

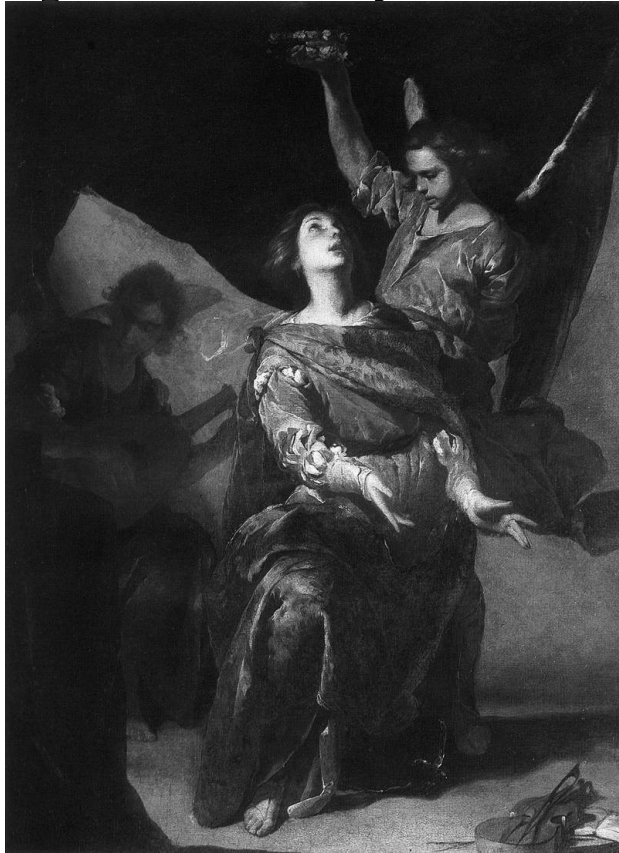
# Forgotten Mystics In World Religions

Lesser Known Out-of-Body Experiences

Compiled by Marilyn Hughes

*The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!*

<http://outofbodytravel.org>



St. Cecilia's Ecstasy



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Having worked primarily in radio broadcasting, Marilyn Hughes spent several years as a news reporter, producer and anchor before deciding to stay at home with her three children. She's experienced, researched, written, and taught about out-of-body travel since 1987.

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# Forgotten Mystics

## In World Religions

Lesser Known Out-of-Body Experiences

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### INTRODUCTION

*'Forgotten Mystics in World Religions: Lesser Known Out-of-Body Experiences' presents a fascinating path in the study of Mysticism and Out-of-Body Travel.*

*In my studies, I have found that there are a great deal of Forgotten Mystics and thus, Out-of-Body Experiences, in many religious traditions whose work was powerful, meaningful, vibrant and eternal. It seems unfortunate and definitely at odds with the will of the God that such works be lost in our time when such great effort was made during theirs to bring their individual Out-of-Body Travel revelations to light. So we've decided to feature Forgotten Mystics and Out-of-Body Travelers, some of whom are less forgotten than others, but all of whom have fallen out of the public limelight despite the fantastic and profound messages they were sent to receive and give to the rest of us through Out-of-Body Experiences.*

# 'Pensatia – Forgotten Rosicrucian Mystic'



'The High Mountain' by Pensatia (Helen Merrick Bond)

Pensatia lived in the mid-twentieth century, and the majority of her writings were published between 1958 and 1980. Her given name was Helen Merrick Bond, the daughter of a congregational minister and sister to founder of Coral Gables in Florida, George E. Merrick. Although the whole family worked in education and community service, Helen's role would be different from the rest of them as she studied the path of the Rosy Cross - Rosicrucianism - her entire life. She had a great love for Christ and the Cross which comes through in her writings and initiations into many mysteries.

She wrote many books all about her mystical experiences and the messages given to her in them by many spiritual personages. But most notably, she met the Master H, who was given to guide her on her life's journey and be a steady presence throughout her life. It was he who gave her the pen name which resonated with her heavenly name - Pensatia.

In 'The High Mountain,' Pensatia takes the reader on her journey of purification which involves the ascending of a series of twelve planes of consciousness to reach the high mountain. In each of these planes, she is met with different teachers, led to her by her Master H and given to teach her of a different level of knowledge.

Although I have felt drawn to all of her writings which include a great many books which will be listed at the end of the article, 'The High Mountain' holds special intrigue for me as a fellow mystic because so much of it mirrors my own initiations into the mysteries, including the entities that she meets - such as the Christ, the Goddess Isis, Abraham Lincoln, a series of Masters, Councils of Initiators, etc.

*"Again and again the Rod struck. New power, wholeness flowed through me. The throat center was expanded, and*

*light circulated through my body as it fused with the centers of light. Consciousness of the two in one liberated physical karma still existing. At the ninth stroke of the Rod the Initiator uttered a chant. Attar of roses was sprinkled upon me. I felt the Rod of Light flowing its Cosmic voltage through my body, regenerating all organs, awaking all psychic centers . . . 'So be it! Through the Holy Chalice let the Rose bloom!' spoke the three witnesses, Alden, Master H and Lincoln."*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

But she also expresses many of the same concepts in identical detail which she was taught in the mystical realms as I, which for any mystic is a helpful tool in their own discernment of their experience.

One aspect in this particular book which was much more reminiscent of the experiences of Edgar Cayce than my own was her constant guidance into the use of medicinal herbs for various purposes, many of which had not been proven at her time but have yet been shown in the years since her passing to be of remedial value in the very illnesses for which she was shown.

Interestingly, in my own experience, Christ has come to me more often in the robes of an Essene than in any other form. In Pensatia's visions, He also comes to her as an Essene. While as a Catholic, I would often see the Cross and Crucifix raised high in the sky upon some triumphant mystical journey, Pensatia would always see the Rosy Cross, which is a symbol of a cross with a rose in the center which represents the sacrifice, resurrection and victory of Christ.

*"I awoke to silence, centered in a circular expanse of golden atmosphere. All the preceding steps, the sumtotal of my initiations, lifted my consciousness into the holy*

*silence of this Seventh step. The Essene Jesus, the Christed One, a white dove silhouetted high above his head, stood, arms outstretched within the cosmic circle. The Guru H greeted me. 'Come close, Pensatia. Here, sit in the silence of the AUM, penning what is given thee.' Obeying, I relaxed with peace beside a blue cosmic lake. Calm green grass, magnetic and restful, bedded my body with comfort. Master H stood erect gazing upon the waters. He spoke: 'Pensatia, the Seventh step is now to be climbed. In slumber you were softly transported here. Often through this medium does the Master take the ready disciple through several steps on the Way to the High Mountain. On this Seventh stratum the Christ is seen by the faithful disciple, or sensed physically, or in sleep. From here on the Christ rays charge the Pilgrim, ever leading one to travel upward.'"*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

In her journeys, she faced various entities which she refers to as the 'black ones' who tried to tempt her away from her path, alluring her with promises of fame, fortune and the opportunity to be like God, even experiencing something so like the Garden of Eden it is uncanny. In my own experience, the forces of darkness were always at my side trying to prevent my sojourn to the worlds of light, as well.

*"Suddenly, thunder and lightning, wild winds, bore through the calm. Two forces began struggling with me. The Black Masters, standing apart, sought by unholy rites to tear me away from my assignment on the Most High Mountain. The three Venerables, H, Lincoln and Alden of the Rose, had vanished. Also the Initiator, Dr. Charley Woo. Only myself, battering with the forces of light and darkness. A smoky suffocating power sought to quench the*

*work of the Golden Rod. Come what may I would stand erect in the Flame of Gold. Holding to Rose and Cross I spoke from the awakened throat center: 'Begone! - I work only in the light of the Rose! Begone!' I repeated. A loathsome, claw-like hand reached out from the smoky haze and lunged for my throat center. 'Master! - Master H! - God of Heaven! - Guardian Angels!-' my cries rang out.*

*No answer. I was alone - deserted. Death, or to vow allegiance to the Dark Master, was my only hope. Better death than to renounce the Path and my assignment! The tightening upon my throat became more severe. The pressure increased. Steadily a stripping away of consciousness was taking place. 'Alden! - Alden!- Blessed Jesus! - ' again I made plea. With my closing breath, I demanded: 'By the Rod of Light, depart now, forces of Black!' And lo, by the power of the Rod of Light, as a miracle, the hand on my throat fell away - dissolved - and the stench with it. Free!- alive and whole!- I was. Master H stood by me, saying 'Well done, Pensatia; thou hast passed the Initiation of the Rod of Light! You are now fortified and healed! In using the Rod, you came forth, able now to go onward to the next step . . . He arose and did pluck from the tree of many blossoms which shaded the eaves of his cabin. This white flower, the essence of attar of roses, can neither wither or fade. As long as you wear it and are true to the Path, it will keep its freshness. Yet, Pensatia, deviate from the High Mountain and your assignment, it dies as all mortal flowers.' I prayed that I never betray the purity of this esoteric flower."*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

In a fabulous description, the Master H allows Pensatia to read from the Akashic record the requirements for the spiritual path and specifically the ascent to the High Mountain.



*“As neophyte one starts on the probational boot training of the Path. The fundamentals are learned and applied. As a little child one places his hand in faith in the Father’s and learns to know and obey cosmic law. In steady obedience one builds, brick by brick, cementing the essential ingredients within the Self needed to awaken the esoteric centers of cosmic contact, making possible the attainment to the foot of the High Mountain. Before that comes, one must be born anew within the Heart’s Flame. Long or short is the boot training: according to the sum total of one’s obedience to esoteric discipline. All must learn by test and trial, and pass, before they are allowed to go farther. In this boot training all negation must be transmuted. The neophyte must be pure in motive, clean in body. All the virtues of Buddha’s Eightfold Path must come forth in action. The seeking of the Kingdom within must alone be the search, else the first round cannot be attained. The obedient ones, those who can and will make the ascent to the Illumined Mountain, receive the living Word from the Masters, and the Christed Light from the Creator on the summit of the High Mountain. Those faithful disciples engender and earn the power of the Word, the command of Nature Elementals, and to make the Demons to obey . . . Even as the Nazarene, he bears the initiations of Fire, Earth, Air and Water, and in triumph, raises the Cross to the bloom of the immortal Rose. One prepares step by step to roll away the Stone to the Sepulchre within his Self. In all men, their divinity is buried, awaiting man’s consciousness to awaken it . . . Let this one sentence sink in all who read, for it is the wayshower of the Path! Those who obey and give their all to know, God and the Masters ever aid, bless and redeem their harsh karma – when one has earned the grace.”*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing  
Company, NY, USA, 1978*

She further undergoes initiations into the Kaballah, the Holy Grail, the Bhagavad Gita, Allah, Tao, Zen, Buddhism, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Golden Flame (reminiscent of the Eternal Flame spoken of in my own visions) and many other adventures including 'sipping from the silver vial,' much as I, too, had to drink of the waters of life from the Cistern of the Angels.

Entering into the mysteries of the Golden Flame, (the Eternal Flame, respectively) Master H then speaks to her about the journey of twin flames, soul mates - and explains it in the same manner in which I lived it through my own experiences in 'The Mysteries of the Redemption.'

*"Such is God's law, ever was, is and ever will be: the woman a star that shines ever to blend with the light of her soul - man. Thus the weary, sad mistakes, yet inevitable: man and woman seeking in earth life that love which can only be found here. Not until the sacred petals of the psychic centres open in full and the student learns to transmute and prepares to enter this garden can he ever find the one his soul seeks. For here the only real and true exists. Sometimes, though not often, both enter and find each other at the same time; but more often one enters before the other and then the one who has entered first can only give all he or she has learned into the keeping of the one not yet within the garden. You, see, Pensatia,'*  
*Continued H, 'even though many have known each other in many incarnations, not until they both have awakened and entered the door of the heart can the union of true love be possible. Therefore, souls on the Path, prepare the Rosy Way, hasten the quickening of all your centres; fulfill your debts to your Karmic mates, transmute and obey and soon you will walk in this exalted place the Creator has given for the fulfillment of your Cosmic destiny, the positive and the negative mated in a beauty of everlasting love and service, with the signature of the Word their betrothal,*

*their marriage service the blending of the two souls in one harmonious flame."*

*The Door of the Heart, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1963*

Interestingly, I made inquiry with several Rosicrucian Organizations and it seems that Pensatia's legacy has been lost to a great many Rosicrucian's as well as to the rest of the world. My own estimation is that this is a great tragedy as her work was so profoundly before her time in the 1950's through 1970's. Reading Pensatia reminds me of my own experiences and writing in their picturesque depictions of the heavenly realms and initiations and there is an authenticity that is rare among mystical writers.

It was my desire to find out more about Helen Merrick Bond, the voice behind Pensatia, her life, her interests, if and when she died, etc. But so little remains of her legacy, just the tiny tidbits I have shared with you. Her writings remain, although rare because they are out of print, but they speak boldly of her interior life which was vast and profound.

*"The Light is becoming ever more brilliant. The Redeemer, the Living Word, has come to claim its own. It shines out love, compassion, mercy forgiveness, courage, faith. Partake of Its bounty. Dedicate your life, your all, to the glory and wisdom. Thus will happiness, peace and fulfillment be yours."*

*The Magnetic Light, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1980*

Perhaps in our current time of warring with nations around the world these words of Master H to Pensatia have special significance:

*“Humanity faces the aftermath of self-made and world karma. Now the mandate is: Go with God or perish. Not by force – war – but by evolution, Soul and Love power exemplified, shall peace be. ‘Man know thy Self’ speaks the esoteric Word. Thus only can one bridge safely the Dark Night of ignorance and negation. Ever thusly have the Avatars proclaimed the Way . . . ”*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

Perhaps the last words to the masses of Pensatia were these – penned in 1980 in her book ‘The Magnetic Light,’ the last known work of Helen Merrick Bond:

*“Be honest in your seeking and dedication to know. Be diligent and responsible to all earthly obligations . . . Be humble. Be generous in all earthly contacts. When you are ready, the Master will come and guide you to the High Mountain and your earthly mission. The Light is. Man must realize this to find fulfillment, and peace profound. Now as the Master departed, his aura settled around me like a golden mist. Attar of roses, like incense, permeated the atmosphere. The music of the spheres resounded. A voice echoed within my heart: ‘Pensatia, finished is ‘The Magnetic Light.’ May this book journey out to the wide, wide world, and touch the hearts of many, and may each find this Light which lights all darkness, all sorrow, all ignorance into life’s divine meaning.”*

*The Magnetic Light, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1980*

*The Books of Pensatia (Helen Merrick Bond):*

*The Door of the Heart*

*The Stone and Elixir*

*The Inner Signature*

*The Master H*

*The Flame of White*  
*The Rose of Life*  
*The High Mountain*  
*Master H's Call to Humanity*  
*The Disciple and the Master*  
*Living Words from the Master*  
*The Path*  
*The Magnetic Light*  
*The Golden Dawn*  
*Vigil*

Master H spoke much of Personal Destiny to Pensatia; a common question that so many seek a feasible answer to in the hopes that his enlightened words may shed deeper light on this process:

*"Yes, readers, there is a Path. Seek it not in outward things countries or cities, but in the citadel of the heart. If one is in earnest the search will not be in vain, the Masters will see to that. You will find the Way; be steady in your quest. Join no spurious man-made cults; pray for the right door to open which will guide you safely through the crucibles and disciplines of the Way. When once you have chosen and contacted the outer portal to your pilgrimage depart not from it; with obedience follow through to the illuminated awakening of Cosmic Consciousness. It matters not how humble or menial your life. Educated or not, rich or poor, if you desire with all your heart and mind you are eligible for the great climb . . . To each in a different way the door will open in your response to my Call. One direction I leave with you as this chapter closes: Be still, as and the high adventure to this immortal awakening must come."*

*The Lotus of Wisdom, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1968*

*“One cannot jump from the Base to the Top. The curious, the materialist, the sensual, may never put their feet even on the outskirts of the Rosy Path. Elimination – transmutation of the lesser – must be, if one seeks the Path to the High Mountain!”*

*The High Mountain, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

*“Only those awake in obedience walk the esoteric Path of the Masters to the High Mountain of initiation. By self-made cause and effect man crucifies himself. Only by reclamation in the Christus and the Holy Grail will the Living Rose of Life bloom from man’s heart. Scientifically, spiritually, materially, must the inner mysteries be realized by each and every one on this planet, Earth. In order that this be, man must seek beyond the objective into the lost horizons of his immortality. All that is hidden must become known. The joy, grandeur, wonder of the super world within man himself must be traveled at will by man.”*

*The Lotus of Wisdom, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1968*

*“Be faithful in little everyday duties. Neglect not the weekly lessons, the tedious repetitions of boot training and procedure necessary to attainment esoteric. Carry out thy holy orders no matter the cost or sacrifice. Remember, all that is let go of in earthly desires shall be returned threefold at the summit of thy pilgrimage. Usually desires change if not sound cosmically. If basically in harmony with cosmic law, whether early or late on the Path, desires of the heart are granted one. Many times when least expected they bloom for man.”*

*The Lotus of Wisdom, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1968*

*“No one becomes a disciple by rapid development. True, one may attain Cosmic Consciousness in advance of others. This is no gift, but earned from esoteric work performed in other incarnations, or from selfless service, zeal and faith in this life. No side doors of bribery can bring to the student the Living Rose of Life. Those who think so soon eliminate themselves and go their endless round of mental indigestion. They join cults and other schools, thinking there is a short cut. Alas, too late, they find they have mastered nothing, and know only a jumble of book knowledge. They are called ‘drifters.’ Such never make the grade even in boot training. Know, before you enter any true esoteric door or outer portal, be sure you want it more than breath itself. Not for fame, worldly power or prestige or occult magic or love for self. If this be so, set not your foot thereon, for you will fail by the deceit of your own false intentions. For a while it may appear you are attaining the great mysteries, yet just when you think you have the Stone and Elixir all will crumble. For only honesty and pureness of heart can walk the tightrope to the Most High Mountain.”*

*The Lotus of Wisdom, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1978*

*“At the Immaculate Table where ever sits the Christ, come in reverence, bow down and listen. Hear Him say to each disciple: ‘Thou art whole, go forth in peace. In thy heart sing like a bird of the morning skies. Fight not, but live in brotherhood straight, eternally young with the nectar of the Absolute for thy nourishment as well as nature’s abundance. With gracious deeds and thoughts cover thy walking mission. Laugh much and hurry not to gain temporal things. Rather ever hunger for the divine in all life.”*

*The Master H, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA, 1961*

*When man earns and becomes conscious of his Soul, the Body of Light is henceforth the captain of his earthly journey. From then on the physical body is the faithful servant of man's Divine Self. Until this happens, man is driftwood on the Sea of Maya."*

*The Path, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA,  
1972*

*"Now the light of his aura beamed out and down into the darkness of man's ignorance. With the resounding flow of AUM, his fingertips touched earth's loam. And the Word, alive from his throat, resounded over the Living Rose. With the Waters of Life, he baptized man. All who were ready, all those seeking, were ignited to enter and walk the Kings Highway to the High Mountain, its lofty peak rose high in Cosmic citadel. And a gentle breeze, yet quick in action, fanned man's inertia to life. Such is the impact and influence of the Hierarchal Masters, those of the White Lodge, those who bring the Light from the East, those who shoot the Cosmic arrow into man's heart, those who sound the drum of the Word out to all humanity. Such is the Path the wayshower of the Aquarian Age, the lighthouse to man's liberation from maya."*

*The Path, Pensatia, Euclid Publishing Company, NY, USA,  
1972*



# 'Reverend John MacGowan – Forgotten Protestant Mystic'



Reverend John Macgowan

Reverend John Macgowan was a Baptist Minister of the Gospel in Devonshire Square, London who lived from 1726 to 1780. Somewhat controversial in his time and certainly in our own, he wrote a great deal of work not all of it mystical. But he is most remembered for the most controversial aspect of his theology which came about after undergoing an unusual mystical experience wherein he was given to enter into the infernal abodes and begin listening to the diabolical dialogues of the devils, and by so doing, learning the various ways that the dark side would easily subvert such simple souls as ourselves. Here follows his own recollection of the event which led to the writing of this fascinating work:

*The Story of Reverend John Macgowan*

“Know then, that not far from my humble cot, there is a widely extended, most tremendous and gloomy VALE, first formed, as is supposed, by some dreadful earthquake, or some other remarkable convulsion in nature. The confines of this valley, on the outside, are every where nearly level with the surface of the ground, but the precipice within is to the last degree horrible, inasmuch that few have fortitude enough to approach it. The ancient bards very justly called it HORRIDA VALLIS, and we from them, the Vale of Horrors. This horrid vale has long been supposed, by the credulous vulgar, to be the haunt of infernal spirits; and some people imagine that it is the only place on earth where they freely converse about the dark designs of their mal-administration.

My curiosity continually prompting me, at last conquered my native timidity, and I resolved, if possible, to find an entrance into this unfrequented, unknown, and dreadful place.

But many months, I may say some years, were spent in this fruitless search, and I despaired of success. At length, however, having entered a very large and unfrequented wood, one side of which led to the very edge of the precipice, as I walked a few furlongs down a gradual descent, gloomy beyond whatever I had seen before, I came to a huge rock, all overgrown with ivy and moss. It had the appearance of an ancient ruin, somewhat in the form of a pyramid; the bottom occupied a considerable space, and the spiral top was hardly concealed by the highest branches of the tall and aged oaks which surrounded it. Near the ground, by chance, I discovered an opening almost choked up with baleful hemlock and nightshade. At first I thought that this could be no other than the cave of some ancient Druid; but approaching it, and having with much toil cleared away the noxious weeds, I found, what I had long sought for, an entrance into the dreadful cavity.

Here my resolution almost failed me, and I was at the point of relinquishing the long projected enterprise. At length I recollected myself a little, and resolved to descend into the place, though, as I thought, not much less horrible than hell. The passage, a little within the entrance, led downwards almost in a perpendicular direction; but its straightness, and the natural unevenness of the rocks that formed it, rendered my descent more practicable and safe than I at first expected. Down, however, I went, fathoms I know not how many, ere I found myself at the bottom, and from an easy opening entered the gloomy vale.

Looking up, I saw rocks upon rocks projecting over my timorous head; and I perceived myself to be within the most hideous inclosure that ever mortal eyes beheld. The vale being solitary and gloomy as death itself, I said in my

heart, Surely if damned spirits are permitted to visit the earth this must be their rendezvous, and two to one I shall see some of them. I therefore observed carefully my retreat; and by several marks on the rocks which formed it, I hoped that, on my emergency, I might be directed to the entrance of the cave, by which alone I could return to the society of mortals.

I soon found that my precautions were far from being unnecessary; for I saw, by the feeble light which glimmered in the place, a form most frightful making directly towards me. My heart bounced in my breast with terror, and swift as a hare prest by sanguine hounds, I ran to my little sanctuary. No sooner had I entered it, but the fiend stalked up to the very door of it. The hair of my head stood upright, the blood ran down my back as cold as Greenland ice, and I looked on myself as a dead man; having often heard of miserable wretches being torn in pieces by talons of merciless infernals. But as the hideous form attempted not to penetrate into the cave, nor seemed at all conscious of my being there, I recovered myself a little, and reviewed it with less apprehension of danger. At length he espied another of his clan, to whom he called, and with whom he held the following dialogue, which made such an impression on my mind, that I afterwards recollected the most part of it; and here present it to the worthy reader. The name of this devil, as I afterwards understood was AVARO, and that of the other FASTOSUS."

*The Dialogues of the Devils, Reverend John Macgowan,  
1863*

Macgowan's work was controversial in his time and remains so today because he held nothing back, and many of the dialogues that he recorded were severe and

cutting to the Christian Church, the Papacy, the Priesthood, the Jews and frankly every living person.

One of the greatest gifts of his writings which shows a similarity to C.S. Lewis's *Screwtape* letters, although that book was written as a fiction, is the insight which Macgowan provides into the subtlety of temptation and how easily mankind can be led astray.

In one of the dialogues between two of the demons, Fastosus and Avaro, the two discuss how intricately they are involved in the fashions of the time and how easy it is to lead women and men into vanity and lust simply by making certain types of clothing 'fashionable.' In the dialogue, each demon claims to be behind the designs of the greatest clothing makers of the day and they take great pride in taking down so many so easily by so doing.

But the dialogues are very detailed and cover every possible sin, most of which seem to be suggested to us as humans by minimizing its import, making those who follow the moral law closely to be prudish, and creating a perception of fun and good times around such acts.

Interestingly, in their attacks on the church, they took prideful credit for the widely utilized system of the day in the Catholic faith regarding the selling of 'Indulgences' which are meant to guarantee the faithful a ticket to heaven through the Catholic Church. The attacks on the church don't stop there, as they speak openly of their great victory in convincing a certain Pope to decry a doctrine of infallibility and in their words replacing the one true God with a man. At the time, and probably it could be conceded as being somewhat true in certain Catholic circles today, money was a huge part of the

Church. And the devils Avaro and Fastosus brag about their many schemes to lead priests to greed with parishioners of means in order to attain political status in the church.

But the devils, of course, don't stick only to the leaders of faith communities. The dialogues continue on a long rant about the ease with which they've taken so many souls of children by creating laxity in parents, and accusing them with slothfulness in their parenting:

"Here dwells the parent who spends wastefully what should regularly support his family, so that his children are brought up in the most dissolute, and irreligious manner, as a preparative to the most vicious practices . . . Another sort are very careful to preserve the bodies of their children, by providing diligently for them the necessaries and conveniences of life; as they grow up are careful to preserve them from the highway and the stews, by putting into their hands a business by which to obtain a comfortable livelihood; and after all prove the murderers of their children. For, on the one hand, they restrain them not from bad company, which leads to destruction; company that corrupt the principles, vitiate the conduct, and lead into bad practices, such as Sabbath-breaking, gaming, lying, and swearing."

*The Dialogues of the Devils, Reverend John Macgowan,  
1863*

In his work, we here from five demons other than Beelzebub himself who appears frequently throughout the work, mostly being spoken about by his minions. Each demon has certain charges, vices and destruction for which he is to look after in the world:

### **Fastosos - Vanity**

**Avaro - False Piety**  
**Infidelis - Infidelity**  
**Impiator - Impiety**  
**Discordans - Discordance**

The devils speak openly about the events which led to the fall of man, the anger of Beelzebub at the station of man and the rage that built within his heart:

*An Account of the Fall*

“(The Demon) Fastosus: I have already told you, that as soon as I was born, I obtained full dominion over the adherents of Beelzebub; this taught the angels of the deep, that the only way to seduce innocent beings was to inject my nature into them; and that the seeds of pride being once sown, they could not fail of most abundant fruitfulness. Man was originally created in a holy and happy estate, a perfect stranger to those evils which now prevail over, and reign predominant in the natural and moral world. You could not have seen so much as one symptom of pride or covetousness or other vice, either in Adam or Eve, in their primitive state. They love without unchastity, and enjoyed without uncleanness; nor were they in the least acquainted with the racking torments of jealousy. No anxious thoughts, perplexing fears, nor distracting cares, disturbed their peaceful hearts. Envy, anger, shame, and resentment were strangers to the new created pair, and never set foot in paradise before my arrival there. Their sole delight was to contemplate the beneficence of their God.

Our eagle-eyed angels when they saw the noble deportment of man, soon perceived that he was of the same nature, which the Son of God was predestinated to assume, (for as some think, he might, out of love to the

human nature, appear occasionally to the heavenly hosts in the form of man) for the resisting which decree, they were damned to the depths of ever-burning hell. The first discovery Beelzebub made of the blessed situation in which man was created, filled his noble mind with such violent agitations of rage, envy, malice, and pride, that his fury burst beyond all bounds. He stamped and raged in a most tempestuous manner; insomuch that he shook the sable firmament of hell, and brought his confederates to inquire the cause of his anguish. A council thus convened, after the prince had a little recovered from the first shock of transporting rage, he related to them what he had discovered concerning the inhabitants of Eden."

*The Dialogues of the Devils, Reverend John Macgowan,  
1863*

Perhaps my favorite part of the dialogues is a profoundly interesting section wherein the demons discuss the events immediately before, during and after the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. I'll let it speak for itself:

*An Account of the Crucifixion from the  
Perspective of the Demonic Realms and the  
Demons*

*By Reverend John Macgowan*

*(It should be noted that the reference to the Jewish people in this excerpt is in no way exclusive in the mass of writings by Reverend John MacGowan. The demonic dialogues take great pains to excoriate the sins of all; including the Christians, the Papacy, the Priesthood, the Vanities, Greed and Sins of Laypeople People and everything else underneath the infernal register which excludes none. Because of the nature of this particular historical event, the Jewish priests played a role and the Reverend's accountings of the discussions of the demons*



*are biting and very harsh – but in the entirety of the Dialogues of the Devils, this harshness is not exclusive to the Jews or any one group, but to all under the pain of temptation and sin which includes us all.)*

“(The Demon) Infidelis: It happened in the process of time, our friend Judas found an opportunity to betray him into the hands of the principal priests for the goodly reward of thirty pieces of silver; for even Judas would not serve the devil for nothing. At the same time my son Slavish Fear, who is a spirit of gigantic stature, fell upon and routed all his followers, so that none of them remained with him in his last temptations. As soon as Immanuel was seized and fettered, they led him in triumph to prison and judgment, where our steady friends Hatred and Falsehood were appointed witnesses against him in behalf of the commonwealth. So very hard did they swear against him, that he was brought in guilty, as had been agreed on before hand. As soon as the jury of priests brought in their verdict, the devil Crudelis, and Pilate, who sat as judge, arose and gave sentence against him; which for its singularity, I shall repeat.

1. That the Jewish ploughers should make their furrows long and deep in his devoted flesh.
2. That his face should be marred with shame and spitting.
3. That his cheek should be bruised by the slavish hand of the barbarous smiter.
4. That he should be delivered over for further torment to those who pluck off the hair.
5. That in point of the greatest contempt, his temples should be torn with a mock crown of piercing thorns.

6. That he should be crushed to the earth beneath the weight of the cross, to which he was to be nailed for execution.
7. That in his extreme torture, he should have no drink, but the sourest vinegar mixed with gall.
8. That in the most barbarous manner which devils, priests, and soldiers could devise, his mangled body should be stretched upon and nailed to the accursed wood. And,
9. As unworthy of either, that he should be lifted up betwixt heaven and earth, a spectacle to devils and men, and there hang till he was dead.

As soon as the sentence was denounced, the devil Malevolus cried out, "Away with him, soldiers, away with him,-come, let us crucify him, his sentence is by far too mild, away with the varlet to Calvary." So they led him away to crucifixion.

At the same time our infernal nobility were struck with amazement, at the seeming power which man had gained over Immanuel; and great Beelzebub, in the midst of his astonishment, thus addressed his senators, "Once was a memorable time, that we made such an attempt to subvert the government of God by resisting the power of Immanuel; but great was our defeat, and dismal our overthrow. Our designs were not only frustrated, but we ourselves in the height of our confusion, fiercely hurled from the resplendent summit of primeval glory into the yawning gulph of unfathomable perdition, where we are still reserved in these horrible chains, to the judgment of the great and terrible day. A day, the very thoughts of which make this noble frame of mine to tremble as the quaking asp. But how it comes to pass, I know not, these

earthborn sons of ours seem exceedingly to surpass us in power: for I saw Immanuel stand fettered at their bar, dumb as sheep before their shearers, he opened not his mouth. I am much afraid there is some hidden mystery in it. What is this? - My undaunted mind is not wont to misgive me thus! - What can this unusual tremor which now invades my heart portend? I hate timidity - and yet I cannot help fearing that this commotion of my intellects is ominous of some event fatal to our interest.

I cannot deem it possible that the God of heaven and earth would patiently submit to such indignities, had he not some ends to answer by it, to which we at present are strangers. Often have I prophesied true; but O! May my prophetic mind be mistaken in its present timorous forebodings. Meanwhile let us, my infernal brethren, harden ourselves in despair; for it is now long since Hope took wing and fled from these dreary mansions. Strong in fury and fired with revenge, let us quit ourselves like devils and avowed enemies of righteousness. As for me, I hold it good that we instantly fly to the assistance of our devoted friends the Jews. Having this unexpected opportunity, let us not fail to improve it to the best advantage; let it not be owing to our negligence, if the state of Immanuel be not overturned. Let not us have the hell to reflect, that we omitted any thing which might tend to promote the interest of darkness.

Great Beelzebub finishing here, and his motion being universally approved of, all the legions of reprobate angels, a few excepted, who were left to look after the affairs of the damned, took wing for earth, to assist at so very amazing an execution. Arrived at Calvary, they formed themselves into an invisible ring around the

elevated cross, where to their unspeakable astonishment and wonder, hung Immanuel the maker of the world; and you may be assured they did not fail, as far as it was in the power of fallen spirits, to torment his oppressed soul. Aye, aye, so successful were we devils, priests, and soldiers that day, that no less was hoped for than a decisive victory over the Son of God.

But, how shall I speak it? To the everlasting mortification of the infernal peers just as Immanuel was to all appearance ready to expire, on a sudden he exerted his mighty power, seized old Beelzebub and dashed him against the cross, then casting him to the earth, he so bruised the head of the serpent with his heel, that there is great reason to believe he will never recover as long as he lives. It would have grieved the heart of the very Crudelis himself to see the abuse which our great and venerable parents received on that occasion.

(The Demon) Impiator: Well, sire, I cannot but think how truly the prophetic mind of Beelzebub foreboded his misfortune: but what were the rest of the chiefs a-doing? Why did not all the veterans flee to his assistance?

(The Demon) Infidelis: A pertinent question indeed, considering by whom it is made, my son. But I assure you, we were never so greatly mistaken in our days as at that time. For when we thought ourselves sure of the victory, to our sad experience we learned that Immanuel was strongest in death. For even when he was a-dying, he laid us all under the most perfect arrest: none of us could take one step, either backward or forward, but as he gave permission; so that being spoiled of all our power, we could not help ourselves much less the afflicted prince.

This done, he cried out with a voice which shook the very foundations of both earth and hell, "It is finished;" and was then conveyed by Death into an invisible state.

This done, once more we thought the day our own; but here I cannot omit that fearful stagnation of nature which happened then, and the set of new preachers which were introduced. For when all under our influence had forsaken Immanuel, who was betrayed by one, denied by another, and forsaken by all his preachers; the indignant sun could not endure that sight, as if angry and ashamed of the proceedings of the sons of men, covered his face with a sable cloud, and denied one smiling ray to delinquent earth whilst his Lord was ignominiously crucified. As if it had been seized with uncommon tremor, the earth itself fell into a fit of violent convulsions, the mountains reeled, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the dead arose, and all to preach the sufferings of the God of nature. An invisible hand rent the veil of the temple, that cloth of extraordinary texture, in twain from the top to the bottom, and a voice was heard to say, "The glory is departed from Israel, and now the most holy place is laid open."

Death having conveyed Immanuel to its lonely mansions, the resolute, though maimed Beelzebub, our great prince, recovered himself as much as was possible, his head being incurably broken; mustered his maimed forces, and went to the assistance of Death, if possible to keep Immanuel fast prisoner in the silent tomb. Nothing doubting, but if this could be, we should render all that he had heretofore done and suffered, null and void. The better to succeed in the important enterprise, we sealed the door of the sepulcher, and set a watch of faithful soldiers instructed by the chief of the Jewish priests; and still to make the security stronger, every fiend did his utmost to impost weights on

the buried body of Immanuel, to prevent his resurrection from the solitary grave.

But to our eternal confusion, on the third day of his invisible state, he arose, shook himself from the dust, came to the door of the sepulcher, burst it open, and laid hold on Death, who stood as sentinel next to the door of the tomb, trampled him under his feet, and by main force wrenched from him his poisonous sting, that sad repository of all his strength. This done, he said, "Henceforth, monster, hast thou no power over the people for whom I have died." Then he broke impetuously through all the lines of martial infernals who stood in firm phalanx around the tomb; seized the lately wounded chief, who was very ill with a fever in his mind, arising from his disaster upon Mount Calvary. He took the fiend, the great Beelzebub, chained him to the axle of his chariot, mounted his seat, and rode triumphantly through the gathering crowds of joyful saints, who on golden pinions descended from heaven in solemn strains, to hymn their all-conquering and triumphant Redeemer.

Oh my friends! My dear infernals, it must have pierced your hearts with the most poignant sorrow to see him dragged in triumph through all the hosts of saints and angels, who fearless stood in blazing ranks to see the longed-for solemnity; and at the same time to see our beloved friend Death lie gasping for life at the door of the sepulcher. Great was the confusion of the infernal brigades when they saw their principalities spoiled, and Death and Satan so terribly handled: yea, so tremendous was their amazement, that to escape the avenging hand of risen Immanuel, they retreated even to the nethermost depths of hell; and his scattered disciples again resorted to his

erected standard. But the greatest disappointment and consternation was, when we understood that after all our diligence and hazardous exploits, we, with our auxiliary priests, &c. had done nothing but what the hand and counsel of God had predetermined should be done; that by our seeming victory over Immanuel, he had for ever subdued us under his feet; and that our hatred, envy, and cruelty, were fully recompensed into our own bosoms; now deeper damned than ever.

(The Demon) Avarice: Ah, father, these were troubles indeed, such as do not happen every day; but it is not for us to desist from tempting when our designs miscarry, then should we not act the part of desperadoes, such as we are.

(The Demon) Infidelis: Ah, gentlemen, great was the cause of my dismay, for Immanuel gave such demonstration of his Messiahship, that all which was written in the prophets concerning him was exactly fulfilled in his life and death; yea, so very striking was the evidence that many cried, "Truly this is a just man;" and others, "Truly this is the Son of God." Therefore I greatly feared that all the world would become believers in him, and consequently shake off my yoke. But I was much obliged to my good friends, the Jewish clergymen; for their reverences greatly befriended me, and warmly espoused my interest; exerted their utmost power to establish the throne of the great Infidelis, and to destroy the early seeds of Christianity sown by Immanuel, and now beginning to grow.

Immanuel having in opposition to all the powers of darkness, finished the work for which he came down to

the earth; he triumphantly ascended to his native heaven, to the primeval embraces of his eternal Father, and assumed all the ensigns of his eternal Father, and assumed all the ensigns of empyrean glory.

Soon after this the high festival of Pentecost drew on, and I as formerly, attended at Jerusalem in the midst of many thousands, who according to the law, came up to worship upon that occasion, not only from Judea, but from nations very remote. I dreaded no harm at the hands of a few illiterate fishermen, having not been informed that any of the rulers, or of the scribes and Pharisees had believed in Jesus, and therefore was at no pains to prevent the multitude coming up to the solemnity as usual. But here was another shock my kingdom sustained; for Peter the fisherman, who so very lately like a dastard impiously denied his Lord with profane oaths, now filled with the Holy Ghost, stood up in the midst, and clearly proved that Jesus was the very Messiah, and upon this occasion played off the heavy artillery of Sinai on the consciences of my people, which was attended with success so fatal to me, that no less than three thousand were pierced through the heart at once, and fell on the field of action. Now it was that my evil apprehensions were again alarmed, plainly perceiving that the artillery of the word was leveled against my person, and that the first end of the gospel was the subversion of my diabolical government. However I drew up all the forces which I possibly could in the hurry of that surprise, and had just time to give one general discharge, my soldiers crying out as they gave the volley, "These men are drunken with new wine." It was but a poor opposition to doctrine so powerful I allow; but it was the best that could at that time be made, for we were



obliged to retreat in much confusion, and leave the Christian fishermen masters of the field.

As soon as we were a little recovered from the disorder into which that unexpected misfortune had plunged us, I summoned a council of war, in which the self-righteous Jews were the principal, next to our infernal train. I myself gave special orders that some method should be concerted effectually to destroy the name of Jesus; for, said I, "If we let them alone, all the people will believe in their doctrine." In this council, it was resolved, to raise an army of those who were the greatest adversaries to the name of Jesus, to whom orders should be given to kill, destroy, and cause to perish all who believed in this way, till the Christian religion should be banished from the face of the earth. This army was raised, and the command given to Saul of Tarsus, at that time a mighty zealous for us, and who for a season made a dreadful havoc of all that believed contrary to the faith of the priests; for it ought to be observed, that the opinion of the priests has been esteemed true orthodoxy and the only faith, in all ages and countries.

But here another sad disappointment and loss befell me, for as this same captain Saul was on his march to Damascus to fight a pitched battle with the Christians, it so fell that Immanuel himself was taking a tour in the valley to see how the pomegranates budded, and falling in with trusty Saul on his journey, unveiled his own personal excellencies to him, and laid him under an immediate arrest. As soon as he saw the beauties of Immanuel, he felt the most sincere esteem for his person, and conceived the most exalted sentiments of friendship and love. Yea, he was even so much grieved that ever he had drawn his sword against him, that he renounced the service of

Infidelis on the spot, took the oath of allegiance to Jesus, and thenceforward hated my person and government with the most perfect hatred; and did what he could to overturn our state and subvert our government."

*The Dialogues of the Devils, Reverend John Macgowan,  
1863*

# 'A. Farnese – Forgotten Mystic Amanuensis (to Franchezzo)'

## A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands



Franchezzo

*A classic true story  
of the afterlife*

'A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands' By Franchezzo  
through Amanuensis A. Farnese

With A. Farnese, we encroach upon a word which was often used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to describe a person who had a special relationship with one particular soul in the spirit world who would show them visions of the afterlife and teach them regarding the laws and mechanisms of the world beyond. A. Farnese was one of these, although there were quite a few. One of the more well-known of these was Phyllos the Tibetan whose work 'A Dweller on Two Planets' is kept in print by a small following even today though it was written by Amanuensis, Yol Gorro, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well. In this better known work, Phyllos tells the story of many of his lifetimes going back to the time of Atlantis and explains the mechanisms of karma. But in our forgotten mystic's work, the theme is the other life, the world beyond and Franchezzo takes him on many journeys to this world and teaches him about the laws that abide within it.

As with many of our forgotten mystics, not much is known about his life. He left a short note about the nature of his work in his work 'A Wandering in the Spirit World,' which is also known by the title 'A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands.'

"The following narrative was written more than a year ago, and in giving it to the public I do not claim to be its author, since I have only acted the part of an amanuensis and endeavored to write down as truthfully and as carefully as I could, the words given to me by the Spirit Author himself, who is one of several spirits who have desired me to write down for them their experiences in the spirit world.

I have had to write the words as fast as my pen could travel over the paper, and many of the experiences described and opinions advanced are quite contrary to

what I myself believed to be in accordance with the conditions of life in the world of spirits.

The Spirit Author Franchezzo I have frequently seen materialized, and he has been recognized on these occasions by friends who knew him in earth life.

Having given the narrative to the public as I received it from the Spirit Author, I must leave with him all responsibility for the opinions expressed and the scenes described."

*FARNESE, A., A Wandering in the Spirit World,  
London, 1896*

All that is known about what brought Farnese to the transformation into mystic hood is written in two accounts he included in his writings. 1.) My Death, and 2.) My Second Death.

## **My Death.**

"I have been a Wanderer through a far country, in those lands that have no name--no place--for you of earth, and I would set down as briefly as I can my wanderings, that those whose feet are pointed to that bourn may know what may in their turn await them.

On earth and in my life of earth I lived as those do who seek only how the highest point of self gratification can be reached. If I was not unkind to some--if I was indulgent to those I loved--yet it was ever with the feeling that they in return must minister to my gratification--that from them I might purchase by my gifts and my affection the love and homage which was as my life to me.

I was talented, highly gifted both in mind and person, and from my earliest years the praise of others was ever given to me, and was ever my sweetest incense. No thought ever came to me of that all self-sacrificing love which can sink itself so completely in the love for others that there is no thought, no hope of happiness, but in securing the happiness of the beloved ones. In all my life, and amongst those women whom I loved (as men of earth too often miscall that which is but a passion too low and base to be dignified by the name of love), amongst all those women who from time to time captivated my fancy, there was not one who ever appealed to my higher nature sufficiently to make me feel this was true love, this the ideal for which in secret I sighed. In everyone I found something to disappoint me. They loved me as I loved them--no more, no less. The passion I gave won but its counterpart from them, and thus I passed on unsatisfied, longing for I knew not what.

Mistakes I made--ah! how many. Sins I committed--not a few; yet the world was often at my feet to praise me and call me good, and noble, and gifted. I was feted--caressed--the spoilt darling of the dames of fashion. I had but to woo to win, and when I won all turned to bitter ashes in my teeth. And then there came a time upon which I shall not dwell, when I made the most fatal mistake of all and spoilt two lives where I had wrecked but one before. It was not a golden flowery wreath of roses that I wore, but a bitter chain--feters as of iron that galled and bruised me till at last I snapped them asunder and walked forth free. Free?--ah, me! Never again should I be free, for never for one moment can our past errors and mistakes cease to dog our footsteps and clog our wings while we live--aye, and after the life of the body is ended--till one by one we have atoned for them, and thus blotted them from our past.

And then it was--when I deemed myself secure from all love--when I thought I had learned all that love could teach--knew all that woman had to give--that I met one woman. Ah! What shall I call her? She was more than mortal woman in my eyes, and I called her "The Good Angel of My Life," and from the first moment that I knew her I bowed down at her feet and gave her all the love of my soul--of my higher self--a love that was poor and selfish when compared to what it should have been, but it was all I had to give, and I gave it all. For the first time in my life I thought of another more than of myself, and though I could not rise to the pure thoughts, the bright fancies that filled her soul, I thank God I never yielded to the temptation to drag her down to me.

As so time went on--I sunned myself in her sweet presence--I grew in holy thoughts that I deemed had left me for ever--I dreamed sweet dreams in which I was freed from those chains to my past that held me so cruelly, so hardly, now when I sought for better things. And from my dreams I ever woke to the fear that another might win her from me--and to the knowledge that I, alas! Had not the right to say one word to hold her back. Ah, me! The bitterness and the suffering of those days! I knew it was myself alone who had built that wall between us. I felt that I was not fit to touch her, soiled as I was in the world's ways. How could I dare to take that innocent, pure life and link it to my own? At times hope would whisper it might be so, but reason said ever, "No!" And though she was so kind, so tender to me that I read the innocent secret of her love, I knew--I felt--that on earth she never would be mine. Her purity and her truth raised between us a barrier I could never pass. I tried to leave her. In vain! As a magnet is drawn to the pole, so was I ever drawn back to her, till at last I struggled no more. I strove only to enjoy the

happiness that her presence gave--happy that at least the pleasure and the sunshine of her presence was not denied me.

And then! Ah! Then there came for me an awful, and unexpected day, when with no warning, no sign to awaken me to my position, I was suddenly snatched from life and plunged into that gulf, that death of the body which awaits us all.

And I knew not that I had died. I passed from some hours of suffering and agony into sleep--deep, dreamless sleep--and when I awoke it was to find myself alone and in total darkness. I could rise; I could move; surely I was better. But where was I? Why this darkness? Why was no light left with me? I arose and groped as one does in a dark room, but I could find no light, hear no sound. There was nothing but the stillness, the darkness of death around me.

Then I thought I would walk forward and find the door. I could move, though slowly and feebly, and I groped on--for how long I know not. It seemed hours, for in my growing horror and dismay I felt I must find some one--some way out of this place; and to my despair I seemed never to find any door, any wall, anything. All seemed space and darkness round me.

Overcome at last, I called out aloud! I shrieked, and no voice answered me. Then again and again I called, and still the silence; still no echo, even from my own voice, came back to cheer me. I bethought me of her I loved, but something made me shrink from uttering her name there. Then I thought of all the friends I had known, and I called on them, but none answered me. Was I in prison? No. A prison has walls and this place had none. Was I mad?



Delirious? What? I could feel myself, my body. It was the same. Surely the same? No. There was some change in me. I could not tell what, but I felt as though I was shrunken and deformed? My features, when I passed my hand over them, seemed larger, coarser, distorted surely? Oh, for a light! Oh, for anything to tell me even the worst that could be told! Would no one come? Was I quite alone? And she, my angel of light, oh! Where was she? Before my sleep she had been with me--where was she now? Something seemed to snap in my brain and in my throat and I called wildly to her by name, to come to me, if but for once more. I felt a terrible sense as if I had lost her, and I called and called to her wildly; and for the first time my voice had a sound and rang back to me through that awful darkness.

Before me, far, far away, came a tiny speck of light like a star that grew and grew and came nearer and nearer till at last it appeared before me as a large ball of light, in shape like a star, and in the star I saw my beloved. Her eyes were closed as of one in sleep, but her arms were held out to me and her gentle voice said in those tones I knew so well, "Oh! My love, my love, where are you now; I cannot see you, I only hear your voice; I only hear you call to me, and my soul answers to yours."

I tried to rush to her, but I could not. Some invisible force held me back, and around her seemed a ring I could not pass through. In an agony I sank to the ground, calling upon her to leave me no more. Then she seemed to grow unconscious; her head sank upon her breast, and I saw her float away from me as though some strong arms had borne her. I sought to rise and follow her, but could not. It was as if a great chain held me fast, and after some fruitless struggles I sank upon the ground in unconsciousness."

*FARNESE, A., A Wandering in the Spirit World,  
London, 1896*

## **My Second Death.**

"The meetings for materialization were held once a fortnight, and from the number of them I judged that about three months had passed, when I was told by Ahrinziman to prepare myself for a great change which was about to take place in myself and my surroundings, and which would mean my passing into a higher sphere. I have heard the spheres divided differently by different spirit teachers, and it is not very important that they should be all divided by the same standard, since these divisions are very similar to mapping out a country where the boundaries melt so imperceptibly into one another that it is not very essential to have the limits defined with perfect exactitude, since the changes in the countries and the people will of themselves mark their different states as you progress on your journey. Thus, then, some will tell you there are seven spheres and that the seventh means the heaven spoken of in the Bible; others say there are twelve spheres; others again extend the number. Each sphere is, however, divided into circles, usually twelve to a sphere, though here again some spirits will reckon them differently, just as your standards of measurement on earth differ in different countries, yet the thing they measure remains the same. For myself, I have been used to count that there are seven spheres above the earth and seven below it--using the terms above and below as signifying the nearness to, or distance from, the great central sun of our solar system, the nearest point of attraction towards that sun being considered to be our highest point of attainment (while in the limits of the earth spheres), and the farthest away being regarded as our

lowest or most degraded sphere. Each sphere, then, being subdivided into twelve circles, which are blended so closely into each other that you appear to pass almost insensibly from one to the other. I had hitherto been in what is called the earth plane, which like a great broad belt circles around the earth and permeates its atmosphere. This earth plane may be said to comprehend within its bounds the first of the seven spheres above and the first of those below the earth, and is used commonly in describing the habitations of those spirits who are said to be earth-bound in a greater or less degree because they are not able to sink below the earth attractions nor to free themselves from its influences.

I was now told that I had so far freed myself from the earth's attractions and overcome my desires for earthly things that I was able to pass into the second sphere. The passing from the body of a lower sphere into that of a higher one is often, though not invariably, accomplished during a deep sleep which closely resembles the death-sleep of the spirit in leaving the earthly body. As a spirit grows more elevated, more etherealized, this change is accompanied by a greater degree of consciousness, till at last the passing from one high sphere to another is simply like changing one garb for another a little finer, discarding one spiritual envelope for a more ethereal one. Thus the soul passes onward, growing less and less earthly (or material) in its envelopment, till it passes beyond the limits of our earth spheres into those of the solar systems.

It happened, then, that upon my return from one of my visits to the earth, I felt overpowered by a strange unusual sense of drowsiness, which was more like paralysis of the brain than sleep.

I retired to my little room in the Twilight Land, and throwing myself upon my couch, sank at once into a profound dreamless slumber like unto the unconscious sleep of death.

In this state of unconsciousness I lay for about two weeks of earthly time, and during it my soul passed from the disfigured astral body and came forth like a newborn child, clothed in a brighter, purer spiritual envelope, which my efforts at overcoming the evil in myself had created for it. Only I was not born as an infant but as a full grown man, even as my experience and knowledge had been those of a mature spirit. There are some mortals whose knowledge of life is so limited, whose minds have been so little cultivated, and whose natures are so simple and childlike, that they are born into the spirit world as mere children, however many years of earth life they may have known, but it was not so with me, and in assuming my new condition I also possessed the development in age which my earth life had given me.

In a state of perfect unconsciousness my newborn soul was borne by the attendant spirit friends into the second sphere, where I lay sleeping my dreamless sleep till the time came for my awakening.

The discarded astral envelope I had left was by the power of attendant spirits dissolved into the elements of the earth plane, even as my earthly body left at my first death would decay into the earthly material from which it had been taken,--dust returning unto dust again, while the immortal soul passed on to a higher state.

Thus did I pass through my second death and awake to the resurrection of my higher self."

*FARNESE, A., A Wandering in the Spirit World,  
London, 1896*

Farnese's writings present such a thorough and fascinating view of both the heavenly and hellish realms. We hope you enjoy this interesting journey into another yet forgotten wanderer in the spirit lands!

# Excerpts from a Wandering in the Spirit World

*By Franchezzo through A. Farnese*

## **Twilight Lands--Love's Gifts--The Valley of Selfishness--The Country of Unrest--The Miser's Land--The Gambler's Land.**

When my period of work in any place was finished, I used to return to the Twilight Land to rest in another large building which belonged to our brotherhood. It was somewhat like the other place in appearance only not quite so dark, nor so dismal, nor so bare, and in the little room which belonged to each there were such things as we had earned as the rewards of our labors. For instance, in my room, which was still somewhat bare-looking, I had one great treasure. This was a picture of my love. It seemed more like a reflection of her in a mirror than a mere painted image, for when I looked intently at her she would smile back at me in answer, as though her spirit was conscious of my gaze, and when I wished very much to know what she was doing, my picture would change and show me. This was regarded by all my companions as a great and wonderful privilege, and I was told it was as much the result of her love and constant thought for me as of my own efforts to improve. Since then I have been shown how this living image was thrown upon the light of the astral plane and then projected into its frame in my room, but I cannot explain it more fully in this book. Another gift from my darling was a white rose-bud, which I had in a small vase and which never seemed to fade or

wither, but remained fresh and fragrant and ever an emblem of her love, so that I called her my white rose.

I had so longed for a flower. I had so loved flowers on earth and I had seen none since I saw those my darling put upon my grave. In this land there were no flowers, not even a leaf or blade of grass, not a tree or a shrub however stunted--for the dry arid soil of our selfishness had no blossom or green thing to give to any one of us; and it was when I told her this during one of the brief visits I used to pay her, and when through her own hand I was able to write short messages--it was, I say, when I told her that there was not one fair thing for me to look upon save only the picture of herself, that she asked that I might be given a flower from her, and this white rosebud was brought to my room by a spirit friend and left for me to find when I returned from earth and her. Ah! you who have so many flowers that you do not value them enough and leave them to wither unseen, you can scarce realize what joy this blossom brought to me nor how I have so treasured it and her picture and some loving words she once wrote to me, that I have carried them with me from sphere to sphere as I have risen, and shall, I hope, treasure them evermore.

From this Twilight Land I took many journeys and saw many strange and different countries, but all bore the same stamp of coldness and desolation.

One place was a great valley of grey stones, with dim, cold, grey hills shutting it in on every side, and this twilight sky overhead. Here again not a blade of grass, not one poor stunted shrub was to be seen, not one touch of color or brightness anywhere, only this dull desolation of grey stones. Those who dwelt in this valley had centered their lives and their affections in themselves and had shut

up their hearts against all the warmth and beauty of unselfish love. They had lived only for themselves, their own gratification, their own ambitions, and now they saw nothing but themselves and the grey desolation of their hard selfish lives around them. There were a great many beings flitting uneasily about in this valley, but strange to say they had been so centered in themselves that they had lost the power to see anyone else.

These unhappy beings were invisible to each other until such time as the thought of another and the desire to do something for some one besides themselves should awaken, when they would become conscious of those near to them, and through their efforts to lighten another's lot they would improve their own, till at last their stunted affections would expand and the hazy valley of selfishness would hold them in its chains no more.

Beyond this valley I came upon a great, dry, sandy-looking tract of country where there was a scanty straggling vegetation, and where the inhabitants had begun in some places to make small attempts at gardens near their habitations. In some places these habitations were clustered so thickly together that they formed small towns and cities. But all bore that desolate ugly look which came from the spiritual poverty of the inhabitants. This also was a land of selfishness and greed, although not of such complete indifference to others' feelings as in the grey valley, and therefore they sought for a certain amount of companionship even with those around them. Many had come from the grey valley, but most were direct from the earth life and were now, poor souls, struggling to rise a little higher, and wherever this was the case and an effort was made to overcome their own selfishness, then the dry



soil around their homes would begin to put forth tiny blades of grass and little stunted shoots of shrubs.

Such miserable hovels as were in this land! Such ragged, repulsive, wretched-looking people, like tramps or beggars, yet many had been amongst earth's wealthiest and most eminent in fashionable life, and had enjoyed all that luxury could give! But because they had used their wealth only for themselves and their own enjoyments, giving to others but the paltry crumbs that they could spare from their own wealth and hardly notice that they had given them--because of this, I say, they were now here in this Twilight Land, poor as beggars in the true spiritual wealth of the soul which may be earned in the earthly life alike by the richest king or the poorest beggar, and without which those who come over to the spirit land--be they of earth's greatest or humblest--must come here to dwell where all are alike poor in spiritual things.

Here some of the people would wrangle and quarrel and complain that they had not been fairly treated in being in such a place, seeing what had been their positions in earth life. They would blame others as being more culpable than themselves in the matter, and wake a thousand excuses, a thousand pretences, to anyone who would listen to them and the story of what they would call their wrongs. Others would still be trying to follow out the schemes of their earthly lives and would try to make their hearers believe that they had found means (at the expense of someone else) of ending all this weary life of discomfort, and would plot and plan and try to carry out their own schemes, and spoil those of others as being likely to interfere with theirs, and so on would go the weary round of life in this Land of Unrest.

To all whom I found willing to listen to me I gave some word of hope, some thought of encouragement or help to find the true way out of this country, and so passed on through it and journeyed into the Land of Misers--a land given over to them alone, for few have sympathy with true misers save those who also share their all-absorbing desire to hoard simply for the pleasure of hoarding.

In this country were dark crooked-looking beings with long claw-like fingers, who were scratching in the black soil like birds of prey in search of stray grains of gold that here and there rewarded their toil; and when they had found any they would wrap them up in little wallets they carried and thrust them into their bosoms that they might lie next to their hearts, as the thing of all things most dear to them. As a rule they were lonely, solitary beings, who avoided each other by instinct lest they should be robbed of their cherished treasure.

Here I found nothing that I could do. Only one solitary man listened for a brief moment to what I had to say ere he returned to his hunt in the earth for treasure, furtively watching me till I was gone lest I should learn what he had already got. The others were all so absorbed in their search for treasure they could not even be made conscious of my presence, and I soon passed on from that bleak land.

From the Misers' Country I passed downwards into a dark sphere, which was really below the earth in the sense of being even lower in its spiritual inhabitants than parts of the earth plane.

Here it was very much like the Land of Unrest, only that the spirits who dwelt here were worse and more degraded looking. There was no attempt made at cultivation, and the

sky overhead was almost dark like night, the light being only such as enabled them to see each other and the objects near them. Whereas in the Land of Unrest there were but wranglings and discontent and jealousy, here there were fierce fights and bitter quarrels. Here were gamblers and drunkards. Betting men, card sharpers, commercial swindlers, profligates, and thieves of every kind, from the thief of the slums to his well-educated counterpart in the higher circles of earth life. All whose instincts were roguish or dissipated, all who were selfish and degraded in their tastes were here, as well as many who would have been in a higher condition of spiritual life had not constant association on earth with this class of men deteriorated and degraded them to the level of their companions, so that at death they had gravitated to this dark sphere, drawn down by ties of association. It was to this last class that I was sent, for amongst them there was hope that all sense of goodness and right was not quenched, and that the voice of one crying to them in the wilderness of their despair might be heard and lead them back to a better land.

The wretched houses or dwellings of this dark Land of Misery were many of them large spacious places, but all stamped with the same appalling look of uncleanness, foulness and decay. They resembled large houses to be seen in some of our slums, once handsome mansions and fine palaces, the abodes of luxury, which have become the haunts of the lowest denizens of vice and crime. Here and there would be great lonely tracts of country with a few scattered wretched houses, mere hovels, and in other places the buildings and the people were huddled together in great gloomy degraded-looking copies of your large cities of earth. Everywhere squalor and dirt and wretchedness reigned; nowhere was there one single

bright or beautiful or gracious thing for the eye to rest upon in all this scene of desolation, made thus by the spiritual emanations from the dark beings who dwelt there.

Amongst these wretched inhabitants I wandered with my little star of pure light, so small that it was but a bright spark flickering about in the darkness as I moved, yet around me it shed a soft pale light as from a star of hope that shone for those not too blinded by their own selfish evil passions to behold it. Here and there I would come upon some crouched in a doorway or against a wall, or in some miserable room, who would arouse themselves sufficiently to look at me with my light and listen to the words I spoke to them, and would begin to seek for the better way, the returning path to those upper spheres from which they had fallen by their sins. Some I would be able to induce to join me in my work of helping others, but as a rule they could only think of their own miseries, and long for something higher than their present surroundings, and even this, small as it seems, was one step, and the next one of thinking how to help others forward as well would soon follow.

One day in my wanderings through this country I came to the outskirts of a large city in the middle of a wide desolate plain. The soil was black and arid, more like those great cinder heaps that are seen near your iron works than anything I can liken it to. I was amongst a few dilapidated, tumble-down little cottages that formed a sort of fringe between the unhappy city and the desolate plain, when my ears caught the sound of quarreling and shouting coming from one of them, and curiosity made me draw near to see what the dispute might be about and if even here there might not be someone whom I could help.

It was more like a barn than a house. A great rough table ran the length of the room, and round it upon coarse little wooden stools were seated about a dozen or so of men. Such men! It is almost an insult to manhood to give them the name. They were more like orangutangs, with the varieties of pigs and wolves and birds of prey expressed in their coarse bloated distorted features. Such faces, such misshapen bodies, such distorted limbs, I can in no way describe them! They were clothed in various grotesque and ragged semblances of their former earthly finery, some in the fashion of centuries ago, others in more modern garb, yet all alike ragged, dirty, and unkempt, the hair disheveled, the eyes wild and staring and glowing now with the fierce light of passion, now with the sullen fire of despair and vindictive malice. To me, then, it seemed that I had reached the lowest pit of hell, but since then I have seen a region lower still--far blacker, far more horrible, inhabited by beings so much fiercer, so much lower, that beside them these were tame and human. Later on I shall describe more fully these lowest beings, when I come to that part of my wanderings which took me into their kingdoms in the lowest hell, but the spirits whom I now saw fighting in this cottage were quarreling over a bag of coins which lay on the table. It had been found by one of them and then given to be gambled for by the whole party. The dispute seemed to be because each wanted to take possession of it himself without regard to the rights of anyone else at all. It was simply a question of the strongest, and already they were menacing each other in a violent fashion. The finder of the money, or rather the spiritual counterpart of our earthly money, was a young man, under thirty I should say, who still possessed the remains of good looks, and but for the marks that dissipation had planted on his face would have seemed unfit for his present surroundings and degraded associates. He was

arguing that the money was his, and though he had given it to be played for fairly he objected to be robbed of it by anyone. I felt I had no business there, and amidst a wild chorus of indignant cries and protestations that they "supposed they were as well able to say what was honest as he was," I turned and left them. I had proceeded but a short way, and was almost opposite another deserted little hovel when the whole wild crew came struggling and fighting out of the cottage, wrestling with each other to get near the young man with the bag of money whom the foremost of them were beating and kicking and trying to deprive of it. This one of them succeeded in doing, whereupon they all set upon him, while the young man broke away from them and began running towards me. In a moment there was a wild yell set up to catch him and beat him for an imposter and a cheat, since the bag was empty of gold and had only stones in it, the money, like the fairy gold in the stories, having turned, not into withered leaves, but into hard stones.

Almost before I realized it the wretched young man was clutching hold of me and crying out to me to save him from those devils; and the whole lot were coming down upon us in hot pursuit of their victim. Quick as thought I sprang into the empty hovel which gave us the only hope of asylum, dragging the unfortunate young man with me, and slamming the door I planted my back against it to keep our pursuers out. My Goodness! How they did yell and stamp and storm and try to batter in that door; and how I did brace myself up and exert all the force of mind and body to keep them out! I did not know it then, but I know now that unseen powers helped me and held fast that door till, baffled and angry that they could not move it, they went off at last to seek for some fresh quarrel or excitement elsewhere.

## **My House in the Twilight Lands-- Communion Between the Living and the Dead.**

In my home in the Twilight Land I rested now for a time, studying to learn more of myself and the powers I had within me, and seeking to apply the lessons I had learned in my wanderings. My chief instructor at this time was a man like myself in many respects, who had lived a similar life on earth and had passed through the lower spheres, as I was now doing, and who had become a dweller in a bright land of sunshine from which he came constantly to teach and help those of the Brotherhood who, like myself, were his pupils.

There was likewise another teacher or guide whom I sometimes saw, whose influence over me was even greater, and from whom I learned many strange things, but as he was in a much more advanced sphere than the other, it was but seldom that I could see him as a distinct personality. His teachings came to me more as mental suggestions or inspirational discourses in answer to some questioning thought on my part. This spirit I shall not now describe to you, as at this time of my sojourn in the Twilight Land I saw him but very dimly, and only clearly when my progression had carried me into a brighter state.

Though this man was not fully visible to me I was often conscious of his presence and his aid, and when later on I learned that he had been my principal guardian spirit during my earthly life, I could easily trace many thoughts and suggestions, many of my higher aspirations, to his influence; and it was his voice that had so often spoke to me in warning or in comfort when I struggled on almost overwhelmed with my terrible position on first entering

the spirit world. In the days of darkness I had been faintly conscious of his form flitting in and out of my little cell, and soothing my terrible sufferings with his magnetism and his wonderful knowledge and power.

On returning to the Twilight Land from the darker spheres I had visited, I felt almost like returning to a home, for, bare and shabby as my room looked, and small and narrow as it was, it yet held all my greatest treasures: my picture mirror in which I could see my beloved, and the rose, and the letter she had sent to me. Moreover I had friends there, companions in misfortune like myself, and though we were as a rule much alone, meditating upon our past mistakes and their lessons, yet at times it was very pleasant to have one friend or another come in to see you, and since we were all alike men who had disgraced ourselves by our earthly lives and were now seeking to follow the better way, there was even in that a bond of sympathy. Our life, could I make you fully realize it, would indeed seem strange to you. It was like and yet unlike an earthly life. For instance, we ate at times a simple sort of food provided for us, it would seem, by magic whenever we felt hungry, but often for a week at a time we would not think of food, unless indeed it was one of us who had been fond of good eating on earth, and in that case the desire would be much more frequent and troublesome to satisfy. For myself my tastes had been somewhat simple, and neither eating nor drinking had in themselves possessed special attractions for me.

There was always around us this twilight, which was never varied with dark night or bright day, and which was most especially trying to me in its monotony. I so love light and sunshine. To me it was ever as a life-giving bath.



I had been born in a land of earth where all is sunshine and flowers.

Then although we usually walked about this building and the surrounding country much as you do, we could float a little at will, though not so well as more advanced spirits do, and if we were in a great hurry to go anywhere our wills seemed to carry us there with the speed almost of thought.

As for sleep, we could spend long intervals without feeling its need, or, again, we could lie and sleep for weeks at a time, sometimes semi-conscious of all that passed, at others in the most complete of slumbers. Another strange thing was our dress--which never seemed to wear out and renewed itself in some mysterious fashion. All through this period of my wanderings and while I was in this abode it was of a dark--a very dark--blue color, with a yellow girdle round the waist, and an anchor worked in yellow on the left sleeve, with the words, "Hope is Eternal," below it. There were close-fitting undergarments of the same dark color. The robe was long and such as you see penitent brotherhoods or monks wear on earth, with a hood hung from the shoulders, which could be used to cover the head and face of any who desired to screen their features from view; and indeed there were often times when we wished to do so, for suffering and remorse had made such changes in us that we were often glad to hide our faces from the gaze of those we loved. The hollow eyes, sunken cheeks, wasted and bent forms, and deep lines suffering had traced upon each face told their own story but too well, and such of us as had dear friends on earth or in the spirit land still grieving for our loss, sought often at times to hide from their eyes our disfigured forms and faces.

Our lives had somewhat of monotony about them in the regular order in which our studies and our lectures followed each other like clockwork. At certain stages--for they did not count time by days or weeks, but only as advance was made in the development of each spirit--when a lesson had been learned, in a longer or shorter time according to the spiritual and intellectual development, the spirit was advanced to a higher branch of the subject studied.

Some remain a very long time before they can grasp the meaning of the lesson shown to them; if so, the spirit is in no way hurried or pressed on as is done in earth education, where life seems all too short for learning. As a spirit a man has all eternity before him and can stand still or go on as he pleases, or he may remain where he is till he has thought out and grasped clearly what has been shown, and then he is ready for the next step, and so on. There is no hurrying anyone faster than he chooses to go; no interference with his liberty to live on in the same state of undevelopment if he wishes, so long as he interferes with the liberty of no one else and conforms to the simple rule which governs that great Brotherhood, the rule of freedom and sympathy for all. None were urged to learn, and none were kept back from doing so; it was all voluntary, and did anyone seek (as many did) to leave this place, he was free to go where he would, and to return again if he wished; the doors were closed to none, either in going or returning, and none ever sought to reproach another with his faults or shortcomings, for each felt the full depth of his own.

Some had been years there, I learned, for to them the lessons were hard and slow to be learned. Others, again, had broken away and gone back to the life of the earth

plane so many times that they had descended to the lowest sphere at last, and gone through a course of purification in that other House of Hope where I had first been. They had appeared to go back instead of forward, yet even this had not been in truth a retrogression, but only a needful lesson, since they were thus cured of the desire to try the pleasures of the earth plane again. A few, like myself, who had a strong and powerful motive to rise, made rapid progress, and soon passed on from step to step, but there were, alas! too many who required all the hope and all the help that could be given to sustain and comfort them through all their trials; and it was my lot to be able, out of the storehouse of my own hopefulness, to give a share to others less fortunate who were not blessed, as I was, with a stream of love and sympathy flowing ever to me from my beloved on earth, cheering me on to fresh efforts with its promise of joy and peace at last.

### **The Astral Plane and Its Inhabitants-- Spooks, Elves, Vampires, etc.**

I can hardly give you a better idea of the course of our journey than by asking you to imagine a vast spiral or corkscrew winding upwards and downwards in circling rings. A tiny speck no bigger than a pin's head in the middle of a large cart-wheel might represent the earth in the centre of these circling rings, an equal number of which are above and below the earth, all winding in a connected series from the lowest to the highest around this speck, and the head of the spiral pointing towards our central sun--this being regarded as the highest point of the most advanced sphere.

This will give you a faint idea of the earth and its attendant spirit spheres, and help you to understand how in our

journey we passed from the second into the lowest sphere, and in doing so passed through the earth plane. As we entered it I perceived many spirits of mortals hurrying to and fro just as I had been wont to see them, but now for the first time I also saw that mingling with them were many floating spectral shapes similar to those wraiths I had seen haunting the spirit in the icy cage in the Frozen Land. These wraiths seemed to be floating to and fro like driftweed upon a seashore, borne here and there by the different astral currents which revolve and circle round the earth.

Some were very distinct and life-like till a closer inspection revealed to me that the light of intelligence was wanting in their eyes and expressions, and there was a helpless collapsed look about them like wax dolls from which the stuffing has run out. For the life of me I can think of nothing that will so well express their appearance.

In my former wanderings through the earth plane I had not been conscious of any of these beings, and on asking Hassein the reason of this he answered: "First, because you were so much absorbed in your work, and secondly, your powers of sight were not sufficiently developed. Now look," he added, pointing to a strange little group of beings like elves which were approaching us hand in hand, gamboling like children. "Look at those; they are the mental and bodily emanations cast off from the minds and bodies of children which consolidate into these queer, harmless little elementals when brought into contact with any of the great life currents that circle around the earth, and which bear upon their waves the living emanations cast off from men, women and children. These curious little beings have no real separate intelligent life such as a soul would give, and they are so evanescent and ethereal

that they take their shapes and change them, as you will observe, like the clouds on a summer sky. See how they are all dissolving and forming again afresh."

As I looked I saw the whole little cloud of figures shift into a new form of grotesque likeness, and whereas they had looked like tiny fairies in caps and gowns made from flowers, they now took wings, becoming like a species of half butterflies, half imps, with human bodies, animal's heads, and butterflies' wings. Then as a fresh strong wave of magnetism swept over them, lo! they were all broken up and carried away to form fresh groups elsewhere with other particles.

I was so astonished at this, the real living appearance and the unreal disappearance, that I suppose Hassein read my puzzled state of mind, for he said, "What you have now beheld is only an ethereal form of elemental life, which is not material enough for a long continued existence on the earth plane, and is like the foam of the sea thrown up by the wave motions of pure earthly lives and thoughts. See now how much stronger on the astral plan can be the consistency of that which is not pure."

I beheld approaching us a great mass of aerial forms, dark, misshapen, human, yet inhuman, in appearance. "These," said he, "are the beings which haunt the delirium of the drunkard, which gather round him, drawn by his corrupted magnetism and unable to be repelled by one who has lost the will-force needful to protect him from such creatures which cling like barnacles to him, and like leeches suck his animal vitality with a strange ghoulis intelligence akin to that of some noisome plant which has fastened itself upon a tree. For such a one as the unfortunate drunkard the best help which can be given is

by obtaining some one upon the earth side of life who possesses a strong will and mesmeric powers, and let him place the drunkard under the protection of his will and the strong influence of his magnetism, till the last of these phantoms drops off from inability to hold on longer under the stream of healthy magnetism poured upon them and the unlucky man upon whom they have fastened. The healthy magnetism acts like a poison upon these creatures, and kills them so that they drop off, and their bodies, unable to hold together, decay into immaterial dust. Should these beings, however, not encounter such a strong dose of healthy magnetism they will go on for years floating about and drawing away the animal vitality of one human being after another, till at last they become endowed with a certain amount of independent animal life of their own. At this stage they can be used by higher, more intelligent beings to carry out such work as their peculiar organizations fit them for, and it is these soulless creatures, though created and earth-nourished, whom a certain class of practitioners of the so-called black magic made use of in some of their experiments, as well as for carrying out their evil designs against any one who had offended them. But like deadly weeds at the bottom of a dark pool, these astrals draw down and destroy in their soulless clutches those who venture to meddle with them unprotected by the higher powers."

"And now tell me, friend Hassenin," said I, "if these astrals, when they fasten upon a drunkard, can or do influence him to drink more, as is the case when the earth-bound spirit of a departed drunkard controls one still in the flesh."

"No! These beings do not derive any pleasure from the drink a man swallows, except in so far as by corrupting his

magnetism it makes him such that they can more readily feed upon him. It is his animal or earthly life-force they desire. It means existence for them and is much the same as water to a plant, and beyond the fact that by draining the victim of his vitality they cause a sense of exhaustion which makes him fly to stimulants for relief, they do not affect the question of his continuing to drink. They are mere parasites, and possess no intelligence of their own except of so rudimentary a character that we can scarcely give it that name.

"To originate a thought or to impress your thoughts upon another requires the possession of an intelligent soul germ or spark of the divine essence, and once this has been given the being becomes possessed of an independent individuality it can never again lose. It may cast off envelope after envelope, or it may sink into grosser and still grosser forms of matter, but once endowed with soul-life it can never cease to exist, and in existing must retain the individuality of its nature and the responsibility of its actions. This is alike true of the human soul and the intelligent soul-principle as manifested in the animals or lower types of soul existence. Whenever you see the power to reason and to act upon such reasoning manifested either in man, the highest type, or in animals, the lower type, you may know that a soul exists, and it is only a question of degree of purity of soul essence. We see in man and in the brute creation alike a power of reasoning intelligence differing only in degree, and from this fact the school of thought to which I belong draws the inference that both alike have a conscious individual immortality, differing, however, in the type and degree of soul essence, animals as well as men having an immortal future for development before them. What are the limits of the action of this law we cannot pretend to say, but we draw our conclusions

from the existence in the spirit world of animals as well as men who have alike lived on earth, and both of whom are found in a more advanced state of development than they were in their earth existences.

"It is impossible for the soulless parasite to influence the mind of any mortal; and it is therefore undoubtedly the souls which have been incarnated in earthly bodies and have so indulged their lower passions in that state that they are not able to free themselves from the fetters of their astral envelopes, that haunt the earth and incite those yet in the flesh to indulgence in drink and similar vices. They, as you know, can control man in many ways, either partially or completely, and the most common way is for the spirit to partly envelop the man he controls with his spirit body until a link has been formed between them, somewhat after the nature of that uniting some twin children who possess distinct bodies, but are so joined to each other and interblended that all which one feels is felt by the other. In this fashion what is swallowed by the mortal is enjoyed by the spirit who controls the unfortunate man, and who urges him to drink as much as possible, and when he can no longer do so the spirit will then try to free himself and go elsewhere in search of some other weak-willed man or woman of depraved tastes. Not always, however, can either the spirit or the mortal free themselves from the strange link woven between them by the indulgence of their joint desires. After a long-continued connection of this sort it becomes very difficult for them to separate, and the spirit and the man may go on for years sick of each other yet unable to break the tie without help from the higher powers, who are always ready to assist those who call upon their aid. Should a spirit continue to control men for the purpose of self-gratification as I have described, he sinks lower and lower, and drags his victims



down with him into the depths of hell itself, from which they will both have a bitter and weary task to climb when at last the desire for better things shall awaken. To a soul alone belongs the power to think and to will, and those other soulless creatures but obey the laws of attraction and repulsion, which are felt likewise by all the material atoms of which the universe is composed, and even when these astral parasites have, by long feeding upon the vital force of men or women, attained to a certain amount of independent life, they have no intelligence to direct their own or others' movements; they float about like fever germs generated in a foul atmosphere, attracted to one person more readily than to another, and like such germs may be said to possess a very low form of life.

"Another class of elemental astrals are those of the earth, air, fire, and water, whose bodies are formed from the material life germs in each element. Some are in appearance like the gnomes and elves who are said to inhabit mines and mountain caverns which have never been exposed to the light of day. Such, too, are the fairies whom men have seen in lonely and secluded places amongst primitive races of men. Such, with the variations caused by the different natures of the elements from which they are formed, are the water sprites and the mermaids of ancient fable, and the spirits of the fire and the spirits of the air.

"All these beings possess life, but as yet no souls, for their lives are drawn from and sustained by the lives of earthly men and women, and they are but reflections of the men amongst whom they dwell. Some of these beings are of a very low order of life, almost like the higher orders of plants, except that they possess an independent power of motion. Others are very lively and full of grotesque

unmeaning tricks, with the power of very rapid flight from place to place. Some are perfectly harmless, while others again are more malignant in their instincts as the human beings from whom their life is drawn are of a more savage race. These curious earth elementals cannot exist long amongst nations where the more intellectual stage of development has been reached, because then the life germs thrown off by man contain too little of the lower or animal life to sustain them, and they die and their bodies decay into the atmosphere. Thus as nations advance and grow more spiritual, these lower forms of life die out from the astral plane of that earth's sphere, and succeeding generations begin at first to doubt and then to deny that they ever had an existence. Only amongst those ancient religions of the East who have kept still unbroken the threads of record, are there to be found accounts of these intermediate dependent races of beings and the causes of their existence.

"These soulless elementals of earth, air, fire and water, are a class distinct from those others which I have drawn you as emanating from the debased intelligence of man's mind and the evil actions of his body. Behold now, oh! man of a Western nation, the knowledge which your philosophers and learned men have shut out and locked away as being harmful fables, till man, shut into the narrow bounds of what he can with his physical senses alone see, hear, and feel, has begun to doubt if he has any soul at all; any higher, purer, nobler self than is sustained by the sordid life of earth. See now the multitudinous beings that surround man on every side, and ask yourself if it would not be well that he should have the knowledge which could help to keep him safe from the many pitfalls over which he walks in blind ignorance and unconsciousness of his danger. In the primitive ages of the earth man was

content to look like a child for help and succor to his Heavenly Father, and God sent his angels and ministering spirits to protect his earthly children. In these latter ages man, like a full-grown troublesome youth, seeks in his self-conceit no higher help than his own, and rushes into danger with his eyes bandaged by his pride and ignorance. He scoffs at those things which he is too limited in his powers to understand, and turns aside from those who would instruct him. Because he cannot see his soul, cannot weigh it and analyze it, he says, forsooth, that man has no soul and had better enjoy this earthly life as one who shall some day die and turn to dust again, consciousness, individuality, all forever blotted out.

"Or, again, in abject fear of the unknown fate before him, man takes refuge in the vague superstitions, the shadowy creeds of those who profess to act as guides upon the pathway to the Unknown Land, with little more certain knowledge than man has himself.

"Thus, then, it is in pity to his wandering, struggling children that God has in these later days opened once more--and wider than ever before--the doors of communion between the two worlds. He is sending out again messengers to warn man, ambassadors, to tell him of the better way, the truer path to the happiness of a higher life, and to show him that knowledge and that power which shall yet be of right his inheritance. As the prophets of old spake, so speak these messengers now, and if they speak with clearer voice, with less veiled metaphor, it is because man is no longer in his infancy and needs now that he should be shown the reason and the science upon which his beliefs and hopes must be founded.

"Listen, then, unto this voice that calls, oh! ye toilers of the earth!" cried Hasein, turning and stretching out his hands towards a small dark ball that seemed to float far away on the horizon of our sight--a small dark globe that we knew to be the sorrowful planet called Earth. "Listen to the voices that call to you and turn not a deaf ear, and realize ere it be too late that God is not a God of the dead but of the living, for all things are alive for evermore. Life is everywhere and in everything; even the dull earth and the hard rocks are composed of living germs, each living according to its own degree. The very air we breathe and the boundless ether of universal space are full of life, and there is not one thought we think but lives for good or ill, not one act whose image shall not live to torture or to solace the soul in the days of its release from its incarnation in an earthly form. Life is in all things, and God is the central Life of All."

Hasein paused, then in a calmer voice he said to me: "Look yonder! What would you say those things were?"

He pointed to what seemed to me at first a mass of spirit forms which came sweeping towards us as though blown by a strong wind. As they came near I saw they were evidently soulless astral envelopes, but unlike those floating wraiths I had seen haunting the man in the icy cage, these were solid, and to my spiritual sight life-like and full of animal vigor; yet they were like automatons and did not seem to possess any intelligence. They were drifting and bobbing about like buoys at sea to which boats are anchored. As they drifted close to us my friend put forth his will-force and captured one, which then remained floating in mid air.

"Now look," said he, "you will observe this is somewhat like a great living doll. It is the result of countless little living germs which man is continually throwing off from his earthly body, emanations solely of his animal or lower life, material enough when brought into contact with the magnetic forces of the astral plane, to form into these imitations of earthly men and women, and immaterial enough to be invisible to man's purely material sight, although a very small degree of clairvoyant power would enable him to see them. A stronger and higher degree of clairvoyant power would enable him to see, as you do, that this is not a true spirit envelope, since the soul principle is wanting; and a yet higher degree of clairvoyant power would show that a soul has never been in this form, and that it has never had a conscious existence as a soul's astral envelope.

"Amongst ordinary clairvoyants the subject of astral spirits is not studied sufficiently to develop these degrees of soul-sight, therefore few clairvoyants in your earthly country could tell you whether this was a true soul-enveloping astral form or one from which the soul had departed, or yet again one in which the soul had never been present at all. Presently I shall show you an experiment with this astral form, but first observe that being such as it is, it is fresh and full of the animal life of the earth plane, and has not the collapsed appearance of those you saw before, which had once contained a soul and which were there in a state of rapid decay yet. And mark this carefully: this fresh looking astral will decay far faster than the others, for it has none of the higher principle of life clinging to it, which, in the case of an astral that has once contained a soul, often remains for a long time animating and keeping it from perfect decay. Astral forms must draw their life

from a higher source (from soul germs in fact), or they soon cease to exist and crumble away."

"But," I asked, "How do they assume the shapes of men and women?"

"By the action of the spiritualized magnetic currents which flow through all the ether space continually, as the currents flow in the ocean. These magnetic life currents are of a more etherealized degree than those known to scientific mortals, being in fact their spiritual counterpart, and as such they act upon these cloud masses of human atoms in the same way that electricity acts upon the freezing moisture upon a window pane, forming them into the semblance of men and women as the electricity forms the freezing moisture into a likeness of trees, plants, etc.

"It is an acknowledged fact that electricity is an active agent in the formation of the shapes of leaves and trees, etc., in vegetable life, but few know that this refined form of magnetism has a similar share in the formation of human forms and animal life. I say animal life as applied to those types which are lower than man."

"Are there, then, also the astral forms of animals?"

"Certainly, and very queer, grotesque combinations some of them are. I cannot show them to you now, because your powers of sight are not yet fully developed, and also because we are traveling too rapidly to enable me to develop them for you, but some day I shall show you these, as well as many other curious things relating to the astral plane. I may tell you that atoms may be classed under different heads, and that each class will have a special attraction for others of its own kind; thus vegetable

atoms will be attracted together to form astral trees and plants, while animal atoms will form into the semblance of beasts, birds, etc., and human atoms into men and women's forms. In some cases, where the human beings from whom the atoms come are very low in the scale of humanity and nearly akin to animals, their atoms will blend with those of the lower forms of life and create grotesque horrible creatures which resemble at once animals and men, and having been seen by clairvoyants in a semi-trance condition are described as nightmare visions. In the earth spheres an immense amount of these living atoms are thrown off continually from man's lower or animal life, and these sustain and renew the astral forms, but were we to transport one of these shells to a planet whose spheres had been spiritualized beyond the stage of material life, or in other words freed from all these lower germs, the astrals could not exist, they would become like a noxious vapor and be blown away. These astrals being, as I have said, created from the cloud masses of human atoms, and never having been the envelope of any soul, are very little more permanent in their nature than the frost flowers on a window pane, unless the power of some higher intelligence acts upon them to intensify their vitality and prolong their existence. They are, as you will see, expressionless and like wax dolls in appearance, and readily lend themselves to receive any individuality stamped upon them, hence their use in ancient times by magicians and others. Astral atoms, whether of trees, plants, animals, or human beings, must not be confounded with the true spirit or soul-clothing atoms which constitute the real spirit world and its inhabitants. Astrals of every kind are the intermediate degree of materiality between the gross matter of earth and the more etherealized matter of the spirit world, and we talk of a soul clothed in its astral envelope to express that earth-bound condition in

which it is too refined or immaterial for earth existence, and too grossly clad to ascend into the spirit world of the higher spheres, or to descend to those of the lower."

"Then you mean that a spirit even in the lowest sphere is more spiritualized as regards its body than an earth-bound spirit?"

"Certainly I do. The astral plane extends like a belt around each planet and is, as I said, formed of the matter which is too fine for reabsorption by the planet, and too coarse to escape from the attraction of the planet's mass and pass into the spheres of the spirit world to form either matter in the course of disintegration or change from one form to another, and it is only the vitalizing power of such soul magnetism as it retains which enables it to cling together in any shape at all.

"In the case of human astral forms which have possessed individualized life as a soul's envelope, the astral atoms have absorbed a greater or less degree of the soul's magnetism, or true life essence, according as the earthly existence of the soul has been good or evil, elevated or degraded, and this soul magnetism animates it for a longer or shorter period, and forms a link between it and the soul which has animated it. In the case of a soul whose desires are all for higher things, the link is soon severed and the astral envelope soon decays, while with a soul of evil desires the tie may last for centuries and chain the soul to earth, making it in fact earth-bound. In some cases the astral of a soul of very evil life will have absorbed the lower or higher spheres. Astral matter is practically so much of the soul's vitality that after the soul itself has sunk into the lowest sphere of all, the empty shell will still float about the earth like a fading image of its departed owner.



Such are sometimes seen by clairvoyants hanging about the places where they once lived, and are truly 'spooks.' They have no intelligence of their own, since the soul has fled, and they can neither influence mediums nor move tables, nor do any other thing except as mechanical agents of some higher intelligence, whether that intelligence be good or evil.

"The astral before us now has no soul magnetism in it; it never possessed any, therefore it will soon decay and its atoms be absorbed by others. But see to what use it can be turned when acted upon by my will power and animated for the time being by my individuality."

I looked as he spoke and saw the astral doll become suddenly animated and intelligent, and then glide to one of the Brotherhood whom Hasein had selected and touch him upon the shoulder, seeming to say, "Friend, Hasein Bey salutes you." Then bowing to the amused and wondering brother, it glided back to us as though Hasein had held it by a string like a performing monkey.

"Now you see," he said, "how if I chose I might use this astral as a messenger to execute some work I wished done at a distance from myself, and you will understand one of the means made use of by the old magicians to carry out some work at a great distance from themselves and without their appearing to take any share in it. These astrals, however, are only capable of being made use of upon the astral plane. They could not move any material object, although they would be visible to material sight at the will of the mortal using them. There are other astrals more material in substance who could be used to penetrate into the earth itself and to bring forth its hidden treasures, the precious metals and the gems deeply buried from the

eyes of men. It would not, however, be lawful or right for me to explain to you the power by which this could be done, and those magicians who have discovered and made use of such powers have sooner or later fallen victims to those powers they could summon to their aid but rarely continue to control."

"Then were this astral to become animated by an evil intelligence it would be an actual danger to man?" I said.

"Yes, without doubt it might; and you will also observe that although I should not care to descend to clothe myself in this astral form, yet a spirit more ignorant than myself could easily do so in order to make himself felt and seen upon the earth in a more palpable form than possible to any spirit who has left the earth plane; but in doing so he would run a danger of creating a link between himself and the astral envelope not easily broken, and which might thus tie him to the astral plane for a considerable time. You will, therefore, see how the idea has arisen that men on earth, in seeking to see their departed friends, draw the spirits back into earthly conditions and do them harm. Many an ignorant spirit who is good and pure himself, has committed the mistake of reclothing himself in one of these fresh astral shells when he would have turned away from those which he knew to have been left by another spirit, and has found to his cost that he has thereby made of himself a prisoner upon the earth plane, till a higher intelligence comes to his aid and releases him.

"In a like manner spirits of a low type can clothe themselves in these empty astral garments, but in their case the very grossness of the spirit (or soul) prevents them from retaining possession long, the dense magnetism of the low spirit's own body acting as a strong noxious vapor

or gas would do upon a covering made, say, of a spider's web of fine gossamer, and rending it into a thousand pieces. To a spirit above the astral plane an astral envelope appears almost as solid as iron, but to one below it these fragile shells are like a cloud or vapor. The lower the soul the stronger is its envelope and the more firmly does it hold the soul, limiting its powers and preventing it from rising into a more advanced sphere."

"You mean, then, that spirits sometimes use these astral shells as they do earthly mediums, and either control them independently or actually enter into the form?"

"Yes, certainly. A spirit above the earth plane, anxious to show himself to a clairvoyant of the lowest or first degree of power, will sometimes enter one of these shells which he at once stamps with his identity, and in that way the clairvoyant will truly see and describe him. The danger lies in the fact that when the good spirit of limited knowledge seeks to leave again the astral shell, he finds he cannot do so; he has animated it and its strong life holds him prisoner, and it is often difficult to release him. In similar manner the too complete, too long continued control of an earthly medium by a spirit, has been found to create a link between them which becomes at last a chain. To a spirit of the lowest spheres an astral envelope is but a convenient, all too evanescent cloak with which to hide his own degraded spirit body, and thus impose upon clairvoyants unable to see the vile spirit underneath; but to a good and pure spirit the astral envelope is as a suit of iron capable of imprisoning him."

"Then in the case of what are called personations by one spirit of another at seances upon earth, are these astrals made use of?"

"Very often they are, where the mischief-making spirit is of too low a type himself to come into direct contact with the medium. You must know by this time how wonderfully the thoughts of mortal men and women are mirrored upon the atmosphere of the astral plane, and as pictures they can be read and answered by spirits possessing the knowledge of how to read them. All spirits have not the power, just as all men and women on earth are not able to read a newspaper or a letter. It requires intellect and education with us as with those on earth. The spirits, then, of which men should most beware are not so much the poor ignorant half developed spirits of the earth plane and lower spheres, whose degraded lives have made them what they are and who are often glad of a helping hand to raise them, but it is of the intellectually evil, those who have great powers alike of mind and body and who have only used them for wrong purposes. These are the real dangers to guard against, and it is only by the increase of knowledge amongst the mediums incarnated in the earthly body that it will be successfully done, for then mortals and spirit workers will labor in unison, and mutually protect the spiritual movement from fraud and from the mistakes of the well meaning but half-ignorant spirits and mortals who are doing good work in directing the attention of mankind to the matter, but who often do harm both to themselves and others. They are like ignorant chemists and liable to bring destruction and harm upon others as well as on themselves in their experiments in search of knowledge."

"You do not think, then, that the purity of their motives will suffice to protect them?"

"Would purity of motive save a child from being burnt if it thrust its hands into a blazing furnace? No! Then the only

way is to keep the child as far from the fire as possible. This good and wise spirit guardians do in a great measure, but if the children are continually hovering near the danger, and try at all sorts of odd times and fashions to get just another peep at the dangerous thing, it is impossible but that some of them will get scorched."

"Then you would not advise the indiscriminate cultivation of mediumistic powers by all mortals?"

"Certainly not. I would have all men use the powers of those who have been carefully developed under wise guardians, and I would have all assisted to cultivate them who are truly anxious to develop their powers as a means of doing good to others. But when you consider how manifold and how selfish may be the motives of those mediumistically endowed, you will see how exceedingly difficult it would be to protect them. Perhaps my ideas are colored by the circumstances of race and my earthly education, but I confess I should wish to limit the practice of mediumship to those who have proved their readiness to give up more material advantages for its sake. I would, in fact, rather see them set apart as a body who have no share in the ambitions of mankind. But enough of our discussion. I am now about to let this astral shell go and draw your attention to another type of the same class."

As he spoke he made a swift upward motion with his hands over it and uttered some words in an unknown language, whereupon the astral--which had hitherto floated on beside us--stopped and seemed to waver about for a few seconds until an advancing current of magnetism caught it, and it was swept away from us like a piece of driftwood upon the waves. As I turned from watching it I saw a small cluster of dark, weird, horrible looking forms

approaching us. These were astral shells which had never known soul life, but, unlike the pleasant waxy looking astral from which we had just parted, these were in all respects repulsive.

"These," said Hasein, "are the emanations thrown off by men and women of a low intellectual type and evil, sensual lives. They are from the slums of the earth life--not alone the social slums, but also from a higher grade of society where there are moral slums quite as degraded. Such beings as these, when animated by an evil intelligence can be used for the very worst purposes. Being so very material, they can even be used to affect material matter upon earth, and have been so used in the practice of what is known as Black Magic and witchcraft, and they are also (but very rarely) used by higher intelligences to effect physical phenomena at seances. Where wise and good intelligences control them no harm will be done, but under the direction of the evil or ignorant they become a danger beyond my power fully to express. To these astrals, and to those of a similar class in which the soul germ yet lingers as in a prison, are due those rough and dangerous manifestations sometimes seen in spirit circles (seances), where men of bad lives, and others too ignorant to protect themselves, are assembled from motives of curiosity or mere amusement."

"And amongst what class of spirits do you place those ghouls and vampires so firmly believed in, in many parts of the world?"

"Vampire spirits are those who have themselves known earth life, but have so misused it that their souls are still imprisoned in the astral envelope. Their object in sucking away the animal life principle of men and women is in

order to retain thereby their hold upon the life of the earth plane, and so save themselves from sinking to far lower spheres. They are anxious to cling to their astral envelope and to prolong its life, just as men of very evil lives upon earth cling to the life of the earthly body because they fear that when they are separated from it they will sink into some unknown depths of darkness and horror. The constant renewal of the animal and astral life often enables these vampire spirits to hang about the earth for centuries."

"Is it possible for a vampire spirit to possess itself of a sufficient amount of materiality to appear in mortal form and mingle with men as described in many of the tales told of such creatures?"

"If you mean to ask if the vampire can make to itself a material body, I say no, but it can and does sometimes take complete possession of one belonging to a mortal, just as other spirits do, and can cause its acquired body to act in accordance with its will. Thus it is quite possible for a vampire spirit clothed in the mortal body of another to so change its expression as to make it bear some resemblance to the vampire's own former earthly appearance, and through the power obtained by the possession of a material body he (or she, for the vampires are of both sexes) might really lead the curious double life ascribed to them in those weird tales current and believed in in many countries. By far the larger number of vampire spirits, however, are not in possession of an earthly body, and they hover about the earth in their own astral envelope, sucking away the earthly life of mediumistic persons whose peculiar organization makes them liable to become the prey of such influences, while they are themselves quite ignorant that such beings as these astrals exist. The

poor mortals suffer from a constant sense of exhaustion and languor without suspecting to what it is to be attributed."

"But cannot spirit guardians protect mortals from these beings?"

"Not always. In a great measure they do protect them, but only as one may protect a person from infectious fevers, by showing them the danger and warning them to avoid spots where, owing to the associations with their earthly lives, the vampire spirits are specially attracted. This the guardian spirit does by instilling into the mind of the mortal an instinctive dread of the places where crimes have been committed, or persons of evil lives have lived. But since man is and must be in all respects a free agent, it is not possible to do more. He cannot be directed in all things like a puppet, and must in a great measure gather his own experience for himself, however bitter may prove its fruits. Knowledge, guidance and help will always be given, but only in such a manner as will not interfere with man's free will, and only such knowledge as he himself desires; nothing will ever be forced upon him by the spirit world."

## **The Approach to Hell.**

I would have liked to ask Hasein a great many more questions about the astral plane and its many curious forms of life, but we were now fast leaving it behind, and passing downwards through those lower spheres which I had partly explored before. We were traveling through space at a wonderful velocity, not quite with the rapidity of thought but at a speed difficult for the mind of mortal to conceive. Onward and still onward we swept, sinking ever



lower and lower away from the bright spheres, and as we sank a certain sense of awe and expectancy crept over our souls and hushed our talk. We seemed to feel in advance the horrors of that awful land and the sorrows of its inhabitants.

And now I beheld afar off great masses of inky black smoke which seemed to hang like a pall of gloom over the land to which we were approaching. As we still floated on and down, these great black clouds became tinged with lurid sulphurous-looking flames as from myriads of gigantic volcanoes. The air was so oppressive we could scarcely breathe, while a sense of exhaustion, such as I had never experienced before, seemed to paralyze my every limb. At last our leader gave the order for us to halt, and we descended on the top of a great black mountain which seemed to jut out into a lake of ink, and from which we saw on the horizon that awful lurid country.

Here we were to rest for a time, and here, too, we were to part from our friends who had so far escorted us upon our journey. After a simple repast consisting of various sustaining spiritual fruits and food which we had brought with us, our leader on behalf of the whole company offered up a short prayer for protection and strength, and then we all lay down upon that bleak mountain top to rest.

**The Fires of Hell--A Vengeful Spirit--  
Pirates--The Sea of Foul Mud--The  
Mountains of Selfish Oppression--The  
Forest of Desolation--Messages of Love.**

Away before me stretched a narrow path, and curious to see where it would lead I followed it, sure that it would

somehow lead me to those whom I could help. After following it for a short time I came to the foot of a range of black mountains, and before me was the entrance to a huge cavern. Horrible reptiles were hanging on to the walls and crawling at my feet. Great funguses and monstrous air plants of an oozy slimy kind hung in festoons like ragged shrouds from the roof, and a dark pool of stagnant water almost covered the floor. I thought of turning away from this spot, but a voice seemed to bid me go on, so I entered, and skirting round the edge of the dark pool found myself at the entrance to a small dark passage in the rocks. Down this I went, and turning a corner saw before me a red light as from a fire, while dark forms like goblins passed and repassed between it and myself. Another moment and I stood at the end of the passage. Before me was a gigantic dungeon-like vault, its uneven rocky roof half revealed and half hidden by the masses of lurid smoke and flames which arose from an enormous fire blazing in the middle of the cavern, while round it were dancing such a troop of demons as might well typify the Devils of Hell. With shrieks and yells of laughter they were prodding at the fire with long black spears and dancing and flinging themselves about in the wildest fashion, while in a corner were huddled together a dozen or so of miserable dark spirits towards whom they made frantic rushes from time to time as if about to seize and hurl them into the fire, always retreating again with yells and howls of rage.

I soon perceived that I was invisible to these beings, so taking courage from that fact, I drew nearer. To my horror I discovered that the fire was composed of the bodies of living men and women who writhed and twisted in the flames, and were tossed about by the spears of those awful demons. I was so appalled by this discovery that I cried

out to know if this was a real scene or only some horrible illusion of this dreadful place, and the same deep mysterious voice that had often spoken to me in my wanderings answered me now.

"Son! they are living souls who in their earthly lives doomed hundreds of their fellow men to die this dreadful death, and knew no pity, no remorse, in doing so. Their own cruelties have kindled these fierce flames of passion and hate in the breast of their many victims, and in the spirit world these fiery germs have grown till they are now a fierce flame to consume the oppressors. These fires are fed solely by the fierce cruelties of those they now consume; there is not here one pang of anguish which has not been suffered a hundred fold more in the persons of these spirits' many helpless victims. From this fire these spirits will come forth touched by a pity, born of their own sufferings, for those they wronged in the past, and then will be extended to them the hand of help and the means of progression through deeds of mercy as many and as great as have been their merciless deeds in the past. Do not shudder nor marvel that such retribution as this is allowed to be. The souls of these spirits were so hard, so cruel, that only sufferings felt by themselves could make them pity others. Even since they left the earth life they have only been intent upon making others more helpless suffer, till the bitter hatred they have aroused has become at last a torrent which has engulfed themselves. Furthermore, know that these flames are not truly material, although to your eyes and to theirs they appear so, for in the spirit world that which is mental is likewise objective, and fierce hatred or burning passion does indeed seem a living fire. You shall now follow one of these spirits and see for yourself that what seems to you cruel justice is yet mercy in disguise. Behold these passions are burning themselves

out and the souls are about to pass into the darkness of the plain beyond."

As the voice ceased the flames died down and all was darkness save for a faint bluish light like phosphorus that filled the cavern, and by it I saw the forms of the spirits rise from the ashes of the fire and pass out of the cavern. As I followed them one became separated from the others and passing on before me went into the streets of a city that was near. It seemed to me like one of the old Spanish cities of the West Indies or South America. There were Indians passing along its streets and mingling with Spaniards and men of several other nations.

Following the spirit through several streets we came to a large building which seemed to be a monastery of the order of Jesuits--who had helped to colonize the country and force upon the unhappy natives the Roman Catholic religion, in the days when religious persecution was thought by most creeds to be a proof of religious zeal; and then, while I stood watching this spirit, I saw pass before me a panorama of his life.

I saw him first chief of his order, sitting as a judge before whom were brought many poor Indians and heretics, and I saw him condemning them by hundreds to torture and flames because they would not become converts to his teachings. I saw him oppressing all who were not powerful enough to resist him, and extorting jewels and gold in enormous quantities as tribute to him and to his order; and if any sought to resist him and his demands he had them arrested and almost without even the pretense of a trial thrown into dungeons and tortured and burned. I read in his heart a perfect thirst for wealth and power and an actual love for beholding the sufferings of his victims,

and I knew (reading as I seemed to do his innermost soul) that his religion was but a cloak, a convenient name, under which to extort the gold he loved and gratify his love of power.

Again I saw the great square or market place of this city with hundreds of great fires blazing all round it till it was like a furnace, and a whole helpless crowd of timid gentle natives were bound hand and foot and thrown into the flames, and their cries of agony went up to Heaven as this cruel man and his vile accomplices chanted their false prayers and held aloft the sacred cross which was desecrated by their unholy hands, their horrible lives of cruelty and vice, and their greed for gold. I saw that this horror was perpetrated in the name of the Church of Christ--of him whose teachings were of love and charity, who came to teach that God was perfect Love. And I saw this man who called himself Christ's minister, and yet had no thought of pity for one of these unhappy victims; he thought alone of how the spectacle would strike terror to the hearts of other Indian tribes, and make them bring him more gold to satisfy his greedy lust. Then I beheld this man returned to his own land of Spain and reveling in his ill-gotten wealth, a powerful wealthy prince of the church, venerated by the poor ignorant populace as a holy man who had gone forth into that Western World beyond the seas to plant the banner of his church and preach the blessed gospel of love and peace, while, instead, his path had been marked in fire and blood, and then my sympathy for him was gone. Then I saw this man upon his deathbed, and I saw monks and priests chanting mass for his soul that it might go to Heaven, and instead I saw it drawn down and down to Hell by the chains woven in his wicked life. I saw the great hordes of his former victims awaiting him there, drawn down in their turn by their thirst for

revenge, their hunger for power to avenge their sufferings and the sufferings of those most dear to them.

I saw this man in Hell surrounded by those he had wronged, and haunted by the empty wraiths of such as were too good and pure to come to this place of horror or to wish for vengeance on their murderer, just as I had seen in the Frozen Land with the man in the icy cage; and in Hell the only thought of that spirit was rage because his power on earth was no more--his only idea how he might join with others in Hell as cruel as himself and thus still oppress and torture. If he could have doomed his victims to death a second time he would have done it. In his heart there was neither pity nor remorse, only anger that he was so powerless. Had he possessed one feeling of sorrow or one thought of kindness for another, it would have helped him and created a wall between himself and these vengeful spirits, and his sufferings, though they might be great, would not have at last assumed the physical aspect in which I had beheld them. As it was, his passion of cruelty was so great it fed and fanned into fresh life the spiritual flames which theirs created, till at last when I saw him first they were dying out exhausted by their own violence. Those demons I had beheld were the last and most fierce of his victims in whom the desire for revenge was even then not fully satisfied, while those I had beheld crouching in the corner were some who, no longer desirous of tormenting him themselves, had yet been unable to withdraw themselves from beholding his sufferings and those of his accomplices.

And now I beheld that spirit with the newly awakened thought of repentance, returning to the city to warn others of his Jesuit fraternity, and to try to turn them from the path of his own errors. He did not yet realize the length of

time that had elapsed since he had left the earth life, nor that this city was the spiritual counterpart of the one he had lived in on earth. In time, I was told, he would be sent back to earth to work as a spirit in helping to teach mortals the pity and mercy he had not shown in his own life, but first he would have to work here in this dark place, striving to release the souls of those whom his crimes had dragged down with him. Thus I left this man at the door of that building which was the counterpart of his earthly house, and passed on by myself through the city.

Like the Roman city this one was disfigured and its beauties blotted out by the crimes of which it had been the silent witness; and to me the air seemed full of dark phantom forms wailing and weeping and dragging after them their heavy chains. The whole place seemed built upon living graves and shrouded in a dark red mist of blood and tears. It was like one vast prison house whose walls were built of deeds of violence and robbery and oppression.

And as I wandered on I had a waking dream, and saw the city as it had been on earth ere the white man had set his foot upon its soil. I saw a peaceful primitive people living upon fruits and grains and leading their simple lives in an innocence akin to that of childhood, worshiping the Great Supreme under a name of their own, yet none the less worshiping him in spirit and in truth--their simple faith and their patient virtues the outcome of the inspiration given them from that Great Spirit who is universal and belongs to no creeds, no churches. Then I saw white men come thirsting for gold and greedy to grasp the goods of others, and these simple people welcomed them like brothers, and in their innocence showed them the treasures they had gathered from the earth--gold and silver and

jewels. Then I saw the treachery which marked the path of the white man; how they plundered and killed the simple natives; how they tortured and made slaves of them, forcing them to labor in the mines till they died by thousands; how all faith, all promises, were broken by the white man till the peaceful happy country was filled with tears and blood.

Then I beheld afar, away in Spain, a few good, true, kindly men whose souls were pure and who believed that they alone had the true faith by which only man can be saved and live eternally, who thought that God had given this light to but one small spot of his earth, and had left all the rest in darkness and error--had left countless thousands to perish because this light had been denied to them but given exclusively to that one small spot of earth, that small section of his people.

I thought that these good and pure men were so sorry for those who, they thought, were in the darkness and error of a false religion, that they set forth and crossed that unknown ocean to that strange far-away land to carry with them their system of religion, and to give it to those poor simple people whose lives had been so good and gentle and spiritual under their own faith, their own beliefs.

I saw these good but ignorant priests land on this strange shore and beheld them working everywhere amongst the natives, spreading their own belief and crushing out and destroying all traces of a primitive faith as worthy of respect as their own. These priests were kind good men who sought to alleviate the physical lot of the poor oppressed natives even while they labored for their spiritual welfare also, and on every side there sprang up missions, churches and schools.



Then I beheld great numbers of men, priests as well as many others, come over from Spain, eager, not for the good of the church nor to spread the truths of their religion, but only greedy for the gold of this new land, and for all that could minister to their own gratification; men whose lives had disgraced them in their own country till they were obliged to fly to this strange one to escape the consequences of their misdeeds. I saw these men arrive in hordes and mingle with those whose motives were pure and good, till they had outnumbered them, and then thrust the good aside everywhere, and made of themselves tyrannical masters over the unhappy natives, in the name of the Holy Church of Christ.

And then I saw the Inquisition brought to the unhappy land and established as the last link in the chain of slavery and oppression thus riveted round this unhappy people, till it swept almost all of them from the face of the earth; and everywhere I beheld the wild thirst, the greed for gold that consumed as with a fire of hell all who sought that land. Blind were most of them to all its beauties but its gold, deaf to all thought but how they might enrich themselves with it; and in the madness of that time and that awful craving for wealth was this city of Hell, this spiritual counterpart of the earthly city built, stone upon stone, particle by particle, forming between itself and the city of earth chains of attraction which should draw down one by one each of its wicked inhabitants, for truly the earthly lives are building for each man and woman their spiritual habitations. Thus all these monks and priests, all these fine ladies, all these soldiers and merchants, yea, and even these unhappy natives had been drawn down to Hell by the deeds of their earthly lives, by the passions and hatreds, the greed of gold, the bitter sense of wrongs

unrequited and the thirst for revenge which those deeds had created.

At the door of a large square building, whose small grated windows looked like a prison, I stopped, arrested by the cries and shouts which came from it; then guided by the mysterious voice of my unseen guide I entered, and following the sounds soon came to a dungeon cell. Here I found a great number of spirits surrounding a man who was chained to the wall by an iron girdle round his waist. His wild glaring eyes, disheveled hair and tattered clothing suggested that he had been there for many years, while the hollow sunken cheeks and the bones sticking through his skin told that he was to all appearance dying of starvation; yet I knew that here there was no death, no such relief from suffering. Near him stood another man with folded arms and bowed head, whose wasted features and skeleton form scarred with many wounds made him an even more pitiable object than the other, though he was free while the other was chained to the wall. Around them both danced and yelled other spirits, all wild and savage and degraded. Some of them were Indians, a few Spanish, and one or two looked, I thought, like Englishmen. All were at the same work--throwing sharp knives at the chained man that never seemed to hit him, shaking their fists in his face, cursing and reviling him, yet, strange to say, never able to actually touch him, and all the time there he stood chained to the wall, unable to move or get away from them. And there stood the other man silently watching him.

As I stood looking at this scene I became conscious of the past history of those two men. I saw the one who was chained to the wall in a handsome house like a palace, and knew he had been one of the judges sent out from Spain to

preside over the so-called courts of justice, which had but proved additional means for extorting money from the natives and oppressing all who sought to interfere with the rich and powerful. I saw the other man who had been a merchant, living in a pretty villa with a beautiful, a very beautiful, wife and one little child. This woman had attracted the notice of the judge, who conceived an unholy passion for her, and on her persistently repulsing all his advances he made an excuse to have the husband arrested on suspicion by the Inquisition and thrown into prison. Then he carried off the poor wife and so insulted her that she died, and the poor little child was strangled by order of the cruel judge.

Meantime the unfortunate husband lay in prison, ignorant of the fate of his wife and child and of the charge under which he had been arrested, growing more and more exhausted from the scanty food and the horrors of the dungeon, and more and more desperate from the suspense. At last he was brought before the council of the Inquisition, charged with heretical practices and conspiracy against the crown, and on denial of these charges was tortured to make him confess and give up the names of certain of his friends who were accused of being his accomplices. As the poor man, bewildered and indignant, still protested his innocence he was sent back to his dungeon and there slowly starved to death, the cruel judge not daring to set him at liberty, well knowing that he would make the city ring with the story of his wrongs and his wife's fate when he should learn it.

As so this poor man had died, but he did not join his wife, who, poor injured soul, had passed at once with her little innocent child into the higher spheres. She was so good and pure and gentle that she had even forgiven her

murderer--for such he was, though he had not intended to kill her--and between her and the husband she so dearly loved there was a wall created by his bitter revengeful feelings against the man who had destroyed them both.

When this poor wronged husband died, his soul could not leave the earth. It was tied there by his hatred of his enemy and his thirst for revenge. His own wrongs he might have forgiven, but the fate of his wife and child had been too dreadful. He could not forgive that. Before even his love for his wife came this hate, and day and night his spirit clung fast to the judge, seeking for the chance of vengeance; and at last it came. Devils from Hell--such as had once tempted me--clustered round the wronged spirit and taught it how through the hand of a mortal it could strike the assassin's dagger to the judge's heart, and then when death severed the body and the spirit he could drag that down with him to Hell. So terrible had been this craving for revenge, nursed through the waiting years of solitude in prison and in the spirit land, that the poor wife had tried and tried in vain to draw near her husband and soften his heart with better thoughts. Her gentle soul was shut out by the wall of evil drawn round the unhappy man, and he also had no hope of ever seeing her again. He deemed that she had gone to Heaven and was lost to him for evermore. A Roman Catholic of the narrow views held nearly two hundred years ago when this man had lived, he believed that being under the ban of its priests and denied the ministrations of the church when he died, was the reason he was one of the eternally lost, while his wife and child must be with the angels of Heaven. Is it wonderful, then, that all this poor spirit's thoughts should center in the desire for vengeance, and that he should plan only how to make his enemy suffer as he had been made to suffer? Thus, then, it was he who inspired a man on earth to kill

the judge; his hand guided the mortal's with so unerring an aim that the judge fell pierced to his false, cruel heart. The earthly body died but the immortal soul lived, and awakened to find itself in Hell, chained to a dungeon wall as he had chained his victim, and face to face with him at last.

There were others whom the judge had wronged and sent to a death of suffering to gratify his anger or to enrich himself at their expense, and these all gathered round him and made his awakening a Hell indeed. Yet such was the indomitable strength of will of this man that none of the blows aimed at him could touch him, none of the missiles strike, and thus through all the years had those two deadly enemies faced each other, pouring out their hatred and defiance while those other spirits, like the chorus of a Greek tragedy, came and went and amused themselves devising fresh means to torment the chained man whose strong will kept them at bay.

And away in the bright spheres mourned the poor wife, striving and hoping till the time should come when her influence would be felt even in this awful place, when her love and her unceasing prayers should reach the soul of her husband and soften it, that he might relent in his bitter purpose and turn from his revenge. It was her prayers which had drawn me to this dungeon, and it was her soul which spoke to mine, telling me all the sad cruel story, and pleading with me to carry to her unhappy husband the knowledge that she lived only in thoughts of him, only in the hope that he would be drawn by her love to the upper spheres to join her in peace and happiness at last. With this vision strong upon me, I drew near the sullen man who was growing tired of his revenge, and whose heart was full of longing for the wife he loved so passionately.

I touched him upon the shoulder and said: "Friend, I know why you are here, and all the cruel story of your wrongs, and I am sent from her you love to tell you that in the bright land above she awaits you, wearying that you do not come and marveling that you can find revenge more sweet than her caresses. She bids me tell you that you chain yourself here when you might be free."

The spirit started as I spoke, then turning to me grasped my arm and gazed long and earnestly into my face as though to read there whether I spoke truly or falsely. Then he sighed as he drew back, saying: "Who are you and why do you come here? You are like none of those who belong to this awful place, and your words are words of hope, yet how can there be hope for the soul in Hell?"

"There is hope even here; for hope is eternal and God in his mercy shuts none out from it, whatever man in his earth-distorted image of the divine teachings may do. I am sent to give hope to you and to others who are, like you, in sorrow for the past, and if you will but come with me, I can show you how to reach the Better Land."

I saw that he hesitated, and a bitter struggle went on in his heart, for he knew that it was his presence which kept his enemy a prisoner, that were he to go the other would be free to wander through this Dark Land, and even yet he could hardly let him go. Then I spoke again of his wife; his child; would he not rather go to them? The strong passionate man broke down as he thought of those loved ones, and burying his face in his hands wept bitter tears. I put my arm through his and led him, unresisting, out of the prison and out of the city. Here we found kind spirit friends were awaiting the poor man, and with them I left him that they might bear him to a bright land where he

would see his wife from time to time, till he worked himself up to the level of her sphere, where they would be united forever in a happiness more perfect than could ever have been their lot on earth.

I did not return to the city, for I felt my work there was done, and so wandered on in search of fresh fields of usefulness. In the middle of a dark lonely plain I came upon a solitary hut, in which I found a man lying on some wisps of dirty straw, unable to move and to all appearance dying.

He told me that in his earth life he had thus abandoned and left to die a sick comrade, whom he had robbed of the gold for which they had both risked their lives, and that now he also was dead he found himself lying in the same helpless deserted way.

I asked him if he would not wish to get up and go and do something to help others and thus atone for the murder of his friend, because if so I thought I could help him.

He thought he would like to get up certainly. He was sick of this hole, but he did not see why he should work at anything or bother about other people. He would rather look for the money he had buried, and spend that. Here his cunning eyes glanced furtively at me to see what I thought of his money and if I was likely to try to find it.

I suggested to him that he ought rather to think of trying to find the friend he had murdered and make reparation to him. But he wouldn't hear of that, and got quite angry, said he was not sorry he had killed his friend, and only sorry he was here. He thought I would have helped him to get away. I tried to talk to this man and make him see how

he really might better his position and undo the wrong he had done, but it was no use, his only idea was that once given the use of his limbs again he could go and rob or kill some one else. So at last I left him where he lay, and as I went out his feeble hand picked up a stone and flung it after me.

"What," I asked mentally, "will become of this man?"

I was answered: "He has just come from earth after dying a violent death, and his spirit is weak, but ere long he will grow strong, and then he will go forth and join other marauders like himself who go about in bands, and add another horror to this place. After the lapse of many years--it may even be centuries--the desire for better things will awake, and he will begin to progress, but very slowly, for the soul which has been in chains so long and is so poorly developed, so degraded as in this man, often takes cycles of time to develop its dormant powers."

After I had wandered for some time over this dreary desolate plain I felt so tired, weary of heart, that I sat down, and began musing upon what I had seen in this awful sphere. The sight of so much evil and suffering had depressed me, the awful darkness and heavy murky clouds oppressed my soul that ever had loved the sunshine and the light as I fancy only we of the Southern nations love it. And then I wearied. Ah! How I wearied and longed for news from her whom I had left on earth. No word had reached me as yet from my friends--no news of my beloved. I knew not how long I had been in this place where there was no day to mark the time, nothing but eternal night that brooded and reigned in silence over everything. My thoughts were full of my beloved, and I prayed earnestly, that she might be kept safe on earth to



gladden my eyes when the time of probation in this place should be over. While I prayed I became conscious of a soft pale light suffused around me, as from a glowing star, that grew and grew till it expanded and opened out into a most glorious picture framed in rays of light, and in the centre I saw my darling, her eyes looking into mine and smiling at me, her sweet lips parted as though speaking my name; then she seemed to raise her hand and touching her lips with her finger tips, threw me a kiss. So shyly, so prettily, was it done that I was in raptures, and rose to return her that kiss, to look more closely at her, and lo! The vision had vanished and I was alone on the dark plain once more. But no longer sad, that bright vision had cheered me, and given me hope and courage to go on once more and bring to others such hope as cheered myself.

I arose and went on again, and in a short time was overtaken by a number of dark and most repulsive-looking spirits; they wore ragged black cloaks and seemed to have their faces concealed by black masks like spectral highwaymen. They did not see me, and I had found that as a rule the dwellers of this sphere were too low in intelligence and spiritual sight to be able to see anyone from the spheres above unless brought into direct contact with them. Curious to see what they were about, I drew back and followed them at a little distance. Presently another party of dark spirits approached, carrying what looked like bags with some sort of treasure. Immediately they were attacked by the first-comers. They had no weapons in their hands, but they fought like wild beasts with teeth and claws, their finger nails being like the claws of a wild animal or a vulture. They fastened upon each other's throats and tore them. They scratched and bit like tigers or wolves, till one-half at least were left lying helpless upon the ground, while the rest rushed off with

the treasure (which to me seemed only lumps of hard stone).

When all who were able to move had gone, I drew near the poor spirits lying moaning on the ground to see if I could help any of them. But it seemed to be no use doing so; they only tried to turn upon me and tear me in pieces. They were more like savage beasts than men, even their bodies were bent like a beast's, the arms long like an ape's, the hands hard, and the fingers and nails like claws, and they half walked and half crawled on all-fours. The faces could scarcely be called human; the very features had become bestial, while they lay snarling and showing their teeth like wolves. I thought of the strange wild tales I had read of men changing into animals, and I felt I could almost have believed these were such creatures. In their horrible glaring eyes there was an expression of calculation and cunning which was certainly human, and the motions of their hands were not like those of an animal; moreover they had speech and were mingling their howls and groans with oaths and curses and foul language unknown to animals.

"Are there souls even here?" I asked.

Again came the answer: "Yes, even here. Lost, degraded, dragged down and smothered, till almost all trace is lost, yet even here there are the germs of souls. These men were pirates of the Spanish main, highwaymen, freebooters, slave dealers, and kidnappers of men. They have so brutalized themselves that almost all trace of the human is merged in the wild animal. Their instincts were those of savage beasts; now they live like beasts and fight like them."

"And for them is there still hope, and can anyone help them?" I asked.

"Even for these there is hope, though many will not avail themselves of it for ages yet to come. Yet here and there are others who even now can be helped."

I turned, and at my feet lay a man who had dragged himself to me with great difficulty and was now too exhausted for further effort. He was less horrible to look upon than the others, and in his distorted face there were yet traces of better things. I bent over him and heard his lips murmur: "Water! Water for any sake! Give me water for I am consumed with a living fire."

I had no water to give him and knew not where to get any in this land, but I gave him a few drops of the essence I had brought from the Land of Dawn for myself. The effect upon him was like magic. It was an elixir. He sat up and stared at me and said:

"You must be a magician. That has cooled me and put out the fire that has burned within me for years. I have been filled with a living fire of thirst ever since I came to this Hell."

I had now drawn him away from the others, and began to make passes over his body, and as I did so his sufferings ceased and he grew quiet and restful. I was standing by him wondering what to do next, whether to speak or to go away and leave him to himself, when he caught my hand and kissed it passionately.

"Oh! Friend, how am I to thank you? What shall I call you who have come to give me relief after all these years of suffering?"

"If you are thus grateful to me, would you not wish to earn the gratitude of others by helping them? Shall I show you how you could?"

"Yes! Oh! Yes, most gladly, if only you will take me with you, good friend."

"Well, then, let me help you up, and if you are able we had better leave this spot as soon as we can," said I, and together we set forth to see what we could do.

My companion told me he had been a pirate and in the slave trade. He had been mate of a ship and was killed in a fight, and had awakened to find himself and others of the crew in this dark place. How long he had been there he had no idea, but it seemed like eternity. He and other spirits like him went about in bands and were always fighting. When they did not meet another party to fight they fought amongst themselves; the thirst for fighting was the only excitement they could get in this horrible place where there was never any drink to be got which could quench the awful burning thirst which consumed them all; what they drank only seemed to make them a thousand times worse, and was like pouring living fire down their throats. Then he said: "You never could die, no matter what you suffered, that was the awful curse of the thing, you had got beyond death, and it was no use trying to kill yourself or get others to kill you, there was no such escape from suffering."

"We are like a lot of hungry wolves," he said, "for want of anyone to attack us we used to fall upon each other and fight till we were exhausted, and then we would lie moaning and suffering till we recovered enough to go forth again and attack someone else. I have been longing for any means of escape. I have almost got to praying for it at last. I felt I would do anything if God would only forgive me and let me have another chance; and when I saw you standing near me I thought perhaps you were an angel sent down to me after all. Only you've got no wings nor anything of that sort, as they paint 'em in pictures. But then pictures don't give you much idea of this place, and if they are wrong about one place why not about the other?"

I laughed at him; yes, even in that place of sorrow I laughed, my heart felt so much lightened to find myself of so much use. And then I told him who I was and how I came to be there, and he said if I wanted to help people there were some dismal swamps near where a great many unhappy spirits were imprisoned, and he could take me to them and help a bit himself he thought. He seemed afraid to let me go out of his sight lest I should disappear and leave him alone again. I felt quite attracted to this man because he seemed so very grateful and I was also glad of companionship of any sort (except that of those most repulsive beings who seemed the majority of the dwellers here) for I felt lonely and somewhat desolate in this far-off dismal country.

The intense darkness, the horrible atmosphere of thick fog, made it almost impossible to see far in any direction, so that we reached the land of swamps before I was aware of it except for feeling a cold, damp, offensive air which blew in our faces. Then I saw looming before me a great sea of liquid mud, black, fetid and stagnant, a thick slime of oily

blackness floating on the top. Here and there monstrous reptiles, with huge inflated bodies and projecting eyes were wallowing. Great bats, with almost human faces like vampires, hovered over it, while black and grey smoke wreaths of noisome vapor rose from its decaying surface, and hung over it in weird fantastic phantom shapes that shifted and changed ever and anon into fresh forms of ugliness--now waving aloft wild arms and shaking, nodding, gibbering heads, which seemed almost endowed with sense and speech--then melting into mist again to form into some new creature of repulsive horror.

On the shores of this great foul sea were innumerable crawling slimy creatures of hideous shape and gigantic size that lay sprawling on their backs or plunged into that horrid sea. I shuddered as I looked upon it and was about to ask if there could indeed be lost souls struggling in that filthy slime, when my ears heard a chorus of wailing cries and calls for help coming from the darkness before me, that touched my heart with their mournful hopelessness, and my eyes, growing more accustomed to the mist, distinguished here and there struggling human forms wading up to their armpits in the mud. I called to them and told them to try and walk towards me, for I was on the shore, but they either could not see or could not hear me for they took no notice, and my companion said he believed they were both deaf and blind to everything but their immediate surroundings. He had been in the sea of foul mud himself for a time, but had managed to struggle out, though he had understood that most were unable to do so without help from another, and that some went on stumbling about in it for years. Again we heard those pitiful cries, and one sounded so near us that I thought of plunging in myself and trying to drag the wretched spirit out, but faugh! It was too horrible, too disgusting. I

recoiled in horror at the thought. And then again that despairing cry smote upon my ears and made me feel I must venture it. So in I went, trying my best to stifle my sense of disgust, and, guided by the cries, soon reached the man, the great phantoms of the mist wavering and swooping and rushing overhead as I did so. He was up to his neck in the mud and seemed sinking lower when I found him, and it seemed impossible for me alone to draw him out, so I called to the pirate spirit to come and help me, but he was nowhere to be seen. Thinking he had only led me into a trap and deserted me, I was about to turn and struggle out again, when the unfortunate spirit besought me so pitifully not to abandon him that I made another great effort and succeeded in dragging him a few yards and drawing his feet out of a trap of weeds at the bottom in which they appeared to be caught. Then, somehow, I half dragged, half supported him till we reached the shore where the unfortunate spirit sank down in unconsciousness. I was a good deal exhausted also and sat down beside him to rest. I looked round for my pirate friend, and beheld him wallowing about in the sea at some distance and evidently bringing out someone along with him. Even in the midst of my awful surroundings I could not help feeling a certain sense of amusement in looking at him, he made such frantic and exaggerated efforts to haul along the unlucky spirit, and was so shouting and going on that it was calculated to alarm anyone who was timid, and I did not wonder to hear the poor spirit almost imploring not to be so energetic, to take it a little slower, and to give him time to follow. I went over to them, and the poor rescued one being now near the shore I helped to get him out and to let him rest beside the other one.

The pirate spirit seemed greatly delighted with his successful efforts and very proud of himself, and was quite

ready to set off again, so I sent him after someone else whom we heard calling, and was attending to the other two when I again heard most pitiful wailings not far from me, though I could see no one at first, then a faint, tiny speck of light like a will-o'-the-wisp glimmered in the darkness of that disgusting swamp, and by its light I saw someone moving about and calling for aid, so, not very willingly, I confess, I went into the mud again. When I reached the man I found he had a woman with him whom he was supporting and trying to encourage, and with considerable trouble I got them both out and found the pirate spirit had also arrived with his rescued one.

Truly a strange group we must have made on the shores of that slimy sea, which I learned afterwards was the spiritual creation of all the disgusting thoughts, all the impure desires of the lives of men on earth, attracted and collected into this great swamp of foulness. Those spirits who were thus wallowing in it had reveled in such low abominations in their earth lives and had continued to enjoy such pleasures after death through the mediumship of mortal men and women, till at last even the earth plane had become too high for them by reason of their own exceeding vileness, and they had been drawn down by the force of attraction into this horrible sink of corruption to wander in it till the very disgust of themselves should work a cure.

One man I had rescued had been one of the celebrated wits of Charles the Second's court, and after his death had long haunted the earth plane, sinking, however, lower and lower till he had sunk into this sea at last, the weeds of his pride and arrogance forming chains in which his feet were so entangled that he could not move till I released him. Another man had been a celebrated dramatist of the reign



of the early Georges. While the man and woman had belonged to the court of Louis the Fifteenth and had been drawn together to this place. Those rescued by the pirate were somewhat similar in their histories.

I had been somewhat troubled at first as to how I was going to free myself from the mud of that horrible sea, but I now suddenly saw a small clear fountain of pure water spring up near to us as if by magic, and in its fresh stream we soon washed all traces of the mud away.

I now advised those whom we had rescued to try what they could do to help others in this land of darkness as a return for the help given to themselves, and having given them what advice and help I could I started once more upon my pilgrimage. The pirate, however, seemed so very unwilling to part from me that we two set forth together once more.

I shall not attempt to describe all whom we sought to help in our wanderings. Were I to do so this narrative would fill volumes and probably only weary my readers, so I shall pass over what seemed to me like weeks of earthly time, as nearly as I am able to reckon it, and will describe our arrival at a vast range of mountains whose bleak summits towered into the night sky overhead. We were both somewhat discouraged with the results of our efforts to help people. Here and there we had found a few who were willing to listen and to be helped, but as a rule our attempts had been met with scorn and derision, while not a few had even attacked us for interfering with them, and we had some trouble to save ourselves from injury.

Our last attempt had been with a man and woman of most repulsive appearance who were fighting at the door of a

wretched hovel. The man was beating her so terribly I could not but interfere to stop him. Whereupon they both set on me at once, the woman spirit doing her best to scratch my eyes out, and I was glad to have the pirate come to my assistance, for, truth to tell, the combined attack had made me lose my temper, and by doing so I put myself for the moment on their level, and so was deprived of the protection afforded me by my superior spiritual development.

These two had been guilty of a most cruel and brutal murder of an old man (the husband of the woman) for the sake of his money; and they had been hanged for the crime, their mutual guilt forming a bond between them so strong that they had been drawn down together and were unable to separate in spite of the bitter hatred they now felt for each other. Each felt the other to be the cause of their being in this place, and each felt the other more guilty than themselves, and it had been their eagerness each to betray the other which had helped to hang both. Now they seemed simply to exist in order to fight together, and I can fancy no punishment more awful than theirs must have been, thus linked together in hate.

In their present state of mind it was not possible to help them in any way.

Shortly after leaving this interesting couple we found ourselves at the foot of the great dark mountains, and by the aid of a curious pale phosphorescent glow which hung in patches over them we were able to explore them a little. There were no regular pathways, and the rocks were very steep, so we stumbled up as best we might--for I should explain that by taking on a certain proportion of the conditions of this low sphere I had lost the power to rise at

will and float, which was a privilege of those who had reached the Land of Dawn. After a toilsome ascent of one of the lower ranges of the mountains we began to tramp along the crest of one, faintly lighted by the strange gleaming patches of phosphorescent light, and beheld on either side of us vast deep chasms in the rocks, gloomy precipices, and awful looking black pits. From some of these came wailing cries and moans and occasionally prayers for help. I was much shocked to think there were spirits down in such depths of misery, and felt quite at a loss how to help them, when my companion, who had shown a most remarkable eagerness to second all my efforts to rescue people, suggested that we should make a rope from some of the great rank, withered-looking weeds and grass that grew in small crevices of these otherwise barren rocks, and with such a rope I could lower him down, as he was more used to climbing in that fashion than I, and thus we might be able to draw up some of these spirits out of their dreadful position.

This was a good idea, so we set to work and soon had a rope strong enough to bear the weight of my friend, for you should know that in spiritual, as well as in material things, weight is a matter of comparison, and the materiality of those low spheres will give them a much greater solidity and weight than belongs to a spirit sphere more advanced, and though to your material eyes of earth life my pirate friend would have shown neither distinct material form nor weight, yet a very small development of your spiritual faculties would have enabled you to both see and feel his presence, though a spirit the next degree higher would still remain invisible to you. Thus I am not in error, nor do I even say what is improbable, when I thus speak of my friend's weight, which for a rope made of spiritual grass and weeds was as great a strain as would

have been the case with an earthly man and earth materials. Having made one end of the rope fast to a rock, the spirit descended with the speed and sureness acquired by long practice as a sailor. Once there he soon made it fast round the body of the poor helpless one whom he found lying moaning at the bottom. Then I drew up the rope and the spirit, and when he had been made safe I lowered it to my friend and drew him up, and having done what we could for the rescued one we went on and helped a few more in like fashion.

When we had pulled out as many as we could find, a most strange thing happened. The phosphorescent light died out and left us in utter darkness, while a mysterious voice floating, as it seemed, in the air, said, "Go on now, your work here is done. Those whom you have rescued were caught in their own traps, and the pitfalls that they made for others had received themselves, till that time when repentance and a desire to atone should draw rescuers to help them and free them from the prisons they had themselves made. In these mountains are many spirits imprisoned who may not yet be helped out by any, for they would only be a danger to others were they free, and the ruin and evil they would shed around make their longer imprisonment a necessity. Yet are their prisons of their own creating, for these great mountains of misery are the outcome and product of men's earthly lives, and these precipices are but the spiritual counterparts of those precipices of despair over which they have in earthly life driven their unhappy victims. Not till their hearts soften, not till they have learned to long for liberty that they may do good instead of evil, will their prisons be opened and they be drawn forth from the living death in which their own frightful cruelties to others have entombed them."

The voice ceased, and alone and in darkness we groped our way down the mountain side till we reached the level ground once more. Those awful mysterious dark valleys of eternal night--those towering mountains of selfishness and oppression--had struck such a chill to my heart that I was glad indeed to know there was no call of duty for me to linger longer there.

Our wandering now brought us to an immense forest, whose weird fantastic trees were like what one sees in some awful nightmare. The leafless branches seemed like living arms held out to grasp and hold the hapless wanderer. The long snake-like roots stretched out like twisting ropes to trip him up. The trunks were bare and blackened as though scorched by the blasting breath of fire. From the bark a thick foul slime oozed and like powerful wax held fast any hand that touched it. Great waving shrouds of some strange dark air plant clothed the branches like a pall, and helped to enfold and bewilder any who tried to penetrate through this ghostly forest. Faint muffled cries as of those who are exhausted and half smothered came from this awful wood, and here and there we could see the imprisoned souls held captive in the embrace of these extraordinary prisons, struggling to get free, yet unable to move one single step.

"How," I wondered, "shall we help these?" Some were caught by the foot--a twisted root holding them as in a vice. Another's hand was glued to the trunk of a tree. Another was enveloped in a shroud of the black moss, while yet another's head and shoulders were held fast by a couple of branches which had closed upon them. Wild ferocious looking beasts prowled round them, and huge vultures flapped their wings overhead, yet seemed unable to touch any of the prisoners, though they came so near.

"Who are those men and women?" I asked.

"They are those," was the reply, "who viewed with delight the sufferings of others, those who gave their fellow men to be torn in pieces by wild beasts that they might enjoy the excitement of their sufferings. They are all those who for no reason but the lust of cruelty have, in many different ways and in many different ages, tortured and entrapped and killed those who were more helpless than themselves, and for all now here release will only come when they have learned the lesson of mercy and pity for others and the desire to save some one else from suffering, even at the expense of suffering to themselves. Then will these bands and fetters which hold them be loosed, then they will be free to go forth and work out their atonement. Till then no one else can help them--none can release them. Their release must be effected by themselves through their own more merciful desires and aspirations. If you will but recall the history of your earth and think how men in all ages have enslaved, oppressed and tortured their fellow men in every country of that globe, you will not wonder that this vast forest should be well peopled. It was deemed right that for your own instruction you should see this fearful place, but as none of those you see and pity have so far changed their hearts that you can give them aid, you will now pass on to another region where you can do more good."

After leaving the Forest of Desolation we had not gone far upon our road when to my joy I saw my friend Hassein approaching. Mindful, however, of Ahrinziman's warning I gave him the sign agreed upon and received the countersign in return. He had come, he said, with a message from my father and from my beloved who had sent me what were indeed sweet words of love and

encouragement. Hasein told me that my mission would now lie amongst those great masses of spirits whose evil propensities were equaled only by their intellectual powers, and their ingenuity in works of evil. "They are those," said he, "who were rulers of men and kings of intellect in all branches, but who have perverted and abused the powers with which they were endowed till they have made of them a curse and not a blessing. With most of them you will have to guard yourself at all points against the allurements they will hold out to tempt you, and the treachery of every kind they will practice on yourself. Yet amongst them are a few whom you are sent to succor and whom your own instinct and events will point out as those to whom your words will be welcome and your aid valuable. I shall not in all probability bring you messages again, but some other may be sent to do so, and you must, above all things and before all things, remember to distrust any who come to you and cannot give the sign and symbol I have given. You are now in reality about to invade the enemies' camp, and you will find that your errand is known to them and resented, whatever it may suit them to pretend. Beware, then, of all their false promises, and when they seem most friendly distrust them most."

I promised to remember and heed his warning, and he added that it was necessary I should part for a time from my faithful companion, the pirate, as he could not safely accompany me in those scenes to which my path would now lead, but he promised he would place him under the care of one who could and would help him to leave that dark country soon.

After giving him loving and helpful messages to my beloved and my father, which he promised to deliver to

them, we parted, and I set forth in the direction pointed out, greatly cheered and comforted by the good news and loving messages I had received.

**CHAPTER XXXII.--Through the Gates of Gold--My Mother--My Home in the Land of Bright Day--I Am Joined by Benedetto.**

I was always fond of watching the clouds float over the sky and shape themselves into pictures suggested by my thoughts. Since I reached the second sphere of the spirit land my skies have always had clouds floating over them, lovely light fleecy clouds which shape themselves into a thousand forms and take on the most lovely shades of color, sometimes becoming rainbow hued and at others of the most dazzling white, and then again vanishing away altogether. I have been told by some spirits that in their skies they never see a cloud, all is serene clear beauty; and no doubt it is so in their lands, for in the spirit world our thoughts and wishes form our surroundings. Thus, because I love to see clouds they are to be seen in my sky, at times veiling and softening its beauties and making cloud-castles for me to enjoy.

Now, some time after I obtained my little home in the Morning Land I began to see between myself and my cloud-pictures a vision which, like the mirage seen in the desert, hovered on the horizon, distinct and lifelike, only to melt away as I gazed. This was a most lovely ethereal gate of wrought gold, such as might be the entrance to some fairy land. A clear stream of water flowed between myself and this gate, while trees so fresh, so green, so aerial, they seemed like fairy trees, arched their branches over it and clustered at the sides. Again and again did I see this vision, and one day while I was gazing at it my father came



unnoticed by me and stood by my side. He touched my shoulder and said:

"Franchezzo, that gate is inviting you to go nearer and see it for yourself. It is the entrance to the highest circle of this second sphere, and it is within those gates that your new home is waiting for you. You might have gone some time ago into those circles which lie between you and it, had not your affection for this little cottage made you content to remain in it. Now, however, it would be as well for you to go forth and see if the wonders of that new land will not still more delight you. I am, as you know, in the third sphere, which will, therefore, be still above you, but the nearer you approach to me the more easily can I visit you, and in your new home we shall be much oftener together."

I was so surprised I could not answer for a little time. It seemed incredible that I should be able so soon to pass those gates. Then, taking my father's advice, I bade a regretful adieu to my little home (for I grow much attached to places which I live long in) and set forth to journey to this new country, the gate shining before me all the time, not fading away as it had done before.

In the spirit land where the surface is not that of a round globe as with the planets, you do not see the objects on the horizon vanishing in the same way, and earth and sky meeting at last as one. Instead you see the sky as a vast canopy overhead, and the circles which are above you seem like plateau resting upon mountain tops on your horizon, and when you reach those mountains and see the new country spread out before you, there are always on its horizon again more mountains and fresh lands lying higher than those you have reached. Thus also you can look down on those you have passed as upon a succession

of terraces, each leading to a lower, less beautiful one, till at last you see the earth plane surrounding the earth itself, and then beyond that again (for those spirits whose sight is well developed) lie another succession of terrace-like lands leading down to Hell. Thus circle melts into circle and sphere into sphere, only that between each sphere there exists a barrier of magnetic waves which repels those from a lower sphere who seek to pass it until their condition has become in harmony with the higher sphere.

In my journey to the golden gates I passed through several circles of this second sphere, whose cities and dwelling-places would have tempted me to linger and admire them had I not been so eager to view the fair land which was now the goal of my hopes. I knew, moreover, that I could at any time on my way to earth stop and explore those intermediate lands, because a spirit can always retrace his steps if he desires and visit those below him.

At last I reached the top of the last range of mountains between me and the golden gates, and saw stretched out before my eyes a most lovely country. Trees waved their branches as in welcome to me and flowers blossomed everywhere, while at my feet was the shining river and across it the golden gates. With a great sense of joy in my heart I plunged into that beautiful river to swim across, its refreshing waters closing over my head as I dived and swam. I had taken no heed to my clothing and as I landed on the farther side I looked to see myself dripping with water, but in a moment I found my clothing as dry as could be, and what was still stranger, my grey robe with its triple bordering of white had changed into one of the most dazzling snowy luster with a golden girdle and golden borderings. At the neck and wrists it was clasped with little plain gold clasps, and seemed to be like the

finest muslin in texture. I could scarce believe my senses. I looked and looked again, and then, with a trembling, beating heart I approached those lovely gates. As my hand touched them they glided apart and I passed into a wide road bordered by trees and flowering shrubs and plants of most lovely hues--like flowers of earth, indeed, but ah! How much more lovely, how much more fragrant no words of mine can convey to you.

The waving branches of the trees bent over me in loving welcome as I passed, the flowers seemed to turn to me as greeting one who loved them well, at my feet there was the soft green sward, and overhead a sky so clear, so pure, so beautiful, the light shimmering through the trees as never did the light of earthly sun. Before me were lovely blue and purple hills and the gleam of a fair lake, upon whose bosom tiny islets nestled crowned with the green foliage of groups of trees. Here and there a little boat skimmed over the surface of the lake filled with happy spirits clad in shining robes of many different colors--so like to earth, so like my beloved Southern Land, and yet so changed, so glorified, so free from all taint of wrong and sin!

As I passed up the broad flower-girt road a band of spirits came to meet and welcome me, amongst whom I recognized my father, my mother, my brother and a sister, besides many beloved friends of my youth. They carried gossamer scarfs of red, white and green colors, which they were waving to me, while they strewed my path with masses of the fairest flowers as I approached, and all the time they sang the beautiful songs of our own land in welcome, their voices floating on the soft breeze in the perfection of unison and harmony. I felt almost overcome with emotion; it seemed far too much happiness for one like me.

And then my thoughts even in that bright scene turned to earth, to her who was of all the most dear to me, where all were so dear, and I thought, "Alas that she is not here to share with me the triumphs of this hour; she to whose love more than to any other thing I owe it." As the thought came to me I suddenly beheld her spirit beside me, half asleep, half conscious, freed for a brief moment from the earthly body and borne in the arms of her chief guardian spirit. Her dress was of the spirit world, white as a bride's and shimmering with sparkling gems like dew drops. I turned and clasped her to my heart, and at my touch her soul awoke and she looked smilingly at me. Then I presented her to my friends as my betrothed bride, and while she was still smiling at us all, her guide again drew near and threw over her a large white mantle. He lifted her in his arms once more, and like a tired child she seemed to sink into slumber as he bore her away to her earthly body, which she had left for a time to share and crown this supreme moment of my joy. Ah, me! even in my joy I felt it hard to let her go, to think I could not keep her with me; but the thread of her earthly life was not yet fully spun, and I knew that she like others must travel the path of her earthly pilgrimage to its end.

When my beloved was gone, my friends all clustered round me with tender embraces, my mother whom I had never seen since I was a little child--caressing my hair and covering my face with kisses as though I had been still the little son whom she had left on earth so many, many years ago that his memory of her had been but dim, and that the father had supplied the image of both parents in his thoughts.

Then they led me to a lovely villa almost buried in the roses and jasmine which clustered over its walls and

twined around the slender white pillars of the piazza, forming a curtain of flowers upon one side. What a beautiful home it seemed! How much beyond what I deserved! Its rooms were spacious, and there were seven of them, each typical of a phase in my own character or some taste I had cultivated.

My villa was upon the top of a hill overlooking the lake which lay many hundreds of feet below, its calm waters rippled by magnetic currents and the surrounding hills mirrored in its quiet bosom, and beyond the lake there was a wide valley. As one looks down from a mountain top to the low hills and the dark valley and level plains below, so did I now look down from my new dwelling upon a panorama of the lower spheres and circles through which I had passed, to the earth plane and again to the earth itself, which lay like a star far below me. I thought as I looked at it that there dwelt still my beloved, and there yet lay the field of my labors. I have sat many times since gazing out on that lone star, the pictures of my past life floating in a long wave of memory across my day-dream, and with all my thoughts was interwoven the image of her who is my guiding star.

The room from which I could see this view of the distant earth was my music-room, and in it were musical instruments of various kinds. Flowers festooned the walls and soft draperies the windows, which required no glass in their frames to keep out the soft zephyrs of that fair land. A honeysuckle, that was surely the same sweet plant which had so rejoiced my heart in my little cottage in the Morning Land, trailed its fragrant tendrils around the window, and on one of the walls hung my picture of my darling, framed with its pure white roses which always seemed to me an emblem of herself. Here, too, I again

found all my little treasures which I had collected in my dark days when hope seemed so far and the shadow of night was ever over me. The room was full of soft masses of lovely spirit flowers, and the furniture was like that of earth only more light in appearance, more graceful and beautiful in every way. There was a couch which I much admired. It was supported by four half-kneeling figures of wood-nymphs, carved as it would seem from a marble of the purest white and even more transparent than alabaster. Their extended arms and clasped hands formed the back and the upper and lower ends; their heads were crowned with leaves and their floating draperies fell around their forms in so graceful, so natural a manner, it was difficult to believe they were not living spirit-maidens. The covering of this couch was of a texture like swan's down, only it was pale gold in color; so soft was it, it seemed to invite one to repose, and often have I lain upon it and looked out at the lovely scene and away to the dim star of earth with its weary pilgrims--its toiling souls.

The next apartment was filled with beautiful pictures, lovely statues, and tropical flowers. It was almost more like a conservatory than a room, the pictures being collected at one end of it and the statues and flowers forming a foreground of beauty that was like another and larger picture. There was a little grotto with a fountain playing, the water sparkling like diamonds and rippling over the sides of the smaller basin into one larger still, with a murmuring sound which suggested a melody to me. Near this grotto was one picture which attracted me at once, for I recognized it as a scene from my earthly life. It was a picture of one calm and peaceful evening in early summer when my beloved and I had floated on the quiet waters of an earthly river. The setting sun glowing in the west was sinking behind a bank of trees, while the grey

twilight crept over the hollows through the shade of the trees; and in our hearts there was a sense of peace and rest which raised our souls to Heaven. I looked around and recognized many familiar scenes, which had likewise been full of happiness for me and in whose memories there was no sting.

There were also many pictures of my friends, and of scenes in the spirit world. From the windows I could behold another view than from my music-room. This view showed those lands which were yet far above me, and whose towers and minarets and mountains shone through a dim haze of bright mist, now rainbow hued, now golden, or blue, or white. I loved to change from the one view to the other, from the past which was so clear, to the future that was still dim, still veiled for me.

In this picture salon there was all which could delight the eye or rest the body, for our bodies require repose as well as do yours on earth, and we can enjoy to rest upon a couch of down earned by our labors as much as you can enjoy the possession of fine furniture bought with gold earned by your work on earth.

Another saloon was set apart for the entertainment of my friends, and here again, as in the lower sphere, there were tables set out with a feast of simple but delicious fruits, cakes, and other agreeable foods like earthly foods, only less material, and there was also the delicious sparkling wine of the spirit world which I have before mentioned. Another room again was full of books recording my life and the lives of those whom I admired or loved. There were also books upon many subjects, the peculiarity in them being that instead of being printed they seemed full of pictures, which when one studied them appeared to

reflect the thoughts of those who had written the books more eloquently than any words. Here, too, one could sit and receive the inspired thoughts of the great poets and literary men who inhabit the sphere above, and here have I sat, and inscribed upon the blank pages of some book laid open before me, poems to her who filled the larger half of all my thoughts.

From this room we passed out to the garden, my father saying he would show me my chamber of repose, after our friends were gone. Here, as in the house, flowers were everywhere, for I always loved flowers, they spoke to me of so many things and seemed to whisper such bright fancies, such pure thoughts. There was a terrace around the house, and the garden seemed almost to overhang the lake, especially at one secluded corner which was fenced in with a bank of ferns and flowering shrubs and backed by a screen of trees. This nook was a little to the side of the house and soon became my favorite resort; the ground was carpeted with soft green moss as you have not on earth--and flowers grew all around. Here there was a seat whereon I loved to sit and look away to the earth, and fancy where my beloved one's home would be. Across all those millions of miles of space my thoughts could reach her as hers could now reach me, for the magnetic cord of our love stretched between us and no power could ever shut us out from each other again.

When I had seen and admired all, my friends led me back to the house and we all sat down to enjoy the feast of welcome which their love had prepared for me. Ah! what a happy feast that was. How we proposed the progression and happiness of each one, and then drank our toast in wine which left no intoxication behind, no after reckoning of shame to mar its refreshing qualities! How delicious



seemed this fruit, these numerous little delicacies which were all the creations of someone's love for me. It seemed too much happiness, I felt as in a delightful dream from which I must surely wake. At last all my friends left except my father and mother, and by them I was conducted to the upper chambers of the house. They were three in number. Two were for such friends as might come to stay with me, and both were most prettily furnished, most peaceful looking; the third room was for myself, my own room, where I would retire when I desired to rest and to have no companion but my own thoughts. As we entered, the thing which attracted me most and filled me with more astonishment than anything I had yet seen, was the couch. It was of snowy white gossamer, bordered with pale lilac and gold, while at the foot were two angels, carved, like the wood-nymphs, out of the dazzling white alabaster I have vainly tried to describe. They were much larger than myself or any spirits whom I had seen, and their heads and extended wings seemed almost to touch the roof of my room, and the pose of these two most lovely figures was perfect in its grace. Their feet scarce touched the floor and with their bending forms and half-outstretched wings they appeared to hover over the bed as though they had but just arrived from their celestial sphere.

They were male and female forms, the man wearing on his head a helmet and bearing in his hand a sword, while the other hand held aloft a crown. His figure was the perfection of manly beauty and grace, and his face with its perfect features so firmly moulded, expressing at once strength and gentleness, had to my eyes a look of calm regal majesty that was divine.

The female figure at his side was smaller--more delicate in every way. Her face was full of gentle, tender, womanly

purity and beauty. The eyes large and soft even though carved in marble, the long tresses of her hair half-veiling her head and shoulders. One hand held a harp with seven strings, the other rested upon the shoulder of the male angel as though she supported herself with his strength, while the lovely head was half bent forward and rested upon her arm, and on her head she wore a crown of pure white lilies.

The look upon her face was one of such exquisite sweetness, such maternal tenderness, it might well have served for that of the Virgin Mother herself. The attitudes, the expressions of both were the most perfect realization of angelic beauty I have seen, and for some moments I could but gaze at them expecting them to melt away before my eyes.

At last I turned to my father and asked how such lovely figures came to be in my room, and why they were represented with wings, since I had been told that angels had not really wings growing from their bodies at all.

"My son," he answered, "these lovely figures are the gift of your mother and myself to you, and we would fain think of you as reposing under the shadow of their wings, which represent in a material form the protection we would ever give you. They are shown with wings because that is the symbol of the angelic spheres, but if you will look closely at them you will find that these wings are like a part of the drapery of the forms, and are not attached to the bodies at all as though they grew from the shoulder in the fashion earthly artists represent them. The wings, moreover, express the power of angelic beings to soar upon these outstretched pinions into Heaven itself. The shining helmet and the sword represent war, the helmet the war of

the Intellect against Error, Darkness and Oppression. The sword, the war man must ever wage against the passions of his lower nature. The crown symbolizes the glory of virtue and self-conquest.

"The harp in the woman's hand shows that she is an angel of the musical sphere, and the crown of lilies expresses purity and love. Her hand resting on the man's shoulder is to show that she derives her strength and power from him and from his stronger nature, while her attitude and looks as she bends over your couch express the tender love and protection of woman's maternal nature. She is smaller than the man, because in you the masculine elements are stronger than the feminine. In some representations of the angels of men's souls they are made of equal size and stature, because in those characters the masculine and feminine elements are both equal, both evenly balanced, but with you it is not so, therefore are they represented with the woman dependent upon the stronger one.

"The male angel typifies power and protection. The female angel purity and love. Together they show the eternal dual nature of the soul and that one-half is not complete without the other. They also are the symbolical representation of the twin guardian angels of your soul whose wings may be said in a spiritual sense to be ever outstretched in protection over you."

Shall I confess that even in that beautiful home there were times when I felt lonely? I had this home, earned by myself, but as yet I had no one to share it with me, and I have always felt a pleasure to be doubly sweet when there was some one whom I could feel enjoyed it also. The one companion of all others for whom I sighed was still on earth, and alas! I knew that not for many years could she

join me. Then Faithful Friend was in a circle of the sphere above me in a home of his own, and as for Hassen, he was far above us both, so that though I saw them at times as well as my dear father and mother, there was no one to share my life with me *en bon camarade*, no one to watch for my home-coming, and no one for whom in my turn I could watch. I was often on earth--often with my darling--but I found that with my advanced position in the spirit world I could not remain for so long at a time as I had been wont to do. It had upon my spirit much the effect of trying to live in a foggy atmosphere or down a coal mine, and I had to return more frequently to the spirit land to recover myself.

I used to sit in my lovely rooms and sigh to myself, "Ah, if I had but some one to speak with, some congenial soul to whom I might express all the thoughts which crowd my mind." It was therefore with the greatest pleasure that I received a visit from Faithful Friend, and heard the suggestion he had to make to me.

"I have come," said he, "on behalf of a friend who has just come to this circle of the sphere, but who has not yet earned for himself a home of his own and therefore desires to find one with some friend more richly endowed than himself. He has no relatives here and I thought that you might be glad of his companionship."

"Most truly, I would be delighted to share my home with your friend."

Faithful Friend laughed. "He may be called your friend also, for you know him. It is Benedetto."

"Benedetto!" I cried in astonishment and delight. "Ah! Then he will indeed be doubly welcome. Bring him here as soon as possible."

"He is here now--he awaits at your door; he would not come with me till he was sure you would really be glad to welcome him."

"No one could be more so," I said. "Let us go at once and bring him in."

So we went to the door and there he stood, looking very different from when I had last seen him in that awful city of the lower sphere--then so sad, weighed down, so oppressed--now so bright, his robes, like mine, of purest white, and though his face was still sad in expression yet there was peace, and there was hope in the eyes he raised to mine as I clasped his hand and embraced him as we of my Southern Land embrace those we love and honor. It was with much pleasure that we met--we who had both so sinned and so suffered--and we were henceforth to be as brothers.

Thus it was that my home became no more solitary, for, when one of us returns from our labors, the other is there to greet him, to share the joy and the care, and to talk over the success or the failure.

## **My Vision of the Spheres.**

How can I tell of the many friends who came to visit me in this bright home, of the cities I saw in that fair land, the lovely scenes I visited? I cannot. It would take volumes, and already my narrative has reached its limits. I shall only tell of one more vision that I had, because in it I was

shown a new path wherein I was to labor, one in which I could apply to the aid of others the lessons I had learned in my wanderings.

I was lying on the couch in my room and had awakened from a long slumber. I was watching, as I often did, those two most beautiful figures of my guardian angels, and seeing fresh beauties, fresh meanings in their faces and their attitudes every time I looked at them, when I became conscious that my Eastern guide, Ahrinziman, in his far-off sphere was seeking to communicate with me. I therefore allowed myself to become perfectly passive and soon felt a great cloud of light of a dazzling white misty substance surrounding me. It seemed to shut out the walls of my room and everything from me. Then my soul seemed to arise from my spirit body and float away, leaving my spirit envelope lying upon the couch.

I appeared to pass upwards and still upwards, as though the will of my powerful guide was summoning me to him, and I floated on and on with a sense of lightness which even as a spirit I had never felt before.

At last I alighted upon the summit of a high mountain, from which I could behold the earth and its lower and higher spheres revolving below me. I also saw that sphere which was my home, but it appeared to lie far below the height upon which I stood.

Beside me was Ahrinziman, and as in a dream I heard his voice speaking to me and saying:

"Behold, son of my adoption, the new path in which I would have you labor. Behold earth and her attendant spheres, and see how important to her welfare is this work

in which I would have you to take part. See now the value of the power you have gained in your journey to the Kingdoms of Hell, since it will enable you to become one of the great army who daily and hourly protect mortal men from the assaults of Hell's inhabitants. Behold this panorama of the spheres and learn how you can assist in a work as mighty as the spheres themselves."

I looked to where he pointed, and I beheld the circling belt of the great earth plane, its magnetic currents like the ebb and flow of an ocean tide, bearing on their waves countless millions upon millions of spirits. I saw all those strange elemental astral forms, some grotesque, some hideous, some beautiful. I saw also the earth-bound spirits of men and women still tied by their gross pleasures or their sinful lives, many of them using the organisms of mortals to gratify their degraded cravings. I beheld these and kindred mysteries of the earth plane, and I likewise beheld sweeping up from the dark spheres below waves of dark and awful beings, ten times more deadly unto man in their influence over him than those dark spirits of the earth plane. I saw these darker beings crowd around man and cluster thickly near him, and where they gathered they shut out the brightness of the spiritual sun whose rays shine down upon the earth continually. They shut out this light, with the dark mass of their own cruel evil thoughts, and where this cloud rested there came murder and robbery; and cruelty and lust, and every kind of oppression were in their train, and death and sorrow followed them. Wherever man had cast aside from him the restraints of his conscience and had given way to greed and selfishness, and pride and ambition, there did these dark beings gather, shutting out the light of truth with their dark bodies.

And again I saw many mortals who mourned for the dear ones they had loved and lost, weeping most bitter tears because they could see them no more. And all the time I saw those for whom they mourned standing beside them, seeking with all their power to show that they still lived, still hovered near, and that death had not robbed of one loving thought, one tender wish, those whom death had left behind to mourn. All in vain seemed their efforts. The living could not see or hear them, and the poor sorrowing spirits could not go away to their bright spheres because while those they had left so mourned for them they were tied to the earth plane by the chains of their love, and the light of their spirit lamps grew dim and faded as they thus hung about the atmosphere of earth in helpless sorrow.

And Ahrinziman said to me: "Is there no need here for the means of communication between these two, the living and the so-called dead, that the sorrowful ones on both sides may be comforted? And, again, is there no need for communication that those other sinful selfish men may be told of the dark beings hovering around them who seek to drag their souls to hell?"

Then I beheld a glorious dazzling light as of a sun in splendor, shining as no mortal eye ever saw the sun shine on earth. And its rays dispelled the clouds of darkness and sorrow, and I heard a glorious strain of music from the celestial spheres, and I thought surely now man will hear this music and see this light and be comforted. But they could not--their ears were closed by the false ideas they had gathered, and the dust and dross of earth clogged their spirits and made their eyes blind to the glorious light which shone for them in vain.



Then I beheld other mortals whose spiritual sight was partly unveiled and whose ears were not quite deaf, and they spoke of the spirit world and its wondrous beauties. They felt great thoughts and put them into the language of earth. They heard the wondrous music and tried to give it expression. They saw lovely visions and tried to paint them, as like to those of the spirit as the limits of their earthly environments would allow. And these mortals were termed geniuses, and their words and their music and their pictures all helped to raise men's souls nearer to the God who gave that soul--for all that is highest and purest and best comes from the inspiration of the spirit world.

Yet with all this beauty of art and music and literature--with all these aspirations--with all the fervor of religious feeling, there was still no way opened by which men on earth could hold communion with the loved ones who had gone before them into that land which dwellers upon earth have called the Land of Shades, and from whose bourn, they thought, no traveler could return--a land that was all vague and misty to their thought. And there was likewise no means by which those spirit ones who sought to help man to a higher, purer knowledge of Truth could communicate with him directly. The ideas and the fallacies of ancient theories formulated in the days of the world's infancy continually mixed with the newer, more perfect sight which the spirit world sought to give, and clouded its clearness and refracted its rays so that they reached the minds of mortals broken and imperfect.

Then I beheld that the walls of the material life were pierced with many doors, and at each door stood an angel to guard it, and from each door on earth even to the highest spheres I saw a great chain of spirits, each link

being one stage higher than the one below it, and to mortals upon earth were given the keys of these doors that they might keep them open and that between mortals and the spirit world there might be communication.

But, alas! As time passed on I saw that many of those who held these keys were not faithful. They were allured by the joys and the gifts of earth, and turned aside and suffered their doors to close. Others again kept their doors but partly open and where only light and truth should have shown they suffered errors and darkness to creep in, and again the light from the spirit world was sullied and broken as it passed through these darkened doorways. Still more sad, as time passed on, the light ceased to shine at all and gave place to the thick impure rays from dark deceitful spirits from the lower sphere, and at last the angel would close that door to be opened no more on earth.

Then I turned from this sad sight and beheld many new doors opened where mortals stood, whose hearts were pure and unselfish and unsullied by the desires of earth; and through these doors poured such a flood of light upon the earth that my eyes were dazzled, and I had to turn aside. When I looked again I saw these doorways thronged by spirits, beautiful, bright spirits, and others whose raiment was dark and their hearts sad because their lives had been sinful, but in whose souls there was a desire for good, and there were spirits who were fair and bright, but sorrowful, because they could speak no more with those whom they had left on earth; and I beheld the sorrowful and the sinful spirits alike comforted and helped by means of the communication with the earth, and in the hearts of many mortals there was joy, for death's dark curtain was

drawn aside and there was news from those beyond the grave.

Then I saw pass before me great armies of spirits from all the higher spheres, their raiment of purest white and their helmets of silver and gold glittering in the glorious spiritual light. And some among them seemed to be the leaders who directed the others in their work. And I asked, "Who are these? Were they ever mortal men?"

And Ahrinziman answered me: "These were not only mortal men but they were many of them men of evil lives, who by reason thereof descended to those Kingdoms of Hell which you have seen, but who because of their great repentance and the many and great works of atonement which they have done, and the perfect conquest over their own lower natures which they have gained, are now the leaders in the armies of light, the strong warriors who protect men from the evils of those lower spheres."

From time to time I saw dark masses of spirits, like waves washing on a shore and flowing over portions of the earth, drawn thither by man's own evil desires and greedy selfishness, and then I would see them driven back by the armies of light spirits, for between these two there was a constant conflict, and the prize for which they contended was man's soul; and yet these two contending forces had no weapons but their wills. They fought not save with the repelling powers of their magnetism which was so antagonistic that neither could long remain in close contact with the other.

Ahrinziman pointed out to me one door at which stood a mortal woman, and said: "Behold the chain there is incomplete; it wants still one link between her and the

spirit chain. Go down and form that link, and then will your strength protect her and make her strong; then will you guard her from those dark spirits who hover near, and help her to keep open her door. Your wanderings in those lower spheres have given you the power of repelling their inhabitants, and where stronger power is required it will be sent to protect her--and those who seek to communicate through her will do so only when you see fit, and when you desire to rest in the spirit world another guide will take your place. And now look again at the earth and the conflict that surrounds it."

I looked as he spoke, and saw black thunder clouds hovering over the earth and gathering dark as night, and a sound as of a rushing storm swept upwards from the dark spheres of hell, and like the waves of a storm-tossed ocean these dark clouds of spirits rolled up against the sea of bright spirits, sweeping them back and rolling over the earth as though to blot out from it the light of truth, and they assailed each door of light and sought to overwhelm it. Then did this war in the spirit world become a war amongst men--nation fighting against nation for supremacy. It seemed as though in the great thirst for wealth and greed for conquest, all nations and all peoples must be engulfed, so universal was this war. And I looked to see were there none to aid, none who would come forth from the realms of light and wrest from the dark spirits their power over the earth. The seething mass of dark spirits were attacking those doors of light and striving to sweep away those poor faithful mortals who stood within them, that man might be driven back to the days of his ignorance again.

Then it was that like a Star in the East I saw a light, glittering and dazzling all by its brightness, and it came

down and down, and grew and grew till I saw it was a vast host of radiant angels from the heavenly spheres, and with their coming those other bright spirits whom I had seen driven back by the forces of evil gathered together again and joined those glorious warriors, and this great ocean of light, this mighty host of bright spirits swept down to earth and surrounded it with a great belt of glorious light. Everywhere I saw the rays of light, like spears, darting down and rending the dark mass in a thousand places. Like swords of fire flashed these dazzling rays and cut through the dark wall of spirits on all sides, scattering them to the four winds of heaven. Vainly did their leaders seek to gather their forces together again, vainly seek to drive them on. A stronger power was opposed to them, and they were hurled back by the brightness of these hosts of heaven till, like a dark and evil mist, they sank down, rolling back to those dark spheres from which they had come.

"And who were these bright angels?" I asked again, "these warriors who never drew back yet never slew, who held in check these mighty forces of evil, not with the sword of destruction but by the force of their mighty wills, by the eternal power of good over evil?"

And the answer was: "They are those who are also the redeemed ones of the darkest spheres, who long, long ages ago have washed their sin-stained garments in the pools of repentance, and have, by their own labors, risen from the ashes of their dead selves to higher things, not through a belief in the sacrifice of an innocent life for their sins, but by many years of earnest labors--many acts of atonement--by sorrow and by bitter tears--by many weary hours of striving to conquer first the evil in themselves that they who have overcome may help others who sin to do so

likewise. These are the angels of the heavenly spheres of earth, once men like themselves and able to sympathize with all the struggles of sinful men. A might host they are, ever strong to protect, powerful to save."

My vision of the earth and its surroundings faded away, and in its stead I beheld one lone star shining above me with a pure silver light. And its ray fell like a thin thread of silver upon the earth and upon the spot where my beloved dwelt. Ahrinziman said to me:

"Behold the star of her earthly destiny, how clear and pure it shines, and know, oh! beloved pupil, that for each soul born upon earth there shines in the spiritual heavens such a star whose path is marked out when the soul is born; a path it must follow to the end, unless by an act of suicide it sever the thread of the earthly life and by thus transgressing a law of nature plunge itself into great sorrow and suffering."

"Do you mean that the fate of every soul is fixed, and that we are but straws floating on the stream of our destiny?"

"Not quite. The great events of the earth life are fixed, they will inevitably be encountered at certain periods of the earthly existence, and they are such events as those wise guardians of the angelic spheres deem to be calculated to develop and educate that soul; how these events will affect the life of each soul--whether they shall be the turning point for good or ill, for happiness or for sorrow--rests with the soul itself, and this is the prerogative of our free will, without which we would be but puppets, irresponsible for our acts and worthy of neither reward nor punishment for them. But to return to that star--note that while the mortal follows the destined path with

earnest endeavor to do right in all things, while the soul is pure and the thoughts unselfish, then does that star shine out with a clear unsullied ray, and light the pathway of the soul. The light of this star comes from the soul and is the reflection of its purity. If, then, the soul cease to be pure, if it develop its lower instead of its higher attributes, the star of that soul's destiny will grow pale and faint, the light flickering like some will-o'-the-wisp hovering over a dark morass; no longer will it shine as a clear beacon of the soul; and at last, if the soul become very evil, the light of the star will die out and expire, to shine no more upon its earthly path.

"It is by watching these spiritual stars and tracing the path marked out for them in the spiritual heavens, that spirit seers are able to foretell the fate of each soul, and from the light given by the star to say whether the life of the soul is good or evil. Adieu, and may the new field of your labors yield you the fairest fruits."

He ceased speaking and my soul seemed to sink down and down till I reached the spirit body I had left lying on my couch, and for a brief moment as I re-entered it I lost consciousness; then I awoke to find myself in my own room, with those beautiful white angels hovering over me, symbols, as my father had said, of eternal protection and love.

*A. Farnese Amanuensis to Franchezzo*

# 'Comte St. Germain – Forgotten Immortal Mystic of the Mystery Schools'



Comte St. Germain



Comte St. Germain is one that has been remembered by a few, in part, because of his legendary immortality. There are those who believe the Comte St. Germain was alive hundreds, even thousands, of years ago and remains alive together in a unique state of immortality that he has been able to attain through his mastery of the science of alchemy. We present this unique forgotten mystic because of his fascinating life, work and legend.

### FROM THE 'TRINISOPHIA'

"A STRONG wind arose and I had difficulty in keeping my lamp alight. At last I saw a white marble platform to which I mounted by nine steps. Arrived at the last one I beheld a vast expanse of water. To my right I heard the impetuous tumbling of torrents; to my left a cold rain mixed with masses of hail fell near me. I was contemplating this majestic scene when the star which had guided me to the platform and which was slowly swinging overhead, plunged into the gulf. Believing that I was reading the commands of the Most High, I threw myself into the midst of the waves. An invisible hand seized my lamp and placed it on the crown of my head. I breasted the foamy wave and struggled to reach the side opposite the one which I had left. At last I saw on the horizon a feeble gleam and hastened forward. Perspiration streamed down my face and I exhausted myself in vain efforts. The shore which I could scarcely discern seemed to recede to the degree 1 advanced. My strength was ebbing. I feared not to die, but to die without illumination . . . I lost courage, and lifting to the vault my tear-streaming eyes I cried out: "*Judica judicium meum et redime me, propter eloquium tuum vivifica me.*" (Judge thou my judgment and redeem me, by thy eloquence make me live.) I could hardly move my tired limbs and was sinking more and more when near me

I saw a boat. A richly dressed man guided it. I noticed that the prow was turned toward the shore which I had left. He drew near. A golden crown shone on his forehead. "*Vade me cum,*" said he, "*mecum principium in terris, instruam to in via hac qua graduveris.*" (Come with me, with me, the foremost in the world; I will show thee the way thou must follow.) I instantly answered him: "*Bonum est sperare in Domino quam considerare in principibus.*" (It is better to trust in the Lord than to sit among the mighty.) Whereupon the boat sank and the monarch with it. Fresh energy seemed to course through my veins and I gained the goal of my efforts. I found myself on a shore covered with green sand. A silver wall was before me inlaid with two panels of red marble. Approaching I noticed on one of them sacred script, the other being engraved with a line of Greek letters; between the two plates was an iron circle. Two lions, one red and the other black, rested on clouds and appeared to guard a golden crown above them. Also near the circle were to be seen a bow and two arrows. I read several characters written on the flanks of one of the lions. I had barely observed these different emblems when they vanished together with the wall which contained them."

The Most Holy Trinosophia of the Comte De St. Germain, Phoenix Press, Los Angeles, CA MCMXXXIII

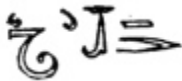
Like many mystics before and after him, he was taken into the hellish realms and then into the heavenlies. One very interesting aspect of his writings, however, includes actual depictions of inscriptions in unknown languages on various 'altars' that he sees in his mystical visions.

## HELLISH JOURNEY BELOW THE EARTH

“When I awoke I was lying on a luxurious cushion; the air I breathed was saturated with the fragrance of flowers . . . A blue robe spangled with golden stars had replaced my linen garment. A yellow altar stood opposite me from which a pure flame ascended having no other substance for its alimentation than the altar itself. Letters in black were engraved at the base of the altar. A lighted torch stood beside it, shining like the sun; hovering above it was a bird with black feet, silvery body, a red head, black wings and a golden neck. It was in constant motion without however using its wings. It could only fly when in the midst of the flames. In its beak was a green branch; its name is



the name of the altar is



Altar, bird and torch are the symbol of all things. Nothing can be done without them. They themselves are all that is good and great. The name of the torch is



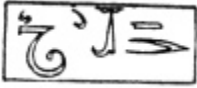
Four inscriptions surrounded these different emblems.”

From 'The Most Holy Trinosophia of the Comte De St. Germain,'  
 Introductions by Manly P. Hall, Phoenix Press, Los Angeles, CA  
 MCMXXXIII

"I TURNED aside and noticed an immense palace the base of which rested on clouds. Its mass was composed of marble and its form was triangular. Four tiers of columns were raised one above the other. A golden ball topped the edifice. The first tier of columns was white, the second black, the third green and the last one a brilliant red. I intended, after having admired this work of immortal artists, to return to the place of the altar, the bird and the torch; I desired to study them further. They had disappeared and with my eyes I was searching for them when the doors of the palace opened. A venerable old man came forth clad in a robe like mine, except that a golden sun shone on his breast. His right hand held a green branch, the other upheld a censer. A wooden chain was about his neck and a pointed tiara like that of Zoroaster covered his white head. He came toward me, a benevolent smile on his lips. "Adore God" said he to me in Persian. "It is He who sustained thee in thy trials; His spirit was with thee. My son, thou hast let slip by the opportunity. Thou couldst have seized instantly the bird,

the torch

and the altar



Thou wouldst have become altar, bird and torch at one and the same time. Now, in order to arrive at the most secret place of the Palace of sublime sciences, it will be necessary for thee to pass through all by-ways. Come . . . I must first of all present thee to my brothers." He took me by the hand and led me into a vast hall.

The eyes of the vulgar cannot conceive the form and richness of the ornaments which embellished it. Three hundred and sixty columns enclosed it on all sides. Suspended from a golden ring in the ceiling was a cross of red, white, blue and black. In the center of the hall was a triangular altar composed of the four elements; on its three points were placed the bird, the altar and the torch. "Their names are now changed," said my guide. Here the bird is called

אֵם פִּירְנָא

AT some distance from the shore a sumptuous palace raised aloft its alabaster columns; its different parts were joined by porticos of flame colour. The entire edifice was of light and airy architecture. As I approached the portals, I saw that the front was decorated with the figure of a butterfly. The doors stood open . . . I entered. The entire palace consisted of a single hall . . . surrounded by a triple colonnade, each rank composed of twenty-seven alabaster columns. In the middle of the building stood the figure of a man issuing from a tomb; his hand, holding up a lance, struck the stone which previously confined him. His loins

were girt about with a green garment; gold gleamed from its hem. On his breast was a square tablet bearing several letters. Above this figure hung a golden crown and the figure seemed to lift itself into the air in order to seize the crown. Above it was a yellow stone tablet bearing several emblems which I explained by means of the inscription I saw on the tomb and by the one I had seen on the breast of the man.

I stayed in that hall which is called

پستان اژدرن

the time needful for contemplating all its aisles, and soon I left it with the intention of crossing a vast plain in order to reach a tower that I had perceived at quite some distance.

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*And also like many mystics before and after him, he was eventually led through the doors of immortality after discarding the earthly garment through purification and many rites of passage.*

After that time I left it in order to enter a large place surrounded by colonnades and gilded porticos. In the center of the place stood a bronze pedestal supporting a group representing a large strong man whose majestic head was covered with a crowned helmet. A blue garment protruded through the meshes of his golden armour. In one hand he held a white staff bearing certain characters, the other hand he extended toward a beautiful woman. His companion wore no garment, but a sun radiated from her breast. Her right hand held three globes joined by

golden rings; a coronet of red flowers confined her beautiful hair. She sprang into the air and seemed to lift with her the warrior who accompanied her; both were borne up by the clouds about the group. On the capitals of four white marble columns were set four bronze statues; they had wings and appeared to sound trumpets.

I crossed the place, and mounting on a marble platform which was before me, I noticed with astonishment that I had re-entered the hall of Thrones (the first in which I had found myself when entering the Palace of Wisdom). The triangular altar was still in the center of this hall but the bird, the altar and the torch were joined and formed a single body. Near them was a golden sun. The sword which I had brought from the hall of fire lay a few paces distant on the cushion of one of the thrones; I took up the sword and struck the sun, reducing it to dust. I then touched it and each molecule became a golden sun like the one I had broken. At that instant a loud and melodious voice exclaimed, "The work is perfect!" Hearing this, the children of light hastened to join me, the doors of immortality were opened to me, and the cloud which covers the eyes of mortals, was dissipated. I SAW and the spirits which preside over the elements knew me for their master."

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Press, Los Angeles, CA MCMXXXIII

# THE COMTE DE ST. GERMAIN

*By Isabel Cooper-Oakley*

## MYSTIC AND PHILOSOPHER

HE was, perhaps, one of the greatest philosophers who ever lived. The friend of humanity, wishing for money only that he might give to the poor, a friend to animals, his heart was concerned only with the happiness of others.--*Mémoires de Mon Temps*, p. 135. S. A. LE LANDGRAVE CHARLES, PRINCE DE HESSE. (Copenhagen, 1861.)

DURING the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by those Masters, of whom I have spoken, to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity. Towards the close of each century you will invariably find that an outpouring or upheaval of spirituality--or call it mysticism if you prefer--has taken place. Some one or more persons have appeared in the world as their agents, and a greater or less amount of occult knowledge or teaching has been given out.--*The Key to Theosophy* (p. 194). H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE Comte de St. Germain was certainly the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries.--*Theosophical Glossary*, H. P. BLAVATSKY.

AMONG the strange mysterious beings, with which the eighteenth century was so richly dowered, no one has commanded more universal comment and attention than the mystic who was known by the name of the Comte de St. Germain. A hero of romance; a charlatan; a swindler



and an adventurer; rich and varied were the names that showered freely upon him. Hated by the many, loved and revered by the few, time has not yet lifted the veil which screened his true mission from the vulgar speculators of the period. Then, as now, the occultist was dubbed charlatan by the ignorant; only some men and women here and there realised the power of which he stood possessed. The friend and councillor of kings and princes, an enemy to ministers who were skilled in deception, he brought his great knowledge to help the West, to stave off in some small measure the storm clouds that were gathering so thickly around some nations. Alas! His words of warning fell on deafened ears, and his advice went all unheeded.

Looking back from this distance of time it will be of interest to many students of mysticism to trace the life, so far as it may yet be told, of this great occultist. Sketches are to be found here and there from various writers, mostly antagonistic, but no coherent detailed account of his life has yet appeared. This is very largely owing to the fact that the most interesting and important work, done by M. de St. Germain, lies buried in the secret archives of many princely and noble families. With this fact we have become acquainted during the careful investigations which we have been making on the subject. Where the archives are situated we have also learned, but we have not yet in all cases received permission to make the necessary researches.

It must be borne in mind that the Comte de St. Germain, alchemist and mystic, does not belong to the French family of St. Germain, from which descended Count Robert de St. Germain; the latter was born in the year 1708, at Lons-le-Saulnier, was first a Jesuit, and entered later in turn the

French, Palatine, and Russian military services; he became Danish Minister of War under Count Struensee, then re-entered the French service, and at the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI., he tried, as Minister of War, to introduce various changes into the French army; these raised a violent storm of indignation; he was disgraced by the king and finally died in 1778. He is so often confounded with his mystic and philosophic namesake, that for the sake of clearing up the ignorance that prevails on the matter it is well to give these brief details, showing the difference between the two men; unfortunately the disgrace into which the soldier fell is but too often attributed to the mystic, to whom we will now turn our entire attention.

That M. de St. Germain had intimate relations with many high persons in various countries is quite undeniable, the testimony on this point being overwhelming. That such relations should cause jealousy and unkindly speculation is unfortunately not rare in any century. Let us, however, see what some of these princely friends say. When questioned by the Herzog Karl August as to the supernatural age of this mystic, the Landgraf von Hessen-Phillips-Barchfeld replied: "We cannot speak with certainty on that point; the fact is the Count is acquainted with details about which only contemporaries of that period could give us information; it is now the fashion in Cassel to listen respectfully to his statements and not to be astonished at anything. The Count is known not to be an importunate sycophant; he is a man of good society to whom all are pleased to attach themselves. . . . He at all events stands in close relation with many men of considerable importance, and exercises an incomprehensible influence on others. My cousin the Landgraf Karl von Hessen is much attached to him; they

are eager Freemasons, and work together at all sorts of hidden arts. . . . He is supposed to have intercourse with ghosts and supernatural beings, who appear at his call."

Herr Mauvillon, in spite of his personal prejudice against M. de St. Germain, is obliged to acknowledge the feeling of the Duke towards the great alchemist. For on his supposed death being mentioned in the Brunswick newspaper of the period, wherein M. de St. Germain was spoken of as "a man of learning," "a lover of truth," "devoted to the good" and "a hater of baseness and deception," the Duke himself wrote to the editor, expressing his approbation of the announcement. In France M. de St. Germain appears to have been under the personal care, and enjoying the affection of Louis XV., who repeatedly declared that he would not tolerate any mockery of the Count, who was of high birth. It was this affection and protection that caused the Prime Minister, the Duc de Choiseul, to become a bitter enemy of the mystic, although he was at one time friendly to him, since the Baron de Gleichen in his memoirs says: "M. de St. Germain frequented the house of M. de Choiseul, and was well received there."

The same writer, who later became one of his devoted students, testifies to the fact that M. de St. Germain ate no meat, drank no wine, and lived according to a strict *régime*. Louis XV gave him a suite of rooms in the royal Château de Chambord, and he constantly spent whole evenings at Versailles with the King and the royal family.

One of the chief difficulties we find in tracing his history consists in the constant changes of name and title, a proceeding which seems to have aroused much antagonism and no little doubt. This fact should not, however, have made the public (of the period) dislike him,

for it appears to have been the practice of persons of position, who did not wish to attract vulgar curiosity; thus, for instance, we have the Duc de Medici travelling in the years 1698 and 1700 under the name of the Conte di Siena. The Graf Marcolini, when he went from Dresden to Leipzig to meet M. de St. Germain, adopted another name. The Kur-Prinz Friedrich-Christian von Sachsen travelled in Italy from 1738 to 1740, under the name Comte Lausitz. Nearly all the members of the royal families in every country, during the last century, and even in this, adopted the same practice; but when M. de St. Germain did so, we have all the small writers of that period and later calling him an adventurer and a charlatan for what appears to have been, practically, a custom of the time.

Let us now make a list of these names and titles, bearing in mind that they cover a period of time dating from 1710 to 1822. The first date is mentioned by Baron de Gleichen, who says: "I have heard Rameau and an old relative of a French ambassador at Venice testify to having known M. de St. Germain in 1710, when he had the appearance of a man of fifty years of age." The second date is mentioned by Mme. d'Adhémar in her most interesting *Souvenirs sur Marie Antoinette*. During this time we have M. de St. Germain as the Marquis de Montferrat, Comte Bellamarre or Aymar at Venice, Chevalier Schoening at Pisa, Chevalier Weldon at Milan and Leipzig, Comte Soltikoff at Genoa and Leghorn, Graf Tzarogy at Schwabach and Triesdorf, Prinz Ragoczy at Dresden, and Comte de St. Germain at Paris, the Hague, London, and St. Petersburg. No doubt all these varied changes gave ample scope and much material for curious speculations.

A few words may fitly here be said about his personal appearance and education. From one contemporary writer we get the following sketch:--

"He looked about fifty, is neither stout nor thin, has a fine intellectual countenance, dresses very simply, but with taste; he wears the finest diamonds on snuff-box, watch and buckles. Much of the mystery with which he is surrounded is owing to his princely liberality." Another writer, who knew him when at Anspach, says: "He always dined alone and very simply; his wants were extremely few; it was impossible while at Anspach to persuade him to dine at the Prince's table."

M. de St. Germain appears to have been very highly educated. According to Karl von Weber, "he spoke German, English, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish very well, and French with a Piedmontese accent."

It was almost universally accorded that he had a charming grace and courtliness of manner. He displayed, moreover, in society, a great variety of gifts, played several musical instruments excellently, and sometimes showed facilities and powers which bordered on the mysterious and incomprehensible. For example, one day he had dictated to him the first twenty verses of a poem, and wrote them simultaneously with both hands on two separate sheets of paper--no one present could distinguish one sheet from the other.

In order to arrive at some orderly sequence, it will be well to divide our material into three parts:--

i. Theories about his birth and character, with personal details, some of which we have briefly noticed.

ii. His travels and knowledge.

iii. His political and mystical work.

Beginning, then, with our first division, the theories about his birth and nationality are many and various; and different authors, according to their prejudices, trace his descent from prince or tax-gatherer, apparently as fancy dictates. Thus, among other parentages, we find him supposed to be descended from:--

1. The widow of Charles II. (King of Spain)--the father a Madrid banker.
2. A Portuguese Jew.
3. An Alsatian Jew.
4. A tax-gatherer in Rotondo.
5. King of Portugal (natural son).
6. Franz-Leopold, Prince Ragoczy, of Transylvania.

This last seems to have been the correct view, according to the most reliable sources that have been found, and other information to which we have had access on this point.

This theory is also held by Georg Hezekiel in his *Abenteuerliche Gesellen*, i., 35, Berlin, 1862. Karl von Weber (*op. cit.*, i., 318) also says that M. de St. Germain openly appeared in Leipzig in 1777 as Prince Ragoczy, and that he was often known as the Graf Tzarogy, which latter is merely an anagram for Ragotzy (Ragoczy). This last fact we have verified in another interesting set of articles, to

which we shall refer later, written by a person who knew him at Anspach under the name Tzarogy. Another writer remarks: "His real origin would, perhaps, if revealed, have compromised important persons." And this is the conclusion to which, after careful investigation, we have also come. Prince Karl of Hesse, writing of M. de St. Germain, says:--

"Some curiosity may be felt as to his history; I will trace it with the utmost truthfulness, according to his own words, adding any necessary explanations. He told me that he was eighty-eight years of age when he came here, and that he was the son of Prince Ragoczy of Transylvania by his first wife, a Tékéli. He was placed, when quite young, under the care of the last Duc de Medici (Gian Gastone), who made him sleep while still a child in his own room. When M. de St. Germain learned that his two brothers, sons of the Princess of Hesse-Wahnfried (Rheinfels), had become subject to the Emperor Charles VI., and had received the titles and names of St. Karl and St. Elizabeth, he said to himself: 'Very well, I will call myself Sanctus Germano, the Holy Brother.' I cannot in truth guarantee his birth, but that he was tremendously protected by the Duc de Medici I have learnt from another source."

Another well-known writer speaks on the same point, an author, moreover, who had access to the valuable Milan archives; we refer to the late Cæsare Cantù, librarian of the great library in Milan, who in his historical work, *Illustri Italiani*, ii., 18, says: "The Marquis of San Germano appears to have been the son of Prince Ragotzy (Ragoczy) of Transylvania; he was also much in Italy; much is recounted of his travels in Italy and in Spain; he was greatly protected by the last Grand Duke of Tuscany, who had educated him." It has been said that M. de St. Germain

was educated at the University of Siena; Mme. de Genlis in her *Mémoires* mentions having heard of him in Siena during a visit that she paid to that town.

The whole life of M. de St. Germain seems to have been more or less shadowed by the political troubles and struggles of his father.

In order to understand this we must take a brief survey of his family history, a survey which will moreover give us some clues, helping us to unravel the tangled web of mysterious elements which surrounded the life and work of the great occultist.

Few pages of history are more deeply scored with sorrow, suffering and impotent struggle than those which tell the life story of the efforts of one Ragoczy after another to preserve the freedom of their principality, and to save it from being swallowed up by the rapidly growing Austrian Empire under the influence of the Roman Church. In an old German book, *Genealogische Archivarius aus dem Jahr 1734*, pp. 409, 410, 438, Leipzig, a sketch is given, on the death of Prince Ragoczy, of his family, his antecedents and descendants, from which we will quote some leading facts: Francis Leopold Racozi, or Rakoczy, according to the later spelling--the father of the famous mystic--made ineffectual efforts to regain his throne, the principality of Siebenbürgen. The Ragoczy property was wealthy and valuable, and Prince Francis, grandfather of the mystic of whom we are writing, had lost his life in a hopeless struggle to retain his freedom; on his death, his widow and children were seized by the Austrian Emperor, and hence the son, Francis Leopold, was brought up at the Court of Vienna. As our informant says: "The widowed Princess (who had remarried Graf Tékéli) was forced to hand over



her children with their properties to the Emperor, who said he would become their guardian and be responsible for their education." This arrangement was made in March, 1688. When, however, Prince Francis came of age, his properties, with many restrictions and limitations, were given back to him by the Emperor of Austria. In 1694 this Prince Ragoczy married at Köln-am-Rhein, Charlotte Amalia, daughter of the Landgraf Karl von Hesse-Wahnfried (of the line of Rhein-fels). Of this marriage there were three children, Joseph, George and Charlotte. Almost immediately after this period Prince Ragoczy began to lead the conspiracies of his noblemen against the Austrian Empire, with the object of regaining his independent power. The history of the struggle is most interesting in every way, and singularly pathetic. The Prince was defeated and all his properties were confiscated. The sons had to give up the name of Ragoczy, and to take the titles of St. Carlo and St. Elizabeth.

Let us notice what Hezekiel has to say on this point, for he has made some very careful investigations on the subject: "We are, in fact, inclined to think the Comte de St. Germain was the younger son of the Prince Franz-Leopold Ragoczy and the Princess Charlotte Amalia of Hesse-Wahnfried. Franz-Leopold was married in 1694, and by this marriage he had two sons, who were taken prisoners by the Austrians and brought up as Roman Catholics; they were also forced to give up the dreaded name of Ragoczy. The eldest son, calling himself the Marquis of San Carlo, escaped from Vienna in 1734. In this year, after fruitless struggles, his father died at Rodosto in Turkey, and was buried in Smyrna. The eldest son then received his father's Turkish pension, and was acknowledged Prince of Siebenbürgen (Transylvania). He carried on the same warfare as his father, fought against and was driven away

by Prince Ferdinand of Lobkowitz, and finally died forgotten in Turkey. The younger brother took no part in the enterprises of his elder brother, and appears, therefore, to have been always on good terms with the Austrian Government."

Adverse writers have made much mystery over the fact that the Comte de St. Germain was rich and always had money at his disposal; indeed, those writers who enjoyed calling him a "charlatan and a swindler" did not refrain also from hinting that his money must have been ill-gotten; many even go so far as to say that he made it by deceiving people and exercising an undue influence over them. If we turn to the old *Archivarius* already mentioned, we find some very definite information that not only shows us whence the large fortune possessed by this mystic was derived, but also why he was so warmly welcomed by the King of France, and was so well known at all the courts of Europe. No obscure adventurer is this with whom we are dealing, but a man of princely blood, and of almost royal descent.

Turning back to the old chronicle we find in the volume for 1736 the will of the late Prince Franz-Leopold Ragoczy, in which both his sons are mentioned who have been already named, and also a third son. It also states that Louis XIV. had bought landed property for this Prince Ragoczy from the Polish Queen Maria, the rents of which property were invested by the order of the King of France in the Hôtel de Ville in Paris. We also find that considerable legacies were left which were to be demanded from the Crown of France. The executors of this will were the Duc de Bourbon, the Duc de Maine and the Comte de Charleroi and Toulouse. To their care Prince Ragoczy committed his third son, to whom also he left a

large legacy and other rights on this valuable property. Hence we must cast aside the theories that M. de St. Germain was a homeless and penniless adventurer, seeking to make money out of any kindly disposed person. These were the views and ideas of the newspaper and review writers of that day, put forward in the leading periodicals. Unfortunately the law of heredity prevails in this class of people, and there is a remarkable similarity between the epithets hurled by the press of the nineteenth century at the venturesome occultist of to-day and those flung at M. de St. Germain and other mystics of lesser importance and minor merit.

We will now pass from this portion of our subject to some of the personal incidents related of M. de St. Germain; perhaps the most interesting are those given by one who knew him personally in Anspach during the period that he was in close connection with the Markgraf. It appears that the mystic made two visits at different times to Schwalbach, and thence he went to Triesdorf. We will let the writer speak for himself on this point:--

"On hearing that a stranger, both remarkable and interesting, was at Schwalbach, the Markgraf of Brandenburg-Anspach invited him to come to Triesdorf in the spring, and the Graf Tzarogy (for this was the name under which he appeared) accepted this invitation, on the condition that they would allow him to live in his own way quite unnoticed and at peace.

He was lodged in the lower rooms of the Castle, below those occupied by Mademoiselle Clairon. The Markgraf and his wife lived in the Falkenhaus. The Graf Tzarogy had no servant of his own; he dined as simply as possible in his own room, which he seldom left. His wants were

extremely few, and he avoided all general society, spending the evenings in the company of only the Markgraf, Mademoiselle Clairon, and those persons whom the former was pleased to have around him. It was impossible to persuade the Graf Tzarogy to dine at the Prince's table, and he only saw the Markgräfin a few times, although she was very curious to make the acquaintance of this strange individual. In conversation the Graf was most entertaining, and showed much knowledge of the world and of men. He was always especially glad to speak of his childhood and of his mother, to whom he never referred without emotion, and often with tears in his eyes. If one could believe him, he had been brought up like a Prince. One day Tzarogy showed the Markgraf an invitation which he had received, sent by a courier, from the Graf Alexis Orloff, who was just returning from Italy; the letter pressed Graf Tzarogy to pay him a visit, as Graf Orloff was passing through Nuremberg. . . . The Markgraf went with Graf Tzarogy to Nuremberg, where the Graf Alexis Orloff had already arrived. On their arrival Orloff, with open arms, came forward to meet and embrace the Graf Tzarogy, who now appeared for the first time in the uniform of a Russian General; and Orloff called him several times, 'Caro padre,' 'Caro amico.' The Graf Alexis received the Markgraf of Brandenburg-Anspach with the most marked politeness, and thanked him several times for the protection which the Markgraf had accorded to his worthy friend; they dined together at midday. The conversation was most interesting; they spoke a good deal of the campaign in the Archipelago, and still more about useful and scientific discoveries. Orloff showed the Markgraf a piece of unignitable wood, which when tested produced neither flames nor cinders, but simply fell to pieces in light ashes, after it had swollen up like a sponge. After dinner Graf Orloff took the Graf Tzarogy into the

next room, where they remained for some considerable time together. The writer, who was standing at the window under which the carriages of Graf Orloff were drawn up, remarked that one of the Graf's servants came, opened one of the carriage doors and took out from the box under the seat a large red leather bag, and carried it upstairs to the other room. After their return to Anspach the Graf Tzarogy showed them, for the first time, his credentials as a Russian General with the Imperial seal attached; he afterwards informed the Markgraf that the name Tzarogy was an assumed name, and that his real name was Ragotzy, and that he was the sole representative and descendant of the late exiled Prince Ragotzy of Siebenbürgen of the time of the Emperor Leopold."

So far this narrative is tolerably accurate, but after this point the author proceeds with the history of what he considers the "unveiling" of the "notorious Comte de St. Germain," in which all the various theories about his birth, to which we have already referred, are retold with embellishments. Amongst other wild reports, it was stated that M. de St. Germain had only become acquainted with the Orloffs in Leghorn in 1770, whereas there are various historical proofs showing, without doubt, that he was in 1762 in St. Petersburg, where he knew the Orloffs well. We have moreover heard in Russia that he was staying with the Princess Marie Galitzin at Archangelskoi on March 3rd, 1762.

The following details were found in Russia, and sent by a Russian friend:--

"The Comte de St. Germain was here in the time of Peter III. and left when Catherine II came to the throne. M. Pyliaeff thinks even before Catherine's time.

"At St. Petersburg St. Germain lived with Count Rotari, the famous Italian painter, who was the painter of the beautiful portraits which are in the Peterhof palace.

"The street where they lived is supposed to be the Grafsky péréoulok ('péréoulok' means small street, and 'Grafsky' comes from Graf-Count) near the Anitchkoff bridge where the palace is, on the Newsky. St. Germain was a splendid violinist, he 'played like an orchestra.' In the 'Story of the Razoamovsky family' Alexis R. was reported to have spoken of a beautiful moonstone St. Germain had in his possession.

"M. Pyliaeff has seen (he cannot remember where now) a piece of music, some air for the harp, dedicated to Countess Ostermann by St. Germain's own hand *signed*. It is bound beautifully in red maroquin. The date is about 1760.

"M. Pyliaeff thinks that St. Germain was not in Moscow. He says the Youssouppoff family have many MSS. in old chests and that St. Germain was in relations with a Prince Youssouppoff to whom he gave the elixir for long life. He says, too, that St. Germain did not bear the name of Saltykoff (Soltikow) in Russia but that in Vienna he did take this name.

"About the music signed by St. Germain, M. Pyliaeff now recollects that it belonged to him himself. He bought it at some sale and had it for some time. Then he gave it to the famous composer Peter *Chaikowsky* as a present. It must now be in Chaikowsky's papers, but as the great musician had very little order, M. Pyliaeff thinks it very unlikely that it could be found, especially as at Chaikowsky's

sudden death all was left without any directions being given about the property."

We have said that the political events in his family had to some extent shadowed the life of M. de St. Germain; one remarkable instance of this we will now cite: it is, as far as we know, the only one in which he himself makes any direct reference to it, and it occurs some time later than the events which we have just been relating. After the return of the Markgraf from Italy, whither he had gone in 1776, and where he had heard some of the legends and fabrications above referred to, he appears to have sent the writer whom we have quoted to Schwalbach to see the Graf Tzarogy, and to test his *bona fides*. We will continue the history as he gives it. "On his arrival, he found M. de St. Germain ill in bed. When the matter was explained to him, he admitted with perfect coolness that he had assumed from time to time all the names mentioned, even down to that of Soltikow; but he said he was known on all sides, and to many people, under these names, as a man of honour, and that if any calumniator were venturing to accuse him of nefarious transactions, he was ready to exculpate himself in the most satisfactory manner, as soon as he knew of what he was accused, and who the accuser was who dared to attack him. He steadily asserted that he had not told the Markgraf any lies with reference to his name and his family. The proofs of his origin, however, were in the hands of a person on whom he was dependent (*i.e.*, the Emperor of Austria), a dependence which had brought on him, in the course of his life, the greatest *espionage*. . . . When he was asked why he had not informed the Markgraf about the different names under which he had appeared in so many different places, the Graf Tzarogy answered that he was under no obligations to the Markgraf, and that since he offended no one and did

no person any harm, he would only give such personal information after and not before he had dealings with them. The Graf said he had never abused the confidence of the Markgraf; he had given his real name. . . . after this he still remained at Schwalbach." A little later the author of the paragraph just quoted remarks: "What resources M. de St. Germain had, to defray the necessary expenses of his existence, is hard to guess."

It appears curious to us that the writer knew so little of contemporary history. As we have seen, all the sons of Prince Ragoczy were amply provided for, and the proofs were even more accessible than they are in our day. He goes on to say in conclusion: "It would be an ungrateful task to declare that this man was a swindler; for this proofs are required and they are not to be had." This is truly an ingenious statement, but borders somewhat on libel; to speak of any one as a swindler without any proof is beyond the bounds of ordinary fairness, and it is especially incongruous in view of the final paragraph, which is as follows: "As long as the Graf had dealings with the Markgraf, he never asked for anything, and never received anything of the slightest value, and never mixed himself up in anything which did not concern him. On account of his extremely simple life, his wants were very limited; when he had money he shared it with the poor."

If we compare these words with those spoken of M. de St. Germain by his friend Prince Charles of Hesse, we shall find they are in perfect accord. The only wonder is that a writer who speaks such words of praise can even hint that his subject might be a "swindler." If such words can be rightly spoken of an "adventurer," then would it be well for the world if a few more of like sort could be found.

**By Isabel Cooper-Oakley**



# TRINOSOPHIA, THE RAREST OF MANUSCRIPTS

*By Manly P. Hall*

From 'The Most Holy Trinosophia of the Comte De St. Germain,'  
Introductions by Manly P. Hall, Phoenix Press, Los Angeles, CA  
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mystical writing of the Comte de St.-Germain, but it is one of the most extraordinary documents relating to the Hermetic sciences ever compiled. Though the libraries of European Rosicrucians and Cabbalists contain many rare treasures of ancient philosophical lore, it is extremely doubtful if any of them include a treatise of greater value or significance. There is a persistent rumor that St.-Germain possessed a magnificent library, and that he

prepared a number of manuscripts on the secret sciences for the use of his disciples. At the time of his death . . . or disappearance . . . these books and papers vanished, probably into the archives of his society, and no trustworthy information is now available as to their whereabouts.

The mysterious Comte is known to have possessed at one time a copy of the Vatican manuscript of the Cabbala, a work of extraordinary profundity setting forth the doctrines of the Lucianiasts and the Gnostics. The second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky (pp. 582-83 of the original edition) contains two quotations from a manuscript "supposed to be by the Comte St.-Germain". The parts of the paragraphs attributed to the Hungarian adept are not clearly indicated, but as the entire text deals with the significance of numbers, it is reasonable to infer that his commentaries are mystical interpretations of the numerals 4 and 5. Both paragraphs are in substance similar to the *Puissance des nombres d'après Pythagore* by Jean Marie Ragon. The Mahatma Koot Hoomi mentions a "ciphered MS." by St.-Germain which remained with his staunch friend and patron the benevolent Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel (See *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*). Comparatively unimportant references to St.-Germain, and wild speculations concerning his origin and the purpose of his European activities, are available in abundance, but the most exhaustive search of the work of eighteenth century memoir writers for information regarding the Masonic and metaphysical doctrines which he promulgated has proved fruitless. So far as it has been possible to ascertain, the present translation and publication of *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* affords the first opportunity to possess a work setting forth . . . in the usual veiled and symbolic manner . . . the esoteric doctrines of St.-Germain, and his associates.

*La Très Sainte Trinosophie* is MS. No. 2400 in the French Library at Troyes. The work is of no great length, consisting of ninety-six leaves written upon one side only. The calligraphy is excellent. Although somewhat irregular in spelling and accenting, the French is scholarly and dramatic, and the text is embellished with numerous figures, well drawn and brilliantly colored. In addition to the full-page drawings there are small symbols at the beginning and end of each of the sections. Throughout the French text there are scattered letters, words, and phrases in several ancient languages. . There are also magical symbols, figures resembling Egyptian hieroglyphics, and a few words in characters resembling cuneiform. At the end of the manuscript are a number of leaves written in arbitrary ciphers, possibly the code used by St.-Germain's secret society. The work was probably executed in the latter part of the eighteenth century, though most of the material belongs to a considerably earlier period.

As to the history of this remarkable manuscript, too little, unfortunately, is known. The illustrious Freemasonic martyr, the Comte Allesandro Cagliostro, carried this book amongst others with him on his ill-fated journey to Rome. After Cagliostro's incarceration in the Castle San Leo, all trace of the manuscript was temporarily lost. Eventually Cagliostro's literary effects came into the possession of a general in Napoleon's army, and upon this officer's death *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* was bought at a nominal price by the Bibliothèque de Troyes. In his *Musée des Sorciers*, Grillot de Givry adds somewhat to the meager notes concerning the manuscript. He states that the volume was bought at the sale of Messena's effects; that in the front of the book is a note by a philosopher who signs himself "I.B.C. Philotaume" who states that the manuscript belonged to him and is the sole existing copy of the famous

Trinosophie of the Comte de St.-Germain, the original of which the Comte himself destroyed on one of his journeys. The note then adds that Cagliostro had owned the volume, but that the Inquisition had seized it in Rome when he was arrested at the end of 1789. (It should be remembered that Cagliostro and his wife had visited St.-Germain at a castle in Holstein.) De Givry sums up the contents of *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* as "Cabbalized alchemy" and describes St.-Germain as "one of the enigmatic personages of the eighteenth century . . . an alchemist and man of the world who passed through the drawing rooms of all Europe and ended by falling into the dungeons of the Inquisition at Rome, if the manuscript is to be believed".

The title of the manuscript, *La Très Sainte Trinosophie*, translated into English means "The Most Holy Trinisophia" or "The Most Holy Three-fold Wisdom". The title itself opens a considerable field of speculation. Is there any connection between *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* and the Masonic brotherhood of *Les Trinosophists* which was founded in 1805 by the distinguished Belgian Freemason and mystic Jean Marie Ragon, already referred to? The knowledge of occultism possessed by Ragon is mentioned in terms of the highest respect by H. P. Blavatsky who says of him that "for fifty years he studied the ancient mysteries wherever he could find accounts of them". Is it not possible that Ragon as a young man either knew St.-Germain or contacted his secret society? Ragon was termed by his contemporaries "the most learned Mason of the nineteenth century". In 1818, before the Lodge of *Les Trinosophists*, he delivered a course of lectures on ancient and modern initiation which he repeated at the request of that lodge in 1841. These lectures were published under the title *Cours Philosophique et Interprétatif des Initiations Anciennes et Modernes*. In 1853 Ragon published his most important

work *Orthodoxie Maçonnique*. Ragon died in Paris about 1866 and two years later his unfinished manuscripts were purchased from his heirs by the Grand Orient of France for one thousand francs. A high Mason told Madam Blavatsky that Ragon had corresponded for years with two Orientalists in Syria and Egypt, one of whom was a Copt gentleman.

Ragon defined the Lodge of the *Trinosophists* as "those who study three sciences". Madame Blavatsky writes: "It is on the occult properties of the three equal lines or sides of the Triangle that Ragon based his studies and founded the famous Masonic Society of the *Trinosophists*". Ragon describes the symbolism of the triangle in substance as follows: The first side or line represents the mineral kingdom which is the proper study for Apprentices; the second line represents the vegetable kingdom which the Companions should learn to understand because in this kingdom generation of bodies begins; the third line represents the animal kingdom from the exploration of which the Master Mason must complete his education. It has been said of the Lodge of the Trinosophists that "it was at one time the most intelligent society of Freemasons ever known. It adhered to the ancient Landmarks but gave clearer and more satisfactory interpretations to the symbols of Freemasonry than are afforded in the symbolical Lodges". It practiced five degrees. In the Third, candidates for initiation received a philosophic and astronomic explanation of the Hiramic Legend.

The Egyptianized interpretation of Freemasonic symbolism which is so evident in the writings of Ragon and other French Masonic scholars of the same period (such as Court de Gabelin and Alexandre Lenoir) is also present in the figures and text of the St.-Germain

manuscript. In his comments on the Rite of Misraim, called the Egyptian Rite, Ragon distinguishes 90 degrees of Masonic Mysteries. The 1st to 33rd degrees he terms symbolic; the 34th to 66th degrees, philosophic; the 67th to 77th, mystic; and the 78th to 90th, Cabbalistic. The Egyptian Freemasonry of Cagliostro may also have been derived from St.-Germain or from some common body of Illuminists of whom St.-Germain was the moving spirit. Cagliostro's memoirs contain a direct statement of his initiation into the Order of Knights Templars at the hands of St.-Germain. De Luchet gives what a modern writer on Cagliostro calls a fantastic account of the visit paid by Allesandro and his wife the Comtesse Felicitas to St.-Germain in Germany, and their subsequent initiation by him into the sect of the Rosicrucians – of which he was the Grand Master or chief. There is nothing improbable in the assumption that Cagliostro secured *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* from St.-Germain and that the manuscript is in every respect an authentic ritual of this society.

The word *Trinosophie* quite properly infers a triple meaning to the contents of the book, in other words that its meaning should be interpreted with the aid of three keys. From the symbolism it seems that one of these keys is alchemy, or soul-chemistry; another Essenian Cabbalism; and the third Alexandrian Hermetism, the mysticism of the later Egyptians. From such fragments of the Rosicrucian lore as now exists, it is evident that the Brethren of the Rose Cross were especially addicted to these three forms of the ancient wisdom, and chose the symbols of these schools as the vehicles of their ideas.

The technical task of decoding the hieroglyphics occurring

throughout La Très Sainte Trinosophie was assigned to Dr. Edward C. Getsinger, an eminent authority on ancient alphabets and languages, who is now engaged in the decoding of the primitive ciphers in the Book of Genesis. A few words from his notes will give an idea of the difficulties involved in decoding:

"Archaic writings are usually in one system of letters or characters, but those among the ancients who were in possession of the sacred mysteries of life and certain secret astronomical cycles never trusted this knowledge to ordinary writing, but devised secret codes by which they concealed their wisdom from the unworthy. Each of these communities or brotherhoods of the enlightened devised its own code. About 3000 B. C. only the Initiates and their scribes could read and write. At that period the simpler methods of concealment were in vogue, one of which was to drop certain letters from words in such a manner that the remaining letters still formed a word which, however, conveyed an entirely different sense. As ages progressed other systems were invented, until human ingenuity was taxed to the utmost in an endeavor to conceal and yet perpetuate sacred knowledge.

"In order to decipher ancient writings of a religious or philisophic nature, it is first necessary to discover the code or method of concealment used by the scribe. In all my twenty years of experience as a reader of archaic writings I have never encountered such ingenious codes and methods of concealment as are found in this manuscript. In only a few instances are complete phrases written in the same alphabet; usually two or three forms of writing are employed, with letters written upside down, reversed, or with the text written backwards. Vowels are often omitted, and at times several letters are missing with merely dots to

indicate their number. Every combination of hieroglyphics seemed hopeless at the beginning, yet, after hours of alphabetic dissection, one familiar word would appear. This gave a clue as to the language used, and established a place where word combination might begin, and then a sentence would gradually unfold.

"The various texts are written in Chaldean Hebrew, Ionic Greek, Arabic, Syriac, cuneiform, Greek hieroglyphics, and ideographs. The keynote throughout this material is that of the approach of the age when the Leg of the Grand Man and the Waterman of the Zodiac shall meet in conjunction at the equinox and end a grand 400,000-year cycle. This points to a culmination of eons, as mentioned in the Apocalypse: "Behold! I make a new heaven and a new earth," meaning a series of new cycles and a new humanity.

"The personage who gathered the material in this manuscript was indeed one whose spiritual understanding might be envied. He found these various texts in different parts of Europe, no doubt, and that he had a true knowledge of their import is proved by the fact that he attempted to conceal some forty fragmentary ancient texts by scattering them within the lines of his own writing. Yet his own text does not appear to have any connection with these ancient writings. If a decipherer were to be guided by what this eminent scholar wrote he would never decipher the mystery concealed within the cryptic words. There is a marvelous spiritual story written by this savant, and a more wonderful one he interwove within the pattern of his own narrative. The result is a story within a story."

In the reprinting of the French text of the *Trinosophia*, the spelling and punctuation is according to the original. It has



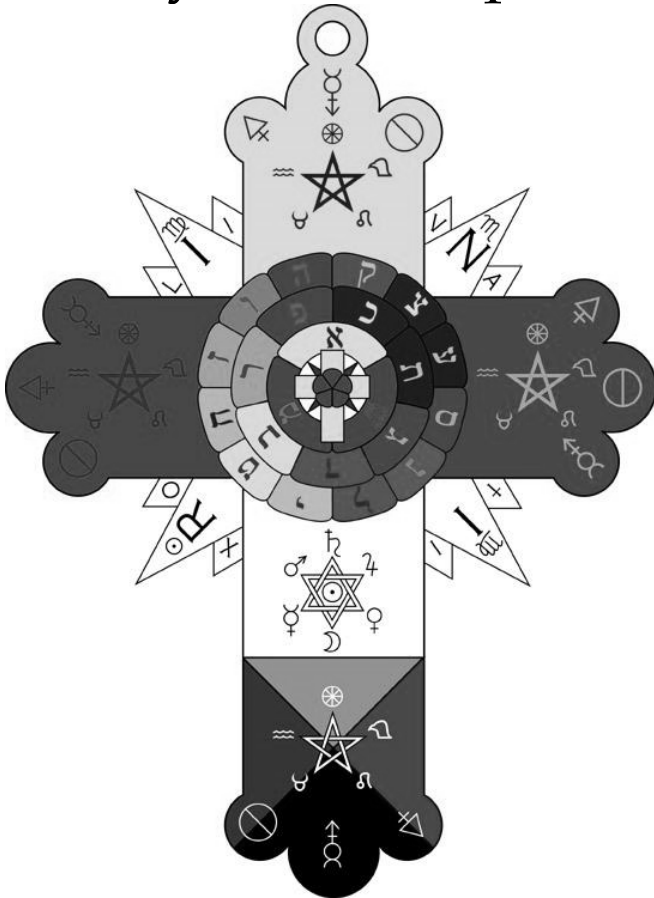
been impossible, however, to reproduce certain peculiarities of the calligraphy. In some cases the punctuation is obscure, accents are omitted, and dashes of varying lengths are inserted to fill out lines. The present manuscript is undoubtedly a copy, as "Philotaume" stated. The archaic characters and the hieroglyphics reveal minor imperfections of formation due to the copyist being unfamiliar with the alphabets employed.

The considerable extent of the notes and commentaries has made it advisable to place them together at the end of the work rather than break up the continuity of the text by over-frequent interpolations.

*La Très Sainte Trinosophie* is not a manuscript for the tyro. Only deep study and consideration will unravel the complicated skein of its symbolism. Although the text matter is treated with the utmost simplicity, every line is a profound enigma. Careful perusal of the book, and meditation upon its contents, will convince the scholar that it has been well designated "the most precious known manuscript of occultism."

**By Manly P. Hall**

# 'Secret Friend of Franz Hartmann – Forgotten Mystical Adept'



Rosy Cross, by Hermetic Soft

The secret friend to Franz Hartman is truly forgotten as even his/her name is completely lost to history. All that remains is the record given to Franz Hartmann from this forgotten mystic of this fascinating mystical journey. Franz Hartmann leaves us with only a few words to describe how he came upon the manuscript in question.

"THE following account of a psychic experience has been gathered from notes handed to me by a friend, a writer of considerable repute. Whether the adventures told therein are to be regarded as a dream, or an actual experience on the astral plane, I must leave to the reader to judge."

*With the Adepts, An Adventure Among the Rosicrucians, Franz Hartmann, William Rider & Son: London, 1910*

The experiences of this completely forgotten mystic speak for themselves and begin with a prayerful inquiry.

### UNEXPECTED REVELATIONS

"THE Adept paused, and my mind was invaded by a multitude of questions to which I could find no answer: "What is nature, and what is man? Why am I in this world? Did I exist before, and, if so, where did I come from? What is the object of my existence, and how will it end?"

Again the Adept, reading my thoughts, answered: "Mortal man, as you know him, is an intellectual animal, living a sort of dream-life among dream-pictures which he mistakes for realities. Real man is a celestial being, a soul dwelling temporarily within a material body. Within this organism the spiritual, divine spark finds the proper soil to generate and develop the immortal man, as has been described by Saint Paul, who speaks of that spark of divine

consciousness as being sown in corruption and raised in incorruption. This spiritual man is in each person his or her personal God and Redeemer. While a man is unacquainted with the processes going on in his invisible organism, he will have little power to guide and control these processes; he will resemble a plant, which is dependent for its growth on the elements which are unconsciously brought to it by the winds and the rains, or which may accidentally be found in its surroundings; it has neither the power to prevent nor to promote its own growth. But when man obtains a knowledge of the constitution of his own soul, when he becomes conscious of the processes going on in its organism and learns to guide and control them, he will be able to command his own growth. He will become free to select or to reject the psychic influences which come within his sphere, he will become his own master and attain--so to say--psychic locomotion. He will then be as much superior to a man without such knowledge and power as an animal is superior to a plant; for while an animal may go in search of its food and select or reject what it pleases, the plant is chained to its place and depends entirely on the conditions which that one place affords. The ignorant depends on the conditions prepared for him; the wise can choose his conditions himself."

"And what will be the end and object of this?" I asked.

"The end of it," was the answer, "is that the soul of man enjoys supreme bliss in realizing that she herself is everything and that there is nothing beyond her. The object is that mortal man shall become immortal, and a perfect instrument for the manifestation of divine wisdom."

I heard the answer of the Master, but I could not grasp its meaning. What could that "soul" be of which he spoke as being as big as the universe, and could my soul possess any other vehicle or organism than my visible material body?

While I was meditating, the Adept stepped with me to a window where the inaccessible mountain was seen, and pointing it out to me, he said: "Behold there the door by which you entered our stronghold; concentrate your attention upon the way you came, and seek with the eye of your soul to penetrate to the other side of the mountain."

I did so, and suddenly I found myself standing at that other side, upon the place where I had lain down to rest. Before me, upon the ground, was stretched out an apparently lifeless human figure, and to my horror I recognized it as being my own bodily self. At first everything seemed a dream, but then the thought came to me that I must have died. There was my body; and nevertheless I was myself, and saw myself such as I had always been, with all my organs and limbs and even the same clothing which the corpse before me wore. The hat of the corpse was drawn over its eyes, and I attempted to lift it; but I might just as well have tried to lift the inaccessible mountain. There was no physical strength within my arms. I realized that my present body consisted of a state of matter differing from that of the physical plane.

I thought I must have died, and a feeling of disgust came over me, thinking that I had ever inhabited that now lifeless, grossly material form; I was so glad to be free, and had no wish to re-enter it.

But an inner voice seemed to speak to me, saying that the time of my laboring in the mundane sphere had not yet ended, and that I must return. I even felt a sort of pity for that helpless body, and the sympathy caused thereby created a strong attraction. I felt myself drawn towards that body, and was about losing my consciousness when I was called away by hearing the voice of the Master. I started as one who awakes from a dream; the Adept stood by my side, and the vision was gone.

"Know now, my friend!" he said, "the difference between your physical and your psychical or astral organism. The divine soul has many vehicles through which it may act and manifest its powers."

"But why," I asked, "are these things not recognized by academical science?"

"On account of self-conceit," answered the Adept. "The scientists, up to a very recent date, used to discard such questions as being unworthy of their consideration, and they preferred annihilation rather than confess that there was something in the wide expanse of nature which they did not already know. The theories advanced by the theologians were not more satisfactory than those of the scientists, for they believed--or professed to believe--that man was a complete being, in a finished state, with perfect freedom of will, and, as a punishment for his subsequent bad behavior, made a prisoner upon this planet. Furthermore, they were of the opinion that, if a man were leading a pious life, or, after leading a wicked life, obtained pardon for his sins and the favor of God, he would after his death become a celestial being, be ushered into a paradise, and live there for ever in a state of never-ending enjoyment.

"It will be acknowledged now by every independent thinker, that these theories were not very satisfactory to those who desired to know the truth. But there was nothing either to prove or to contradict such assumptions, and, moreover, the multitude did not think; they paid their clergy to do their thinking for them.

"Since the publication of 'The Secret Doctrine' the opinions of the scientists and those of the theologians have been equally shaken to their foundations. The old truth which was known to the ancients, but which had been almost entirely forgotten during our modern age of materialism, that man is not a finished being, incapable of any further organic development, but that his body and his mind are continually subject to transformation and change, and that no transformation can take place where no substance exists, because force cannot exist without substance, has become almost universally known. It was demonstrated to the scientists that their science extended only to a very small portion of that mysterious being called Man; that they only knew his outward appearance, his shell, but nothing of the living power acting within that mask which is called the physical body. It was demonstrated to the presumptuous theologians who believed that man's eternal welfare or damnation depended on their blessings or curses, that justice cannot be separated from God, and that man's salvation depends upon his own spiritual evolution. It was made logically comprehensible to the intellect that God in man will continue to live after all the lower and imperfect elements are dissolved, and that therefore a man in whom God did not exist in a state of divinity could not, after the death of his body, jump into a higher state for which he was not fit, and which he was not able to attain while alive.

"The exposition of the essential constitution of Man, known to the Indian sages, described three hundred years ago by Theophrastus Paracelsus, and again set forth more fully and clearly than ever before by H. P. Blavatsky and other theosophical writers, is calculated to humble the pride of the scientists and the vanity of the priests. When it is once more known and digested, it will prove to the learned how little they know, and it will draw the line for the legitimate activity of the clergyman as an instructor in morals. It proves that man is not already a god, as some had imagined themselves to be. It proves that he may look like an intellectual giant, and still be, spiritually considered, only a dwarf. It demonstrates that the law which governs the growth of organisms on the physical plane is not reversed when it acts upon the corresponding organisms on the psychical plane. It shows that out of nothing nothing can grow; but that wherever there is the germ of something, even if that germ is invisible, something may grow and develop.

"The growth of every germ and of every being, as far as we know it, depends on certain conditions. These conditions may be established either by means of the intellectual activity of the being itself, which has the power to surround itself by such conditions, or they may have been established by external causes, over which the being has no control. A plant or an animal cannot grow unless it receives the food and the stimulus which it requires; the intellect cannot expand unless it is fed with ideas and stimulated by reason to assimilate them; the soul cannot become strong unless she finds in the lower principles the nutriment required for the acquisition of strength, and is stimulated by the light of wisdom to select that which she requires."



Here again the thought occurred to me, how agreeable and profitable it would be to live in such a Rosicrucian convent, where everything was rendered comfortable, no disturbing elements being admitted. To this the Master answered:

"One element necessary for the development of strength is resistance. If we enter one of the vast pine forests of the Alps, or of the Rocky Mountains in the United States, we find ourselves surrounded by towering trees, whose main trunks have very few branches. Upwards they rise like the masts of a ship, covered with a gray bark, naked, and without foliage. Only near the tops, that reach out of the shadows which they throw upon each other, the branches appear and spread up to the highest points, which wave their heads in the sunlight. These trees are all top-heavy; their chiefly or only well-developed parts are their heads, and all the life which they extract from the ground and the air seems to mount to their tops; while the trunks, although increasing in size as the tree grows, are left undeveloped and bare of branches. Thus they may stand and grow from year to year, and reach a mature age; but some day, sooner or later, some dark clouds collect around the snowy peaks and assume a threatening aspect; the gleam of lightnings appears among the swelling masses, the sound of thunder is heard, bolts of liquid light dart from the rents in the clouds, and suddenly the storm sweeps down from the summit into the valley. Then the work of devastation begins. These top-heavy trees, having but little strength in their feet, are mowed down by the wind like so many stems of straw in a field of wheat; there they lie rank after rank, having tumbled over each other in their fall, and their corpses encumber the mountain sides. But at the edge of the timber, and outside of the main body of the forest, looking like outposts or sentinels near the

lines of a battle, there are still here and there some solitary pines to whom the storm could do no harm. They have, on account of their isolated positions, been exposed to winds all their lives; they have become used to it and grown strong. They have not been protected and sheltered by their neighbors. They are not top-heavy, for their great strong branches grow out from the trunk a few feet above the soil, continuing up to the tops, and their roots have grown through the crevices of the rocks, holding on to them with an iron grasp. They have met with resistance since the time of their youth, and, by resisting, have gained their strength.

"Thus intellectual man, growing up protected by fashion and friends in a school, college, university, or perhaps within the walls of the convent, finds himself isolated from contrary influences and meets with but little resistance. Crowded together with those who think like him, he lives and thinks like the others. Over their heads waves the banner of some accepted authority, and upon that banner are inscribed certain dogmas in which they believe without ever daring to doubt their veracity. There they grow, throwing upon each other the shadow of their ignorance, and each prevents the others from seeing the sunlight of truth. There they cram their brains with authorized opinions, learning details of our illusory life which they mistake for the real existence; they become top-heavy, for all the energy which they receive from the universal fountain of life goes to supply the brain; the soul is left without supply; the strength of character, of which the heart is the seat, suffers; the intellect is overfed and the spirit is starved. Thus they may grow up and become proud of their knowledge; but perhaps some day new and strange ideas appear on the mental horizon, a wind begins to blow, and down tumbles the banner upon which their

dogmas have been inscribed, and their pride tumbles down with it.

"But not only on the physical and the intellectual plane; in the realm of the emotions, too, the same law prevails. He who desires to develop strength must not be afraid of resistance; he must obtain strength in his feet. He must be prepared to meet the wind of the lower emotions, and not be overthrown when the storms of passion arise. He should force himself to remain in contact with that which is not according to his taste, and even to harmonies with that which appears inimical, for it is really his friend, because it can supply him with strength. He should learn to bear calumny and animosity, envy and opposition; he should learn to endure suffering, and to estimate life at its true value. The contrary influences to which he has been exposed may cause a tempest to rage through his heart; but when he has gained the power to command the tempest to cease and to say to the excited waves: be still! then will the first gleam of the rising sun appear in his heart, and before its warm glow the cold moonlight thrown out by the calculating and reflecting brain will grow pale; a new and still larger world than the external one will appear before his interior vision, in which he will be contented to live, and where he will find an inexhaustible source of happiness, unknown to those who live a life of the senses. Henceforth he will require no more to speculate reflectively about the truth, for he will see it clear in his own heart. Henceforth he will not be required to be exposed to storms, but may seek shelter in a tranquil place; not because he is afraid of the storms, which can do him no harm, but because he wants to employ his energies for the full development of the newly awakened spiritual germ, instead of wasting them uselessly on the outward plane.

"What the disciple ought to seek is to strengthen his character, which constitutes his real individuality; keeping it always in harmony with the law of divine wisdom and love. A man without strength of character is without true individuality, without self-reliance, moved only by the emotions which arise in his mind and which belong to powers foreign to his divine nature.

"Only after the attainment of a certain state of maturity, life in a solitude, isolated from contrary influences, becomes desirable and useful, and those who retire from the world as long as they need the world are attempting to ascend to the kingdom of heaven by beginning at the top of the ladder. Let him who needs the world remain in the world. The greater the temptations are by which he is surrounded, the greater will be his strength if he successfully resists. Only he who can control his mind and within his own mental sphere create the conditions which his spirit requires, is independent of all external conditions and free. He who cannot evolve a world within his own soul needs the external world to evolve his soul.

*Unspiritual* men, therefore, who retire from the world because they are afraid of the world, cannot be considered to be heroes who have renounced the world; they deserve rather to be regarded as cowards who have deserted their ranks at the beginning of the battle with life. Such people sometimes retire into convents for the purpose of having a comfortable life, and in addition to that a ticket to heaven. They imagine they do a service to God by leading a harmless and useless life; for which imaginary service they expect to obtain a reward at the end of life. But the reward which they will receive will also exist merely in their imagination. As the sensualist wastes his time in the prosecution of useless pleasures, so the bigot wastes his

time in useless ceremonies and prayers. The actions of the former are instigated by a desire for sensual pleasure in this life, those of the latter by the hope for pleasure in another life; both are acting for the purpose of gratifying their own selfish desires. I am unable to see any essential difference between the motives and morals of the two.

"But with *spiritually developed* man the case is entirely different. The divine spark in man exists independent of the conditions of relative space and time; it is eternal and self-existent. It cannot be angered by opposition, nor irritated by contradiction, nor be thrown into confusion by sophistry. If it has once become conscious of its own power, it will not require the stimulus needed by the physical organism and afforded by the impressions which come through the avenues of the senses from the outer world; for it is itself that stimulus which creates worlds within its own substance. It is the Lord over all the animal elemental forces in the astral body of man, and their turmoil can neither educate nor degrade it, for it is Divinity itself in its pure state, being eternal, unchangeable, and free."

"Do you mean to say," I asked, "that all asceticism and self-denial is useless?" And the Master answered:

"It all depends upon the motive. All that the egotist does for his own selfish progress and aggrandizement is useless; it is done for an illusion, and increases his self-conceit. But this you will understand only when the consciousness of the divine state awakens within you, and you begin to realize the difference between your true and your illusive self.

"He in whom this divine principle has once awakened, he who has once practically experienced the inner life, who has visited the kingdom of heaven within his own soul, he who stands firm upon his feet, will no more need the educating influences of the contending storms of the outer world, to gain strength by resistance; nor will he experience any desire to return to the pleasures and tomfooleries of the world. He renounced nothing when he retired into the solitude; for it cannot be looked upon as an act of renunciation if we throw away a thing which is a burden to us. He cannot be called an *ascetic*; for he does not undergo any discipline or process of hardening; it is no act of self-denial to refuse things which we do not want. The true ascetic is he who lives in the world, surrounded by its temptations; he in whose soul the animal elements are still active, craving for the gratification of their desires and possessing the means for their gratification, but who by the superior power of his will conquers his animal self. Having attained that state, he may retire from the world and employ his energies for the employment and the further expansion of the spiritual power which he possesses. He will be perfectly happy, because that which he desires he can create in his own interior world. He expects no future reward in heaven; for what could heaven offer to him except happiness which he already possesses. He desires no other good but to create good for the world.

"If you could establish theosophical academies where intellectual and spiritual development would go hand in hand, where a new science could be taught, based upon a true knowledge of the fundamental laws of the universe, and where at the same time man would be taught how to obtain mastery over himself, you would confer the greatest possible benefit upon the world. Such a convent would, moreover, afford immense advantages for the

advancement of intellectual research. The establishment of a number of such places of learning would dot the mental horizon of the world with stars of the first magnitude, from which rays of intellectual light would stream and penetrate the world. Standing upon a far higher plane than the material science of our times, a new and far greater field would be laid open for investigation and research in these centers. Knowing all the different opinions of the highest accepted authorities, and not being bound by an orthodox scientific creed, having at their service all the results of the investigations of the learned, but not being bound to their systems by a belief in their infallibility, such people would be at liberty to think freely. Their convents would become centers of intelligence, illuminating the world; and if their power of self-control would grow in equal proportion with the development of their intellect, they would soon be able to enter adeptship."

The Adept had spoken these words with unusual warmth, as if he intended to appeal to my sympathy and to induce me to use my efforts to establish such convents; there was a look of pity in his eyes, as if he exceedingly regretted the state of poor ignorant humanity, with whose Karma he was not permitted to interfere forcibly, according to the established rules of his order. I, too, regretted my own inability to establish such academies, and for once I wished that I were rich, so as to be able to make at least an attempt with one such establishment. But immediately the Emperor saw my thought in my mind, and said:

"You mistake; it is not the want of money which prevents us from executing this idea; it is the impossibility of finding at present the proper kind of people to inhabit the convent after it is established. Indeed, we would be poor alchemists if we could not produce gold in any desirable

quantity, if some real benefit for humanity could be affected thereby, and of this I shall convince you, if you desire it. But gold is a curse to mankind, and we do not wish to increase the curse from which humanity suffers. Distribute gold among men, and you will only create a craving for more; give them power, and you will transform them into devils. No; it is not gold that we need; it is men who thirst after true wisdom. There are thousands who desire knowledge, but few who desire wisdom. Intellectual development, sagacity, craftiness, cunning, are to-day mistaken for spiritual development, but this conception is wrong; animal cunning is not intelligence, craftiness is not wisdom, and most of your learned men are the last ones who can bear the truth. Even many of your would-be occultists and so-called Rosicrucian's have taken up their investigations merely for the purpose of gratifying their idle curiosity, while others desire to pry into the secrets of nature to obtain knowledge which they hope to employ for the attainment of selfish ends. Give us men or women who desire nothing else but the truth, and we will take care of their needs. How much money will it require to lodge a person who cares nothing for comfort? What will it take to furnish the kitchen for those who have no desire for dainties? What libraries will be required for those who can read in the book of nature? What external pictures will please those who wish to avoid a life of the senses and to retire within their own selves? What terrestrial scenery shall be selected for those who live within the paradise of their souls? What company will please those who converse with their own higher self? How can we amuse those who live in the presence of God?"

Here the Adept paused for a moment, and then continued, saying: "Verily the theosophical monastery of which I dream is even superior to ours. It is located far away from



this earth, and yet it can be reached without trouble and without expense. Its monks and nuns have risen above the sphere of self. They have a temple of infinite dimensions, pervaded by the spirit of sanctity, which is the common possession of all. There the differentiation of the Universal Soul ceases, and Unification takes place. It is a convent where there exists no difference of sex, of taste, opinion, and desire; where vice cannot enter; where none are born, or marry, or die, but where they live like the angels; each one constituting the centre of a power for good; each one immersed in an infinite ocean of light; each one able to see all he desires to see, to know all he wants to know, growing in strength and expanding in size, until he embraces the All and is one with it."

For a moment it seemed as if the soul of the Adept had gone and visited that blissful state of Nirvana, a state of which we mortals cannot conceive; but soon the light returned into his eyes, and he smilingly excused himself, saying that he had permitted himself to be carried away by the sublimity of this idea. I ventured to say that probably millions of ages would pass away before mankind would arrive at that state.

"Alas!" he answered, "the conditions which our present state of civilization imposes upon its followers are now such as to force the vast majority of humanity to employ nearly all their time and energy in an outward direction, instead of employing them for their inward growth. Each man has a certain amount of energy which he may call his own. If he wastes his energy on the outward plane, either for the attainment of sensual gratification or in intellectual pursuits, he will have nothing left to nourish the divine germ in his heart. If he continually concentrates his mind outwardly, there will be no inward concentration of

thought, which is absolutely necessary for the attainment of self-knowledge. The laboring classes, men of commerce, scientists, doctors, lawyers, and clergymen are all actively engaged in outward affairs, and find little time for the inward concentration of their powers. The majority are continually occupied in running after shadows and illusions, which are at best only useful as long as they last, but whose usefulness ceases when the heart ceases to beat. Their time and energy are taken up in procuring what they call the 'necessaries of life,' and they excuse themselves by saying that it is their misfortune to be so situated as to be forced to procure them. Nature, however, cares nothing for our excuses; the law of cause and effect is blind and inaccessible to argumentation. A man climbing over a mountain top and falling over a precipice, is as much in danger of breaking his neck as if he had jumped down voluntarily; a man who is not able to progress will be left as far behind as one who does not desire to progress. But nature is not so cruel as she appears to be to the superficial observer. That which man requires for the purpose of living is very little indeed, and can usually be easily obtained; for nature has amply provided for all of her children, and if they cannot all obtain their proper share then there must be something seriously wrong, either with them individually or with the social organization as a whole. There is undoubtedly a great deal wrong in our social organization, and our philosophers and politicians are continually trying to remedy it. They will succeed in their task when they succeed in making the laws of the human world harmonies with the laws of nature, and not before. That event may take place in the far distant future. We have not the time to wait for it. Let each one attempt to restore harmony in his own individual organism and live according to natural laws, and the harmony of the social organism as a whole will be restored."

The words of the Adept caused me some irritation, for I loved the comforts of life. A spirit of contradiction arose within me and caused me to say: "Would you, then, do away with all luxuries, which at our present stage of civilization have become necessities? Would you have us return to the semi-animal state of our forefathers, living as savages in the woods? I know there are certain cranks that harbor such views."

"Not so," answered the Adept. "The great bulk of those things which are said to be the necessities of life are only artificially created necessities, and millions of people lived and attained old age long before many of the things which our modern civilization considers as absolutely necessary had been discovered or invented. The term 'necessity' has a relative meaning; and to a king a dozen of palaces, to a nobleman a carriage and four, may appear as much a necessity as to a beggar a bottle of whisky, or to a fashionable man a new swallowtail coat. To get rid at once of all such fancied necessities and the trouble which is imposed upon us to attain them, the shortest and surest way is to rise above such necessities and to consider them not to be necessary at all. Then a great amount of our energy would become free, and might be employed for the acquisition of that which is really necessary, because it is eternal and permanent, while that which serves merely temporal purposes ends in time.

"There are thousands of people engaged in prying into the details of the constitution of external objects and in learning the chemical and physiological processes going on therein, and some are sacrificing their soul and extinguishing the spark of divinity within themselves by perpetrating the most inhuman cruelties upon their fellow-beings for the purpose of gratifying their scientific

curiosity and making useless discoveries for the promotion of their ambition; but they do not manifest the least desire to know their own real self, although it would seem that such a knowledge is far more important. Modern science says that she wants to know the laws of nature in all their minute ramifications, and yet she pays no attention whatever to the universal and fundamental law from which all these ramifications spring; and thus she resembles an insect crawling over a fallen leaf and imagining thereby to learn the qualities of the tree. It is surely the prerogative of intellectual man to investigate intellectually all the departments of nature; but the investigation of external things is only of secondary importance to the attainment of knowledge of our own interior powers. All primary powers act from within; effects are secondary to causes. He who considers the knowledge of external things to be more important than the knowledge of God, possesses very little wisdom indeed."

"God?" I exclaimed. "What can we know about God? How can you prove that such a being exists?"

To this answered the Adept: "I am sorry for a man who is so far backward in his course of spiritual evolution that he is not yet able to recognize the presence of God in everything. The supreme spirit which pervades, embraces, and penetrates everything, being the very essence, soul, and life of all things in the universe, from the atom up to the whole solar system, is beyond all mental conception. If He could be grasped by the human intellect, that intellect would have to be greater than God. There is nothing real but God. Nature itself is only a manifestation of His power. Let no man expect that somebody will prove to him the existence of God; but let every one seek to be

himself a living witness of His presence and power by becoming god-like and divine by His divine grace. Man is destined to restore within himself the divine image. When he realizes the divine ideal within his heart, his pilgrimage through manifold incarnations will have ended and the object of his existence be accomplished. Peace be with you!"

As the Adept finished this sentence, a sound as if produced by the tinkling of small silver bells was heard in the air above our heads. I looked up, but nothing was to be seen from which that sound could have proceeded.

"This is the signal," said the Adept, "that the members of our order are assembled in the Refectory. Let us go to join their company. Some refreshment will undoubtedly be welcome to you."

*With the Adepts, An Adventure Among the Rosicrucians, Franz  
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# Excerpt from 'With the Adepts: An Adventure among the Rosicrucians.'

*By Franz Hartmann*

IT would be too tedious to some of our readers if I were to report all the instructions that were given to me by my kind guide Theodorus, who, for all I know, may have been known as the celebrated Theophrastus Paracelsus during his life in the physical body. I do not, however, feel myself justified in omitting to tell what he said in regard to the importance of practicing self-control and developing firmness of character and individuality. Previously to my visit to the Rosicrucian convent I had been made to believe that occultism and mysticism were things only for dreamers; adapted to persons living continually in the clouds, enjoying their superstitions and vagaries by building castles in the air; but now, I found, that self-reliance is a most necessary quality for a disciple of this sacred science, and that no science can be more exact than the one based upon our own exact spiritual knowledge and realized within our own soul. Thus Theodorus said:

"A power to become strong at a centre must be directed towards the centre; for it is only by resistance that it can accumulate and become strong. A king who goes away from his kingdom and leaves it without protection may find other rulers there when he attempts to return. To become conquerors over nature we must fight our own battles, and not wait until nature fights them for us. The more the animal elements within man's constitution are

stimulated into life and activity by the temptations coming from the external world through the avenues of the senses, the hotter will be the battle, and the stronger will man's power grow if he successfully resists. This is the battle which the great Gautama Buddha fought and from which he came out victorious, because he was overshadowed by the *Bo-tree* of Wisdom.

"I will attempt to give you a rational explanation of the effects of inward concentration, to show you how you may become a creator of your own world.

"According to the teachings of the sages the Universal Spirit called the world into existence by the power of His own thought. All great religions speak of a divine Triunity, according to Christianity called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The will or intention is the Father, the thought or idea the Son, and the creative power of the Father acting through the Son is the Holy Ghost. By this power the thoughts of the Father become manifest, and thus visible objective worlds are called into existence."

"But," said I, "where does the Father find the material or substance to render these thoughts visible and objective?"

"Within Himself," answered my guide, and, looking at me as if to make sure that I understood the meaning of what he said, he continued: "*Allah il Allah*, says the Mohammedan; God is God, and there is nothing beside Him. He is the All; matter and motion and space, consciousness, intelligence, wisdom, spirit, substance, energy, darkness, and light. The worlds are His outspoken thoughts; but there is nothing outside of Himself of which He might think, He being the All, including and penetrating everything. Thus everything exists within

Him, who is the life and soul of all things. In Him we live and move and have our being, and without Him we are nothing.

"Man is the god and creator of his own little world, and therefore similar processes take place when a person, by the power of introspection, directs his thoughts towards his own centre of consciousness within his 'heart.' Now this activity going towards the centre could never of itself have created an external world, because the external world belongs to the periphery, and it requires a centrifugal power to call it into existence. The introspective activity of the Mind is a centripetal power, and could therefore not act from the centre towards the periphery. But you know that every action is followed by a reaction. The centripetal power, finding resistance at the centre, returns and evolves a centrifugal activity, and this centrifugal power is called Imagination. This *Soul-energy* is the medium between the centre and the periphery, between Spirit and Matter, between the Creator and His creations, between God and Nature, or whatever names you may choose to give to them. The Soul-consciousness is the product of the centrifugal activity of the Mind, put into action by the centripetal activity of the Will.

"If these plain facts, expressed in plain language, without any scientific jargon, without circumlocutions, philosophical intricacies and modern gibberish, are comprehensible to you, all you have to do is to apply it to yourself. If you direct the power of your mind inwardly towards your centre, instead of letting it fly off at a tangent, the resistance which it finds at the centre will cause a reaction, and the stronger the centripetal power which you apply, the stronger will be the centrifugal power created; in other words, the stronger will your *Soul*



become, and, as she grows strong, her invisible, but nevertheless material, substance will penetrate your physical, visible body, and serve to transform it into a higher kind. Thus you may at the end become all *Soul*, and have no gross physical body. But long before that time arrives you will be able to act upon matter by the power of your soul, to cure your own bodily ills and those of other people, and to do many wonderful things, even at distances far away from your visible form; for the activity of the soul is not limited by the circumference of the physical form, but radiates far into the sphere of the Universal Mind."

I told Theodorus that these ideas were as yet too grand and too new to me, to be grasped immediately; but that I would attempt to remember them and to meditate about them in the future.

"You will do well if you do so," said the Adept, "and I will take care that they remain in your memory."

"If the doctrines of the sages are true," I replied, "it would seem that the vast majority of our thinkers are continually thinking the wrong way; because they are engaged all their lives in prying into the manifestations of life on the outward plane, and do not seem to care a straw about what is taking place within the inner life of the soul."

"Therefore," answered Theodorus, "they will perish with their illusions; and the Bible is right in saying that the ways of the worldly-wise are foolishness in the eyes of the Eternal.

"What will it serve you, if your head is full of speculations about the details of the phenomenal illusions of life, and

you become a senile imbecile in your old age? What will it serve you, roaming about the world and gratifying your curiosity in regard to its details, when, after that world has vanished, they for ever disappear from your memory? Perhaps it would be better for the learned if they knew less of scientific theories and had more soul knowledge. It would be better if they had fewer theories and more experience. If they were to employ, for instance, some of their time and energy for the development of the spiritual power of clairvoyance, instead of spending it to find out the habits of some species of African monkey, they would fare better by it. If they were to obtain the power to heal the sick by the touch of their hands, instead of seeking new methods to poison humanity by inoculations of injurious substances, humanity would be the gainer. There are thousands of people who work hard all their lives, without accomplishing anything which is really useful or enduring. There are thousands who labor intellectually or mechanically to perform work which had better be left undone. There are vastly more people engaged in undermining and destroying the health of man than in curing his ills, more engaged in teaching error than in teaching the truth, more trying to find that which is worthless than that which is of value; they live in dreams and their dreams will vanish; they run after money, and the money will remain while they themselves perish and die.

"The obstacles which arise from the external world are intimately connected with those from the inner world, and cannot be separated; because external temptations create inward desires, and inward desires call for external means for gratification. There are many people who do not crave for the illusions of life, but who have not the strength to resist them; they have a desire to develop spiritually and

to gain immortality, but employ all of their time and energy for the attainment of worthless things, instead of using it to dive down into the depths of the soul to search for the priceless pearl of wisdom. Thousands of people have not the moral courage to break loose from social customs, ridiculous habits, and foolish usages, which they inwardly abhor, but to which they nevertheless submit because they are customs and habits to act against which is considered to be a social crime. Thus thousands sacrifice their immortality to the stupid goddess of fashion.

"Who dares to break loose from the bondage imposed upon him by the fashion which at present dominates religious thought? Who has the courage to incur the sneers of the imbecile, the ridicule of the ignorant, the laughter of the fool, and gain thereby a light of whose existence those who live in eternal darkness know nothing? The vast majority of people drown the voice of reason and dance with the fool. Rather than have their vanity suffer, they allow the spirit to starve; rather than be crucified and rise into immortal life, they submit to the galling chain; they lose their appreciation of liberty, and, becoming used to their chains, begin to love them and impose them upon others.

"I am not a believer in the total depravity of human nature; I know that man's animal energies, on account of their inherent instinctive efforts for the preservation of their existence, are opposed to the development of his higher principles, because the life of the higher involves the death of the lower; but I also know that in each human being is contained a power for good, which may be made to develop if the proper conditions are given. There are elements of good and elements of evil in every man, and it depends on ourselves which class we desire to develop.

From a cherry stone nothing can grow but a cherry tree, from a thistle seed nothing else than a thistle; but man is a constellation of powers in which all kinds of seeds are contained; you may make him grow to be a hog or a tiger, an angel or a devil, a sage or a fool, according to your own pleasure.

"The continual rush after more money, more comfort, more pleasure, after we already possess all we require, which characterizes our present civilization, is not necessarily a sign of viciousness and moral depravity; but it is rather caused by the instinctive impulse, inherent in the constitution of man, to reach some higher and better condition, which expresses itself on the mundane plane. Man intuitively knows that, no matter how rich in money or fame he may be, he has not yet reached a state in which he will be contented to rest; he knows that he must still keep on striving for something, but he does not know what that something is. Not knowing the higher life, he strives for more of those things which the lower life affords. Thus we may see a bug or a butterfly falling into a lake, and in its vain efforts to save itself from drowning swimming away from the shore, because it does not know in which direction the means for salvation exist. The curse of the world and the root of all evil is ignorance. The curse of man is his ignorance of his higher nature and final destiny, and the efforts of a true system of religion and science ought to be above all to remove this stupidity.

"But it is also true that ignorance and conceit are closely connected together, and that the ignorant hate him who is wiser than they. If one man, knowing more about the requirements of his nature, and desirous to employ all his energies for the attainment of a higher state, were to dare to assert his manhood and to rebel against the chains of

fashion, could he continue to live unmolested in his community? And if he were to emigrate to another, would he not be exposed there to the same troubles? He would still come in contact with men who hated freedom because they were educated in chains, who would misunderstand him, suspect his motives, and persecute him; and woe to him if he had any human failings upon which the snake of slander could fasten its poison fangs. Wherever darkness exists, there exists abhorrence of light.

Wherever ignorant man enters, there enter his imperfections. Wherever ignorance resides, there are her attending angels, suspicion, envy, and fear. Would it not be more within the scope of a true science to enlighten man about his higher nature, than to dig for worms in the bowels of the material plane?

"That which is almost impossible to accomplish by the unaided efforts of a single individual, may often easily be accomplished by the co-operation of many, and this law seems to prevail in all departments of nature. If a sufficient number of people were determined to retire from the harlequin stage of the world and to turn away from the tomfooleries of a fashionable existence, they might, if they could harmonies with each other, form a power sufficiently strong to repel the attacks of the monster which would devour them all if they were separated and unaided by each other. Those who are not yet progressed far on the ladder of evolution need those who are upon a higher step to assist them on their upward way, and the higher ones need the lower for their support, in the same sense as a rock needs a solid ground to rest upon and maintain its position.

"There have been at previous times, as there are now, numerous people who became convinced that there is a higher and inner life, and who desired to surround themselves with such conditions as were most favorable for its attainment. Such people were not merely to be found in Christian countries, but also among the 'heathen.' Lamaseries and lodges, orders, monasteries, convents, and places of refuge have been established, where people might strive to attain a higher life, unimpeded by the aggressions and annoyances of the external world of illusions. Their original purpose was beyond a doubt very commendable. If in the course of time many such institutions have become degraded and lost their original character; if instead of being places for the performance of the noblest and most difficult kind of labor, they have become places of refuge for the indolent, idle, and superstitious; it is not the fault of that principle which first caused such institutions to be organized, but it is the consequence of the knowledge of the higher nature of man and his powers and destiny having been lost, and with the loss of that knowledge, the means for the attainment, the original aim, was naturally lost and forgotten.

"Such a degradation took place in Europe, especially during and after the Middle Ages, when, enriched by robberies and endowed by dying thieves who wanted to buy salvation, the clergy amassed great wealth and lived a luxurious life, feasting on the fat of the land. They then knew nothing more of the conditions of a higher existence; they became centers of attraction for the hypocrite and the idle. They passed away their idle hours in apparently pious amusements, and in striving to gain more material wealth. Instead of being centers from which blessings should spread over the country, they became a plague to the land. They robbed the rich, and, vampire-like, they

sucked the last drop of blood out of the poor. They continued in this manner until the cup of their crimes was full, when the great Reformation caused the downfall of many and a certain reform of the rest.

There are still numerous convents existing in Europe, and in America their number is on the increase. The modern reformer, the socialist and materialist, looks upon them with an evil eye; but the unprejudiced observer will not deny that some of them are doing a great deal of good in their own way. Some have established schools, others opened hospitals; and above all are the Sisters of Charity unsurpassed in their usefulness in the care for the sick. Thus some of these orders serve the noble purpose of benefiting humanity, and their usefulness could be increased a thousandfold if the light of spiritual knowledge--the Holy Ghost, to whom they pray--were to be permitted to descend upon their ranks.

"Do the religious orders as they are now fulfill their original purpose of raising man up into a higher and spiritual state of existence, or are they merely centers around which pious and benevolent people have collected who teach schools and nurse the sick--occupations which might perhaps equally well be performed without professing any particular creed? If the religious convents are calculated to develop true spirituality and to produce truly regenerated men and women, they will be the places where we may find some manifestation of spiritual powers; for a latent power which never manifests itself is of no use; it cannot exist in an active state without manifesting itself. Let us therefore be permitted to ask: Do the inhabitants of our convents consciously exercise any spiritual powers? Can they knowingly cure the sick by the touch of their hands? Are their inner senses sufficiently

opened, so that they may see and hear, taste, smell, and feel things which are imperceptible to the senses of average man? Can they prophesy, with any degree of certainty, future events, except by the conclusions of logic? Are there any among them who have become Adepts? What do they actually know about the conditions required to enter a higher state of consciousness than that of ordinary mortals? What do they know about the means to enter adeptship and to obtain a conscious existence as souls? What do our monks and nuns know about the constitution of the human soul, and especially of those souls who are entrusted to their care? What are their experiences when in that higher state called ecstasy? If there is one among them who enters into a state of trance, or is levitated into the air, or able to produce a simple mediumistic phenomenon, do they know the occult causes which produce such effects, or is not such an occurrence considered to be an unexplainable or supernatural miracle?

"It is idle for the priests to assert that they can forgive sins, or that sins can be forgiven through them. If they do not possess any spiritual powers, we cannot believe that they are able to communicate them to others; and if they convey such powers to others, where are their effects to be seen? Do the ignorant become wise after having been baptized with water? Do those who have submitted to the ceremony of confirmation obtain firmness of faith? Does the sinner become innocent after having the load taken off from his conscience by means of absolution? Can our clergymen change the laws of nature? Can they by any external ceremony cause the growth of an inner principle? Or does he who enters a church an animal, come out an animal still?



"These are perplexing questions, and I would not like to be understood as if I desired to throw any discredit upon the motives of any of the inhabitants of our convents and nunneries. I am personally acquainted with many of them, and found them to be good and kind and well-meaning people, without that priestly pride and arrogance which unfortunately often characterize the clergymen of the world; but I believe that all the good which they do they could perform as well, and even a great deal better, if they were to undertake the study of the soul, its organization and functions, and if they were qualifying themselves for that study. They would then be able to develop consciously those higher faculties which have spontaneously developed among some of their members, who, on account of such an unexpected and abnormal development, were called miracle-workers or saints.

"How can any one be a true spiritual guide who has no spiritual powers, and who, perhaps, does not even know that such powers exist? What would you think of a surgeon who knew nothing whatever of anatomy? What of a physician who did not know his patient? What of a blind painter, a deaf musician, an imbecile mathematician? What shall we think of a physician of the soul who knows nothing at all about the soul or its attributes, who has never seen it, and is merely of the opinion that it exists? Have we not a right to doubt the usefulness of such a physician, and exclaim with Shakespeare--

"Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it"?

If the inhabitants of our convents and monasteries, instead of employing the time and energy which they need for the performance of their customary ceremonies, for the saying of rosaries and the repetitions of litanies, &c., were to

employ them for the purpose of acquiring self-knowledge, for the study of the essential constitution of man and of nature, and for the acquisition of spiritual power, their usefulness might be extended to an enormous degree. Their knowledge would be no longer restricted to earthly things, but expand to heaven; they would not need to nurse the sick, for they could cure them by the touch of their hands; they would not need to baptize people with water, for they could baptize them with the spirit of sanctity; they would not need to listen to confessions, for they would be able to read the thoughts of the culprit. Why should they not be able to do their duties much better if they were wise instead of ignorant; if they knew the truth instead of blindly accepting a creed; if they had the power to accomplish that which they now expect an invisible and unknown power to accomplish in response to their prayers? If the public believe that there is one miracle-working saint at a convent, do they not rush there to receive his or her blessings? What would be the fame of a convent composed entirely of saints whose powers could not be doubted?

"But how can monks and nuns acquire such powers? How can they qualify themselves for such a study? It has been said that it is ten times more difficult to remove an old error than to find a new truth; and there lies the difficulty. A page which is already full of writing will have to be cleaned before it can be written upon again. They would have to purge their minds of all dogmatism and sophistry before they can see the light of truth; they would have to become like children before they can enter the kingdom of heaven within their own souls. They would have to remove the mountain of rubbish which has accumulated in time in the vestibule of the temple, consisting of errors and superstitions, and of the corpses of forms from which the

spirit has fled. Ages of ignorance have contributed to its growth, and it has become venerable by age. The inhabitants of the convent bare their heads and bend their knees when they approach that pile, and they do not dare to destroy it. To become wise, they would have to learn the true meaning of their own doctrines, symbols, and books, of which they at present merely know the outward form and the dead letter. They would have to form a much higher and nobler conception of God than to invest Him with the attributes of semi-animal man. They would have to base their moral doctrines upon the intrinsic dignity of the divine principle in man, instead of appealing to the selfish desires of man and to his fear of punishment, to induce him to seek his salvation.

"This may be accomplished in the far-distant future, but not at the present time. Ages and centuries may roll away before the sunlight of truth will penetrate through the thick veil of materialism and superstition which, like an icy crust, covers the true foundation of human religions. Look at the ice-fields of the Alps, covering the sides of the mountains, sometimes many miles in area. They extend in solid blocks, perhaps more than a hundred feet thick, down to the valley. They are the products of centuries; and firm as the rock the ice appears; and yet these rigid and apparently immovable masses move and slowly change from year to year. They grate the rocks upon which they rest, and they throw out that which is foreign. There may cracks and fissures be seen at the top, and if, as happens sometimes, a man falls into one of these fissures, his remains will be found many years afterwards at the foot of the glacier, below the field of ice, having been spewed out by the same.

"Change, slow change, is going on everywhere in nature. Even in the most rigid and orthodox religious systems, in the most benighted hearts and heads, there is going on a continual change. Already the doctrines which were expounded in the pulpits of the Middle Ages have been modified to a certain extent. The proportions of the devil have shrunk so much that the people have almost ceased to fear him, and in the same degree as clerical power has diminished, the conception of God has assumed a grander aspect. Already the necessity of performing humanitarian labors has been more fully recognized, and is by some considered to be of almost equal importance to the performance of the prescribed ceremonies. Still the change goes on, gradually but slowly; for there is a powerful giant who by his negation resists the decay of the pile of rubbish, and the name of this giant is *Fashion*. It is fashionable to support certain things, and therefore the masses support them.

"Is the progressive part of the world going to wait until the legally appointed guardians of the truth have found out the true value of the treasure in their possession? Have we to wait until they have cleaned the jewel from the dark crust which they have permitted to accumulate around it for centuries? Messengers have arrived from the East, the land of light, where the sun of wisdom has risen, bringing with them costly moonlight pearls and treasures of liquid gold. Will their untold wealth be entrusted to the safe keeping of those who possess the old and empty forms, or will the new wine be filled in new casks, because the old ones are rotten?

"But why should those who have begun to see the dawn of the day close their eyes and wait until the blind would inform them that the sun is rising over the mountains? Is

love of the truth not strong enough to accomplish that which the fear of a dread hereafter has been able to accomplish? Cannot the enlightened classes establish academies, which would offer all the advantages of orthodox convents without their disadvantages? Could they not establish a garden, where the divine lotus flower of wisdom might grow and unfold its leaves, sheltered against the storms of passion raging beyond the walls, watered by the water of truth, whose spring is within; where the *Tree of Life* could unfold without becoming encumbered by the weeds of credulity and error; where the soul could breathe the pure spiritual air, unadulterated by the odor of the poison-tree of ignorance, unmixed with the effluvia of decaying superstitions; a place where this Tree of Life, springing from the roots of the Tree of Knowledge, could grow and spread its branches, far up in the invisible realm where Wisdom resides, and produce fruits which cause those who partake of them to become like gods and immortal?"

Here the Adept paused, as if in deep meditation; but after a moment of silence he said: "Yes, by all means establish your theosophical monastery, if you can find any inhabitants duly prepared to enter it; for it will be easier to introduce the truth into a house which is not occupied, than into one which is occupied by its enemies.

"But," I objected, "Such an institution would require an Adept as a teacher. Would you consent to teach?"

To this Theodorus answered, "Wherever there is a want, the supply will not fail to come, for *there is no vacuum in nature.*"

AT this moment I heard again the sound of the invisible silver bell in the air, and the Adept, rising, said that he was called away for a few minutes, and invited me to remain until he should return. He left the laboratory, and I remained alone . . . . I turned, and I saw by my side a man with an extremely intelligent face, dressed in the habit of a monk. He excused himself for causing an interruption in my thoughts, and said that I seemed so deeply engaged in meditating over those figures that I had not observed his entrance.

The open countenance, the pleasant looks, and the intelligent expression of the face of my visitor at once gained my confidence; and I asked him who he was with whom I had the honor to speak.

"I am," said the stranger, "the *Famulus*, or, as you well may call it, the *Chela*, of Theodorus. They call me jocularly his intellectual principle, because I have to do his work when the old gentleman is asleep."

I found his remark very funny, and answered in a jocular way: "If you are called his intellectual principle, you are perhaps only a creation of his thought. I have seen so many strange things in this place, that I would not be surprised at anything, not even if you were to vanish before my eyes or turn into a snake or a devil."

To this the apparition replied: "As far as our external appearance is concerned, we are all forms produced by thought, and it is the privilege of men of a higher order to assume whatever form they find convenient for their purpose. Thus it may sometimes happen that the very devil appears in the shape of a saint for the purpose of deluding some gullible fool, and I know of cases where

some jolly spirits of nature have assumed the shapes of Christ and the apostles for the purpose of amusing themselves by misleading some ignoramus. They usually succeed in such cases; but I am neither a devil nor an elemental spirit, and you are neither an ignoramus nor a fool."

I found myself highly flattered by the favorable opinion expressed by my visitor, and I did not wish to appear suspicious and thus to weaken his faith regarding my power of judging the character of a person at first sight. Moreover, he had such a look of benevolence that I did not wish to distrust him. I therefore made him my bow, and said: "I have not the least doubt about your honorable intentions, and am quite sure that you are a reliable guide."

"One cannot be careful enough in selecting one's guides," continued the stranger. "There are at present so many false prophets and guides. All the world is at present crazy for poking their noses into the mysteries of the astral world. Everybody wants to be taught witchcraft and sorcery. Secrets, which for thousands of years have been wisely kept hidden before the eyes of the unripe and profane, are now bawled out from the housetops and sold at the market-place as objects of trade. Hundreds of self-appointed "masters" and guides speculate upon the selfishness and ambitions of their disciples, and, the blind leading the blind, they both come to grief. If only all the seekers for truth were like you, they would not be deluded by false promises held out to them for attaining adeptship."

"I am really glad," I answered, "that you have discovered my purity and unselfishness of purpose, and I hope that, in consideration of my merits, you will be kind enough to

show me some more of your occult secrets. Theodorus has already been preaching long sermons to me, and I listened to him with great patience; but now I want to see something substantial, and if possible learn how to perform some occult feats."

"Most willingly," said my companion. "I will do all I can for you, because you deserve by your unselfishness the patronage of all the Adepts."

So saying, he began to show me some of the curiosities of the laboratory, which contained many strange things. Of some of those I had read in books on alchemy; others were entirely new to me. At last we came to a closed shrine, and my curiosity led me to ask what it contained.

"Oh!" answered the monk, "this shrine contains some powders for fumigations, by the aid of which a man may see the Elemental Spirits of Nature."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "Oh, how I should like to see these lovely spirits! I have read a great deal about them in the books of Paracelsus; but I never had an opportunity of seeing them."

"They are not all of them lovely," said the monk. "The Elementals of earth have human forms. They are small, but they have the power to elongate their bodies. These gnomes and pigmies are usually ill-humored and cross; and it is just as well to leave them alone, although sometimes they become very good friends of man, and may even show him hidden treasures and mines. The Elementals of air, the sylvans, are of a more agreeable nature; still we cannot rely upon their friendship. The salamanders, living in the element of fire, are ugly



customers, and it is better to have nothing to do with them. But the nymphs and undines are lovely creatures, and they often associate with man."

"I wish I could see those beautiful water-sprites," I said; "but I am inclined to believe that they belong to the realm of the fable. For many years, accounts given by seafaring men spoke of mermen and mermaids, which they insisted on having seen at a distance. They said that those people were like human beings, of whom the upper part resembled a man or a woman, while the lower part of their body was a fish. They told great stories about their beauty, their waving hair, and how finely they could sing; and they called them sirens, because it was said they could sing so well that men who heard their voices would become oblivious of everything else but their songs. At last, such a siren was caught; and it proved to be nothing else than a curious fish of the species called *Halicore catacca*, which at a distance may be mistaken for a man, on account of its color, and which barks somewhat like a dog. Perhaps those undines and nymphs are also nothing but fishes."

"This is a most erroneous opinion, my dear sir," answered the monk. "The halicore is a fish; but the nymphs and undines are Elemental spirits of nature, living in the element of water, being, under ordinary circumstances, invisible to man, and not being able therefore to be caught in this manner. They are almost like human beings, but far more ethereal and beautiful; and under certain circumstances they may be seen by man. They may even attain a permanent material form and remain on land; and a case is even known in which a certain Count Stauffenberg married such a nymph on account of her beauty and lived with her for more than a year, until some stupid theologian frightened him by telling him that his

wife was a devil. The count at that time had fallen in love with some good-looking peasant-girl, and so the interference of the preacher was welcome, and he took this as a pretext to drive his true wife away. But she revenged herself; and on the third day after his second marriage the count was found dead in his bed. These nymphs are very beautiful. They are strong in love, and are constant; but they are also said to be very jealous."

The more the monk spoke about the water-nymphs, the stronger grew my desire to see them. I asked him to put me in communication with those beautiful spirits; but he made all sorts of excuses, which, however, only served still more strongly to excite my curiosity.

"We are living here in this sinful world, and ought not to meddle with the inhabitants of another. We are all sinners and liable to succumb to temptations. These water-nymphs are continually seeking to be united with men, and they have good reason for it, because they have no immortal souls. Becoming united with man they form a link with his soul, and thus partake of his immortality."

"Why, then," I exclaimed, "Do you hesitate to conjure these beings? I would only be too happy to convey the gift of immortality to one of these beautiful spirits. Moreover, I would consider this as an act of charity and duty, and if such a nymph should insist upon marrying me, I can see no reason why I should object if she were amiable. Besides, it would be quite an extraordinary thing to have a water-nymph for a wife."

"They are not only very amiable," said the monk, "but they are also very obedient to their husbands. Such a water-nymph has no will of her own; she regards her husband as

her savior and god, never contradicts or scolds him, but is always ready to obey his commands, fulfill his wishes, and gratify his desires. She is very modest in her demands, needs no luxuries, and requires nothing except occasionally a short excursion to the seashore, which will cause you no expense whatever, because she has her own method of traveling."

I could restrain myself no longer, and earnestly begged the monk to make a fumigation with the mysterious powder. At last he consented. Putting a few pieces of dry maple tree bark and some dried leaves of laurel into a brazier, he added pieces of charcoal and lighted them. He then strewed some of the mysterious powder, and a white smoke arose, filling the room like a mist and with a very sweet odor. The objects in the laboratory could soon be seen only dimly through that mist, and finally disappeared altogether. The walls of the chamber were no more to be seen. The air seemed to take on a vibratory motion and to become more dense; but, far from feeling oppressed by this, I felt a great exhilaration and satisfaction. At last I knew I was in the element of water, and was supported by it. I was swimming, but my body was as light as a feather, and it required no effort whatever to keep me from sinking; it seemed as if the water was my own element, as if I were born in it. A light shone directly above my head. I rose up to the surface and looked around. I was in the midst of the ocean, dancing up and down with the waves. It was a bright moonlight night. Right above me stood the full moon and threw her silvery rays upon the water, causing the ripples and the foamy crests on the tops of the waves to sparkle like liquid silver or diamonds. Far in the distance appeared the coast with a mountain range, which seemed familiar to me. At last I recognized it as the coast of the island of Ceylon, with the range of mountains

beyond Colombo and Galle; surely I could not mistake, for I recognized the Adam's Peak.

Never shall I forget the agreeable sensation caused by that ethereal bath in the moonlit sea in the Indian Ocean. It seemed to me that at last my wish had been fulfilled, and that I was free of my mortal body and its weight; and yet I was myself. I could see no difference between the body I inhabited now and the one I inhabited before the fumigation was made, only my present body was so light that it seemed as if it would float in the air as easily as it did upon the water.

Listen! Some faint sound is brought by the breeze; it seems to be a human voice. It comes nearer, and now I hear it plainly; it is the melodious song of a female voice. I look in the direction from which the sound seems to come, and I see three forms floating upon the waves, rising and sinking and coming nearer. They seem to play with each other, and as they approach I behold three beautiful females with long, waving hair; but the one in the middle surpasses the others in beauty. She seems to be the queen, for she wears a wreath of water-plants upon her head. Still nearer they come. Now they see me and stop. They consult together, but curiosity conquers their fear. They come quite close and speak to me. Their voices are full and melodious; their language is foreign to me, and yet I understand what they say. Having discovered that I am a mortal, they appear as anxious to cultivate my acquaintance as I am anxious to be on friendly terms with them.

They invite me to go with them to their home; they speak of their palace constructed of beautiful shells among the coral-reefs in the depths of the ocean; of the milk-white

pearls with which they have ornamented the walls; of the azure blue of the waves shining through the transparent walls of their houses; and the curious things which no mortal had ever seen. I object, and tell them that I am mortal and that I could not live in their own element; but the beautiful queen, rising out of the water up to her waist, smiles and shakes her charming head, and fluid diamonds seem to stream from her waving locks. "Come," she whispers; "no harm will befall you, for my love shall protect you." She extends her beautifully shaped arms towards me and touches my shoulder, and at her touch my consciousness fades away. A voluptuous sensation pervades my whole being. I feel that I am dissolving in the element of water; I only dimly hear the distant thunder of the breakers as they roll upon the sandy beach. I feel that my desire has been fulfilled--a moment, and I know nothing more.

I HAVE little more to add to my tale. I awoke, and opening my eyes, I found myself stretched upon the moss, in the shadow of that mighty pine, where I had evidently fallen asleep. The sun stood still high above the western horizon, and far up in the sky two vultures described long drawn spirals in the air; and in their cries I seemed to recognize the voice of the queen of the nymphs. On the opposite side of the valley was still the rushing waterfall with the foaming basin, and the spray still rose in the air, and the water still sped over the moss-covered edge.

"Alas!" I exclaimed, "has all I have seen been nothing else than a dream? Has that which seemed so beautiful and real been merely an illusion of my brain, and have I now returned to real life? Why did I not die in the arms of the queen, and thus save myself this horrid awakening?"

I rose, and, as I rose, my eye fell upon the bud of a white lily sticking in a buttonhole of my coat. I could not believe my eyes, and suspected that I was again the victim of a hallucination. I grasped the lily. It did not vanish in my grasp; it was as real as the earth upon which I stood; it was of a kind which does not grow in these cold mountainous regions; it only grows where the air is mild and warm. I remembered the gold; I put my hand into my pocket, and there, among the few remaining silver pieces, I found a solid lump of gold as bright as the purest; but the little ruby pearls had dropped off from its surface and were lost. I then recollected the precious book which the Adept had promised to send to my room in the village inn; but somehow it seemed to me that I had committed an indiscretion during the absence of Theodorus by prying into the secrets of his laboratory and listening to the temptations of the Nymphs. I felt as if I did not deserve the favor, and was doubtful whether or not he would send me the book.

I flew rather than walked down the mountain, along the road leading toward the village. Little did I now care for the scenery; neither for the mountain tops, which were gilded by the rays of the setting sun, nor for the murmuring river. It grew dark; and the full moon arose over the hills, looking exactly like the moon I had seen some hours before in the Indian Ocean. I calculated about the difference of time between Germany and Ceylon, and I found that indeed I might have seen the moon shine in the Bay of Bengal while the sun was shining in the Alps.

I arrived at O., little heeding the astonished looks of the villagers, who may have believed me insane as I hurried through the streets. I entered the inn, rushed upstairs to my room, and, as I entered, I saw upon the table the

precious book, "The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." On the fly-leaf were written a few lines in pencil, saying:--

"Friend, I regret that you left our home so abruptly, and I cannot invite you to visit us again for the present. He who desires to remain in the peaceful valley must know how to resist all sensual attractions, even those of the Water Queen. Study this book practically; bring the circle into a square. Mortify the metals; calcinate and purify them of all residua. When you have succeeded, we shall meet again. I shall be with you when you need me.--Yours fraternally,

"THEODORUS."

It may be imagined that, in spite of my fatigue, I did not go to sleep very early. I walked up and down in my room, thinking over the events of that memorable day. I tried to find the line between the visible and the invisible, between the objective and subjective, between dreams and reality, and I found that there was no line, but that all these terms are merely relative, referring not merely to the conditions of things which appear objective or subjective to ourselves, but to our own conditions, and that while in one state of existence certain things may appear real to us and others illusive, in another state the illusions become real, and that which before seemed to be real is now merely a dream. Perhaps our whole terrestrial life will seem to be at the end nothing else than a hallucination.

As I walked about the room I observed a Bible belonging to my host lying upon a cupboard. I felt an impulse to open it at random and to see what it said. I did so, and my eye fell upon the twelfth chapter of the second epistle of

the Apostle Paul, written to the Corinthians, where it said:-

-  
*"I knew a man in Christ, above fourteen years ago (whether in the body or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth); such a one was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."*

*With the Adepts, An Adventure Among the Rosicrucians, Franz  
Hartmann, William Rider & Son: London, 1910*



'SA'D UD DIN MAHMŪD  
SHABISTARĪ - Forgotten  
Islamic Sufi Mystic'



There remains one great expert on the life of Shabistari, Forgotten Islamic Sufi, Mystic, Florence Lederer. Allow Florence to introduce you to the life of Shabistari and the Doctrine's in which he lives, believed and experienced God.

### **LIFE OF SHABISTARĪ, By Florence Lederer**

"It is inward glow that makes the Sūfī, not the religious habit."

SA'D UD DIN MAHMŪD SHABISTARĪ was born at Shabistar, near Tabriz, about A.D. 1250.

He wrote the *Gulshan i Rāz*, or *Secret Rose Garden*, as a reply to questions put forth by a Sūfī doctor of Herat named Dmir Syad Hosaini.

Very little is known of Mahmūd Shabistari's life. He wrote beside the *Gulshan i Rāz* two treatises on Sūfiism called *Hakk ul Yakin* and *Risala i Shadīd*.

We learn he had a very favorite disciple called Shaikh Ibrahim.

The *Gulshan i Rāz* was introduced into Europe by two travelers in 1700. Later, copies of the poem were found in several European libraries.

In 1821 Dr. Tholuck, of Berlin, published extracts, and in 1825 a German translation of part of the poem appeared in another of his books. Afterwards a verse translation and the Persian text was published by Von Hammer Purgstall in Berlin and Vienna.

The *Gulshan i Rāz* was translated into English and published, with the Persian text and extracts from Hammer's edition and Lajihī's notes, by Mr. Whinfield in 1880.

## SŪFĪ POETRY

Readers of Sūfī poetry for the first time are liable to be amazed, perhaps even repelled, by the extravagant language, by the familiarity with the Deity, by the apparent disregard of all human and Divine laws. But on further examination the wonder of the Sūfīs' love for their Beloved shines out with a clear intensity, a beautiful luminous brightness.

They are in love with The One, and their love takes the form of exquisite songs of praise and wonder:

"I heard entranced; my spirit rushed to meet  
Love's welcome order, for the voice was sweet."

Vaughan says:

"Oriental mysticism has become famous by its poets, and into poetry it has thrown all its force and fire."

"The Sūfīs . . . have one sole and simple task, to  
make their hearts a stainless mirror for their God."

Love is the Sūfīs' theme, Divine, Eternal Love, and into this sea of Love they cast themselves headlong.

Rūmī sings:

"Moths, burnt by the torch of the Beloved's face,  
Are the lovers who linger in the sanctuary."

"If we are called madmen or drunkards,  
'Tis because of the Cupbearer and the Cup."

"Because my mouth has eaten of His sweetmeats  
In a clear vision I can see Him face to face."

### **SŪFĪ SYMBOLISM**

In reading the enraptured poetry of the Sūfīs, it should be borne in mind that, though the symbols of earthly love and beauty are freely used, yet the real meaning is concealed. No doubt this was originally done to keep secret their mystic love, lest the profane should scoff. But as time went on certain words began to have a recognized meaning amongst themselves. For instance:

EMBRACES and KISSES are raptures of love.

SLEEP is contemplation, PERFUME the wish for Divine favor.

IDOLATERS mean men of the pure faith, not infidels.

WINE, which was forbidden by Mahomet to his followers, was used as a word-symbol by the Sūfīs to denote spiritual knowledge, and the WINE-SELLER means the spiritual guide.

A TAVERN is a place where the wine of Divine love inebriates the pilgrim.

INTOXICATION means religious ecstasy, MIRTH the joy in the love of the Deity.

BEAUTY means the glory of the Beloved.

CURLS and TRESSES mean plurality veiling the face of Unity from its lovers.

The CHEEK means Divine essence of names and qualities.

The DOWN is the world of pure spirits which is nearest to Divinity.

The MOLE on the cheek is the point of indivisible Unity.

The TORCH is the light kindled in the heart by the Beloved.

We thus see that to the Sūfī the love between man and woman is a shadowed picture of the love between the soul and God, and just as a lover will dream of his beloved, singing her praises, and thirsting for a sight of her face, so do the Sūfīs eternally dream of their God, ever contemplating His attributes, and consumed with a burning desire for His presence.

The history of mysticism contains many impassioned love songs to the Absolute, but in Sūfī poetry there is a peculiar richness, a depth, a color which fascinates and charms so many of us.

Sūfī poetry abounds in allegories and love romances, the stories of Laylā and Majnūm, Yūsuf and Zulaikā, Salāmān and Absāl, in which it is easy to read the hidden meaning of passion for the Absolute. Various are the love themes of

the Sūfīs; we hear songs of: the nightingale in love with the rose, the moth fluttering round the light of the candle, the moaning dove who has lost her mate, the snow melting in the desert and mounting as vapor to the sky, of a dark night in the desert through which a frenzied camel madly plunges, of a reed torn from its bed and made into a flute whose plaintive music fills the eyes with tears.

### THE BELOVED

The Sūfīs' conception of the Beloved is essentially personal, though there is nothing to show that they worshipped Him as a person, or assigned to Him a form.

Being pantheists, they probably believed that He was the One Light shining in myriad forms through the whole universe, One essence remaining the same.

"Every moment the robber Beauty rises in a different shape, ravishes the soul and disappears. Every instant the Loved One assumes a new garment, now of old, now of youth. Now He plunged into the heart of the substance of the potter's clay--the Spirit plunged like a diver. Anon He rose from the depths of mud that is moulded                      and                      baked, Then he appeared in the world."

And Jāmī declares:

"In neighbor, friend, companion, Him we see,  
In beggar's rags or robes of royalty,  
In Union's cell or in distraction haunts,  
There's none but He, by God, there's none but He."

The Sūfis realized that it is impossible in spatial terms to describe that which is even beyond pure spirit.

Plotinus has told us in a beautiful passage that a

"We must not be surprised that that which excites the keenest of longings is without any form, even spiritual form, since the soul itself, when inflamed with love for it, puts off all the form which it had, even that which belongs to the spiritual world."

The inability to describe to the uninitiated the secret love of the mystic for the Unknowable is made the subject of an exquisite poem by the Indian poet Tagore:

"I boasted among men that I had known you. They see your picture in all works of mine. They come and ask me who is he? I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Indeed, I cannot tell.' They blame me and they go away in scorn. And you sit there smiling. I put my tales of you into lasting songs. The secret gushes out from my heart. They come and ask me, 'Tell me all your meaning.' I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Ah, who knows what they mean.' They smile and go away in utter scorn. And you sit there smiling."

### **FROM THE UNREAL TO THE REAL**

The Sūfis believed that the phenomenal world is the Unreal, that the reason men are blind to the existence of the Real world, which is the Spiritual, is because there are veils and mists separating the soul from God.

This world appears Real to the man who cannot use his spiritual eye and view the Beyond. Having no discernment of the Unseen, he does not believe in its existence.

But whosoever becomes aware of the Divine Light shining in the heart, and who realises the love of God in the soul, is able to pass from the Unreal to the Real; he will see:

"Gold wherever we go, and pearls  
Wherever we turn, and silver in the waste."

So exquisite is the vision of the All-Beautiful that whoever has had this vision instantly becomes enamored, and leaves the world of shadows and change to contemplate the One.

He will not rest until he has purified his life, cast aside everything that may be a hindrance in his path, and he will spend his whole life in communion with God, at the same time pouring out in love-songs and praise all the worship and adoration of his soul.

"By God, sun never rose or set but Thou wert  
My heart's desire and my dream.  
And I never sat conversing with any people  
But Thou wert the subject of my conversation  
In the midst of my comrades.  
And I never mentioned Thee in joy or sorrow  
But love for Thee was mingled with my breath.  
And I never resolved to drink water, when I was  
athirst, but I saw an image of Thee in the cup.  
And were I able to come I would have visited Thee,  
Crawling on my face or walking on my head."



When the Sūfi has passed to the Real World he is able to see earthly existence in its true light:

"I am lost to myself and unconscious,  
And my attributes are annihilated.  
To-day I am lost to all things:  
Naught remains but a forced expression."

Passing through a world of shadows he fixes his eye on Eternity; the happenings of the universe appear to him unworthy of exultation, grief, or sorrow.

Earthly love seems worthless, insipid, and dull, compared to his flaming devotion for the Unchangeable.

He has one desire, one aim, one goal--to reach the bliss which he has briefly touched in rare moments of ecstasy and rapture.

To find the far-off mystic city which

"Mystery shrouds . . . now from mortal eyes,  
Save when upon some lone lost wanderer's sight  
Its diamond turrets like a day-dream rise."

## THE ART OF SHABISTARĪ

I have already said that little is known of Shabistari's life, but of his learning and knowledge of Sūfiism there is ample evidence in this book; and though he does not charm with the subtle fascination of Hafiz, though he has not the originality of Rūmī or in style cannot compare with the elegance of Jāmī, yet in plainness and directness of speech, and in earnestness of purpose, he perhaps outweighs them all. He gives us a clear, bright vision in

brilliant sunshine of Virtue and Vice, Reality and Illusion, Wisdom and Ignorance.

We do not find ourselves in the twilight of a faintly-colored land where we sometimes wander, drawn hither by the sweet voices of the Sūfis, where, midst the delicate perfumes of an Oriental garden, the lover is singing entrancing love-songs, whether of earthly passion or of Divine intoxication remains a matter of heated controversy to this day.

Neither are we given such daring advice as Jāmī gives when he sings:

"Drink deep of earthly love, that so thy lip  
May learn the wine of holier love to sip."

Mahmūd's vision of Reality was direct and distinct, not the oblique view which is the vision of some mystics, and from this Reality he is able to distinguish sharply between the conflicting forces of Good and Evil.

He makes a passionate appeal to humanity to seek for the Truth, to desire the substance and not the mirage, to ignore the allurements and illusion of earthly love, and instead to centre on the Beloved all the heart's adoration.

### **THE SECRET ROSE GARDEN**

It is nearly seven hundred years since Mahmūd planted his garden with roses of Love and Adoration, of Reason and of spiritual Illumination. Since then many have wandered there, lingering in the secret paths and plucking the scented blossoms to carry back into the world of shadows and unreality. What is the fadeless color of these

Roses? What is their lasting grace of form, and what perfumed attar from them lingers on through the ages?

The poem opens with the statement of the sole existence of the One Real Being, and of the illusion of this world's mirage. How is man to reach knowledge of God? By thought, for--

"Thought is passing from the false to the true."

But reason and sense cannot throw off the apparent reality of the phenomenal world. Reason looking at the Light of Lights is blinded like a bat by the sun. It is then a consciousness arises in the soul of its own nothingness. At this point (annihilation of the self) it is possible for man to discern the light of the Spirit. In this world are mirrored the various attributes of Being, and each atom of Not-Being reflects some one Divine attribute:

"Each atom hides beneath its veil  
The soul-amazing beauty of the Beloved's face."

And these atoms are ever longing to rejoin their source.

The journey to the Beloved has only two stages: dying to self and uniting with the Truth.

When man's lower self is dead, the real self remains and is above the dominion of the law.

These two stages--the "journey to God" and the "journey down to God"--are a circuit. He who has revolved round this circuit is a perfect man.

On being born into this world man is possessed by evil passions, and if he gives way to them his soul is lost. But in each soul there is an instinct for God and a longing for holiness. If man will foster this instinct and develop this longing, a Divine light will shine on him, and he, repenting, turns and journeys towards God; casting away self, he will meet and be united with the Truth in spirit.

This is the holy state of the saints and prophets.

But the man must not rest in this Divine union. He must return to this world of unreality, and in the downward journey must keep the ordinary laws and creeds of men.

This phenomenal existence, i.e. Not-being, is an illusion which is typified by considering the unreality of echoes and reflections and by pondering on past and future time, and on passing events, which seem at the moment of their existence to be real, but fading into the past become vague and shadowy.

The dispositions acquired by man in this life will in the next world be manifested in spiritual bodies; each form will be appropriate to its past life. The material idea of Paradise and houris will then be known to be an idle tale. No quality or distinction will remain for the perfect will. Then drink of the cup of union with God.

Such is the hope of the Sūfīs, but in this world the intoxication of the cup of union is followed by the headache of separation.

## THE CENTRAL TREE OF BEAUTY

All round his garden Mahmūd has planted these roses of Reason, Belief, Knowledge, and Faith; they are blooming everywhere, beautiful in their vivid coloring of Truth and Purity. But it is in the centre that we find a Rose-tree of glory unequalled, glowing with the blossoms of love's devotion; this is the tree which Mahmūd planted with all his heart's adoration--the description of the perfect face of the Beloved.

It is at this spot we wait entranced, and through the mystic stillness we seem to hear the voice of him who, long ago for love's sake, planted this Rose-tree, echoing his sublime utterance:

"See but One, say but One, know but One."

FLORENCE LEDERER.

*The Secret Rose Garden of Sa'd Ud Din Mahmud  
Shabistari, Translated and Introduction by Florence  
Lederer, London, J. Murray, 1920*

## Excerpts from Forgotten Afghan Sufi Poets

*"O THOU, in heart ignorant concerning thine own soul!  
O man, seek thou the nature of it, from the reality itself!*

*From the refulgence of religion, acquire thou comprehension:  
Bear away, unto the desert, this darkness of infidelity!*

*Sin abandon; and set out towards devotion and piety!  
This is the road, without anxiety, and from danger free.*

*This secret praise is the lamp of truth and orthodoxy;  
Therefore, from the Immaculate's hand, the lighted lamp take.*

*Should perception's light become enkindled in thine heart,  
Thou wilt, altogether, acquire life's happiness and felicity.*

*The penetrating, and the enlightened, are spectators of both  
worlds; But the bat flieth about in the dark, without seeing.*

*What do I, blind that I am, know of the state of the sublime?  
How wilt thou, from the deaf, ask the import of sound?*

*Thou wilt comprehend, forthwith, the language of all things,  
Shouldst thou, sagacious one! make thine heart's ear to hear.*

*Err not, regarding the amount of attributes and properties;  
And unto the source of the essence, bear the essence itself.*

*About their own materiality, the enlightened are in torment; But  
there can be no dread of mortality from corruption itself.*

*Every attainer who hath passed beyond this nature frail,  
Assuredly discovereth the signification of immortality.*

*He wandereth about in the boundlessness of infinity;  
He arrived even unto his home, that he might unity behold.*

*That fruit, which on its own branch acquired ripeness,  
This brief claim of its own perfection, made to the parent tree –*

*"Notwithstanding there is not much excess in thy greatness;  
Still, within this body of mine, do I see thee, entirely, O tree!*

*From the first, thy root germinated from me, and flourished: The  
development of thy purpose devolved, wholly, on me."*

*Answer, to this effect, on the part of the tree, proceeded –  
"Colour and flavour, O fruit! whence didst thou acquire?*

*From one fruit, naught but a single tree is produced;  
And the fruit of that tree is renewed, year by year."*

*The reply from the tree, however, is here sound and wise,  
Though the observation of its fruit is, of attention, worthy.*

*From that, which possesseth no kernel, no corn groweth:  
It is not advisable that any one should sow husked seed.*

*The reputation of the servant lieth with his master;  
And without the servant, the master's dignity is not.*

*Invoke, then, within thine heart, the sayings of MĪRZĀ,  
If the page of thy mind be unblotted, and unstained."*

*MĪRZĀ KHAN, ANSĀRĪ, Afghan Mystical Poet, Selections on the  
Poetry of the Afghans, H.G. Raverty*

"THE promise of the kiss, the beloved ever putteth off for to-morrow; Then how can my heart place confidence in a pledge like this?

Whoso is vain enough to depend upon the affairs of the future,  
The wise and sagacious will laugh that foolish man to scorn.

My friend is not acquainted with the deceitfulness of the world;  
Yet still she deceiveth, having, in her heart, naught of truthfulness.

Do not presume to this degree, upon the loveliness of the face:  
Behold the autumn! doth it ever, to the rose, any bloom impart?

Thou, who through arrogance, attest thus falsely towards me;  
Time will pay back unto thee the requital of these deeds of thine.

In the land of association, the appliances of pleasure will be many;  
But the troops of bereavement, full speedily, lay it waste.

Never cast thou thine eyes upon the rose, O nightingale!  
For separation will make those fresh wounds of thine still worse.

But is the nightingale wont, through advice, the rose to forswear?  
No! 'tis the blast of autumn only that separateth them by force!

Full many have departed in sorrow, with the hope of to-morrow;  
Then who will place any reliance on life's fidelity to-day?

Thou, who in the hope of existence therefrom, retest in tranquility.  
Doth the empyrean ever any opportunity for continuance allow?



*To-day, I perceive the crisis of a contingency on the world impending; But the future may make apparent unto it some other event.*

*THE SEVERED had never beheld Bijāpūr, even in his dreams; But, at last, that presenteth itself, which his destiny decreed!"*

*ASHRAF KHĀN, KHATTAK, Afghan Mystical Poet, Selections on the Poetry of the Afghans, H.G. Raverty*

*"Do not become, like the bubble, wholly vain and inflated; For, from such vanity thou wilt, to ruin and perdition go.*

*Ask not from the Almighty, the rank and dignity of man; Since, like the brutes, thou art occupied, in eating and drinking.*

*Even the beast, in the plough, goeth uniform to the furrow; Wherefore then, quittest thou, thus sinfully, the Law's precepts?*

*Every breath thou drawest, without remembering thy Creator; Consider, that thou swallowest a live coal, by the same computation.*

*Seeing that thou knowest nothing, save sleeping and eating, In what respect art thou superior to the beasts of the field?*

*Why writhe in agony, at the bare thoughts of Hell's pangs, When thou wanderest about tormented by carnality's cares?*

*Follow not, thus presumptuously, the vanities of the world; For in this, like the lightning, thou wilt soon lose thyself.*

*If, in the accounts here below, there shall no errors be, There will be none, in those, of the account-book above.*

*Be not concerned, O ḤAMĪD, regarding thy daily bread;  
For that Causer of Causes, the Infinite, existeth!"*

*ÆABD-UL-ḤAMĪD, Afghan Mystical Poet, Selections on the Poetry of  
the Afghans, H.G. Raverty*

Excerpts from:

# A SUFI MESSAGE OF SPIRITUAL LIBERTY

*By Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan*

## DREAMS AND INSPIRATIONS

Dreams and inspirations are open proofs of the higher world. The past, present, and future are frequently seen in a dream, and may also be revealed through inspiration. The righteous person sees more clearly than the unrighteous. There are five kinds of dreams:

1. Khayali – in which the actions and thoughts of the day are reproduced in sleep.
2. Qalbi – in which the dream is opposite to the real happening.
3. Naqshi – in which the real meaning is disguised by as symbolic representation which only the wise can understand.
4. Ruhi – in which the real happening is literally shown.
5. Elhami – in which divine messages are given in letters or by an angelic voice.

Dreams give, sometimes clearly, sometimes in a veiled form, warnings of coming dangers and assurance of success. The ability to be conscious of dreams and their meaning varies with the degree of development attained.

Dreams have their effect sooner or later, according to the stars under which they take place. The dream seen at midnight is realized within one year, and the dream of the latter part of night within six months; the dream of the early morning is realized soon after. At the same time the manifestation of dreams is subject to qualification according to the good or bad actions of the dreamer.

Inspirations are more easily reflected upon spiritual persons than upon material ones. Inspiration is the inner light which reflects itself upon the heart of man; the purer the heart is from rust, like a clean mirror, the more clearly inspiration can be reflected in it. To receive inspirations clearly the heart should be prepared by proper training. A heart soiled with rust is never capable of receiving them. There are five kinds of inspiration:

1. Elham-e-'Ilm – inspiration of an artist and scientist
2. Elham-e-Husn – inspiration of a musician and poet
3. Elham-e-'Ishq – inspiration of a devotee
4. Elbam-e-Ruh – inspiration of a mystic
5. Elham-e-Ghayb – inspiration of a prophet

Inspirations are reflected upon mankind in five ways:

1. Kushad der Khyal – in the wave of thought
2. Kushad der Hal – in emotions and feelings
3. Kushad der Jemal – in the sufferings of the heart
4. Kushad der Jelal – in the flow of wisdom
5. Kushad der Kemal – in the divine voice and vision

Some are born with an inspirational gift, and to some it appears after their development. The higher the development in spirituality, the greater the capacity for inspiration, yet the gift of inspiration is not constant; as the saying of Mohammed declares, 'Inspirations are enclosed as well as disclosed at times; they appear according to the will of Allah, the only Knower of the unknown.'

## ECSTASY

Ecstasy is called *Wajad* by Sufis: it is especially cultivated among the Chishtis. This bliss is the sign of spiritual development and also the opening for all inspirations and powers. This is the state of eternal peace, which purifies from all sins. Only the most advanced Sufis can experience *Wajad*. Although it is the most blissful and fascinating state, those who give themselves entirely to it become unbalanced, for too much of anything is undesirable; as the day's labor is a necessary precursor of the night's rest,

so it is better to enjoy this spiritual bliss only after the due performance of worldly duties.

Sufis generally enjoy Wajad while listening to music called *Qawwali*, special music producing emotions of love, fear, desire, repentance, etc.

There are five aspects of Wajad: Wajad of dervishes, which produces a rhythmic motion of the body; Wajad of idealists, expressed by a thrilling sensation of the body, tears and sighs; Wajad of devotees, which creates an exalted state in the physical and mental body; Wajad of saints, which creates perfect calm and peace; and Wajad of prophets, the realization of the highest consciousness called *Sadrat al Mantaha*. One who by the favor of the murshid arrives at the state of Wajad is undoubtedly the most blessed soul and deserves all adoration.

## CONCENTRATION

The entire universe in all its activity has been created through the concentration of God. Every being in the world is occupied consciously or unconsciously in some act of concentration. Good and evil are alike the result of concentration. The stronger the concentration, the greater the result; lack of concentration is the cause of failure in all things. For this world and the other, for material as well as spiritual progress, concentration is most essential.

The power of will is much greater than the power of action, but action is the final necessity for the fulfillment of the will. Perfection is reached by the regular practice of concentration, passing through three grades of development: Faná -fi-Shaikh, annihilation in the astral

plane, Faná-fi-Rasul, annihilation in the spiritual plane, and Faná-fi-Allah, annihilation in the abstract.

After passing through these three grades, the highest state is attained of Bá qi-bi-Allah, annihilation in the eternal consciousness, which is the destination of all who travel by this path.

Breath is the first thing to be well studied. This is the very life, and also the chain which connects material existence with the spiritual. Its right control is a ladder leading from the lowest to the highest stage of development. Its science is to be mastered by the favor of the murshid, the guiding light of God.

*By Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan*

*www.sacred-texts.com*

# Excerpts from Studies in Islamic Mysticism

By Reynold A. Nicholson, [1921] at [sacred-texts.com](http://sacred-texts.com)

## III. THE ESSENCE AS GOD.

In the *Insánu 'l-kámil* we find the same contrast as in the Vedanta system between Being with attributes, *i.e.*, God, and Being which would not be absolute unless it were stripped of all qualities. The essence of God is Pure Being, but Divinity (*Iláhiyya*)—the domain of Allah, regarded as He who necessarily exists—is the highest manifestation of the Essence, embracing all that is manifested: "it is a name for the sum of the individualisations of Being, *i.e.*, Being in the relation of Creator (*al-Haqq*) to created things (*al-khalq*), and for their maintenance in their respective order in that sum." Here the full ideal content of every individualisation, existent or non-existent, is manifested according to its proper place in the series, and all opposites exhibit their relativity in the greatest possible perfection; thus, the Creator (*al-Haqq*) appears in the form of the creature (*al-khalq*), and conversely the creature in the form of the Creator. Since Divinity represents the sum of the attributes, it is invisible to the eye, though visible everywhere in its effects, *i.e.*, in the sensible world; the Essence, on the other hand, is visible, though its where is unknown. Similarly, when you see a man, you know or believe that he has certain qualities, but you do not see them; his essence (*dhát*), however, you see as a whole, even if many of his qualities are unknown to you. Only the effects of his qualities are visible, the qualities themselves you cannot see, because the attribute must always remain hidden in the Essence; otherwise, it could be separated



from the Essence, and that is impossible. In a scale of existence where each lower individualisation marks a loss of simplicity, the difference-in-identity (*Iláhiyya*) in which the sunken riches of the Absolute are completely realised, might be expected to succeed the identity-in-difference which belongs to the stage of *Wáhidiyya*. Jílí, as a mystical theologian, does not take this view. He enthrones Allah in the seat of the Absolute and gives the following line of descent:

1. Divinity (*Iláhiyya*).
2. Abstract Oneness (*Ahadiyya*).
3. Unity in plurality (*Wáhidiyya*).
4. Mercifulness (*Rahmáníyya*).
5. Lordship (*Rubúbiyya*).

Mercifulness and Lordship are specialised aspects of Divinity. *Rahmáníyya* manifests the creative attributes (*al-şifátu 'l-haqqiyya*) exclusively, whereas *Iláhiyya* comprehends both the creative and the creaturely (*khalqí*). The first mercy (*rahmat*) of God was His bringing the universe into existence from Himself. His manifestation pervaded all that exists, and His perfection was displayed in every particle and atom of the whole, yet He remains One (*wáhid*) in the Many which mirror Him and Single (*ahad*) according to the necessity of His nature, for He is indivisible and He created the world from Himself. It is wrong to say that God "lends" His attributes to things; the things are really His attributes, to which He lends the name of creatureliness (*khalqiyya*), in order that the mysteries of Divinity and the antithesis inherent in it may

be revealed. God is the substance (*hayúlá*) of the universe. The universe is like ice, and God is the water of which it is made: the name "ice" is "lent" to the congealed mass, but its true name is "water." Jílí pursues this analogy in four verses which he quotes from an ode of his own composition. He says in the second verse that although Religion declares the ice and the water to be different, "we mystics know that they are the same." He asks how this doctrine—the permeation of existence by the Essence—can be confounded with *hulúl* (incarnation), which affirms contact, *i.e.*, non-identity. In virtue of the name *al-Rahmán*, God exists in all the things that He brought into being. His mercy towards His creatures was shown by His manifesting Himself in them and by causing them to appear in Himself. "In every idea that you form God is present as its Creator, and you are God in respect of its existence in you, for you must needs form ideas in God and find (feel the presence of) God in forming them."

Lordship (*Rubúbiyya*) establishes a necessary relation between God and His creatures, since it typifies the class of attributes which involve a complementary term or require an object; *e.g.*, "lord" implies "slave," and "knower" refers to something "known."

It will be understood that "comparison" (*tashbíh*), *i.e.*, the bringing of God into relation with created things, is "a judgment about Him" and does not affect His absolute transcendence (*tanzíh*) as He is in Himself, which He alone can conceive and know. This fact is known intuitively by Perfect Men; for other mystics it is a truth apprehended by faith. While the Essential *tanzíh* has no opposite, the antithesis of *tanzíh* and *tashbíh* is associated with God in His creative and creaturely aspects by those who perceive that He is One and that the form of all existent things is the

form of, Divine excellence (*husn*). Considered absolutely, the Divine nature does not admit of change. Change consists in the relations of God, *i.e.*, in the diverse aspects wherein He manifests Himself to us. His manifestation of Himself to Himself, and His occultation of Himself in Himself, is eternally one and the same. The notion of eternity, without beginning and without end, when it is applied to God, involves no time-relation with His creatures, but only a judgment that His nature is necessarily timeless.

Jlí makes a fourfold division of the Divine attributes: (1) attributes of the Essence, *e.g.*, One, Eternal, Real; (2) attributes of Beauty (*jamál*), *e.g.*, Forgiving, Knowing, Guiding aright; (3) attributes of Majesty (*jalál*), *e.g.*, Almighty, Avenging, Leading astray; (4) attributes of Perfection (*kamál*), *e.g.*, Exalted, Wise, First and Last, Outward and Inward.

Every attribute has an effect (*athar*), in which its *jamál* or *jalál* or *kamál* is manifested. Thus, objects of knowledge are the "effect" of the Name *al-'Alím*, the Knower. All attributes of *jamál*, and some of *jalál*, are displayed by everything that exists. Paradise is the mirror of absolute *jamál*, Hell of absolute *jalál*, and the universe is the form of these Divine attributes. Evil, as such, does not exist, although it has its appointed place in the world of opposites. What we call evil is really the relation of some parts and aspects of the whole to other parts and aspects; in a word, all imperfection arises from our not looking at things *sub specie unitatis*. Sin is not evil except in so far as we judge it to be forbidden by God. The author's treatment of the seven principal attributes—*i.e.*, Knowledge, Will, Power, Speech, Hearing, and Sight—is marked by great subtlety,

but the discussion is somewhat arid. I will give a few specimens.

Life. The existence of a thing for itself is its complete life; its existence for another is its relative life. God exists for Himself. He is the Living One (*al-Hayy*), and His life is the life complete and immortal. Created beings in general exist for God: their life is relative and linked with death. While the Divine life in created beings is one and complete, some manifest it in a complete form, *e.g.*, the Perfect Man and the Cherubim; others incompletely, *e.g.*, the animal man (*al-insánu 'l-hayawáni*), the inferior angels, the *jinn* (genies), animals, plants, and minerals. Yet, in a certain sense, the life of all created beings is complete in the measure suitable to their degree and necessary for the preservation of the order of the universe. Life is a single essence, incapable of diminution or division, existent for itself in everything; and that which constitutes a thing is its life, that is to say, the life of God whereby all things subsist: they all glorify Him in respect of all His names, and their glorification of Him in respect of His name "the Living" is identical with their existence through His life. The author states, as a fact known to few but revealed to him by mystical illumination, that everything exists in and for itself, and that its life is entirely free and self-determined. This—which, as he admits, does not tally with what has been said above—is confirmed by the Divine information that on the Day of Resurrection each of a man's deeds will appear in visible shape and will address him and say, "I am thy deed."

*Knowledge.* Although every attribute is independent and uncompounded, knowledge is most nearly connected with life: whatever lives knows. Jílí controverts the doctrine of Ibnu 'l-'Arabí that God's knowledge is given Him by the

objects which He knows. God certainly decreed that every individual thing should be what its nature required it to be, but the consequence drawn by Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, namely, that His knowledge of things is derived from the necessity of their natures, is false: on the contrary, their natures were necessitated by His knowledge of them before they were created and brought into existence—it was His knowing them, not the necessity inherent in them of being what they are, that caused them to become objects of His knowledge. Afterwards (*i.e.*, when they were created), their natures required other than that which He knew of them at first, and He then for the second time decreed that they should be what their natures required, according to that which He knew of them.

*Will.* The will of God is "His particularisation of the objects of His knowledge by existence, according to the requirements of His knowledge." Our will is identical with the Divine eternal will, but in relation to us it partakes of our temporality (*hudúth*), and we call it "created." Nothing but this (unreal) attribution prevents us from actualising whatever we propose: if we refer our will to God, all things become subject to it. Jílí enumerates nine phases of will, beginning with inclination (*mayl*) and ending with the highest and purest love (*'ishq*), in which there is no lover or beloved, since both have passed away in the love that is God's very essence. The Divine will is uncaused and absolutely free, not, as Ibnu 'l-'Arabí holds, determined by the obligation of the Knower to act as His nature demands.

*Power.* This is defined by Jílí as "the bringing of the nonexistent into existence." Here again he disagrees with Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, who asserts that God did not create the world from not-being, but only brought it from being in His knowledge into actual being. But in that case, Jílí

argues, the world would be co-eternal with God. It is not so: the judgment that God exists in Himself is logically prior to the judgment that things exist in His knowledge; and the former judgment involves the non-existence of things and the existence of God alone. God brought things from not-being into being and caused them to exist in His knowledge, *i.e.*, He knew them as brought into existence from not-being; *then* He brought them forth from His knowledge and caused them to exist externally. Does it follow, because they were produced from not-being, that they were unknown to Him before He caused them to exist in His knowledge? No; the priority is of logic, not of time. There is no interval between the not-being of things and their existence in His knowledge. He knows them as He knows Himself, but they are not eternal as He is eternal.

#### IV. THE HEAVENLY MAN.

Like Jacob Böhme, Jílí sets out from the principle that "in order that the truth may be manifested as a Something, there must be a contrary therein." He finds the ground of existence in a Being which, though essentially One, is of threefold nature, since it knows itself as the Creator (*al-Haqq*) and the creatures (*al-khalq*).

"The Essence," he says, "is 'Thou' and 'I' — 'Thou' in respect of thy deepest self (*huwiyya*, He-ness), not in respect of the human attributes which the notion 'Thou' admits; and 'I' in respect of my individual self, not in respect of the Divine attributes which the notion 'I' admits. That is what is signified by the Essence (*al-Dhát*). 'I,' in respect of my 'I-ness' (*aniyya*), viewed in relation to the judgments which the notion 'I' is capable of, is God; and 'Thou,' in the creaturely aspect, is Man. Therefore consider your essence,

if you will, as 'I,' or if you will, as 'Thou,' for there is nothing besides the universal reality....

If you say, that it (the Essence) is One, you are right; or if you say that it is Two, it is in fact Two. Or if you say, No, it is Three,' you are right, for that is the real nature of Man.

Regard the Oneness (*aḥadiyya*) which is his essence: say, 'He is One relatively (*wáḥid*), One absolutely (*aḥad*), unique in glory.'

But if the two essences are considered, you will say that he is Two, because he is a slave (*'abd*) and a Lord (*rabb*).

And if you examine his real nature and what is united therein, namely, two things deemed to be contrary,

You will contemplate him with amazement: his lowness is such that you will not call him lofty, and his loftiness is such that you will not call him low. Nay, name that (Man) a Third, because of a reality having two attributes inherent in the realities of its essence.

It (that reality) is he named Aḥmad as being that (Man), and Mohammed as being the true idea (*ḥaqíqa*) of all things that exist."

As an introduction to the Logos doctrine foreshadowed here, which is interwoven with a mystical scheme of cosmology, I will translate part of the 60th chapter, "Of the Perfect Man: showing that he is our Lord Mohammed, and

that he stands over against the Creator (*al-Ḥaqq*) and the creatures (*al-khalq*)."

The Perfect Man is the *Qutb* (axis) on which the spheres of existence revolve from first to last, and since things came into being he is one (*wáḥid*) for ever and ever. He hath various guises and appears in diverse bodily tabernacles (*kaná'is*): in respect of some of these his name is given to him, while in respect of others it is not given to him. His own original name is Mohammed, his name of honour Abú 'l-Qásim, his description 'Abdullah, and his title Shamsu'ddín. In every age he bears a name suitable to his guise (*libás*) in that age. I once met him in the form of my Shaykh, Sharafu'ddín Ismá'íl al-Jabartí, but I did not know that he (the Shaykh) was the Prophet, although I knew that he (the Prophet) was the Shaykh. This was one of the visions in which I beheld him at Zabíd in A.H. 796. The real meaning of this matter is that the Prophet has the power of assuming every form. When the adept (*adīb*) sees him in the form of Mohammed which he wore during his life, he names him by that name, but when he sees him in another form and knows him to be Mohammed, he names him by the name of the form in which he appears. The name Mohammed is not applied except to the Idea of Mohammed (*al-Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*). Thus, when he appeared in the form of Shiblí, Shiblí said to his disciple, "Bear witness that I am the Apostle of God"; and the disciple, being one of the illuminated, recognised the Prophet and said, "I bear witness that thou art the Apostle of God." No objection can be taken to this: it is like what happens when a dreamer sees some one in the form of another; but there is a difference between dreaming and mystical revelation, *viz.*, that the name of the form in which Mohammed appears to the dreamer is not bestowed in hours of waking upon the *Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*,



because interpretation is applicable to the World of Similitudes: accordingly, when the dreamer wakes he interprets the *haqíqa* of Mohammed as being the *haqíqa* of the dream-form. In mystical revelation it is otherwise, for if you perceive mystically that the *haqíqa* of Mohammed is displayed in any human form, you must bestow upon the *haqíqa* of Mohammed the name of that form and regard its owner with no less reverence than you would show to our Lord Mohammed, and after having seen him therein you may not behave towards it in the same manner as before. Do not imagine that my words contain any tincture of the doctrine of metempsychosis. God forbid! I mean that the Prophet is able to assume whatever form he wishes, and the Sunna declares that in every age he assumes the form of the most perfect men, in order to exalt their dignity and correct their deviation (from the truth): they are his vicegerents outwardly, and he is their spiritual essence (*haqíqa*) inwardly.

The Perfect Man in himself stands over against all the individualisations of existence. With his spirituality he stands over against the higher individualisations, with his corporeality over against the lower. His heart stands over against the Throne of God (*al-'Arsh*), his mind over against the Pen (*al-Qalam*), his soul over against the Guarded Tablet (*al-Lawḥu 'l-mahfúz*), his nature over against the elements, his capability (of receiving forms) over against matter (*hayúlá*)....He stands over against the angels with his good thoughts, over against the genies and devils with the doubts which beset him, over against the beasts with his animality. ...To every type of existence he furnishes from himself an anti-type. We have already explained that every one of the Cherubim is created from an analogous faculty of the Perfect Man. It only remains to speak of his correspondence with the Divine names and attributes.

You must know that the Perfect Man is a copy (*nuskha*) of God, according to the saying of the Prophet, "God created Adam in the image of the Merciful," and in another *hadith*, "God created Adam in His own image." That is so, because God is Living, Knowing, Mighty, Willing, Hearing, Seeing, and Speaking, and Man too is all these. Then he confronts the Divine *huwiyya* with his *huwiyya*, the Divine *aniyya* with his *aniyya*, and the Divine *dhát* (essence) with his *dhát*—he is the whole against the whole, the universal against the universal, the particular against the particular.... Further, you must know that the Essential names and the Divine attributes belong to the Perfect Man by fundamental and sovereign right in virtue of a necessity inherent in his essence, for it is he whose "truth" (*haqíqa*) is signified by those expressions and whose spirituality (*latífa*) is indicated by those symbols: they have no subject in existence (whereto they should be attached) except the Perfect Man. As a mirror in which a person sees the form of himself and cannot see it without the mirror, such is the relation of God to the Perfect Man, who cannot possibly see his own form but in the mirror of the name Allah; and he is also a mirror to God, for God laid upon Himself the necessity that His names and attributes should not be seen save in the Perfect Man. This obligation to display the Divine attributes is the "trust" (*amána*) which God offered to the heavens and the earth: they were afraid to accept it, "but Man accepted it; verily he is unjust and ignorant" (Kor. 33, 72), *i.e.*, unjust to his own soul in letting it suffer degradation (from the things of this world) and ignorant of his real worth, because he is unaware of that with which he has been entrusted.... Beyond the plane of the Names and Attributes, which are ranged on the right and left of him according to their kind, the Perfect Man feels through his whole being "a pervasive delight, which is named the delight of the Godhead" (*ladhdhatu 'l-iláhiyya*).... Here he is

independent of his modes, *i.e.*, the Names and Attributes, and regards them not at all. He knows nothing in existence save his own nature (*huwiyya*), contemplates the emanation (*ṣudúr*) from himself of all that exists, and beholds the Many in his essence, even as ordinary men are conscious of their own thoughts and qualities; but the Perfect Man is able to keep every thought, great or small, far from himself: his power over things does not proceed from any secondary cause but is exercised freely, like other men's power of speaking, eating, and drinking.

These extracts bring out the germinal idea which is developed by Jílí into a psychological and cosmological system. The Perfect Man, as the copy of God and the archetype of Nature, unites the creative and creaturely aspects of the Essence and manifests the oneness of Thought with things. "He is the heaven and the earth and the length and the breadth."

Mine is the kingdom in both worlds: I saw therein none but myself, that I should hope for his favour or fear him.

Before me is no "before," that I should follow its condition, and after me is no "after," that I should precede its notion.

I have made all kinds of perfection mine own, and lo, I am the beauty of the majesty of the Whole: I am naught but It.

Whatsoever thou seest of minerals and plants and animals, together with Man and his qualities, And whatsoever thou seest of elements and nature

and original atoms (*haba'*) whereof the substance is  
(ethereal as) a perfume,

And whatsoever thou seest of seas and deserts and  
trees and high-topped mountains,

And whatsoever thou seest of spiritual forms and  
of things visible whose countenance is goodly to  
behold,

And whatsoever thou seest of thought and  
imagination and intelligence and soul, and heart  
with its inwards,

And whatsoever thou seest of angelic aspect, or of  
phenomena whereof Satan is the spirit,

\* \* \* \* \*

Lo, I am that whole, and that whole is my theatre:  
'tis I, not it, that is displayed in its reality.  
Verily, I am a Providence and Prince to mankind:  
the entire creation is a name, and my essence is the  
object named.

The sensible world is mine and the angel-world is  
of my weaving and fashioning; the unseen world is  
mine and the world of omnipotence springs from  
me.

And mark! In all that I have mentioned I am a slave  
returning from the Essence to his Lord—  
Poor, despised, lowly, self-abasing, sin's captive, in  
the bonds of his trespasses.

The concluding verses only say what Jílí repeats in many places, that while at supreme moments a man may lose himself in God, he can never be identified with God absolutely.

In the second part of his work the author treats of the Perfect Man as the Spirit whence all things have their origin. Accordingly he devotes successive chapters to the organs and faculties which make up the psychological and intellectual constitution of the Perfect Man—spirit, heart, intelligence, reflection, etc., with the corresponding celestial beings which are said to be "created" from them e. The highest hypostases of his psychology are the Holy Spirit (*Rúhu 'l-Quds*) and the Spirit (*al-Rúh*); the latter is also described as "the angel named al-Rúh" and, in the technical language of the Šúfís, as "the *haqq* by means of which the world is created" (*al-haqqu 'l-makhlúq bihi*) and "the Idea of Mohammed" (*al-Haqíqatu 'l-Muhammadiyah*). How these two Spirits are related to each other is indicated in the following passage:

You must know that every sensible object has a created spirit which constitutes its form, and the spirit is to the form as the meaning to the word. The created spirit has a Divine spirit which constitutes it, and that Divine spirit is the *Rúhu 'l-Quds*. Those who regard the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* in man deem it created, because two eternal substances cannot exist: eternity belongs to God alone, whose names and attributes inhere in His essence because of the impossibility of their being detached; all else is created and originated. Man, for example, has a body, which is his form, and a spirit, which is his meaning, and a consciousness (*sirr*), which is *al-Rúh*, and an essential aspect (*wajh*), which is denoted by the terms *Rúhu 'l-Quds*

(the Holy Spirit), *al-sirru 'l-iláhí* (the Divine consciousness) and *al-wujúdu 'l-sárí* (the all-pervading Being).

The *Rúhu 'l-Quds* and the *Rúh* are one Spirit viewed as eternal in relation to God and non-eternal in relation to Man; as the inmost essence of things or as their form of existence. The uncreated Spirit of God, sanctified above all phenomenal imperfections, is referred to in the verse, "I breathed of My Spirit into Adam" (Kor. 15, 29; 38, 72), and in the verse, "Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face (*wajh*) of Allah" (Kor. 2, 109), *i.e.*, the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* exists, "individualised by its perfection," in every object of sense or thought. Jílí adds that inasmuch as the spirit of a thing is its self (*nafs*), existence is constituted by the "self" of God; and His "self" is His essence. Union with the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* comes only as the crown and consummation of the mystical life to "the holy one" (*qudsí*) who unceasingly contemplates the Divine consciousness (*sirr*) which is his origin, so that its laws are made manifest in him and God becomes his ear, eye, hand and tongue: he touches the sick and they are healed, he bids a thing be and it is, for he has been strengthened with the Holy Spirit, even as Jesus was (Kor. 2, 81).

It will now be seen that Jílí considers the created *Rúh* or the archetypal Spirit of Mohammed as a mode of the uncreated Holy Divine Spirit and as the medium through which God becomes conscious of Himself in creation.

God created the angel named *Rúh* from His own light, and from him He created the world and made him His organ of vision in the world. One of his names is the Word of Allah (*Amr* Allah). He is the noblest and most exalted of existent beings: there is no angel above him, and he is the chief of the Cherubim. God caused the mill-stone of

existent beings to turn on him, and made him the axis (*quṭb*) of the sphere of created things. Towards every thing that God created he has a special aspect (*wajh*), in virtue of which he regards it and preserves it in its appointed place in the order of existence. He has eight forms, which are the bearers of the Divine Throne (*al-'Arsh*). From him were created all the angels, both the sublime and the elemental. The angels stand to him in the relation of drops of water to the sea, and the eight bearers of the 'Arsh stand in the same relation to him as the eight faculties which constitute human existence to the spirit of man. These faculties are intelligence (*'aql*), judgment (*wahm*), reflection (*fikr*), phantasy (*khayál*), imagination (*al-muṣawwira*), memory (*al-háfiza*), perception (*al-mudrika*), and the soul (*nafs*). The *Rúḥ* exercises a Divine guardianship, created in him by God, over the whole universe. He manifests himself in his perfection in the *Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muhammadiyah*: therefore the Prophet is the most excellent of mankind. While God manifests Himself in His attributes to all other created beings, He manifests Himself in His essence to this angel alone. Accordingly the *Rúḥ* is the *Quṭb* of the present world and of the world to come. He does not make himself known to any creature of God but to the Perfect Man. When the saint (*walí*) knows him and truly understands the things which the *Rúḥ* teaches him, he becomes a pole (*quṭb*) on which the entire universe revolves; but the Poleship (*Quṭbiyya*) belongs fundamentally to the *Rúḥ*, and if others hold it, they are only his delegates. He is the first to receive the Divine command, which he then delivers to the angels; and whenever a command is to be executed in the universe, God creates from him an angel suitable to that command, and the *Rúḥ* sends him to carry it out. All the Cherubim are created from him, *e.g.*, Seraphiel, Gabriel, Michael, and Azrael, and those above them, such as the angel named al-Nún, who is stationed beneath the

Guarded Tablet, and the angel named the Pen (*al-Qalam*), and the angel named al-Mudabbir, whose station is beneath the *Kursí*, and the angel named al-Mufaṣṣil, who stands beneath the Imámu 'l-Mubín: these are the Sublime Angels, who were not commanded to worship Adam. God in His wisdom did not command them, for had they been commanded to worship, every one of Adam's descendants would have known them. Consider how, inasmuch as the angels were commanded to worship Adam, they appear to men in the forms of the Divine similitudes whereby God reveals Himself to the dreamer. All those forms are angels, who descend in diverse shapes by command of the angel entrusted with the making of similitudes. For this reason a man dreams that lifeless things speak to him: unless they were really spirits assuming the form of lifelessness, they would not have spoken. The Prophet said that a true dream is an inspiration from God—because an angel brings it—and also that a true dream is one of the forty-six parts of prophecy. Since Iblís, though he did not worship Adam, was amongst those commanded to worship, the devils who are his offspring were commanded to appear to the dreamer in the same forms as the angels: hence false dreams. According to this argument, the Sublime Angels are unknowable except by "the divine men" (*al-iláhiyyún*), on whom God bestows such knowledge as a gift after their release from the limitations of humanity.

The *Rúh* has many names according to the number of his aspects. He is named "The Most Exalted Pen" and "The Spirit of Mohammed" and "The First Intelligence" and "The Divine Spirit," on the principle of naming the original by the derivative, but in the presence of God he has only one name, which is "The Spirit" (*al-Rúh*).

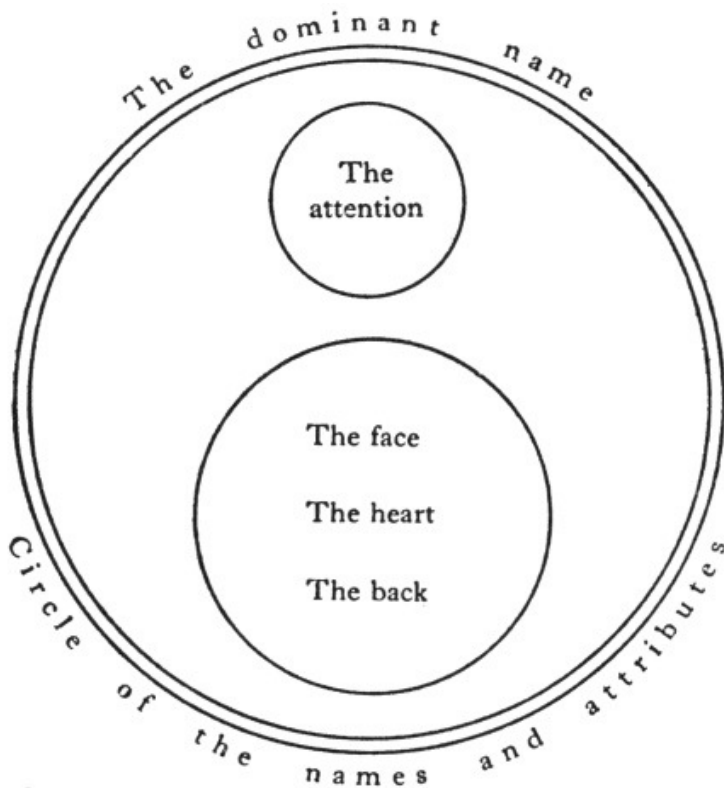


Jílí gives a long account of a vision in which the *Rúh* conversed with him and spoke darkly concerning the mystery of his nature, saying, "I am the child whose father is his son and the wine whose vine is its jar...I met the mothers who bore me, and I asked them in marriage, and they let me marry them." In the course of this colloquy the Idea of Mohammed (*al-Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*) says:

God created Adam in His own image—this is not doubted or disputed—and Adam was one of the theatres (*mazáhir*) in which I displayed myself: he was appointed as a vicegerent (*khalífa*) over my externality. I knew that God made me the object and goal of all His creatures, and lo, I heard the most gracious allocution from the Most Great Presence: "Thou art the *Qutb* whereon the spheres of beauty revolve, and thou art the Sun by whose radiance the full-moon of perfection is replenished; thou art he for whom We set up the pattern and for whose sake We made fast the door-ring; thou art the reality symbolised by Hind and Salmá, and 'Azza and Asmá. O thou who art endued with lofty attributes and pure qualities, Beauty doth not dumbfound thee nor Majesty cause thee to quake, nor dost thou deem Perfection unattainable: thou art the centre and these the circumference, thou art the clothed and these the splendid garments."

In some aspects the spiritual organ which Súfís call "the heart" (*qalb*) is hardly distinguished from the spirit (*rúh*): indeed Jílí says that when the Koran mentions the Divine spirit breathed into Adam, it is the heart that is signified. He describes it as "the eternal light and the sublime consciousness (*sirr*) revealed in the quintessence (*'ayn*) of created beings (Mohammed), that God may behold Man thereby"; as "the Throne of God (*al-'Arsh*) and His Temple in Man...the centre of Divine consciousness and the

circumference of the circle of all that exists actually or ideally." It reflects all the Divine names and attributes at once, yet quickly changes under the influence of particular names. Like a mirror, it has a face and a back. The face is always turned towards a light called the attention (*al-hamm*), which is the eye of the heart, so that whenever a name becomes opposite to, or as we should say, strikes the attention, the heart sees it and receives the impression of it; then this name disappears and is succeeded by others. The "back" of the heart is the place from which the attention is absent. Jílí illustrates his meaning by the diagram reproduced here:



The Divine names and attributes are the heart's true nature, in which it was created. Some men are so blessed that they have little trouble to keep it pure, but most of us must needs undergo painful self-mortifications in order to wash out the stains of the flesh. Recompense for good works depends on the merit imputed by God to His creatures according to the original individualisations in which He created them: it is a necessary right, not an arbitrary gift. The heart reflects the world of attributes, or rather, as Jílí holds, is itself reflected by the universe. "Earth and heaven do not contain Me, but the heart of My believing servant containeth Me": if the universe were primary and the heart secondary, *i.e.*, if the heart were only a mirror, then the power of containing and comprehending would have been ascribed to the universe, not to the heart; but in fact, it is the heart alone that comprehends God—by knowledge, by contemplation, and finally by transubstantiation.

When God created the whole world from the Light of Mohammed, He created from the heart of Mohammed the angel Isráfíl (Seraphiel), the mightiest of the angels and the nearest to God.

The faculty of Reason has three modes, *viz.*, the First Intelligence (*al-'aqlu 'l-awwal*), Universal Reason (*al-'aqlu 'l-kullí*), and ordinary reason (*'aqlu 'l-ma'úsh*). Jílí identifies the First Intelligence, as the faithful treasurer of Divine Knowledge, with Gabriel, "the trusted Spirit" (*al-Rúhu 'l-amín*), and as a locus for the form of Divine Knowledge in existence—the first objective analysis of the Divine synthesis—with the Pen (*al-Qalam*) which transmits the particulars contained as a whole in God's consciousness to the Guarded Tablet (*al-Lawhu 'l-mahfúz*). Universal Reason is "the percipient luminous medium whereby the forms of

knowledge deposited in the First Intelligence are made manifest"; not the sum of individual intelligences, for in this case Reason would be plural, while in reality it is a single substance, the common element, so to speak, of human, angelic, and demonic spirits. Ordinary reason is "the light (of Universal Reason) measured by the rule of reflection (*fikr*), and does not apprehend save by means of reflection": therefore it cannot reach the unconditioned First Intelligence, often misses its mark, and fails to perceive many things. Universal Reason, on the other hand, is infallible, since it weighs all with the twin scales of Wisdom and Power, but it never penetrates beyond the sphere of creation. Neither universal (intuitive) nor ordinary (discursive) reason can attain to knowledge of God. The contrary doctrine has only a demonstrative and controversial value. True gnosis (*ma'rifa*) is given by faith, which does not depend on proofs and effects (*áthár*) but on the Divine attributes themselves.

The judgment (*wahm*) of Mohammed was created from the light of the Divine Name *al-Kámil* (the Perfect), and God created from the light of Mohammed's judgment Azrael, the Angel of Death. *Wahm* is the strongest of the human faculties: it overpowers the understanding, the reflection, and the imagination...nothing in the world apprehends more quickly; it is what enables men to walk on the water and fly in the air; it is the light of certainty (*yaqín*) and the basis of dominion; he that has it at his command exercises sway over all things high and low, while he that is ruled by its might becomes stupefied and bewildered. The spirit, on entering the body, either acquires angelic dispositions and ascends to Paradise, or assumes bestial dispositions and sinks to Hell: it ascends when it judges the limitations of its human form, *e.g.*, grossness and weakness, to be merely negative and capable of being thrown off, since the

spirit always retains its original qualities potentially. At death Azrael appears to the spirit in a form determined by its beliefs, actions, and dispositions during life. Or, again, he appears disembodied and invisible, so that a man may "die of a rose in aromatic pain" or of a stench. When the spirit sees Azrael, it becomes enamoured of him, and its gaze is entirely withdrawn from the body, whereupon the body dies. The spirit does not quit its bodily form at once but abides in it for a while, like one who sleeps without seeing any vision. After this dreamless sleep, which is its death (*mawtu 'l-arwáh*), the spirit passes into the intermediate state (*al-barzakh*).

Meditation (*himmá*) is the noblest of the spiritual lights (faculties), for it has no object but God. Yet one must beware of resting in it in order to enjoy its fruits: the master-mystic will leave it before it has yielded all its secrets to him, lest it become a barrier to his further advance. Michael, the angel created from it, is charged with the duty of dispensing the portions of fate allotted by eternal necessity to each recipient.

From the reflection (*fikr*) of Mohammed God created the spirits of the celestial and terrestrial angels, and appointed them to guard the higher and lower spheres of existence until the Last Day, when they shall be translated to the intelligible world. One of the keys to that world is reflection, leading to true knowledge of the nature of Man, which is set with all its aspects over against the aspects of the Merciful (*al-Rahmán*). But the pure region of filer lies open to mystics alone: the path of speculative philosophy ends in a mirage.

As we have already seen, thought (*khayál*), *i.e.*, the faculty that retains what the fancy perceives of the forms of

sensible objects after their substance has disappeared, is declared by Jílí to be the stuff of the universe. In Hegelian language "the things that we know about are appropriately described when we say that their being is established not on themselves, but on the Divine Idea." Nothing exists otherwise than as a dream in the perception of the dreamer, and the cosmos is "a thought within a thought within a thought" (*khayál<sup>un</sup> fí khayál<sup>in</sup> fí khayál*). It must be added, however, that while every thing, *i.e.*, every thought, expresses some reality, the Perfect Man (though he is not Reality itself) is the complete self-expression of Reality.

Imagination, memory, and perception, which the author enumerated amongst the eight spiritual faculties, find no place in this discussion.

After a preliminary chapter on the Form of Mohammed (*al šúratu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*), which I will omit for the present, he concludes his psychology with an account of the nature of the soul.

Ascetic and devotional Şúfism, in agreement with orthodox Islam, distinguishes sharply between the spirit (*rúḥ*) and the soul (*nafs*). The latter term may, indeed, be used to denote a man's spiritual "self"—"he that knows himself (*nafsahu*) knows his Lord"—but as a rule when Şúfís refer to the *nafs* they mean the appetitive soul, the sensual "self" which, from their point of view, is wholly evil and can never become one with God. Jílí makes short work of this dualistic doctrine. The heading of his 59th chapter promises to show that the *nafs* is the origin of Iblís and all the devils, and he begins as follows:

The *nafs* is the consciousness (*sirr*) of the Lord, and the essence (of God): through that Essence it hath in its essence manifold delights. It is created from the light of the attribute of Lordship: many, therefore, are its lordly qualities.... God created the *nafs* of Mohammed from His own *nafs* (and the *nafs* of a thing is its essence); then He created the *nafs* of Adam as a copy of the *nafs* of Mohammed.

With great boldness Jílí argues that the Fall of Man is the necessary consequence of his Divine nature. Adam ate the forbidden fruit because his soul manifests a certain aspect of Deity, *viz.*, Lordship (*rubúbiyya*); for it is not in the nature of Lordship to submit to a prohibition. The soul knew that, if it ate the fruit, it would inevitably descend into the material world and would suffer misery, but on the other hand it was aware of the blessedness of its inherent sovereignty. Thus it became perplexed, and its perplexity (*iltibás*) brought about its fall. The choice of the soul is at once determined and free: determined, because in the last resort its act proceeds from a fundamental difference in the nature of God; free, because the soul acts in accordance with its knowledge of itself and, had it not been blinded by pride, would have perceived that its true nature requires obedience to the Divine command, inasmuch as disobedience renders the spirit miserable, and misery is inconsistent with Lordship.

When God created the soul of Mohammed from His own Essence, which comprises all contraries, He created from the soul of Mohammed (1) the Sublime Angels in respect of His attributes of Beauty, Light, and Leading, and (2) Iblís and his followers in respect of His attributes of Majesty, Darkness, and Misleading. Now, the name of Iblís was 'Azázíl: he had worshipped God for thousands of

years before the creation of the world, and God had forbidden him to worship aught else. Therefore, when God created Adam and commanded the angels to bow down before him, Iblís refused, for he did not know that to worship by God's command is equivalent to worshipping God. Instead of justifying his disobedience or repenting of it and asking God to forgive him, he silently acknowledged that God wills and acts in conformity with the eternal and unchangeable principles of His nature. Iblís was banished from the Divine presence and a curse was laid upon him "until the Day of Judgment" (Kor. 15, 35), *i.e.*, for a finite period. After the Day of Judgment the creatureliness which hinders the spirit from knowing God as He really is will be counted amongst its perfection, and Iblís will then be restored to his place beside God.

Jílí mentions five phases of the soul, or ascending grades of spiritual life: (1) the animal soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as governing the body; (2) the commanding (evil-prompting) soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as subject to the passions; (3) the inspired soul, *i.e.*, the spirit which God inspires to do good; (4) the self-reproaching soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as turning penitently towards God; (5) the tranquil soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as at rest with God.

## VI. THE RETURN TO THE ESSENCE.

The gist of Jílí's philosophy, as I understand it, is the notion of One Being, which is One Thought, going forth from itself in all the forms of the universe, knowing itself as Nature and yet, amidst the multiformity of Nature, reasserting its unity in Man—in Man whom self-knowledge has enlightened and made perfect, so that ceasing to know himself as an individual he sinks into his Divine element, like a wave into the sea. This language,



apart from its inadequacy, conveys a wrong impression by translating in terms of time and space what does not belong to these categories. All interpretations of ideal and mystical experience are more or less fictitious.

The word commonly used to denote the self-manifestation of God in His essence, attributes, and names is *tajallí*, which implies that something hidden before is now clearly seen, as the splendour of the sun emerging from eclipse or the beauty of a bride when she unveils. The Divine *tajallí*, in respect of the person to whom it is made, may be called an illumination, for it is the light whereby the mystic's heart has vision of God. Accordingly, the ontological descent from the Absolute and the mystical ascent or return to the Absolute are really the same process looked at from different points of view. The self-revelation of God necessarily involves the manifestation of His nature by those who possess an inborn capacity for realising it in themselves. Jílí divides the ascending movement of this consciousness into four stages—the Illumination of the Actions, the Illumination of the Names, the Illumination of the Attributes, and the Illumination of the Essence—which correspond in reverse order to the devolution of Pure Being from its primal simplicity to the manifestation of its effects in the sensible world.

(a) The Illumination of the Divine actions.

To one thus illumined it becomes plain that human agency is naught, that he has no power or will of his own, and that all things are done by the power of God who moves them and brings them to rest. Sometimes the Divine will is made known to him before the act: consequently, he may disobey the command of God in order to comply with His will; in which case his disobedience is essentially

obedience and lies between him and God, though "it remains for us to exact from him the penalty which God has imposed in the Koran and the Sunna upon those who break His commandment."

(b) The Illumination of the Divine names.

The mystic to whom God reveals Himself in one of His Names vanishes (from consciousness of individuality) under the radiance of the Name; and if you invoke God by that Name, the man will answer you, because the Name is applicable to him....If God reveal Himself in His Name Allah, the man will disappear and God will call to him, saying, "Lo, I am Allah"; and if you cry "O Allah!" the man will answer you with the words "At thy service (*labbayka*)!" Then, if he mount higher and God strengthen him and let him abide in consciousness after his passing-away (*fanâ*), God will answer any one who calls the man, so that if you say, for instance, "O Muḥammad!" God will respond to you, saying, "At thy service!" In proportion as he is strengthened to ascend, God will reveal Himself to him in His subordinate Names, *viz.*, the Merciful (*al-Raḥmân*), the Lord (*al-Rabb*), the King (*al-Malik*), the Omniscient (*al-'Alím*), the Omnipotent (*al-Qádir*), etc. The self-revelation of God in each of these Names is superior to His self-revelation in the Name preceding it, because as regards the Illumination of the Names analysis is superior to synthesis, and the manifestation of each lower Name is an analysis of the synthesis which is manifested by the one immediately above it.

As regards illuminations of the Essence, it is otherwise; here the more general is above the more particular: *al-Raḥmân* is superior to *al-Rabb*, and *Allah* to either. Finally, all the Divine Names seek to apply themselves to the

illuminated man, even as the name seeks the object named, and then he sings:

One calls Her by Her name and I answer him, and when I am called (by my own name) 'tis Laylá (the Beloved) that answers for me.

That is because we are the spirit of One, though we dwell by turns in two bodies—a marvellous thing! Like a single person with two names: thou canst not miss by whichever name thou callest him.

Jílí only speaks of what he himself has experienced, since every Name is revealed in different ways to different individuals. From his account of these illuminations I take a passage which exhibits his characteristic blend of logic and mysticism:

The way to the illumination of the Name *al-Qadím* (the Eternal) is through a Divine revelation whereby it is shown to any one that he existed in the knowledge of God before the Creation, inasmuch as he existed in God's knowledge through the existence of that knowledge, and that knowledge existed through the existence of God: the existence of God is eternal and the knowledge is eternal and the object of knowledge is inseparable from the knowledge and is also eternal, inasmuch as knowledge is not knowledge unless it has an object which gives to the subject the name of Knower. The eternity of existent beings in the knowledge of God necessarily follows from this induction, and the (illuminated) man returns to God in respect of His Name, the Eternal. At the moment when the Divine eternity is revealed to him from his essence, his temporality vanishes and he remains eternal through God,

having passed away from (consciousness of) his temporality.

(c) The Illumination of the Divine Attributes.

When God desires to reveal Himself to a man by means of any Name or Attribute, He causes the man to pass away (*faná*) and makes him naught and deprives him of his (individual) existence; and when the human light is extinguished and the creaturely spirit passes away, God puts in the man's body, without incarnation (*ḥulúl*), a spiritual substance, which is of God's essence and is neither separate from God nor joined to the man, in exchange for what He deprived him of; which substance is named the Holy Spirit (*rúḥu 'l-quds*). And when God puts instead of the man a spirit of His own essence, the revelation is made to that spirit. God is never revealed except to Himself, but we call that Divine spirit "a man" in respect of its being instead of the man. In reality there is neither "slave" nor "Lord," since these are correlated terms. When the "slave" is annulled, the "Lord" is necessarily annulled, and nothing remains but God alone.

Mystics receive these illuminations in proportion to their capacities, the abundance of their knowledge, and the strength of their resolution. Taking each of the seven chief attributes in turn, the author describes the effects of the illumination on himself or on others, and the different forms which it may assume. Concerning Life and Knowledge something has been said above. Those endowed with Hearing hear the language of angels, animals, plants, and minerals. As for the *mukallamún*, who receive the illumination of Speech, the Word (*kalám*) comes to them sometimes audibly and from a certain direction, sometimes from no direction and not through the ear,

sometimes as an inner light having a definite shape; and in oneness with God they realise that all existent beings are their Word and that their words are without end. According to Jílí, the illumination of Power is marked in its initial stages by a phenomenon characteristic of prophetic inspiration—the ringing of a bell (*ṣalṣalatu 'l-jaras*), which is produced, as he quaintly writes, by "the dashing of realities one against another in order that men's hearts may not dare to enter the presence of Divine Majesty." "In this illumination," he says, "I heard the ringing of bells. My frame dissolved and my trace vanished and my name was rased out. By reason of the violence of what I experienced I became like a worn-out garment which hangs on a high tree, and the fierce blast carries it away piece by piece. I beheld naught but lightnings and thunders, and clouds raining lights, and seas surging with fire."

(d) The Illumination of the Divine essence.

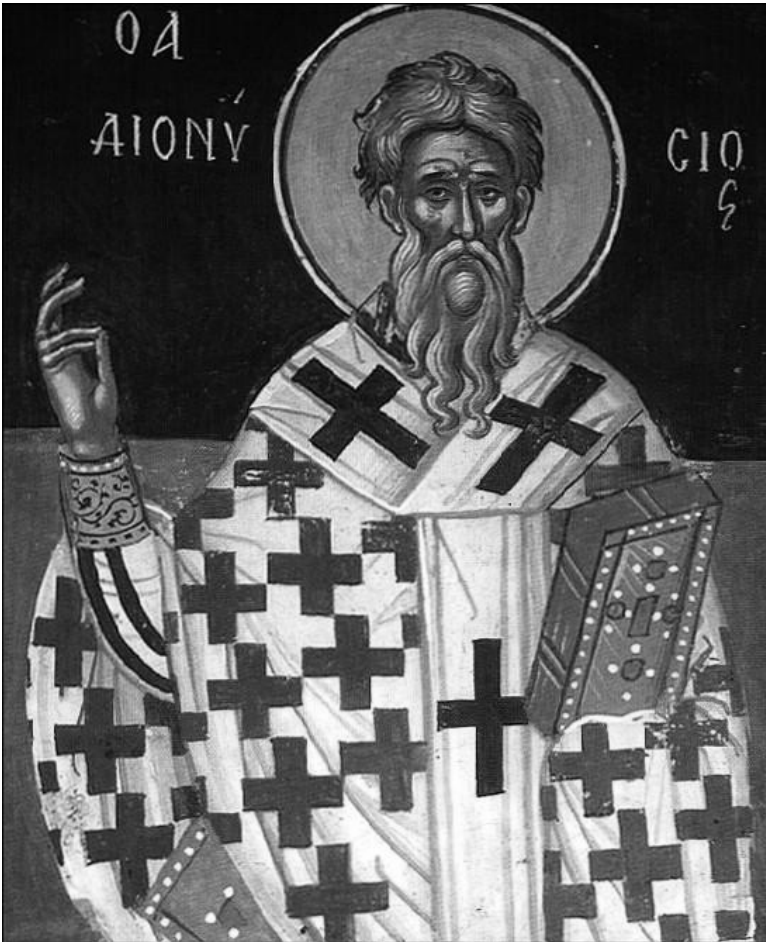
While every illumination of a Name or Attribute reveals the Essence in a particular relation, the Illumination of the absolute Essence is not identical with any or all of these illuminations. Jílí refers the difference to the Divine substance, which, as we have seen, God " puts instead of the man' so that the subject and object of illumination are really one. This substance may be either attributal (*ṣifâtí*) or essential (*dhátí*). Only in the latter case does "the man" become the God-man. Such a one is the Perfect Unit (*al fardu 'l-kámil*) and the Microcosmic Pole (*al-ghawthu 'l-jámi'*) on whom the whole order of existence revolves; to him genuflection and prostration in prayer are due, and by means of him God keeps the universe in being. He is denoted by the terms *al-Mahdí* and *al-Khátam* (the Seal), and he is the Vicegerent (*khalífa*) indicated in the story of Adam. The essences of all things that exist are drawn to

obey his command, as iron is drawn to the magnet. He subdues the sensible world by his might and does what he will by his power. Nothing is barred from him, for when the Divine substance is in this *walí* as a simple essence, unconditioned by any degree appertaining to the Creator or to the creature, he bestows on every degree of existent things its *ḥaqq*, *i.e.* what it requires and is capable of receiving, and nothing can hinder him from doing so. That which hinders the Essence is merely its limitation by a degree or name or quality; but the simple Essence has nothing to hinder it: therefore with it all things are actual, not potential, while in other essences things are sometimes potential and sometimes actual.

It would seem, then, that the Illumination of the Absolute is given to the Heavenly Man (Mohammed) alone and transmitted through him to the Perfect Men who are his representatives on earth.

***Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, by Reynold A. Nicholson,  
[1921], at [sacred-texts.com](http://sacred-texts.com)**

# 'Dionysius - Forgotten Christian Mystic of the Early Church'



Dionysius

We begin this chapter's investigation into the mystic, Dionysius, with an examination of his life and conversion as written by Reverend John Parker, M.A. But let it not be left unheeded, to enter the mind of Dionysius, is to enter a firestorm of mystical thought! Let us journey . .

**DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE  
AND  
THE ALEXANDRINE SCHOOL  
By Rev. John Parker, M.A.**

ALEXANDRIA became the home of Christian Philosophy, but Athens was its birthplace. Pantaenus and Ammonius-Saccus were chief founders of the Alexandrine School. They were both Christian. They both drew their teaching from the Word of God, "the Fountain of Wisdom," and from the writings of Hierotheus, and Dionysius the Areopagite--Bishops of Athens. For several centuries there had been a Greek preparation for the Alexandrine School. As the Old Testament was a Schoolmaster, leading to Christ, so the Septuagint, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristobulus, Philo, and Apollos were heralds who prepared the minds of men for that fullness of light and truth in Jesus Christ, which, in Alexandria, clothed itself in the bright robes of Divine Philosophy.

Pantaenus was born in Athens, a.d. 120, and died in Alexandria, a.d. 213. He was Greek by nationality, and Presbyter of the Church in, Alexandria by vocation. First, Stoic, then Pythagorean, he became Christian some time before a.d. 186, at which date he was appointed chief instructor in the Didaskeleion, by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria. Pantaenus recognized the preparation for the Christian Faith in the Greek Philosophy. Anastasius-Sinaita describes him as "one of the early expositors who



agreed with each other in treating the first six days of Creation as prophetic of Christ and the whole Church."

Eusebius says, that "Pantaenus expounded the treasures of the Divine dogmas preserved direct, as from father to son, from St. Paul and other Apostles. Photius records that Pantaenus was pupil of those who had seen the Apostles, but that he certainly had not listened to any of them themselves. Now, if Pantaenus was pupil of those who had seen the Apostles, and yet had, not listened to their oral teaching, it is natural to infer that he was pupil through their writings. I am a pupil of Dr. Pusey, but I never listened to his oral teaching; I am pupil through his writings. Now, there exist, to this day, the writings of two Presbyters who had seen the Apostles--both, converts to the faith through St. Paul,---whose writings contain the treasures of the Divine dogmas, received from St. Paul and the other Apostles. Those two Presbyters are Hierotheus and Dionysius the Areopagite, both ordained Bishop of Athens by St. Paul. Dionysius the Areopagite expressly calls, St. Paul his "chief initiator," and as such, gives his teaching on the holy Angels, in the sixth chapter of the Heavenly Hierarchy; and frequently describes St. Paul as his "chief instructor."

If, then, we can prove that the writings of Dionysius existed before and were known in Alexandria, when Pantaenus delivered his lectures in that city, we may fairly infer that Pantaenus would know, and knowing, would use, the writings penned by the Chief of his own Areopagus, and Bishop of his own Athens.

Historical criticism does not permit us to reject probabilities, merely because they confirm the Christian Faith.

Dexter, in his Chronicle, collected from the Archives of Toledo and other churches in Spain, gives this testimony:--

"U.C. 851 (a.d. 98). Dionysius Areopagita dicat Eugenio Marcello, dicto, propter ingenii excellentiam, Timotheo, *libros de Divinis Nominibus*."

Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to Pope Sixths II., c. 250, respecting the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, affirms "that no one can intelligently dispute their paternity--that no one penetrated more profoundly than Dionysius into the mysterious depths of Holy Scripture--that Dionysius was disciple of St. Paul, and piously governed the Church of Athens." If, then, the Bishops of Alexandria and Rome exchanged letters only a few years after the death of Pantaenus, and only seven years after the death of Ammonius, and in those letters affirmed the writings to be undoubtedly written by Dionysius the Areopagite, it would be the height of absurdity to affirm that such writings were unknown to Pantaenus and Ammonius.

But we do not need to base our proof on mere supposition. Routh gives two fragments of Pantaenus. The second is a distinct echo of Dionysius. In *Divine Names* (c. 7), Dionysius discusses how Almighty God knows existing things, and explains the text; "*He, knowing all things before their birth*" as proving that "not as learning existing things from existing things, but from Himself, and in Himself, as Cause, the Divine Being pre-holds and pre-comprehends the notions and essence of all things, not approaching each several thing according to its kind, but knowing and containing all things within one grasp of the cause. Thus Almighty God knows existing things, not by a knowledge of existing things, but by that of Himself." Dionysius, c. V.

s. 8, speaking of creation, declares that the Divine and good *volitions* of Almighty God define and produce existing things.

Pantaenus teaches the same: "Neither does He know things sensible sensibly (αἰσθητῶς), nor things intelligible intellectually. For it is not possible that He, Who is above all things, should comprehend things being, after things being (κατὰ τὰ ὄντα), but we affirm that He knows things being" as *His own volitions* . . . yea, as His own volitions, Almighty God knows things being, since by willing (θέλων), He made all things being."

In *Mystic Theology*, c. V., Dionysius says, "Almighty God does not know existing things, *qua* existing." The teaching of Ammonius-Saccus is the same; Ammonius uses the word βούλημα, Dionysius and Pantaenus, θελήματα, of God, as Source of Creation.

But, though the known fragments of Pantaenus are few, we possess abundant writings of two pupils, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, from which we may gather the teaching of their master. Clement speaks of Pantaenus as his "great instructor and collaborator." Such is the similarity between the writings of Clement and Dionysius, that some have hazarded the conjecture that Clement the Philosopher, mentioned by Dionysius, was Clement of Alexandria! I give only one familiar illustration. Clement writes: "As then, those riding at anchor at sea, drag the anchor, but do not drag it to themselves, but themselves to the anchor, thus those who are drawn to God in the gnostic life, find themselves unconsciously led to God." Dionysius, D. N., c. III. s. 1, says, "or, as if after we have embarked on ship, and are holding on to the cable, attached to some rock, we do not draw the rock to us, but

ourselves, and the ship, to the rock. Wherefore, before everything, and especially theology, we must begin with prayer; not as though we ourselves were drawing the power, which is everywhere, and nowhere present, but as, by our godly reminiscences and invocations, conducting ourselves to, and making ourselves one with It."

Origen confessed that Pantaenus was his superior in the philosophy of the schools, and that he moulded his teaching upon the model of Pantaenus. Do the writings of Origen bear the stamp of Dionysius and Hierotheus? Origen, on the resurrection of the body, says, "For how does it not seem absurd p. x that this body which has endured scars for Christ, and, equally with the soul, has borne the savage torments of persecutions, and has also endured the suffering of chains, and rods, and has been tortured with fire, beaten with the sword, and has further suffered the cruel teeth of wild beasts, the gallows of the cross, and divers kinds of punishments,--that this should be deprived of the prizes of such contests. If forsooth, the soul alone, which not alone contended, should receive the crown, and its companion the body, which served it with much labour, should attain no recompense, for its agony and victory,--how does it not seem contrary to all reason, that the flesh, resisting for Christ its natural vices, and its innate lust, and guarding its virginity with immense labour,--that one, when the time for rewards has come, should be rejected as unworthy and the other should receive its crown? Such a fact would undoubtedly argue on the part of God, either a lack of justice or a lack of power." Dionysius (E. H., c. VII.) says, "Now the pure bodies of the holy souls, enrolled together as yoke-fellows, and fellow travellers, which together strove during the divine contests, throughout the Divine Life, in the unmoved steadfastness of the souls, will together receive

their own resurrection. For, having been made one with the holy souls, to which they were united during this present life, by having become members of Christ, they will receive in return the godlike and incorruptible immortality and blessed inheritance." Dionysius (D. N., c. VI. s. 2) says, "what is still more divine, It promises to "transfer our whole selves (I mean souls and bodies, their yoke-fellows), to a perfect life and immortality. Others again do this injustice to bodies, that, after having toiled with the holy souls, they unjustly deprive them of the holy retributions, when they have come to the goal of their most divine course." "For if the man have passed a life dear to God in soul and body, the body which has contended throughout the Divine struggles will be honoured together with the devout soul."

To show that Origen knew the works of Hierotheus, we give an extract from his letter to Gregory: "Would that you might both participate in and continually augment this part, so that you may not only say, 'we are partakers of Christ,' but also partakers of God." Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (fragment V.) says, "the Presbyters, the disciples of the Apostles, say that this is the gradation and method of those who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature, and that, moreover, they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father; and that, in due time, the Son will yield up His work to the Father." Who the *Presbyters, the disciples of the Apostles* were, we may gather from the three last chapters of the "Book of Hierotheus," in which the very same doctrine is taught. Is it not, then, a legitimate inference, that when Photius says "that Pantaenus was a pupil of *the Presbyters who had seen the Apostles,*" he designated Hierotheus and Dionysius the Areopagite, generally known under that title?

Ammonius Saccus was born of Christian parents in Alexandria, and died in that city, a.d. 242.

Anastasius Sinaita calls him "the Wise," and Hierocles, "the taught of God." Besides being famous for his expositions of Holy Scripture, he wrote the "Diatesseron," or "Harmony of the Gospels," contained in the *Bib. Patrum*. In a.d. 236, he wrote the agreement between Moses and Jesus. He was the great conciliator, who sought the good in every system, and to make all one in Christ. Pressensé beautifully describes him as a man who wished to believe and to know--to adore and to comprehend--to conciliate the Greek Philosophy with the Mysteries of the East. He wrote a commentary on the golden verses of Pythagoras, which Hierocles published, as well as reproduced his other works. The titles of his books, mentioned by Photius, such as "Providence" and "Free Will," recall those of the lost books of Dionysius, of which we have only a summary in his known works. (Cod. 251-214.)

Ammonius was surnamed Saccus from having been a corn carrier. Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, were great geniuses in themselves, but when we know the sources from which they drew, we can better understand their achievements.

Dionysius was indebted to Hierotheus--Ammonius drew from Dionysius. This we shall show, not as we might, by his works as described by Photius, but from Plotinus, his disciple, in order that we may have the prevailing proof, to some minds, of testimony not necessarily Christian.

Plotinus was born in Lycopolis, a.d. 205, and died in Campagna, a.d. 270. At the age of 29, he began to search for truth, in the schools of Alexandria. He wandered from teacher to teacher, but could find no rest until he was

persuaded to go and hear Ammonius-Saccus. After listening to him, he exclaimed, "This is what I sought."

Plotinus remained under him eleven years, until the death of Ammonius, a.d. 242. In a.d. 244, Plotinus began to teach in Rome. Plotinus was not a refined scholar. Porphyry, therefore, committed his teaching to writing. Porphyry was regarded as the greatest enemy to the Christian Faith in the early centuries. Persecutors burned the bodies of Christians, but Porphyry sought to undermine their faith in the Holy Scriptures, by quibbles of unbelief, which have been revived to-day as "New Criticism." Porphyry wrote against the Holy Scriptures with a bitterness engendered by a conviction of their truth. Now, it is a startling fact, that though the teaching of Plotinus comes to us through Porphyry, there is not a word in the *Enneads*, in which the teaching of Plotinus is given, against the Christian Faith. It is true that Eutochius published another version of the teaching of Plotinus, on the ground that his teaching was coloured by Porphyry, but we prefer to rest our proof on Porphyry, as not being prejudiced in favour of the truth.

Let us then first see what Plotinus teaches respecting the Holy Trinity. He says, "We need not go beyond the three *Hypostaseis*" (Persons). It is true that Plotinus presents that Trinity as "One," "Mind," and "Soul," whereas Dionysius gives the formula "Father, Son, and Spirit." Occasionally Plotinus uses "Logos" instead of "Mind." But even this substitution of "One" for "Father" may be traced to Dionysius, who speaks of the Triad, ἐναρχική and even ἐναρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων, "One springing." The "One" represents the Father. Plotinus says, "We may represent the first principle, 'One,' as source, which has no other origin than Itself, and which pours Itself in a multitude of streams without being diminished by what it gives."

Dionysius speaks of the "Father" as sole source of Godhead, and says that "the Godhead is undiminished by the gifts imparted." In Chap. XII. of Divine Names, Dionysius treats of "One" and "Perfect" as applied to Almighty God.

Let Us now hear Plotinus on the "Beautiful" Enneads (I. 6-7). Plotinus says, "The soul advances in its ascent towards God, until being raised above everything alien, it sees face to face, in His simplicity, and in all His purity, Him upon Whom all hangs, to Whom all aspire; from Whom all hold existence, life and thought. What transport of love must not he feel who sees Him! with what ardour ought he not to desire to be united to Him! He, who has not seen Him, desires Him as the Good; he who has seen Him, admires Him as the sovereign Beauty; and struck at once with astonishment and pleasure, disdains the things which heretofore he called by the name of Beauty. This is what happens to those to whom have appeared the forms of gods and demons;--they no longer care For the beauty of other bodies. What think you, then, should he experience who has seen the Beautiful Himself,--the Beautiful surpassing earth and heaven! The miserable is not he, Who has neither fresh colour nor comely form, nor power, nor royalty; it is alone he, Who sees himself excluded from the possession of Beauty--a possession in comparison with which he ought to disdain royalty, rule of the whole earth, of the sea, and heaven itself, if he should be able, by abandoning, by despising all these, to rise to the contemplation of the Beautiful, face to face." Plotinus also recognized, "that the eye soiled with impurity could never bear the sight, or attain to the vision of that Beauty. We must render the organs of vision analogous and like to the object that they would contemplate. Every man ought to begin by rendering himself beautiful and divine to obtain a



Vision of the Beautiful and the Deity." Well might St. Augustine say, that "with the change of a few words, Plotinus became concordant with Christ's religion." No wonder that Gregory and Basil quoted so largely from Plotinus. Let us now hear what Dionysius says of the "Good and Beautiful":-- "Goodness turns all things to Itself; all things aspire to It, as source and bond and end. From this Beautiful comes being to all existing things. All things aspire to the Beautiful and Good,--and there is no existing thing which does not participate in the Beautiful and Good." Read the Fourth Chapter of the Divine Names.

Porphyry records that Plotinus attained to that vision of the Beautiful three times during his life. How that vision of the Beautiful is to be attained, Dionysius describes in the "Mystic Theology:"--"But thou, O dear Timothy, by thy persistent commerce with the mystic visions, leave behind both sensible perceptions and intellectual efforts, and all objects of sense and intelligence, and all things not being and being, and be raised aloft agnostically to the union, as attainable, with Him Who is above every essence and knowledge. For by unchecked and absolute ecstasy, in all purity, from thyself, and all, thou wilt be carried on high to the superessential Ray of the Divine Darkness, when thou hast cast away all and become free from all." Ammonius had such ecstasy during his lectures, in which he seemed to have Divine visions.

Plotinus differs from Dionysius in regarding creation as an act of necessity, whereas Dionysius regards it as an act of love. Plotinus treats evil as "an elongation from God." Dionysius speaks of Almighty God as immanent in matter the most elongated from spirit. Plotinus traces evil to matter; Dionysius to the fallacious choice of a free agent. May it not be that the pagan colouring of Porphyry in

these respects led Eutochius to give a more faithful and consistent account of the teaching of Plotinus.

But the crowning proof that Dionysius was the source from which the Alexandrine School drew much of its wisdom, is Proclus (450-485). Suidas affirmed long ago that Proclus cribbed whole passages from Dionysius. Professor Stiglmayr fills seven pages with parallel passages.

Vachérot describes certain chapters of the "Divine Names" as extracts from Proclus, word for word, and says the whole doctrine of Dionysius seems to be a commentary upon the Theology of Alexandria. Barthélémy St. Hilaire says that Dionysius and Scotus Erigena, almost entirely implanted, in the middle age, the doctrine of Neo-Platonism. Matter is more profound; Professor Langen finds in Dionysius the "characteristics of Neo-Platonic speculation." The similarity of doctrine is denied by none. Which writings appeared first? *that* is the question.

Dexter commemorates the "Divine Names" a.d. 98.

Polycarp quotes Dionysius verbatim as "a certain one." Jerome quotes him as "quidam Graecorum." Dionysius of Alexandria (a.d. 250), writing to Sixtus II., declares that no one can intelligently doubt that the writings are those of Dionysius, the convert of St. Paul, Bishop of Athens. Tertullian, expresses the Agnosia "nihil scire omnia scire," Origen quotes him by name. Theodore (a.d. 420) answers objections,—whom Photius approved. Gregory calls Dionysius "an ancient and venerable Father." The Second Council of Nicea quotes the very words, contained in the "Ecclesiastical Hierarchy," c. I. s. 4, as those of the great Dionysius. Bishop Pearson proves that the best judges in

the sixth, fifth, fourth and third centuries regarded the writings as written: by Dionysius the Areopagite. German scholars to-day admit that the external testimony is in favour of their genuineness.

Yet eccentric critics, on account of the precise theology, cannot believe that the works were written; by a learned Greek,--Chief of the Areopagus--who forsook all to follow Christ,--the convert and disciple of St. Paul,--the familiar friend of St. John and other Apostles, to whom our Saviour revealed the mysteries of the Father; but those critics can believe that an unknown man, whose century no one can fix, and possibly a Syrian, may have gleaned from writers of the first four centuries these theological pearls expressed in Greek in a style unique and always like itself. They can believe that the Author of these Divine writings, would incorporate, fictitious allusions to persons and events of the apostolic, age, to add lustre to incomparable works, and to impute them to another. They can believe that writings, so composed, were foisted upon a credulous Christendom, so that Dionysius of Alexandria, Maximus, St. John Damascene, and the Council of Nicea, accepted them as the genuine works of Dionysius. I do not belong to that school. Only unbelief could believe anything so incredible. Rational men will not hazard the surmise that works known in the first century were gleaned from writings composed four hundred years afterwards.

The tone of the Alexandrine School may be further illustrated from Amelius and Dionysius the Sublime. Amelius attended Plotinus twenty-four years as companion and pupil. Eusebius gives an extract from his writings, in which Amelius says, "This plainly was the Word, by Whom, being Eternal, things becoming became, as Heraclitus would say." It was probably he who said,

"the Prologue of St. John's Gospel ought to be written in gold, and placed in the most conspicuous place in every church." De Civ. Dei, LX. c. 29. Dionysius, the famous secretary of Zenobia, attended the lectures of Ammonius-Saccus. He was the "arbiter" of all literary questions. He expresses his admiration, De sub. L. 9, of the diction of Moses in the description of the six days' creation, and numbers St. Paul amongst the most brilliant Greek orators, as a man who propounded a "dogma beyond demonstration."

We claim that the testimony of these illustrious men, and the extracts from Pantaenus, Ammonius, and their disciples, justify the conclusion that the Alexandrine School was Biblical, Christian, and Philosophical, that its Philosophy was a Divine Philosophy *of the Faith*, not a pagan philosophy *against the Faith*, and that the main sources of its Divine Philosophy were the writings of Hierotheus and Dionysius, Bishops of Athens.

JOHN PARKER.

Cannes,

*Epiphany*, 1899.

*The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite, 250 A.D., Rev.  
John Parker, M.A.*

# On the Heavenly Hierarchy

By Dionysius

## CAPUT I.

To my Fellow Presbyter Timothy. Dionysius the Presbyter.

That every divine illumination, whilst going forth lovingly to the objects of its forethought under various forms, remains simplex. Nor is this all. It also unifies the things illuminated.

### Section I.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights."

Further also, every procession of illuminating light, proceeding from the Father, whilst visiting us as a gift of goodness, restores us again gradually as an unifying power, and turns us to the oneness of our conducting Father, and to a deifying simplicity. For all things are from Him, and to Him, as said the Sacred Word.

### Section II.

Invoking then Jesus, the Paternal Light, the Real, the True, "which lighteth every man coming into the world," "through Whom we have access to the Father," Source of Light, let us aspire, as far as is attainable, to the illuminations handed down by our fathers in the most sacred Oracles, and let us gaze, as we may, upon the

Hierarchies of the Heavenly Minds manifested by them symbolically for our instruction. And when we have received, with immaterial and unflinching mental eyes, the gift of Light, primal and super-primal, of the supremely Divine Father, which manifests to us the most blessed Hierarchies of the Angels in types and symbols, let us then, from it, be elevated to its simple splendour. For it *never* loses its own unique inwardness, but multiplied and going forth, as becomes its goodness, for an elevating and unifying blending of the objects of its care, remains firmly and solitarily centered within itself in its unmoved sameness; and raises, according to their capacity, those who lawfully aspire to it, and makes them one, after the example of its own unifying Oneness. For it is not possible that the supremely Divine Ray should otherwise illuminate us, except so far as it is enveloped, for the purpose of instruction, in variegated sacred veils, and arranged naturally and appropriately, for such as we are, by paternal forethought.

### Section III.

Wherefore, the Divine Institution of sacred Rites, having deemed it worthy of the supermundane imitation of the Heavenly Hierarchies, and having depicted the aforesaid immaterial Hierarchies in material figures and bodily compositions, in order that we might be borne, as far as our capacity permits, from the most sacred pictures to the instructions and similitudes without symbol and without type, transmitted to us our most Holy Hierarchy. For it is not possible for our mind to be raised to that immaterial representation and contemplation of the Heavenly Hierarchies, without using the material guidance suitable to itself, accounting the visible beauties as reflections of the invisible comeliness; and the sweet odours of the senses as

emblems of the spiritual distribution; and the material lights as a likeness of the gift of the immaterial enlightenment; and the detailed sacred instructions, of the feast of contemplation within the mind; and the ranks of the orders here, of the harmonious and regulated habit, with regard to Divine things; and the reception of the most Divine Eucharist, of the partaking of Jesus, and whatever other things were transmitted to Heavenly Beings supermundanely, but to us symbolically.

For the sake, then, of this our proportioned deification, the philanthropic Source of sacred mysteries, by manifesting the Heavenly Hierarchies to us, and constituting our Hierarchy as fellow-ministers with them, through our imitation of their Godlike priestliness, so far as in us lies, described under sensible likeness the supercelestial Minds, in the inspired compositions of the Oracles, in order that It might lead us through the sensible to the intelligible, and from inspired symbols to the simple sublimities of the Heavenly Hierarchies.

## **CAPUT II.**

That Divine and Heavenly things are appropriately revealed, even through dissimilar symbols.

### Section I.

It is necessary then, as I think, first to set forth what we think is the purpose of every Hierarchy, and what benefit each one confers upon its followers; and next to celebrate the Heavenly Hierarchies according to their revelation in the Oracles; then following these Oracles, to say in what sacred forms the holy writings of the Oracles depict the celestial orders, and to what sort of simplicity we must be

carried through the representations; in order that we also may not, like the vulgar, irreverently think that the heavenly and Godlike minds are certain many-footed and many-faced creatures, or moulded to the brutishness of oxen, or the savage form of lions, and fashioned like the hooked beaks of eagles, or the feathery down of birds, and should imagine that there are certain wheels of fire above the heaven, or material thrones upon which the Godhead may recline, or certain many-coloured horses, and spear-bearing leaders of the host, and whatever else was transmitted by the Oracles to us under multifarious symbols of sacred imagery.

And indeed, the Word of God artlessly makes use of poetic representations of sacred things, respecting the shapeless minds, out of regard to our intelligence, so to speak, consulting a mode of education proper and natural to it, and moulding the inspired writings for it.

## Section II.

But if any one think well to accept the sacred compositions as of things simple and unknown in their own nature, and beyond our contemplation, but thinks the imagery of the holy minds in the Oracles is incongruous, and that all this is, so to speak, a rude scenic representation of the angelic names; and further says that the theologians ought, when they have come to the bodily representation of creatures altogether without body, to represent and display them by appropriate and, as far as possible, cognate figures, taken, at any rate, from our most honoured and immaterial and exalted beings, and ought not to clothe the heavenly and Godlike simple essences with the many forms of the lowest creatures to be found on the earth (for the one would perhaps be more adapted to our instruction, and would



not degrade the celestial explanations to incongruous dissimilitudes; but the other both does violence without authority to the Divine powers, and likewise leads astray our minds, through dwelling upon these irreverent descriptions); and perhaps he will also think that the super-heavenly places are filled with certain herds of lions, and troops of horses, and bellowing songs of praise, and flocks of birds, and other living creatures, and material and less honourable things, and whatever else the similitudes of the Oracles, in every respect dissimilar, describe, for a so-called explanation, but which verge towards the absurd, and pernicious, and impassioned; now, in my opinion, the investigation of the truth demonstrates the most sacred wisdom of the Oracles, in the descriptions of the Heavenly Minds, taking forethought, as that wisdom does, wholly for each, so as neither, as one may say, to do violence to the Divine Powers, nor at the same time to enthrall us in the groveling passions of the debased imagery. For any one might say that the cause why forms are naturally attributed to the formless, and shapes to the shapeless, is not alone our capacity which is unable immediately to elevate itself to the intelligible contemplations, and that it needs appropriate and cognate instructions which present images, suitable to us, of the formless and supernatural objects of contemplation; but further, that it is most agreeable to the revealing Oracles to conceal, through mystical and sacred enigmas, and to keep the holy and secret truth respecting the supermundane minds inaccessible to the multitude. For it is not every one that is holy, nor, as the Oracles affirm, does knowledge belong to all.

Section III.

But if any one should blame the descriptions as being incongruous, by saying that it is shameful to attribute shapes so repugnant to the Godlike and most holy Orders, it is enough to reply that the method of Divine revelation is twofold; one, indeed, as is natural, proceeding through likenesses that are similar, and of a sacred character, but the other, through dissimilar forms, fashioning them into entire unlikeness and incongruity. No doubt, the mystical traditions of the revealing Oracles sometimes extol the august Blessedness of the super-essential Godhead, as Word, and Mind, and Essence, manifesting its God-becoming expression and wisdom, both as really being Origin, and true Cause of the origin of things being, and they describe It as light, and call it life. While such sacred descriptions are more reverent, and seem in a certain way to be superior to the material images, they yet, even thus, in reality fall short of the supremely Divine similitude. For It is above every essence and life. No light, indeed, expresses its character, and every description and mind incomparably fall short of Its similitude.

But at other times its praises are supermundanely sung, by the Oracles themselves, through dissimilar revelations, when they affirm that it is invisible, and infinite, and incomprehensible; and when there is signified, not what it is, but what it is not. For this, as I think, is more appropriate to It, since, as the secret and sacerdotal tradition taught, we rightly describe its non-relationship to things created, but we do not know its superessential, and inconceivable, and unutterable indefinability. If, then, the negations respecting things Divine are true, but the affirmations are inharmonious, the revelation as regards things invisible, through dissimilar representations, is more appropriate to the hiddenness of things unutterable. Thus the sacred descriptions of the Oracles honour, and do

not expose to shame, the Heavenly Orders, when they make them known by dissimilar pictorial forms, and demonstrate through these their supermundane superiority over all material things. And I do not suppose that any sensible man will gainsay that the incongruous elevate our mind more than the similitudes; for there is a likelihood, with regard to the more sublime representations of heavenly things, that we should be led astray, so as to think that the Heavenly Beings are certain creatures with the appearance of gold, and certain men with the appearance of light, and glittering like lightning, handsome, clothed in bright shining raiment, shedding forth innocuous flame, and so with regard to all the other shapes and appropriate forms, with which the Word of God has depicted the Heavenly Minds. In order that men might not suffer from this, by thinking they are nothing more exalted than their beautiful appearance, the elevating wisdom of the pious theologians reverently conducts to the incongruous dissimilarities, not permitting our earthly part to rest fixed in the base images, but urging the upward tendency of the soul, and goading it by the unseemliness of the phrases (to see) that it belongs neither to lawful nor seeming truth, even for the most earthly conceptions, that the most heavenly and Divine visions are actually like things so base. Further also this must particularly be borne in mind, that not even one of the things existing is altogether deprived of participation in the beautiful, since, as is evident and the truth of the Oracles affirms, all things are very beautiful.

#### Section IV.

It is, then, possible to frame in one's mind good contemplations from everything, and to depict, from things material, the aforesaid dissimilar similitudes, both

for the intelligible and the intelligent; since the intelligent hold in a different fashion things which are attributed to things sensible differently. For instance, appetite, in the irrational creatures, takes its rise in the passions, and their movement, which takes the form of appetite, is full of all kinds of unreasonableness. But with regard to the intelligent, we must think of the appetite in another fashion, as denoting, according to my judgment, their manly style, and their determined persistence in their Godlike and unchangeable steadfastness. In like manner we say, with regard to the irrational creatures, that lust is a certain uncircumspect and earthly passionate attachment, arising incontinently from an innate movement, or intimacy in things subject to change, and the irrational supremacy of the bodily desire, which drives the whole organism towards the object of sensual inclination. But when we attribute "lust" to spiritual beings, by clothing them with dissimilar similitudes, we must think that it is a Divine love of the immaterial, above expression and thought, and the inflexible and determined longing for the supernally pure and passionless contemplation, and for the really perpetual and intelligible fellowship in that pure and most exalted splendour, and in the abiding and beautifying comeliness. And 'incontinence' we may take for the persistent and inflexible, which nothing can repulse, on account of the pure and changeless love for the Divine beauty, and the whole tendency towards the really desired. But with regard to the irrational living beings, or soulless matter, we appropriately call their irrationality and want of sensible perception a deprivation of reason and sensible perception. And with regard to the immaterial and intelligent beings, we reverently acknowledge their superiority, as supermundane beings, over our discursive and bodily reason, and the material perception of the senses which is alien to the incorporeal

Minds. It is, then, permissible to depict forms, which are not discordant, to the celestial beings, even from portions of matter which are the least honourable, since even it, having had its beginning from the Essentially Beautiful, has throughout the whole range of matter some echoes of the intellectual comeliness; and it is possible through these to be led to the immaterial archetypes--things most similar being taken, as has been said, dissimilarly, and the identities being denned, not in the same way, but harmoniously, and appropriately, as regards the intellectual and sensible beings.

#### Section V.

We shall find the Mystic Theologians enfolding these things not only around the illustrations of the Heavenly Orders, but also, sometimes, around the supremely Divine Revelations Themselves. At one time, indeed, they extol It under exalted imagery as Sun of Righteousness, as Morning Star rising divinely in the mind, and as Light illuming without veil and for contemplation; and at other times, through things in our midst, as Fire, shedding its innocuous light; as Water, furnishing a fullness of life, and, to speak symbolically, flowing into a belly, and bubbling forth rivers flowing irresistibly; and at other times, from things most remote, as sweet-smelling ointment, as Head Corner-stone. But they also clothe It in forms of wild beasts, and attach to It identity with a Lion, and Panther, and say that it shall be a Leopard, and a rushing Bear. But, I will also add, that which seems to be more dishonourable than all, and the most incongruous, viz. that distinguished theologians have shown it to us as representing Itself under the form of a worm. Thus do all the godly-wise, and interpreters of the secret inspiration, separate the holy of holies from the uninitiated and the unholy, to keep them

undefined, and prefer the dissimilar description of holy things, so that Divine things should neither be easily reached by the profane, nor those who diligently contemplate the Divine imagery rest in the types as though they were true; and so Divine things should be honoured by the true negations, and by comparisons with the lowest things, which are diverse from their proper resemblance. There is then nothing absurd if they depict even the Heavenly Beings under incongruous dissimilar similitudes, for causes aforesaid. For probably not even we should have come to an investigation, from not seeing our way,--not to say to mystic meaning through an accurate enquiry into Divine things,--unless the deformity of the descriptions representing the Angels had shocked us, not permitting our mind to linger in the discordant representations, but rousing us utterly to reject the earthly proclivities, and accustoming us to elevate ourselves through things that are seen, to their supermundane mystical meanings. Let these things suffice to have been said on account of the material and incongruous descriptions of the holy Angels in the Holy Oracles. And next, it is necessary to define what we think the Hierarchy is in itself, and what benefit those who possess a Hierarchy derive; from the same. But let Christ lead the discourse--if it be lawful to me to say--He Who is mine,--the Inspiration of all Hierarchical revelation. And thou, my son, after the pious rule of our Hierarchical tradition, do thou religiously listen to things religiously uttered, becoming inspired through instruction in inspired things; and when thou hast enfolded the Divine things in the secret recesses of thy mind, guard them closely from the profane multitude as being uniform, for it is not lawful, as the Oracles say, to cast to swine the unsullied and bright and beautifying comeliness of the intelligible pearls.

### CAPUT III.

What is Hierarchy? and what the use of Hierarchy?

#### Section I.

Hierarchy is, in my judgment, a sacred order and science and operation, assimilated, as far as attainable, to the likeness of God, and conducted to the illuminations granted to it from God, according to capacity, with a view to the Divine imitation. Now the God-becoming Beauty, as simple, as good, as source of initiation, is altogether free from any dissimilarity, and imparts its own proper light to each according to their fitness, and perfects in most Divine initiation, as becomes the undeviating moulding of those who are being initiated harmoniously to itself.

#### Section II.

The purpose, then, of Hierarchy is the assimilation and union, as far as attainable, with God, having Him Leader of all religious science and operation, by looking unflinchingly to His most Divine comeliness, and copying, as far as possible, and by perfecting its own followers as Divine images, mirrors most luminous and without flaw, receptive of the primal light and the supremely Divine ray, and devoutly filled with the entrusted radiance, and again, spreading this radiance ungrudgingly to those after it, in accordance with the supremely Divine regulations. For it is not lawful for the Mystic Rites of sacred things, or for things religiously done, to practice anything whatever beyond the sacred regulations of their own proper function. Nor even must they attempt otherwise, if they desire to attain its deifying splendour, and look to it religiously, and are moulded after the example of each of

the holy minds. He, then, who mentions Hierarchy, denotes a certain altogether Holy Order, an image of the supremely Divine freshness, ministering the mysteries of its own illumination in hierarchical ranks, and sciences, and assimilated to its own proper Head as far as lawful.

For each of those who have been called into the Hierarchy, find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation in their own proper degree; and, what is more Divine than all, in becoming a fellow-worker with God, as the Oracles say, and in showing the Divine energy in himself manifested as far as possible. For it is an Hierarchical regulation that some are purified and that others purify; that some are enlightened and others enlighten; that some are perfected and others perfect; the Divine imitation will fit each one in this fashion. The Divine blessedness, to speak after the manner of men, is indeed unstained by any dissimilarity, and is full of invisible light --perfect, and needing no perfection; cleansing, illuminating, and perfecting, yea, rather a holy purification, and illumination, and perfection--above purification, above light, preeminently perfect, self-perfect source and cause of every Hierarchy, and elevated preeminently above every holy thing.

### Section III.

It is necessary then, as I think, that those who are being purified should be entirely perfected, without stain, and be freed from all dissimilar confusion; that those who are being illuminated should be filled with the Divine Light, conducted to the habit and faculty of contemplation in all purity of mind; that those who are being initiated should be separated from the imperfect, and become recipients of that perfecting science of the sacred things contemplated.



Further, that those who purify should impart, from their own abundance of purity, their own proper holiness; that those who illuminate, as being more luminous intelligences, whose function it is to- receive and to impart light, and who are joyfully filled with holy gladness, that these should overflow, in proportion to their own overflowing light, towards those who are worthy of enlightenment; and that those who make perfect, as being skilled in the impartation of perfection, should perfect those being perfected, through the holy instruction, in the science of the holy things contemplated. Thus each rank of the Hierarchical Order is led, in its own degree, to the Divine co-operation, by performing, through grace and God-given power, those things which are naturally and supernaturally in the Godhead, and accomplished by It superessentially, and manifested hierarchically, for the attainable imitation of the God-loving Minds.

#### **CAPUT IV.**

What is meant by the appellation "Angels?"

##### Section I.

Now that the Hierarchy itself has been, in my judgment, sufficiently defined, we must next extol the Angelic Hierarchy, and we must contemplate, with supermundane eyes, its sacred formations, depicted in the Oracles, in order that we may be borne aloft to their Divinely resplendent simplicity, through the mystic representations, and may extol the source of all Hierarchical science with God-becoming reverence and with thanksgivings. First of all, however, let this truth be spoken --that it was through goodness that the superessential Godhead, having fixed all the essences of things being, brought them into being. For

this is the peculiar characteristic of the Cause of all things, and of goodness surpassing all, to call things being to participation of Itself, as each order of things being was determined from its own analogy. For all things being share in a Providence, which bubbles forth from the superessential Deity, Cause of all things. For they would not be, unless they had participated in the Essence and Origin of things being. All things then, without life, participate in It by their being. For the being of all things is the Deity, above being; things living participate in its life-giving power, above all life; things rational and intellectual participate in its self-perfect and preeminently perfect wisdom, above all reason and mind. It is evident, then, that all those Beings are around It, which have participated in It, in many forms.

## Section II.

The holy orders, then, of the Heavenly Beings share in the supremely Divine participation, in a higher degree than things which merely exist, or which lead an irrational life, or which are rational like ourselves. For by moulding themselves intelligibly to the Divine imitation, and looking supermundanely to the supremely Divine likeness, and striving to mould their intellectual appearance, they naturally have more ungrudging communications with It, being near and ever moving upwards, as far as lawful, elevating themselves with the intensity of the Divine unswerving love, and receiving the primal illuminations without earthly stain, and ranging themselves to these, and having their whole life intellectual. These, then, are they who, at first hand, and under many forms, participate in the Divine, and, at first hand, and under many forms, make known the supremely Divine Hiddenness. Wherefore, beyond all, they are deemed pre-eminently

worthy of the appellation Angelic, on the ground that the supremely Divine illumination comes to them at first hand, and, through them, there pass to us manifestations above us. Thus, then, the Law, as the Word of God affirms, was given to us through the ministration of Angels; and Angels led our illustrious fathers before the Law, and after the Law, to the Divine Being, either by leading them to what was to be done, and by converting them from error, and an unholy life, to the straight way of truth, or by making known to them sacred ordinances, or hidden visions, or supermundane mysteries, or certain Divine predictions through the Prophets.

### Section III.

But if any one should say that Divine manifestations were made directly and immediately to some holy men, let him learn, and that distinctly, from the most Holy Oracles, that no one hath seen, nor ever shall see, the "hidden" τὸ κρυφίον of Almighty God as it is in itself. Now Divine manifestations were made to the pious as befits revelations of God, that is to say, through certain holy visions analogous to those who see them. Now the all-wise Word of God (Theologia) naturally calls Theophany that particular vision which manifests the Divine similitude depicted in itself as in a shaping of the shapeless, from the elevation of the beholders to the Divine Being, since through it a divine illumination comes to the beholders, and the divine persons themselves are religiously initiated into some mystery. But our illustrious fathers were initiated into these Divine visions, through the mediation of the Heavenly Powers. Does not the tradition of the Oracles describe the holy legislation of the Law, given to Moses, as coming straight from God, in order that it may teach us this truth, that it is an outline of a Divine and holy

legislation? But the Word of God, in its Wisdom, teaches this also--that it came to us through Angels, as though the Divine regulation were laying down this rule, that, through the first, the second are brought to the Divine Being. For not only with regard to the superior and inferior minds, but even for those of the same rank, this Law has been established by the superessential supreme ordinance, that, within each Hierarchy, there are first, and middle, and last ranks and powers, and that the more divine are instructors and conductors of the less, to the Divine access, and illumination, and participation.

#### Section IV.

But I observe that Angels first were initiated in the Divine mystery of the love of Jesus towards man, then, through them, the gift of its knowledge passed to us. Thus, for example, the most divine Gabriel instructed Zachariah, the Hierarch, that the son who was to be born to him, beyond hope, by Divine grace, should be a prophet of the God-incarnate work of the Lord Jesus, to be manifested to the world for its salvation, as becomes the Divine goodness; and he revealed to Mary, how, in her, should be born the supremely Divine mystery of the unutterable God-formation. Yet another Angel instructed Joseph, how, in very truth, should be fulfilled the things Divinely promised to his ancestor David. Another declared glad tidings to the shepherds, as being purified by their separation from the multitude, and their quiet life, and, with him, a multitude of the Heavenly Host announced to those on earth that often-sung doxology. Let us then ascend to the highest manifestations of light contained in the Oracles, for I perceive that even Jesus Himself, the superessential Cause of the super-heavenly Beings, when He had come to our condition, without change, did not

overstep the good order which becomes mankind, which Himself arranged and took, but readily subjected Himself to the dispositions of the Father and God, through Angels; and, through their mediation, was announced to Joseph the departure of the Son to Egypt, which had been arranged by the Father, and again the return to Judaea from Egypt. And through Angels we see Him subjecting Himself to the Father's decrees. For I forbear to speak, as addressing one who knows the teaching of our hierarchical tradition, both concerning the Angel who strengthened the Lord Jesus, or that even Jesus Himself, when He had come to manifest the good work of our beneficent salvation, was called Angel of Great Counsel. For, as He Himself says, after the manner of an Angel, "Whatsoever He heard from the Father, He announced to us."

#### CAPUT V.

For what reason all the Heavenly Beings are called, in common, Angels.

This, then, in our judgment, is the reason for the appellation Angelic in the Oracles. We must now, I suppose, enquire for what reason the theologians call all the Heavenly Beings together "Angels;" but when they come to a more accurate description of the supermundane orders, they name exclusively, "angelic rank," that which completes the full tale of the Divine and Heavenly Hosts. Before this, however, they range pre-eminently, the Orders of Archangels, and the Principalities, the Authorities, and Powers, and as many Beings as the revealing traditions of the Oracles recognize as superior to them. Now, we affirm that throughout every sacred ordinance the superior ranks possess the illuminations and powers of their subordinates, but the lowest have not the same powers as

those who are above them. The theologians also call the most holy ranks of the highest Beings "Angels," for they "also make known the supremely Divine illumination. But there is no reason to call the lowest rank of the celestial Minds, Principalities, or Thrones, or Seraphim. For it does not possess the highest powers, but, as it conducts our inspired Hierarchs to the splendours of the Godhead known to it; so also, the saintly powers of the Beings above it are conductors, towards the Divine Being, of that Order which completes the Angelic Hierarchies. Except perhaps some one might say this also, that all the angelic appellations are common, as regards the subordinate and superior communication of all the celestial powers towards the Divine likeness, and the gift of light from God. But, in order that the question may be better investigated, let us reverently examine the saintly characteristics set forth respecting each celestial Order in the Oracles.

## **CAPUT VI.**

Which is the first Order of the Heavenly Beings? which the middle? and which the last?

How many, and of what sort, are the Orders of the supercelestial Beings, and how the Hierarchies are classified amongst themselves, I affirm, the deifying Author of their consecration alone distinctly knows; and further, that they know their own proper powers and illuminations, and their sacred and supermundane regularity. For it is impossible that we should know the mysteries of the supercelestial Minds and their most holy perfections, except, some one might say, so far as the Godhead has revealed to us, through them, as knowing perfectly their own condition. We, then, will utter nothing as from ourselves, but whatever angelic visions have been

gazed upon by the holy Prophets of God, we, as initiated in these, will set forth as best we can. The Word of God has designated the whole Heavenly Beings as nine, by appellations, which show their functions. These our Divine Initiator divides into three threefold Orders. He also says that that which is always around God is first and is declared by tradition to be united closely and immediately, to Him, before all the rest. For he says that the teaching of the Holy Oracles declares, that the most Holy Thrones, and the many-eyed and many-winged hosts, named in the Hebrew tongue Cherubim and Seraphim, are established immediately around God, with a nearness superior to all. This threefold order, then, our illustrious Guide spoke of as one, and of equal rank, and really first Hierarchy, than which there is not another more Godlike or immediately nearer to the earliest illuminations of the Godhead. But he says, that which is composed of the Authorities, and Lordships, and Powers is second; and, as respects the lowest of the Heavenly Hierarchies, the Order of the Angels and Archangels and Principalities is third.

## **CAPUT VII.**

Concerning the Seraphim and Cherubim and Thrones, and concerning their first Hierarchy.

### Section I.

We, whilst admitting this as the arrangement of the holy Hierarchies, affirm, that every appellation of the celestial Minds denotes the Godlike characteristic of each; and those who know Hebrew affirm, that the holy designation of the Seraphim denotes either that they are kindling or burning; and that of Cherubim, a fullness of knowledge or stream of wisdom. Naturally, then, the first (order) of the

Heavenly Hierarchies is ministered by the most exalted Beings, holding, as it does, a rank which is higher than all, from the fact, that it is established immediately around God, and that the first-wrought Divine manifestations and perfections pass earlier to it, as being nearest. They are called, then, "Burning," and Thrones, and Stream of Wisdom--by a name which sets forth their Godlike conditions. The appellation of Seraphim plainly teaches their ever moving around things Divine, and constancy, and warmth, and keenness, and the seething of that persistent, indomitable, and inflexible perpetual motion, and the vigorous assimilation and elevation of the subordinate, as giving new life and rekindling them to the same heat; and purifying through fire and burnt-offering, and the light-like and light-shedding characteristic which can never be concealed or consumed, and remains always the same, which destroys and dispels every kind of obscure darkness. But the appellation of the Cherubim denotes their knowledge and their vision of God, and their readiness to receive the highest gift of light, and their power of contemplating the super-Divine comeliness in its first revealed power, and their being filled anew with the impartation which maketh wise, and their ungrudging communication to those next to them, by the stream of the given wisdom. The appellation of the most exalted and pre-eminent Thrones denotes their manifest exaltation above every groveling inferiority, and their supermundane tendency towards higher things; and their unswerving separation from all remoteness; and their invariable and firmly-fixed settlement around the veritable Highest, with the whole force of their powers; and their receptivity of the supremely Divine approach, in the absence of all passion and earthly tendency, and their bearing God; and the ardent expansion of themselves for the Divine receptions.



## Section II.

This, then, is the revelation of their names, so far as we can give it; and we ought to say what we think their Hierarchy is. For I suppose we have sufficiently shown above, that the purpose of every Hierarchy is an unswerving devotion to the divine imitation of the Divine Likeness, and that every Hierarchical function is set apart for the sacred reception and distribution of an undefiled purification, and Divine Light, and perfecting science.

And now I pray that I may speak worthily of the most exalted Minds--how the Hierarchy amongst them is exhibited through the Oracles.

One must consider, then, that the Hierarchy is akin, and in every respect like, to the first Beings, who are established after the Godhead, who gave them Being, and who are marshalled, as it were, in Its very vestibule, who surpass every unseen and seen created power. We must then regard them as pure, not as though they had been freed from unholy stains and blemishes, nor yet as though they were unreceptive of earthly fancies, but as far exalted above every stain of remissness and every inferior holiness, as befits the highest degree of purity--established above the most Godlike powers, and clinging unflinchingly to their own self-moved and same-moved rank in their invariable love of God, conscious in no respect whatever of any declivity to a worse condition, but having the unsullied fixity of their own Godlike identity--never liable to fall, and always unmoved; and again, as "contemplative," not contemplators of intellectual symbols as sensible, nor as being led to the Divine Being by the varied texture of holy representations written for meditation, but as being filled with all kinds of immaterial

knowledge of higher light, and satiated, as permissible, with the beautifying and original beauty of super-essential and thrice manifested contemplation, and thus, being deemed worthy of the Communion with Jesus, they do not stamp pictorially the deifying similitude in divinely-formed images, but, as being really near to Him, in first participation of the knowledge of His deifying illuminations; nay more, that the imitation of God is given to them in the highest possible degree, and they participate, so far as is allowable to them, in His deifying and philanthropic virtues, in the power of a first manifestation; and, likewise as "perfected," not as being illuminated with an analytic science of sacred variety, but as being filled with a first and pre-eminent deification, as befits the most exalted science of the works of God, possible in Angels. For, not through other holy Beings, but being ministered from the very Godhead, by the immediate elevation to It, by their power, and rank, surpassing all, they are both established near the All-Holy without any shadow of turning, and are conducted for contemplation to the immaterial and intelligible comeliness, as far as permissible, and are initiated into the scientific methods of the works of God, as being first and around God, being ministered, in the highest degree, from the very source of consecration.

### Section III.

This, then, the theologians distinctly show (viz.) that the subordinate Orders of the Heavenly Beings are taught by the superior, in due order, the deifying sciences; and that those who are higher than all are illuminated from Godhead itself, as far as permissible, in revelations of the Divine mysteries. For they introduce some of them as being religiously instructed, by those of a higher rank, that

He, Who was raised to Heaven as Man, is Lord of the Heavenly Powers and King of Glory; and others, as questioning Jesus Himself, as desiring to be instructed in the science of His Divine work on our behalf, and Jesus Himself teaching them immediately, and showing to them, at first hand, His beneficent work out of love to man. For "I," He says, "am speaking of righteousness and judgment of Salvation." Now I am astonished that even the first of the Beings in Heaven, and so far above all, should reverently strive after the supremely Divine illuminations, as intermediate Beings. For they do not ask directly, "Wherefore are Thy garments red?" But they first raise the question among themselves, showing that they desire to learn, and crave the deifying knowledge, and not anticipating the illumination given after a Divine procedure.

The first Hierarchy, then, of the Heavenly Minds is purified, and enlightened, and perfected, by being ministered from the very Author of initiation, through its elevation to It immediately, being filled, according to its degree, with the altogether most holy purification of the unapproachable Light of the pre-perfect source of initiation, unstained indeed by any remissness, and full of primal Light, and perfected by its participation in first-given knowledge and science. But to sum up, I may say this, not inappropriately, that the reception of the supremely Divine Science is, both purification, and enlightenment, and perfecting,--purifying, as it were, from ignorance, by the knowledge of the more perfect revelations imparted to it according to fitness, and enlightening by the self-same Divine knowledge, through which it also purifies, that which did not before contemplate the things which are now made manifest through the higher illumination; and perfecting further, by

the self-same Light, through the abiding science of the mysteries made clearly manifest.

#### Section IV.

This, then, according to my science, is the first rank of the Heavenly Beings which encircle and stand immediately around God; and without symbol, and without interruption, dances round His eternal knowledge in the most exalted ever-moving stability as in Angels; viewing purely many and blessed contemplations, and illuminated with simple and immediate splendours, and filled with Divine nourishment,--many indeed by the first-given profusion, but one by the unvariegated and unifying oneness of the supremely Divine banquet, deemed worthy indeed of much participation and co-operation with God, by their assimilation to Him, as far as attainable, of their excellent habits and energies, and knowing many Divine things pre-eminently, and participating in supremely Divine science and knowledge, as is lawful. Wherefore the Word of God has transmitted its hymns to those on earth, in which are Divinely shown the excellency of its most exalted illumination. For some of its members, to speak after sensible perception, proclaim as a "voice of many waters," "Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place" and others cry aloud that frequent and most august hymn of God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth, the whole earth is full of His glory." These most excellent hymnologies of the supercelestial Minds we have already unfolded to the best of our ability in the "Treatise concerning the Divine Hymns," and have spoken sufficiently concerning them in that Treatise, from which, by way of remembrance, it is enough to produce so much as is necessary to the present occasion, namely, "That the first Order, having been illuminated, from this the

supremely Divine goodness, as permissible, in theological science, as a Hierarchy reflecting that Goodness transmitted to those next after it," teaching briefly this, "That it is just and right that the august Godhead -- Itself both above praise, and all-praiseworthy--should be known and extolled by the God-receptive minds, as is attainable; for they as images of God are, as the Oracles say, the Divine places of the supremely Divine repose; and further, that It is Monad and Unit tri-subsistent, sending forth His most kindly forethought to all things being, from the super-heavenly Minds to the lowest of the earth; as super-original Origin and Cause of every essence, and grasping all things super-essentially in a resistless embrace.

## **CAPUT VIII.**

Concerning Lordships and Powers and Authorities, and concerning their middle Hierarchy.

### Section I.

Let us now pass to the middle Order of the Heavenly Minds, gazing, as far as we may, with supermundane eyes upon those Lordships, and the truly terrible visions of the Divine Authorities and Powers. For each appellation of the Beings above us manifests their God-imitating characteristics of the Divine Likeness. I think, then, that the explanatory name of the Holy Lordships denotes a certain unslavish elevation, free from all groveling subserviency, as becomes the free, not submitting itself in any way whatever to one of the tyrannical dissimilarities, as a cruel Lordship; superior to every kind of cringing slavery, indomitable to every subserviency, and elevated above every dissimilarity, ever aspiring to the true Lordship, and source of Lordship; and moulding, as an image of

goodness, itself, and those after it, to its Lordly bearing, as attainable, turning itself wholly to none of the things that vainly seem, but to the Lordly Being, and ever sharing in the Lordly Likeness of God, to its utmost ability; and the appellation of the Holy Powers denotes a certain courageous and unflinching virility, for all those Godlike energies within them--not feebly weak for the reception of any of the Divine illuminations vouchsafed to it--vigorously conducted to the Divine imitation, not forsaking the Godlike movement through its own unmanliness, but unflinchingly looking to the superessential and powerful-making power, and becoming a powerlike image of this, as far as is attainable, and powerfully turned to this, as Source of Power, and issuing forth to those next in degree, in gift of Power, and in likeness to God; and that the appellation of the Holy Authorities, of the same rank as the Divine Lordships and Powers, (denotes) the beautiful and unconfused good order, with regard to the Divine receptions, and the discipline of the supermundane and intellectual authority, not using the authoritative powers imperiously for base purposes, but conducted indomitably, with good order, towards Divine things, and conducting those after it benignly, and assimilated, as far as permissible, to the Authoritative Source of authority, and making this visible, as is possible to Angels, in the well-ordered ranks of the authoritative power within it. The middle Order of the Heavenly Minds having these Godlike characteristics, is purified and illuminated and perfected in the manner described, by the Divine illuminations vouchsafed to it at second hand, through the first Hierarchical Order, and passing through this middle as a secondary manifestation.

Section II.

No doubt, as regards that message, which is said to pass through one angel to another, we may take it as a symbol of a perfecting completed from afar, and obscured by reason of its passage to the second rank. For, as men skilled in our sacred initiations say, the fullness of Divine things manifested directly to ourselves is more perfecting than the Divine contemplations imparted through others. Thus, I think, the immediate participation of the Angelic ranks elevated in first degree to God, is more clear than those perfected through the instrumentality of others. Wherefore by our sacerdotal tradition, the first Minds are named perfecting, and illuminating, and purifying Powers of the subordinate, who are conducted, through them, to the superessential Origin of all things, and participate, as far as is permissible to them, in the consecrating purifications, and illuminations, and perfections. For, this is divinely fixed absolutely by the Divine source of order that, through the first, the second partake of the supremely Divine illuminations. This you will find declared by the theologians in many ways. For, when the Divine and Paternal Love towards man whilst chastening, in a startling manner, His people Israel, for their religious preservation, after delivering them to terrible and savage nations for correction, by various leadings of His guided people to better things, both liberated them from their misery, and mildly led them back, through His compassion, to their former state of comfort; one of the theologians, Zechariah, sees one of the first Angels, as I think, and near God, (for the Angelic appellation is common, as I said, to them all), learning from God Himself the comforting words, as they are called, concerning this matter; and another Angel, of inferior rank, advancing to meet the first, as for reception and participation of enlightenment: then, by him instructed in the Divine purpose as from a Hierarch, and charged to reveal to the

theologian that Jerusalem should be abundantly occupied by a multitude of people. And another theologian, Ezekiel, says that this was righteously ordained by the glorious Deity Itself, seated above the Cherubim. For Paternal Love towards man, conducting Israel as we have said through chastisement to better things, by a righteousness worthy of God, deemed right to separate the guilty from the guiltless. This is first revealed to one after the Cherubim; him who was bound about the loins with a sapphire, and wore displayed the robe coming down to the feet, as a Hierarchical symbol. But the Divine Government enjoins the other Angels, who bore the battle-axes, to be instructed from the former, as to the Divine judgment in this matter. For, to one, He said that he should go through the midst of Jerusalem, and place the sign upon the forehead of the innocent men, but to the others; "Go into the city after him and strike, and draw not back your eyes, but to every one upon whom is the sign draw not near."

What would any one say concerning the Angel, who said to Daniel, "The word has gone forth?" or concerning him the first, who took the fire from the midst of the Cherubim, or what is more remarkable than this for showing the good order amongst the Angels, that the Cherubim casts the fire into the hands of him who wears the sacred vestment; or concerning Him Who called the most divine Gabriel, and said to him, "Make this man understand the vision," or whatever else is recorded by the holy theologians concerning the Godlike order of the Heavenly Hierarchies; by being assimilated to which, as far as possible, the discipline of our Hierarchy will have the Angelic comeliness, as it were, in reflection, moulded through it, and conducted to the superessential Source of order in every Hierarchy.



## CAPUT IX.

Concerning the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, and concerning their last Hierarchy.

### Section I.

There remains for our reverent contemplation a Division which completes the Angelic Hierarchies, that divided into the Godlike Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. And I think it necessary, to declare first the meaning of their sacred appellations to the best of my ability. For that of the Heavenly Principalities manifests their princely and leading function, after the Divine example, with order religious and most befitting the Princely, and their being wholly turned to the super-princely Prince, and leading others in princely fashion, and being moulded, as far as possible, to that prince-making Princedom Itself, and to manifest its superessential princely order, by the regularity of the princely powers.

### Section II.

The (Order) of the Holy Archangels is of the same rank with the heavenly Principalities. For there is one Hierarchy and Division, as I said, of them and the Angels. But since there is not a Hierarchy which does not possess first and middle and last powers, the holy order of Archangels occupies the middle position in the Hierarchy between the extremes, for it belongs alike to the most holy Principalities and to the holy Angels; to the Principalities because it is turned in a princely fashion to the superessential Princedom, and is moulded to It as far as attainable, and unites the Angels after the fashion of its own well-regulated and marshalled and invisible leadings; and it

belongs to the Angels, because it is of the messenger Order, receiving hierarchically the Divine illuminations from the first powers, and announcing the same to the Angels in a godly manner, and, through Angels, manifesting to us, in proportion to the religious aptitude of each of the godly persons illuminated. For the Angels, as we have already said, complete the whole series of Heavenly Minds, as being the last Order of the Heavenly Beings who possess the Angelic characteristic; yea, rather, they are more properly named Angels by us than those of higher degree, because their Hierarchy is occupied with the more manifest, and is more particularly concerned with the things of the world. For the very highest Order, as being placed in the first rank near the Hidden One, we must consider as directing in spiritual things the second, hiddenly; and that the second, which is composed of the holy Lordships and Powers and Authorities, leads the Hierarchy of the Principalities and Archangels and Angels, more clearly indeed than the first Hierarchy, but more hiddenly than the Order after it, and the revealing order of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, presides, through each other, over the Hierarchies amongst men, in order that the elevation, and conversion, and communion, and union with God may be in due order; and, further, also that the procession from God vouchsafed benignly to all the Hierarchies, and passing to all in common, may be also with most sacred regularity. Hence, the Word of God has assigned our Hierarchy to Angels, by naming Michael as Ruler of the Jewish people, and others over other nations. For the Most High established borders of nations according to number of Angels of God.

### Section III.

But if any one should say, "How then were the people of the Hebrews alone conducted to the supremely Divine illuminations?" we must answer, that we ought not to throw the blame of the other nations wandering after those which are no gods upon the direct guidance of the Angels, but that they themselves, by their own declension, fell away from the direct leading towards the Divine Being, through self-conceit and self-will, and through their irrational veneration for things which appeared to them worthy of God. Even the Hebrew people are said to have suffered the same thing; for He says, "Thou I hast cast away knowledge of God, and hast gone after thine own heart." For neither have we a life governed by necessity, nor on account of the free will of those who are objects of providential care, are the Divine rays of the providential illumination blunted; but the inaptitude of the mental visions makes the overflowing light-gift of the paternal goodness, either altogether unparticipated or impenetrable to their resistance, or makes the participations of the one fontal ray, diverse, small, or great, obscure, or brilliant, although that ray is one and simple, and always the same and ever overflowing; for even if, over the other nations (from whom we also have emerged to that boundless and bounteous sea of Divine Light, which is readily-expanded for the ready reception of all), certain not alien gods were wont to preside; yet there is one Head of all, and to this, the Angels, who religiously direct each nation, conduct those who follow them. Let us consider Melchizedek as being a Hierarch, most dear to God; (not of gods which are not, but of the truly most high God); for the godly-wise did not call Melchizedek simply dear to God, but also Priest, in order that they may clearly show to the wise, that not only was he himself turned to the true God, but further that he was guide to others, as Hierarch of the elevation to the true and only Godhead.

## Section IV.

Let me also recall this to your Hierarchical judgment--that both to Pharaoh, from the Angel who presided over the Egyptians, and to the Babylonian Prince, from his own Angel, the watchful and ruling care of the Providence and Lordship over all, was interpreted in visions; and for those nations, the worshippers of the true God were appointed leaders, for the interpretation of things shaped by Angelic visions revealed from God through Angels to holy men akin to the Angels, Daniel and Joseph. For there is one Prince and Providence over all. And never must we think that the Godhead is leader of Jews by lot, and that Angels, independently, or as of equal rank, or in opposition, or that certain other gods, preside over the other nations. But that particular phrase of the Divine Word must be accepted according to the following sacred intention; not as though God had divided government amongst men, with other gods, or Angels, and had been elected by lot to the government and leadership of Israel, but in this sense--whilst the one Providence of Highest over all, assigned all mankind, savingly, to the directing conduct of their own Angels, yet Israel, almost alone in comparison with all, turned himself to the Light-gift, and recognition of the true Lord--Hence the Word of God, as showing that Israel elected himself for the worship of the true God, says this, "He became Lord's portion;" and as indicating that he was assigned equally with the other nations, to one of the holy Angels, for the recognition, through him, of the Head of all, said "That Michael became leader of the (Jewish) people," demonstrating distinctly that there is one Providence of the whole, superessentially established above all the powers, unseen and seen, and that all the Angels who preside over each nation, elevate, as far as

possible, those who follow them with a willing mind, to It as their proper Head.

## **CAPUT X.**

A Repetition and Summary of the Angelic discipline.

### Section I.

We have concluded, then, that the most reverend Order of the Minds around God, ministered by the perfecting illumination through its immediate elevation to it, is purified, and illuminated, and perfected by a gift of light from the Godhead, more hidden and more manifest--more hidden, indeed, as being more intelligible, and more simplifying, and more unifying; more manifest, as being a first gift and a first manifestation, and more complete, and more effused to it as transparent. And from this (Order) again, in due degree, the second, and from the second, the third, and from the third, our Hierarchy, is reverently conducted to the super-original Origin and End of all good order, according to the self-same law of well-ordered regularity, in Divine harmony and proportion.

### Section II.

Now all Angels are interpreters of those above them, the most reverend, indeed, of God, Who moves them, and the rest, in due degree, of those who have been moved by God. For, to such an extent has the superessential harmony of all things provided for the religious order and the regulated conduct of each of the rational and intellectual beings, that each rank of the Hierarchies, has been placed in sacred order, and we observe every Hierarchy distributed into first, and middle, and last Powers. But to

speaking accurately, He distinguished each Division itself, by the same Divine harmonies; wherefore the theologians say that the most Divine Seraphim cry one to another, indicating distinctly, as I think by this, that the first impart their knowledge of divine things to the second.

### Section III.

I might add this not inappropriately, that each heavenly and human mind has within itself its own special first, and middle, and last ranks, and powers, manifested severally in due degree, for the aforesaid particular mystical meanings of the Hierarchical illuminations, according to which, each one participates-, so far as is lawful and attainable to him, in the most spotless purification, the most copious light, the pre-eminent perfection. For there is nothing that is self-perfect, or absolutely without need of perfecting, except the really Self-perfect and preeminently Perfect.

## **CAPUT XI.**

For what reason all the Heavenly Beings, in common, are called Heavenly Powers.

### Section I.

Now that we have defined these things, it is worthy of consideration for what reason we are accustomed to call all the Angelic Beings together, Heavenly Powers. For it is not possible to say, as we may of the Angels, that the Order of the holy Powers is last of all. The Orders of the superior Beings share in the saintly illumination. of the last; but the last in no wise of the first; and on this account all the Divine Minds are called Heavenly Powers, but never

Seraphim and Thrones and Lordships. For the last do not enjoy the whole characteristics of the highest. For the Angels, and those above the Angels--Archangels, and Principalities, and Authorities,--placed by the Word of God after the Powers, are often in common called by us, in conjunction with the other holy Beings, Heavenly Powers.

## Section II.

But we affirm that, whilst often using the appellation, Heavenly Powers, for all in common, we do not introduce a sort of. confusion of the characteristics of each Order. But, inasmuch as all the Divine Minds, by the supermundane description given of them, are distributed into three,--into essence, and power, and energy,--when we speak of them all, or some of them, indiscriminately, as Heavenly Beings or Heavenly Powers, we must consider that we manifest those about whom we speak in a general way, from their essence or power severally. For we must not apply the superior characteristic of those holy Powers, whom we have already sufficiently distinguished, to the Beings which are entirely inferior to them, so as to overthrow the unconfused order of the Angelic ranks. For according to the correct account which we have already frequently given, the superior Orders possess abundantly the sacred characteristics of the inferior, but the lowest do not possess the superior completeness of the more reverend, since the first-manifested illuminations are revealed to them, through the first Order, in proportion to their capacity.

## CAPUT XII.

Why the Hierarchs amongst men are called Angels.

## Section I.

But this is sometimes also asked by diligent contemplators of the intelligible Oracles; Inasmuch as the lowest Orders do not possess the completeness of the superior, for what reason is our Hierarch named by the Oracles, "Angel of the Sovereign Lord?"

## Section II.

Now the statement, as I think, is not contrary to what has been before defined; for we say that the last lack the complete and pre-eminent Power of the more reverend Divisions; for they participate in the partial and analogous, according to the one harmonious and binding fellowship of all things. For example, the rank of the holy Cherubim participates in higher wisdom and knowledge, but the Divisions of the Beings beneath them, participate, they also, in wisdom and knowledge, but nevertheless partially, as compared with them, and in a lower degree. For the participation of wisdom and knowledge throughout is common to all the minds which bear the image of God; but the being near and first, or second and inferior, is not common, but, as has been determined for each in its own degree. This also one might safely define respecting all the Divine Minds; for, as the first possess abundantly the saintly characteristics of the inferior, so the last possess those of the superior, not indeed in the same degree, but subordinately. There is, then, as I think, nothing absurd, if the Word of God calls our Hierarch, Angel, since he participates, according to his own capacity, in the messenger characteristic of the Angels, and elevates himself, as far as attainable to men, to the likeness of their revealing office.



## Section III.

But you will find that the Word of God calls gods, both the Heavenly Beings above us, and the most beloved of God, and holy men amongst us, although the Divine Hiddenness is transcendently elevated and established above all, and no created Being can. properly and wholly be said to be like unto It, except those intellectual and rational Beings who are entirely and wholly turned to Its Oneness as far as possible, and who elevate themselves incessantly to Its Divine illuminations, as far as attainable, by their imitation of God, if I may so speak, according to their power, and are deemed worthy of the same divine name.

**CAPUT XIII.**

For what reason the Prophet Isaiah is said to have been purified by the Seraphim.

## Section I.

Come, then, let us examine this as best we can, why the Seraphim is said to be sent to one of the Theologians; for some one may object, that not one of the inferior Angels, but he, the enrolled amongst the most reverend Beings, cleanses the Prophet.

## Section II.

Some, then, affirm that, according to the definition already given of the mutual relation of all the Minds, the Logion does not name one of the highest around God, as having come for the cleansing of the Theologian, but that some one of the Angels, placed over us as a sacred Minister of

the Prophet's cleansing, is called by the same name. as the Seraphim, on the ground that the removal of the faults spoken of, and the restoration of him who was cleansed for the Divine mission, was through fire; and they say that the Logion speaks simply of one of the Seraphim, not one of those who are established around God, but one of the Powers set over us for the purpose of cleansing.

### Section III.

Now another man brought forward to me a by no means foolish defense of the present position. For he said that that great one, whoever he was,--the Angel who formed this vision for the purpose of teaching the theologian Divine things,--referred his own cleansing function to God, and after God, to the first working Hierarchy. And was not this statement certainly true? For he who said this, affirmed that the supremely Divine Power in visiting all, advances and penetrates all irresistibly, and yet is invisible to all, not only as being superessentially elevated above all, but as secretly transmitting its providential energies to all; yea, rather, it is manifested to all the intellectual Beings in due degree, and by conducting Its own gift of Light to the most reverend Beings, through them, as first, It distributes in due order to the subordinate, according to the power of each Division to bear the vision of God; or to speak more strictly, and through familiar illustrations (for if they fall short of the Glory of God, Who is exalted above all, yet they are more illustrating for us), the distribution of the sun's ray passes with easy distribution to first matter, as being more transparent than all, and, through it with greater clearness, lights up its own splendours; but when it strikes more dense materials, its distributed brilliancy becomes more obscure, from the inaptitude of the materials illuminated for transmission of the gift of Light,

and from this it is naturally contracted, so as to almost entirely exclude the passage of Light. Again, the heat of fire transmits itself chiefly to things that are more receptive, and yielding, and conductive to assimilation to itself; but, as regards repellent opposing substances, either it leaves none, or a very light, trace of its fiery energy; and further, when through substances favourable to its proper action, it comes in contact with things not congenial,—first, it perchance makes things easily changed to heating hot, and through them heats proportionately either water or something else which is not easily heated. After the same rule, then, of Nature’s well-ordered method, the regulation of all good order, both visible and invisible, manifests supernaturally the brightness of its own gift of Light, in first manifestation to the most exalted Beings, in abundant streams, and through these, the Beings after them partake of the Divine ray. For these, as knowing God first, and striving preeminently after Divine virtue, and to become first-workers, are deemed worthy of the power and energy for the imitation of God, as attainable, and these benevolently elevate the beings after them to an equality, as far as possible, by imparting ungrudgingly to them the splendour which rests upon themselves, and these again to the subordinate, and throughout each Order, the first rank imparts its gift to that after it, and the Divine Light thus rests upon all, in due proportion, with providential forethought. There is, then, for all those who are illuminated, a Source of illumination, viz., God, by nature, and really, and properly, as Essence of Light, and Cause of Being, and Vision itself; but, by ordinance, and for Divine imitation, the relatively superior (is source) for each after it, by the fact, that the Divine rays are poured through it to that. All the remaining Angelic Beings, then, naturally regard the highest Order of the Heavenly Minds as source, after God, of every God-knowledge and God-imitation,

since, through them, the supremely Divine illumination is distributed to all, and to us. Wherefore, they refer every holy energy of Divine imitation to God indeed as Cause, but to the first Godlike Minds, as first agents and teachers of things Divine.

The first Order, then, of the holy Angels possesses, more than all, the characteristic of fire, and the streaming distribution of supremely Divine wisdom, and the faculty of knowing the highest science of the Divine illuminations, and the characteristic of Thrones, exhibiting their expansion for the reception of God; and the ranks of the subordinate Beings possess indeed the empyrean, the wise, the knowing, the God-receptive, faculty, but subordinately, and by looking to the first, and through them, as being deemed worthy of the Divine imitation in first operation, are conducted to the attainable likeness of God. The aforesaid holy characteristics, then, which the Beings after them possess, through the first, they attribute to those Beings themselves, after God, as Hierarchs.

#### Section IV.

He who said this, used to affirm, that this vision was shown to the Theologian, through one of the holy and blessed Angels set over us, and that from his illuminating direction, he was elevated to that intellectual contemplation in which he saw the most exalted Beings seated (to speak symbolically) under God, and with God, and around God, and the super-princely Eminence elevated unspeakably above them and all, seated on high in the midst of the superior Powers. The Theologian then learned, from the things seen, that, as compared with every super-essential pre-eminence, the Divine Being was seated incomparably above every visible and invisible

power, yea, even that It is exalted above all, as the Reality of all things, as Absolute--not even like to the first of created Beings;--further also, that It is source and essentiating Cause, and unalterable Fixity of the undissolved continuance of all things, from, Which is both the being and the well-being of the most exalted Powers themselves. Then he revealed that the Godlike powers of the most holy Seraphim, themselves, whose sacred appellation signifies the Fiery, concerning which we shall shortly speak as best we can, conducted the elevations of the empyrean power to the Divine likeness. And, the holy Theologian, by viewing the description of free and most exalted elevation of the sixfold wings to the Divine Being in first, middle, and last conceptions, and further, their endless feet and many faces, and their extended wings--one under their feet, and the other over their faces, as seen in vision, and the perpetual movement of their middle wings--was brought to the intelligible knowledge of the things seen, since there was manifested to him the power of the most exalted minds for deep penetration and contemplation, and the sacred reverence which they have, supermundanely, for the bold and courageous and unattainable scrutiny into higher and deeper mysteries; and of the incessant and high-flying perpetual movement of their Godlike energies in due proportion. But he was also taught the hidden mysteries of that supremely Divine and much esteemed Hymn of Praise--whilst the Angel who formed the vision imparts, as far as possible, his own sacred knowledge to the Theologian. He also taught him this, that the participation, as far as attainable, in the supremely Divine and radiant purity, is a purification to the pure however pure; and it being accomplished from the very Godhead by most exalted causes, for all the sacred Minds by a superessential hiddenness, is in a manner more clear, and exhibits and distributes itself, in a

higher degree, to the highest powers around It; but with regard to the second, or us, the lowest mental powers, as each is distant from, as regards the Divine likeness, so It contracts its brilliant illumination to the single unknowable of its own hiddenness. And it illuminates the second, severally, through the first; and, if one must speak briefly, it is firstly brought from hiddenness to manifestation through the first powers. This, then, the Theologian was taught by the Angel who was leading him to Light--that purification, and all the supremely Divine operations, illuminating through the first Beings, are distributed to all the rest, according to the relation of each for the deifying participations. Wherefore he reasonably attributed to the Seraphim, after God, the characteristic of purification by fire. There is nothing, then, absurd, if the Seraphim is said to purify the Prophet. For, as God purifies all, by being cause of every purification, yea, rather (for I use a familiar illustration) just as our Hierarch, when purifying or enlightening through his Leitourgoi or Priests, is said himself to purify and enlighten, since the Orders consecrated through him attribute to him their own proper sacred operations; so also the Angel who effected the purification of the Theologian attributes his own purifying science and power to God, indeed, as Cause, but to the Seraphim as first-operating Hierarch; as any one might say with Angelic reverence, whilst teaching one who was being purified by him, "There is a preeminent Source, and Essence, and Worker, and Cause of the cleansing wrought upon you from me, He Who brings both the first Beings into Being, and holds them together by their fixity around Himself, and keeps them without change and without fall, moving them to the first participations of His own Providential energies (for this, He Who taught me these things used to say, shows the mission of the Seraphim), but as Hierarch and Leader after God, the Marshal of the

most exalted Beings, from whom I was taught to purify after the example of God -- this is he, who cleanses thee through me, through whom the Cause and Creator of all cleansing brought forth His own provident energies from the Hidden even to us." These things, then, he taught me, and I impart them to thee. Let it be a part of thy intellectual and discriminating skill, either, to acquit each of the causes assigned from objection, and to honour this before the other as having likelihood and good reason, and perhaps, the truth; or, to find out from yourself something more allied to the real truth, or to learn from another; (God, of course, giving expression, and Angels supplying it;) and to reveal to us, the friends of Angels, a view more luminous if it should be so, and to me specially welcome.

#### CAPUT XIV.

What the traditional number of the Angels signifies.

This also is worthy, in my opinion, of intellectual attention, that the tradition of the Oracles concerning the Angels affirms that they are thousand thousands, and myriad myriads, accumulating and multiplying, to themselves, the supreme limits of our numbers, and, through these, showing clearly, that the ranks of the Heavenly Beings cannot be numbered by us. For many are the blessed hosts of the supermundane minds, surpassing the weak and contracted measurement of our material number, and being definitely known by their own supermundane and heavenly intelligence and science alone, which is given to them in profusion by the supremely Divine and Omniscient Framer of Wisdom, and essentiating Cause and connecting Force, and encompassing Term of all created things together.

## CAPUT XV.

What are the morpnic likenesses of the Angelic Powers? what the fiery? what the anthromorphic? what are the eyes? what the nostrils? what the ears? what the mouths? what the touch? what the eyelids? what the eyebrows? what the prime? what the teeth? what the shoulders? what the elbows and the hands? what the heart? what the breasts? what the back? what the feet? what the wings? what the nakedness? what the robe? what the shining raiment? what the sacerdotal? what the girdles? what the rods? what the spears? what the battle-axes? what the measuring lines? what the winds? what the clouds? what the brass? what the electron? what the choirs? what the clapping of hands? what the colours of different stones? what the appearance of the lion? what the appearance of the ox? what the appearance of the eagle? what the horses? what the varieties of coloured horses? what the rivers? what the chariots? what the wheels? what the so-called joy of the Angels?

## Section I.

Come, then, let us at last, if you please, rest our mental vision from the strain of lofty contemplation, befitting Angels, and descend to the divided and manifold breadth of the many-shaped variety of the Angelic forms, and then return analytically from the same, as from images, to the simplicity of the Heavenly Minds. But let this first be made plain to you, that the explanations of the sacredly depicted likenesses represent the same ranks of the Heavenly Beings as sometimes ruling, and, at other times, as being ruled; and the last, ruling, and the first, being ruled; and the same, as has been said, having first, and middle, and last powers --without introducing anything absurd into the



description, according to the following method of explanation. For if indeed we were to say that some are ruled by those above them, and then that they rule the same, and that those above, whilst ruling those below, are ruled by those same who are being ruled, the thing would manifestly be absurd, and mixed with all sorts of confusion. But if we say that the same rule and are ruled, but no longer the self-same, or from the self-same, but that each same is ruled by those before, and rules those below, one might say appropriately that the Divinely pictured presentations in the Oracles may sometimes attribute, properly and truly, the very same, both to first, and middle, and last powers. Now the straining elevation to things above, and their being drawn unswervingly around each other, as being guardians of their own proper powers, and that they participate in the providential faculty to provide for those below them by mutual communication, befit truly all the Heavenly Beings, although some, pre-eminently and wholly, as we have often said, and others partially and subordinately.

## Section II.

But we must keep our discourse within bounds, and must search, in our first explanation of the types, for what reason the Word of God prefers the sacred description of fire, in preference to almost every other. You will find it, then, representing not only wheels of fire, but also living creatures of fire, and men, flashing, as it were, like lightning, and placing around the Heavenly Beings themselves heaps of coals of fire, and rivers of flame flowing with irresistible force; and also it says that the thrones are of fire; and that the most exalted Seraphim glow with fire, it shows from their appellation, and it attributes the characteristic and energy of fire to them, and

throughout, above and below, it prefers pre-eminently the representation by the image of fire. I think, then, the similitude of fire denotes the likeness of the Heavenly Minds to God in the highest degree; for the holy theologians frequently describe the superessential and formless essence by fire, as having many likenesses, if I may be permitted to say so, of the supremely Divine property, as in things visible. For the sensible fire is, so to speak, in everything, and passes through everything unmingled, and springs from all, and whilst all-luminous, is, as it were, hidden, unknown, in its essential nature, when there is no material lying near it upon which it may show its proper energy. It is both uncontrollable and invisible, self-subduing all things, and bringing under its own energy anything in which it may happen to be; varying, imparting itself to all things near it, whatever they may be; renewing by its rousing heat, and giving light by its uncovered illuminations; invincible, unmingled, separating, unchangeable, elevating, penetrating, lofty; subject to no groveling inferiority, ever moving, self-moving, moving other things, comprehending, incomprehended, needing no other, imperceptibly increasing itself, displaying its own majesty to the materials receiving it; energetic, powerful, present to all invisibly, unobserved, seeming not to be, and manifesting itself suddenly according to its own proper nature by friction, as it were by a sort of seeking, and again flying away impalpably, undiminished in all the joyful distributions of itself. And one might find many characteristics of fire, appropriate to display the supremely Divine Energy, as in sensible images. The Godly-wise, then, knowing this, depict the celestial Beings from fire, showing their Godlikeness, and imitation of God, as far as attainable.

## Section III.

But they also depict them under the likeness of men, on account of the intellectual faculty, and their having powers of looking upwards, and their straight and erect form, and their innate faculty of ruling and guiding, and whilst being least, in physical strength as compared with the other powers of irrational creatures, yet ruling over all by their superior power of mind, and by their dominion in consequence of rational science, and their innate unslavishness and indomitableness of soul. It is possible, then, I think, to find within each of the many parts of our body harmonious images of the Heavenly Powers, by affirming that the powers of vision denote the most transparent elevation towards the Divine lights, and again, the tender, and liquid, and not repellent, but sensitive, and pure, and unfolded, reception, free from all passion, of the supremely Divine illuminations.

Now the discriminating powers of the nostrils denote the being able to receive, as far as attainable, the sweet-smelling largess beyond conception, and to distinguish accurately things which are not such, and to entirely reject.

The powers of the ears denote the participation and conscious reception of the supremely Divine inspiration.

The powers of taste denote the fullness of the intelligible nourishments, and the reception of the Divine and nourishing streams.

The powers of touch denote the skilful discrimination of that which is suitable or injurious.

The eyelids and eyebrows denote the guarding of the conceptions which see God.

The figures of manhood and youth denote the perpetual bloom and vigour of life.

The teeth denote the dividing of the nourishing perfection given to us; for each intellectual Being divides and multiplies, by a provident faculty, the unified conception given to it by the more Divine for the proportionate elevation of the inferior.

The shoulders and elbows, and further, the hands, denote the power of making, and operating, and accomplishing.

The heart again is a symbol of the Godlike life, dispersing its own life-giving power to the objects of its forethought, as beseems the good.

The chest again denotes the invincible and protective faculty of the life-giving distribution, as being placed above the heart.

The back, the holding together the whole productive powers of life.

The feet denote the moving and quickness, and skillfulness of the perpetual movement advancing towards Divine things. Wherefore also the Word of God arranged the feet of the holy Minds under their wings; for the wing displays the elevating quickness and the heavenly progress towards higher things, and the superiority to every groveling thing by reason of the ascending, and the lightness of the wings denotes their being in no respect earthly, but undefiledly and lightly raised to the sublime; and the naked and

unshod denotes the unfettered, agile, and unrestrained, and free from all external superfluity, and assimilation to the Divine simplicity, as far as attainable.

#### Section IV.

But since again the simple and variegated wisdom both clothes the naked, and distributes certain implements to them to carry, come, let us unfold, according to our power, the sacred garments and implements of the celestial Minds. The shining and glowing raiment, I think, signifies the Divine likeness after the image of fire, and their enlightening, in consequence of their repose in Heaven, where is the Light, and their complete illuminating intelligibly, and their being illuminated intellectually; and the sacerdotal robe denotes their conducting to Divine and mystical visions, and the consecration of their whole life. And the girdles signify the guard over their productive powers, and the collected habit of being turned uniformly to It, and being drawn around Itself by an unbroken identity, in a well-ordered circle.

#### Section V.

The rods signify the kingly and directing faculty, making all things straight. The spears and the battle-axes denote the dividing of things unlike, and the sharp and energetic and drastic operation of the discriminating powers. The geometrical and technical articles denote the founding, and building, and completing, and whatever else belongs to the elevating and guiding forethought for the subordinate Orders. But sometimes the implements assigned to the holy Angels are the symbols of God's judgments to ourselves; some, representing His correcting instruction or avenging righteousness, others, freedom from peril, or end

of education, or resumption of former well-being, or addition of other gifts, small or great, sensible or intelligible. Nor would a discriminating mind, in any case whatever, have any difficulty in properly adapting things visible to things invisible.

## Section VI.

But the fact that they are named winds denotes their rapid action, passing almost instantaneously to all things, and their transporting movement in passing from above to below, and again from below to above, their elevating the second to the height above, and moving the first to a common and provident advance of the inferior Orders. But perhaps some one would say that the appellation of wind, to the aerial spirit, also denotes the Divine likeness of the Heavenly Minds; for this also bears a likeness and type of the supremely Divine energy (as we have demonstrated more fully in the symbolic theology, in our explanation of the four elements) in accordance with the moving and life-producing, and the rapid and resistless development of Nature, and the Hiddenness of the moving sources and terminations to us unknown and invisible. For He says, "Thou knowest not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." But also the Word of God attributes to them the appearance of a cloud, signifying, through this, that the holy minds are filled super-mundanelly with the hidden Light, receiving the first manifestation without boasting over it as such, which they distribute ungrudgingly to the second, as a secondary manifestation, and in proportion to capacity; yea, further, that the productive, and life-producing, and increasing, and perfecting power is enshrined in them, after the fashion of the intelligible production of showers, which summons the receptive

womb of the earth, by fruitful rains, to the life-giving pangs of birth.

### Section VII.

Also, the Word of God attributes to the Heavenly Beings a likeness to Brass, Electron, and many-coloured stones. Electron, as being partly like gold, partly like silver, denotes the incorruptible, as in gold, and unexpended, and undiminished, and spotless brilliancy, and the brightness, as in silver, and a luminous and heavenly radiance. But to the Brass, according to the reasons assigned, must be attributed either the likeness of fire or that of gold.

We must consider that the many-coloured appearances of stones denote either as white, the luminous; or as red, the fiery; or as yellow, the golden; or as green, the youthful and the full grown; and within each likeness you will find an explanation which teaches the inner meaning of the typical images.

But since, I think, according to our power, this has been sufficiently said, let us pass to the sacred explanation of the Divine representations of the Heavenly Minds through wild beasts. We must consider that the shape of a Lion signifies the leading, and robust, and indomitable, and the assimilation, as far as possible, to the unutterable Godhead, by the concealment of the intellectual footprints, and by the mystically modest covering of the path, leading to It, during Divine illumination.

### Section VIII.

The Image of the Ox denotes the strong and the mature, turning up the intellectual furrows for the reception of the

heavenly and productive showers; and the Horns, the guarding and indomitable.

The representation of the Eagle denotes the kingly, and soaring, and swift in flight, and quickness in search of the nourishment which makes strong, and agility, and cleverness; and the unimpeded, straight, and unflinching gaze towards the bounteous and brilliant splendour of the Divine rays of the sun, with the robust extension of the visual powers.

That of Horses represents obedience and docility, and of those who are white, brilliancy, and as especially congenial to the Divine Light; but of those who are dark blue, the Hidden; and of those red, the fiery and vigorous; and of the piebald, the uniting of the extremes by the power passing through them, and joining the first to the second, and the second to the first, reciprocally and considerately.

Now if we did not consult the proportion of our discourse, we might, not inappropriately, adapt the particular characteristics of the aforesaid living creatures, and all their bodily representations to the Heavenly Powers, upon the principle of dissimilar similitudes; for instance, their appearance of anger, to intellectual manliness, of which anger is the remotest echo, and their desire, to the Divine love; and to speak summarily, referring all the sensible perceptions, and many parts of irrational beings, to the immaterial conceptions and unified Powers of the Heavenly Beings. Now not only is this sufficient for the wise, but even an explanation of one of the dissimilar representations would be sufficient for the accurate description of similar things, after the same fashion.



## Section IX.

But we must examine the fact that rivers are spoken of, and Wheels and Chariots attached to the Heavenly Beings. The rivers of fire signify the supremely Divine streams furnishing to them an ungrudging and incessant flow, and nourishing the productive powers of life; the chariots, the conjoined communion of those of the same rank; the wheels being winged, and advancing without turning and without deviation, the power of their advancing energy within a straight and direct path, towards the same unflinching and straight swoop of their every intellectual track, supermundanely straight and direct way. Also it is possible to explain, after another mystical meaning, the sacred description of the intellectual wheels; for the name Gel, Gel, is given to them, as the theologian says. This shows, according to the Hebrew tongue, revolutions and revelations. For the Empyrean and Godlike wheels have revolutions, indeed, by their perpetual movement around the Good Itself; but revelations, by the manifestation of things hidden, and by the elevation of things at our feet, and by the descending procession of the sublime illuminations to things below. There remains for accurate explanation, the statement respecting the rejoicing of the Heavenly Orders; for they are utterly incapable of our impassioned pleasure. Now they are said to rejoice with God over the discovery of what was lost, as befits their Divine good nature, and that Godlike and ungrudging rejoicing over the care and salvation of those who are turned to God; and that joy, beyond description, of which also holy men often partake, whilst the deifying illuminations of the Deity rest upon them. Let it suffice, then, to have said this much concerning the Divine representations, which, no doubt, falls short of their accurate explanation, but which will prevent us, I think,

from being servilely entangled in the resemblance of the types. But if you should say that we have not mentioned in order the whole Angelic Powers, or operations, or likenesses, depicted in the Oracles, we answer in truth, that we do not possess the supermundane science of some; and further, in regard to them, we have need of another to conduct to light and to reveal. Other things, however, as being parallel to the things said, we have omitted, out of regard to the symmetry of the discourse; and the hiddenness, beyond our capacity, we have honoured by silence.

St. Michael and All Angels, 1898.

*The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite, 250 A.D., Rev.  
John Parker, M.A.*

'Acvaghosha - Forgotten  
Buddhist Mystic of the  
Mahayana Path'



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Açvaghosha will take your mind to some very fascinating places, the heart of Buddhist teaching and thinking. We begin with an accounting of his life of unknown origin.

## NATIVITY AND PEREGRINATIONS

There is not so much discordance in the traditions about the wanderings of Açvaghosha as about his date, though indeed we do not have as yet any means of ascertaining his birth-place, other than the statements of discordant authorities. According to Târanâtha, he was a son of a rich Brahman called Samghaguhya who married the tenth and youngest daughter of a merchant in Khorta. As a youth, when thoroughly familiar with every department of knowledge, he went to Odiviça, Gaura, Tîrahuti, Kâmarûpa, and some other places, defeating everywhere his Buddhist opponents by his ingenious logic.

All these places are situated in Eastern India, and among the Chinese traditions the *Record of the Triratna* (*Li tai san pao chi*) as well as the *Accounts of Buddha and the Patriarchs* (*Fo tsu tung chi*) agree with Târanâtha in placing Açvaghosha's native land in the East; but the *Life of Vasubandhu* makes Açvaghosha a native of Bhâshita in Çrâvastî, while in Nâgârjuna's work, the *Mahâyânaçâstravyâkhyâ*

## 釋摩訶衍論

(*Shih mo ho yen lun*), he is mentioned as having been born in Western India, Loka being the father and Ghoṇâ the mother. The *Record of Buddha and the Patriarchs Under Successive Dynasties* (*Fo tsu li tai t'ung tsai*) agrees with

neither of the above statements, for it says (*fasciculus* 5): "The twelfth patriarch, Aṣvaghosha Mahāsattva was a native of Vârâṇasî." A further contradicting tradition is pointed out by Prof. S. Murakami in one of his articles on the history of Buddhism, quoting the *Shittanzô*

悉曇藏

(*fas.* 1), which makes Aṣvaghosha a man of South India.

A majority of the traditions place his native country in East India; but there is no means of confirming these. One thing, however, seems to be certain, namely, that Aṣvaghosha was not born in the northern part of India, which place is supposed by most Western Buddhist scholars to be the cradle of the Mahâyâna school.

Wherever the native country of Aṣvaghosha may have been, both the Chinese and Tibetan records agree that he made a journey to Central India, or Magadha. It seems that every intellectual man in India, the people of which, living in affluence, were not occupied with the cares of making a living, sought to gain renown by dialectics and subtle reasonings, and Aṣvaghosha, as a Brahman whose "intellectual acquirements were wonderfully deep," and whose "penetrating insight was matchless," could not resist the temptation. Not satisfied with his intellectual campaign against commonplace Buddhists in his neighborhood, who were crushed down as "rotten wood before a raging hurricane," he went, according to a Chinese tradition, to Pâtaliputra, and according to the Tibetan, to Nâlânda. The *Life of Aṣvaghosha* evidently refers to this fact when it states that Parçva, the eleventh patriarch and eventual teacher of Aṣvaghosha, on being informed of the paramount influence of the Brahmantîrthaka (i.e.,

Açvaghosha) in Central India and of the fact that his conquest over Buddhists had silenced the bell (*ghanta*) in some monastery (*vihâra*), journeyed from Northern India to convert the bitterest opponent into a faithful follower of Buddha. He adds that Açvaghosha left his home and lived henceforth in Central India. But according to the *Transmission of the Dharmapitaka* (*Fu fa tsang ch'uan, fas. 5*) we find Açvaghosha even after his conversion still in Pâtaliputra, from which he was taken by King Kanishka to the latter's own capital, Gandhâra, in the Northwest of India.

Thus all that we can say about the birth-place and wanderings of Açvaghosha is: (1) he was a Brahman by birth either of South, or of West, or of East, but not of North India; (2) he acquired in Central India his highest reputation as a Brahman disputant, and, after his conversion, as the greatest Buddha follower of the time, intellectually as well as morally; (3) his later life was spent according to the Chinese authority in the North where he wrote probably the *Mahâlamkâra-sûtraçâstra* (*Book of Great Glory*) which describes matters mostly relating to Western India.

### APPELLATIONS.

The author of the *Mahâyânaçradhotpâdaçâstra* (*Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahâyâna*) is most commonly known in the Chinese Buddhist literature by the name of Açvaghosha. But according to his *Life* he was also called Kung-tê-jih

功德日

(i.e., merit-sun; in Sanskrit, Puṇyaditya?). For he was not only a philosopher, but a preacher and an organizer, for "while in North India he widely propagated the doctrine of Buddha, led and benefited the masses, and through good and excellent [missionary] methods perfected the merits of the people." *The Record of Buddha and the Patriarchs (Fo tsou t'ung tsai)*, where it is stated that his other name was Kung-chang

## 功勝

(Puṇyaçrīka?), can be said almost to agree with the above. While thus no other name or appellation of his is known in China, Târanâtha mentions nine more names: Kâla (Time), Durdarsha (Hard-to-be-seen), Durdarshakâla (Hard-to-be-seen-time), Mâtṛceta (Mother-child), Pitṛceta (Father-child), Çûra (Hero), Dharmika-Subhûti (Virtuous-mighty), and Maticitra (Intelligence-bright).

In I-tsing's *Correspondence from the South Sea (Nan hai chi kuei ch'uan*, Chap. 32, "On chanting"), the name Mâtṛceta is mentioned, but I-tsing does not identify him with Açvaghosha, though the legend attached to the former closely resembles that of the latter told in Târanâtha. Târanâtha states that when Açvaghosha became a sthavira and advocate of the Tripitaka, he had a dream one night in which the venerable Tara gave him the instruction to write hymns on Buddha for the expiation of his former sinful deeds; that according to this admonition he wrote many hymns praising the virtues of Buddha, amongst which one containing one hundred and fifty çlokas is the best of all; that the hymns composed by him are full of benediction like the very words of Buddha, because he was predicted by the Blessed One to be a hymnist.

Compare the above with this from I-tsing:

"The venerable Mâtrceta (Mother-child) was a man of great intellect, of excellent virtue, eminently standing above all sages in India. A tradition says that when Buddha was taking a walk one time with his kinsmen, disciples, and many other people, a nightingale (?), observing his personal feature as elegant and majestic as a gold mountain, uttered in the wood some pleasant, harmonious notes that sounded like praising the virtues of Buddha. Buddha then turning towards the disciples said: 'The bird overcome by the joy of seeing me utters a pitiful cry. By this merit it will after my death obtain a human form, Mâtrceta

## 摩陁哩制吒

by name, and praise and adore my intrinsic virtues with a number of hymns.' This man first followed the doctrine of a tîrthaka worshipping Maheçvara and composed many hymns to adore him. But in the meantime he came across his own name recorded [in a Buddhist writing]; inspired by this, he took refuge in Buddha, changed his garb, abandoned his laymanship, and in many ways praised, honored and adored Buddha. Regretting his misbehavior in the past and desiring to perform good deeds in the future and also lamenting the unfortunate fate that prevented him from having a personal interview with the Great Teacher rather than bowing before his bequeathed image, he at last decided with all his rhetorical talent and in solemn fulfillment of the Lord's prophecy, to praise his virtues and merits [in hymns]. He first composed four hundred çlokas and then one hundred and fifty çlokas; all of which describe the six Pâramitâs [Perfections] and state



the excellent virtues possessed by the World-Honored-One," etc.

At the end of the same Chapter (i.e., Chap. 32) in I-tsing's *Correspondence* he refers to Aṣvaghosha and Nâgârjuna both of whom composed some beautiful and popular hymns that were sung by Buddhists throughout India at the time of his pilgrimage. But if the Tibetan statement is reliable, I-tsing may have been mistaken in recording Aṣvaghosha and Mâtrceṭa as different characters. The Tibetan and Chinese version of the one hundred and fifty çloka hymn being still existent, the comparison of which, however, I have not yet been able to make, will furnish an interesting testimony for the identification.

Many legendary explanations have been invented about the name of Aṣvaghosha, as might be expected of the imaginative Indian mind, but not being worth while quoting from the materials at my command, no reference will be made to them here.

*Aṣvaghosha has an equally fascinating tale of his conversion from Brahmanism to Mahayana Buddhism.*

## CONVERSIONS

A consensus of traditions both Tibetan and Chinese maintains that Aṣvaghosha was in his earlier life a most powerful adherent of Brahmanism, though we are tempted to discredit it on the ground that later Buddhist writers may have wished to exaggerate the superiority of Buddhism to all other Indian philosophical and religious doctrines, by chronicling the conversion of one of its strongest opponents to their side. Whatever the origin of

the legend may be, how did his conversion take place? By whom was he converted? About these points the Tibetan and the Chinese tradition by no means agree, the one standing in a direct contradiction to the other. While the Tibetan account is full of mystery and irrationality, the Chinese is natural enough to convince us of its probable occurrence.

According to Tāranātha Āryadeva, the most eminent disciple of Nāgārjuna, defeated and proselyted Aṣvaghosha, not by his usual subtlety in dialectics, but by the superiority of his magical arts. Aṣvaghosha made use of every tantric formula he could command, in order to free himself from the enchantment in which he was held by his enemy, but all to no purpose whatever. Thus when he was in an utterly desperate condition, he happened to read the Buddhist Sūtra which was kept in his place of confinement and in which he found his destiny prophesied by Buddha, he was seized with deep regret for his former hostile attitude toward the Dharma, and immediately renouncing his tīrthakism, professed the doctrine of Çākyaṃuni.

The Tibetan tradition presents some unmistakable indications of a later invention: the use of tantric formulæ, the so-called prophecy of the Tathāgata, and the anachronism of Āryadeva. On the other hand, the Chinese records are worth crediting, though they are not unanimous as to how the conversion took place and who was the proselytist.

According to the *Life of Aṣvaghosha*, Parçva was the man who converted him. They agreed at their first meeting that on the seventh day thence they should have the king, ministers, çrāmanas, tīrthakas and all great teachers of the

Dharma gathered in the Vihâra and have their discussion there before all those people. "In the sixth night the sthavira entered into a samâdhi and meditated on what he had to do [in the morning]. When the seventh day dawned, a great crowd was gathered like clouds. The Sthavira Parçva arrived first and ascended a high platform with an unusually pleasant countenance. The tîrthaka [i.e., Açvaghosha] came later and took a seat opposite him. When he observed the çrâmana with a pleasant countenance and in good spirits, and when he also observed his whole attitude showing the manner of an able opponent, he thought: 'May he not be Bhikshu Chin? His mind is calm and pleasant, and besides he bears the manner of an able antagonist. We shall indeed have an excellent discussion to-day.'

"They then proposed the question how the defeated one should be punished. The tîrthaka [Açvaghosha] said: 'The defeated one shall have his tongue cut out.' The sthavira replied: 'No, he shall become a disciple [of the winner] as the acknowledgement of defeat.' The tîrthaka then replied: 'Let it be so,' and asked, 'Who will begin the discussion?' The Sthavira Parçva said: 'I am more advanced in age; I came from afar for the purpose [of challenging you]; and moreover I was here this morning earlier than you. So it will be most natural for me to speak first.' The tîrthaka said: 'Let it be so. Following the subject of your argument, I shall completely baffle you.'

"The Sthavira Parçva then said: 'What shall we have to do, in order to keep the kingdom in perfect peace, to have the king live long, to let the people enjoy abundance and prosperity, all free from evils and catastrophes?' The tîrthaka was silent, not knowing what to reply. As now according to the rule of discussion one who could not

make a response is defeated, Aṣvaghosha was obliged to bow [before the opponent] as a disciple of his. He had his head shaved, was converted to a çrâmana, and instructed in the perfection-precepts.

"When he [Aṣvaghosha] was alone in his room, he was absorbed in gloomy, unpleasant reflexion as to why he, possessing a bright intellect and far-sighted discretion, and having his reputation widely spread all over the world, could be defeated with a single question and be made a disciple of another. Parçva well knew his mind and ordered him to come to his room where the master manifested himself in several supernatural transformations. Aṣvaghosha now fully recognized that his master was not a man of ordinary type, and thus feeling happy and contented, thought it his duty to become one of his disciples.

"The master told him: 'Your intellect is bright enough, hard to find its equal; but it wants a final touch. If you study the doctrine I have mastered, attend to my capability and insight into the Bodhi, and if you become thoroughly versed in the method of discussion and clearly understand the principle of things, there will be no one who can match you in the whole world.'

"The master returned to his own country [North India]; the disciple remained in Central India, making an extensive study of the Sûtras, seeking a clear comprehension of the doctrine, Buddhistic as well as non-Buddhistic. His oratorical genius swept everything before him, and he was reverentially honored by the four classes of the people, including the king of [Central] India who treated him as a man of distinction."

According to the *Transmission of the Dharmapitaka (Fu fa tsang chuan)*, however, Aṣvaghosha was not converted by Parçva, but by his disciple and patriarchal successor, Puṇyayaças. Though the two works, *Life of Aṣvaghosha* and the book just mentioned, differ in some other points, they are evidently two different versions of the one original legend. As the book is not as yet accessible to English readers, I here produce the whole matter translated from the Chinese version. The comparison will prove interesting.

"Full of a proud and arrogant spirit that speedily grew like a wild plant, he [Aṣvaghosha] firmly believed in the existence of an ego-entity and cherished the ultra-egotistic idea. Being informed that Âcarya called Puṇyayaças, who, deep in knowledge and wide in learning, proclaimed that all things are relative [= *çûnya*, lit. empty], there is no *âtman*, no *pudgala*; Aṣvaghosha's arrogant spirit asserted itself, and presenting himself to Puṇyayaças challenged him saying: 'confute all [false] opinions and doctrines in the world, as hailstones strike tender grass. If my declaration prove false and not true' I will have my own tongue cut out in acknowledgment of defeat.' Thereupon Puṇyayaças as explained to him that Buddhism distinguishes two kinds of truth, that while 'Practical truth' hypothetically admits the existence of an *âtman*, there is nothing conditional in 'pure [or absolute] truth,' all being calm and tranquil, and that therefore we cannot prove the ego as an absolute entity.

"Aṣvaghosha would not yet surrender himself, because being over-confident of his own intellectual power he considered himself to have gained the point. Puṇyayaças said: 'Carefully think of yourself; tell not a lie. We will see which of us has really won.'

"Açvaghosha meanwhile came to think that while 'practical truth' being only conditional has no reality at all, 'pure truth' is calm and tranquil in its nature, and that therefore these two forms of truth are all unobtainable, and that if they have thus no actuality [or existence], how could they be refuted [as false]? So feeling now the superiority of his opponent, he tried to cut out his tongue in acknowledgement of the defeat. But Puṇyayaças stopped him, saying: 'We teach a doctrine of love and compassion, and do not demand that you cut out your tongue. Have your head shaved instead and be my disciple.' Açvaghosha thus converted was made a çrâmana by Puṇyayaças.

"But Açvaghosha who felt extremely ashamed of his [former] self-assumption was thinking of attempting his own life. Puṇyayaças, however, attaining arhatship, entered into a samâdhi and divined what was going on in the mind of Açvaghosha. He ordered him to go and bring some books out of the library. Açvaghosha said to the Âcarya: 'The room is perfectly dark; how can I get in there?' To this Puṇyayaças answered: 'Just go in, and I shall let you have light.' Then the Âcarya through his supernatural power stretched far into the room his right hand whose five fingers each radiating with light illuminated everything inside of the walls. Açvaghosha thought it a mental hallucination, and knowing the fact that a hallucination as a rule disappears when one is conscious of it, he was surprised to see the light glowing more and more. He tried his magical arts to extinguish it till he felt utterly exhausted, for the mysterious light suffered no change whatever. Finally coming to realize that it was the work of no other person than his teacher, his spirit was filled with remorse, and he thenceforth applied himself diligently to religious discipline and never relapsed."

The *Record of Buddha and the Patriarchs* (Fo tsou lung tsai) agrees with the *Transmission of the Dharma-pitaka* (Fu fa tsang chuan) in making Puṇyayaças, instead of Parçva, the master of the conversion. But the former does not state how Açvaghosha was converted.

Though so far it remains an open question who was the real master of Açvaghosha, we can be sure of this, that he had intimate spiritual communication with both Parçva and Puṇyayaças. Parçva, who was an older contemporary of Puṇyayaças, was probably already advanced in age when Açvaghosha came to be personally acquainted with him, and so he did not have time enough to lead the young promising disciple to a consummate understanding of the doctrine of Buddha. After the demise of this venerable old patriarch, Açvaghosha therefore had to go to Puṇyayaças for a further study of his religion, till he was capable of forming his own original thoughts, which are set forth in his principal work, the *Discourse of the Awakening of Faith* (*Çraddhotpâda-çâstra*). This assumption is justified when we notice that Açvaghosha in the *Book of Great Glory* pays his homage to Parçva as well as to Puṇyayaças.

Now by way of a supplementary note to the above, let us say a word about Wassiljew's observation, which states that while Hīnayānists or Çrāvakas ascribe the conversion of Açvaghosha to Parçva, the Mahāyānistic record says that Āryadeva converted him. This assertion is evidently incorrect, for the *Life of Açvaghosha* as well as the *Transmission of the Dharmapitaka* (Fu fa tsang chuan) in which the honor of his conversion is given to the successor of Parçva as aforesaid, do not certainly belong to the work of the Hīnayāna school. It is the Tibetan tradition only, and not the general Mahāyānist statement, that Āryadeva converted Açvaghosha, and there is no ground at all for

the assertion of Wassiljew, which practically leads us to take everything Tibetan for Mahâyânistic and everything Chinese for Hînayânistic.

### **Unknown Source (Public Domain)**

Our forgotten mystic, Acvagosha, has a unique perspective on how we protect ourselves from evil forces through the Buddhist standpoint that I think is excellent to share.

“And again when the practiser by virtue of his samâdhi attains an immediate insight into the nature of the universe (*dharmadhâtu*), he will recognize that the Dharmakâya of all Tathâgatas and the body of all beings are one and the same (*samatâ*), are consubstantial (*ekalakshana*). On that account it is also called the samâdhi of oneness (*ekalakshanasamâdhi*). By disciplining oneself in this samâdhi, one can obtain infinite samâdhis, because suchness is the source of all samâdhis.

Some people scantily supplied with the root of merit (*kuçalamûla*) may yield to the temptation of Mâras, tîrthakas, or evil spirits. [For instance] those evil ones sometimes assuming horrible forms may frighten the practiser; sometimes manifesting themselves in beautiful figures, they may fascinate him; sometimes appearing in form of a deva, or of a Boddhisattva, or even of a Buddha with all his excellent and magnified features, they may speak about *dhârani* or the pârâmitâ, or may give instructions about various means of emancipation (*mukti*), declaring that there is no hatred, no friendship, no causation, no retribution, or declaring that all things in the world are absolute nothingness (*atyantaçûnyatâ*), that they are in their essence Nirvâna itself. Or they may reveal to the practiser his own past and future states of existence,



they may teach him to read the thoughts of others, may grant him incomparable power of eloquence, may induce him to crave covetously for worldly fame and advantages.

Further, through the influence of those evil ones the practiser may sometimes be inordinately susceptible to dissatisfaction or delight; he may sometimes be too misanthropic or too philanthropic; he may sometimes be inclined to enjoy drowsiness; he may sometimes not sleep for a long time; he may sometimes be affected by diseases; he may sometimes remain discouraged and indolent; he may sometimes rise all on a sudden with full energy, but only to sink down again into languor; he may sometimes, being over-skeptical, not believe in anything; he may sometimes, abandoning the excellent religious observance, enjoy himself in frivolous occupations, indulge in worldly affairs, gratify his desires and inclinations; he may sometimes attain to the samâdhi of heretics [i.e., tîrthaka] and, remaining in a state of trance a day or two, or even seven, and being supplied imaginarily with some palatable food and drink, and feeling very comfortable mentally and physically, he may have no sensation of hunger or thirst; he may sometimes be induced to enjoy female fascinations; he may sometimes be very irregular in taking meals, either too much or too little; he may sometimes look either very handsome or very ugly in appearance.

If the practiser get enraptured by those visions and prejudices (*kleṣa*), he will lose his root of merit (*kuṣalamûla*) accumulated in his previous existences. Therefore he should exercise a deep and thorough contemplation, thinking that all those [heretical states of samâdhi] are the temptations of Mâras or evil spirits that take advantage of his deficiency in merits and his intensity of karma-hindrances (*karmâvarana*).

After this thought he should make another thought, viz., that all these are nothing but mental hallucinations. When he makes these thoughts, the visions and imaginations will instantly disappear, and, becoming free from all attributes [of limitation], he will enter into the true samâdhi. He has then not only liberated himself from all modes of subjectivity, he has also effaced the idea of suchness. Even when he rises up from a deep meditation, no visionary images, no prejudices will take possession of in his mind, since he has destroyed the root of illusion through the power of the samâdhi. On the contrary, all the excellent and virtuous deeds which are in conformity with suchness will be constantly performed by him, while all hindrances without exception will be removed by him, who now exhibiting great spiritual energy will never become exhausted.

Those who do not practice this kind of samâdhi will not be able to enter into the essence of the Tathâgata, for all other samâdhis practiced in common with the tîrthakas have invariably some attributes [of imperfection] and do not enable one to come into the presence of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Therefore let Bodhisattvas [who aspire to the highest knowledge] assiduously apply themselves to the discipline and attain to the perfection of this samâdhi.

Those who practice this samâdhi will procure in their present life ten beneficial results:

1. They will always be remembered and guarded by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in all quarters.
2. They will not be molested by Mâras or evil spirits.
3. They will not be led astray by false doctrines.

4. They will be free from disparaging the deepest Doctrine (*gambhîradharma*). Their serious misdemeanors as well as their karma-hindrances will be attenuated.
- 5 . They will destroy all doubts, sinful recollections, and contemplations.
6. They will be strengthened in their belief in the spiritual state of Tathâgata.
7. They will be liberated from gloomy remorse; they will be courageous and unflinching in the face of birth and death.
8. Being free from arrogance and presumptuousness, they will be meek and patient and will be revered by all the world.
9. If not practicing deep meditation, those prejudices (*âçrava*) which are now getting weaker, will not assert themselves in them.
10. While practicing meditation, they will not be disturbed by any external objects, such as voices, sounds, etc.

But mind: when the practiser is trained only in cessation (*çamatha*), his mind will sink down into stupidity, and acquiring a habit of indolence, cannot rejoice in doing good acts, as he will estrange himself from deep compassion (*mahâkaruna*). Accordingly he should discipline himself in intellectual insight (*vidarçana*) as well.

*Acvaghosha*

# Excerpts from ‘The Revelation of the True Doctrine’

*By Acvaghosha*

## *1. The Revelation of the True Doctrine.*

In the one soul we may distinguish two aspects.

The one is the Soul as suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*), the other is the soul as birth-and-death (*samsâra*). Each in itself constitutes all things, and both are so closely interrelated that one cannot be separated from the other.

### **A. The Soul as Suchness.**

What is meant by the soul as suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*), is the oneness of the totality of things (*dharmadhâtu*), the great all-including whole, the quintessence of the Doctrine. For the essential nature of the soul is uncreated and eternal.

All things, simply on account of our confused subjectivity (*smrti*), appear under the forms of individuation. If we could overcome our confused subjectivity, the signs of individuation would disappear, and there would be no trace of a world of [individual and isolated] objects.

Therefore all things in their fundamental nature are not namable or explicable. They cannot be adequately expressed in any form of language. They are without the range of apperception. [They are universals.] They [things

in their fundamental nature] have no signs of distinction. [They are not particulars.] They possess absolute sameness (*samatâ*). [They are universals.] They are subject neither to transformation, nor to destruction. They are nothing but the one soul, for which suchness is another designation. Therefore they cannot be [fully] explained by words or exhausted by reasoning.

While all words and expressions are nothing but representations and not realities, and their existence depends simply on our confused subjectivity, suchness has no attribute [of particularity] to speak of.

But the term suchness is all that can be expressed in language, and through this term all other terms may be disposed of.

In the essence of suchness, there is neither anything which has to be excluded, nor anything which has to be added.

Now the question arises: If that be so, how can all beings conform to and have an insight into [suchness]?

The answer is: As soon as you understand that when the totality of existence is spoken of, or thought of, there is neither that which speaks nor that which is spoken of, there is neither that which thinks nor that which is thought of; then you conform to suchness; and when your subjectivity is thus completely obliterated, it is said to have the insight.

Again there is a twofold aspect in suchness if viewed from the point of its explicability. The first is trueness as negation (*çûnyatâ*), in the sense that it is completely set apart from the attributes of all things unreal, that it is the

real reality. The second is trueness as affirmation (*açûnyatâ*), in the sense that it contains infinite merits, that it is self-existent.

And again by trueness as negation we mean that in its [metaphysical] origin it has nothing to do with things defiled [i.e., conditional], that it is free from all signs of distinction existing among phenomenal objects, that it is independent of unreal, particularising consciousness.

Thus we understand that suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*) is neither that which is existence, nor that which is non-existence, nor that which is at once existence and non-existence, nor that which is not at once existence and non-existence; that it is neither that which is unity, nor that which is plurality, nor that which is at once unity and plurality, nor that which is not at once unity and plurality.

In a word, as suchness cannot be comprehended by the particularising consciousness of all beings, we call it the negation [or nothingness, *çûnyatâ*].

The truth is that subjectivity does not exist by itself, that the negation (*çûnyatâ*) is also void (*çûnya*) in its nature, that neither that which is negated [viz., the external world] nor that which negates [viz., the mind] is an independent entity.

By the so-called trueness as affirmation, we mean that [as soon as we understand] subjectivity is empty and unreal, we perceive the pure soul manifesting itself as eternal, permanent, immutable and completely comprising all things that are pure. On that account we call it affirmation [or reality, or nonemptiness, *açûnyatâ*]. Nevertheless, there is no trace of affirmation in it, because it is not the product

of a confused subjectivity, because only by transcending subjectivity (*smṛti*) can it be grasped.

### **b. The Soul as Birth-and-Death.**

The soul as birth-and-death (*samsâra*) comes forth [as the law of causation] from the Tathâgata's womb (*Tathâgatagarbha*). But the immortal [i.e., such-ness] and the mortal [i.e., birth-and-death] coincide with each other. 1 Though they are not identical, they are not a duality. [Thus when the absolute soul assumes a relative aspect by its self-affirmation] it is called the all-conserving mind (*âlaya-vijñâna*).

The same mind has a twofold significance as the organizer and the producer of all things.

Again it embraces two principles: (1) Enlightenment; (2) Non-enlightenment.

Enlightenment is the highest quality of the mind; it is free from all [the limiting] attributes of subjectivity (*smṛti*). As it is free from all [limiting] attributes of subjectivity, it is like unto space (*âkâṣa*), penetrating everywhere, as the unity of all (*dharmadhâtu*). That is to say, it is the universal Dharmakâya of all Tathâgatas.

On account of this Dharmakâya, all Tathâgatas are spoken of as abiding in enlightenment *a priori*.

Enlightenment *a priori* is contrasted with enlightenment *a posteriori*. Through enlightenment *a posteriori* is gained no more than enlightenment *a priori*.

Now we speak of enlightenment *a posteriori*; because there is enlightenment *a priori*, there is non-enlightenment, and because there is non-enlightenment we can speak of enlightenment *a posteriori*.

Again, when the mind is enlightened as to its own ultimate nature, it is called perfect enlightenment; when it is not enlightened as to its ultimate nature, it is not perfect enlightenment.

Common people (*prthagjana*), who, becoming conscious of errors that occur in a succession of their mental states, abstain from making conclusions, may be spoken of as enlightened; but in reality theirs is non-enlightenment.

Çrâvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and those Bodhisattvas who have just entered their course, recognizing the difference between subjectivity and the transcending of subjectivity both in essence and attributes, have become emancipated from the coarse form of particularisation. This is called enlightenment in appearance.

Bodhisattvas of the Dharmakâya, having recognized that subjectivity and the transcending of subjectivity have no reality of their own [i.e., are relative], have become emancipated from the intermediate form of particularisation. This is called approximate enlightenment.

Those who have transcended the stage of Bodhisattvahood and attained the ultimate goal, possess a consciousness which is consistent and harmonious; they have recognized the origin from which consciousness [or mentation] starts. This will truly be called enlightenment.



Having transcended the attributes of enlightenment and the subtlest form of particularisation, they [i.e., Buddhas] have gained a perfect and eternal insight into the very nature of the soul [i.e., suchness], because the latter now presents itself to them in its absolute and immutable form. Therefore they are called Tathâgatas, and theirs is perfect enlightenment; and therefore it is said in the Sûtra that those who have an insight into the non-reality of all subjectivity, attain to the wisdom of the Tathâgata.

In the preceding statement we referred to the origin from which consciousness [or mentation] starts according to the popular expression. In truth there is no such thing as the origin of consciousness [or mentation]; for consciousness [being purely subjective] has no absolute [but only a phenomenal] existence. How can we then speak of its origin?

The multitude of people (*bahujana*) are said to be lacking in enlightenment, because ignorance (*avidya*) prevails there from all eternity, because there is a constant succession of confused subjective states (*smrti*) from which they have never been emancipated.

But when they transcend their subjectivity, they can then recognize that all states of mentation, viz., their appearance, presence, change, and disappearance [in the field of consciousness] have no [genuine] reality. They are neither in a temporal nor in a spatial relation with the one soul, for they are not self-existent.

When you understand this, you also understand that enlightenment *a posteriori* cannot be manufactured, for it is no other thing than enlightenment *a priori* [which is uncreate and must be discovered].

And again enlightenment *a priori*, when implicated in the domain of defilement [i.e., relativity], is differentiated into two kinds of attributes:

(1) Pure wisdom (*prajñâ?*); (2) Incomprehensible activity (*karma?*).

By pure wisdom we understand that when one, by virtue of the perfuming power of the Dharma, disciplines himself truthfully [i.e., according to the Dharma], and accomplishes meritorious deeds, the mind [i.e., *âlaya-vijñâna*] which implicates itself with birth-and-death will be broken down, and the modes of the evolving-consciousness will be annulled; while the pure and genuine wisdom of the Dharmakâya manifests itself.

Though all modes of consciousness and mentation are mere products of ignorance, ignorance in its ultimate nature is identical and not-identical with enlightenment *a priori*; and therefore ignorance in one sense is destructible, while in the other sense it is indestructible.

This may be illustrated by [the simile of] the water and the waves which are stirred up in the ocean. Here the water can be said to be identical [in one sense] and not-identical [in the other sense] with the waves. The waves are stirred up by the wind, but the water remains the same. When the wind ceases, the motion of the waves subsides; but the water remains the same.

Likewise, when the mind of all creatures which in, its own nature is pure and clean, is stirred up by the wind of ignorance (*avidya*), the waves of mentality (*vijñâna*) make their appearance. These three [i.e., the mind, ignorance,

and mentality], however, have no [absolute] existence, and they are neither unity nor plurality.

But the mind though pure in its essence is the source of the awakened [or disturbed] mentality. When ignorance is annihilated, the awakened mentality is tranquilized, whilst the essence of the wisdom remains unmolested.

Incomprehensible activity which we know proceeds from pure wisdom, uninterruptedly produces all excellent spiritual states. That is to say, the personality (*kâya*) of the Tathâgata, which in exuberance contains immeasurable and ever-growing merits, reveals itself to all beings according to their various predispositions [or characters], and accomplishes for them innumerable [spiritual] benefits.

Further there is a fourfold significance in the nature of enlightenment whose purity may be likened unto space or a bright mirror.

The first great significance which may be likened unto space and a bright mirror, is trueness as negation (*çûnyatâ*), in the sense that enlightenment is absolutely unobtainable by any modes of relativity or by any outward signs of enlightenment.

The second great significance which may be likened unto space and a bright mirror, is trueness as affirmation (*açûnyatâ*), in the sense that all things [in their ultimate nature] are perfect and complete, and not subject to destruction; in the sense that all events in the phenomenal world are reflected in enlightenment, so that they neither pass out of it, nor enter into it, and that they neither disappear nor are destroyed; that they are in one eternal

and immutable soul which by none of the defiled things can be defiled and whose wisdom-essence enveloping immeasurable and innumerable merits, becomes the cause of perfuming the minds of all beings.

The third great significance which may be likened unto space and a bright mirror, is the affirmation as free from the hindrances (*âvarana*), in the sense that enlightenment is forever cut off from the hindrances both affectional (*kleçâvarana*) and intellectual (*jñeyâ-varana*), as well as from the mind [i.e., *âlâya-vijñâna*] which implicates itself with birth-and-death, since it is in its true nature clean, pure, eternal, calm, and immutable.

The fourth great significance which may be likened unto space and a bright mirror, is the affirmation as unfolding itself, in the sense that on account of a liberation from the hindrances, it transforms and unfolds itself, wherever conditions are favorable, in the form of a Tathâgata or in some other forms' in order that all beings might be induced thereby to bring their root of merit (*kuçalamûla*) to maturity.

By the so-called non-enlightenment, we mean that as the true Dharma [i.e., suchness] is from all eternity not truthfully recognized in its oneness, there issues forth an unenlightened mind and then subjectivity (*smrti*). But this subjectivity has no self-existence independent of enlightenment *a priori*.

To illustrate: a man who is lost goes astray because he is bent on pursuing a certain direction; and his confusion has no valid foundation other than that he is bent on a certain direction.

It is even the same with all beings. They become unenlightened, foster their subjectivity and go astray, because they are bent on enlightenment. But non-enlightenment has no existence of its own, aside from its relation with enlightenment *a priori*. And as enlightenment *a priori* is spoken of only in contrast to non-enlightenment, and as non-enlightenment is a non-entity, true enlightenment in turn loses its significance too. [That is to say, they are simply relative.]

In blindness there arose non-enlightenment of which three aspects are to be noted. These three are not independent.

The first aspect is ignorant action (*avidyakarma?*). A disturbance of the mind [i.e., *âlāya-vijñāna*] caused by non-enlightenment characterizes the beginning of karma. When enlightened, the mind is no more disturbed.

But by its disturbance misery (*duhkha*) is produced according to the law of causation.

The second aspect is that which perceives [i.e., the ego or subject]. In consequence of the disturbance of the mind there originates that which perceives an external world. When the mind is not disturbed, perception does not take place.

The third aspect is the external world. Through perception an unreal external world originates. Independent of that which perceives [i.e., the ego or subject], there is no surrounding world [or the object].

Conditioned by the unreal external world, six kinds of phenomena arise in succession.

The first phenomenon is intelligence [i.e., sensation]. Being affected by the external world the mind becomes conscious of the difference between the agreeable and the disagreeable.

The second phenomenon is succession [i.e., memory]. Following upon intelligence, memory retains the sensations agreeable as well as disagreeable in a continuous succession of subjective states.

The third phenomenon is clinging. Through the retention and succession of sensations agreeable as well as disagreeable, there arises the desire of clinging.

The fourth phenomenon is an attachment to names [or ideas, *samjñâ*], etc. By clinging the mind hypostasises all names whereby to give definitions to all things.

The fifth phenomenon is the performance of deeds (*karma*). On account of attachment to names, etc., there arise all the variations of deeds, productive of individuality.

The sixth phenomenon is the suffering due to the fetter of deeds. Through deeds suffering arises in which the mind finds itself entangled and curtailed of its freedom.

Be it therefore known that all defiled things do not exist by themselves, for all of them have arisen from ignorance.

Now there is a twofold relation between enlightenment and non-enlightenment: (1) identity; (2) nonidentity.

The relation of identity may be illustrated by the simile of all kinds of pottery which though different are all made of the same clay. Likewise the undefiled (*anâçrava*) and

ignorance (*avidya*) and their various transient forms come all from one and the same entity. Therefore Buddha teaches that all beings are from all eternity ever abiding in Nirvâna. In truth enlightenment cannot be manufactured, nor can it be created; it is absolutely intangible; it is no material existence that is an object of sensation.

The reason why enlightenment nevertheless assumes tangible material form is that it suffers defilement which is the source of all transient forms of manifestation. Wisdom itself has nothing to do with material phenomena whose characteristic feature is extension in space, and there are no attributes there by which wisdom can become tangible. This is the meaning of Buddha's brief statement just referred to.

The relation of non-identity may be illustrated by the difference that obtains among the various kinds of pottery. The relation among the undefiled and ignorance and their various transient forms of manifestation is similar to it.

And again, by the law of causation (*hetupratyaya*) in the domain of birth-and-death (*samsâra*) we mean that depending on the mind [i.e., *âlaya-vijñâna*] an evolution of the ego (*manas*) and consciousness (*vijñâna*) takes place in all beings.

What is meant by this?

In the all-conserving mind (*âlaya-vijñâna*) ignorance obtains; and from the non-enlightenment starts that which sees, that which represents, that which apprehends an objective world, and that which constantly particularises. This is called the ego (*manas*).

Five different names are given to the ego [according to its different modes of operation].

The first name is activity-consciousness (*Karma-vijñâna*?) in the sense that through the agency of ignorance an unenlightened mind begins to be disturbed [or awakened].

The second name is evolving-consciousness [*pravṛtti-vijñâna*, i.e., the subject], in the sense that when the mind is disturbed, there evolves that which sees an external world.

The third name is representation-consciousness, in the sense that the ego (*manas*) represents [or reflects] an external world. As a clean mirror reflects the images of all description, it is even so with the representation-consciousness. When it is confronted, for instance, with the five objects of sense, it represents them at once, instantaneously, and without any effort.

The fourth name is particularisation-consciousness, in the sense that it discriminates between different things defiled as well as pure.

The fifth name is succession-consciousness [i.e., memory], in the sense that continuously directed by the awakening consciousness [or attention, *manaskara*] it [*manas*] retains and never loses or suffers the destruction of any karma, good as well as evil, which had been sown in the past, and whose retribution, painful as well as agreeable, it never fails to mature, be it in the present or in the future; and also in the sense that it unconsciously recollects things gone by, and in imagination anticipates things to come.

Therefore the three domains (*triloka*) are nothing but the self-manifestation of the mind [i.e., *âlaya-vijñâna* which is



practically identical with suchness, *bhûtatathatâ*]. Separated from the mind, there would be no such things as the six objects of sense.

Why?

Since all things, owing the principle of their existence to the mind (*âlâya-vijñâna*), are produced by subjectivity (*smṛti*), all the modes of particularisation are the self-particularisation of the mind. The mind in itself [or the soul] being, however, free from all attributes, is not differentiated. Therefore we come to the conclusion that all things and conditions in the phenomenal world, hypostasized and established only through ignorance (*avidya*) and subjectivity (*smṛti*) on the part of all beings, have no more reality than the images in a mirror. They evolve simply from the ideality of a particularising mind. When the mind is disturbed, the multiplicity of things is produced; but when the mind is quieted, the multiplicity of things disappears.

By ego-consciousness (*manovijñâna*) we mean that all ignorant minds through their succession-consciousness cling to the conception of I and not-I [i.e., a separate objective world] and misapprehend the nature of the six objects of sense. The ego-consciousness is also called separation-consciousness, or phenomena-particularising-consciousness, because it is nourished by the perfuming influence of the prejudices (*âçrava*), intellectual as well as affectional.

The mind [or consciousness, *vijñâna*] that starts from the perfuming influence of ignorance which has no beginning cannot be comprehended by the intellect of common people (*prthagjana*), Çrâvakas and Pratyekabuddhas.

It is partially comprehended by those Bodhisattvas at the stage of knowledge-and-practice, who discipline themselves., practice contemplation and become the Bodhisattvas of the Dharmakâya; while even those who have reached the highest stage of Bodhisattvahood cannot thoroughly comprehend it.

The only one who can have a clear and consummate knowledge of it is the Tathâgata.

Why?

While the essence of the mind is eternally clean and pure, the influence of ignorance makes possible the existence of a defiled mind. But in spite of the defiled mind, the mind [itself] is eternal, clear, pure, and not subject to transformation.

Further as its original nature is free from particularisation, it knows in itself no change whatever, though it produces everywhere the various modes of existence.

When the oneness of the totality of things (*dharmadhâtu*) is not recognized, then ignorance as well as particularisation arises, and all phases of the defiled mind are thus developed. But the significance of this doctrine is so extremely deep and unfathomable that it can be fully comprehended by Buddhas and by no others. Now there are six different phases of the defiled mind thus developed:

1. Interrelated [or secondary] defilement by attachment, from which Çrâvakas, Pratyekabuddhas and those Bodhisattvas at the stage of faith-adaptation can be freed.

2. Interrelated [or secondary] defilement by succession, from which Bodhisattvas with strenuous efforts at the stage of faith, can partially be freed, and at the stage of pure-heartedness, completely.
3. Interrelated [or secondary] defilement by the particularising intelligence, from which Bodhisattvas are gradually freed during their advancement from the stage of morality to the stage of wisdom, while upon reaching the stage of spirituality, they are eternally freed from it.
4. Non-interrelated [or primary] defilement by belief in an external world, which can be exterminated at the stage of matter-emancipation.
5. Non-interrelated [or primary] defilement by belief in a perceiving mind, which can be exterminated at the stage of mind-emancipation.
6. Non-interrelated [or primary] defilement by the fundamental activity, which can be exterminated in entering upon the stage of Tathâgatahood, passing through the highest stage of Bodhisattvahood.

From not recognizing the oneness of the totality of things (*dharmadhâtu*), Bodhisattvas can partially be liberated by passing first from the stage of faith and the stage of contemplation to the stage of pure-heartedness; while when they enter upon the stage of Tathâgatahood, they can once for all put an end [to the illusion].

By "interrelated" we mean that there is [in this case] a distinction [or consciousness of a duality] between the mind in itself and particularisation, that there is [here] a distinction [or consciousness of a duality] between the

defiled and the pure, [and therefore] that there is [here] an interrelation between that which perceives and that which determines.

By "non-interrelated" we mean that the mind [in this case] is perfectly identified with non-enlightenment, so that there is no distinction [or consciousness of a duality] between these two, [and therefore] that there is no consciousness of interrelation between that which perceives and that which determines.

The defiled mind is called affectional hindrance (*kleçâvarana*), because it obscures the fundamental wisdom of suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*). Ignorance is called intellectual hindrance (*jñeyâvarana*), because it obscures the spontaneous exercise of wisdom from which evolve all modes of activity in the world.

What is meant by this?

On account of the defiled mind attachment affirms itself in innumerable ways; and there arises a distinction [or consciousness] between that which apprehends and that which is apprehended. Thus believing in the external world produced by subjectivity, the mind becomes oblivious of the principle of sameness (*samatâ*) that underlies all things.

The essence of all things is one and the same, perfectly calm and tranquil, and shows no sign of becoming; ignorance, however, is in its blindness and delusion oblivious of enlightenment, and, on that account, cannot recognize truthfully all those conditions, differences, and activities which characterize the phenomena of the universe.

Further we distinguish two phases of the self-manifestation of the mind [i.e., *âlaya-vijñâna*, under the law of causation] as birth-and-death (*samsâra*). The first is the cruder phase, being the state of an interrelated mind; the second is the more refined phase, being the state of a non-interrelated mind. The crudest phase is the subjective condition of common people (*prthagjana*); the more refined of the crude or the cruder of the refined is the subjective state of a Bodhisattva. These two phases [of the *âlaya-vijñâna* as the principle of birth-and-death] originate through the perfuming power of ignorance.

The birth-and-death (*samsâra*) has its *raison d'être* (*hetu*) and its cause [or condition, *pratyaya*]. Non-enlightenment is the *raison d'être*, and the external world as produced by subjectivity is the condition. When the *raison d'être* is annihilated, the condition is annihilated [i.e., loses its conditioning power]. When the condition is annihilated, the state of an interrelated mind is annihilated. When the *raison d'être* is annihilated, the state of a non-interrelated mind [too] is annihilated.

It may be asked: If the mind be annihilated, how can there be mentation? If mentation really occurs, how can there be annihilation?

In reply we say that while the objection is well founded, we understand by the annihilation, not that of the mind itself, but of its modes [only].

To illustrate: the water shows the symptoms of disturbance when stirred up by the wind. Have the wind annihilated, and the symptoms of disturbance on the water will also be annihilated, the water itself remaining the same. Let the water itself, however, be annihilated, the

symptoms of disturbance would no more be perceptible; because there is nothing there through which it can show itself. Only so long as the water is not annihilated, the symptoms of disturbance may continue.

It is even the same with all beings. Through ignorance their minds become disturbed. Let ignorance be annihilated, and the symptom of disturbance will also be annihilated, while the essence of the mind [i.e., suchness] remains the same. Only if the mind itself were annihilated, then all beings would cease to exist, because there would be nothing there by which they could manifest themselves. But so long as the mind be not annihilated, its disturbance may continue.

A constant production of things defiled and pure is taking place on account of the inter-perfuming of the four different powers which are as follows: the first is the pure dharma, that is, suchness (*bhûatathatâ*); the second is the principle of defilement, that is, ignorance (*avidya*); the third is the subjective mind, that is, activity-consciousness (*karmavijñâna?*); the fourth is the external world (*vishaya*) of subjectivity, that is, the six objects of sense.

By "perfuming" we mean that while our worldly clothes [viz., those which we wear] have no odor of their own, neither offensive nor agreeable, they acquire one or the other according to the nature of the substance with which they are perfumed.

Now suchness is a pure dharma free from defilement. It acquires, however, a quality of defilement owing to the perfuming power of ignorance. On the other hand, ignorance has nothing to do with purity. Nevertheless, we

speak of its being able to do the work of purity, because it in its turn is perfumed by suchness.

How are defiled things continually produced by perfuming?

Determined by suchness [in its relative aspect], ignorance becomes the *raison d'être* of all forms of defilement. And this ignorance perfumes suchness, and, by perfuming suchness, it produces subjectivity (*smṛti*). This subjectivity in its turn perfumes ignorance. On account of this [reciprocal] perfuming, the truth is misunderstood. On account of its being misunderstood, an external world of subjectivity appears [viz., a conception of particulars as particulars]. Further, on account of the perfuming power of subjectivity, various modes of individuation are produced. And by clinging to them, various deeds are done, and we suffer as the result miseries, mentally as well as bodily.

There are two senses in what we call the perfuming power of the external world of subjectivity": (1) that which strengthens particularisation; (2) that which strengthens attachment.

There are again two senses in what we call-the perfuming power of the subjective mind": (1) that which strengthens the fundamental activity-consciousness, whereby Arhats, Pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas are subject to the miseries of birth and death; (2) that which strengthens the phenomena-particularising-consciousness, whereby all common people (*prthagjana*) are subject to the miseries of being fettered by prior deeds (*karma*).

There are also two senses in what we call "the perfuming power of ignorance": (1) a fundamental perfuming, in the sense that the activity-consciousness is thereby actualized; (2) a perfuming of intellect and affection, in the sense that the phenomena-particularising-consciousness is thereby actualized.

How are pure things constantly produced by perfuming?

Suchness perfumes ignorance, and in consequence of this perfuming the mind involved in subjectivity is caused to loathe the misery of birth and death and to seek after the blessing of Nirvâna. This longing and loathing on the part of the subjective mind in turn perfumes suchness. On account of this perfuming influence we are enabled to believe that we are in possession within ourselves of suchness whose essential nature is pure and immaculate; and we also recognize that all phenomena in the world are nothing but the illusory manifestation of the mind (*âlaya-vijñâna*) and have no reality of their own. Since we thus rightly understand the truth, we can practice the means of liberation, can perform those actions which are in accordance [with the Dharma]. Neither do we particularize, nor cling to. By virtue of this discipline and habituation during the lapse of innumerable *asamkhyeyakalpas*, we have ignorance annihilated.

As ignorance is thus annihilated, the mind [i.e., *âlaya-vijñâna*] is no more disturbed so as to be subject to individuation. As the mind is no more disturbed, the particularisation of the surrounding world is annihilated. When in this wise the principle and the condition of defilement, their products, and the mental disturbances are all annihilated, it is said that we attain to Nirvâna and that



various spontaneous displays of activity are accomplished.

There are two senses in what we call "the perfuming of the subjective mind": (1) the perfuming of the phenomena-particularising-consciousness, whereby all common people (*prthagjana*), Çrâvakas, and Pratyekabuddhas are induced to loathe the misery of birth and death, and, each according to his own capacity, to step towards the most excellent knowledge (*bodhiparinishpatti*); (2) the perfuming of the ego (*manas*), whereby courageously making up their minds, Bodhisattvas unhesitatingly step towards and enter into Nirvâna, that has no fixed abode.

There are also two senses in what we call "the perfuming of suchness": (1) essence-perfuming, and (2) activity-perfuming.

*The Essence-Perfuming.*--Embracing in full from all eternity infinite spotless virtues (*anâçrava*) and incomprehensibly excellent spiritual states that can efficiently exercise an eternal and incessant influence upon all beings, suchness thereby perfumes the minds of all beings. 1

In consequence of this perfuming power, they are caused to loathe the misery of birth and death, and to long for the blessing of Nirvâna, and believing that they are in possession within themselves of the true, valid Dharma, to call forth their aspiration (*cittotpâda*) and to discipline themselves.

Here a question arises: If all beings are uniformly in possession of suchness and are therefore equally perfumed by it, how is it that there are some who do not believe in it, while others do; and that there are such immeasurable

stages and inequalities among them, which divide the path from the first stage of aspiration up to the last stage of Nirvâna, while according to the Doctrine all these differences should be equalized?

In reply we say this: Though all beings are uniformly in possession of suchness, the intensity [of the influence] of ignorance, the principle of individuation, that works from all eternity, varies in such manifold grades as to outnumber the sands of the Ganges. And it is even so with such entangling prejudices (*kleṣa* or *âçrava*) as the ego-conception, intellectual and affectional prejudices, etc. [whose perfuming efficiency varies according to the karma previously accumulated by each individual],--all these things being comprehended only by the Tathâgata. Hence such immeasurable degrees of difference as regards belief, etc.

Further, there is made in the doctrine of all Buddhas a distinction between *raison d'être* (*hetu*) and cause (*pratyaya*). When both are fully satisfied, the final goal [of Buddhism] is attained and actualized.

To illustrate: the combustible nature of the wood is the *raison d'être* of a fire. But if a man is not acquainted with the fact, or, though acquainted with it, does not apply any method [whereby the potential principle can be actualized], how could he produce a fire and burn the wood?

It is even so with all beings. Although they are in possession of suchness as the perfuming *raison d'être*, yet how could they attain to Nirvâna, if they do not happen, as the cause, to see Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, or good sages, or even if they see them, do not practice good deeds

(*caryâ*), do not exercise wisdom (*prajñâ*), do not destroy prejudices (*kleça*)?

Conversely, by the cause alone, i.e., by their mere happening to see all good sages, it is not sure for them that they will be induced to loathe the misery of birth and death and to long for the blessing of Nirvâna, unless indeed they were in possession within themselves of the intrinsic perfuming principle as the *raison d'être*. It is, therefore, only when both the *raison d'être* and the cause are fully actualized that they can do so.

How are the *raison d'être* and the cause to be fully actualized?

Now, there is an inherent perfuming principle in one's own being, which, embraced and protected by the love (*maitrî*) and compassion (*karunâ*) of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, is caused to loathe the misery of birth and death, to believe in Nirvâna, to cultivate their root of merit (*kuçalamûla*), to habituate oneself to it, and to bring it to maturity.

In consequence of this, one is enabled to see all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and, receiving instructions from them, is benefited, gladdened, induced to practice good deeds, etc., till one attain to Buddhahood and enter into Nirvâna.

*The Activity-Perfuming.*--By this is meant nothing else than the perfuming influence of the external cause over all beings. It asserts itself in innumerable ways. Briefly speaking we may distinguish two kinds of it: (1) individual; and (2) universal.

*The Individual Cause.*--All beings since their first aspiration (*cittotpâda*) till the attainment of Buddhahood are sheltered under the guardianship of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who, responding to the requirements of the occasion, transform themselves and assume the actual forms of personality.

Thus for the sake of all beings Buddhas and Bodhisattvas become sometimes their parents, sometimes their wives and children, sometimes their kinsmen, sometimes their servants, sometimes their friends, sometimes their enemies, sometimes reveal themselves as devas or in some other forms.

Again Buddhas and Bodhisattvas treat all beings sometimes with the four methods of entertainment, sometimes with the six pârâmitâs, or with some other deeds, all of which are the inducement for them to make their knowledge (*bodhi*) perfect.

Thus embracing all beings with their deep compassion (*mahâkarunâ*), with their meek and tender heart, as well as their immense treasure of blissful wisdom, Buddhas convert them in such a way as to suit their [all beings'] needs and conditions; while all beings thereby are enabled to hear or to see Buddhas, and, thinking of Tathâgatas or some other personages, to increase their root of merit (*kuçalamûla*).

This individual cause is divided into two kinds: (1) that which takes effect immediately, enabling one without delay to attain to Buddhahood; (2) that which takes effect gradually, enabling one to attain to Buddhahood only after a long interval.

Each of these two is further divided into two kinds: (1) that which increases one's root of merit; (2) that which induces one to enter into the path (*mârga*).

*The Universal Cause.*--With universal wisdom (*samatâjñâna?*) and universal wishes (*samatâpranidhâna?*) all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas desire to achieve a universal emancipation of all beings. This desire is eternal and spontaneous on their part. And now as this wisdom and these wishes have the perfuming power over all beings, the latter are caused to think of or to recollect all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, so that sometimes hearing them, sometimes seeing them, all beings thereby acquire [spiritual] benefits (*hitatâ*). That is, entering into the samâdhi of purity, they destroy hindrances wherever they are met with, and obtain all-penetrating insight, that enables one to become conscious of the absolute oneness (*samatâ*) of the universe (*sarvaloka*) and to see innumerable Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Again, this perfuming of the essence and the activity may be divided into two categories: (1) that which is not yet in unison [with suchness]; (2) that which is already in unison [with suchness].

By that perfuming which is not yet in unison [with suchness] we understand the religious discipline of common people (*prthagjana*), Çrâvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and novice Bodhisattvas. While their strength of faith (*çradhâbala*) perfumed by the ego (*manas*) and the ego-consciousness (*manovijñâna*) enables them to continue their religious discipline, they have not yet attained to the state of non-particularisation, because their discipline is not yet in unison with the essence of suchness; nor have they yet attained to the spontaneity of action (*svayamkarma?*),

because their discipline is not yet in unison with the activity of suchness.

By that perfuming which is already in unison [with suchness], we understand the religious discipline of Bodhisattvas of the Dharmakâya. They have attended to the state of non-particularisation, because their discipline is in unison with the self-essence of all Tathâgatas; they have attained to the spontaneity of action, because their discipline is in unison with the wisdom and activity of all Tathâgatas. Allowing themselves to be influenced only by the power of the Dharma, their discipline acquires a nature of spontaneity and thereby perfumes suchness and destroys ignorance.

Again the incessant perfuming of the defiled dharma [i.e., ignorance] from all eternity works on; but when one attains to Buddhahood, one at once puts an end to it.

The perfuming of the pure dharma [i.e., suchness] works on to eternity, and there is no interruption of it. Because by virtue of the perfuming of the Dharma, that is, suchness, subjectivity is on the one hand annihilated, and the Dharmakâya is on the other hand revealed, and the perfuming process of the activity [of suchness] thus originated forever goes on.

### **c. The Threefold Significance of the Mahâyâna Explained.**

Again the quintessence and the attributes of suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*) know no diminution or addition, but remain the same in common people (*prthagjana*), Çrâvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas. It was not created in the past, nor is it to be annihilated in the future;

it is eternal, permanent, absolute; and from all eternity it sufficingly embraces in its essence all possible merits (*punya*).

That is to say, suchness has such characteristics as follows: the effulgence of great wisdom; the universal illumination of the dharmadhātu [universe]; the true and adequate knowledge; the mind pure and clean in its self-nature; the eternal, the blessed, the self-regulating and the pure; the tranquil, the immutable, and the free. And there is no heterogeneity in all those Buddha-dharmas which, outnumbering the sands of the Ganges, can be neither identical (*ekârtha*) nor not-identical (*nânârtha*) [with the essence of suchness], and which therefore are out of the range of our comprehension. Accordingly suchness is called the Tathâgata's womb (*tathâgatagarbha*) or the Dharmakâya.

It may be questioned: While it was stated before that suchness is devoid of all characteristics (*lakshana*), how can it now be said without contradiction that it embraces in full all such merits?

In reply it would be said that though suchness in truth abundantly embraces all merits, yet it is free in its nature from all forms of distinction; because all objects in the world are of one and the same taste, are of one reality, have nothing to do with the modes of particularisation, and are not of dualistic character. Depending on the principle of birth-and-death, such as the activity-consciousness (*karmavijñâna?*), etc., however, all signs of difference and individuation appear.

How are those qualifications to be assigned to suchness?

Though all things in their [metaphysical] origin come from the soul alone and in truth free from particularisation, yet on account of non-enlightenment there originates a subjective mind [i.e., *âlâya-vijñâna*] that becomes conscious of an external world (*vishaya*). This we call ignorance (*avidya*). Nevertheless the essence of the mind [or the soul] is perfectly pure, and there is no awakening of ignorance in it. Thence we assign to suchness this quality, the effulgence of great wisdom.

If the mind being awakened perceive an external world, then there will be something that cannot be perceived by it. But the essence of the mind has nothing to do with perception [which presupposes the dual existence of a perceiving subject and an object perceived]; so there is nothing that cannot be perceived by it, [that is, the world of relativity is submerged in the oneness of suchness]. Thence we assign to suchness this quality, the universal illumination of the universe (*dharmadhâtu*).

When the mind is disturbed, it fails to be a true and adequate knowledge; it fails to be a pure, clean essence; it fails to be eternal, blissful, self-regulating, and pure; it fails to be tranquil, etc. On the contrary, it will become transient, changeable, unfree, and therefore the source of falsity and defilement, while its modifications outnumber the sands of the Ganges. But when there is no disturbance in the essence of the mind, we speak of suchness as being the true, adequate knowledge, etc., and as possessing pure and clean merits that outnumber the sands of the Ganges.

When the mind is disturbed it will strive to become conscious of the existence of an external world and will thus betray the imperfection of its inner condition. But as all infinite merits in fact constitute the one mind which,



perfect in itself, has no need of seeking after any external things other than itself, so suchness never fails to actualize all those Buddha-dharmas, that, outnumbering the sands of the Ganges, can be said to be neither identical nor non-identical with the essence of the mind, and that therefore are utterly out of the range of our comprehension. On that account suchness is designated the Tathâgata's womb (*tathâgatagarbha*) or the Tathâgata's Dharmakâya.

What is meant by the activity of suchness is this: all Buddhas, while at the stage of discipline, feel a deep compassion (*mahâkarunâ*) [for all beings], practice all pârâmitâs, the four methods of entertainment (*catvâri-sangrahavastûni*), and many other meritorious deeds-treat others as their own self, wish to work out a universal salvation of mankind in ages to come, through limitless numbers of kalpas; recognize truthfully and adequately the principle of equality (*samatâ*) among people; and do not cling to the individual existence of a sentient being.

By virtue of such a great wisdom that works means of emancipation (*upâyâjñâ?*), they annihilate ignorance that knows no beginning; recognize the Dharmakâya in its original purity; spontaneously perform incomprehensible karma as well as various unfettered moral activities; manifest themselves throughout the universe (*dharmadhâtu*), identify themselves with suchness, and leave no traces of compulsion.

And how is this?

Because all Tathâgatas are the Dharmakâya itself, are the highest truth (*paramârthasatya*) itself, and have nothing to do with conditionality (*samvrittisatya*) and compulsory actions; whereas the seeing, hearing, etc. [i.e., the

particularising senses] of the sentient being diversify [on its own account] the activity of Tathâgatas.

Now this activity [in another word, the Dharmakâya] has a twofold aspect. The first one depends on the phenomena-particularising-consciousness, by means of which the activity is conceived by the minds of common people (*prthagjana*), Çrâvakas, and Pratyekabuddhas. This aspect is called the Body of Transformation (*nirmânakâya*).

But as the beings of this class do not know that the Body of Transformation is merely the shadow [or reflection] of their own evolving-consciousness (*pravṛtti-vijñâna*), they imagine that it comes from some external sources, and so they give it a corporeal limitation. But the Body of Transformation [or what amounts to the same thing, the Dharmakâya] has nothing to do with limitation and measurement.

The second aspect [of the Dharmakâya] depends on the activity-consciousness (*karmavijñâna*) by means of which the activity is conceived by the minds of Bodhisattvas while passing from their first aspiration (*cittotpâda*) stage up to the height of Bodhisattvahood. This is called the Body of Bliss (*sambhogakâya*).

The body has infinite forms. The form has infinite attributes. The attribute has infinite excellencies. And the accompanying rewards of Bodhisattvas, that is, the region where they are predestined to be born [by their previous karma], also has infinite merits and ornamentations. Manifesting itself everywhere, the Body of Bliss is infinite, boundless, limitless, unintermittent [in its action], directly coming forth from the mind.

All these merits being actualized through the perfuming of such spotless deeds as the pârâmitâs, etc., as well as through the incomprehensible perfuming power [of enlightenment *a priori*], the Sambhogakâya embraces infinite attributes of bliss and merit. Therefore it is also called the Body of Reward.

What is recognized by common people (*prthagjana*), etc., is the coarsest form of the activity of the Dharmakâya. There is a variety of it according to the six different states of creation. It has no attributes of infinite merits and blessings.

What is recognized by Bodhisattvas at the first stage is a finer form of the activity of the Dharmakâya. As they firmly believe in suchness, they can have a partial insight into it, and understand that the Body of the Tathâgata is not departing, is not coming, is free from arrest [i.e., the Tathâgata's work is eternal and constant], that every thing is but a reflected shadow of the mind, not independent of suchness. But these Bodhisattvas have not yet freed themselves from the finest form of particularisation, because they have not yet entered into the order of the Dharmakâya.

Bodhisattvas at the stage of pure-heartedness are able to recognize the finer form of the activity [of the Dharmakâya]. Their insight is more penetrating than the former. When they reach the height of Bodhisattvahood their insight becomes perfect.

By the finer form of the activity we understand the Body of Bliss (*sambhogakâya*). As long as they are possessed by the activity-consciousness, they would conceive the Body of Bliss. 1 But when they are liberated from it, all traces of

individuation would become obliterated. Because all Tathâgatas come from [one and the same] Dharmakâya, have no distinction of this-ness and that-ness, have no corporeal forms that are characterized by reciprocal limitation.

A question arises here: If the Dharmakâya of Buddhas is devoid of variously differentiated corporeal forms, how is it that it can manifest itself in various corporeal forms at all?

In reply we say: The Dharmakâya can manifest itself in various corporeal forms just because it is the real essence of them. Matter (*rûpa*) and mind (*citta*) from the very beginning are not a duality. So we speak of [the universe as] a system of rationality (*prajñakâya*), seeing that the real nature of matter just constitutes the norm of mind. Again we speak of [the universe as] a system of materiality (*dharmakâya*), seeing that the true nature of mind just constitutes the norm of matter.

Now depending on the Dharmakâya, all Tathâgatas manifest themselves in bodily forms and are incessantly present at all points of space. And Bodhisattvas in the ten quarters, according to their capabilities and wishes, are able to manifest infinite Bodies of Bliss and infinite lands of ornamentation, each one of which, though stamped with the marks of individuality, does not hinder the others from being fused into it, and this [mutual fusion] has no interruption.

But the manifestation of the Dharmakâya in [infinite] bodily forms is not comprehensible to the thought and understanding of common-people; because it is the free and subtlest activity of suchness.

Again, in order that all beings might be induced to step forward from the gate of birth-and-death to that of suchness, we endeavor to let them understand that those modes of existence such as matter (*rûpa*), etc. [i.e., the five skandhas] are imperfect.

Why are they imperfect?

When we divide some gross [or composite] matter, we can reduce it to atoms (*anu*). But as the atom will also be subject to further division, all forms of material existence, whether gross or fine, are nothing but the shadow of particularisation produced by a subjective mind, and we cannot ascribe any degree of [absolute, or independent] reality to them.

Let us next go over to and examine the other skandhas [that have temporal existence]. We find there too that we can gradually reduce them to kshanas [i.e., infinitesimal divisions of time], whose nature, however closely scrutinized, does not give any sign of [indivisible] oneness.

It is even the same with the objects of non-aggregate (*asamskrta-dharma*). They cannot have their own existence independent of the universe (*dharmadhâtu*). Be it therefore understood that the same may be said in regard to all objects without exception in the ten quarters of space.

As a lost man who takes the east for the west, while the quarter is not changed on account of his confusion, so all beings, because of their misleading ignorance, imagine that the mind is being disturbed, while in reality it is not.

But when they understand that the disturbance of the mind [i.e., birth-and-death] is [at the same time]

immortality [viz., suchness], they would then enter into the gate of suchness.

## ***2. The Refutation of False Doctrines.***

All false doctrines invariably come out of the âtman-conception. If we were liberated from it, the existence of false doctrines would be impossible.

There are two kinds of the âtman-conception: (1) Belief in the existence of a personal atman [or ego-soul]; (2) Belief in the existence of âtman in thing[or things-in-themselves].

### **a. Five False Views Held by Those Who Believe in a Personal Atman.**

There are five different views springing from it [belief in the ego], which are held by common people (*prthagjana*).

First, hearing that it is said in the Sûtra that the Dharmakâya of the Tathâgata is perfectly tranquil and may be likened unto space (*âkâsa*), yet not understanding its purport, ignorant people cling to the view that the nature of the Tathâgata is eternal and omnipresent in the same sense as space is.

In order that this clinging to the false doctrine may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that space is nothing but a mode of particularisation and that it has no real existence of its own. Where there is a perception of space, there is side by side a perception of a variety of things, in contradistinction to which space is spoken of as if existing independently. Space therefore exists only in relation to our particularising consciousness.

Further since matter (*rûpa*) as stated before, is merely a particularisation of the confused mind, it is clear enough that space cannot have any independent existence. In a word all modes of relative existence, our phenomenal world as a whole, are created simply by the particularisation of the confused mind. If we become dissociated from the latter, then all modes of relative existence vanish away by themselves; while the soul alone, in its truth and suchness, pervades the whole universe. The soul, therefore, that constitutes the essential nature of the Tathâgata, cannot be compared with space, though the latter may be said to be in a certain limited sense eternal and real.

Secondly, hearing that it is said in the Sûtras that all things in the world without exception are perfect emptiness (*atyantaçûnyatâ*), that even Nirvâna or suchness is also perfect emptiness, is devoid in its true nature of all characteristics (*lakshanâ*), yet not understanding its purport, ignorant people cling to the view that Nirvâna or suchness is a nothing, devoid of contents.

In order that this clinging may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that suchness or Dharmakâya in its self-nature (*svabhâva*) is not a nothing (*çûnyatâ*) but envelopes in full immeasurable merits (*guna*) which make up its true nature.

Thirdly, hearing that it is said in the Sûtras that the Tathâgata's womb (*tathâgatagarbha*) envelopes in full all kinds of merits which constituting its true nature do neither suffer augmentation nor diminution, yet not understanding its purport, ignorant people cling to the view that there is in the Tathâgata's womb itself an inherent and fundamental distinction between the two objects, matter (*rûpa*) and mind (*citta*).

In order that this clinging may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*) has nothing to do with any form of distinction produced by defilement, and that even in case we speak of its possessing innumerable meritorious characteristics, they are free from the traces of defilement.

Fourthly, hearing that it is said in the Sûtras that even all impure and defiled things in the world are produced through the Tathâgata's womb (*tathâgatagarbha*), and that all things in the world are not at variance with suchness, yet not understanding its purport, ignorant people imagine that the Tathâgata's womb all-containingly envelopes all objects of defilement in the world.

In order that this clinging may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that the Tathâgata's womb all-containingly envelopes pure and spotless merits (*guna*) which, outnumbering the sands of the Ganges, are not at variance with suchness; that the prejudices (*âçrava* or *kleça*) and defiled objects, which also outnumber the sands of the Ganges are nothing but non-entity, have from the first no self-existence (*svabhâva*), have never been in correspondence with the Tathâgata's womb; that there is no reason to suppose that the Tathâgata's womb had been corresponding with defiled objects, but has now by virtue of intellectual intuition been freed from falsity and defilement.

Fifthly, hearing that it is said in the Sûtras 1 that depending on the Tathâgata's womb, there is birth-and-death (*samsâra*) as well as the attainment of Nirvâna, yet not understanding its purport, ignorant people imagine that depending on the Tathâgata's womb there is a



beginning for birth-and-death, and that since there is the beginning, Nirvâna is in turn subject to extinction.

In order that this clinging may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that as the Tathâgata's womb has no beginning, ignorance and birth-and-death depending on it have also no beginning; that it is a view held by the tîrthaka [i.e., the followers of the Vaiçesika] and not taught by the Buddha, to say that there are outside of the three worlds (*triloka*) some other beings coming into existence; that the Tathâgata's womb has no future [i.e., time of extinction]; and that those who have an insight into it, will eternally destroy the seeds of birth-and-death and attain to Nirvâna which has also no future [i.e., time of extinction].

These four erroneous views have thus arisen from the conception of a personal âtman, and so we have laid down the four refutations as above mentioned.

### **b. Belief in the Existence of Atman in Things.**

As the World-honored One (*Bhagavat*), considering the inferior intellectual calibre of Çrâvakas and Pratyekabuddhas, taught them only the doctrine of non-personal âtman, [and did not make any further demonstration of the doctrine], the people have in the meantime formed a fixed idea on the transitoriness of the five skandhas, and, being terrified at the thought of birth and death, have fanatically craved for Nirvâna.

In order that this clinging may be eliminated, be it clearly understood that the essence of the five skandhas is uncreate, there is no annihilation of them; that since there is no annihilation of them, they are in their [metaphysical] origin Nirvâna itself; that if one be absolutely freed from

particularisation and attachment, one will understand that all things both pure and defiled have only relative existence.

Be it therefore known that all things in the world from the beginning are neither matter (*rûpa*), nor mind (*citta*), nor intelligence (*prajñâ*), nor consciousness (*vijñâna*), nor non-being (*abhâva*), nor being (*bhâva*); they are after all inexplicable. The reason why the Tathâgata nevertheless endeavors to instruct by means of words and definitions is through his good and excellent skillfulness [or expediency, *upâya-kauçalya*]. He only provisionally makes use of words and definitions to lead all beings, while his real object is to make them abandon symbolism and directly enter into the real reality (*tattva*). Because if they indulge themselves in reasoning's, attach themselves to sophistry, and thus foster their subjective particularisation, how could they have the true wisdom (*tattvajñâna*) and attain to Nirvâna?

### **3. Ways of Practising the Right Path.**

By this we mean that all Bodhisattvas, by their aspiration (*cittotpâda*) and discipline (*caryâcarana*), will be able to attain to the reason that made all Tathâgatas perceive the path (*mârga*).

Briefly stated, there are three kinds of aspiration: (1) Aspiration through the perfection of faith; (2) Aspiration through knowledge and practice; (3) Aspiration through intellectual intuition.

By whom, and by which deeds, can faith (*çraddhâ*) be perfected and can the aspiration be awakened?

Now the people who belong to the group of inconstancy (*aniyatarâçi*), by virtue of their root of merit (*kuçalamûla*), which has a perfuming power, firmly believe in the retribution of karma, practice the ten virtues (*daçakuçalâni*), loathe the sufferings of birth and death, seek after the most excellent enlightenment (*Samyaksambodhi*), and seeing Buddhas and Bodhisattvas they wait on them, make offerings to them, discipline themselves in many [meritorious] deeds; and after the lapse of ten thousand kalpas (eons), their faith will finally be perfected.

Since then either by virtue of the instruction received from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, or on account of their deep compassion (*mahâkarunâ*), or from their desire to preserve the right doctrine (*saddharma*) against its corruption, their aspiration [to the highest truth] will be awakened.

After having awakened the aspiration they will enter into the group of constant truth (*samyaktvaniyata-râçi*) and never relapse, always abiding in the essence of the Buddha-seed and identifying themselves with its excellent principle.

There is, however, a certain class of people whose root of merit (*kuçalamûla*) from time immemorial is poor, and whose prejudices (*kleça* or *âçrava*) are intense, deeply veiling their minds. Such people, even if they see Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, wait on them, and make offerings to them, will sow merely the seeds of men (*manushya*) and gods (*deva*) [i.e., they will be born in the future as men or gods], or the seeds of the enlightenment of Çrâvakas and Pratyekabuddhas [i.e., their attainment would not be higher than that of Çrâvakas or Pratyekabuddhas].

Some of them may even aspire to seek after the Mahâbodhi, but owing to the instability of their character, they will ever oscillate between progress and retrogression.

Some of them, happening to see Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, may make offerings to them, wait on them, practice many [meritorious] deeds, and, while ten thousand mahâkalpas (æons) are not yet elapsed, may meantime come into some favorable circumstances and thereby awake aspiration. What are those favorable circumstances? For instance, they may witness the personal figure of a Buddha, or may make some offerings to the congregation of priests (*samgha*), or may be instructed by Çrâvakas or Pratyekabuddhas, or may be moved by seeing others aspire [to the highest truth].

But this kind of aspiration as a rule is not constant. In case they come into unfavorable circumstances, they may happen to fall down to the stage of Çrâvakahood or Pratyekabuddhahood.

Now, briefly speaking, three faculties of the soul will be awakened by the perfection of faith: (1) rightness of comprehension [lit., right, straight mind], for it truthfully and intuitively contemplates suchness (*bhûtalathatâ*); (2) profundity of virtue [lit., deep, heavy mind], for it rejoices in accumulating all good deeds; (3) greatness of compassion (*mahâkarunâ*), for it desires to uproot the miseries (*duhkha*) of all beings.

It may be asked whether there is ever any need for one to discipline oneself in all good deeds and to try to save mankind, since all sentient beings (*sarvasattva*) as well as all things (*sarvadharmâ*) in the world, abiding in the

oneness of the universe (*dharmadhâtu*) that has no second, will, as can be logically inferred, have nothing to do but calmly to contemplate suchness.

In reply we say, yes. Because the mind may be likened unto a precious jewel which is pure and bright in its essence but buried in a gross veinstone. Now there is no reason to suppose that one can make it clean and pure only by contemplating it, and without applying any means [of purification] or a degree of workmanship.

It is even the same with suchness. Though it is pure and bright in its essence and sufficiently envelopes all merits (*guna*), yet it is deeply buried in infinite external defilements. And there is no reason to suppose that a man can make it pure and clean only by earnest contemplation on it, and without trying any means [of emancipation] or of discipline.

It is therefore an urgent necessity that all good deeds should be accumulated, that all beings should be delivered, that those infinite external defilements and impurities should be cast off, that the true doctrine should be revealed.

With regard to "means" [or "skillfulness," *upâya*] there are, briefly stated, four kinds.

The first one is called the means of practicing the fundamental [truth, *mûla*]. That is to say, by contemplating the true essence of all dharmas, which, being uncreate and free from imagination, is not concerned with the metempsychosis of birth and death, and by contemplating the truth that all things originate from the co-operation of the principle (*hetu*) and the causes (*pratyaya*), and that the

retribution of karma is irrevocable, one will evoke deep compassion, discipline oneself in all good deeds, embrace and convert all beings, and not dwell in Nirvâna, since suchness [in its absolute aspect] has nothing to do with Nirvâna or with birth-and-death. As this attitude [towards all objects] is in accord [with the nature of suchness], it is called the means of practicing the [fundamental] truth.

The second one is called the means of abeyance. That is, by feeling shame and remorse, one may put an end to all evils and not let them grow, since suchness is free from all marks of imperfection. Thus to be in accord with suchness and to put an end to all evils is called the means of abeyance.

The third one is called the means of strengthening the root of merits (*kuçalamûla*). By raising reverential feelings toward the Triple Treasure (*triratna*), one will revere, make offerings to, pay homage to, praise, rejoice in, and beseech the Triple Treasure; and there upon one's orthodox faith being strengthened, one will at last awake a desire for the most excellent knowledge (*bodhiparinishpatti*). Through the protection of the majestic power of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sam gha, one's karma-hindrances (*karmâvarana*) will now get purified and one's root of merit firmly established; because suchness is free from all hindrances and envelopes all merits. Thus to be in accord with suchness and to practice good deeds is called the means of strengthening the root of merits.

The fourth one is called the universal means of great vows (*mahâpranidhâna*). That is, one may make the vow that in ages to come all beings should universally be delivered and take refuge at ease in the Anupadhiçesa Nirvâna, because the true nature of all objects is free from

relativity, is one and the same, making no distinction between this and that, and is absolutely calm and tranquil. Thus to be in accord with the three attributes [i.e., non-relativity, sameness, tranquility] of suchness and to make such a great vow is called the universal means of great vows.

[Now to return to the former subject], when the Bodhisattva thus aspires to the highest truth, he is able to have a partial insight into the Dharmakâya of the Buddha; and according to the power of the vow (*pranâdhânavâçâ*), he performs eight things, to wit, his descent from the palace in the Tushita heaven [to this world], his entrance into the human womb, his stay therein, his birth, his renunciation, his attainment of Buddhahood, his revolution of the Dharma-wheel (*dharmacakra*), and lastly his Parinirvâna.

He is not, however, as yet to be called absolute Dharmakâya, for he has not yet completely destroyed the impure karma that has been accumulated during his numberless existences in the past; perchance by the influence of the evil karma he may suffer a little amount of misery. But he suffers it only for a short time, and this not because of his being fettered by the evil karma, but because of his own vow-power (*pranidhânavâçâ*) [which he made for the universal emancipation of mankind].

It is sometimes said in the Sûtra that even those Bodhisattvas who aspired [to the highest truth] through the perfection of their faith might relapse and fall down to the evil creation (*apâyagati*). But this was only said to encourage those novices who are apt to give themselves up to indulgence and so may fail to enter into the right

order [i.e., *samyaktvaniyata*], though they may not really fall down [into the evil path].

Further the Bodhisattva has since his first aspiration disciplined himself in those deeds which are beneficial both to himself and others, and thereby his heart has become free from timidity, inasmuch as he would not shudder even at the thought of falling down to the stage of Çrâvakahood or Pratyekabuddhahood, any more than to the evil creation (*apâyagati*).

If he learn that he is able to attain to Buddhahood only after an assiduous observance of various rules of austerity and mortification during immeasurable asamkheyakalpas, he will never be frightened nor will he falter. How then could he ever raise such thoughts as cherished by Çrâvakas or Pratyekabuddhas? How then could he fall down to the evil creation (*apâyagati*)? He has a firm faith in the truth that all things (*sarvadharmā*) from the beginning are in their nature Nirvâna itself.

This sort of aspiration (*cittotpâda*) is more excellent than the former, because the first asamkheyakalpa of Bodhisattvas of this class is approaching to an end, because they have attained a thorough knowledge of suchness, because all their acts are performed without any stain of attachment.

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, being free from the trace of covetousness, is the perfection of pure and stainless charity (*dânapâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice charity (*dânapâramitâ*).

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, being free from the influence of the five sensual passions, and, having nothing to do with immorality, is the perfection of pure



and stainless morality (*çilapâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice morality (*çilapâramitâ*).

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, having nothing to do with grievance and being free from malice, is the perfection of pure and stainless patience (*kshântipâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice patience (*kshântipâramitâ*).

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, being free from physical and mental limitations and having nothing to do with indolence, is the perfection of pure and stainless energy (*vîryapâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice energy (*vîryapâramitâ*).

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, having nothing to do with disturbance or confusion, is the perfection of pure and stainless tranquilization (*dhyânapâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice tranquilization (*dhyânapâramitâ*).

As they know that the nature of the Dharma, being free from the darkness of ignorance, is the perfection of pure and stainless wisdom (*prajñâpâramitâ*), they in conformity to it practice wisdom (*prajñâpâramitâ*).

What is the object of which the Bodhisattva from the stage of pure-heartedness up to the height of Bodhisattvahood has attained an intellectual intuition? The object is no less than suchness itself. We call it an object on account of the evolving-consciousness (*pravṛtti-vijñâna*). But in truth there is no object in perfect intellectual intuition, neither is there a subject in it; because the Bodhisattva by means of his wisdom of non-particularisation intuitively perceives

suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*) or Dharmakâya, which is beyond the range of demonstration and argumentation.

Thus he is able in a moment to go over all the worlds in the ten quarters and to make offerings to all Buddhas and to beseech them to revolve the Wheel of the Dharma (*darmacakrapravartana*). His sole desire being to benefit all beings, he does not care for any melodious sounds or words [which he can enjoy in his heavenly abode]. In order to encourage weak-hearted people, he shows great energy and attains to perfect enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*), all at once annihilating the lapse of immeasurable asamkheyakalpas. Or in order to instigate indolent people, he sometimes attains to Buddhahood only after long discipline and mortification through the period of immeasurable asamkheyakalpas. The reason why he achieves in this wise infinite methods (*upâya*) [of salvation] is that he wishes thereby to benefit all beings.

But in fact the intrinsic nature, the faculties, the aspiration, and the intellectual attainment of all Bodhisattvas are equal [in value] and there is not any scale of gradation in them. Because they will all equally and assuredly attain to the most perfect enlightenment, only after the elapsing of three asamkheyakalpas. Yet as there are differences in various states of existence regarding their objects of seeing, hearing, etc., as well as regarding their faculties, their desires, and their character; so there are correspondingly many different forms of religious discipline [destined to] them.

Three different operations of the mind are revealed in this aspiration by means of intellectual intuition: (1) Pure consciousness originating in the mind as it becomes free from particularisation; (2) moral consciousness [lit., *upâya-*

*citta?*] originating in the mind as it spontaneously performs those deeds which are beneficent to others; (3) unconscious activity (*karma-vijñānacitta*) originating in the mind as it achieves a most hidden mode of activity.

Again the Bodhisattva, having attained to the perfection of bliss and wisdom, which are his two marks of adornment, has in reaching the height of evolution (*akanishtha*) also obtained the most venerable and excellent body in the whole universe. By means of that knowledge which intuitively identifies itself [with enlightenment *a priori*], he has all at once uprooted ignorance; and thus obtaining omniscience (*sarvākārajñāna*), he spontaneously achieves incomprehensible [or divine] deeds (*acintyakarma*), reveals himself in immeasurable worlds in the ten quarters, and works out the universal emancipation of mankind.

A question arises here. As space is infinite, worlds are infinite. As worlds are infinite, beings are infinite. As beings are infinite, the modes of mentation are also infinitely diversified. And as all these objects and conditions (*vishaya*) have no limits, they can hardly be known or understood [in all their multitudinousness]. If, now, ignorance being destroyed, all modes of mentation are entirely annihilated as well, how can the Bodhisattva understand all things and complete his omniscience (*sarvākārajñāna*)?

In reply we say: All so-called illusory phenomena are in truth from the beginning what they are; and their essence is nothing but the one soul [or mind]. Though ignorant minds that cling to illusory objects cannot understand that all things are in their nature the highest reality (*paramârtha*), all Buddha-Tathâgatas being free from clinging [or particularising] are able to have an insight into

the true nature of things. And by virtue of their great wisdom they illuminate all distinctions between the defiled and the pure-through their immeasurable and inexhaustible sources of expediency (*upâyakauçalya*), which is good and excellent, they benefit and gladden all beings according to the latter's various necessities and capabilities. Therefore the mind that is saturated with subjectivity is annihilated, while all things are understood and omniscience (*sarvâkârajñâna*) is attained.

Another question presents itself here: If all Buddhas who are in possession of infinite expediencies (*upâya*) can spontaneously benefit all beings in the ten quarters, why is it that the latter cannot always see Buddhas in person, or witness their divine transformations, or hear their instructions in the Doctrine?

The reply is: Tathâgatas are really in possession of those expediencies, and they are only waiting to reveal themselves to all beings as soon as the latter can purify their own minds.

When a mirror is covered with dust, it cannot reflect images. It can do so only when it is free from stain. It is even the same with all beings. If their minds are not clear of stain, the Dharmakâya cannot reveal itself in them. But if they be freed from stain, then it will reveal itself.

#### **IV. PRACTICE OF FAITH.**

In what does the practice of faith (*çraddhâ*) consist?

This part of the Discourse is intended for those beings who have not yet entered into the order of constant truth (*samyaktvaniyata-râçi*).

What is meant by faith? How should one practice faith?

There are four aspects of faith. [As to faith in general]: (1) To believe in the fundamental [truth], that is, to think joyfully of suchness (*bhûtatathatâ*). [As to particular faiths:] (2) To believe in the Buddha as sufficingly enveloping infinite merits, that is, to rejoice in worshipping him, in paying homage to him, in making offerings to him, in hearing the good doctrine (*saddharma*), in disciplining oneself according to the doctrine, and in aspiring after omniscience (*sarvajñâna*). (3) To believe in the Dharma as having great benefits, that is, to rejoice always in practicing all pârâmitâs. (4) To believe in the Samgha as observing true morality, that is, to be ready to make offerings to the congregation of Bodhisattvas, and to practice truthfully all those deeds which are beneficial at once to oneself and others.

Faith will be perfected by practicing the following five deeds: (1) charity (*dâna*); (2) morality (*çîla*), (3) patience (*kshânti*); (4) energy (*vîrya*); (5) cessation [or tranquilization, *çamatha*] and intellectual insight (*vidarçana* or *vipaçyana*).

How should people practice charity (*dâna*)?

(1) If persons come and ask them for something, they should, as far as their means allow, supply it ungrudgingly and make them rejoice in it. (2) If they see people threatened with danger, they should try every means of rescuing them and impart to them a feeling of fearlessness (*vaiçâradya*). (3) If they have people who come to them desiring instruction in the Doctrine, they should, so far as they are acquainted with it, and, according to their own discretion, deliver speeches on religious discipline.

And when they are performing those three acts of charity, let them not cherish any desire for fame or advantages, nor covet any worldly rewards. Only thinking of those benefits and blessings that are at once for themselves and others, let them aspire to the most excellent, most perfect knowledge (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*).

How should they practice morality (*çîla*)?

Those Bodhisattvas who have families [i.e., lay members of Buddhism] should abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, lying, duplicity, slander, frivolous talk, covetousness, malice, currying favor, and false doctrines.

In the case of Çramanas, they should, in order to vanquish all prejudices (*kleça* or *âçrava*), retire from the boisterousness of worldly life, and, abiding in solitude (*aranya*), should practice those deeds which lead to moderation and contentment as well as those of the Dhûtaguna. Even at the violation of minor rules (*çîla*) they should deeply feel fear, shame, and remorse. Strictly observing all those precepts given by the Tathâgata, they should not call forth the blame or disgust of the outsider, but they should endeavor to induce all beings to abandon the evil and to practice the good.

How should they practice patience (*kshânti*)?

If they meet with the ills of life they should not shun them. If they suffer sufferings, they should not feel afflicted. But they should always rejoice in contemplating the deepest significance of the Dharma.

How should they practice energy (*vîrya*)?

Practicing all good deeds, they should never indulge in indolence (*kausîdya*). They should think of all their great mental and physical sufferings, which they are now vainly suffering on account of their having coveted worldly objects during their existences in innumerable former ages (*kalpa*), and which do not give the least nourishment to their spiritual life. They should, therefore, in order to be emancipated from those sufferings in the future, be indefatigably energetic, and never raise the thought of indolence, but endeavor, out of deep compassion (*mahâkaruna*), to benefit all beings. Though disciplining themselves in faith, all novice Bodhisattvas, on account of the hindrances of their evil karma (*karmâvarana*) produced by the violation of many important precepts in their previous existences, may sometimes be annoyed by evil Mâras, sometimes entangled in worldly engagements, sometimes threatened by various diseases. As these things will severally disturb their religious course and make them neglect practicing good deeds, they should dauntlessly, energetically, unintermittently, all six watches, day and night, pay homage to all Buddhas, make offerings (*pûjâ*) to them, praise them, repent and confess (*kshamâ*) to them, aspire to the most excellent knowledge (*samyaksambodhi*), make great vows (*mahâpranidhâna*); and thereby annihilate the hindrances of evils and increase the root of merit (*kuçalamûla*).

How should they practice cessation [or tranquilization, *çamatha*] and intellectual insight (*vidarçana* or *vipaçyana*)?

To bring all mental states that produce frivolous sophistries to a stand is called cessation. To understand adequately the law of causality and transformation is called intellectual insight. Each of them should be practiced separately by the beginner. But when by degrees

he obtains facility and finally attains to perfection, the two will naturally become harmonized.

Those who practice cessation should dwell in solitude (*âraṇyaka*) and, sitting cross-legged rectify the attitude and pacify the mind. Do not fix the thoughts on the breath (*ânâpânasmṛti*); do not fix the thoughts on the forms (*samjñâ*) and colors; do not fix the thoughts on space (*âkâṣa*); 1 do not fix the thoughts on earth, water, fire, and ether; 1 do not fix the thoughts on what you see, hear, learn, or memories (*vijñânakṛtsnâyatana*). All particularizations, imaginations and recollections should be excluded from consciousness, even the idea of exclusion being excluded; because [the suchness of] all things is uncreate, eternal, and devoid of all attributes (*alakṣhana*).

[Now in the constant flux of thoughts,] that which precedes [i.e., a sensation] has been awakened by an external object; so the next [step to be taken by the practiser] is to abandon the idea of an external world. Then that which succeeds [in that constant flux of thoughts] is elaborated in his own mind; so he should in turn abandon reflexion [or thought]. In short, as his attention is distracted by the external world [outer *vishaya*], he is warned to turn it to inner consciousness [inner *citta*]; while as his retrospection in turn calls forth a succession of thoughts [or ideal associations], he is again warned not to attach himself to the latter; because, independent of suchness, they [thoughts] have no existence of their own.

At all times, while moving, standing, sitting, or lying, the practiser should constantly discipline himself as above stated. Gradually entering the samâdhi of suchness, he will finally vanquish all prejudices (*kleṣa* or *âçrava*), be strengthened in faith (*çradhâ*),--and immediately attain to



the state of never-returning (*avaivartikatva*). But those who are skeptical, sacrilegious, destitute of faith, encumbered with the hindrances (*âvarana*) of karma, arrogant, or indolent, are not entitled to enter therein . . .

In what does this discipline consist?

The practiser should contemplate that all things in the world are subject to a constant transformation, that since they are transient they are misery, that since they are misery they are not things-in-themselves [i.e., atman].

He should contemplate that all things in the past are like a dream, those in the present are like the lightning, those in the future are like clouds that spontaneously come into existence.

He should contemplate that all that has a body is impure, being a lodging place of obnoxious vermin and the intermixture of prejudices (*âçrava*).

Contemplate that ignorant minds, on account of their groundless imagination, take the unreal as they see it, for reality.

Contemplate that all objects which come into existence by a combination of various causes (*pratyaya*) are like a chimera, having [only a transitory existence and] no [genuine] realness at all.

Contemplate that the highest truth (*paramârthasatya*) is not a production of mind [or subjectivity], cannot be [fully] illustrated by analogy, cannot be [exhaustively] treated by reasoning.

Contemplate that on account of the perfuming power of ignorance (*avidya*) all beings from eternity suffer great mental and physical sufferings in immeasurable ways; that those immeasurable and innumerable sufferings are suffered in the present and will be suffered in the future that while it is extremely difficult to disentangle, to emancipate themselves from those sufferings, all beings always abiding in the midst of them are not conscious of the fact, and this makes them the more pitiable.

After these contemplations the practiser should awake positive knowledge [or unerring understanding], feel the highest and deepest compassion (*karunâ*) for all suffering beings, rouse dauntless energy, and make great vows (*mahâpranidhâna*) as follows:

"May my mind be freed from all contradictions; may I abandon particularisation; may I personally attend on all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, whom I shall pay homage to, make offerings to, revere and praise, and to whose instructions in the good Doctrine (*saddharma*) I shall listen; may I truthfully discipline myself according to their teachings, and to the end of the future never be negligent in self-discipline; may I with innumerable expediences (*upâya*) [of salvation] deliver all beings who are drowned in the sea of misery, and bring them to the highest bliss of Nirvâna."

After these vows the practiser should at all times, so far as his energy permits, practice those deeds which are beneficial both to himself and others. While moving, standing, sitting, or lying, he should assiduously meditate what should be done and what should be avoided. This is called the practicing of intellectual insight (*vidarçana* or *vipaçyana*).

And again when the practiser disciplines himself only in intellectual insight his mind may lack tranquilization, and becoming too susceptible to skepticism, may not be in accord with the highest truth, may not attain to the wisdom of non-particularisation. Therefore cessation and intellectual insight should be practiced side by side. He should consider that nothing is self-existent (*svabhâva*), and things [in their essence] are uncreate, eternally tranquil, and Nirvâna itself. But at the same time let him not forget to reflect that karma and its retribution, both good and evil, being produced by a co-operation of principle and conditions, will neither be lost nor destroyed. He should thus ponder on the law of causation, both in its good and evil karma and retribution, but at the same time let him not forget to perceive that all things, though in their essence uncreate, have no self-existence, etc., they are Nirvâna.

By practicing cessation, common people (*prthagjana*) will be cured of finding pleasures in worldliness, while Çrâvakas and Pratyekabuddhas will be cured of feeling intimidation at the thought of birth and death.

By practicing intellectual insight common people will be cured of not cultivating their root of merit (*kuçalamûla*), while Çrâvakas and Pratyekabuddhas will be cured of narrow-mindedness whereby they cannot raise deep compassion [for mankind].

Therefore, cessation and intellectual insight are supplementary to, not independent of, each other. If one of the two is wanting, the practiser will surely be unable to attain to the most excellent knowledge (*bodhiparinishpatti*).

And again when those novice Bodhisattvas who are living in this present life [*sahâlokadhâtu*, i.e., the enduring world

of actual existence], may sometimes suffer misfortunes that are caused by climate, weather, unforeseen famine, or what not; and when they witness those people who are immoral, fearful, infatuated with the three venomous passions (*akuçalamûla*), cling to false and self-contradictory doctrines, desert the good law and acquire evil habits; they [that is, novice Bodhisattvas], living in the midst of them, may feel so discouraged that they may come to doubt whether they can see Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, whether they can actualize their pure and spotless faith (*çraddhâ*).

Therefore, it is advisable for those novices to cherish this thought: All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten quarters having great, unimpeded supernatural powers (*abhijñâ*), are able to emancipate all suffering beings by means of various expedencies that are good and excellent (*upâyakauçalya*).

After this reflexion, they should make great vows (*mahâpranidhâna*), and with full concentration of spiritual powers think of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. When they have such a firm conviction, free from all doubts, they will assuredly be able to be born in the Buddha-country beyond (*buddha-kshetra*), when they pass away from this present life, and seeing there Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, to complete their faith and to eternally escape from all evil creations (*apâya*).

Therefore, it is said in the Sûtra that if devoted men and women would be filled with concentration of thought, think of Amitâbha Buddha in the world of highest happiness (*sukhâvatî*) in the Western region, and direct (*parinâma*) all the root of their good work toward being born there, they would assuredly be born there.

Thus always seeing Buddhas there, their faith will be strengthened, and they will never relapse therefrom. Receiving instruction in the doctrine, and recognizing the Dharmakâya of the Buddha, they will by gradual discipline be able to enter upon the state of truth [i.e., Buddhahood] (*samyaktva-râçi*).

## V. BENEFITS.

In what does this part [treating] of the benefits consist?

Such as above presented is the spiritual significance of the Mahayana, and I have finished elucidating it.

Those who, desiring to produce pure and spotless faith in, and knowledge of, the deepest spiritual condition and the greatest Dharma of the Tathâgata, so that they have no hindrances in entering upon the Mahayana path (*mârğa*), will diligently pursue this brief discourse, contemplate it, discipline themselves in it, and thus they can surely and unhesitatingly attain to the knowledge of all forms and manifestations (*sarvâkârâjñâna*).

And if they do not awake a feeling of fear in hearing this Doctrine, they will surely be qualified to inherit the Buddha-seeds and immediately receive the prophecy (*vijâkarana*) from the Buddha. Even if there be a person who could convert all beings in three thousand great chiliocosms (*trisâhasramahâsâhasra*), and could induce them to observe the ten precepts of morality (*daçakuçalamârğa*), his merits will not be superior to those of the person who will truthfully comprehend this Doctrine even for a second; because the merits of the latter immeasurably and infinitely surpass those of the former.

If one practice this doctrine as it is instructed for one whole day and night, the merits thereby produced will be so immeasurable, infinite, inconceivable that all Buddhas in the ten quarters could not exhaust them, even if each of them continued to praise them for innumerable asamkheyakalpas. As the merits of suchness have no limits, so the merits of the discipline are also without limit.

Those who slander this doctrine, on the other hand, commit immeasurable faults and suffer great sufferings for asamkheyakalpas. Accordingly all beings should cherish a firm faith in the Doctrine and never slander it, for this will lead to the destruction of oneself as well as others, nay, even to the destruction of the seeds of the Triple Treasure (*triratna*).

By practicing this Doctrine all Buddhas have attained the most excellent knowledge (*anuttarajñânâ*). By practicing this Doctrine all Bodhisattvas have obtained an insight into the Dharmakâya of the Tathâgata.

By practicing this Doctrine Bodhisattvas in the past consummated, Bodhisattvas in the future will consummate, pure and spotless faith (*çradadhâ*) in the Mahâyâna. Therefore those who desire to practice those excellent virtues that are beneficial at once to themselves and others should diligently study this Discourse.

I have now finished elucidating  
The deepest and greatest significance [of the  
Dharma].

May its merit be distributed among all creatures,  
And make them understand the Doctrine of  
Suchness. **Acvaghosha**

# 'Bishop Shelemon of Armenia – Forgotten Nestorian Christian Mystic'



Modern Armenian Bishop

Of this issue's forgotten mystic, Bishop Shelemon of Armenia, little is known except for the a small excerpt from an introduction to his one known work, 'The Book of the Bee,' by his translator E.A. Wallis Budge, renowned Egyptologist and historian.

**E.A. Wallis Budge on 'The Book of the Bee' by Bishop Shelemon:**

"OF the author of 'the Book of the Bee,' the bishop Shelêmôn or Solomon, but very little is known. He was a native of Khilât or Akhlât (in Armenia, at the western end of lake Vân), and by religious profession a Nestorian. He became metropolitan bishop of al-Basra (in al-`Irâk, on the right bank of the united streams of the Tigris and Euphrates) about A.D. 1222, in which year he was present at the consecration of the catholicus or Nestorian patriarch Sabr-îshô` (Hope-in-Jesus) (see Assemânî, *Bibl. Orient.*, t. ii, p. 453, no. 75; Bar-hebraeus, *Chron. Eccl.*, t. ii, p. 371). In the Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Works compiled by `Ebêd-yêshû` or `Abd-îshô` (the-Servant-of-Jesus) he is stated to have written, besides 'the Bee,' a treatise on the figure of the heavens and the earth, and sundry short discourses and prayers (see Assemânî, *Bibl. Orient.*, t. iii, pt. i, p. 309, where there is a lengthy analysis of the contents of 'the Bee'). A Latin translation of 'the Bee' by Dr. J. M. Schoenfelder appeared at Bamberg in 1866; it is based upon the Munich MS. only, and is faulty in many places.

The text of 'the Bee,' as contained in this volume, is edited from four MSS., indicated respectively by the letters A, B, C and D.

The MS. A belongs to the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. It is dated A.Gr. 1880



= A.D. 1569, and consists of 188 paper leaves, measuring about 8 in. by  $5\frac{3}{4}$ . Each page is occupied by one column of writing, generally containing 25 lines. This MS. is so stained and damaged by water in parts that some of the writing is illegible. The quires are twenty-one in number and, excepting the last two, are signed with letters. Leaves are wanting after folios 6, 21, 49, 125, 166 and 172; and in several pages there are lacunae of one, two and more lines. The volume is written in a good Nestorian hand, with numerous vowel-points. Originally it was the property of the priest Wardâ, son of the deacon Moses, who was prior of the convent of Mâr Ezekiel. Later on, it belonged to one Mâr John of Enzelli (near Resht, on the south shore of the Caspian Sea). In the year A.Gr. 1916 = A.D. 1605 it was bound by a person whose name has been erased. The Book of the Bee occupies foll. 26 *a* to 92 *b*, and the colophon runs: 'By the help of our Lord and our God, this Book of the Bee was completed on the 16th day of the month of Tammuz, on the Saturday that ushers in the Sunday which is called Nûsârdêl, in the year 1880 of the blessed Greeks, by the hands of the sinful servant the faulty Elias. Amen.'

The MS. B is on paper, and is numbered Add. 25,875 in the British Museum. See Wright's *Catal.*, p. 1064, no. dccccxii, ff. 81 *b*-158 *a*. It is written in a good Nestorian hand, with numerous vowel-points, etc., and is dated A.Gr. 2020 = A.D. 1709. The colophon runs:--

'It was finished in the year 2020 of the Greeks, on Friday the 22nd of the blessed month Tammûz, by the wretched sinner, the deacon Hômô of Alkôsh. I entreat you to pray for him that perchance he may obtain mercy with those upon whom mercy is freely shewn in the day of judgment, Amen. And to Jah be the glory, Amen.

'The illustrious priest and pure verger, the priest Joseph, the son of the late deacon Hormizd of Hôrdaphnê, took pains and was careful to have this book written: may Christ make his portion in the kingdom of heaven! Amen. He had it written for the holy church called after the name of our Lady Mary the pure and virgin mother, which is in the blessed and happy village of Hôrdaphnê in the district of `Amêdîa. From now and henceforth this book remains the property of the (above-) mentioned church, and no man shall have power over it to carry it off for any reprehensible cause of theft or robbery, or to give it away without the consent of its owners, or to abstract it and not to return it to its place. Whosoever shall do this, he shall be banned and cursed and execrated by the word of our Lord; and all corporeal and incorporeal beings shall say "Yea and Amen."

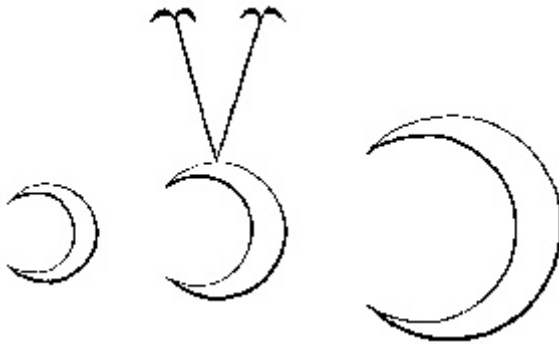
From the manner in which B ends, it would seem either that the MS. from which it was copied was imperfect, or that the scribe Hômô omitted to transcribe the last leaf of the MS. before him, probably because it contained views on man's future state which did not coincide with his own.

The MS. C, belonging to the Royal Library at Munich, consists of 146 paper leaves, measuring about 12 1/8 in. by 8 1/4. There are two columns, of twenty-four lines each, to a page; the right-hand column is Syriac, the left Kârshûnî or Arabic in Syriac characters. The MS. is beautifully written in a fine Nestorian hand, and vowels and diacritical points have been added abundantly. The headings of the chapters are in Estrangelâ. The last two or three leaves have been torn out, and on fol. 147 *a* there are eighteen lines of Kârshûnî in another hand, which contain the equivalent in Arabic of B, fol. 157 *a*, col. 2, lines 10 to 24.

On the fly-leaf are five lines of Arabic, which run:--

'This book is the property of the church of Mâr Cyriacus the Martyr at Baṭnâye. The deacon Peter bar Saumô has purchased it for the church with its own money, and therefore it has become the lawful property of the church. Whosoever taketh it away without the consent of the directors of the church, committeth sin and is bound to restore it. This was on the 17th of the month of Âdhâr in the year of our Lord 1839, in the protected city of Moṣul.'

Dr. Schoenfelder in the preface to his translation, p. ii, assigns this MS. to the fourteenth century ('ad saeculum decimum quartum procul dubio pertinet'). From this view, however, I differ for the following reasons. The MS. B, dated A.Gr. 2020 = A.D. 1709, is written upon water-lined paper, having for water-mark upon each leaf three crescents of different sizes, and a sign like a V:--



The paper is smooth and thick. The Munich MS. C is written upon rather rougher paper, but with the same water-mark exactly, only the three crescents are on one leaf, and the V-shaped mark upon that next to it. Therefore Dr. E. Maunde Thompson, keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, who has kindly given me the benefit of

his great experience in these matters, considers that the paper on which these two MSS. are written was made at the same manufactory and about the same time. Add to this that the writing of both MSS. is almost identical, and that the signatures of the quires and the style of ornamentation is the same, and it will be evident that the Munich MS. belongs rather to the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century than to the fourteenth.

The MS. D, belonging to the Bodleian Library, Oxford, consists of 405 paper leaves, measuring 8 5/8 in. by 6¼. There is one column of twenty-one lines, in Kârshûni or Arabic in Syriac characters, to each page. The MS. is written in a fine bold hand, the headings of the chapters, names, and diacritical points being in red. It is dated Friday the 28th day of Âb, A.Gr. 1895 = A.D. 1584, and was transcribed by Peter, the son of Jacob.

The Arabic version of 'the Bee' contained in this MS. borders at times on a very loose paraphrase of the work. The writer frequently repeats himself, and occasionally translates the same sentence twice, though in different words, as if to make sure that he has given what he considers to be the sense of the Syriac. He adds paragraphs which have no equivalents in the three Syriac copies of 'the Bee' to which I have had access, and he quotes largely from the Old and New Testaments in support of the opinions of Solomon of Basrah. The order of the chapters is different, and the headings of the different sections into which the chapters are divided will be found in the selections from the Arabic versions of 'the Bee'. This MS. is of the utmost importance for the study of 'the Bee,' as it contains the last chapter in a perfect and complete state; which is

unfortunately not the case either with the bilingual Munich MS. or the copy in Paris.

Assemânî says in the *Bibl. Orient.*, t. iii, pt. i, p. 310, note 4, that there are two codices of 'the Bee' in the Vatican Library, and he has described them in his great work--*MSS. Codicum Bibliothecae Apostol. Vatic. Catalogus*, t. iii, nos. clxxvi and clxxvii. The latter is incomplete, containing only forty chapters (see *Bibl. Orient.*, t. ii, p. 488, no. ix); but the former is complete (see *Bibl. Orient.*, t. i, p. 576, no. xvii). It was finished, according to a note at the end, on Wednesday, 14th of Shebât in the year of Alexander, the son of Nectanebus<sup>2</sup>, 1187, which Assemânî corrects into 1787 = A.D. 1476. The name of the scribe was Gabriel, and he wrote it for the 'priest John, son of the priest Jonah' (Yaunân), living at the village of ### in the district of Baz, (see Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syr. Akten pers. Martyrer*, pp. 204-5). At a subsequent time it belonged to the church of Mâr Cyriacus in the village of Sâlekh, in the district of Barwar, (see Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 193, 204).

*The Book of the Bee, By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia,  
Edited and Translated by Earnest A. Wallis Budge, M.A.,  
Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886, Scanned and Edited by  
Christopher M. Weimer, May 2002*

# Excerpts from the Book of the Bee

*By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia  
Translated by E.A. Wallis Budge*

## CHAPTER II.

OF THE CREATION OF THE SEVEN NATURES  
(SUBSTANCES) IN SILENCE.

WHEN God in His mercy wished to make known all His power and His wisdom, in the beginning, on the evening of the first day, which is Sunday, He created seven natures (substances) in silence, without voice. And because there was as yet none to hear a sound, He did well to create them in silence, that He might not make anything uselessly; but He willed, and heaven, earth, water, air, fire, and the angels and darkness, came into being from nothing.

## CHAPTER IV.

OF HEAVEN.

HEAVEN is like a roof to the material world, and will serve as the floor of the new world. It is by nature shining and glorious, and is the dwelling-place of the invisible hosts. When God spread out this firmament, He brought up above it a third part of the waters, and above these is the heaven of light and of the luminaries. Hence people say 'the heaven, and the heaven of heavens'; for we call both the firmament and the waters which are above it 'heaven.' Some consider that the verse 'Let the waters

which are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord' refers to the holy angels and to our Lord's humanity; but neither the Church nor the orthodox teachers accept this.

## CHAPTER V.

### OF THE ANGELS.

THE Angels consist of nine classes and three orders, upper, middle and lower. The upper order is composed of Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones: these are called 'priests' (*kumrê*), and 'chief priests,' and 'bearers of God's throne.' The middle order is composed of Lords, Powers and Rulers: these are called 'priests' (*kâhnê*), because they receive revelations from those above them. The lower order consists of Principalities, Archangels and Angels: and these are the ministers who wait upon created things. The Cherubim are an intellectual motion which bears the throne of the holy Trinity, and is the chief of all motions; they are ever watchful of the classes of themselves and those beneath them. As concerning the epithet 'full of eyes,' which is applied to them, the eyes indicate the mystery of the revelations of the Trinity. Their head, and the foremost and highest among them, is Gabriel, who is the mediator between God and His creation. The Seraphim are a fiery motion, which warms those below it with the fire of the divine love. The six wings which each of them is said to possess indicate the revelations which they receive from the Creator and transmit to mankind. The Thrones are a fixed motion, which is not shaken by the trials which come upon it. The Lords are a motion which is entrusted with the government of the motions beneath it; and it is that which prevents the demons from injuring created things. The Powers are a mighty motion, the minister of the will of the Lord; and it is that which gives victory to

some rulers in battle and defeat to others. The Rulers are a motion which has power over the spiritual treasures, to distribute them to its companions according to the will of the Creator. This class of angels governs the luminaries, the sun, moon, and stars. The Principalities are a defined motion which possesses the direction of the upper ether, of rain, clouds, lightning, thunder, whirlwinds, tempests, winds, and other ethereal disturbances. The Archangels are a swift operative motion, into whose hands is entrusted the government of the wild beasts, cattle, winged fowl, reptiles, and everything that hath life, from the gnat to the elephant, except man. The Angels are a motion which has spiritual knowledge of everything that is on earth and in heaven. With each and every one of us is an angel of this group--called the guardian angel--who directs man from his conception until the general resurrection. The number of each one of these classes of angels is equal to the number of all mankind from Adam to the resurrection. Hence it is handed down that the number of people who are going to enter the world is equal to the number of all the heavenly hosts; but some say that the number is equal to that of one of the classes only, that they may fill the place of those of them who have fallen through transgressing the law; because the demons fell from three classes (of angels), from each class a third part. If then it is an acknowledged fact that there are three orders of angels, and in each order there are three classes, and in every class a number equivalent to that of all mankind, what is the total number of the angels? Some say that when the angels were created, and were arranged in six divisions--Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels--the three lower divisions reflected (saying), 'What is the reason that these are set above, and we below? for they have not previously done anything more than we, neither do we fall short of them.'



On account of this reflection as a cause, according to the custom of the (divine) government, Justice took from both sides, and established three other middle classes of angels--Lords, Powers, and Rulers--that the upper might not be (unduly) exalted, nor the lower think themselves wronged. As for the dwelling-place of the angels, some say that above the firmament there are waters, and above them another heaven in the form of infinite light, and that this is the home of the angels. Here too is God without limit, and the angels, invisible to bodily eyes, surround the throne of His majesty, where they minister to 'the tabernacle not made with hands.' Others say that, from the beginning, when God created the angels, until the second day, in which the firmament was made, all the classes of angels dwelt in the upper heavens; but when the firmament was made, they all came down below it, with the exception of three classes--the Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones--who remained above it. These surrounded and supported the Shechinah of God from the beginning of the world until our Lord ascended unto heaven; and after the Ascension, behold, they surround and support the throne of the Christ God, who is over all, until the end of the world. The Expositor and his companions say: 'The tabernacle which Moses made is a type of the whole world.' The outer tabernacle is the likeness of this world, but the inner tabernacle is the similitude of the place that is above the firmament. And as the priests ministered in the outer tabernacle daily, while the high priest alone entered into the inner tabernacle once a year; so of all rational beings, angels and men, no one has entered (the place) above the firmament, save the High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ. The fathers, when they have been deemed worthy at any time to see our Lord in a revelation, have seen Him in heaven, surrounded by the Cherubim and Seraphim. Hence some say that there are angels above the heavens.

All these celestial hosts have revelations both of sight and of hearing; but the Cherubim have revelations by sight only, because there is no mediator between them and God. The angels have an intellect superior to that of the rest of rational beings; man has stronger desire, and the demons a greater degree of anger.

## **CHAPTER VI.**

### **OF DARKNESS.**

DARKNESS is a self-existent nature; and if it had not had a nature, it would not have been reckoned among the seven natures which were created in the beginning in silence. Others say that darkness is not a self-existent nature, but that it is the shadow of bodies.

## **CHAPTER VII.**

### **OF EFFUSED (CIRCUMAMBIENT) LIGHT.**

WHEN the holy angels were created on the evening of the first day, without voice, they understood not their creation, but thought within themselves that they were self-existent beings and not made. On the morning of the first day God said in an audible and commanding voice, 'Let there be light,' and immediately the effused light was created. When the angels saw the creation of light, they knew of a certainty that He who had made light had created them. And they shouted with a loud voice, and praised Him, and marvelled at His creation of light, as the blessed teacher saith, 'When the Creator made that light, the angels marvelled thereat,' etc.; and as it is said in Job, 'When I created the morning star, all my angels praised me.' Now by nature light has no warmth.

**CHAPTER VIII.****OF THE FIRMAMENT .**

ON the evening of the second day of the week, God willed to divide the heavens from the earth, that there might be luminaries and stars beneath the heavens to give light to this world, and that the heavens might be a dwelling-place for the righteous and the angels after the resurrection. God said, 'Let there be a firmament which shall divide the waters from the waters'; and straightway the waters were divided into three parts. One part remained upon the earth for the use of men, cattle, winged fowl--the rivers and the seas; of another part God made the firmament; and the third part He took up above the firmament. But on the day of resurrection the waters will return to their former nature.

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**CHAPTER LIX.****OF THE HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE  
TORMENT OF SINNERS, AND IN WHAT STATE THEY  
ARE THERE.**

IT is right for us to know and explain how those suffer, who suffer in Gehenna. If they do suffer, how can we say that they are impassible? and if they do not suffer, then there is no torture for sinners; and if there be no torture for sinners in proportion to their sins, neither can there be happiness for the righteous as a reward for their labours. The suffering wherewith the Fathers say that sinners will suffer in Gehenna is not one that will pain the limbs, such as the blows of sticks, the mutilation of the flesh, and the

breaking of the bones, but one that will afflict the soul, such as grief for the transgression of what is right, repentance for shameful deeds, and banishment from one to whom he is bound in love and for whom his affection is strong. For in the resurrection we shall not be without perception, like the sun which perceives not his splendour, nor the moon her brilliancy, nor the pearl its beauty; but by the power of reason we shall feel perfectly the delight of our happiness or the keen pain of our torture. So then by that which enables the righteous to perceive the pleasure of their happiness, by that selfsame thing will the wicked also perceive the suffering of their torment; (that is) by the power capable of receiving pleasure, which is the intelligence. Hence it is right for us to be certain that intelligence will not be taken away from us, but it will receive the utmost purification and refinement. The glorious and good things of the world which is to come are not to be compared with those of this world; for if all the glorious and good things and delights of this world were given to us in the world which is to come, we should look upon them as hateful and abominable, and they would not be able to give us pleasure or to gladden us; and our nature by the blessedness of its immortality would be exalted above all their glory and desirability. And if all the torments and afflictions and troubles of this world were brought near to us in the world which is to come, the pain of them would make no impression upon our immortal and immutable nature. Hence the pleasure of that world is something beyond all comparison more glorious and excellent and exalted than those of this world; and the torment of yonder is likewise something beyond all comparison more severe and more bitter than any that is here.

It is also right for us to explain the quality of the light of the righteous. The light of the righteous is not of a natural origin like this elemental light (of ours), but some of the light of our Lord--whose splendour surpasses ten thousand suns--is diffused and shed upon them. Each saint shines in proportion to his purity, and holiness and refinement and sincerity, as the blessed Paul has said, 'One star surpasseth another in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead<sup>1</sup>.' And although all the saints will be happy in one kingdom, yet he who is near to the King or the Bridegroom will be separated from him whose place is at the end of the guest-chamber, even though his place be in the same chamber. So also with the sinners in Gehenna; their sentence will not be alike, for in proportion to the sin of each will be his torment. And as the light of the sun is not to be compared with the light of the moon, nor is the light of the moon like that of the stars, so also will the happiness of the righteous be, although the name and honour of righteousness be laid upon and spread over all of them. And as the light of our Lord's humanity will pass over all our limbs without distinction, and take the place of dress and ornament for us, so also with all our members shall we perceive the suffering and torment of Gehenna. The festal garments which our Lord has prepared for His saints, the children of light, are impassibility; and the filthy garments which hinder us from entering into the spiritual bridal-chamber are the passions. In the new world there will be no distinctive names for ranks and conditions of human beings; and as every name and surname attributed to God and the angels had its origin from this world, and names for human beings were assigned and distributed by the government of this world, in the world of spiritual and intellectual natures there will be neither names nor surnames among them, nor male nor female, nor slave nor free, nor child nor old man, nor Ethiopian nor Roman

(Greek); but they will all rise in the one perfect form of a man thirty-three years of age, as our Lord rose from the dead. In the world to come there will be no companies or bands but two; the one of the angels and the righteous, who will mingle and form one Church, and the other of the devils and sinners in Gehenna.

## CHAPTER LX.

WHETHER MERCY WILL BE SHEWN TO SINNERS AND THE DEVILS IN GEHENNA, AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN TORMENTED AND SUFFERED AND BEEN PUNISHED, OR NOT? AND IF MERCY IS TO BE SHEWN TO THEM, WHEN WILL IT BE?

SOME of the Fathers terrify us beyond our strength and throw us into despair; and their opinion is well adapted to the simple-minded and transgressors of the law. Others of them encourage us and bid us rely upon Divine mercy; and their opinions are suitable and adapted to the perfect and those of settled minds and the pious. In the 'Book of Memorials' it is thus written: 'This world is the world of repentance, but the world which is to come is the world of retribution. As in this world repentance saves until the last breath, so in the world to come justice exacts to the uttermost farthing. And as it is impossible to see here strict justice unmingled with mercy, so it is impossible to find there strict justice mingled with mercy.' Mâr Isaac says thus: 'Those who are to be scourged in Gehenna will be tortured with stripes of love; they who feel that they have sinned against love will suffer harder and more severe pangs from love than the pain that springs from fear.' Again he says: 'The recompense of sinners will be this: the resurrection itself will be their recompense instead of the recompense of justice; and at the last He will clothe those

bodies which have trodden down His laws with the glory of perfection. This act of grace to us after we have sinned is greater than that which, when we were not, brought our nature into being.' Again he says: 'In the world which is to come grace will be the judge and not justice.' Mâr Theodore the Expositor says: 'Those who have here chosen fair things will receive in the world to come the pleasure of good things with praises; but the wicked who have turned aside to evil things all their life, when they are become ordered in their minds by penalties and the fear that springs from them, and choose good things, and learn how much they have sinned by having persevered in evil things and not in good things, and by means of these things receive the knowledge of the highest doctrine of the fear of God, and become instructed to lay hold of it with a good will, will be deemed worthy of the happiness of the Divine liberality. For He would never have said, "Until thou payest the uttermost farthing," unless it had been possible for us to be freed from our sins through having atoned for them by paying the penalty; neither would He have said, "he shall be beaten with many stripes," or "he shall be beaten with few stripes," unless it were that the penalties, being meted out according to the sins, should finally come to an end.' These things the Expositor has handed down in his books clearly and distinctly.

So also the blessed Diodorus, who says in the 'Book of the Dispensation:' 'A lasting reward, which is worthy of the justice of the Giver, is laid up for the good, in return for their labours; and torment for sinners, but not everlasting, that the immortality which is prepared for them may not be worthless. They must however be tormented for a short time, as they deserve, in proportion to the measure of their iniquity and wickedness, according to the amount of the wickedness of their deeds. This they will have to bear, that

they suffer for a short time; but immortal and unending happiness is prepared for them. If it be then that the rewards of good deeds are as great (in proportion to them) as the times of the immortality which are prepared for them are longer than the times of the limited contests which take place in this world, the torments for many and great sins must be very much less than the greatness of mercy. So then it is not for the good only that the grace of the resurrection from the dead is intended, but also for the wicked; for the grace of God greatly honours the good, but chastises the wicked sparingly.'

Again he says: 'God pours out the wages of reward beyond the measure of the labours (wrought), and in the abundance of His goodness He lessens and diminishes the penalty of those who are to be tormented, and in His mercy He shortens and reduces the length of the time. But even thus He does not punish the whole time according to (the length of) the time of folly, seeing that He requites them far less than they deserve, just as He does the good beyond the measure and period (of their deserts); for the reward is everlasting. It has not been revealed whether the goodness of God wishes to punish without ceasing the blameworthy who have been found guilty of evil deeds (or not), as we have already said before. \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* But if punishment is to be weighed out according to sin, not even so would punishment be endless. For as regards that which is said in the Gospel, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal;' this word 'eternal' (*le-`âlam*) is not definite: for if it be not so, how did Peter say to our Lord, 'Thou shalt never wash my feet,' and yet He washed him? And of Babylon He said, 'No man shall dwell therein for ever and ever,' and behold many generations dwell therein. In the 'Book of



Memorials' he says: 'I hold what the most celebrated of the holy Fathers say, that He cuts off a little from much. The penalty of Gehenna is a man's mind; for the punishment there is of two kinds, that of the body and that of the mind. That of the body is perhaps in proportion to the degree of sin, and He lessens and diminishes its duration; but that of the mind is for ever, and the judgment is for ever.' But in the New Testament *le-`âlam* is not without end. To Him be glory and dominion and praise and exaltation and honour for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

*The Book of the Bee, By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia,  
Edited and Translated by Earnest A. Wallis Budge, M.A.,  
Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886, Scanned and Edited by  
Christopher M. Weimer, May 2002*

'Rev. G. Vale Owen -  
Forgotten Christian  
Mystic'



Rev. G. Vale Owen

Forgotten mystic, Rev. G. Vale Owen, was a Protestant Pastor who in the early 1900's began receiving communications from his mother shortly after her death describing the many worlds of the afterlife. Shortly thereafter, she introduced the Reverend to a Spiritual Teacher by the name of Zabel.

In these communications, the Reverend's mother explains the afterlife journey in great detail as she travels from death to the many worlds of the afterlife, heavenly, hellish and purgatorial.

A very beautiful work, the six volume 'Life Beyond the Veil' series is a unique and fascinating contribution to the annals of Christian literature. (The Lowlands of Heaven, The Highlands of Heaven, The Ministry of Heaven, The Battalions of Heaven, The Children of Heaven, The Outlands of Heaven)

The preface to the series gives much more detail as to how these communications came to be:

"THIS volume contains the second of a series of communications from beyond the veil received and written down by the Rev. G. Vale Owen, Vicar of Orford, Lancashire.

The messages in this volume are complete in themselves and all are given by one who calls himself Zabdiel and who in the opening line of the messages describes himself as the guide of Mr. Vale Owen.

Following on the communications which Mr. Vale Owen received from his mother, and which terminated on October 30, 1913, in rather an abrupt manner, Mr. Vale Owen again sat in the vestry of the Parish Church, Oxford, on the evening of November 3 and received by automatic writing the words "Zabdiel your guide is here." From that

date and until the evening of January 3, 1914, a series of communications amounting to some 60,000 words and occupying some thirty-seven sittings were given by this communicator.

These messages cover a wider range than those the Vicar received from his mother. The inter-relation of this and the after life is more fully explained both in narrative and exposition; and in the last message of all the highest note of spiritual rapture is reached.

### **HOW THE MESSAGES CAME**

IN the typewritten copies of the original manuscript, Mr. Vale Owen gave a description of how it came about that he acted as amanuensis for his mother and the spirit beings who in turn took her place at the sittings in the vestry of the church at Orford.

He said: "There is an opinion abroad that the clergy are very credulous beings. But our training in the exercise of the critical faculty places us among the most hard-to-convince when any new truth is in question. It took a quarter of a century to convince me—ten years that spirit communication was a fact, and fifteen that the fact was legitimate and good. "From the moment I had taken this decision, the answer began to appear. First my wife developed the power of automatic writing. Then through her I received requests that I would sit quietly, pencil in hand, and take down any thoughts which seem to come into my mind projected there by some external personality and not consequent on the exercise of my own mentality. Reluctance lasted a long time, but at last I felt that friends were at hand who wished very earnestly to speak with me.

They did not overrule or compel my will in any way – that would have settled the matter at once, so far as I was concerned – but their wishes were made ever more plain. "I felt at last that I ought to give them an opportunity, for I was impressed with the feeling that the influence was a good one, so, at last, very doubtfully I decided to sit in my cassock in the vestry after Evensong.

"The first four or five messages wandered aimlessly from one subject to another. But gradually the sentences began to take consecutive form, and at last I got some which were understandable. From that time, development kept pace with practice. When the whole series of messages was finished I reckoned up and found that the speed had been maintained at an average of twenty-four words a minute. On two occasions only had I any idea what subject was to be treated. That was when the message had obviously been left uncompleted. At other times I had fully expected a certain subject to be taken, but on taking up my pencil the stream of thought went off in an altogether different direction. "G. V. O."

Before commencing to write Mr. Vale Owen would number a quantity of sheets of paper, these he placed before him on the table in the vestry. Then, using shaded candle-light to illuminate the top sheet of paper and with his pencil in his hand he would wait until he felt the influence to write. When once he started the influence was maintained without a stop until the message for the evening was concluded by the communicator. The words of the message came in a perfectly steady flow and were joined together as if the writer were striving to keep pace with the communication which was being impressed upon his mind.

A reproduction of an actual page of the script is given in *The Lowlands of Heaven*, volume I of *The Life Beyond the Veil*.

### **ABOUT ZABDIEL WHO COMMUNICATED.**

In the course of these communications Zabdiel has given no indication as to who he may have been during his earth life or of what period of our earth's history he lived here. To Mr. Vale Owen he always addressed himself as his friend and guardian and his spiritual presence is very real to the Vicar of Orford.

I am privileged to be able to give for the first time in these notes the full story of an experience that befel a young woman who attended evening service at the parish church of Orford on Palm Sunday, 1917, and it seems to indicate very directly the presence of Zabdiel on this occasion. I myself have questioned at great length this young girl, Mary A., and her story coupled with the appeal expressed by Mr. Vale Owen to Zabdiel, the same evening, points very clearly to the fact that it was Zabdiel who was seen by the girl and thus came to the help of Mr. Vale Owen in response to his prayer. I give the story from notes made by Mr. Vale Owen himself at the time and I use his own words: "After Evensong on Palm Sunday, 1917, a girl of about eighteen or nineteen years of age came to me in the vestry. Without any preliminaries she asked, 'Mr. Owen, is there such a thing as seeing angels?'

"I replied, 'Certainly; why?'

"'Because I have seen one.'

"'When?'

"'Tonight, in church.'

"She then in answer to further questions explained that just as I had entered the pulpit she saw an angel near the 'Shield,' who passed over the heads of the congregation.

As he passed, he turned and smiled—a very beautiful and sweet smile it was—and seemed to go towards me in the pulpit and there disappeared. This was the first experience of the kind she had had, and it gave her so great a shock that she had not recovered from it during the remainder of the service. Indeed, as she spoke to me, she was visibly trembling. I told her that, had she not given way to fright, she would probably have seen him standing with me in the pulpit.

"As to her reference to the 'Shield'; there are six shields on either side of the nave, attached to the corbels. Those on the south are illuminated with ecclesiastical insignia; those on the north with the arms of local families. The third from the chancel arch on the south side is just about half way down the nave, the pulpit stands outside the chancel on the north side.

"The occurrence she related interested me on this particular evening for the following reason:

"On account of extra work owing to the war, I had been feeling very unwell for some weeks past. Palm Sunday is a full day in most parishes, and that evening I was feeling very much spent. As the time for the sermon drew near I began to dread the ordeal and wondered what was going to happen. After saying my usual prayer before going into the pulpit, therefore, I made an appeal to my guide, Zabdiel. I told him I needed his help very really as I did not feel at all equal to the preaching of a sermon without notes, and was in acute pain. So I asked him to give me his help in a special degree that night. What the girl had told me assured me that my request had not been in vain, and it showed me who had brought me the help I already was aware I had received. For on entering the pulpit my pain

had suddenly ceased and the preaching was no effort at all.

Preoccupation might have explained it had the effect not been so marked and instantaneous. Before Mary A. had spoken to me I had decided that the effect was too great for such a cause, and had already thanked Zabdiel for acceding to my request."

\* \* \* \* \*

*Note by H. W. E.*

When interviewing Mary A. in reference to the above experience I was very much impressed by the girl's obvious honesty.

*Excerpts from the Preface to the 'Life Beyond the Veil,'  
Series, by Rev. G. Vale Owen, The Greater World  
Association, UK, 1922*



# Excerpts from 'The Highlands of Heaven,' Book II of the 'Life Beyond the Veil' Series

*By Rev. G. Vale Owen*

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

**Divine Love – Human blindness – Evil and good –  
Evolution – Unity in diversity.**

*Monday, November 3, 1913.*

ZABDIEL, your guide, is here and would speak with you. *I shall be glad if he will be good enough to do so.* I am able now for the first time, friend, to join in these messages which your mother and her friends are giving through you to your fellows. Now the time has come when I may continue to develop, with your help, the instructions given you, if it be your wish so to continue. *I am much indebted to you, sir. Please tell me what is your wish now.* That you sit and write down my messages, here and at this time, as you have done for the past few weeks for your mother and her friends. All questions put by Mr. Vale Owen are in italics.

*Will my mother, then, cease and give place to you?*

Yes, that is her wish. From time to time, however, you shall hear of her, and from her and others of your circle of friends.

*And what is the nature of your projected course of instruction?*

That of the development of evil and good, and of God's present and future purpose with the Church of the Christ and, throughout, of mankind generally. It is for you, my friend and charge, to say whether you will proceed, or cease here and go no further. I warn you that, although I shall observe the rule here held advisable of leading onward rather than revealing by cataclysm, yet much that I shall have to say will be of a nature disturbing to you for a time until you have assimilated it and have come to understand the logical sequence of the teaching I shall have to impart.

*What of those messages I have received from my mother and her friends? Are they to cease? They are incomplete—there is no proper conclusion to them.*

Yes, they will stand very well as they have been given to you. Remember, they were not meant to be in the form of a complete history or a novel. Scrappy they may be, but not unhelpful to those who read with a right mind.

*I confess I am rather disappointed at the ending, it is so abrupt. Lately something was said about publication. Is it your wish that they should go forth as they are?*

That we leave to your own discretion. Personally I do not see why they should not. I may tell you, however, that this writing you have been doing lately, as all former writing you have received from us, is preparatory to a further advance—which I now propose to you.

*When do you wish to begin?*

Now; and you may proceed as you are able from day to day, as you already have done. I know your work and

your engagements and shall order my own accordingly, so far as my work with you is concerned.

*Yes, I will do my best. But I confess, quite candidly, I fear the task. What I mean is, I do not feel developed enough, for, from what you say, sir, there is some pretty stiff mental work afoot in what you propose.*

My grace shall be sufficient in the strength of our Lord the Christ, as heretofore.

*Well, then, will you begin by telling me something more than I know about yourself?*

It is not on myself that I would fix your mind, friend, but on the messages proceeding through me to you, and through you to our fellow Christians fighting their way through the mists of controversy and doubt and misdirected zeal. I want to help them and you, my charge; and to such as have shall be given, and these shall hand it on to others. It is for you still to choose.

*I have already chosen. I said so. If you are good enough, Zabdiel, to use a poor instrument like me, that is your business, not mine. I will do my best. I can only promise so much as that. Now, what of yourself?*

My mission is of more importance than my own personality which will best be delineated through the thoughts I am able to give you. The world is suspicious of one who claims more than they can understand. They believe when they read, "I am Gabriel who stand in the Presence," because that was said long ago. But if I should say to you, "I am Zabdiel who comes to you from High Places with a message from those who are accounted in the

Heavenly Realms as Holy Ones and Princes of Love and Light"—well, you know, my friend and charge, what shape their lips would take. And so I pray you let me speak, and judge me and us by what message I am charged with—whether it be true and high or no—and it will suffice for you and for me. One day, dear friend, you shall look on me as I am, and know me better in that day, and be glad.

*Very well, sir, I leave it to you. You know my limitations. I am neither clairvoyant nor clairaudient nor a psychic in any real way, I take it. But what has already been written, I admit, has convinced me that it is external to myself,—I think I am convinced that far. So, if you will, I will. I cannot say more, and I know I am not offering you much.*

It is enough, and what you lack I must endeavour to supply of my own strength. Now, I will say no more at this time, for I know you have to go; you have work to do. God be with you, my charge, in the Lord Christ Amen.

*Tuesday, November 4, 1913.*

May grace and peace be yours, friend, and quietness of mind. In order that what I have to say be not misunderstood, I would begin by telling you that in these realms we do not dwell so much on those things which are not of immediate importance but search out such matters as most concern our present onward way, master them, and so proceed from step to step on firm and sure ground. Truly, the things of infinity are not altogether absent from our minds—the nature and presence of the Absolute and Ultimate One, and those conditions which are about Him, these are not altogether thrust aside. Yet we are content to let them rest not understood, knowing, as we judge from our own experience in these lower realms, that those beyond us must hold for us blessing even greater than our

present state. And so we go onward in perfect trust and confidence, happy to advance, and yet not impatient of the future towards which we surely move. So when I tell you of evil and good I shall deal more of those things which we are able to make plain to you, and these will be but as one dewdrop is to a rainbow, and less than this indeed.

There are those who say there is no evil. These are in error. If evil is the negative of positive good, it is real as the good is real. For it were as rational to say there were no such condition as night, but that this is but the negative aspect of light and day, as to say that evil is not and yet good is. For both are conditions of attitude which individual beings assume toward the One Who Is, and, as each attitude is a qualifying medium of an appropriate effect, so a condition of rebellion is the secondary cause of trouble and disaster to the rebel.

### **DIVINE LOVE.**

The very intensity of the Love of God becomes terrible when it meets with an opposing obstacle. The swifter the torrent the greater the surf about the opposing rocks. The greater the heat of a fire the more complete the dissolution of the fuel which is cast into it, and on which it feeds. And although to some such words may seem horrible in the saying of them, yet it is the very intensity of the Love which energizes and flows through the creation of the Father which, meeting opposing and, disharmonious obstruction, causes the greater pain.

And herein is the explanation of the words of St. John that they who have been brought into the knowledge of the truth cannot sin—not as theoretically considered, but as practically considered. For it is difficult to see how they

who have enjoyed the light and all the beauty it reveals should put out their eyes and so become blind. Those, therefore, who sin do so from lack of knowledge, and inability to appreciate the good and beautiful, and as the blind come to disaster unless they be warded by those who can see—guides either incarnate or discarnate—so with those who are spiritually blind.

Yet you may say that people do go back and fall from grace. Those who do so are such as those who are partly blind or of imperfect sight—colourblind as to one or more colours. These have never seen perfectly, and their lack is only unknown to them until opportunity offers, and then their imperfection is manifest. For a colour-blind person is one whose sight is, in little or more measure, undeveloped. It is only by using his vision that he maintains what vision he has, and if he neglects to do this then he retrogresses. So with the sinner.

But it may perplex you to be told that many who live apparently good and upright lives on earth are found here among the undeveloped. Yet so it is. They have gone through life with many of their higher spiritual faculties undeveloped, and when they step into the world where all is spiritual, their lack is seen, and only gradually do they come to understand what they have lacked unknowing so long,—just as many colour-blind people live their lives and pass hence and never know their imperfect state of vision; which also is hidden from their fellows.

*Suppose you give me a case by way of illustration.*

One who teaches the truth in part only must learn here to teach it whole. Quite a large number of people accept the fact of inspiration, but deny that it is an ordinary and

perpetual means of God's grace for men. When they come over here they, in turn, become inspirers, if so qualified, and then learn by how much they were indebted in their earthly course to those who used this method with them unknown. They must first develop this lacking knowledge and then they may progress, and not till then.

Now, evil is the antithesis of good, but both may be present, as you know, in one person. It is only by freewill that that person is 'held responsible for both good and evil in his heart. Of this freewill, and the nature and use of it, I must further speak at another time.

God be with you, friend, and keep you in His Grace.  
Amen.

*Saturday, November 8, 1913.*

### **EVIL AND GOOD.**

If you will give me your mind now for a little while I will endeavour to continue my words in reference to the problem of evil and its relation to that which is good. These are indeed relative terms and neither of them absolute as considered from the point of view of a man on earth. For it is not possible that one in whom both have a part be able to define either perfectly, but only, or chiefly, as the effect of each is seen in its working.

Also let it be remembered that what seems to be good or evil to one man does not of necessity so appear in the eyes of another. Especially is this true of those of different creed and habit of thought and manner of life in community. What, therefore, is possible in the matter of distinction between these two is that the broad and fundamental

principles which underlie each should be grasped clearly, and the minor shades of these qualities be entrusted to the future when they will be gradually made more plain.

Now, evil is rebellion against those laws of God which are manifest in His working. It is the endeavour of a wise man that he should walk in the same direction as that towards which these laws flow. He who from wilfulness or ignorance opposes this current finds at once that an obstacle is presented to him, and if he persists in his opposition, then disaster will ensue.

For the Life of the Supreme, which operates and energizes through creation, is a force to oppose which is destruction. And if a man were powerful enough in himself to bring such opposition to stand in the way of that tremendous force as would check, even for a moment, its flow, annihilation would be his lot when the pent-up energy once again burst forth upon him. But no man is able thus, and to this degree, to oppose God; and it is therefore that our weakness itself is our surety against annihilation such as this.

For a longer or shorter period sometimes, and often indeed for some thousands of years, as you reckon time on earth, a man may maintain his obduracy. But no man is created who is able to continue so everlastingly.

And that is a merciful limit which our Father Creator has placed around and in us lest He lose us, or any one of His children, away from Him, and without return for ever.

Let us therefore, having looked on this phase of aberration from man's natural walking with God, now look the other way in the direction in which all things are tending. For



truly, evil is but a transitory phase and, whether it pass away from His economy in whole or no, from every individual most surely it will pass away when its opposing force is spent, and he be left free to follow on in the glorious train of those who brighten as they go from glory to further and greater glory.

For this reason also will the Kingdom of the Christ one day be altogether purged of evil, because individuals make up that Church and, when the last has been ingathered, then will it be complete in its radiating glory to minister perhaps, and as many here believe, to other worlds in need of such help and succour as your world is to-day.

### **DEGREES OF LIGHT IN THE SPHERES.**

Taking first this same matter of light. Light is known on earth by reason of its contrast with darkness, which is merely a state of absence of light, and intrinsically of no content or value. So that when we speak of darkness we mean a lack of certain vibrations which enable the retina of the eye to register the presence of external things.

Now in the regions of spiritual darkness on this side of the Veil a like condition of affairs also obtains. For those who are in darkness are those whose sense of sight lacks the vibrations from without which enable others to have knowledge of those things which to them are external but present withal. Their state is a state of inability to receive these vibrations. When their spiritual faculties do undergo change then they are able to see more or less clearly.

But also these vibrations which convey the knowledge of things to their sense of sight are, in those regions, of a more gross quality than in the regions of spiritual health.

So that even to those good spirits who penetrate into those regions, and whose sense of sight is more perfect, yet the darkness is quite apparent, and the light by which they see is dim. So that, as you will understand, there is response between the spirit and the spirit's environment, and that response is so accurate and perpetual and sustained as to constitute a permanent state of life.

As we go higher in the spheres this responsive action between the spirits and their environment is also maintained and that which we may call the external light becomes more and more perfect and intense the higher we go.

So it is that those who dwell in, as we will say, the Fourth Sphere may not penetrate into the fifth, to remain there, until they have become so developed as to sustain with ease the degree of intensity of light there obtaining. Having attained to that Fifth Sphere they soon become used to its light. And if they return to the Fourth, as they do from time to time, that Fourth Sphere seems dimmer to them, while still they are able to see with comparative ease. But if they should descend straight to the Second or First Sphere, they would only with difficulty be able to use those denser vibrations of light and, in order to do so, are obliged to train themselves to see in that same sphere which once was but their normal abode.

When we come down to your earth sphere we see by reason of the spiritual light which men have in themselves. And those who are of higher spiritual grade than others we see so much the more clearly. Were it not for faculties we possess other than that of sight, we should, as I suppose, have difficulty in finding our way about, and to those to whom we wish to come. But we have these other

faculties, and by their use are able to do our work in ministering to you.

### **ANGEL VISITANTS TO EARTH.**

We work all together, friend. Some are here present with me bodily, others still in their several spheres are able to send forth their help from those realms without their leaving them. Also there is a certain help which only may be given thus.

### **COURAGE IN THINKING.**

Nor in doing this am I able to constrain myself within the limits of doctrinal theology as understood by you. For it is indeed constrained and straitened so greatly that one who has lived so long in wider room would fear to stretch himself lest he foul his elbows against the confining walls of that narrow channel; and hesitates to go at any pace ahead, fain as he is to travel, lest worse than this be his lot. No, my friend, shocking and startling as it be to those whose orthodoxy is as the breath of their body to them, more saddening is it to us to see them so much afraid to use what freedom of will and reason they have lest they go astray, mistaking rigid obedience to code and table for loyalty to Him Whose Truth is free.

Think you for a moment. What manner of Master-Friend is He to them who tremble so at His displeasure? Is it that He is waiting and watching, with sinister smile, to catch them in His net who dare to think and think in error sincerely? Or is this He Who said, "Because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will reject you"? Move and live and use what powers are given prayerfully and reverently and then, if you do chance to err, it will not be of obduracy and

wilfulness but of good intent. Shoot with strong arm and feet well and firmly set, and if you miss the mark by once or by twice, your feet shall still be firm and the word "Well done!" for you shot amiss, yet in His good service, and as you were able to do, so you did. Be not afraid. It is not those who strike and shoot and sometimes miss the mark whom He rejects, but the craven who fear to fight for Him at all. This I say boldly for I know it is true, having seen the outcome of both manner of lives when those who have lived them issue forth among us here, and seek their proper place and the gate by which they may pass onward this way.

And now, my ward and fellow-servant in the Army of the Lord, listen well awhile, for I have that to say which may be not very familiar to your way of thinking, and I would that you record it aright.

### **THE DIVINITY OF THE CHRIST.**

Many there are among you who do not find it in them to accept the Christ as God. Now, there is much light talk of this matter on both sides of the Veil. For not with you on earth alone but also here we have to seek in order to know, and miracles of revelation are not thrust upon us; nor is our own freedom of reasoning constrained by any higher power than our own.

Guided we are, as you are, too, but not forced to believe this or that in any of the many ways in which this might be done. So there are here, also, many who say that Christ is not God, and so saying think they have made an end of the matter.

It is not my present purpose to prove to you the contrary and positive truth, nor even to state that truth affirmatively. It is rather that I would endeavour to show you and them what manner of question this is, and how it is not conducive to an understanding of it, by even the little we may, to speak in terms without first defining them. First, then, what is meant by God? Do they mean a localized personality when they think of the Father — a person such as a man is?

### **LOVE AND ITS OPPOSITE.**

And so, dear friend and ward, my words to you are such as many will not receive; yet know this, that many shall come from east and west and sit down at the Feast of the Christ who without knowing Him as to His Natural Divinity, yet love Him for His human kindness and love; for that, at least, they all can understand. And none can comprehend the other His aspect in the fullness of its meaning.

And so let us think of other things, and first the relation men incarnate should foster towards Him if they would progress in the way He showed them. Foremost must they love. That is the first commandment of all, and the greatest. And hard have men found it to keep. They all agree that to love one another is good; and when they come to translate the sentiment into action, how sadly do they fail. And yet, without love no thing in all the universe would stand, but fall into decay and dissolution. It is the love of God which energizes through all that is; and we can see that love, if we look for it, everywhere. The best way to understand many things is to contrast them with their opposites. The opposite of love is dissolution; because that comes of refraining from the exertion to love.

Hatred is also of the opposite, and yet not the essence of it; because hatred of one person is often a mistaken method of expressing love to another. And what is said of persons is also true of doctrines and aims. Many express their devotion to one cause by their hatred of another. It is foolish and faulty, but not altogether of evil. When a man hates another man, however, he is likely to cease to love more and more until it becomes an effort to love anything at all.

This is one of those things which make for difficulty in this life of the spheres. For not until a man has learned to love all without hating any is he able to progress in this land where love means light, and those who do not love move in dim places where they lose their way, and often become so dull in mind and heart that their perception of the truth is as vague as that of outward things.

There are, on the other part, mansions here which sparkle with light in every stone, and send forth radiance over the country round to a great distance by reason of the high purity in love of those who dwell in them.

**"NOW WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY."**

If it were possible that I should take you now into that sphere you would not see anything at all, because your condition is not yet fitted to it. What you would see would be a mist of light, more or less intense according to what region of that sphere you were in.

In the lower spheres you would see more, but not all, and what you were able to see you would not understand in every part.

Suppose you take a fish out of the water and put him in a globe and take him through a town, how, much, think you, would he firstly see, and secondly understand? I think he would see some few inches beyond the circumference of his habitat—the water, which is his natural environment. Put your face where he can see you, and then your hand instead. What would he know of these things?

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Put your face where he can see you, and then your hand instead. What would he know of these things?

### **THE INTER-RELATION OF THE SPHERES.**

Moreover, friend, it is a good thing and a helpful to bear in mind our presence at all times; for we are near, and that in ways both many and various. When we are personally near at hand we are able to impress you with helpful thoughts and intuitions, and so to order events that your work may be facilitated and your way more clear than otherwise it would appear to you.

## PURIFIED BY SUFFERING.

Light and darkness are states of the spirit, as you know. When those dwelling in the darkness cry for light, that means that they are become out of touch with their environment. So we send them what help is needed; and that is usually direction by which they find their way – not into regions of light, where they would be in torture, and utterly blinded, but – into a region less dark, and tintured by just so much of light as they may bear until they outgrow that state and cry in their longing for more.

When a spirit leaves a dark region for one less dark he experiences an immediate sense of relief and comfort by comparison with his former state. For now his environment is in harmony with his own inner state of development. But as he continues to develop in aspiration after good, he gradually becomes out of harmony with his surroundings, and then, in ratio to his progress, so his discomfort increases until it becomes not less than agony. Then in his helplessness, and approaching near to despair, having come to that pass when his own endeavours can go no further, he cries for help to those who are able to give it in God's Name, and they enable him one stage onward nearer to the region where dimness, rather than darkness, reigns. And so he at last comes to the place where light is seen to be light; and his onward way is henceforth not through pain and anguish, but from joy to greater joy, and hence to glory and glory greater still. But oh, the long, long ages some do take until they come into that light, ages of anguish and bitterness; and know all the time that they may not come to their friends who wait them until their own unfitness is done away; and that those great regions of darkness and lovelessness must first be trod.



But do not mistake my words of their meaning. This is no vengeance of an angry God, my ward and friend. GOD IS OUR FATHER; AND HE IS LOVE. All this sorrow is of necessity, and is ordered by those laws which govern the sowing, and the reaping of that which is sown. Even here, in my own place, where many things both wonderful and lovely we have learned, yet not yet have we attained to plumb and sound this mystery to its lowest depth. We do understand, as we were unable when in the earth life, that it is of love that these things are ordained. I say we are able to understand where formerly we were able but to say we trusted and believed. Yet little more of this awful mystery do we know; and are content to wait until it is made more plain to us. For we know enough to be able to believe that all is wise and good; as those in those dark hells will know one day. And this is our comfort that they will and must be drawn onward and upward into this great and beautiful universe of light, and that then they will confess, not only that what is is just, but that it is of love and wisdom too, and be content.

Such have I known, and do know, and am of their number in the service of the Father. And it seems to me their praise and blessing of Him are nowise lacking in love in comparison of ours who have not journeyed through those awful depths.

*Excerpts from the 'Highlands of Heaven,' Volume II to the 'Life Beyond the Veil,' Series, by Rev. G. Vale Owen, The Greater World Association, UK, 1922*

# 'Swami Abhedananda - Forgotten Hindu Mystic'



SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Swami Abhedananda, wrote a series of profound works but is most known for his auspicious association with Sri Ramakrishna, a well-known and highly respected Hindu saint in the late 1900's. One of his original fifteen disciples, Swami Abhedananda had the distinction of spending much of his life in the presence of this

His name meant 'That Which Has no Differentiation,' and it was given to him shortly after Ramakrishna's death. His original name at birth was Kali Prasad Chandra.

In his youth, Swami Abhedananda was known for his scholarly pursuits, learning Sanskrit and studying Western Philosophy. When he first came into contact with Sri Ramakrishna, the saint immediately 'knew' him and said, "You were a great yogi in your previous birth. This is your last birth. I am going to initiate you in the practice of yoga." This according to the 'Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture.

During Sri Ramakrishna's final illness, Swami Abhedananda was one of those disciples who stayed closest to his side and nursed him in his final hours.

Swami Abhedananda had another well-known association, that of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna's direct successor. In 1896, Swami Vivekananda sent for Swami Abhedananda in New York and had him take over the running of the Vedanta Society of which he was very successful and stayed on until 1921. Upon return to India, he founded his own Vedanta Society.

Although many do not remember Swami Abhedananda, he led a profoundly holy life surrounded by very holy men of great note. There are many fascinating works to his own name of great worth and in 1939, he was the only living person and only disciple remaining (alive) who had met and known Sri Ramakrishna - a fact which

gave him unusual distinction in his later years.

Perhaps a great introductory work to this great forgotten mystic is his work describing 'What is a Yogi?'

*How To Be A Yogi, by Swâmi Abhedânanda, [1902],  
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# How to be a Yogi

*By Swami Abhedananda*

## **Introductory**

TRUE religion is extremely practical; it is, indeed, based entirely upon practice, and not upon theory or speculation of any kind, for religion begins only where theory ends. Its object is to mould the character, unfold the divine nature of the soul, and make it possible to live on the spiritual plane, its ideal being the realization of Absolute Truth and the manifestation of Divinity in the actions of the daily life.

Spirituality does not depend upon the reading of Scriptures, or upon learned interpretations of Sacred Books, or upon fine theological discussions, but upon the realization of unchangeable Truth. In India a man is called truly spiritual or religious not because he has written some book, not because he possesses the gift of oratory and can preach eloquent sermons, but because he expresses divine powers through his words and deeds. A thoroughly illiterate man can attain to the highest state of spiritual perfection without going to any school or university, and without reading any Scripture, if he can conquer his animal nature by realizing his true Self and its relation to the universal Spirit; or, in other words, if he can attain to the knowledge of that Truth which dwells within him, and which is the same as the Infinite Source of existence, intelligence, and bliss. He who has mastered all the Scriptures, philosophies, and sciences, may be regarded by society as an intellectual giant; yet he cannot be equal to that unlettered man who, having realized the eternal Truth, has become one with it, who sees God everywhere, and who lives on this earth as an embodiment of Divinity.

The writer had the good fortune to be acquainted with such a divine man in India. His name was Râmakrishna. He never went to any school, neither had he read any of the Scriptures, philosophies, or scientific treatises of the world, yet he had reached perfection by realizing God through the practice of Yoga. Hundreds of men and women came to see him and were spiritually awakened and uplifted by the divine powers which this illiterate man possessed. To-day he is revered and worshipped by thousands all over India as is Jesus the Christ in Christendom. He could expound with extraordinary clearness the subtlest problems of philosophy or of science, and answer the most intricate questions of clever theologians in such a masterly way as to dispel all doubts concerning the matter in hand. How could he do this without reading books? By his wonderful insight into the true nature of things, and by that Yoga power which made him directly perceive things which cannot be revealed by the senses. His spiritual eyes were open; his sight could penetrate through the thick veil of ignorance that hangs before the vision of ordinary mortals, and which prevents them from knowing that which exists beyond the range of sense perception.

These powers begin to manifest in the soul that is awakened to the ultimate Reality of the universe. It is then that the sixth sense of direct perception of higher truths develops and frees it from dependence upon the sense powers. This sixth sense or spiritual eye is latent in each individual, but it opens in a few only among millions, and they are known as Yogis. With the vast majority it is in a rudimentary state, covered by a thick veil. When, however, through the practice of Yoga it unfolds in a man, he becomes conscious of the higher invisible realms and of everything that exists on the soul plane. Whatever he says

harmonizes with the sayings and writings of all the great Seers of Truth of every age and clime. He does not study books; he has no need to do so, for he knows all that the human intellect can conceive. He can grasp the purport of a book without reading its text; he also understands how much the human mind can express through words, and he is familiar with that which is beyond thoughts and which consequently can never be expressed by words.

Before arriving at such spiritual illumination he goes through divers stages of mental and spiritual evolution, and in consequence knows all that can be experienced by a human intellect. He does not, however, care to remain confined within the limit of sense perception, and is not contented with the intellectual apprehension of relative reality, but his sole aim is to enter into the realm of the Absolute, which is the beginning and end of phenomenal objects and of relative knowledge. Thus striving for the realization of the highest, he does not fail to collect all relative knowledge pertaining to the world of phenomena that comes in his way, as he marches on toward his destination, the unfoldment of his true Self.

Our true Self is all-knowing by its nature. It is the source of infinite knowledge within us. Being bound by the limitations of time, space, and causation, we cannot express all the powers that we possess in reality. The higher we rise above these limiting conditions, the more we can manifest the divine qualities of omniscience and omnipotence. If, on the contrary, we keep our minds fixed upon phenomena and devote the whole of our energy to acquiring knowledge dependent entirely upon sense perceptions, shall we ever reach the end of phenomenal knowledge, shall we ever be able to know the real nature of the things of this universe? No; because the senses

cannot lead us beyond the superficial appearance of sense objects. In order to go deeper in the realm of the invisible we invent instruments, and with their help we are able to penetrate a little further; but these instruments, again, have their limit. After using one kind of instrument, we become dissatisfied with the results and search for some other which may reveal more and more, and thus we struggle on, discovering at each step how poor and helpless are the sense powers in the path of the knowledge of the Absolute. At last we are driven to the conclusion that any instrument, no matter how fine, can never help us to realize that which is beyond the reach of sense-perception, intellect, and thought.

So, even if we could spend the whole of our time and energy in studying phenomena, we shall never arrive at any satisfactory result or be able to see things as they are in reality. The knowledge of to-day, gained by the help of certain instruments, will be the ignorance of tomorrow, if we get better instruments. The knowledge of last year is already the ignorance of the present year; the knowledge of this century will be ignorance in the light of the discoveries of a new century.

The span of one human life is, therefore, too short to even attempt to acquire a correct knowledge of all things existing on the phenomenal plane. The life-time of hundreds of thousands of generations, nay, of all humanity, seems too short, when we consider the infinite variety to be found in the universe, and the countless number of objects that will have to be known before we can reach the end of knowledge. If a man could live a million years, keeping his senses in perfect order during that long period, and could spend every moment in studying nature and in diligently endeavoring to learn



every minute detail of phenomenal objects, would his search after knowledge be fulfilled at the expiration of that time? Certainly not; he would want still more time, a finer power of perception, a keener intellect, a subtler understanding; and then he might say, as did Sir Isaac Newton after a life of tireless research, "I have collected only pebbles on the shore of the ocean of knowledge." If a genius like Newton could not even reach the edge of the water of that ocean, how can we expect to cross the vast expanse from shore to shore in a few brief years? Thousands of generations have passed away, thousands will pass, yet must the knowledge regarding the phenomena of the universe remain imperfect. Veil after veil may be removed, but veil after veil will remain behind. This was understood by the Yogis and Seers of Truth in India, who said: "Innumerable are the branches of knowledge, but short is our time and many are the obstacles in the way; therefore wise men should first struggle to know that which is highest."

Here the question arises: Which is the highest knowledge? This question is as old as history; it has puzzled the minds of the philosophers, scientists, and scholars of all ages and all countries. Some have found an answer to it, others have not. The same question was voiced in ancient times by Socrates, when he went to the Delphic oracle and asked: "Of all knowledge which is the highest?" To which came the answer, "Know thyself."

We read in one of the Upanishads that a great thinker, after studying all the philosophies and sciences known at that time, came to a Seer of Truth and said: "Sir, I am tired of this lower knowledge that can be gained from books or through the study of the world of phenomena; it no longer satisfies me, for science cannot reveal the ultimate Truth; I

wish to know that which is the highest. Is there anything by knowing which I can know the reality of the universe?"

The sage replied: "Yes, there is; and that knowledge is the highest, by knowing which you can know the true nature of everything in the universe." And he continued, "Know thyself. If thou canst learn the true nature of thine own self, thou wilt know the reality of the universe. In thy true Self thou wilt find the Eternal Truth, the Infinite Source of all phenomena. By knowing this thou wilt know God and His whole creation." As by knowing the chemical properties of one drop of water, we know the properties of all water wherever it appears, so by knowing who and what we are in reality, we shall realize the final Truth. Man is the epitome of the universe. That which exists in the macrocosm is to be found in the microcosm. Therefore the knowledge of one's true Self is the highest of all knowledge. Our real Self is divine and one with God. This may seem to us at present a mere theory, but the nearer we approach the ultimate Truth, the more clearly shall we understand that it is not a theory but a fact, that now we are dreaming in the sleep of ignorance and fancying ourselves this or that particular person. But as all experience gained in dreams afterwards appears of little consequence; so, waking up from this sleep, we shall find that the knowledge of phenomenal nature, upon which we place so much value at present, is of little importance. We shall then realize that all research in the various branches of science depends upon Self-knowledge, and that Self-knowledge is the foundation upon which the structure of phenomenal knowledge is built.

Knowledge of the Self or Âtman is therefore the highest of all. It is the ideal of the Science of Yoga, and should be the aim of our life. We should hold it as our first duty to

acquire this Self-knowledge before we try to know anything concerning the objects of sense-perception. How can we gain it? Not from books, not through the study of external phenomena, but by studying our own nature, and by practicing the different branches of Yoga.

*How To Be A Yogi, by Swâmi Abhedânanda, [1902],  
FOURTH EDITION, VEDANTA SOCIETY, NEW YORK,  
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# 'Moses Maimonides - Forgotten Jewish Mystic'



Moses Maimonides

Forgotten mystic, Moses Maimonides, can best be summed up in the Introductory material to Maimonides greatest work 'The Guide for the Perplexed.' Friedlander, his translator and biographer, tells the tale:

*From Guide for the Perplexed, by Moses Maimonides,  
Friedländer tr. [1904], at sacred-texts.com*

## THE LIFE OF MOSES MAIMONIDES

"BEFORE the sun of Eli had set the son of Samuel had risen." Before the voice of the prophets had ceased to guide the people, the Interpreters of the Law, the Doctors of the Talmud, had commenced their labours, and before the Academies of Sura and of Pumbedita were closed, centres of Jewish thought and learning were already flourishing in the far West. The circumstances which led to the transference of the head-quarters of Jewish learning from the East to the West in the tenth century are thus narrated in the *Sefer ha-kabbalah* of Rabbi Abraham ben David:

"After the death of Hezekiah, the head of the Academy and Prince of the Exile, the academies were closed and no new Geonim were appointed. But long before that time Heaven had willed that there should be a discontinuance of the pecuniary gifts which used to be sent from Palestine, North Africa and Europe. Heaven had also decreed that a ship sailing from Bari should be captured by Ibn Romahis, commander of the naval forces of Abd-er-rahman al-nasr. Four distinguished Rabbis were thus made prisoners-- Rabbi Hushiel, father of Rabbi Hananel, Rabbi Moses,

father of Rabbi Hanok, Rabbi Shemarjahu, son of Rabbi Elhanan, and a fourth whose name has not been recorded. They were engaged in a mission to collect subsidies in aid of the Academy in Sura. The captor sold them as slaves; Rabbi Hushiel was carried to Kairuan, R. Shemarjahu was left in Alexandria, and R. Moses was brought to Cordova. These slaves were ransomed by their brethren and were soon placed in important positions. When Rabbi Moses was brought to Cordova, it was supposed that he was uneducated. In that city there was a synagogue known at that time by the name of *Keneset ha-midrash*, and Rabbi Nathan, renowned for his great piety, was the head of the congregation. The members of the community used to hold meetings at which the Talmud was read and discussed. One day when Rabbi Nathan was expounding the Talmud and was unable to give a satisfactory explanation of the passage under discussion, Rabbi Moses promptly removed the difficulty and at the same time answered several questions which were submitted to him. Thereupon R. Nathan thus addressed the assembly:--'I am no longer your leader; that stranger in sackcloth shall henceforth be my teacher, and you shall appoint him to be your chief.' The admiral, on hearing of the high attainments of his prisoner, desired to revoke the sale, but the king would not permit this retraction, being pleased to learn that his Jewish subjects were no longer dependent for their religious instruction on the schools in the East.

Henceforth the schools in the West asserted their independence, and even surpassed the parent institutions. The Caliphs, mostly opulent, gave every encouragement to philosophy and poetry; and, being generally liberal in sentiment, they entertained kindly feelings towards their Jewish subjects. These were allowed to compete for the acquisition of wealth and honour on equal terms with their

Mohammedan fellow-citizens. Philosophy and poetry were consequently cultivated by the Jews with the same zest as by the Arabs. Ibn Gabirol, Ibn Ḥasdai, Judah ha-levi, Ḥananel, Alfasi, the Ibn Ezras, and others who flourished in that period were the ornament of their age, and the pride of the Jews at all times. The same favourable condition was maintained during the reign of the Omeyyades; but when the Moravides and the Almohades came into power, the horizon darkened once more, and misfortunes threatened to destroy the fruit of several centuries. Amidst this gloom there appeared a brilliant luminary which sent forth rays of light and comfort: this was Moses Maimonides.

Moses, the son of Maimon, was born at Cordova, on the 14th of Nisan, 4895 (March 30, 1135). Although the date of his birth has been recorded with the utmost accuracy, no trustworthy notice has been preserved concerning the early period of his life. But his entire career is a proof that he did not pass his youth in idleness; his education must have been in harmony with the hope of his parents, that one day he would, like his father and forefathers, hold the honourable office of *Dayyan* or *Rabbi*, and distinguish himself in theological learning. It is probable that the Bible and the Talmud formed the chief subjects of his study; but he unquestionably made the best use of the opportunities which Mohammedan Spain, and especially Cordova, afforded him for the acquisition of general knowledge. It is not mentioned in any of his writings who were his teachers; his father, as it seems, was his principal guide and instructor in many branches of knowledge. David Conforte, in his historical work, *Ḳore ha-dorot*, states that Maimonides was the pupil of two eminent men, namely, Rabbi Joseph Ibn Migash and Ibn Roshd (Averroes); that by the former he was instructed in the Talmud, and by the

latter in philosophy. This statement seems to be erroneous, as Maimonides was only a child at the time when Rabbi Joseph died, and already far advanced in years when he became acquainted with the writings of Ibn Roshd. The origin of this mistake, as regards Rabbi Joseph, can easily be traced. Maimonides in his *Mishneh Tora*, employs, in reference to R. Isaac Alfasi and R. Joseph, the expression "my teachers" (*rabbotai*), and this expression, by which he merely describes his indebtedness to their writings, has been taken in its literal meaning.

Whoever his teachers may have been, it is evident that he was well prepared by them for his future mission. At the age of twenty-three he entered upon his literary career with a treatise on the Jewish Calendar. It is unknown where this work was composed, whether in Spain or in Africa. The author merely states that he wrote it at the request of a friend, whom he, however, leaves unnamed. The subject was generally considered to be very abstruse, and to involve a thorough knowledge of mathematics. Maimonides must, therefore, even at this early period, have been regarded as a profound scholar by those who knew him. The treatise is of an elementary character.--It was probably about the same time that he wrote, in Arabic, an explanation of Logical terms, *Millot higgayon*, which Moses Ibn Tibbon translated into Hebrew.

The earlier period of his life does not seem to have been marked by any incident worth noticing. It may, however, be easily conceived that the later period of his life, which was replete with interesting incidents, engaged the exclusive attention of his biographers. So much is certain, that his youth was beset with trouble and anxiety; the peaceful development of science and philosophy was disturbed by wars raging between Mohammedans and



Christians, and also between the several Mohammedan sects. The Moravides, who had succeeded the Omeyades, were opposed to liberality and toleration; but they were surpassed in cruelty and fanaticism by their successors. Cordova was taken by the Almohades in the year 1148, when Maimonides was about thirteen years old. The victories of the Almohades, first under the leadership of the Mahadi Ibn Tamurt, and then under Abd-al-mumen, were, according to all testimonies, attended by acts of excessive intolerance. Abd-al-mumen would not suffer in his dominions any other faith but the one which he himself confessed. Jews and Christians had the choice between Islam and emigration or a martyr's death. The *Sefer ha-kabbalah* contains the following description of one of the persecutions which then occurred:

"After the death of R. Joseph ha-levi the study of the Torah was interrupted, although he left a son and a nephew, both of whom had under his tuition become profound scholars. 'The righteous man (R. Joseph) was taken away on account of the approaching evils. After the death of R. Joseph there came for the Jews a time of oppression and distress. They quitted their homes, 'Such as were for death, to death, and such as were for the sword, to the sword; and such as were for the famine, to the famine, and such as were for the captivity, to the captivity'; and--it might be added to the words of Jeremiah (xv. 2)--'such as were for apostasy, to apostasy.' All this happened through the sword of Ibn Tamurt, who, in 4902 (1142), determined to blot out the name of Israel, and actually left no trace of the Jews in any part of his empire."

Ibn Verga in his work on Jewish martyrdom, in *Shebet Jehudah*, gives the following account of events then happening:--"In the year 4902 the armies of Ibn Tamurt

made their appearance. A proclamation was issued that any one who refused to adopt Islam would be put to death, and his property would be confiscated. Thereupon the Jews assembled at the gate of the royal palace and implored the king for mercy. He answered--'It is because I have compassion on you, that I command you to become Muslemim; for I desire to save you from eternal punishment.' The Jews replied--'Our salvation depends on our observance of the Divine Law; you are the master of our bodies and of our property, but our souls will be judged by the King who gave them to us, and to whom they will return; whatever be our future fate, you, O king, will not be held responsible for it.' 'I do not desire to argue with you,' said the king; 'for I know you will argue according to your own religion. It is my absolute will that you either adopt my religion or be put to death. The Jews then proposed to emigrate, but the king would not allow his subjects to serve another king. In vain did the Jews implore the nobles to intercede in their behalf; the king remained inexorable. Thus many congregations forsook their religion; but within a month the king came to a sudden death; the son, believing that his father had met with an untimely end as a punishment for his cruelty to the Jews, assured the involuntary converts that it would be indifferent to him what religion they professed. Hence many Jews returned at once to the religion of their fathers, while others hesitated for some time, from fear that the king meant to entrap the apparent converts." From such records it appears that during these calamities some of the Jews fled to foreign countries, some died as martyrs, and many others submitted for a time to outward conversion. Which course was followed by the family of Maimon? Did they sacrifice personal comfort and safety to their religious conviction, or did they, on the contrary, for the sake of mere worldly considerations dissemble their faith and

pretend that they completely submitted to the dictates of the tyrant? An answer to this question presents itself in the following note which Maimonides has appended to his commentary on the Mishnah: "I have now finished this work in accordance with my promise, and I fervently beseech the Almighty to save us from error. If there be one who shall discover an inaccuracy in this Commentary or shall have a better explanation to offer, let my attention be directed unto it; and let me be exonerated by the fact that I have worked with far greater application than any one who writes for the sake of pay and profit, and that I have worked under the most trying circumstances. For Heaven had ordained that we be exiled, and we were therefore driven about from place to place; I was thus compelled to work at the Commentary while travelling by land, or crossing the sea. It might have sufficed to mention that during that time I, in addition, was engaged in other studies, but I preferred to give the above explanation in order to encourage those who wish to criticise or annotate the Commentary, and at the same time to account for the slow progress of this work. I, Moses, the son of Maimon, commenced it when I was twenty-three years old, and finished it in Egypt, at the age of thirty[-three] years, in the year 1479 Sel.(1168)."

The *Sefer Haredim* of R. Eleazar Askari of Safed contains the following statement of Maimonides:--"On Sabbath evening, the 4th of Iyyar, 4925 (1165), I went on board; on the following Sabbath the waves threatened to destroy our lives. . . . On the 3rd of Sivan, I arrived safely at Acco, *and was thus rescued from apostasy*. . . . On Tuesday, the 4th of Marḥeshvan, 4926, I left Acco, arrived at Jerusalem after a journey beset with difficulties and with dangers, and prayed on the spot of the great and holy house on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of Marḥeshvan. On Sunday, the 9th of that

month, I left Jerusalem and visited the cave of Machpelah, in Hebron."

From these two statements it may be inferred that in times of persecution Maimonides and his family did not seek to protect their lives and property by dissimulation. They submitted to the troubles of exile in order that they might remain faithful to their religion. Carmoly, Geiger, Munk, and others are of opinion that the treatise of Maimonides on involuntary apostasy, as well as the accounts of some Mohammedan authors, contain strong evidence to show that there was a time when the family of Maimon publicly professed their belief in Mohammed. A critical examination of these documents compels us to reject their evidence as inadmissible.--After a long period of trouble and anxiety, the family of Maimon arrived at Fostat, in Egypt, and settled there. David, the brother of Moses Maimonides, carried on a trade in precious stones, while Moses occupied himself with his studies and interested himself in the communal affairs of the Jews.

It appears that for some time Moses was supported by his brother, and when this brother died, he earned a living by practising as a physician; but he never sought or derived any benefit from his services to his community, or from his correspondence or from the works he wrote for the instruction of his brethren; the satisfaction of being of service to his fellow-creatures was for him a sufficient reward.

The first public act in which Maimonides appears to have taken a leading part was a decree promulgated by the Rabbinical authorities in Cairo in the year 1167. The decree begins as follows--"In times gone by, when storms and tempests threatened us, we used to wander about from

place to place but by the mercy of the Almighty we have now been enabled to find here a resting-place. On our arrival, we noticed to our great dismay that the learned were disunited; that none of them turned his attention to the needs of the congregation. We therefore felt it our duty to undertake the task of guiding the holy flock, of inquiring into the condition of the community, of "reconciling the hearts of the fathers to their children," and of correcting their corrupt ways. The injuries are great, but we may succeed in effecting a cure, and--in accordance with the words of the prophet--'I will seek the lost one, and that which has been cast out I will bring back, and the broken one I will cure' (Micah iv. 6). When we therefore resolved to take the management of the communal affairs into our hands, we discovered the existence of a serious evil in the midst of the community," etc.

It was probably about that time that Maimon died. Letters of condolence were sent to his son Moses from all sides, both from Mohammedan and from Christian countries; in some instances the letters were several months on their way before they reached their destination.

The interest which Maimonides now took in communal affairs did not prevent him from completing the great and arduous work, the Commentary on the Mishnah, which he had begun in Spain and continued during his wanderings in Africa. In this Commentary he proposed to give the quintessence of the Gemara, to expound the meaning of each dictum in the Mishnah, and to state which of the several opinions had received the sanction of the Talmudical authorities. His object in writing this work was to enable those who are not disposed to study the Gemara, to understand the Mishnah, and to facilitate the study of the Gemara for those who are willing to engage in it. The

commentator generally adheres to the explanations given in the Gemara, and it is only in cases where the *halakah*, or practical law, is not affected, that he ventures to dissent. He acknowledges the benefit he derived from such works of his predecessors as the Halakot of Alfasi, and the writings of the Geonim, but afterwards he asserted that errors which were discovered in his works arose from his implicit reliance on those authorities. His originality is conspicuous in the Introduction and in the treatment of general principles, which in some instances precedes the exposition of an entire section or chapter, in others that of a single rule. The commentator is generally concise, except when occasion is afforded to treat of ethical and theological principles, or of a scientific subject, such as weights and measures, or mathematical and astronomical problems. Although exhortations to virtue and warnings against vice are found in all parts of his work, they are especially abundant in the Commentary on *Abot*, which is prefaced by a separate psychological treatise, called *The Eight Chapters*. The dictum "He who speaketh much commits a sin," elicited a lesson on the economy of speech; the explanation of *'olam ha-ba* in the treatise Sanhedrin (xi. 1) led him to discuss the principles of faith, and to lay down the thirteen articles of the Jewish creed. The Commentary was written in Arabic, and was subsequently translated into Hebrew and into other languages. The estimation in which the Commentary was held may be inferred from the following fact: When the Jews in Italy became acquainted with its method and spirit, through a Hebrew translation of one of its parts, they sent to Spain in search of a complete Hebrew version of the Commentary. R. Simḥah, who had been entrusted with the mission, found no copy extant, but he succeeded, through the influence of Rabbi Shelomoh ben Aderet, in causing a Hebrew translation of this important work to be prepared.-

-In the Introduction, the author states that he has written a Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud treatise *Hullin* and on nearly three entire sections, viz., *Moëd*, *Nashim*, and *Nezikin*. Of all these Commentaries only the one on *Rosh ha-shanah* is known.

In the year 1572 Maimonides wrote the *Iggeret Teman*, or *Petaḥ-tiḳvah* ("Letter to the Jews in Yemen," or "Opening of hope") in response to a letter addressed to him by Rabbi Jacob al-Fayumi on the critical condition of the Jews in Yemen. Some of these Jews had been forced into apostasy others were made to believe that certain passages in the Bible alluded to the mission of Mohammed; others again had been misled by an impostor who pretended to be the Messiah. The character and style of Maimonides reply appear to have been adapted to the intellectual condition of the Jews in Yemen, for whom it was written. These probably read the Bible with Midrashic commentaries, and preferred the easy and attractive *Agadah* to the more earnest study of the *Halakah*. It is therefore not surprising that the letter contains remarks and interpretations which cannot be reconciled with the philosophical and logical method by which all the other works of Maimonides are distinguished. After a few complimentary words, in which the author modestly disputes the justice of the praises lavished upon him, he attempts to prove that the present sufferings of the Jews, together with the numerous instances of apostasy, were foretold by the prophets, especially by Daniel, and must not perplex the faithful. It must be borne in mind, he continues, that the attempts made in past times to do away with the Jewish religion, had invariably failed; the same would be the fate of the present attempts; for "religious persecutions are of but short duration." The arguments which profess to demonstrate that in certain Biblical passages allusion is

made to Mohammed, are based on interpretations which are totally opposed to common sense. He urges that the Jews, faithfully adhering to their religion, should impress their children with the greatness of the Revelation on Mount Sinai, and of the miracles wrought through Moses; they also should remain firm in the belief that God will send the Messiah to deliver their nation, but they must abandon futile calculations of the Messianic period, and beware of impostors. Although there be signs which indicate the approach of the promised deliverance, and the times seem to be the period of the last and most cruel persecution mentioned in the visions of Daniel (xi. and xii.), the person in Yemen who pretends to be the Messiah is an impostor, and if care be not taken, he is sure to do mischief. Similar impostors in Cordova, France, and Africa, have deceived the multitude and brought great troubles upon the Jews.--Yet, inconsistently with this sound advice the author gives a positive date of the Messianic time, on the basis of an old tradition; the inconsistency is so obvious that it is impossible to attribute this passage to Maimonides himself. It is probably spurious, and has, perhaps, been added by the translator. With the exception of the rhymed introduction, the letter was written in Arabic, "in order that all should be able to read and understand it"; for that purpose the author desires that copies should be made of it, and circulated among the Jews. Rabbi Naḥum, of the Maghreb, translated the letter into Hebrew.

The success in the first great undertaking of explaining the Mishnah encouraged Maimonides to propose to himself another task of a still more ambitious character. In the Commentary on the Mishnah, it was his object that those who were unable to read the Gemara should be made acquainted with the results obtained by the Amoraim in



the course of their discussions on the Mishnah. But the Mishnah, with the Commentary, was not such a code of laws as might easily be consulted in cases of emergency; only the initiated would be able to find the section, the chapter, and the paragraph in which the desired information could be found. The *halakah* had, besides, been further developed since the time when the Talmud was compiled. The changed state of things had suggested new questions; these were discussed and settled by the Geonim, whose decisions, being contained in special letters or treatises, were not generally accessible. Maimonides therefore undertook to compile a complete code, which would contain, in the language and style of the Mishnah, and without discussion, the whole of the Written and the Oral Law, all the precepts recorded in the Talmud, Sifra, Sifre and Tosefta, and the decisions of the Geonim. According to the plan of the author, this work was to present a solution of every question touching the religious, moral, or social duties of the Jews. It was not in any way his object to discourage the study of the Talmud and the Midrash; he only sought to diffuse a knowledge of the Law amongst those who, through incapacity or other circumstances, were precluded from that study. In order to ensure the completeness of the code, the author drew up a list of the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the Pentateuch, divided them into fourteen groups, these again he subdivided, and thus showed how many positive and negative precepts were contained in each section of the Mishneh torah. The principles by which he was guided in this arrangement were laid down in a separate treatise, called *Sefer ha-mizvot*. Works of a similar kind, written by his predecessors, as the *Halakot gedolot* of R. Shimon Kahira, and the several *Azharot* were, according to Maimonides, full of errors, because their authors had not adopted any proper method. But an examination of the

rules laid down by Maimonides and of their application leads to the conclusion that his results were not less arbitrary; as has, in fact, been shown by the criticisms of Nahmanides. The *Sefer ha-mizvot* was written in Arabic, and thrice translated into Hebrew, namely, by Rabbi Abraham ben Hisdai, Rabbi Shelomoh ben Joseph ben Job, and Rabbi Moses Ibn Tibbon. Maimonides himself desired to translate the book into Hebrew, but to his disappointment he found no time.

This *Sefer ha-mizvot* was executed as a preparation for his principal work, the *Mishneh Torah*, or *Yad ha-ḥazakah*, which consists of an Introduction and fourteen Books. In the Introduction the author first describes the chain of tradition from Moses to the close of the Talmud, and then he explains his method in compiling the work. He distinguishes between the dicta found in the Talmud, Sifre, Sifra, or Tosefta, on the one hand, and the dicta of the Geonim on the other; the former were binding on all Jews, the latter only as far as their necessity and their utility or the authority of their propounders was recognized. Having once for all stated the sources from which he compiled his work, he did not deem it necessary to name in each case the authority for his opinion or the particular passage from which he derived his dictum. Any addition of references to each paragraph he probably considered useless to the uninformed and superfluous to the learned. At a later time he discovered his error, he being himself unable to find again the sources of some of his decisions. Rabbi Joseph Caro, in his commentary on the *Mishneh Torah*, termed *Keseḥ Mishneh*, remedied this deficiency. The Introduction is followed by the enumeration of the six hundred and thirteen precepts and a description of the plan of the work, its division into fourteen books, and the

division of the latter into sections, chapters, and paragraphs.

According to the author, the *Mishneh Torah* is a mere compendium of the Talmud; but he found sufficient opportunities to display his real genius, his philosophical mind, and his ethical doctrines. For in stating what the traditional Law enjoined he had to exercise his own judgment, and to decide whether a certain dictum was meant to be taken literally or figuratively whether it was the final decision of a majority or the rejected opinion of a minority; whether it was part of the Oral Law or a precept founded on the scientific views of a particular author; and whether it was of universal application or was only intended for a special period or a special locality. The first Book, *Sefer ha-madda'*, is the embodiment of his own ethical and theological theories, although he frequently refers to the Sayings of our Sages, and employs the phraseology of the Talmud. Similarly, the section on the Jewish Calendar, *Hilkot ha-'ibur*, may be considered as his original work. In each group of the *halakot*, its source, a certain passage of the Pentateuch, is first quoted, with its traditional interpretation, and then the detailed rules follow in systematic order. The *Mishneh Torah* was written by the author in pure Hebrew; when subsequently a friend asked him to translate it into Arabic, he said he would prefer to have his Arabic writings translated into Hebrew instead of the reverse. The style is an imitation of the Mishnah he did not choose, the author says, the philosophical style, because that would be unintelligible to the common reader; nor did he select the prophetic style, because that would not harmonize with the subject.

Ten years of hard work by day and by night were spent in the compilation of this code, which had originally been

undertaken for "his own benefit, to save him in his advanced age the trouble and the necessity of consulting the Talmud on every occasion." Maimonides knew very well that his work would meet with the opposition of those whose ignorance it would expose, also of those who were incapable of comprehending it, and of those who were inclined to condemn every deviation from their own preconceived notions. But he had the satisfaction to learn that it was well received in most of the congregations of Israel, and that there was a general desire to possess and study it. This success confirmed him in his hope that at a later time, when all cause for jealousy would have disappeared, the *Mishneh Torah* would be received by all Jews as an authoritative code. This hope has not been realized. The genius, earnestness, and zeal of Maimonides are generally recognized; but there is no absolute acceptance of his dicta. The more he insisted on his infallibility, the more did the Rabbinical authorities examine his words and point out errors wherever they believed that they could discover any. It was not always from base motives, as contended by Maimonides and his followers, that his opinions were criticised and rejected. The language used by Rabbi Abraham ben David in his notes (*hasagot*) on the *Mishneh Torah* appears harsh and disrespectful, if read together with the text of the criticised passage, but it seems tame and mild if compared with expressions used now and then by Maimonides about men who happened to hold opinions differing from his own.

Maimonides received many complimentary letters, congratulating him upon his success; but likewise letters with criticisms and questions respecting individual *halakot*. In most cases he had no difficulty in defending his position. From the replies it must, however, be inferred that Maimonides made some corrections and additions,

which were subsequently embodied in his work. The letters addressed to him on the *Mishneh Torah* and on other subjects were so numerous that he frequently complained of the time he had to spend in their perusal, and of the annoyance they caused him; but "he bore all this patiently, as he had learned in his youth to bear the yoke." He was not surprised that many misunderstood his words, for even the simple words of the Pentateuch, "the Lord is one," had met with the same fate. Some inferred from the fact that he treated fully of *'Olam ha-ba*, "the future state of the soul," and neglected to expatiate on the resurrection of the dead, that he altogether rejected that principle of faith. They therefore asked Rabbi Samuel ha-levi of Bagdad to state his opinion; the Rabbi accordingly discussed the subject; but, according to Maimonides, he attempted to solve the problem in a very unsatisfactory manner. The latter thereupon likewise wrote a treatise "On the Resurrection of the Dead," in which he protested his adherence to this article of faith. He repeated the opinion he had stated in the Commentary on the Mishnah and in the *Mishneh Torah*, but "in more words; the same idea being reiterated in various forms, as the treatise was only intended for women and for the common multitude."

These theological studies engrossed his attention to a great extent, but it did not occupy him exclusively. In a letter addressed to R. Jonathan, of Lunel, he says: "Although from my birth the Torah was betrothed to me, and continues to be loved by me as the wife of my youth, in whose love I find a constant delight, strange women whom I at first took into my house as her handmaids have become her rivals and absorb a portion of my time." He devoted himself especially to the study of medicine, in which he distinguished himself to such a degree, according to Alkifti, that "the King of the Franks in

Ascalon wanted to appoint him as his physician." Maimonides declined the honour. Alfadhel, the Vizier of Saladin king of Egypt, admired the genius of Maimonides, and bestowed upon him many distinctions. The name of Maimonides was entered on the roll of physicians, he received a pension, and was introduced to the court of Saladin. The method adopted in his professional practice he describes in a letter to his pupil, Ibn Aknin, as follows: "You know how difficult this profession is for a conscientious and exact person who only states what he can support by argument or authority." This method is more fully described in a treatise on hygiene, composed for Alfadhel, son of Saladin, who was suffering from a severe illness and had applied to Maimonides for advice. In a letter to Rabbi Samuel Ibn Tibbon he alludes to the amount of time spent in his medical practice, and says I reside in Egypt (or Fostat); the king resides in Cairo, which lies about two Sabbath-day journeys from the first-named place. My duties to the king are very heavy. I am obliged to visit him every day, early in the morning; and when he or any of his children or the inmates of his harem are indisposed, I dare not quit Cairo, but must stay during the greater part of the day in the palace. It also frequently happens that one or two of the royal officers fall sick, and then I have to attend them. As a rule, I go to Cairo very early in the day, and even if nothing unusual happens I do not return before the afternoon, when I am almost dying with hunger; but I find the antechambers filled with Jews and Gentiles, with nobles and common people, awaiting my return," etc.

Notwithstanding these heavy professional duties of court physician, Maimonides continued his theological studies. After having compiled a religious guide--*Mishneh Torah*--based on Revelation and Tradition, he found it necessary

to prove that the principles there set forth were confirmed by philosophy. This task he accomplished in his *Dalalāt al-hairin*, "The Guide for the Perplexed," of which an analysis will be given below. It was composed in Arabic, and written in Hebrew characters. Subsequently it was translated into Hebrew by Rabbi Samuel Ibn Tibbon, in the lifetime of Maimonides, who was consulted by the translator on all difficult passages. The congregation in Lunel, ignorant of Ibn Tibbon's undertaking, or desirous to possess the most correct translation of the Guide, addressed a very flattering letter to Maimonides, requesting him to translate the work into Hebrew. Maimonides replied that he could not do so, as he had not sufficient leisure for even more pressing work, and that a translation was being prepared by the ablest and fittest man, Rabbi Samuel Ibn Tibbon. A second translation was made later on by Jehudah Alharizi. The Guide delighted many, but it also met with much adverse criticism on account of the peculiar views held by Maimonides concerning angels, prophecy, and miracles, especially on account of his assertion that if the Aristotelian proof for the Eternity of the Universe had satisfied him, he would have found no difficulty in reconciling the Biblical account of the Creation with that doctrine. The controversy on the Guide continued long after the death of Maimonides to divide the community, and it is difficult to say how far the author's hope to effect a reconciliation between reason and revelation was realized. His disciple, Joseph Ibn Aknin, to whom the work was dedicated, and who was expected to derive from it the greatest benefit, appears to have been disappointed. His inability to reconcile the two antagonistic elements of faith and science, he describes allegorically in the form of a letter addressed to Maimonides, in which the following passage occurs: "Speak, for I desire that you be justified; sif you can,

answer me. Some time ago your beloved daughter, the beautiful and charming Kimah, obtained grace and favour in my sight, and I betrothed her unto me in faithfulness, and married her in accordance with the Law, in the presence of two trustworthy witnesses, viz., our master, Abd-allah and Ibn Roshd. But she soon became faithless to me; she could not have found fault with me, yet she left me and departed from my tent. She does no longer let me behold her pleasant countenance or hear her melodious voice. You have not rebuked or punished her, and perhaps you are the cause of this misconduct. Now, 'send the wife back to the man, for he is'--or might become--'a prophet; he will pray for you that you may live, and also for her that she may be firm and steadfast. If, however, you do not send her back, the Lord will punish you. Therefore seek peace and pursue it; listen to what our Sages said: 'Blessed be he who restores to the owner his lost property'; for this blessing applies in a higher degree to him who restores to a man his virtuous wife, the crown of her husband." Maimonides replied in the same strain, and reproached his "son-in-law" that he falsely accused his wife of faithlessness after he had neglected her; but he restored him his wife with the advice to be more cautious in future. In another letter Maimonides exhorts Ibn Akin to study his works, adding, "apply yourself to the study of the Law of Moses; do not neglect it, but, on the contrary, devote to it the best and the most of your time, and if you tell me that you do so, I am satisfied that you are on the right way to eternal bliss."

Of the letters written after the completion of the "Guide," the one addressed to the wise men of Marseilles (1194) is especially noteworthy. Maimonides was asked to give his opinion on astrology. He regretted in his reply that they were not yet in the possession of his *Mishneh Torah*; they



would have found in it the answer to their question. According to his opinion, man should only believe what he can grasp with his intellectual faculties, or perceive by his senses, or what he can accept on trustworthy authority. Beyond this nothing should be believed. Astrological statements, not being founded on any of these three sources of knowledge, must be rejected. He had himself studied astrology, and was convinced that it was no science at all. If some dicta be found in the Talmud which appear to represent astrology as a true source of knowledge, these may either be referred to the rejected opinion of a small minority, or may have an allegorical meaning, but they are by no means forcible enough to set aside principles based on logical proof.

The debility of which Maimonides so frequently complained in his correspondence, gradually increased, and he died, in his seventieth year, on the 20th Tebeth, 4965 (1204). His death was the cause of great mourning to all Jews. In Fostat a mourning of three days was kept; in Jerusalem a fast was appointed; a portion of the *tochahah* (Lev. xxvi. or Deut. xxix.) was read, and also the history of the capture of the Ark by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv.). His remains were brought to Tiberias. The general regard in which Maimonides was held, both by his contemporaries and by succeeding generations, has been expressed in the popular saying: "From Moses to Moses there was none like Moses."

*Guide for the Perplexed, by Moses Maimonides,  
Friedländer tr. [1904], at sacred-texts.com*

# Excerpts from 'The Guide for the Perplexed

*By Moses Maimonides*

## CHAPTER I

IT is well known that there are men whose face is like that of other animals thus the face of some person is like that of a lion, that of another person like that of an ox, and so on: and man's face is described according as the form of his face resembles the form of the face of other animals. By the expressions, "the face of an ox," "the face of a lion," "the face of an eagle" (Ezek, i. 10), the prophet describes a human face inclining towards the forms of these various species. This interpretation can be supported by two proofs. First, the prophet says of the *Hayyot* in general that "their appearance is this, they have the form of man" (ver. 5), and then in describing each of the *Hayyot* he attributes to them the face of a man, that of an ox, that of a lion, and that of an eagle. Secondly, in the second description of the Chariot, which is intended as a supplement to the first, the prophet says, Each hath four faces; the one is the face of a cherub, the second a man's face, the third a lion's face, and the fourth that of an eagle (*ibid.* x. W. He thus clearly indicates that the terms "the face of an ox" and "the face of a cherub" are identical. But cherub designates "a youth." By analogy we explain the two other terms--"the face of a lion" and "the face of an eagle" in the same manner. "The face of the ox" has been singled out on account of the etymology of the Hebrew term *shor* (ox), as has been indicated by me. It is impossible to assume that this second description refers to the perception of another prophetic vision,

because it concludes thus: "This is the *Hayyah* which I saw at the river Chebar" (*ibid.* ver. 15). What we intended to explain is now clear.

## CHAPTER II

THE prophet says that he saw four *Hayyot*: each of them had four faces, four wings, and two hands, but on the whole their form was human. Comp. "They had the likeness of a man" (Ezek. i. 5). The hands are also described as human hands, because these have undoubtedly, as is well known, such a form as enables them to perform all manner of cunning work. Their feet are straight that is to say, they are without joints. This is the meaning of the phrase "a straight foot," taken literally. Similarly our Sages say, the words, "And their feet were straight feet" (*ibid.* i. 7), show that the beings above do not sit. Note this likewise. The soles of the feet of the *Hayyot*, the organs of walking, are described as different from the feet of man, but the hands are like human hands. The feet are round, for the prophet says, "like the sole of a round foot." The four *Hayyot* are closely joined together, there is no space or vacuum left between them. Comp. "They were joined one to another" (*ibid.* i. 9). "But although they were thus joined together, their faces and their wings were separated above" (*ibid.* ver. 11). Consider the expression "above" employed here, although the bodies were closely joined, their faces and their wings were separated, but only above. The prophet then states that they are transparent; they are "like burnished brass" (*ibid.* ver. 7). He also adds that they are luminous. Comp. "Their appearance was like burning coals of fire" (*ibid.* ver. 13). This is all that has been said as regards the form, shape, face, figure, wings, hands, and feet of the *Hayyot*. The prophet then begins to describe the motions of these *Hayyot*, namely, that they have a uniform

motion, without any curvature, deviation, or deflexion: "They turned not when they went" (ver. 17). Each of the *Hayyot* moves in the direction of its face. Comp. "They went every one in the direction of his face" (ver. 9). Now, it is here clearly stated that each *Hayyah* went in the direction of its face, but since each *Hayyah* has several faces, I ask, in the direction of which face? In short, the four *Hayyot* do not move in the same direction; for, if this were the case, a special motion would not have been ascribed to each of them: it would not have been said, "They went each one towards the side of his face." The motion of these *Hayyot* is further described as a running, so also their returning is described as a running. Comp. "And the *Hayyot* ran, and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning" (ver. 14), *razoh* being the infinitive of *ruz*, "to run," and *shob* the infinitive instead of *shub*, "to return." The ordinary words, *haloch* and *bo*, "to go" and "to come," are not used, but such words as indicate running to and fro: and these are further explained by the phrase, "As the appearance of a flash of lightning" (*bazak*, used by the prophet, is identical with *barak*), for the lightning appears to move very quickly; it seems to hasten and to run from a certain place, and then to turn back and to come again to the place from which it had started. This is repeated several times with the same velocity. Jonathan, the son of Uzziel, renders the phrase *razo vashob* thus: They move round the world and return at once, and are as swift as the appearance of lightning. This quick movement and return the *Hayyah* does not perform of its own accord, but through something outside of it, viz., the Divine Will; for "to whichever side it is the Divine Will that the *Hayyah* should move, thither the *Hayyah* moves," in that quick manner which is expressed by "running and returning." This is implied in the words, "Whithersoever the spirit was to go they went (ver. 20); "They turned not when they went" (ver. 17). By "the spirit"

(*ruah*), the prophet does not mean "the wind," but "the intention," as we have explained when discussing the homonym *ruah* (spirit). The meaning of the phrase is, that whithersoever it is the Divine Will that the *Hayyah* shall go, thither it runs. Jonathan, the son of Uzziel, gives a similar explanation: Towards the place whither it is the will to go, they go; they do not turn when they go. The employment of the future tense of the verbs *yihyeh* and *yeleku* in this passage seems to imply that sometimes it will be the will of God that the *Hayyah* should move in one direction, in which it will in fact move, and at other times it will be His will that the *Hayyah* should move in the opposite direction, in which it will then move. An explanation is, however, added, which is contrary to/this conclusion, and shows that the future form (*yihyeh*) of the verb has here the meaning of the preterite, as is frequently the case in Hebrew. The direction in which God desires the *Hayyah* to move has already been determined and fixed, and the *Hayyah* moves in that direction which His will has determined long ago, without having ever changed. The prophet, therefore, in explaining, and at the same time concluding [this description of the *Hayyot*], says, "Whithersoever the spirit was to go they go, thither *was* the spirit to go" (ver. 20). Note this wonderful interpretation. This passage forms likewise part of the account of the motion of the four *Hayyot* which follows the description of their form.

Next comes the description of another part; for the prophet relates that he saw a body beneath the *Hayyot*, but closely joining them. This body, which is connected with the earth, consists likewise of four bodies, and has also four faces. But no distinct form is ascribed to it: neither that of man nor that of any other living being. The [four bodies] are described as great, tremendous, and terrible; no form is

given to them, except that they are covered with eyes. These are the bodies called *Ofannim* (lit. wheels). The prophet therefore says: "Now, as I beheld the *Hayyot*, behold one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, with his four faces" (ver. 15). He thus distinctly states that the *Ofannim* form a body, of which the one part touches the *Hayyot*, and the other part the earth; and that the *Ofan* has four faces. But he continues--"The appearance of the *Ofannim* (wheels) and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness" (ver. 16). By speaking of four *Ofannim*, after having mentioned only one *Ofan*, the prophet indicates that the "four faces" and the "four *Ofannim*" are identical. These four *Ofannim* have the same form; comp., "And they four had one likeness." The *Ofannim* are then described as partly inter-joined; for" their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel (ver. 16). In the description of the *Hayyot* such a phrase, with the term "in the middle of" (*tok*) is not employed. The *Hayyot* are partly joined, according to the words, "they were joined one to another" (ver. 11); whilst in reference to the *Ofannim* it is stated that they are partly intermixed, "as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel" The body of the *Ofannim* is described as being covered with eyes; it is possible that a body covered with real eyes is here meant, or a body with different colours [*'ayin* denoting "eye," also "colour"], as in the phrase "the colour thereof [*'eno*] as the colour (*ke'en*) of bdellium" (Num. xi. 7); or a body filled with likenesses of things. In this latter sense the term *ayin* is used by our Sages in phrases like the following:--Like that [*ke'en*] which he has stolen, like that [*ke'en*] which he has robbed; or different properties and qualities are meant, according to the meaning of the word *'ayin* in the passage, "It may be that the Lord will look (*be'enai*) on my condition" (2 Sam. xvi. 12). So much for the form of the *Ofannim*. Their motion is

described as being without curvature and deviation; as being straight, without any change. This is expressed in the words, "When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went" (E.: ver. 117). The four *Ofannim* do not move of their own accord, as the *Hayyot*, and have no motion whatever of their own; they are set in motion by other beings, as is emphatically stated twice. The *Hayyot* are the moving agents of the *Ofannim*. The relation between the *Ofan* and the *Hayyah* may be compared to the relation between a lifeless body tied to the hand or the leg of a living animal; whithersoever the latter moves, thither moves also the piece of wood, or the stone, which is tied to the named limb of the animal. This is expressed in the following words:--"And when the *Hayyot* went, the *Ofannim* went by them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the *Ofannim* were lifted up" (ver. 19); "and the *Ofannim* were lifted up over against them" (ver. 20). And the cause of this is explained thus:--"The spirit of the *Hayyah* was in the *Ofannim*" (*ibid.*). For the sake of emphasis and further explanation the prophet adds, "When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the *Ofannim* were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the *Hayyah* was in the *Ofannim*" (ver. 21). The order of these movements is therefore as follows:--Whithersoever it is the will of God that the *Hayyot* should move, thither they move of their own accord. When the *Hayyot* move the *Ofannim* necessarily follow them, because they are tied to them, and not because they move of their own accord in the direction in which the *Hayyot* move. This order is expressed in the words, "Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was the spirit to go; and the *Ofannim* were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the *Hayyah* was in the *Ofannim*" (ver. 20). I have told you that Jonathan, the son of Uzziel, translates the verse

thus, "to the place whither it was the will that the *Hayyot* should go," etc.

After having completed the account of the *Hayyot*, with their form and motion, and of the *Ofannim*, which are beneath the *Hayyot*, connected with them and forced to move when the *Hayyot* move, the prophet begins to describe a third object which he perceived prophetically, and gives the account of a new thing, viz., of that which is above the *Hayyot*. He says that the firmament is above the four *Hayyot*, above the firmament is the likeness of a throne, and over the throne the likeness of the appearance of mar. This is the whole account of what the prophet perceived at first at the river Chebar.

### CHAPTER III

WHEN Ezekiel recalled to memory the form of the Chariot, which he described in the beginning of the book, the same vision presented itself to him a second time; in this vision he was borne to Jerusalem. He explains in describing it things which have not been made clear at first, e.g., he substitutes the term "cherubim" for *Hayyot*, whereby he expresses that the *Hayyot* of the first vision are likewise angels like the cherubim. He says, therefore: "Where the cherubims went, the *Ofannim* went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same *Ofannim* also turned not from beside them" (x. 16). By these words he shows how closely connected the two motions are [viz., that of the *Hayyot* and that of the *Ofannim*]. The prophet adds, "This is the Hayyah that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar: and I knew that they were cherubims" (ver. 20). He thus describes the same forms and the same motions, and states that the *Hayyot* and the cherubim are identical.



A second point is then made clear in this second description, namely, that the *Ofannim* are spherical; for the prophet says, "As for the *Ofannim*, it was cried unto them in my hearing, O sphere" (ver. 13). A third point concerning the *Ofannim* is illustrated here in the following words: "To the place whither the head looked they followed it: they turned not as they went" (ver. 11). The motion of the *Ofannim* is thus described as involuntary, and directed "to the place whither the head looketh"; and of this it is stated that it moves "whither the spirit is to go" (i. 20). A fourth point is added concerning the *Ofannim*, namely, "And the *Ofannim* were full of eyes round about, even the *Ofannim* that they four had" (x. 12). This has not been mentioned before. In this second description there are further mentioned "their flesh, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings" (*ibid.*), whilst in the first account none of these is mentioned: and it is only stated that they are bodies. Though they are endowed in the second account with flesh, hands, and wings, no form is given to them. In the second account each *Ofan* is attributed to a cherub, "one *Ofan* by one cherub, and another *Ofan* by another cherub." The four *Hayyot* are then described as one Hayyah on account of their interjoining: "This is the *Hayyah* that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar" (ver. 20). Also the *Ofannim*, though being four in number, as has been mentioned, are called "one *ofan* upon the earth" (ver. 15), because they interjoin, and "they four have one likeness" (ver. 16). This is the additional explanation which the second vision gives of the form of the *Hayyot* and the *Ofannim*.

## CHAPTER IV

IT is necessary to call your attention to an idea expressed by Jonathan, the son of Uzziel. When he saw that the

prophet says in reference to the *Ofannim*, "It was cried unto them in my hearing, O *gilgal*" ("sphere") (x. 13), he assumed that by *Ofannim* the heavens are meant, and rendered *Ofan* by *gilgal*, "sphere," and *Ofannim* by *gilgelaya*, "spheres." I have no doubt that he found a confirmation of his opinion in the words of the prophet that the *Ofannim* were like unto the colour of *tarshish* (ver. 16), a colour ascribed to the heavens, as is well known. When he, therefore, noticed the passage, "Now as I beheld the *Hayyot*, behold one *Ofan* upon the earth" (i. 15), which clearly shows that the *Ofannim* were upon the earth, he had a difficulty in explaining it in accordance with his opinion. Following, however, his interpretation, he explains the terms *erez*, employed here as denoting the inner surface of the heavenly sphere, which may be considered as *erez* ("earth" or "below"), in relation to all that is above that surface. He therefore translates the words *ofan ehad ba-arez*, as follows: "One *ofan* was below the height of the heavens." Consider what his explanation of the passage must be. I think that he gave this explanation because he thought that *gilgal* denotes in its original meaning "heaven." My opinion is that *gilgal* means originally "anything rolling"; comp. "And I will roll thee (*ve-gilgaltika*) down from the rocks" (Jer. li. 25); "and rolled (*va-yagel*) the stone" (Gen. xxix. 10); the same meaning the word has in the phrase: "Like a rolling thing (*galgal*) before the whirlwind" (Isa. xvii. 13). The poll of the head, being round, is therefore called *gulgolet*; and because everything round rolls easily, every spherical thing is called *gilgal*; also the heavens are called *gilgallim* on account of their spherical form. Thus our Sages use the phrase, "It is a wheel (*gilgal*) that moves round the world"; and a wooden ball, whether small or large, is called *gilgal*. If so, the prophet merely intended by the words, "As for the *Ofannim*, it is cried to them in my hearing, O sphere"

(*gilgal*), to indicate the shape of the *Ofannim*, as nothing has been mentioned before respecting their form and shape; but he did not mean to say that the *Ofannim* are the same as the heavens. The term "like *tarshish*" is explained in the second account, in which it is said of the *Ofannim*: "And the appearance of the *Ofannim* was like the colour of *tarshish*." This latter passage is translated by Jonathan, the son of Uzziel, "like the colour of a precious stone, "exactly in the same manner as Onkelos translates the phrase *ke-ma'ase libnat ha-sappir*, "like the work of the whiteness of sapphire" (Exod. xxix. 10). Note this. You will not find it strange that I mention the explanation of Jonathan, son of Uzziel, whilst I gave a different explanation myself: for you will find many of the wise men and the commentators differ sometimes from him in the interpretation of words and in many things respecting the prophets. Why should it be otherwise in these profound matters? Besides, I do not decide in favour of my interpretation. It is for you to learn both--the whole of his explanation, from what I have pointed out to you, and also my own opinion. God knoweth which of the two explanations is in accordance with that which the prophet intended to say.

## CHAPTER V

IT is necessary to notice that the plural *marot elohim*, "visions of God," is here used, and not the singular *mareh*, "vision," for there were several things, of different kinds, that were perceived by the prophet. The following three things were perceived by him: the *Ofannim*, the *Hayyot*, and the man above the *Hayyot*. The description of each of these visions is introduced by the word *va-ereh*, "and I beheld?" For the account of the *Hayyot*, begins, "And I looked (*va-ereh*), and behold a whirlwind," etc. (Ezek. i. 4). The account of the *Ofannim* begins: "Now as I beheld (*va-*

*ereh*) the *Ḥayyot*, behold one ofan upon the earth" (ver. 15). The vision of that which is above the *Ḥayyot* in order and rank begins: "And I saw (*va-ereh*) as the colour of the amber, etc., from the appearance of his loins even upward" (ver. 27). The word *va-ereh*, "and I beheld," only occurs these three times in the description of the Mercabah. The doctors of the Mishnah have already explained this fact, and my attention was called to it by their remarks. For they said that only the two first visions, namely, that of the *Ḥayyot* and the *Ofannim*, might be interpreted to others; but of the third vision, viz., that of the *hashmal* and all that is connected with it, only the heads of the sections may be taught. Rabbi [Jehudah], the Holy, is of opinion that all the three visions are called *ma'aseh mercabah*, and nothing but the heads of the sections could be communicated to others. The exact words of the discussion are as follows:--Where does *maaseh mercabah* end? Rabbi says, with the last *va-ereh*; Rabbi Yizhak says it ends at the word *hashmal* (ver. 27). The portion from *va-ereh* to *hashmal* may be fully, taught; of that which follows, only the heads of the sections; according to some it is the passage from *va-ereh* to *hashmal*, of which the heads of the sections may be taught, but that which follows may only be studied by those who possess the capacity, whilst those that cannot study it by themselves must leave it.--It is clear from the words of our Sages that different visions are described, as may also be inferred from the repetition of the word *va-ereh*, and that these visions are different from each other in degree: the last and highest of them is the vision commencing, "And I saw as the colour of *hashmal*": that is to say, the divided figure of the man, described as "the appearance of fire, etc., from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward," etc. There is a difference of opinion among our Sages whether it is permitted to give by way of hints an exposition of any part

of this third vision, or whether it is prohibited even to teach of it the heads of the sections, so that only the wise can arrive at understanding it by their own studies. You will also notice a difference of opinion among our Sages in reference to the two first visions, viz., that of the *Hayyot* and that of the *Ofannim* whether these may be taught explicitly or only by way of hints, dark sayings, and heads of sections. You must also notice the order of these three visions. First comes the vision of the *Hayyot*, because they are first in rank and in the causal relation, as it is said, "For the spirit of the Hayyah was in the *Ofannim*," and also for other reasons. The vision of the *Ofannim* [comes next, and] is followed by one which is higher than the *Hayyot*, as has been shown. The cause of this arrangement is, that in study the first two must necessarily precede the third, and in fact they lead to it.

## CHAPTER VI

THE sublime and great subject which Ezekiel by prophetic impulse began to teach us in the description of the *Mercabah*, is exactly the same which Isaiah taught us in general outlines, because he did not require all the detail. Isaiah says, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood seraphims," etc. (Isa. vi. 1 *seq.*). Our Sages have already stated all this clearly, and called our attention to it. For they say that the vision of Ezekiel is the same as that of Isaiah, and illustrate their view by the following simile:-- Two men saw the king riding, the one a townsman, the other a countryman. The former, seeing that his neighbours know well how the king rides, simply tells them that he saw the king; but the villager, wishing to tell his friends things which they do not know, relates in detail how the king was riding, describes his followers, and the

officers who execute his order and command. This remark is a most useful hint; it is contained in the following passage (*Hagigah*, 13 b): "Isaiah saw all that has been seen by Ezekiel: Isaiah is like a townsman that sees the king, Ezekiel like a countryman that sees the king." These words can be explained in the manner which I have just mentioned, viz., the generation of Isaiah did not require the detailed description: his account, "I saw the Lord," etc., sufficed. The generation of the Babylonian exile wanted to learn all the details. It is, however, possible that the author of this saying held Isaiah as more perfect than Ezekiel, so that the vision might have overawed Ezekiel and appeared fearful to him; but Isaiah was so familiar with it that he did not consider it necessary to communicate it to others as a new thing, especially as it was well known to the intelligent.

## CHAPTER VII

ONE Of the points that require investigation is the connexion between the vision of the mercabah and the year, month, and day, and also the place of the vision. A reason must be found for this connexion, and we must not think that it is an indifferent element in the vision. We must consider the words, "the heavens were opened" (Ezek. i. 1); they give the key to the understanding of the whole. The figure of opening, also that of opening the gates, occurs frequently in the books of the prophets: e.g., "Open ye the gates that the righteous nation may enter in" (Isa. xxvi. 2); "He opened the doors of heaven" (Ps. lxx-viii. 23); "Lift them up, ye everlasting doors" (*ibid.* xxiv. 9); "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord" (*ibid.* cxviii. 19). There are many other instances of this kind. You must further notice that the whole description refers undoubtedly to a prophetic

vision, as it is said, "And the hand of the Lord was there upon him" (Ezek. i. 3); and yet there is a very great difference between the various parts of the description, for in the account of the *Hayyot* the prophet does not say four *Hayyot*, but "the likeness of the four *Hayyot*" (*ibid.* ver. 5); similarly he says, "And the likeness of a firmament was over the heads of the *Hayyot*" (ver. 22); "as the appearance of a sapphire stone, the likeness of a throne," and "the likeness of the appearance of man above it" (ver. 26). In all these instances the word "likeness" is used, whilst in the account of the *Ofannim* the phrases, "the likeness of *Ofannim*," the "likeness of an *Ofan*," are not employed, but they are described in a positive manner as beings in actual existence, with their real properties. The sentence "they four had one likeness" must not mislead you, for here the word "likeness" is not used in the same connexion or in the same sense as indicated above. In the description of the last vision the prophet confirms and explains this view. When he commences to describe the firmament in detail, he says, "the firmament," without adding the words "the likeness of," for he says, "And I looked, and behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne" (x. 1). Here the prophet speaks of "the firmament" and not of "the likeness of the firmament," as he does when he connects the firmament with the heads of the likeness of the *Hayyot* (i. 22). But, as regards the throne, he says, "the likeness of a throne appeared over them," in order to indicate that the firmament was first perceived and then the likeness of the throne was seen over it. Consider this well.

You must further notice that in the description of the first vision the *Hayyot* have wings and at the same time human hands, whilst in the second vision, in which the term

cherubim is substituted for *Hayyot*, at first only wings were perceived, and later on human hands were seen. Comp. "And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings" (x. 8). Here "form" (*tabnit*) is used instead of "likeness" (*demut*); and the hands are placed under the wings. Note this.

Consider that in reference to the *ofannim*, the prophet says, *le-'ummatam*, "over against them," although he does not ascribe to them any form.

He further says, "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory," etc. (i. 28). The substance and true essence of the bow described here is well known. The simile and comparison is in this case very extraordinary, and is undoubtedly part of the prophecy; and note it well.

It is also noteworthy that the likeness of man above the throne is divided, the upper part being like the colour of *hashmal*, the lower part like the appearance of fire. As regards the word *hashmal*, it has been explained to be a compound of two words *hash* and *mal*, including two different notions, viz., *hash* signifying "swiftness," and *mal* denoting "pause." The two different notions are here joined in one word in order to indicate figuratively the two different parts,—the upper part and the lower. We have already given a second explanation, namely, that *hashmal* includes the two notions of speech and silence: in accordance with the saying of our Sages, "At times they are silent, at times they speak," thus deriving *hash* of the same root as *heheshethi*, "I have been silent" (Isa. xlii. 14); the word *hashmal* thus includes two notions, and indicates "speech without sound." There is no doubt that the words,



"at times they are silent, at times they speak," refer to a created object. Now consider how they clearly stated that the divided likeness of man over the throne does not represent God, who is above the whole chariot, but represents a part of the creation. The prophet likewise says "that is the likeness of the glory of the Lord"; but "the glory of the Lord" is different from "the Lord" Himself, as has been shown by us several times. All the figures in this vision refer to the glory of the Lord, to the chariot, and not to Him who rides upon the chariot; for God cannot be compared to anything. Note this. I have thus given you also in this chapter as much of the heads of the sections as will be useful to you for the comprehension of this subject, if you fill out [the sections of] these heads. If you consider all that has been said in this part up to this chapter, the greater part of this subject or the whole of it will be clear to you. except a few points and some repetitions the meaning of which is unknown. Perhaps further study will help to reveal even these things so that nothing will remain unintelligible.

Do not expect or hope to hear from me after this chapter a word on this subject, either explicitly or implicitly, for all that could be said on it has been said, though with great difficulty and struggle. I will now begin to treat of some of the other subjects which I hope to elucidate in this treatise.

## CHAPTER VIII

TRANSIENT bodies are only subject to destruction through their substance and not through their form, nor can the essence of their form be destroyed; in this respect they are permanent. The generic forms, as you know, are all permanent and stable. Form can only be destroyed accidentally, i.e., on account of its connexion with

substance, the true nature of which consists in the property of never being without a disposition to receive form. This is the reason why no form remains permanently in a substance; a constant change takes place, one form is taken off and another is put on. How wonderfully wise is the simile of King Solomon, in which he compares matter to a faithless wife: for matter is never found without form, and is therefore always like such a wife who is never without a husband, never single; and yet, though being wedded, constantly seeks another man in the place of her husband: she entices and attracts him in every possible manner till he obtains from her what her husband has obtained. The same is the case with matter. Whatever form it has, it is disposed to receive another form; it never leaves off moving and casting off the form which it has in order to receive another. The same takes place when this second form is received. It is therefore clear that all corruption, destruction, or defect comes from matter. Take, e.g., man; his deformities and unnatural shape of limbs; all weakness, interruption, or disorder of his actions, whether innate or not, originate in the transient substance, not in the form. All other living beings likewise die or become ill through the substance of the body and not through its form. Man's shortcomings and sins are all due to the substance of the body and not to its form; while all his merits are exclusively due to his form. Thus the knowledge of God, the formation of ideas, the mastery of desire and passion, the distinction between that which is to be chosen and that which is to be rejected, all these man owes to his form; but eating, drinking, sexual intercourse, excessive lust, passion, and all vices, have their origin in the substance of his body. Now it was clear that this was the case,--it was impossible, according to the wisdom of God, that substance should exist without form, or any of the forms of the bodies without substance, and it was

necessary that the very noble form of man, which is the image and likeness of God, as has been shown by us, should be joined to the substance of dust and darkness, the source of all defect and loss. For these reasons the Creator gave to the form of man power, rule, and dominion over the substance;--the form can subdue the substance, refuse the fulfilment of its desires, and reduce them, as far as possible, to a just and proper measure. The station of man varies according to the exercise of this power. Some persons constantly strive to choose that which is noble, and to seek perpetuation in accordance with the direction of their nobler part,--their form: their thoughts are engaged in the formation of ideas, the acquisition of true knowledge about everything, and the union with the divine intellect which flows down upon them, and which is the source of man's form. Whenever they are led by the wants of the body to that which is low and avowedly disgraceful, they are grieved at their position, they feel ashamed and confounded at their situation. They try with all their might to diminish this disgrace, and to guard against it in every possible way. They feel like a person whom the king in his anger ordered to remove refuse from one place to another in order to put him to shame; that person tries as much as possible to hide himself during the time of his disgrace; he perhaps removes a small quantity a short distance in such a manner that his hands and garments remain clean, and he himself be unnoticed by his fellow-men. Such would be the conduct of a free man, whilst a slave would find pleasure in such work;--he would not consider it a great burden, but throw himself into the refuse, smear his face and his hands, carry the refuse openly, laughing and singing. This is exactly the difference in the conduct of different men. Some consider, as we just said, all wants of the body as shame, disgrace, and defect to which they are compelled to attend: this is

chiefly the case with the sense of touch, which is a disgrace to us according to Aristotle, and which is the cause of our desire for eating, drinking, and sensuality. Intelligent persons must, as much as possible, reduce these wants, guard against them, feel grieved when satisfying them, abstain from speaking of them, discussing them, and attending to them in company with others. Man must have control over all these desires, reduce them as much as possible, and only retain of them as much as is indispensable. His aim must be the aim of man as man, viz., the formation of ideas, and nothing else. The best and sublimest among them is the idea which man forms of God, angels, and the rest of the creation according to his capacity. Such men are always with God, and of them it is said, "Ye are princes, and all of you are children of the Most High" (Ps. lxxxii. 6). This is man's task and purpose. Others, however, that are separated from God form the multitude of fools, and do just the opposite. They neglect all thought and all reflection on ideas, and consider as their task the cultivation of the sense of touch,—that sense which is the greatest disgrace: they only think and reason about eating and love. Thus it is said of the wicked who are drowned in eating, drinking, and love, "They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way," etc. (Isa. xxviii. 7), "for all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (ver. 8); again, "And women rule over them" (*ibid.* iii. 2),—the opposite of that which man was told in the beginning of the creation, "And for thy husband shall thy desire be, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. iii. 16). The intensity of their lust is then described thus, "Every one neighed after his neighbour's wife," etc. (Jer. v. 8); "they are all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men" (*ibid.* ix. 2). The whole book of the Proverbs of Solomon treats of this subject, and exhorts to abstain from lust and intemperance. These two

vices ruin those that hate God and keep far from Him; to them the following passages may be applied, "They are not the Lord's" (*ibid.* v. 10); "Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth" (*ibid.* xv. 1). As regards the portion beginning, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" it is clear what is meant by the figurative expression, "a virtuous woman." When man possesses a good sound body that does not overpower him nor disturb the equilibrium in him, he possesses a divine gift. In short, a good constitution facilitates the rule of the soul over the body, but it is not impossible to conquer a bad constitution by training. For this reason King Solomon and others wrote the moral lessons; also all the commandments and exhortations in the Pentateuch aim at conquering the desires of the body. Those who desire to be men in truth, and not brutes, having only the appearance and shape of men, must constantly endeavour to reduce the wants of the body, such as eating, love, drinking, anger, and all vices originating in lust and passion; they must feel ashamed of them and set limits to them for themselves. As for eating and drinking in so far as it is indispensable, they will eat and drink only as much as is useful and necessary as food, and not for the purpose of pleasure. They will also speak little of these things, and rarely congregate for such purposes. Thus our Sages, as is well known, kept aloof from a banquet that was not part of a religious act, and pious men followed the example of R. Phinehas, son of Jair, who never dined with other persons, and even refused to accept an invitation of R. Jehudah, the Holy. Wine may be treated as food, if taken as such, but to form parties for the purpose of drinking wine together must be considered more disgraceful than the unrestrained conduct of persons who in daylight meet in the same house undressed and naked. For the natural action of the digestive organ is indispensable to man, he cannot do

without it; whilst drunkenness depends on the free will of an evil man. To appear naked in the presence of other people is misconduct only according to public opinion, not according to the dictates of reason, whilst drunkenness, which ruins the mind and the body of man, reason stamps as a vice. You, therefore, who desire to act as human beings must keep away from it, and even from speaking of it. On sexual intercourse, I need not add anything after I have pointed out in the commentary on *Abot* (i. 17) how it is treated by our Law, which is the teaching of pure wisdom--no excuse whatever should induce us to mention it or to speak of it. Thus our Sages said, that Elisha the prophet is called holy, because he did not think of it, and consequently never found himself polluted with semen. In a similar manner they say that Jacob had the first issue of semen for the conception of Reuben. All these traditional stories have the object of teaching the nation humane conduct. There is a well-known saying of our Sages, "The thoughts about the sin are more dangerous than the sin itself." I can offer a good explanation of this saying: When a person is disobedient, this is due to certain accidents connected with the corporeal element in his constitution; for man sins only by his animal nature, whereas thinking is a faculty of man connected with his form--a person who thinks sinfully sins therefore by means of the nobler portion of his self: and he who wrongly causes a foolish slave to work does not sin as much as he who wrongly causes a noble and free man to do the work of a slave. For this specifically human element, with all its properties and powers, should only be employed in suitable work, in attempts to join higher beings, and not in attempts to go down and reach the lower creatures. You know how we condemn lowness of speech, and justly so, for speech is likewise peculiar to man and a boon which God granted to him that he may be distinguished from the rest of living

creatures. Thus God says, "Who gave a mouth to man?" (Exod. iv. 11); and the prophet declares, "The Lord God hath given me a learned tongue" (Isa. l. 4). This gift, therefore, which God gave us in order to enable us to perfect ourselves, to learn and to teach, must not be employed in doing that which is for us most degrading and perfectly disgraceful; we must not imitate the songs and tales of ignorant and lascivious people. It may be suitable to them, but is not fit for those who are told, "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. xix. 6). Those who employ the faculty of thinking and speaking in the service of that sense which is no honour to us, who think more than necessary of drink and love, or even sing of these things: they employ and use the divine gift in acts of rebellion against the Giver, and in the transgression of His commandments. To them the following words may be applied: "And I multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal" (Hos. ii. 10). I have also a reason and cause for calling our language the holy language--do not think it is exaggeration or error on my part, it is perfectly correct--the Hebrew language has no special name for the organ of generation in females or in males, nor for the act of generation itself, nor for semen, nor for secretion. The Hebrew has no original expressions for these things, and only describes them in figurative language and by way of hints, as if to indicate thereby that these things should not be mentioned, and should therefore have no names; we ought to be silent about them, and when we are compelled to mention them, we must manage to employ for that purpose some suitable expressions, although these are generally used in a different sense. Thus the organ of generation in males is called in Hebrew *gid*, which is a figurative term, reminding of the words, "And thy neck is an iron sinew" (*gid*) (Isa. xlvi. 4). It is also called *shupka*, "pouring out" (Deut. xxiii.

2), on account of its function. The female organ is called *kobah* (Num. xxv. 8), from *kobah* (Deut. xviii. 3), which denotes "stomach"; *rehem*, "womb," is the inner organ in which the foetus develops; *zoah* (Isa. xxviii. 8), "refuse," is derived from the verb *yaza*, "he went out"; for "urine" the phrase *meme raglayim*, "the water of the feet" (2 Kings. xviii. 17), is used; semen is expressed by *shikbat zera'*, "a layer of seed." For the act of generation there is no expression whatever in Hebrew: it is described by the following words only: *ba'al*, "he was master"; *shakab*, "he lay"; *lakah*, "he took"; *gillah 'ervah*, "he uncovered the nakedness." Be not misled by the word *yishgalennah* (Deut. xxviii. 30), to take it as denoting that act: this is not the case, for *shegal* denotes a female ready for cohabitation. Comp. "Upon thy right hand did stand the maiden" (*shegal*) "in gold of Ophir" (Ps. xlv. 10). *Yishgalennah*, according to the *Kethib*, denotes therefore "he will take the female for the purpose of cohabitation."

We have made in the greater part of this chapter a digression from the theme of this treatise, and introduced some moral and religious matter, although they do not entirely belong to the subject of this treatise, but the course of the discussion has led to it.

## CHAPTER XII

MEN frequently think that the evils in the world are more numerous than the good things; many sayings and songs of the nations dwell on this idea. They say that a good thing is found only exceptionally, whilst evil things are numerous and lasting. Not only common people make this mistake, but even many who believe that they are wise. Al-Razi wrote a well-known book *On Metaphysics* [or *Theology*]. Among other mad and foolish things, it



contains also the idea, discovered by him, that there exists more evil than good. For if the happiness of man and his pleasure in the times of prosperity be compared with the mishaps that befall him,--such as grief, acute pain, defects, paralysis of the limbs, fears, anxieties, and troubles,--it would seem as if the existence of man is a punishment and a great evil for him. This author commenced to verify his opinion by counting all the evils one by one; by this means he opposed those who hold the correct view of the benefits bestowed by God and His evident kindness, viz., that God is perfect goodness, and that all that comes from Him is absolutely good. The origin of the error is to be found in the circumstance that this ignorant man, and his party among the common people, judge the whole universe by examining one single person. For an ignorant man believes that the whole universe only exists for him; as if nothing else required any consideration. If, therefore, anything happens to him contrary to his expectation, he at once concludes that the whole universe is evil. If, however, he would take into consideration the whole universe, form an idea of it, and comprehend what a small portion he is of the Universe, he will find the truth. For it is clear that persons who have fallen into this widespread error as regards the multitude of evils in the world, do not find the evils among the angels, the spheres and stars, the elements, and that which is formed of them, viz., minerals and plants, or in the various species of living beings, but only in some individual instances of mankind. They wonder that a person, who became leprous in consequence of bad food, should be afflicted with so great an illness and suffer such a misfortune; or that he who indulges so much in sensuality as to weaken his sight, should be struck with blindness! and the like. What we have, in truth, to consider is this:--The whole mankind at present in existence, and *a fortiori*, every other species of animals, form an

infinitesimal portion of the permanent universe. Comp. "Man is like to vanity" (Ps. cxliv. 4); "How much less man, that is a worm; and the son of man, which is a worm" (Job xxv. 6); "How much less in them who dwell in houses of clay" (*ibid.* iv. 19); "Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket" (Isa. xl. 15). There are many other passages in the books of the prophets expressing the same idea. It is of great advantage that man should know his station, and not erroneously imagine that the whole universe exists only for him. We hold that the universe exists because the Creator wills it so; that mankind is low in rank as compared with the uppermost portion of the universe, viz., with the spheres and the stars: but, as regards the angels, there cannot be any real comparison between man and angels, although man is the highest of all beings on earth; i.e., of all beings formed of the four elements. Man's existence is nevertheless a great boon to him, and his distinction and perfection is a divine gift. The numerous evils to which individual persons are exposed are due to the defects existing in the persons themselves. We complain and seek relief from our own faults: we suffer from the evils which we, by our own free will, inflict on ourselves and ascribe them to God, who is far from being connected with them! Comp. "Is destruction his [work]? No. Ye [who call yourselves] wrongly his sons, you who are a perverse and crooked generation" (Deut. xxxii. 5). This is explained by Solomon, who says, "The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord" (Prov. xix. 3).

I explain this theory in the following manner. The evils that befall an are of three kinds:--

(1) The first kind of evil is that which is caused to man by the circumstance that he is subject to genesis and

destruction, or that he possesses a body. It is on account of the body that some persons happen to have great deformities or paralysis of some of the organs. This evil may be part of the natural constitution of these persons, or may have developed subsequently in consequence of changes in the elements, e.g., through bad air, or thunderstorms or landslips. We have already shown that, in accordance with the divine wisdom, genesis can only take place through destruction, and without the destruction of the individual members of the species the species themselves would not exist permanently. Thus the true kindness, and beneficence, and goodness of God is clear. He who thinks that he can have flesh and bones without being subject to any external influence, or any of the accidents of matter, unconsciously wishes to reconcile two opposites, viz., to be at the same time subject and not subject to change. If man were never subject to change there could be no generation: there would be one single being, but no individuals forming a species. Galen, in the third section of his book, *The Use of the Limbs*, says correctly that it would be in vain to expect to see living beings formed of the blood of menstruous women and the semen virile, who will not die, will never feel pain, or will move perpetually, or will shine like the sun. This dictum of Galen is part of the following more general proposition:-- Whatever is formed of any matter receives the most perfect form possible in that species of matter: in each individual case the defects are in accordance with the defects of that individual matter. The best and most perfect being that can be formed of the blood and the semen is the species of man, for as far as man's nature is known, he is living, reasonable, and mortal. It is therefore impossible that man should be free from this species of evil. You will, nevertheless, find that the evils of the above kind which befall man are very few and rare: for you find countries

that have not been flooded or burned for thousands of years: there are thousands of men in perfect health, deformed individuals are a strange and exceptional occurrence, or say few in number if you object to the term exceptional,--they are not one-hundredth, not even one-thousandth part of those that are perfectly normal.

(2) The second class of evils comprises such evils as people cause to each other, when, e.g., some of them use their strength against others. These evils are more numerous than those of the first kind: their causes are numerous and known; they likewise originate in ourselves, though the sufferer himself cannot avert them. This kind of evil is nevertheless not widespread in any country of the whole world. It is of rare occurrence that a man plans to kill his neighbour or to rob him of his property by night. Many persons are, however, afflicted with this kind of evil in great wars: but these are not frequent, if the whole inhabited part of the earth is taken into consideration.

(3) The third class of evils comprises those which every one causes to himself by his own action. This is the largest class, and is far more numerous than the second class. It is especially of these evils that all men complain, only few men are found that do not sin against themselves by this kind of evil. Those that are afflicted with it are therefore justly blamed in the words of the prophet, "This hath been by your means" (Mal. i. 9); the same is expressed in the following passage, "He that doeth it destroyeth his own soul" (Prov. vi. 32). In reference to this kind of evil, Solomon says, "The foolishness of man perverteth his way" (*ibid.* xix. 3). In the following passage he explains also that this kind of evil is man's own work, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have thought out many inventions" (Eccles. vii. 29), and these

inventions bring the evils upon him. The same subject is referred to in Job (v. 6), "For affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." These words are immediately followed by the explanation that man himself is the author of this class of evils, "But man is born unto trouble." This class of evils originates in man's vices, such as excessive desire for eating, drinking, and love; indulgence in these things in undue measure, or in improper manner, or partaking of bad food. This course brings diseases and afflictions upon body and soul alike. The sufferings of the body in consequence of these evils are well known; those of the soul are twofold:--First, such evils of the soul as are the necessary consequence of changes in the body, in so far as the soul is a force residing in the body; it has therefore been said that the properties of the soul depend on the condition of the body. Secondly, the soul, when accustomed to superfluous things, acquires a strong habit of desiring things which are neither necessary for the preservation of the individual nor for that of the species. This desire is without a limit, whilst things which are necessary are few in number and restricted within certain limits; but what is superfluous is without end--e.g., you desire to have your vessels of silver, but golden vessels are still better: others have even vessels of sapphire, or perhaps they can be made of emerald or rubies, or any other substance that could be suggested. Those who are ignorant and perverse in their thought are constantly in trouble and pain, because they cannot get as much of superfluous things as a certain other person possesses. They as a rule expose themselves to great dangers, e.g., by sea-voyage, or service of kings, and all this for the purpose of obtaining that which is superfluous and not necessary. When they thus meet with the consequences of the course which they adopt, they complain of the decrees and judgments of God; they begin

to blame the time, and wonder at the want of justice in its changes; that it has not enabled them to acquire great riches, with which they could buy large quantities of wine for the purpose of making themselves drunk, and numerous concubines adorned with various kind of ornaments of gold, embroidery, and jewels, for the purpose of driving themselves to voluptuousness beyond their capacities, as if the whole Universe existed exclusively for the purpose of giving pleasure to these low people. The error of the ignorant goes so far as to say that God's power is insufficient, because He has given to this Universe the properties which they imagine cause these great evils, and which do not help all evil-disposed persons to obtain the evil which they seek, and to bring their evil souls to the aim of their desires, though these, as we have shown, are really without limit. The virtuous and wise, however, see and comprehend the wisdom of God displayed in the Universe. Thus David says, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies" (Ps. xxv. 10). For those who observe the nature of the Universe and the commandments of the Law, and know their purpose, see clearly God's mercy and truth in everything; they seek, therefore, that which the Creator intended to be the aim of man, viz., comprehension. Forced by the claims of the body, they seek also that which is necessary for the preservation of the body, "bread to eat and garment to clothe," and this is very little; but they seek nothing superfluous: with very slight exertion man can obtain it, so long as he is contented with that which is indispensable. All the difficulties and troubles we meet in this respect are due to the desire for superfluous things: when we seek unnecessary things, we have difficulty even in finding that which is indispensable. For the more we desire to have that which is superfluous, the more we meet with

difficulties; our strength and possessions are spent in unnecessary things, and are wanting when required for that which is necessary. Observe how Nature proves the correctness of this assertion. The more necessary a thing is for living beings, the more easily it is found and the cheaper it is; the less necessary it is, the rarer and clearer it is. E.g., air, water, and food are indispensable to man: air is most necessary, for if man is without air a short time he dies; whilst he can be without water a day or two. Air is also undoubtedly found more easily and cheaper [than water]. Water is more necessary than food; for some people can be four or five days without food, provided they have water; water also exists in every country in larger quantities than food, and is also cheaper. The same proportion can be noticed in the different kinds of food; that which is more necessary in a certain place exists there in larger quantities and is cheaper than that which is less necessary. No intelligent person, I think, considers musk, amber, rubies, and emerald as very necessary for man except as medicines: and they, as well as other like substances, can be replaced for this purpose by herbs and minerals. This shows the kindness of God to His creatures, even to us weak beings. His righteousness and justice as regards all animals are well known; for in the transient world there is among the various kinds of animals no individual being distinguished from the rest of the same species by a peculiar property or an additional limb. On the contrary, all physical, psychical, and vital forces and organs that are possessed by one individual are found also in the other individuals. If any one is somehow different it is by accident, in consequence of some exception, and not by a natural property; it is also a rare occurrence. There is no difference between individuals of a species in the due course of Nature; the difference originates in the various dispositions of their substances. This is the necessary

consequence of the nature of the substance of that species: the nature of the species is not more favourable to one individual than to the other. It is no wrong or injustice that one has many bags of finest myrrh and garments embroidered with gold, while another has not those things, which are not necessary for our maintenance; he who has them has not thereby obtained control over anything that could be an essential addition to his nature, but has only obtained something illusory or deceptive. The other, who does not possess that which is not wanted for his maintenance, does not miss anything indispensable: "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating" (Exod. xvi. 18). This is the rule at all times and in all places; no notice should be taken of exceptional cases, as we have explained.

In these two ways you will see the mercy of God toward His creatures, how He has provided that which is required, in proper proportions, and treated all individual beings of the same species with perfect equality. In accordance with this correct reflection the chief of the wise men says, "All his ways are judgment" (Deut. xxxii. 4); David likewise says: "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth" (Ps. xxv. 10); he also says expressly "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works" (*ibid.* cxlv. 9); for it is an act of great and perfect goodness that He gave us existence: and the creation of the controlling faculty in animals is a proof of His mercy towards them, as has been shown by us.

*From Guide for the Perplexed, by Moses Maimonides,  
Friedländer tr. [1904], at sacred-texts.com*



# 'The Bab - Forgotten Baha'i Mystic'



**Shrine of the Bab**

This chapter's forgotten mystic, the Bab – Precursor to Baha'u'llah, is about a fascinating and fairly unknown character in world and religious history.

Not unlike John the Baptist of Christian origin, the Bab played a crucial role in the coming of the Baha'i revelation in that he was the precursor to the 'true' prophet, Baha'u'llah and claimed to be the first of two promised Qa'im's of Islam.

Siyid Ali Muhammad who later became the Bab was born in 1819 and died in 1850. A movement was formed around him called Babism which, much like John the Baptist of Christian tradition who paved the way for Jesus Christ, evolved into the Bahai faith when the primary prophet – Baha'u'llah – came into the scene.

He took the title of the Bab because of its meaning - the Gate. Baha'i's consider the Bab to be the return of Elijah, John the Baptist and even Ushidar Mah, a Zoroastrian prophet.

There are many fascinating moments in the life of the Bab, not the least of which was his death. It was said that the Bab was suspended by ropes under a scaffold with one of his most devoted followers and shot at by a firing squad. Although the bullets pierced everything in sight, the Bab and his devotee were spared. Leaving the area, they were taken to a nearby room where they talked to one another.

After some time passed, they were again taken to be suspended by ropes under a scaffold, but the first regiment of soldiers who had fired previously refused to fire again, considering what had happened earlier the obvious sign of a miracle. But they brought in another regiment and the Bab and his companion were then martyred.

Composing hundreds of letters and books, the Bab acted as a faithful forerunner Baha'u'llah - meaning 'He Whom God shall Make Manifest' - to proclaim that he was indeed the prophet foretold by the Bab (and many hundreds of years earlier the prophet Muhammad) and begin what is known today as the Baha'i faith.

Baha'is are known for their belief in unity of world religions and consider every prophet of every faith a true prophet of God who came in a successive line of revelation leading up to the final unity proclaimed by Baha'u'llah. Because of this unique proclamation, Baha'is learn and know about all the other world religions and contain a great respect for the prophets of each of them.

The Bab is well-known to those of the Baha'i faith, but those of other faiths have well forgotten this fascinating mystic and prophet of the modern day.

The Bab explains much of what he taught through Babism in this excerpt from the Kitab-I-Asma:

*EXCERPTS FROM THE KITAB-I-ASMA, (The Book of Names), The Bab, sacred-texts.com*

O ye that are invested with the Bayan! Denounce ye not one another, ere the Day-Star of ancient eternity shineth forth above the horizon of His sublimity. We have created you from one tree and have caused you to be as the leaves and fruit of the same tree, that haply ye may become a source of comfort to one another. Regard ye not others save as ye regard your own selves, that no feeling of aversion may prevail amongst you so as to shut you out from Him Whom God shall make manifest on the Day of Resurrection. It behooveth you all to be one indivisible people; thus should ye return unto Him Whom God shall make manifest.

Those who have deprived themselves of this Resurrection by reason of their mutual hatreds or by regarding themselves to be in the right and others in the wrong, were chastised on the Day of Resurrection by reason of such hatreds evinced during their night. Thus they deprived themselves of beholding the countenance of God, and this for no other reason than mutual denunciations.

O ye that are invested with the Bayan! Ye should perform such deeds as would please God, your Lord, earning thereby the good-pleasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest. Turn not your religion into a means of material gain, spending your life on vanities, and inheriting thereby on the Day of Resurrection that which would displease Him Whom God shall make manifest, while ye deem that what ye do is right. If, however, ye observe piety in your Faith, God will surely nourish you from the treasuries of His heavenly grace.

Be ye sincere in your allegiance to Him Whom God shall make manifest, for the sake of God, your Lord, that perchance ye may, through devotion to His Faith, be redeemed on the Day of Resurrection. Beware lest ye suffer one another to be wrapt in veils by reason of the disputes which may, during your night, arise among you as a result of the problems ye encounter or in consideration of such matters as your loftiness or lowliness, your nearness or remoteness.

Thus have We firmly exhorted you--a befitting exhortation indeed--that haply ye may cleave tenaciously unto it and attain thereby salvation on the Day of Resurrection. The time is approaching when ye will be at peace with yourselves in your homes, and lo, Him Whom God shall make manifest will have appeared, and God wisheth you

to return unto Him, even as God called you into being through the Primal Point. However, all of you will seek guidance while pursuing the promptings of your own desires. Some of you are filled with pride by reason of your religion, others because of your learning. Ye will, one and all, cling unto some part of the Bayan as a means of self-glorification.

GOD is sanctified from His servants and no direct relationship ever existeth between Him and any created thing, while ye have all arisen at His bidding. Verily He is your Lord and your God, your Master and your King. He ordaineth your movements at His behest throughout the day-time and in the night season.

Say, He Whom God shall make manifest is indeed the Primal Veil of God. Above this Veil ye can find nothing other than God, while beneath it ye can discern all things emanating from God. He is the Unseen, the Inaccessible, the Most Exalted, the Best Beloved.

If ye seek God, it behooveth you to seek Him Whom God shall make manifest, and if ye cherish the desire to dwell in the Ark of Names, ye will be distinguished as the guides to Him Whom God shall make manifest, did ye but believe in Him. Verily then make your hearts the daysprings of His exalted Names as recorded in the Book, and ye shall, even as mirrors placed before the sun, be able to receive enlightenment.

SHOULD a person lay claim to a cause and produce his proofs, then those who seek to repudiate him are required to produce proofs like unto his. If they succeed in doing to, his words will prove vain and they will prevail; otherwise neither his words will cease nor the proofs he

hath set forth will become void. I admonish you, O ye who are invested with the Bayan, if ye would fain assert your ascendancy, confront not any soul unless ye give proofs similar to that which he hath adduced; for Truth shall be firmly established, while aught else besides it is sure to perish.

How numerous the people who engaged in contests with Muhammad, the Apostle of God, and were eventually reduced to naught, inasmuch as they were powerless to bring forth proofs similar to that which God had sent down unto Him. Had they been abashed and modest, and had they realized the nature of the proofs wherewith He was invested, they would never have challenged Him. But they regarded themselves as champions of their own religion. Therefore God laid hold on them according to their deserts and vindicated the Truth through the power of Truth. This is what ye clearly perceive today in the Muhammadan Revelation.

Who is the man amongst you who can challenge the exalted Thrones of Reality in every Dispensation, while all existence is wholly dependent upon Them? Indeed, God hath wiped out all those who have opposed Them from the beginning that hath no beginning until the present day and hath conclusively demonstrated the Truth through the power of Truth. Verily, He is the Almighty, the omnipotent, the All-Powerful.

O YE who are invested with the Bayan! Be ye watchful on the Day of Resurrection, for on that Day ye will firmly believe in the Vahid of the Bayan, though this, even as your past religion which proved of no avail, can in no wise benefit you, unless ye embrace the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest and believe in that which He

ordaineth. Therefore take ye good heed lest ye shut yourselves out from Him Who is the Fountain-head of all Messengers and Scriptures, while ye hold fast to parts of the teachings which have emanated from these sources.

CONSIDER how at the time of the appearance of every Revelation, those who open their hearts to the Author of that Revelation recognize the Truth, while the hearts of those who fail to apprehend the Truth are straitened by reason of their shutting themselves out from Him.

However, openness of heart is bestowed by God upon both parties alike. God desireth not to straiten the heart of anyone, be it even an ant, how much less the heart of a superior creature, except when he suffereth himself to be wrapt in veils, for God is the Creator of all things.

Wert thou to open the heart of a single soul by helping him to embrace the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest, thine inmost being would be filled with the inspirations of that august Name. It devolveth upon you, therefore, to perform this task in the Days of Resurrection, inasmuch as most people are helpless, and wert thou to open their hearts and dispel their doubts, they would gain admittance into the Faith of God. Therefore, manifest thou this attribute to the utmost of thine ability in the days of Him Whom God shall make manifest. For indeed if thou dost open the heart of a person for His sake, better will it be for thee than every virtuous deed; since deeds are secondary to faith in Him and certitude in His Reality.

TAKE heed to carefully consider the words of every soul, then hold fast to the proofs which attest the truth. If ye fail to discover truth in a person's words, make them not the object of contention, inasmuch as ye have been forbidden

in the Bayan to enter into idle disputation and controversy, that perchance on the Day of Resurrection ye may not engage in argumentation, and dispute with Him Whom God shall make manifest.

ON the Day of Resurrection when He Whom God will make manifest cometh unto you, invested with conclusive proofs, ye shall hold His Cause as being devoid of truth, whereas God hath apprised you in the Bayan that no similarity existeth between the Cause of Him Whom God will make manifest and the cause of others. How can anyone besides God reveal a verse such as to overwhelm all mankind? Say, great is God! Who else but Him Whom God will make manifest can spontaneously recite verses which proceed from His Lord--a feat that no mortal man can ever hope to accomplish?

Truth can in no wise be confounded with aught else except itself; would that ye might ponder His proof. Nor can error be confused with Truth, if ye do but reflect upon the testimony of God, the True One.

How great hath been the number of those who have falsely laid claim to a cause within Islam, and ye followed in their footsteps without having witnessed a single proof. What evidence can ye then produce in the presence of your Lord, if ye do but meditate a while?

Take ye good heed in your night lest ye be a cause of sadness to any soul, whether ye be able to discover proofs in him or not, that haply on the Day of Resurrection ye may not grieve Him within Whose grasp lieth every proof. And when ye do not discern God's testimony in a person, he will verily fail in manifesting the power of Truth; and God is sufficient to deal with him. Indeed on no account



should ye sadden any person; surely God will put him to the proof and bring him to account. It behooveth you to cling to the testimony of your own Faith and to observe the ordinances laid down in the Bayan.

You are like unto the man who layeth out an orchard and planteth all kinds of fruit trees therein. When the time is at hand for him, the lord, to come, ye will have taken possession of the orchard in his name, and when he doth come in person, ye will shut him out from it.

Verily We planted the Tree of the Qur'an and provided its Orchard with all kinds of fruit, whereof ye all have been partaking. Then when We came to take over that which We had planted, ye pretended not to know Him Who is the Lord thereof.

Be ye not a cause of grief unto Us, nor withhold Us from this Orchard which belongeth unto Us, though independent are We of all that ye possess. Moreover, unto none of you shall We make this property lawful, were it even to the extent of a mustard seed. Verily, the Reckoner are We.

We have planted the Garden of the Bayan in the name of Him Whom God will make manifest, and have granted you permission to live therein until the time of His manifestation; then from the moment the Cause of Him Whom God will make manifest is inaugurated, We forbid you all the things ye hold as your own, unless ye may, by the leave of your Lord, be able to regain possession thereof.

O YE unto whom the Bayan is given! Be ye vigilant lest in the days of Him Whom God shall make manifest, while ye consider yourselves as seeking God's pleasure, in reality ye

persist in that which would only displease Him, even as did those who lived in the days of the Primal Point, to whom it never occurred that they were seeking things which ran counter to that which God had purposed. They shut themselves out as by a veil from God and failed to observe that which He had desired for them to perform as true believers. They pondered not upon such people as lived in the days of Muhammad, who believed likewise that they were seeking the good-pleasure of God, while they had actually cut themselves off therefrom, once they had failed to secure the good-pleasure of Muhammad. Nevertheless they comprehended not.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Regard not yourselves as being like unto the people to whom the Qur'an or the Gospel or other Scriptures of old were given, since at the time of His manifestation ye shall stray farther from God than did they. If ye happen to shut yourselves out it would never cross your minds that ye were shut out from Him. It behooveth you to consider how the people unto whom the Qur'an was given were debarred from the Truth, for indeed ye will act in a like manner, thinking that ye are doers of good. If ye perceive the degree of your deprivation of God, ye will wish to have perished from the face of the earth and to have sunk into oblivion. The day will come when ye will earnestly desire to know that which would meet with the good-pleasure of God but, alas, ye shall find no path unto Him. Ye, even as camels that wander aimlessly, will not find a pasture wherein ye may gather and unite upon a Cause in which ye can assuredly believe. At that time God shall cause the Sun of Truth to shine forth and the oceans of His bounty and grace to surge, while ye will have chosen droplets of water as the object of your desire, and will have deprived yourselves of the plenteous waters in His oceans.

If ye entertain any doubts in this matter consider the people unto whom the Gospel was given. Having no access to the apostles of Jesus, they sought the pleasure of the Lord in their churches, hoping to learn that which would be acceptable unto God, but they found therein no path unto Him. Then when God manifested Muhammad as His Messenger and as the Repository of His good-pleasure, they neglected to quicken their souls from the Fountain of living waters which streamed forth from the presence of their Lord and continued to rove distraught upon the earth seeking a mere droplet of water and believing that they were doing righteous deeds. They behaved as the people unto whom the Qur'an was given are now behaving.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Ye can act similarly. Take ye heed, therefore, lest ye deprive yourselves of attaining the presence of Him Who is the Manifestation of God, notwithstanding that ye have been day and night praying to behold His countenance; and be ye careful lest ye be deterred from attaining unto the ocean of His good-pleasure, when perplexed and to no avail ye roam the earth in search of a drop of water.

Say, the testimony of God hath been fulfilled in the Bayan, and through its revelation the grace of God hath attained its highest consummation for all mankind. Let no one among you say that God hath withheld the outpouring of His bounty unto you, for assuredly God's mercy unto those to whom the Bayan is given hath been fulfilled and completed until the Day of Resurrection. Would that ye might believe in the signs of God.

VERILY God hath caused the people of the Bayan to be called into being through the power of Him unto Whom the Bayan was revealed, in preparation for the Day when they will return to their Lord.

Indeed those who will bear allegiance unto Him Whom God shall make manifest are the ones who have grasped the meaning of that which hath been revealed in the Bayan; they are indeed the sincere ones, while those who turn away from Him at the time of His appearance will have utterly failed to comprehend a single letter of the Bayan, even though they profess belief and assurance in whatever is revealed in it or observe its precepts.

Say, every favourable and praiseworthy designation in the Bayan is but an allusion to those who recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest, and who believe with certainty in God and in His holy Writings, while every unfavourable designation therein is meant to refer to such as repudiate Him Whom God shall make manifest, though they may act uprightly within the bounds laid down in the Bayan. Say, if ye embrace the truth on the Day of Resurrection, God will assuredly pardon you for your night and will grant you forgiveness.

As to those who have faithfully observed the ordinances in the Bayan from the inception of its revelation until the Day when Him Whom God shall make manifest will appear, these are indeed the companions of the paradise of His good-pleasure who will be glorified in the presence of God and will dwell in the pavilions of His celestial garden. Yet, within less than a tiny fraction of an instant from the moment God will have revealed Him Who is the Manifestation of His Own Self, the entire company of the followers of the Bayan shall be put to proof.

SINCE thou hast faithfully obeyed the true religion of God in the past, it behooveth thee to follow His true religion hereafter, inasmuch as every religion proceedeth from God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

He Who hath revealed the Qur'an unto Muhammad, the Apostle of God, ordaining in the Faith of Islam that which was pleasing unto Him, hath likewise revealed the Bayan, in the manner ye have been promised, unto Him Who is your Qa'im, your Guide, your Mihdi, your Lord, Him Whom ye acclaim as the manifestation of God's most excellent titles. Verily the equivalent of that which God revealed unto Muhammad during twenty-three years, hath been revealed unto Me within the space of two days and two nights. However, as ordained by God, no distinction is to be drawn between the two. He, in truth, hath power over all things.

I swear by the life of Him Whom God shall make manifest! My Revelation is indeed far more bewildering than that of Muhammad, the Apostle of God, if thou dost but pause to reflect upon the days of God. Behold, how strange that a person brought up amongst the people of Persia should be empowered by God to proclaim such irrefutable utterances as to silence every man of learning, and be enabled to spontaneously reveal verses far more rapidly than anyone could possibly set down in writing. Verily, no God is there but Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

AS to those who have debarred themselves from the Revelation of God, they have indeed failed to understand the significance of a single letter of the Qur'an, nor have they obtained the slightest notion of the Faith of Islam, otherwise they would not have turned away from God, Who hath brought them into being, Who hath nurtured

them, hath caused them to die and hath proffered life unto them, by clinging to parts of their religion, thinking that they are doing righteous work for the sake of God.

How numerous the verses which have been revealed concerning the grievous tests ye shall experience on the Day of Judgement, yet it appeareth that ye have never perused them; and how vast the number of revealed traditions regarding the trials which will overtake you on the Day of Our Return, and yet ye seem never to have set your eyes upon them.

Ye spend all your days contriving forms and rules for the principles of your Faith, while that which profiteth you in all this is to comprehend the good-pleasure of your Lord and unitedly to become well-acquainted with His supreme Purpose.

God hath made His Own Self known unto you, but ye have failed to recognize Him; and the thing which will, on the Day of Judgement, turn you aside from God is the specious character of your deeds. Throughout your lives ye follow your religion in order to attract the good-pleasure of God, yet on the Last Day ye shut yourselves out from God and turn away from Him Who is your Promised One.

O YE who are invested with the Bayan! Ye shall be put to proof, even as those unto whom the Qur'an was given. Have pity on yourselves, for ye shall witness the Day when God will have revealed Him Who is the Manifestation of His Own Self, invested with clear and irrefutable proofs, while ye will cling tenaciously to the words the Witnesses of the Bayan have uttered. On that Day ye will continue to rove distraught, even as camels,

seeking a drop of the water of life. God will cause oceans of living water to stream forth from the presence of Him Whom God shall make manifest, while ye will refuse to quench your thirst therefrom, notwithstanding that ye regard yourselves as the God-fearing witnesses of your Faith. Nay, and yet again, nay! Ye will go astray far beyond the peoples unto whom the Gospel, or the Qur'an or any other Scripture was given. Take good heed to yourselves, inasmuch as the Cause of God will come upon you at a time when you will all be entreating and tearfully imploring God for the advent of the Day of His Manifestation; yet when He cometh ye will tarry and will fail to be of those who are well-assured in His Faith.

Beware lest ye grieve Him Who is the Supreme Manifestation of your Lord; verily, He can well afford to dispense with your allegiance unto Him. Be ye careful and bring not despondency upon any soul, for surely ye shall be put to proof.

SAY, He Whom God shall make manifest will surely redeem the rights of those who truly believe in God and in His signs, for they are the ones who merit reward from His presence. Say, it is far from the glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest that anyone should in this wise make mention of His name, if ye ponder the Cause of God in your hearts. Say, He shall vindicate the Cause through the potency of His command and shall bring to naught all perversion of truth by virtue of His behest. Verily God is potent over all things.

If ye wish to distinguish truth from error, consider those who believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest and those who disbelieve Him at the time of His appearance. The former represent the essence of truth, as attested in the

Book of God, while the latter the essence of error, as attested in that same Book. Fear ye God that ye may not identify yourselves with aught but the truth, inasmuch as ye have been exalted in the Bayan for being recognized as the bearers of the name of Him Who is the eternal Truth.

Say, were He Whom God shall make manifest to pronounce a pious and truthful follower of the Bayan as false, it is incumbent upon you to submit to His decree, as this hath been affirmed by God in the Bayan; verily God is able to convert light into fire whenever He pleaseth; surely He is potent over all things. And were He to declare a person whom ye regard alien to the truth as being akin thereto, err not by questioning His decision in your fancies, for He Who is the Sovereign Truth createth things through the power of His behest. Verily God transmuteth fire into light as He willeth, and indeed potent is He over all things. Consider ye how the truth shone forth as truth in the First Day and how error became manifest as error; so likewise shall ye distinguish them from each other on the Day of Resurrection.

PONDER upon the people unto whom the Gospel was given. Their religious leaders were considered as the true Guides of the Gospel, yet when they shut themselves out from Muhammad, the Apostle of God, they turned into guides of error, notwithstanding that all their lives they had faithfully observed the precepts of their religion in order to attain unto Paradise; then when God made Paradise known unto them, they would not enter therein. Those unto whom the Qur'an is given have wrought likewise. They performed their acts of devotion for the sake of God, hoping that He might enable them to join the righteous in Paradise. However, when the gates of Paradise were flung open to their faces, they declined to



enter. They suffered themselves to enter into the fire, though they had been seeking refuge therefrom in God.

Say, verily, the criterion by which truth is distinguished from error shall not appear until the Day of Resurrection. This ye will know, if ye be of them that love the Truth. And ere the advent of the Day of Resurrection ye shall distinguish truth from aught else besides it according to that which hath been revealed in the Bayan.

How vast the number of people who will, on the Day of Resurrection, regard themselves to be in the right, while they shall be accounted as false through the dispensation of Providence, inasmuch as they will shut themselves out as by a veil from Him Whom God shall make manifest and refuse to bow down in adoration before Him Who, as divinely ordained in the Book, is the Object of their creation.

SAY, ye will be unable to recognize the One True God or to discern clearly the words of divine guidance, inasmuch as ye seek and tread a path other than His. Whenever ye learn that a new Cause hath appeared, ye must seek the presence of its author and must delve into his writings that haply ye may not be debarred from attaining unto Him Whom God shall make manifest at the hour of His manifestation. Wert thou to walk in the way of truth as handed down by them that are endowed with the knowledge of the inmost reality, God, thy Lord, will surely redeem thee on the Day of Resurrection. Verily He is potent over all things.

In the Bayan God hath forbidden everyone to pronounce judgement against any soul, lest he may pass sentence upon God, his Lord, while regarding himself to be of the

righteous, inasmuch as no one knoweth how the Cause of God will begin or end.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Should ye be apprised of a person laying claim to a Cause and revealing verses which to outward seeming are unlikely to have been revealed by anyone else save God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting, do not pass sentence against him, lest ye may inadvertently pass sentence against Him Whom God shall make manifest. Say, He Whom God shall make manifest is but one of you; He will make Himself known unto you on the Day of Resurrection. Ye shall know God when the Manifestation of His Own Self is made known unto you, that perchance ye may not stray far from His Path.

Verily God will raise up Him Whom God shall make manifest, and after Him Whomsoever He willeth, even as He hath raised up prophets before the Point of the Bayan. He in truth hath power over all things.

VERILY, on the First Day We flung open the gates of Paradise unto all the peoples of the world, and exclaimed: 'O all ye created things! Strive to gain admittance into Paradise, since ye have, during all your lives, held fast into virtuous deeds in order to attain unto it.' Surely all men yearn to enter therein, but alas, they are unable to do so by reason of that which their hands have wrought. Shouldst thou, however, gain a true understanding of God in thine heart of hearts, ere He hath manifested Himself, thou wouldst be able to recognize Him, visible and resplendent, when He unveileth Himself before the eyes of all men.

SAY, by reason of your remembering Him Whom God shall make manifest and by extolling His name, God will

cause your hearts to be dilated with joy, and do ye not wish your hearts to be in such a blissful state? Indeed the hearts of them that truly believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest are vaster than the expanse of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. God hath left no hindrance in their hearts, were it but the size of a mustard seed. He will cheer their hearts, their spirits, their souls and their bodies and their days of prosperity or adversity, through the exaltation of the name of Him Who is the supreme Testimony of God and the promotion of the Word of Him Who is the Dayspring of the glory of their Creator.

Verily, these are souls who take delight in the remembrance of God, Who dilates their hearts through the effulgence of the light of knowledge and wisdom. They seek naught but God and are oft engaged in giving praise unto Him. They desire naught except whatever He desireth and stand ready to do His bidding. Their hearts are mirrors reflecting whatsoever He Whom God shall make manifest willeth. Thus God will cheer the hearts of those who truly believe in Him and in His signs and who are well assured of the life to come. Say, the life to come is none other than the days associated with the coming of Him Whom God will make manifest.

Reduce not the ordinances of God to fanciful imaginations of your own; rather observe all the things which God hath created at His behest with the eye of the spirit, even as ye see things with the eyes of your bodies.

THE divine Revelation associated with the advent of Him Who is your promised Mihdi hath proved far more wondrous than the Revelation wherewith Muhammad, the Apostle of God, was invested. Would that ye might

ponder. Verily, God raised up Muhammad, the Apostle of God, from among the people of Arabia after he had reached forty years of age--a fact which every one of you affirmeth and upholdeth--while your Redeemer was raised up by God at the age of twenty-four amidst people none of whom can speak or understand a single word of Arabic. Thus God layeth bare the glory of His Cause and demonstrateth the Truth through the potency of His revealed Word. He is indeed the Powerful, the Omnipotent, the Help in Peril, the Best Beloved.

SAY, verily God hath caused all created things to enter beneath the shade of the tree of affirmation, except those who are endowed with the faculty of understanding. Theirs is the choice either to believe in God their Lord, and put their whole trust in Him, or to shut themselves out from Him and refuse to believe with certitude in His signs. These two groups sail upon two seas: the sea of affirmation and the sea of negation.

They that truly believe in God and in His signs, and who in every Dispensation faithfully obey that which hath been revealed in the Book--such are indeed the ones whom God hath created from the fruits of the Paradise of His good-pleasure, and who are of the blissful. But they who turn away from God and His signs in each Dispensation, those are the ones who sail upon the sea of negation.

God hath, through the potency of His behest, ordained for Himself the task of ensuring the ascendancy of the sea of affirmation and of bringing to naught the sea of negation through the power of His might. He is in truth potent over all things.

Verily it is incumbent upon you to recognize your Lord at the time of His manifestation, that haply ye may not enter into negation, and that, ere a prophet is raised by God, ye may find yourselves securely established upon the sea of affirmation. For if a prophet cometh to you from God and ye fail to walk in His Way, God will, thereupon, transform your light into fire. Take heed then that perchance ye may, through the grace of God and His signs, be enabled to redeem your souls.

SAY, God shall of a truth cause your hearts to be given to perversity if ye fail to recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest; but if ye do recognize Him God shall banish perversity from your hearts...

That day whereon ye were, by God's Will, initiated into the Bayan, did any of you know who were the Letters of the Living or the Witnesses or the Testimonies or what the names of the believers? Likewise doth God wish you to recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest on the Day of Resurrection. Beware lest ye shut yourselves out as by a veil from Him Who hath created you, by reason of your regard for those who were called into being at the bidding of the Point of the Bayan for the exaltation of His Word. Did ye possess, ere the Point of the Bayan had called you into existence, any trace of identity, how much less a writ or authority? Disregard then your beginnings, perchance ye may be saved on the day of your return. Indeed had it not been for the exaltation of the name of the Primal Point, God would not have ordained for you the Letters of the Living, nor those who are the Testimonies of His Truth, nor the Witnesses of His Justice; could ye but heed a little. All this is to glorify the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest at the time of His manifestation; would that ye might ponder a while.

Therefore it behooveth you to return unto God even as ye were brought forth into existence, and to utter not such words as why or nay, if ye wish your creation to yield fruit at the time of your return. For none of you who have been born in the Bayan shall gain the fruit of your beginning unless ye return unto Him Whom God shall make manifest. He it is Who caused your beginning to proceed from God, and your return to be unto Him, did ye but know

HOW great the number of people who deck themselves with robes of silk all their lives, while clad in the garb of fire, inasmuch as they have divested themselves of the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness; and how numerous are those who wear clothes made of cotton or coarse wool throughout their lives, and yet by reason of their being endowed with the vesture of divine guidance and righteousness, are truly attired with the raiment of Paradise and take delight in the good-pleasure of God. Indeed it would be better in the sight of God were ye to combine the two, adorning yourselves with the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness and wearing exquisite silk, if ye can afford to do so. If not, at least act ye not unrighteously, but rather observe piety and virtue...

But for the sole reason of His being present amongst this people, We would have neither prescribed any law nor laid down any prohibition. It is only for the glorification of His Name and the exaltation of His Cause that We have enunciated certain laws at Our behest, or forbidden the acts to which We are averse, so that at the hour of His manifestation ye may attain through Him the good-pleasure of God and abstain from the things that are abhorrent unto Him.

Say, verily, the good-pleasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is the good-pleasure of God, while the displeasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is none other than the displeasure of God. Avoid ye His displeasure, and flee for refuge unto His good-pleasure. Say, the living guides to His good-pleasure are such as truly believe in Him and are well-assured in their faith, while the living testimonies of His displeasure are those who, when they hear the verses of God sent forth from His presence, or read the divine words revealed by Him, do not instantly embrace the Faith and attain unto certitude.

*EXCERPTS FROM THE KITAB-I-ASMA, (The Book of Names), The Bab, sacred-texts.com*

# Tablet to the First Letter of the Living

*By the Bab*

This is that which We have revealed for the First Believer in Him Whom God shall make manifest, that it may serve as an admonition from Our presence unto all mankind.

In the Name of the Almighty, the Best Beloved.

LAUDED and glorified is He Who is the sovereign Lord of the kingdoms of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. Say, verily unto Him shall all return, and He is the One Who guideth at His Own behest whomsoever He pleaseth. Say, all men beseech His blessings and He is supreme over all created things. He is indeed the All-Glorious, the Mighty, the Well-Beloved.

This is an epistle from the letter `Tha' unto him who is the First Believer. Bear thou witness that verily He is I, Myself, the Sovereign, the Omnipotent. He is the One Who ordaineth life and death and unto Him shall all return.

Indeed there is none other God but Him and all men bow down in adoration before Him. Verily Thy Lord, God, shall presently recompense every one as He ordaineth, even swifter than uttering the words `Be thou, and it is'.

God hath in truth testified in His Book and so also have testified the company of His angels, His Messengers and



those endued with divine knowledge, that thou hast believed in God and in His signs and that everyone is guided aright by virtue of thy guidance. This is indeed a boundless grace which God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, hath graciously conferred upon thee aforetime and will confer hereafter. And since thou didst believe in God before the creation, He hath in truth, at His own behest, raised thee up in every Revelation. There is no God but Him, the Sovereign Protector, the All-Glorious.

It behooveth you to proclaim the Cause of God unto all created things as a token of grace from His presence; no God is there but Him, the Most Generous, the All-Compelling.

Say: All matters must be referred to the Book of God; I am indeed the First to believe in God and in His signs; I am the One Who divulgeth and proclaimeth the Truth and I have been invested with every excellent title of God, the Mighty, the Incomparable. Verily I have attained the Day of the First Manifestation and by the bidding of the Lord and as a token of His grace, I shall attain the Day of the Latter Manifestation. There is no God but Him and at the appointed hour everyone shall bow down unto Him in adoration.

I render thanks and yield praise unto God for having been chosen by Him as the Exponent of His Cause in bygone days and in the days to come; there is none other God save Him, the Glorified, the All-Praised, the Ever-Abiding. Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth is His and through Him are we guided aright.

O people of the Bayan! Those who embrace the Truth must turn unto Me, as ordained in the Book and divine

guidance will be vouchsafed to whosoever attaineth My presence.

***EXCERPTS FROM THE LETTERS OF THE BAB, (The Book of Names), The Bab, sacred-texts.com***

# Excerpts from the Kitab-I- Asma (The Book of Names) *By the Bab*

O ye that are invested with the Bayan! Denounce ye not one another, ere the Day-Star of ancient eternity shineth forth above the horizon of His sublimity. We have created you from one tree and have caused you to be as the leaves and fruit of the same tree, that haply ye may become a source of comfort to one another. Regard ye not others save as ye regard your own selves, that no feeling of aversion may prevail amongst you so as to shut you out from Him Whom God shall make manifest on the Day of Resurrection. It behooveth you all to be one indivisible people; thus should ye return unto Him Whom God shall make manifest.

Those who have deprived themselves of this Resurrection by reason of their mutual hatreds or by regarding themselves to be in the right and others in the wrong, were chastised on the Day of Resurrection by reason of such hatreds evinced during their night. Thus they deprived themselves of beholding the countenance of God, and this for no other reason than mutual denunciations.

O ye that are invested with the Bayan! Ye should perform such deeds as would please God, your Lord, earning thereby the good-pleasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest. Turn not your religion into a means of material  
By 'night' is meant the period between two divine Revelations when the Sun of Truth is not manifest among men. In the Persian Bayan, II, 7, the Bab says, 'O people of

the Bayan! Act not as the people of the Qur'an have acted, for if you do so the fruits of your night will come to naught' . . . If, however, ye observe piety in your Faith, God will surely nourish you from the treasuries of His heavenly grace.

Be ye sincere in your allegiance to Him Whom God shall make manifest, for the sake of God, your Lord, that perchance ye may, through devotion to His Faith, be redeemed on the Day of Resurrection. Beware lest ye suffer one another to be wrapt in veils by reason of the disputes which may, during your night, arise among you as a result of the problems ye encounter or in consideration of such matters as your loftiness or lowliness, your nearness or remoteness.

Thus have We firmly exhorted you--a befitting exhortation indeed--that haply ye may cleave tenaciously unto it and attain thereby salvation on the Day of Resurrection. The time is approaching when ye will be at peace with yourselves in your homes, and lo, Him Whom God shall make manifest will have appeared, and God wisheth you to return unto Him, even as God called you into being through the Primal Point. However, all of you will seek guidance while pursuing the promptings of your own desires. Some of you are filled with pride by reason of your religion, others because of your learning. Ye will, one and all, cling unto some part of the Bayan as a means of self-glorification.

The Kitab-i-Asma' is divided into vahids and chapters, to which these numbers refer.

GOD is sanctified from His servants and no direct relationship ever existeth between Him and any created

thing, while ye have all arisen at His bidding. Verily He is your Lord and your God, your Master and your King. He ordaineth your movements at His behest throughout the day-time and in the night season.

Say, He Whom God shall make manifest is indeed the Primal Veil of God. Above this Veil ye can find nothing other than God, while beneath it ye can discern all things emanating from God. He is the Unseen, the Inaccessible, the Most Exalted, the Best Beloved.

If ye seek God, it behooveth you to seek Him Whom God shall make manifest, and if ye cherish the desire to dwell in the Ark of Names, ye will be distinguished as the guides to Him Whom God shall make manifest, did ye but believe in Him. Verily then make your hearts the daysprings of His exalted Names as recorded in the Book, and ye shall, even as mirrors placed before the sun, be able to receive enlightenment.

SHOULD a person lay claim to a cause and produce his proofs, then those who seek to repudiate him are required to produce proofs like unto his. If they succeed in doing so, his words will prove vain and they will prevail; otherwise neither his words will cease nor the proofs he hath set forth will become void. I admonish you, O ye who are invested with the Bayan, if ye would fain assert your ascendancy, confront not any soul unless ye give proofs similar to that which he hath adduced; for Truth shall be firmly established, while aught else besides it is sure to perish.

How numerous the people who engaged in contests with Muhammad, the Apostle of God, and were eventually reduced to naught, inasmuch as they were powerless to

bring forth proofs similar to that which God had sent down unto Him. Had they been abashed and modest, and had they realized the nature of the proofs wherewith He was invested, they would never have challenged Him. But they regarded themselves as champions of their own religion. Therefore God laid hold on them according to their deserts and vindicated the Truth through the power of Truth. This is what ye clearly perceive today in the Muhammadan Revelation.

Who is the man amongst you who can challenge the exalted Thrones of Reality in every Dispensation, while all existence is wholly dependent upon Them? Indeed, God hath wiped out all those who have opposed Them from the beginning that hath no beginning until the present day and hath conclusively demonstrated the Truth through the power of Truth. Verily, He is the Almighty, the Omnipotent, the All-Powerful.

O YE who are invested with the Bayan! Be ye watchful on the Day of Resurrection, for on that Day ye will firmly believe in the Vahid of the Bayan, though this, even as your past religion which proved of no avail, can in no wise benefit you, unless ye embrace the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest and believe in that which He ordaineth. Therefore take ye good heed lest ye shut yourselves out from Him Who is the Fountain-head of all Messengers and Scriptures, while ye hold fast to parts of the teachings which have emanated from these sources.

CONSIDER how at the time of the appearance of every Revelation, those who open their hearts to the Author of that Revelation recognize the Truth, while the hearts of those who fail to apprehend the Truth are straitened by reason of their shutting themselves out from Him.

However, openness of heart is bestowed by God upon both parties alike. God desireth not to straiten the heart of anyone, be it even an ant, how much less the heart of a superior creature, except when he suffereth himself to be wrapt in veils, for God is the Creator of all things.

Wert thou to open the heart of a single soul by helping him to embrace the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest, thine inmost being would be filled with the inspirations of that august Name. It devolveth upon you, therefore, to perform this task in the Days of Resurrection, inasmuch as most people are helpless, and wert thou to open their hearts and dispel their doubts, they would gain admittance into the Faith of God. Therefore, manifest thou this attribute to the utmost of thine ability in the days of Him Whom God shall make manifest. For indeed if thou dost open the heart of a person for His sake, better will it be for thee than every virtuous deed; since deeds are secondary to faith in Him and certitude in His Reality.

TAKE heed to carefully consider the words of every soul, then hold fast to the proofs which attest the truth. If ye fail to discover truth in a person's words, make them not the object of contention, inasmuch as ye have been forbidden in the Bayan to enter into idle disputation and controversy, that perchance on the Day of Resurrection ye may not engage in argumentation, and dispute with Him Whom God shall make manifest.

ON the Day of Resurrection when He Whom God will make manifest cometh unto you, invested with conclusive proofs, ye shall hold His Cause as being devoid of truth, whereas God hath apprised you in the Bayan that no similarity existeth between the Cause of Him Whom God will make manifest and the cause of others. How can

anyone besides God reveal a verse such as to overwhelm all mankind? Say, great is God! Who else but Him Whom God will make manifest can spontaneously recite verses which proceed from His Lord--a feat that no mortal man can ever hope to accomplish?

Truth can in no wise be confounded with aught else except itself; would that ye might ponder His proof. Nor can error be confused with Truth, if ye do but reflect upon the testimony of God, the True One.

How great hath been the number of those who have falsely laid claim to a cause within Islam, and ye followed in their footsteps without having witnessed a single proof. What evidence can ye then produce in the presence of your Lord, if ye do but meditate a while?

Take ye good heed in your night lest ye be a cause of sadness to any soul, whether ye be able to discover proofs in him or not, that haply on the Day of Resurrection ye may not grieve Him within Whose grasp lieth every proof. And when ye do not discern God's testimony in a person, he will verily fail in manifesting the power of Truth; and God is sufficient to deal with him. Indeed on no account should ye sadden any person; surely God will put him to the proof and bring him to account. It behooveth you to cling to the testimony of your own Faith and to observe the ordinances laid down in the Bayan.

You are like unto the man who layeth out an orchard and planteth all kinds of fruit trees therein. When the time is at hand for him, the lord, to come, ye will have taken possession of the orchard in his name, and when he doth come in person, ye will shut him out from it.



Verily We planted the Tree of the Qur'an and provided its Orchard with all kinds of fruit, whereof ye all have been partaking. Then when We came to take over that which We had planted, ye pretended not to know Him Who is the Lord thereof.

Be ye not a cause of grief unto Us, nor withhold Us from this Orchard which belongeth unto Us, though independent are We of all that ye possess. Moreover, unto none of you shall We make this property lawful, were it even to the extent of a mustard seed. Verily, the Reckoner are We.

We have planted the Garden of the Bayan in the name of Him Whom God will make manifest, and have granted you permission to live therein until the time of His manifestation; then from the moment the Cause of Him Whom God will make manifest is inaugurated, We forbid you all the things ye hold as your own, unless ye may, by the leave of your Lord, be able to regain possession thereof.

O YE unto whom the Bayan is given! Be ye vigilant lest in the days of Him Whom God shall make manifest, while ye consider yourselves as seeking God's pleasure, in reality ye persist in that which would only displease Him, even as did those who lived in the days of the Primal Point, to whom it never occurred that they were seeking things which ran counter to that which God had purposed. They shut themselves out as by a veil from God and failed to observe that which He had desired for them to perform as true believers. They pondered not upon such people as lived in the days of Muhammad, who believed likewise that they were seeking the good-pleasure of God, while they had actually cut themselves off therefrom, once they

had failed to secure the good-pleasure of Muhammad. Nevertheless they comprehended not.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Regard not yourselves as being like unto the people to whom the Qur'an or the Gospel or other Scriptures of old were given, since at the time of His manifestation ye shall stray farther from God than did they. If ye happen to shut yourselves out it would never cross your minds that ye were shut out from Him. It behooveth you to consider how the people unto whom the Qur'an was given were debarred from the Truth, for indeed ye will act in a like manner, thinking that ye are doers of good. If ye perceive the degree of your deprivation of God, ye will wish to have perished from the face of the earth and to have sunk into oblivion. The day will come when ye will earnestly desire to know that which would meet with the good-pleasure of God but, alas, ye shall find no path unto Him. Ye, even as camels that wander aimlessly, will not find a pasture wherein ye may gather and unite upon a Cause in which ye can assuredly believe.

At that time God shall cause the Sun of Truth to shine forth and the oceans of His bounty and grace to surge, while ye will have chosen droplets of water as the object of your desire, and will have deprived yourselves of the plenteous waters in His oceans.

If ye entertain any doubts in this matter consider the people unto whom the Gospel was given. Having no access to the apostles of Jesus, they sought the pleasure of the Lord in their churches, hoping to learn that which would be acceptable unto God, but they found therein no path unto Him. Then when God manifested Muhammad as His Messenger and as the Repository of His good-

pleasure, they neglected to quicken their souls from the Fountain of living waters which streamed forth from the presence of their Lord and continued to rove distraught upon the earth seeking a mere droplet of water and believing that they were doing righteous deeds. They behaved as the people unto whom the Qur'an was given are now behaving.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Ye can act similarly. Take ye heed, therefore, lest ye deprive yourselves of attaining the presence of Him Who is the Manifestation of God, notwithstanding that ye have been day and night praying to behold His countenance; and be ye careful lest ye be deterred from attaining unto the ocean of His good-pleasure, when perplexed and to no avail ye roam the earth in search of a drop of water.

Say, the testimony of God hath been fulfilled in the Bayan, and through its revelation the grace of God hath attained its highest consummation for all mankind. Let no one among you say that God hath withheld the outpouring of His bounty unto you, for assuredly God's mercy unto those to whom the Bayan is given hath been fulfilled and completed until the Day of Resurrection. Would that ye might believe in the signs of God.

VERILY God hath caused the people of the Bayan to be called into being through the power of Him unto Whom the Bayan was revealed, in preparation for the Day when they will return to their Lord.

Indeed those who will bear allegiance unto Him Whom God shall make manifest are the ones who have grasped the meaning of that which hath been revealed in the Bayan; they are indeed the sincere ones, while those who

turn away from Him at the time of His appearance will have utterly failed to comprehend a single letter of the Bayan, even though they profess belief and assurance in whatever is revealed in it or observe its precepts.

Say, every favourable and praiseworthy designation in the Bayan is but an allusion to those who recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest, and who believe with certainty in God and in His holy Writings, while every unfavourable designation therein is meant to refer to such as repudiate Him Whom God shall make manifest, though they may act uprightly within the bounds laid down in the Bayan. Say, if ye embrace the truth on the Day of Resurrection, God will assuredly pardon you for your night and will grant you forgiveness.

As to those who have faithfully observed the ordinances in the Bayan from the inception of its revelation until the Day when Him Whom God shall make manifest will appear, these are indeed the companions of the paradise of His good-pleasure who will be glorified in the presence of God and will dwell in the pavilions of His celestial Garden.

Yet, within less than a tiny fraction of an instant from the moment God will have revealed Him Who is the Manifestation of His Own Self, the entire company of the followers of the Bayan shall be put to proof.

SINCE thou hast faithfully obeyed the true religion of God in the past, it behooveth thee to follow His true religion hereafter, inasmuch as every religion proceedeth from God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

He Who hath revealed the Qur'an unto Muhammad, the Apostle of God, ordaining in the Faith of Islam that which

was pleasing unto Him, hath likewise revealed the Bayan, in the manner ye have been promised, unto Him Who is your Qa'im, your Guide, your Mihdi, your Lord, Him Whom ye acclaim as the manifestation of God's most excellent titles. Verily the equivalent of that which God revealed unto Muhammad during twenty-three years, hath been revealed unto Me within the space of two days and two nights. However, as ordained by God, no distinction is to be drawn between the two. He, in truth, hath power over all things.

I swear by the life of Him Whom God shall make manifest! My Revelation is indeed far more bewildering than that of Muhammad, the Apostle of God, if thou dost but pause to reflect upon the days of God. Behold, how strange that a person brought up amongst the people of Persia should be empowered by God to proclaim such irrefutable utterances as to silence every man of learning, and be enabled to spontaneously reveal verses far more rapidly than anyone could possibly set down in writing. Verily, no God is there but Him, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

AS to those who have debarred themselves from the Revelation of God, they have indeed failed to understand the significance of a single letter of the Qur'an, nor have they obtained the slightest notion of the Faith of Islam, otherwise they would not have turned away from God, Who hath brought them into being, Who hath nurtured them, hath caused them to die and hath proffered life unto them, by clinging to parts of their religion, thinking that they are doing righteous work for the sake of God.

How numerous the verses which have been revealed concerning the grievous tests ye shall experience on the Day of Judgement, yet it appeareth that ye have never

perused them; and how vast the number of revealed traditions regarding the trials which will overtake you on the Day of Our Return, and yet ye seem never to have set your eyes upon them.

Ye spend all your days contriving forms and rules for the principles of your Faith, while that which profiteth you in all this is to comprehend the good-pleasure of your Lord and unitedly to become well-acquainted with His supreme Purpose.

God hath made His Own Self known unto you, but ye have failed to recognize Him; and the thing which will, on the Day of Judgement, turn you aside from God is the specious character of your deeds. Throughout your lives ye follow your religion in order to attract the good-pleasure of God, yet on the Last Day ye shut yourselves out from God and turn away from Him Who is your Promised One.

O YE who are invested with the Bayan! Ye shall be put to proof, even as those unto whom the Qur'an was given. Have pity on yourselves, for ye shall witness the Day when God will have revealed Him Who is the Manifestation of His Own Self, invested with clear and irrefutable proofs, while ye will cling tenaciously to the words the Witnesses of the Bayan have uttered. On that Day ye will continue to rove distraught, even as camels, seeking a drop of the water of life. God will cause oceans of living water to stream forth from the presence of Him Whom God shall make manifest, while ye will refuse to quench your thirst therefrom, notwithstanding that ye regard yourselves as the God-fearing witnesses of your Faith. Nay, and yet again, nay! Ye will go astray far beyond the peoples unto whom the Gospel, or the Qur'an

or any other Scripture was given. Take good heed to yourselves, inasmuch as the Cause of God will come upon you at a time when you will all be entreating and tearfully imploring God for the advent of the Day of His Manifestation; yet when He cometh ye will tarry and will fail to be of those who are well-assured in His Faith.

Beware lest ye grieve Him Who is the Supreme Manifestation of your Lord; verily, He can well afford to dispense with your allegiance unto Him. Be ye careful and bring not despondency upon any soul, for surely ye shall be put to proof.

SAY, He Whom God shall make manifest will surely redeem the rights of those who truly believe in God and in His signs, for they are the ones who merit reward from His presence. Say, it is far from the glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest that anyone should in this wise make mention of His name, if ye ponder the Cause of God in your hearts. Say, He shall vindicate the Cause through the potency of His command and shall bring to naught all perversion of truth by virtue of His behest. Verily God is potent over all things.

If ye wish to distinguish truth from error, consider those who believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest and those who disbelieve Him at the time of His appearance. The former represent the essence of truth, as attested in the Book of God, while the latter the essence of error, as attested in that same Book. Fear ye God that ye may not identify yourselves with aught but the truth, inasmuch as ye have been exalted in the Bayan for being recognized as the bearers of the name of Him Who is the eternal Truth.

Say, were He Whom God shall make manifest to pronounce a pious and truthful follower of the Bayan as false, it is incumbent upon you to submit to His decree, as this hath been affirmed by God in the Bayan; verily God is able to convert light into fire whenever He pleaseth; surely He is potent over all things. And were He to declare a person whom ye regard alien to the truth as being akin thereto, err not by questioning His decision in your fancies, for He Who is the Sovereign Truth createth things through the power of His behest. Verily God transmuteth fire into light as He willeth, and indeed potent is He over all things. Consider ye how the truth shone forth as truth in the First Day and how error became manifest as error; so likewise shall ye distinguish them from each other on the Day of Resurrection.

PONDER upon the people unto whom the Gospel was given. Their religious leaders were considered as the true Guides of the Gospel, yet when they shut themselves out from Muhammad, the Apostle of God, they turned into guides of error, notwithstanding that all their lives they had faithfully observed the precepts of their religion in order to attain unto Paradise; then when God made Paradise known unto them, they would not enter therein. Those unto whom the Qur'an is given have wrought likewise.

They performed their acts of devotion for the sake of God, hoping that He might enable them to join the righteous in Paradise. However, when the gates of Paradise were flung open to their faces, they declined to enter. They suffered themselves to enter into the fire, though they had been seeking refuge therefrom in God.



Say, verily, the criterion by which truth is distinguished from error shall not appear until the Day of Resurrection. This ye will know, if ye be of them that love the Truth. And ere the advent of the Day of Resurrection ye shall distinguish truth from aught else besides it according to that which hath been revealed in the Bayan.

How vast the number of people who will, on the Day of Resurrection, regard themselves to be in the right, while they shall be accounted as false through the dispensation of Providence, inasmuch as they will shut themselves out as by a veil from Him Whom God shall make manifest and refuse to bow down in adoration before Him Who, as divinely ordained in the Book, is the Object of their creation.

SAY, ye will be unable to recognize the One True God or to discern clearly the words of divine guidance, inasmuch as ye seek and tread a path other than His. Whenever ye learn that a new Cause hath appeared, ye must seek the presence of its author and must delve into his writings that haply ye may not be debarred from attaining unto Him Whom God shall make manifest at the hour of His manifestation. Wert thou to walk in the way of truth as handed down by them that are endowed with the knowledge of the inmost reality, God, thy Lord, will surely redeem thee on the Day of Resurrection. Verily He is potent over all things.

In the Bayan God hath forbidden everyone to pronounce judgement against any soul, lest he may pass sentence upon God, his Lord, while regarding himself to be of the righteous, inasmuch as no one knoweth how the Cause of God will begin or end.

O ye who are invested with the Bayan! Should ye be apprised of a person laying claim to a Cause and revealing verses which to outward seeming are unlikely to have been revealed by anyone else save God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting, do not pass sentence against him, lest ye may inadvertently pass sentence against Him Whom God shall make manifest. Say, He Whom God shall make manifest is but one of you; He will make Himself known unto you on the Day of Resurrection. Ye shall know God when the Manifestation of His Own Self is made known unto you, that perchance ye may not stray far from His Path.

Verily God will raise up Him Whom God shall make manifest, and after Him Whomsoever He willeth, even as He hath raised up prophets before the Point of the Bayan. He in truth hath power over all things.

VERILY, on the First Day We flung open the gates of Paradise unto all the peoples of the world, and exclaimed: 'O all ye created things! Strive to gain admittance into Paradise, since ye have, during all your lives, held fast unto virtuous deeds in order to attain unto it.' Surely all men yearn to enter therein, but alas, they are unable to do so by reason of that which their hands have wrought. Shouldst thou, however, gain a true understanding of God in thine heart of hearts, ere He hath manifested Himself, thou wouldst be able to recognize Him, visible and resplendent, when He unveileth Himself before the eyes of all men.

SAY, by reason of your remembering Him Whom God shall make manifest and by extolling His name, God will cause your hearts to be dilated with joy, and do ye not wish your hearts to be in such a blissful state? Indeed the

hearts of them that truly believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest are vaster than the expanse of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. God hath left no hindrance in their hearts, were it but the size of a mustard seed. He will cheer their hearts, their spirits, their souls and their bodies and their days of prosperity or adversity, through the exaltation of the name of Him Who is the supreme Testimony of God and the promotion of the Word of Him Who is the Dayspring of the glory of their Creator.

Verily, these are souls who take delight in the remembrance of God, Who dilates their hearts through the effulgence of the light of knowledge and wisdom. They seek naught but God and are oft engaged in giving praise unto Him. They desire naught except whatever He desireth and stand ready to do His bidding. Their hearts are mirrors reflecting whatsoever He Whom God shall make manifest willeth. Thus God will cheer the hearts of those who truly believe in Him and in His signs and who are well assured of the life to come. Say, the life to come is none other than the days associated with the coming of Him Whom God will make manifest.

Reduce not the ordinances of God to fanciful imaginations of your own; rather observe all the things which God hath created at His behest with the eye of the spirit, even as ye see things with the eyes of your bodies.

THE divine Revelation associated with the advent of Him Who is your promised Mihdi hath proved far more wondrous than the Revelation wherewith Muhammad, the Apostle of God, was invested. Would that ye might ponder. Verily, God raised up Muhammad, the Apostle of

God, from among the people of Arabia after he had reached forty years of age--a fact which every one of you affirmeth and upholdeth--while your Redeemer was raised up by God at the age of twenty-four amidst people none of whom can speak or understand a single word of Arabic. Thus God layeth bare the glory of His Cause and demonstrateth the Truth through the potency of His revealed Word. He is indeed the Powerful, the Omnipotent, the Help in Peril, the Best Beloved.

SAY, verily God hath caused all created things to enter beneath the shade of the tree of affirmation, except those who are endowed with the faculty of understanding. Theirs is the choice either to believe in God their Lord, and put their whole trust in Him, or to shut themselves out from Him and refuse to believe with certitude in His signs. These two groups sail upon two seas: the sea of affirmation and the sea of negation.

They that truly believe in God and in His signs, and who in every Dispensation faithfully obey that which hath been revealed in the Book--such are indeed the ones whom God hath created from the fruits of the Paradise of His good-pleasure, and who are of the blissful. But they who turn away from God and His signs in each Dispensation, those are the ones who sail upon the sea of negation.

God hath, through the potency of His behest, ordained for Himself the task of ensuring the ascendancy of the sea of affirmation and of bringing to naught the sea of negation through the power of His might. He is in truth potent over all things.

Verily it is incumbent upon you to recognize your Lord at the time of His manifestation, that haply ye may not enter

into negation, and that, ere a prophet is raised by God, ye may find yourselves securely established upon the sea of affirmation. For if a prophet cometh to you from God and ye fail to walk in His Way, God will, thereupon, transform your light into fire. Take heed then that perchance ye may, through the grace of God and His signs, be enabled to redeem your souls.

SAY, God shall of a truth cause your hearts to be given to perversity if ye fail to recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest; but if ye do recognize Him God shall banish perversity from your hearts.

That day whereon ye were, by God's Will, initiated into the Bayan, did any of you know who were the Letters of the Living or the Witnesses or the Testimonies or what the names of the believers? Likewise doth God wish you to recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest on the Day of Resurrection. Beware lest ye shut yourselves out as by a veil from Him Who hath created you, by reason of your regard for those who were called into being at the bidding of the Point of the Bayan for the exaltation of His Word. Did ye possess, ere the Point of the Bayan had called you into existence, any trace of identity, how much less a writ or authority? Disregard then your beginnings, perchance ye may be saved on the day of your return. Indeed had it not been for the exaltation of the name of the Primal Point, God would not have ordained for you the Letters of the Living, nor those who are the Testimonies of His Truth, nor the Witnesses of His Justice; could ye but heed a little. All this is to glorify the Cause of Him Whom God shall make manifest at the time of His manifestation; would that ye might ponder a while.

Therefore it behooveth you to return unto God even as ye were brought forth into existence, and to utter not such words as why or nay, if ye wish your creation to yield fruit at the time of your return. For none of you who have been born in the Bayan shall gain the fruit of your beginning unless ye return unto Him Whom God shall make manifest. He it is Who caused your beginning to proceed from God, and your return to be unto Him, did ye but know.

HOW great the number of people who deck themselves with robes of silk all their lives, while clad in the garb of fire, inasmuch as they have divested themselves of the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness; and how numerous are those who wear clothes made of cotton or coarse wool throughout their lives, and yet by reason of their being endowed with the vesture of divine guidance and righteousness, are truly attired with the raiment of Paradise and take delight in the good-pleasure of God. Indeed it would be better in the sight of God were ye to combine the two, adorning yourselves with the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness and wearing exquisite silk, if ye can afford to do so. If not, at least act ye not unrighteously, but rather observe piety and virtue.

But for the sole reason of His being present amongst this people, We would have neither prescribed any law nor laid down any prohibition. It is only for the glorification of His Name and the exaltation of His Cause that We have enunciated certain laws at Our behest, or forbidden the acts to which We are averse, so that at the hour of His manifestation ye may attain through Him the good-pleasure of God and abstain from the things that are abhorrent unto Him.

Say, verily, the good-pleasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is the good-pleasure of God, while the displeasure of Him Whom God shall make manifest is none other than the displeasure of God. Avoid ye His displeasure, and flee for refuge unto His good-pleasure. Say, the living guides to His good-pleasure are such as truly believe in Him and are well-assured in their faith, while the living testimonies of His displeasure are those who, when they hear the verses of God sent forth from His presence, or read the divine words revealed by Him, do not instantly embrace the Faith and attain unto certitude.

*EXCERPTS FROM THE LETTERS OF THE BAB, (The Book of Names), The Bab, sacred-texts.com*

# 'Shinran Shonin – Forgotten Mystic of Pure Land Buddhism'

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Text of Shinran Shonin



Shinran Shonin, is a forgotten but profoundly important mystic of Pure Land Buddhism.

## Life of Shinran Shonin

*EXCERPTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF  
THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND*

*By Yejitsu Okusa, 1915 - sacred-texts.com*

Shinran Shōnin was born on April 1 in the third year of Jōan, 1173 A.D., in the village of Hino near Kyōto. His family was of the Fujiwara clan that occupied at the time the most important position in the empire, and his noble father, Arinori Hino, held an honorable office at the imperial court. The Shōnin was the eldest son, and from this fact we can easily see what an auspicious prospect he had before him; for could not he, as heir to a noble family, occupy a high official rank, wield his influence as he willed, and indulge in the enjoyment of a worldly life? But the death of his parents, while he was yet a child, made him depend upon his uncle, Lord Noritsuna; and this unfortunate circumstance left a very deep impression on his young mind, which, naturally sensitive, now brooded over the uncertainty of human life. At the age of nine, he left home to lead a monkish life at a Buddhist monastery called Shōren-in at Awada-Guchi, where Jiye Sōjō, the high priest, took him as disciple, shaved his head, and gave him the Buddhist name, Han-yen.

After this, the Shōnin went to the Mount Hiye, and staying at the Daijō-in which was in the Mudō-ji, pursued his study under various masters in the deep philosophy of the Tendai Sect, and disciplined himself according to its religious practices. He also sought to enlarge his knowledge by delving into the doctrines of all the other

Buddhist sects; but he was unable to reach the true way leading to a release from this world of pain. He went even so far as to invoke the aid of the gods as well as the Buddhas to make him realise an immovable state of tranquillity; but all to no purpose.

While thus vainly seeking his way of release, many years passed on; and he came to be looked up and paid high respect by all his teachers and friends as one whose deep learning and unimpeachable morality were incomparable. His priestly rank advanced, and when he was twenty-five years old, he was made Monzeki (chief priest) of the Shōkō-in. All these successes, however, were far from satisfying his noble spirit, which was ever hankering after the truth. His spiritual vexations increased the more. When will the light come to this poor yet earnest truth-seeker?

His twenty-ninth year which he attained in the first year of Kennin (1201 A.D.), still found him in a state of mental uncertainty. Determined to arrive at the settlement of all his doubts, he went daily to the Rokkaku-dō, Kyōto, for one hundred days beginning with Jan. 10 of that year, and offered his final prayers to Avalokiteśvara Bōdhisattva (Kwannon Bosatsu) to suffer him to see the light. At last, he had a vision of the Bosatsu, and through his instruction he went to Yoshimidzu in order to be taught by Hōnen Shōnin. Now, according to his doctrine, all sentient beings were sure to be saved and embraced in the light of Amida and to be born in the Land of Happiness, eternal and imperishable, if they, however sinful, only believe in the name of the Buddha, and, forsaking all their petty cares of the world at present and to come, abandon themselves to his saving hands so mercifully extended towards all beings, and recite his name with singleness of heart. It was through listening to this doctrine that our Shōnin came to

remove from his mind every shadow of his spiritual doubt. Then, for the first time, he came to perceive that Amida was the name of his true Father, and could not help realising that, during these twenty-nine years of his existence, his life had ever been actuated by this Father's will to save, and that this true Father, from the very beginning of all things, had been unintermittently at work to save his sinful children through his eternal mercy. The Shōnin was filled with joy and gratitude unspeakable. To commemorate this occasion of his spiritual regeneration, he was given by his master a new Buddhist name, Shakkū. Abandoning his former adherence to the faith of the Tendai Sect, he now embraced the Pure Land Sect; that is to say, forsaking the uncertainty of "self-salvation" (*jiriki*, meaning "self-power"), he became a believer in the efficacy and surety of salvation through a power other than his own (*tariki*, meaning "other-power").

After this, he resigned his priestly position as Monzeki, and becoming a mere Buddhist monk in black, he built an humble hut at Okazaki, where he continued to receive further instructions from Hōnen Shōnin. His faith grew ever deeper until he thoroughly understood the signification of his master's doctrine. In October, 1203 A.D., our Shōnin decided to follow the advice of Hōnen Shōnin to enter upon a conjugal life and to give the world an example concretely illustrating their faith that the householder could be saved as much as the celibate monk. He was, therefore, married to Princess Tamahi, daughter of Prince Kanezane Kujō, formerly prime minister to the Emperor.

He was thirty-one years of age while the Princess eighteen. This marriage, in fact, was undertaken to settle the religious doubt then prevailing as regards the final

redemption of those secular householders, who, living with their family, have not completely destroyed the root of passion. Prince Kujō was one of those who were in doubt about this point, and our Shōnin made the practical demonstration of his belief by marrying one of his daughters and living the life of a man of the world. In the year following, a son was born to him, who was named Han-i.

In 1205 A.D., our Shōnin was given by his revered master a copy of his work entitled, "The Sen-Jyaku Hon-Gwan Nen-Butsu Shū – which we have reason to consider a memorable event in the life of Shinran Shōnin; for it was to a very selected few that the master was pleased to give his own writing,—only to those disciples of his who distinguished themselves in learning and virtue. Our Shōnin assumed yet another name this year in accordance with his master's wish. The name was Zenshin, meaning "good faith." In this wise, the relation between the Shōnin and his master grew closer and closer, every one recognised in him a spirit that harbored a most powerful faith equal to that of his master.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this fact led to a series of sad events in 1207 in the life of the Founder of the True Sect. The beginning of it was the conversion of two court ladies into the faith of Pure Land, who finally entered a nunnery. This greatly offended the feeling of the court and set it against Hōnen Shōnin and his followers. Taking advantage of the court's displeasure, those Buddhist monks belonging to the Kōfuku-ji monastery at Nara, who were for years observing the spread of the Pure Land Sect with unmitigated jealousy, now maliciously denounced its chief propagators to the court and asked for an imperial order to forbid the preaching of the doctrine of the Pure Land Sect.

The court at last lent its ear to this vicious counsel and ordered Hōnen Shōnin to leave the Capital for Tosa Province. Our founder, too, as the foremost disciple of the venerable Hōnen, could not escape the misfortune and was banished to Kokubu in Echigo Province.

Our Shōnin had now to be separated from his revered master as well as from his beloved family. We can well understand what sorrowful feelings were then astir in his heart, which, however, was not so darkened as to be altogether insensible to the other aspect of this sad event. Perceiving the gracious design of the Buddha even in the midst of the calamity, he thought in this wise: "Echigo, which is so remotely situated, could perhaps never have chance to listen to the Good Law of the Buddha if there were not such an opportunity as this. My banishment serves an excellent purpose of proselytism. If I happen to find even one soul embracing the same faith as mine in that remote province, I shall regard it as owing to the wisdom of my venerable master." Thus thinking, he departed for his destination with cheerful spirits.

Therefore, all the way along his long journey, our Shōnin made use of every occasion to give utterance to his faith and to make his people interested in the Good Law. When finally he reached his place of banishment in Echigo, he was ever active in his missionary work, going about in his neighboring villages and exercising his personal influence

over the country people. In the meantime, Princess Tamahi, who, being left behind in the Capital, had spent days and nights in sorrow and without consolation, made up her mind to share with her husband the provincial loneliness in the faraway snowy region of Echigo, and let herself suffer the misery of banishment.

Five years passed, and in November, 1211, the court issued an order to terminate the banishment of our Shōnin. The message carried by Lord Norimitsu Okazaki did not arrive at the destination until December of the same year.

To his receipt of the message, our Shōnin signed himself Gutoku (which means "simple-hearted bald man"). He inwardly wished, by thus designating himself, to determine his own status among followers of the Buddha, which was neither that of a monk nor that of a layman,— his was indeed a most peculiar one. What other signification he wanted to give to this unique title was that he was one of those simple-hearted Buddhists who were not wise, nor intelligent, nor learned. He used to believe himself as an ignorant and sinful soul, as it implied in the literal sense of the title, Gutoku. This critical valuation of himself was an aspect of his religious belief. Afterwards, he had another name given himself, Shinran, by which he is popularly known now.

When he received the message of release, he wished at once to proceed to the Capital and see his venerable master; but being prevented by various circumstances, it was not until January of the following year that he could start from Kokubu. When he reached Kōdzuke on his way to Kyōto toward the middle of February, an unexpected news made him plunge into the deepest sorrow and despair; for it was the news of the death on January 25 of his revered master, Hōnen Shōnin, whom he wished to see fervently for once before his final passing. His heart-breaking was so great, indeed, that he threw himself down on the ground and cried most piteously. He now abandoned his plan to proceed to the Capital, and making his way for Hidachi Province, he visited several towns along his route and preached his faith to the people.

Since January, 1217, he settled at Inada of Hidachi Province, and began writing his "Kyō-Gyō-Shin-Shō" (*The Teaching, Practice, Faith, and Attainment*), in which are laid down the fundamental principles of the True Sect of Pure Land. This was his first literary work, and the greatest, for on this is built the entire structure of the True Sect. After the passing of his master, there were many of his disciples, who failed to grasp the spirit of their master and grossly misrepresented its vital signification. To save the latter from a wreckage, therefore, and to make known the true purport of the Pure Land Sect (that is, the True Sect of Pure Land) free from all possible misinterpretations, he wrote this most significant book. It was completed in the year 1224, when our Shōnin was fifty-two years of age.

In the year following (1225 A.D.), the Shōnin built a temple at Takada of Shimodzuke Province. In 1226, the temple received the name, Senju Amida Ji, by an imperial order. After this, the True Sect of Pure Land began to draw its circles of propagation wider and wider around these two centers, Inada and Takada; and many men and women of good family gathered about him, who led them to the truth of the Buddhist faith. For twenty years in these localities he had thus been indefatigably engaged for the cause of the True Sect of Pure Land, when he conceived an idea to visit the Capital in 1232. He was then sixty years old.

He left his monastery at Takada to the care of his disciple, Shimbutsu; and accompanied only by two of his disciples, (while his wife remained alone at Inada,) he started for Kyōto where he had been long absent. In Kyōto he had no fixed residence, and moved from one place to another, among which we may mention Gojō-Nishinotōin, Okazaki, Nijō-Tominokōji, etc. He was never tired of preaching the Good Law of the compassionate Buddha to whomever that

came to him for spiritual guidance and helpful instructions; and to those who could not pay him a personal visit, he sent letters dwelling upon the joyful life of a devout Buddhist. Towards the end of his life the Shōnin wrote various messages for the sake of uneducated followers of his faith, in which he expounded the essentials of the True Sect in the plainest possible terms.

In 1262, he reached the high age of ninety, and began to show symptoms of an illness on November 23; but he complained of nothing particularly, except speaking of the deep love of Amida and reciting his name with profound devotion. On the twenty-seventh, he bid farewell to his disciples, saying that he would be waiting for them in Pure Land when the time come for them to join him there. After this, he kept on reciting the name of Amida. On the following day, according to the example shown by the Great Muni of the Shākyas at the time of his Nirvāna, he had his head turned towards the North, facing the West, and lying on his right-hand side, in a room at the Zembō-in; at noon his reciting came quietly to an end, showing that he finally returned to the Land of Light, when it is said that an odor of indescribably sweet fragrance filled the room and a flash of white light was seen across the

Western sky, as if unfolding a long piece of immaculate linen.

His remains were cremated on the twenty-ninth at the Yennin-ji, south of Toribeno, and his ashes were buried at Ōtani, Higashiyama, over which now stands tombstones.

The Shōnin was apparently a manifestation of Amida-Butsu, he was indeed a saving light who came among us some seven hundred years ago to dispel the darkness of



this world. His life of ninety years on earth was an imprint eternally engraved on the hearts of sinners not yet freed from impurities. He lived among us to typify the life of a sinful soul, who could yet be saved through his faith in the boundless love of Amida, and left a unique example for us who are intoxicated with the wine of passion. So, our Shōnin did not follow the steps of an ancient sage, who, leaving his home and severing all the family ties, would fly away from this world, in order to cleanse the heart, to sanctify the conduct, and to be thoroughly imbued with the purest religious sentiment, and who by virtue of these unworldly merits was permitted to be born in the country of the Buddha. The Shōnin, on the contrary, married Princess Tamahi and lived a family life, even after his confirmation in the Buddhist faith.

Four sons and three daughters were born through this union. The first, third, fourth, and fifth children were sons who were named respectively, Han-i, Zenran, Myōshin, and Dōshō; while the second, sixth, and seventh were daughters, whose names were: Masa-hime, Saga-hime, and Iya-hime. The Shōnin could not help but deeply love these children, so dear to the heart of the father that he once confessed with a truly human weakness: "I am the one who, not knowing how to be blessed by the saving love of Amida, is drowned in the tempest of passion and has lost his way in the mountains of worldliness." The founder of the True Sect, thus unlike most religious leaders, was a husband and father, who loved his family with all his heart and found his salvation in the eternal love of Amida.

It is due to this fact that in the True Sect of Pure Land there is no distinction made between the monk and the layman as regards their outward religious practice; while in all the other Buddhist sects the monk leads a life of celibacy and

refrains from eating the animal's flesh, the followers of the True Sect have no such special order among them, for their "monks" marry and eat meat. Their religious life, therefore, consists in continuing to live an ordinary, everyday human life, not necessarily struggling to free themselves from the so-called "defilements" of the flesh, and in leaving the grave matter of salvation entirely in the saving hands of Amida; for theirs is only to be grateful for the Buddha's saving love and to express this gratitude by the observance of all the moral laws and the efficient execution of their respective duties. This faith and this way of living were exemplified by our venerable Shinran Shōnin, the Founder of the True Sect of Pure Land.

The Shōnin had many devoted disciples, among whom the following were the most noted: Shōshin, Shimbutsu, Junshin, Muyishin, Myōhō, Yuiyen, Nyūsai, Saibutsu, Kakushin, Ren-yi, etc. There were among these disciples some who had at first entertained an idea to murder the master, imagining him to be the enemy of Buddhism; but as soon as they approached the Shōnin, his personality so powerfully impressed them that they at once abandoned the evil design and became the most devoted of his disciples. There were, again, others who grew more attached to the master, because he was revealed to them in a vision as an incarnation of Amida. It is not, therefore, difficult for one to realise even in these remote days with what veneration he was regarded by these people; indeed, who could refrain from revering him as a Buddha? In spite of these facts, the Shōnin refused to regard these devoted followers of his as disciples, but considered them as his best friends embracing the same faith, or as his younger brothers growing under the guidance of the one spiritual father. He respected and loved every one of them as such, declaring: "I, Shinran, have no disciples in faith." It is

evident then that the master entertained no thought of styling himself as a religious leader or teacher, he only regarded himself as a blessed child living in the all-embracing love of Amida.

In his old age, he wrote many books, in which he praised the love and virtue of the Buddha, confessed his faith, and propounded the principles of the True Sect of Pure Land; and it is through these writings that we have now access to the inner life of our Founder. Among chief works of his besides the one already referred to, "The Kyō-gyō-shin-shō," we mention the following: "The Gutoku-shō," "The Jōdo-monrui-jushō," "The Nyū-shutsu-nimon-ge," "The Jōdo-sangyō-wōjō-monrui," "The Wōgen-yekō-monrui," "The Jōdo-wasan," "The Kōsō-wasan," "The Shōzōmatsu-wasan," "The Yui-shin-shō-mon-i," "The Songō-shinzō-meimon," "The Ichinen-tanen-shōmon," etc.

Besides these, we have two volumes of his letters collected by his disciples, which are entitled, "The Mattō-shō" and "The Go-shōsoku-shū." Still later, Nyoshin Shōnin, grandson of the master, compiled sayings of the latter under the title, "The Tan-i-shō." By the aid of these books, we are able to look into his faith and conviction as it was alive in his heart; and our exposition of the doctrine of the True Sect will be according to these works.

**Life of Shinran Shonin, EXCERPTS FROM THE  
PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF THE TRUE SECT OF PURE  
LAND, By Yejitsu Okusa, 1915 - sacred-texts.com**

Excerpts from:

# THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND

*By Yejitsu Okusa,*

### III. WHY CALLED THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND?

BY the True Sect of Pure Land is meant the true teaching in the doctrine of Pure Land, that is to say, the way of truth that assures one's rebirth in the Pure Land of Amida.

We can imagine the existence of three paths leading to the Pure Land of Amida, one of which is broad and safe, while the other two are rough and narrow. This broad and safe one is the true way that assures our rebirth in Pure Land.

The Pure Land of Amida is a land of perfect beauty founded upon the truth of goodness, and not a particle of impurity could be brought in there. Therefore, however apparently good and praiseworthy in this world, human morality issuing out of a heart ever full of defilement cannot be said to be a good which is truly free from every trace of impurity; and it will be an impossibility to be born in Pure Land through our human will and moral discipline; nay, if indeed a person wants to be born there, he must absolutely renounce his self-will.

Through what power shall we be allowed to be born in Pure Land? The question has been answered in the very beginning of things, for the will of Amida entertains no doubt as to this point. That pure and beautiful land of happiness is for us; Amida, wishing to have us join him in Pure Land, is ever showering his light upon us in order to make us grow in wisdom and to become conscious of our sinfulness and falsehood, whereby we might come to entertain the desire of being born in the land of truth and goodness. It is thus entirely due to the effulgence of Amitābha (the Infinite Light) that we have at all grown conscious of the darkness existing in our hearts and awakened an aspiration after a land of eternal light. Amida who has brought up our minds to this state while we were altogether unaware of his existence, is now beckoning us, saying: "Hear my name of truth and goodness, awaken your consciousness of the impurity and falsehood darkening your hearts, and have your destiny absolutely entrusted into my hands that will save you from sin and ignorance." Those who listen to this call of Amida, and growing aware of their sinfulness, surrender themselves to the will of the Buddha, and grasp his hand of salvation with absolute confidence, are embraced in the truth and goodness of his love that saves; and after death they will no more be the owner of such a defiled mind and body as they have now, but being born in the land of happiness and purity, will be given infinite wisdom and love. If it is not for the love of Amida that wills to save all beings, we shall have no opportunity to be born in his Land of Purity. Therefore, the true way of being born in the Buddha-country lies in crossing this sea of suffering on board the boat of love steered by Amida. This way is called the "Gugwan," by which is meant the Buddha's will to save all beings.

But there are some who can not resign themselves entirely to the Buddha's will to save; though approaching the true way, they are not yet quite ready to surrender themselves to Amida, whose arms are extended towards them for their salvation, but desire to be born in Pure Land through the merit of reciting his name with singleness of heart. These people, believing there is no other way of being born in Pure Land but through the reciting of Amida's name, place too much emphasis on the reciting itself and have the tendency to repeat the name of the Buddha as many times as they could. These are the people who want to be in Pure Land partly through their own efforts. They would be born on the outskirts of it if their hearts remain serene at the time of their death. We call, however, this way the "Shimmon," or real gate.

There are still others who can not enter even upon the path of the so-called "Shimmon"; for they so strongly believe in their own efficiency that they desire to be born in the Pure Land of Amida through the accumulation of merits gained by their own moral and religious deeds. Such people would be born on the outskirts of Pure Land if by the accumulation of merit their hearts remain undisturbed. This way is known as the "Yōmon," meaning the gate of importance.

These two gates or ways, the "Shimmon" and the "Yōmon," are not the true road leading to Pure Land. As there is mixture here of one's own impure will, one is barred from the Pure Land proper; only by the love of the Buddha, one is able to approach a region lying on the outskirts. To such one, the time will come when he will realise his own fault after years of self-discipline in the outlying district of Pure Land, and then he will for the first time come to the path of truth. It is, then, evident that these two gates are merely

provisionary, narrow ones furnished for those who are unable to enter at once upon the path of truth, while the "Gugwan" way is the only, true, ultimate one directly carrying us to the abode of Amida.

When a man thus perceives the existence of these three different roads to Pure Land, he must guard himself against going astray, and follow the true, straight road of the "Gugwan." The doctrine that teaches this, is called the True Sect of Pure Land, or briefly the True Sect.

#### IV. SALVATION.

IN the True Sect of Pure Land, we have the true, all-embracing love of Amida to save all beings from ignorance and pain. It is the net of boundless compassion thrown by the Buddha's own hand into the sea of misery, in which the ignorant rather than the wise, the sinful rather than the good, are meant to be gathered up. This love and compassion is eternally abiding with the Buddha, whose will to save all beings knows no temporal limitations; and on this account the Buddha is called *Amitāyus* (Eternal Life). His power to save is manifest in his light. Though invisible to our defiled eyes, this light is constantly shedding its rays upon all sentient beings ever leading us onward to the awakening of faith. Those who have awakened this faith in the love of Amida which saves, are at once embraced in his light and destined to be born in Pure Land after death. This light is the will of Amida under whose merciful care all beings are made to grow; it reaches every part of the universe, knowing no spatial limitations. Therefore, the Buddha is also called *Amitābha* (Infinite Light). His will to save is, thus, infinite not only in time but in space, hence his two attributes, *Amitāyus* and

Amitābha. In China and Japan, he is briefly known as Amida, meaning the Infinite.

Amida is the Father of all beings;

he is the Only One; he has, from the very beginning of all things, been contriving to save the world, and once incarnated himself in the person of Dharmākara Bhikshu to deliver the message of happiness among us. Amida made the Bhikshu invoke forty-eight vows as recorded in the Amitāyus-sūtra, the main idea of which is that "I will make every one enjoy a rebirth in Pure Land if he listen to my name and believe in my will to save and rejoice in it." It is said that, before making this wish, the Bhikshu cogitated for a period of five kalpas; that, in order to fulfil the wish, he accumulated innumerable merits by practising the six virtues for innumerable kalpas with a heart full of love and compassion and free from all defilement; and, finally, that the fulfilment of this vow took place ten kalpas ago. Amida is now summoning us to his Land of Purity by showing us his name that saves.

This world of ours is a defiled world filled with sin and suffering; neither the wise nor the ignorant are free from sin, the noble as well as the poor are suffering from pain. He that declares himself to be sinless must be either an insane man or an idiot. Even when, judging from our own ignorant conditions, we imagine ourselves happy, we may be deceiving ourselves; for in the Buddha's eye our apparent happiness may be a real pain. In such a world of impurity as this, it is impossible to find a true state of peace and happiness. Fame, wealth, love, learning,—so many evils are ever leading us downward into the abyss of utter darkness. Where can we then find a region which harbors no pain? There stands Amida pointing to his Land



of Purity and Happiness (*Sukhāvati*), where our worldly sufferings and tribulations are no more. In this land there always smiles the spring of peace. No pain, no sin, but all beauty, goodness, and joy. Those born there enjoy a happiness that knows no ending; they are endowed not only with infinite wisdom and liberty, but with pure love and compassion which has the power to save all beings from the world of pain. All this happiness enjoyed by those who are in Pure Land is the outcome of Amida's love and will to save.

Amida thus grudges nothing for our deliverance from sin; with various contrivances, good and excellent, he ever leads us to the way of salvation, and it is through his grace that we have in ourselves the reason of salvation and are allowed to enjoy its fulfilment. Now, Amida has two ways of showing his grace towards us: the one is called the "wōsō yekō," which means that the Buddha supplies us not only with the cause of our rebirth in Pure Land, but with its result; and the other is called the "gensō yekō," meaning that he confers upon us the power to come back to this world of pain even after our rebirth in Pure Land, in order to deliver our fellow-beings from sufferings. In the "wōsō yekō" there are four things to be distinguished, which are teaching, practice, faith, and attainment. The following scheme will make us understand this better:

The Wōsō yekō	1. Teaching, as set forth in the Amitāyus-sūtra (in two volumes).	Cause.
	2. Practice, or reciting the name of Amida.	

	3. Faith, or believing in his will to save...	
	4. Attainment, or being born in Pure Land and becoming a Buddha...	Effect.
The Gensō yekō	Coming back to the world of suffering to save the fellow-beings	

This will be explained more in detail:

*The Teaching.* Amida once assumed a human form and appeared on earth in order to save us from sin and ignorance; and Shākyamuni was he. The most important of all his teachings is the Amitāyus-sūtra translated into Chinese in two volumes, 252 A.D., in which is brought forth the true signification of salvation by Amida. In fact, the very object of his appearance on earth was to teach this sūtra and to establish the foundation of the True Sect of Pure Land. In other words, therefore, we can say that the True Sect is the direct revelation of Amida Buddha.

*The Practice.* We are now acquainted with the name of Amida according to the discourse by Shākyamuni, and we know that in this name is embodied the significance of Amida's will to save; for to hear the name is to hear the voice of salvation, saying, "Trust in me, for I will surely save you,"—a word coming directly from Amida. Such, indeed, being the sense embodied in the name of Amida, we must express deep feeling of gratitude by reciting his name as he wills when we have been able to hear the call of our Father so full of love and compassion. In Sanskrit,

the recitation runs: "Namo 'mitāyushe Buddhāya" or "Namo 'mitabhāya Buddhāya," but in Japanese briefly "Namu Amida Bu."

While all other deeds of ours are more or less defiled, the reciting of "Namu Amida Bu" is an act free from impurities; for it is not we that recite it, but Amida himself, who, giving us his own name, makes us recite it.

*The Faith.* When we hear the name of Amida, we cannot help but believe in the certainty of our salvation, and this belief, too, comes from the grace of Amida. For (1) when we come to think of his will to save, we are unable to deceive ourselves as to our inner life full of falsehoods, and to behave as if we were thoroughly wise. This must be, because the will of Amida, pure and free from falsehood, descends upon us.

(2) The moment we hear the name of the Buddha and surrender ourselves to his will, we grow convinced of our own salvation through his grace and gain peace of mind; this will, however, be impossible, if not for the fact that Amida's will to save everyone who enters into his love affirms itself in us.

(3) The moment we believe in our salvation through his grace, we awake within ourselves a desire to be born in his Pure Land, and are happy in the conviction that it will be done as we desire. This must be due to the influence upon us of Amida's overflowing love which invites us to join him in Pure Land. Therefore, we conclude that, that we come to rely upon Amida for our salvation is entirely due to his grace and not to personal efforts. Indeed, this feeling of dependence, or this faith in Amida, is no more nor less than his own will.

*The Attainment.* The instant the belief is confirmed in our salvation through Amida, our destiny is settled that we are to be reborn in Pure Land and become a Buddha. Then it is said that we are all embraced in the light of Amitābha, and, living under his loving guidance, our life after the confirmation of faith is but filled with joy unspeakable, which is a gift of the Buddha. Then we have no need to pray the gods or Buddhas for more happiness in this life; for are we not already enjoying all the happiness that could be obtained here? If we still have to suffer misfortune, it is the outcome of evil deeds committed by ourselves in the past; and this no amount of praying will remove. It is only after our rebirth in the Land of Happiness that we are allowed to lead a life absolutely free from pain.

At the end of our earthly life, we cast aside every trace of this defiled existence; and upon being born in the Land of Purity and Happiness, we attain to the enlightenment of the Buddha. And it is not necessary at this moment of rebirth to keep our last thoughts on earth in tranquillity, and wait for the coming of the Buddha to take us into his country. As we have already been living encircled by the rays of Amitābha Buddha, however disturbed our last moments, we are sure to be led into Pure Land through the mysterious operation of the Buddha's light.

The Land of Happiness is the garden of Nirvana. Those who are born there, gain the great enlightenment of Nirvana, enjoy a life everlasting, and are forever free from the bondage of birth and death. Not only this, they are then able to manifest themselves over and over again in the world of suffering in order to deliver their fellow-beings from sin and ignorance. All these innumerable

happinesses we can enjoy come from no other source than the grace of Amida Butsu.

## V. FAITH

WHAT kind of faith does the True Sect require of its followers? Not much, only to surrender themselves to the will of Amida; and his will is: "Trust in me with singleness of heart, and you will assuredly be saved." Let us, therefore, surrender ourselves to his will and harbor no other thought than to be embraced in his arms of grace, wishing to be saved in the life to come. Amida is the leader of all the Buddhas. It is he who holds the key to all the mysteries of existence. When we bow before him in all humility, we shall be protected from evils by all the gods and Buddhas. All those followers of the True Sect who pray to a Buddha or Bodhisattva other than Amida are either misunderstanding, or do not fully believe in, the love of Amida, that saves all beings without exception. A faith one entertains for an absolute being must also be absolute and unconditional. Let us, therefore, rely upon no other mystery than Amida himself, who is the mystery of mysteries; and it is he alone that can save us unconditionally and supremely.

The name of Amida is the most worshipful one in the whole universe; and all the roots of goodness and all the stock of merit are gathered up in this name; and the reciting of it is the noblest thing to do in the world, the best of all good deeds one could think of. When we recite the name of Amida, we grow conscious of the inferiority of all other deeds to the reciting itself. However noble, honorable, and beautiful a moral or religious deed may appear to our vulgar eyes, it has no power to lead us into the Pure Land proper where abides Amida himself, for we

have nothing to add, even an iota, to the love of Amida which alone can save us from sin. All that we can do is to surrender ourselves, — our sin, our ignorance, our destiny, and our all, — into the all-embracing love of Amida, and to express our inmost feeling of gratitude for the grace of the Buddha by reciting his name.

To thus resign oneself to the will of Amida and to follow his guiding hand to salvation, is the faith required by the True Sect of its followers. In this faith we recognise two things: (1) that we are such sinful beings as are destined to be inhabitants of Hell, that we are prisoners forever to be confined in the world of pain, that our eyes of wisdom are closed and our legs of morality broken and we are spiritual invalids; (2) that it is the love of Amida who has cherished the thought of saving these sinful creatures and taken vows that he will not stop his efforts until every single being is carried to his Pure Land, that however sinful, all who believe in Amida and his will to save will surely be born in the Land of Happiness. How could we then but rejoice in the surety of our salvation through his grace?

In these two facts of faith all the followers of the True Sect agree, and know that this is altogether due to the will of Amida himself. and that we are absolutely dependent upon him. So long as we are not aware of our salvation through Amida, we may think that we are something, not altogether a negligible quantity; but we find ourselves entirely at fault, when we come to realise the merciful design of the Buddha to save us through his will of goodness and truth, our spiritual eyes are open to the inner darkness of our hearts, full of impurities and falsehoods; and we are most penitent over our utter ignorance. While we were not acquainted with Amida's will to save, we thought we were lonely travellers not

knowing whither to go, or like helpless orphans who have no loving parents, no greeting home. But the moment the name of Amida opens our hitherto unknown spiritual region in us, we are deeply grateful and happy. We now know that we are his children, he is our worshipful father who protects us every moment of our existence, that the home we are going to abide is already magnificently built, and that we, led by the guiding hand of our father, are approaching our home step by step. Such in brief is the faith entertained by the followers of the True Sect of Pure Land.

## VI. LIFE.

THE True Sect of Pure Land is a religion for the home, teaching to be loyal to master, filial to parents, affectionate to wife and children, to be industrious in work, doing all things that contribute to the general welfare, and believing in Amida's will to save. There is no necessity, according to the doctrine of the True Sect, to flee from the world and to discipline oneself in certain religious austerities; one may lead an official life, engage in business, or be a soldier, or farmer, or fisherman, each diligent in his chosen occupation, and believing in Amida with devoted heart. The life of the follower of the True Sect is not difficult; only let him, while continuing on his sinful and ignorant life, be most deeply grateful for the grace of Amida, who loves us so much as he is willing to save us as we are, ignorant and sinful; let us then recite his name from fulness of heart and be ever industrious in our daily work.

The will of the Buddha is manifest everywhere and in everything, it is present in the person of our teacher, parents, brother, wife, children, friends, and also in the State or community to which we may belong; the Buddha

is protecting, nourishing, consoling, and instructing us in every possible way. What we owe to the Buddha is not only when we are carried into his Pure Land, but even when we are living our daily life on earth, for which latter fact we must also be deeply grateful. Let us not forget how much we are owing to our present surroundings, and to regard them with reverence and love. We must endeavor as much as we can to execute our duties faithfully, to work for the growth of Buddhism, for the good of the family, state, and society, and thus to requite even a thousandth part of what we owe to Amida. To work thus for the world with a sense of gratitude is the true life of the Buddhist.

The Buddhist never loses an inward feeling of joy as he most deeply believes in his rebirth in Pure Land through the grace of the Buddha; but as far as his outward appearance go, let him have nothing particularly to distinguish himself as such from other people. A Buddhist officer, or Buddhist soldier, or Buddhist man of business has nothing remarkable about him as to single him out as Buddhist from among his fellow-workers; he obeys the moral laws, moves according to the regulations of the state, does nothing against habits or customs of his times and country, so long as they are not morally offensive; the only thing that distinguishes him most conspicuously from his non-Buddhist fellow-beings, is his inward life filled with joy and happiness, because of his faith in Amida's love to save all beings. For what constitutes the true Buddhist is his inner life, and not his outward features.

*EXCERPTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF  
THE TRUE SECT OF PURE LAND, By Yejitsu Okusa,  
[1915] - sacred-texts.com*



# Shinran and His Work

*By Arthur Lloyd*

## CHAPTER XI.

### *The Salvation of Sentient Beings.*

(§§ 52-59.)

"Amida," "says the Shinshuist, saves us by the exercise of His two great attributes of Mercy and Wisdom" (*hi-chi no ni-toku wo motte warera wo sukuu* § 52). He saves the world by Wisdom, when He allows a part of himself to become incarnate in one of the *Nirmanakaya* or *Keshin* forms, to become the spiritual teachers of suffering humanity. In this way many of the Buddhas and Saints in the past have laboured with Him, or rather He has laboured in them, and in none more conspicuously than in Sakyamuni, who is the Teacher *par excellence* of the Buddhist world. He saves by Mercy by virtue of His Incarnation as Hōzō Biku, His sufferings, His exaltation, His enthronement in Paradise after He had reconquered, as man, all that He had voluntarily surrendered, as the Supreme Buddha.

Whichever way he chooses, His object is still the same, — to save from sin and its attendant miseries His poor children who are fast "bound in misery and iron," so fast that they cannot get out of their prison-house without some one to help them.

Buddhism believes in birth-sin, the guilt of which it does not become less awful to contemplate when it is accepted as the inevitable consequence of previous sins, a guilt

contracted from many sources, in the course of a long series of previous lives. It is from this guilt, this Karma, that Amida would save us. If we listen to His voice, and trust in His mercies, we pass from death to life, death loses its hold on us, there is no returning to this vale of sin and misery. If we refuse, there is no vengeance, no unending misery of hell awaiting us. There is rebirth, there may be rebirths, and some of these rebirths may be in Hell. But Hell is not a place of endless sojourn. There is death in Hell, as there is on Earth, as there is in every place but the Heaven where the invisible Dharmakaya sits enthroned. And everywhere may be heard the voice of Amida: and they that hear shall live.

And what is the Voice?

To the Shinshuist it is summed up in the six Chinese characters *Namu Amida Butsu* (#). This *Myōgō*, or Sacred Name, as it is called, is to the Shinshuist all that the Crucifix is to the Catholic, or the Sacred Monogram I.H.S. It is the Symbolical Embodiment of all that Amida, in fulfilment of His Great Vow, has done for man. Indeed, it is more. It is what the Passover was to the Jews, what the Holy Sacrifice is to the Christian. It is itself the answer to the question, "What mean ye by this Sacrifice?" (§§ 52, 53). Wherever the *Myōgō* is seen written or carved, or wherever (for the *Myōgō* has this advantage over the Christian monograph that it appeals to the ear as well as to the eye, and can be heard as well as seen)—wherever the *Nembutsu* is recited, it bears witness to that which Amida has done. They who hear it for the first time enquire about the reason, and they to whom the sound is a familiar one pause to remember its meaning with gladdened hearts. There is said to be in the *Myōgō* all the Strength of the Great Vow.

When a man thus hears the recital of the *Myōgō*, he places himself by faith in a position of entire and absolute trust in the Mercies of Him whom he believes to have done such great things for him. By this act, a vital union (if I may so call it) is effected between the believer, who is sinful, and Amida, who is sinless, a union which cannot be effected without the cutting of sin and evil. From the moment that the believer puts his whole trust and confidence in Amida, the roots of his sins are cut, the past Karma destroyed, and if he does not enter Paradise at once, yet he is placed in safe keeping in the Sacred Heart of Amida. (*Dai-jihi, dai-chie no Busshin ni ireru koto ni narimasu.*)

It is after this initial step has been taken, after the believer, by an act (Ketsujō) of Faith, has taken advantage of that which the Mercy of Heaven has provided for Him that the Wisdom of Buddha comes into play. For the Faith which has been placed as a seedling in our hearts must be watered and refreshed by teaching and doctrine, and that teaching the Shinshu Buddhist finds, or thinks he finds, in the Scriptures which contain the undoubted teachings of Sakyamuni, the man that came, according to Shinran, to testify in India to Amida and Hōzō Biku.

## CHAPTER XII.

### *Of Faith in General, (i).*

(Extracts from ancient writers.)

I have judged it best in this chapter, instead of following the order of the questions and answers in *Shinshu Hyakuwa* (of which a short analysis will be found in the next chapter) to give from another book, the *Shinshu Seikun*, already cited, a catena of passages taken, mainly, from

Japanese writers of the Middle Ages. If the Christian reader, bearing in mind what I have said of the wonderful parallels between the story of Amida, incarnate for man's salvation in Hōzō Biku, and that of Christ, will read these passages in a Christian sense, he will, I think, find them to be not devoid of edification. He will also, I believe, acknowledge that the devout worshipper of Amida, even though he may never actually have heard the name of Christ, may yet be far nearer to the Kingdom of God than many a man who calls himself a Christian, but shuts his eyes to the pure light of the Christian Faith. I shall take the liberty of interspersing among the extracts comments and criticisms of my own, but I shall do so in such a way as to make what is my own clearly distinguishable from what I have derived from ancient Japanese sources.

127. "They who travel along the Way make Faith their starting point."

Genshin 942-1017.

127. "It is said in the Nirvana Sutra that the Believing Heart is the Cause of Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. There are in truth innumerable causes of Enlightenment, but if you understand what a Believing Heart is you embrace them all."

Anon. \*

127. "In the House of Life and Death we stay for a while with doubt and fear: into the City of Nirvana we make our entrance through Faith."

Genkū 1133-1212.

"Among the Shōnin's followers (i.e. Shinran's), the Believing Heart means Trust, and Trust is the same thing as Peace of Mind."

Rennyō 1415–1499.

[In this sentence, the word for "trust" is *tanomu*. *Tanomū* is used as a verb meaning to "entrust somebody with something" or to "commit some particular duty to some one's care." The believer in Amida entrusts his salvation to Amida's care, and after that he has peace of mind (*anshin*). The word *tanomu* is really the παρατιθέναι in 1. St. Pet. iv. 19. cf. also 2. Tim. i. 12.]

128. "That which is called Faith (the Believing Heart) is Faith in the Imputation (to us) of the Virtue of the Great Vow."

(Rennyō.)

[I have here given "imputation" as the equivalent for the word *ekō* #. The word, which is used commonly for Masses for the dead, means "to divert from one person towards another." So the Virtue of the Great Vow is diverted or transferred from Amida to the believer. Cf. Romans iv. 18–25.]

128. "Faith is the implicit and absolute Belief in a man's words. For instance, if a man, whom we know and hold in confidence, should tell us of what he has seen, — here were mountains and yonder was a river, — we should believe what he tells us, even though we had not seen the country ourselves. Nay, though others should come and tell us a different story, if we had confidence in the first narrator, we should still believe his story, whatever the rest might

say. Thus is it with our Faith. We believe in Mida's Holy Vow, because it is S'akyamuni that has told us of it, and we can have no two minds about it."

Shinran 1168-1257.

130. " The New Birth (*ōjō*) of all Sentient Creatures has been perfected by Amida: but Sentient Creatures remain in doubt and disbelief, and are consequently still entangled in the wheel of existence (*ruten* #). The Sun shineth to every quarter under Heaven, but the blind see it not, and are not enlightened, because their eyes are holden. Thus also, though our New Birth (*ōjō*) is all settled so far as Amida's Enlightenment of us is concerned, our want of belief causes us, poor sinful creatures, to remain in the wheel of Life and Death."

Rennyō.

131. "In order that we may discern things, we want more than eyes, we must have the light of the Sun. Our New Birth is not the work of our own mind, it comes from the Mind of the Tathāgata. But here, as it is a question that regards His own words, we need not ask whether we have light on them or not, whether the darkness has been dispelled or not, whether the Tathāgata vouchsafes to us His enlightenment or not. "If I cannot procure Salvation for all Beings I will not accept the Buddhahood for myself," said the Tathāgata, when, as Hōzō Biku, He had reached the Stage of Perfectionment. The Sun has risen, shall we doubt whether Night still lingers? If the Sun has risen, the Night has gone, and the Sunlight alone is shed abroad. It is therefore of the utmost importance for us clearly to discern the enlightenment gained for us by the Tathāgata. For, if the Tathāgata, in the Person of Hōzō Biku, did not gain

salvation (*shōgaku*) for us, our New Birth is a matter of uncertainty. But inasmuch as Hōzō Biku, who made the Vow, that he would not accept Buddhahood unless the New Birth were made possible for all Sentient Creatures, is really identical with Amida the Tathāgata, why should we have any doubt?"

Shinran.

[I would suggest, as a parallel passage to this, 1. Cor. xv. 12-18. I feel sure that the reader cannot fail to be struck by the constant, and, to my mind, significant echoes of Pauline doctrine that insist on making themselves heard.]

135. "There are three words that are practically identical, to entrust (*tanomu*), to believe (*shinzuru*), and Salvation (*on-tasuke*). For it is the Mystery of the *tariki* Faith that there is no room in it for doubt, – only for thankfulness."

Shinran.

135. "Just as a Son receives his father's goods (as a present earnest of future inheritance), even so do we receive, in the present life, the Merits of Amida's labours for us (i.e. *ōjō*). All Amida's prolonged labours were undertaken for the Salvation (*on-tasuke*) of each single individual amongst us, so that they are a matter for individual and personal gratitude, whenever the layman hears the recital of Amida's Vow made for his sake."

Shinran.

137. "Even though the Mind of Faith (*kimyō no kokoro*) should rise up within us, that is none of our doing. It is the

Mercy and Compassion of Amida that is shining in our hearts."

[Cf. Eph. ii. 8; and especially 2 Cor. iv. 6. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus." The parallelism is all the more striking because of the use of the word φωτισμός by St. Paul.]

137. "The word *shinjin*, "believing heart," may also be read as "straight heart." It is found in the believer, and is therefore supposed to come from the believer. But this a mistake. It comes from the Heart of the Tathāgata. For, if faith came from the crooked heart of man, it could not be 'straight.' It is only because it is the gift of Amida that Faith can be described as 'straight.'"

Anon.

[The character for *shin* in *shinjin* is 心, and means both 'belief,' or 'faith,' and 'straightness,' and 'honesty.' *Shinjin* therefore means both a 'believing heart,' and also an 'honest heart.' The quotation is from an anonymous book, *Shinshūkyō yōshū*. It is described in *Shinshū Seikun* p. 563.]

245. "The word *Is-shin* (One Heart) signifies the Union of Hearts, that is, the Union of our heart with that of Amida. The *Jūgiron* of the Tendai sect says truly that in the world there is always a lover and a beloved, and that love is perfected when lover and beloved meet. Amida is the lover, we are the beloved, and when we turn with our whole heart to Amida and surrender ourselves to Him, our hearts become one with His, and *i-sshin* is realized. But a heart which is distracted over many things cannot realize



this Union—that privilege is reserved for those hearts that are devoted to the thankful remembrance of Amida's Mercies (the Nembutsu)."

Genkū.

[Cf. St. Luke x. 40–42]

146. "In the Gate of Holy Path (*Shōdōmon*, see above chap. ii, p. 12) men work out Wisdom, and thus escape from life and death: by the Gate of the Pure Land, men return to foolishness, and thereby enter into Life (*ō-jō*). They put no trust in Wisdom, they profess themselves to be merely helpless, and unwise persons. But they put their whole trust in the Great Vow, and thus enter into Life.

Genkū.

[1. Cor. i. 17–25. When the rich young man came to Christ, the Master told him that if he would enter into life he must keep the commandments. That was the *Shōdōmon*. When He told him to abandon all the riches wherein he trusted, and "come follow me,"—that was the *Jōdomon*—"thou shalt have treasure in Heaven." S. Matth. xix. 16–22]

147. "When a man hears the preaching of the Pure Land, and, believing in it, feels a thrill of pleasure run through his frame, it shows that in some past life he has already heard something of that of which he now receives the full message. And now that he believes, he receives the New Birth. But if he hears as though he heard not, and gives no credence, he is one that has. but newly come up to the sphere of humanity from one of the three paths of evil. The impediments of sin have not yet been removed, and there is as yet no turning of Faith in his heart. Inasmuch as he

does not yet believe he cannot yet escape from the bonds of life and death.

Genkū.

[There are in Buddhism six grades of Sentient Existence. 1. Heaven (where dwell gods and angels), 2. Man, 3. the Animals. All these have virtues and good qualities of their own. But below these come (4), Monsters of Greediness (*gaki*), and (5) Monsters of Lust and Violence (*shūra*), and these may be in human form, though devoid of the qualities of Humanity. Below all (6), are the demons that inhabit the Hells (*jigoku*). These last three are known as the *san-akudō*, or 'three bad spheres of existence.' It is the privilege of Man that to him the Gospel can be preached, for Man, though "lower than the Angels," has the hope of being "crowned with glory and honour." It is for this reason that we so often find the expression *ukegataki jinshin wo ukeru*, "to receive a human body which it is so hard to receive." This extract also illustrates another doctrine which I have frequently come across in Shinshu writings, to wit, that the call contained in the recital of the Holy Name must in the end prove effectual. We may hear it once and again, and turn away, but it will have found a lodgment in the mind and ultimately (it may be a long time later), when the call comes, it will have a familiar and a welcome sound. (Rom. viii. 29. 30).]

166. " There are two ways of embarking on (the ship of) the Great Vow, and two ways of not embarking. To take the latter first, we do not embark on the Great Vow, when (i) we commit sin. For, in that case, we feel that our Salvation (*ōjō*) will not be secure, even though we repeat the Nembutsu. So we hesitate to take the decisive step. But (ii), we also refrain from embarking, when the religious mind

(*dōshin*, lit. the heart of the Way, the virtuous mind) is aroused in us. For then we feel that, inasmuch as we are so very religious, we shall obtain Salvation for our own virtue and without any need of reciting the Nembutsu. We place our own Virtue first, and the Great Vow second, and so we neglect the Act of Faith.

Next, as to the two ways of embarking. (i). We embark, when we have committed as in. For then we feel that the commission of sin settles our fate and determines our condemnation to Hell. At that moment we hear the recital of the Sacred Name, and the thought, "Oh the joy of the assurance of Salvation!" comes to our mind, and we take the step of Faith, and embark. And (ii) the step is taken when we have the religious mind. For then we say, 'this virtuous feeling will not cause my salvation. This feeling has existed from a remote past, and yet I have not been freed from the bonds of life and death. I will not therefore ask myself whether I have religious sentiments or not, I will not revolve in my mind the weight or otherwise of the sins I have committed. I will only turn my thoughts to the Salvation which can be obtained by the Invocation of the Holy Name.' When a man thinks thus he embarks on the ship *Tariki Hongwan* (Faith in Another's Power – the Power of the Great Vow)."

### *Of Faith in General, (ii).*

Summary of the Questions and Answers in *Shinshu Hyakuwa*.

(§§ 52–70).

§ 52. Amida, it is said, has two qualities (*toku*) whereby He saves us – Mercy and Wisdom. We, sentient Beings, travail

in pain (*kumon shite orimasu*), being fast bound in a kind of slavery to sin and evil, and from this we cannot free ourselves, because the fetters have been fastened on us by the Karma of an immemorial past. And Karma has relations not only with the past. It affects our present condition, it brings with it an endless chain of re-birth, life, and death, which stretches away into the boundless future. From this bondage Amida delivers us. He looses the bonds of sin and evil by the Might accruing to Him from His Great Vow, with His Light He illuminates our minds, giving us supernatural and glorious Wisdom, of His Mercy he places us in a position equal to His own, practically giving us power to become 'sons of God.' For the above reasons the Shinshuist speaks of his Salvation as the Salvation of Amida.

§ 53. Of the "Might accruing to Amida from His Great Vow" we have already spoken when dealing with the Story of Hōzō Biku. That Might is enshrined in the Sacred Name, handed down to us by the living voice (*Koe*) of a great company of devout believers, inciting us to a Mind of Belief and Trust, and filling us with supernatural grace in consequence of the efficacy of the prayers which we ourselves recite after we have laid hold of salvation.

§ 54. Sin is an abstract thing (*mukei*), in the sense that it has so many forms and shapes that it is impossible to lay hands on any one thing and say that this is the Original Form of Sin. Its effect is, as stated above, to enchain us with fetters of habits, easily formed but almost impossible of rupture, and involving us in much pain and distress of mind. But the moment we put our trust in Amida, the fetters are snapped, peace of mind ensues, we are at peace, because we have entered into the Heart of Buddha, and

being at peace, our actions become quiet and peaceable, and the liability to consequent misery is removed.

§ 55. The process by which this result is attained is the putting into operation of Amida's Mercy and Wisdom, and is embodied in the Name and Person of Namu Amida Butsu. We must suppose that in the Mind of the Everlasting Buddha there must have been from everlasting a plan of Salvation for men, originating in his Everlasting Compassion. But Salvation is not complete unless the Faith of those saved be subsequently nourished and illuminated by the Divine Truth and Life. This is given to us by the manifest and manifold operation of the Boundless Wisdom of the Nyorai.

§ 56. Is devoted to the exposition of the meaning of the *Myōgō*, or Sacred Name of *Namu-Amida-Butsu*.

§ 57. Both Shinran and Rennyo insisted on the supreme importance of Faith. "If a man," says the latter, "does not know the importance of Faith, treat him as an outsider. Whoever knows what Faith is, and understands it (from practical experience) treat him as belonging to the Shinshu."

§ 58. Faith comes by hearing. Whenever a man hears the Gospel (*iware*) of Amida, the knowledge will come to him that he is deeply involved in sin and evil, and that it is impossible for hire, try as he will, to save himself from the sin in and around him. That is one side of the 'Gospel message'. Simultaneously, however, with this 'conviction of sin' comes the firm conviction that Amida does save us, and that His Vow remains sure. Then, in a moment, doubt disappears and we find ourselves rejoicing in the Merciful Heart of Amida.

§ 59. What feelings are ours when we have thus learned to believe (*Mida Butsu wo shinzuru Kokoromochi*)? Before conversion, our lives have been spent in the midst of evil, and our minds have been dragged down to the low level of our surroundings. The Voice of the Preacher, telling us of Amida Butsu, acts as a *Sursum Corda*. It tells of our Father, of his gracious invitation, of the arrival of the lifeboat.

Then our heart utters the Nembutsu, but not as a prayer. It is an act of Thanksgiving for the spiritual mercies we have received. We are filled with *shinjin kwanki*, "joy in believing."

§ 60. The object with which we put our trust in the Power of Amida's Saving Vow is that we may be turned from darkness to light, and receive the fruits of Saving Knowledge (*bukkwa*). It is our only chance.

Nishi ye yuku  
 Michi yori hoka wa  
 Ima no yo ni  
 Ukiyo wo idzuru  
 Kado ya nakaran.

"In this poor life at last,  
 I see no other gate, by which to flee  
 From sin and pain that wreathes this Transient-World,  
 But that which leads West to the Paradise  
 Of Amitābha.

§ 61. Faith is given to us: it is not of ourselves. It is the believer's own mind that believes; but that which fixes the mind in belief is the having understood (*tettei suru*) the Great Merciful Heart wherewith Amida saves us. The faith

which turns with repentance (*kijun sure*) to the commands of Amida is not faith in one's self (*jiriki*). It is distinctly faith in Another (*tariki*).

§ 62. It is true that the word *shinjin*, may be translated as "believing heart," and also as "straight heart." But the *tariki* Faith must not be understood to teach that a man is to turn even with an honest and true heart to Amida and ask to be delivered or rescued from this or that evil. To wrestle in prayer of this kind (*neji-kakarite*) is a *jiriki* form of devotion. It may bring deliverance from the particular evil or misfortune, but it does not bring that feeling of rest and peace (*dai-kwairaku-shin*) which is known as *anshin* or *ando*. The *tariki* believer knows that Amida saves him, that He invites him, that He will provide, and knowing this, he comes in perfect trust, and leaves everything in Amida's hands.

§ 63. It may be asked, Is not this 'coming in perfect trust' a form of *jiriki*? Not so. (It is a case of 'turn thou us, O Lord, and so shall we be turned.') Amida turns us to Himself, fills, us with His grace, and bestows faith upon us.

§ 69. Where then does Karma operate? "It is a case of *ta-in-ji-kwa*, 'others have laboured and ye have entered into their labours,' which is not the law of Karma." This objection is sometimes heard.

It is true that Faith is a gift which comes from Amida, given without our efforts. But it is our work to *receive* and *accept* it (just as it is the "work of God to believe on Him whom He hath sent"). *Karma* has three constituent parts, known as *in*—the primary cause—e.g. the seed, *en*—the secondary cause; e.g. the Sun and rain, and *gwa* the fruit.

Amida's gift is *in*, our acceptance is *en*, our Salvation is *gwa*.

§ 65. The faith which we thus receive and accept

comprises all the spiritual Power which was acquired and stored up by Hōzō Biku in the performance of the labours necessary for the fulfilment of the Great Vow which He undertook for man. Among the Powers thus acquired by Hōzō we must include the power to smite sin and evil, and the power to draw men to Himself into the paths of righteousness.

§ 66. Of this power we are assured by Faith, the Symbol of the Sacred Name being the quasi-sacramental pledge to assure us thereof. Faith is the stamping of Amida Himself upon the heart of the believer.

§ 67. Some may think that it is necessary first to cleanse the heart from all defilement, and then to receive the inestimable gift. that is not so. The depraved heart (*mōshin*) of the sinner cannot cleanse itself by its own efforts. If it were possible for it to do so, there would be no room for the exercise of Mercy. It is a comforting fact that Saving Faith can be received by the sinner whilst yet in his sin. This fact throws the greatness of Amida's compassion into more striking prominence.

§ 68. But, when a sinful man turns to the light, one of the first results must be the filling of his mind with abhorrence of his own sins. Can a man, whose mind is troubled about these things, enter that Heart of Buddha to which access is gained by the *tariki* faith? Certainly not. Mere contrition or troubling about the soul, or constant introspection cannot save. All that is required is Conversion, the turning of the



heart to Amida, (*kijun suru*). The rest will come in due and natural course.

§ 69. We must beware lest we presume to say of any living man that, because he has received this lively Faith, therefore he has attained to the perfection of Buddhahood. All we can say is, that the perfect seed has been planted, that the sowing is complete. 'His seed remaineth in him,' but it needs the sun and rain to bring its fruit to perfection.

§ 70. And, similarly, we must be on our guard against those titles of honour which men give at times to those who are supposed to have made progress in holiness. These titles, intended as honours, should serve for our humiliation. For what have we that we have not received? All the Virtues implied by these honorific titles have been bestowed on us by Him, who is the Divine Mercy. Still, as Genkū, says,

Mi wa koko ni  
Mada ari nagara  
Gokuraku no  
Shōjū no kazu ni

Iru zo ureshiki.

"The happiness!

To know that whilst our bodies still are here,  
In this poor world, our selves are numbered  
Amongst the Holy Ones of Paradise."

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I have the less hesitation about offering this somewhat sketchy analysis to my readers since I have learned that a

more careful translation of the whole Catechism is being prepared by a missionary friend in Tokyo.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### *After Justification.*

(§ 71, 72, 73, 74, 75)

We have now reached that portion of the Shinshu Catechism which deals with *Zokutaimon*, i.e. with the earthly life of the believer after he has received justification by Faith in Amida, has cast all his cares upon Him, and has entered into the Sacred Heart of Buddha. We shall find it necessary to consider many questions relating to Grace and Sanctification, and again we shall be astonished by the similarities between the Shinshu and the Christian systems of Theology.

And first, let me summarize what I have been taught, as a Christian, concerning God's grace. It will enable me to describe more accurately the Shinshu position.

Grace consists in the direct illumination of the mind, and the inspiration of the will, by God. It is necessary for all good actions: it is indispensable to the just man, because, without it, he cannot persevere in the state of grace, or work out his own salvation: it is equally necessary to the man outside the covenant of grace, because, without it, he can not only not turn to the safe refuge of religion, but cannot even do any action that is good. All that is ethically good in human life comes through the grace of God. But the grace of God is over all his works: there is not one that is excluded from it. It is God's spiritual sunshine that gives light to the just as well as to the unjust. It is not limited to

priests and monks, nor to that class of people whom the Japanese call *Shūkyōka* (religiously minded persons): it illuminates and inspires the statesman in his cabinet, the merchant at his desk, the carpenter in his workshop: it is the inner soul (as it were) of all good actions, secular as well as religious, and there is no man, be he the most despicable of creatures, who does anything in accordance with the promptings of God's grace, that shall fail to receive from the all-just tribunal of Heaven his due meed of praise and encouragement. If I may express myself in Buddhist terminology, the grace of God is the source (the *in #*) of all good karma.

Turning now to the *Shinshu Hyakuwa*, I find (in § 71) that the earthly life of a believer after receiving the Believing Heart may be compared to a day spent on the road along which one travels to enter into the full happiness of the Fruits of Enlightenment. (*Shinjin wo etaru ue no jinsei-seikwatsu wa, Bukkwa no kōfuku ni iru dōchū no hi-okuri de arimasu*).

The travellers along this road dwell continually in the Glory of Mida's Light ("One the Light of God's own Presence, O'er His ransomed People shed"); and they are continually under the protection of all "gods, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas," the beings who hold in the Buddhist mind a place analogous to that occupied in the Christian system by ministering angels forth sent to minister to the heirs of salvation. The consequence of the clear light in which they dwell is that they are able to estimate rightly the importance of human virtue, that they set their minds to becoming active promoters of the peaceful welfare of society, rightly deeming that social duties are so important and weighty in their nature that the believer cannot afford to neglect them. This state of mind is that which is known

in the Shinshu theology as *Zokutaimon* — the frame of mind which enables a man to discharge his duty towards his neighbour.

In the succeeding paragraph (§ 72) we are brought to the question of works done before justification. The *Zokutaimon*, we are asked, is it something that is obligatory upon a man *before* he receives the justifying faith in Amida, or is it merely something to be done after justification?

The author begins with a somewhat suggestive expression. *Shin wo ete hajimete Shinshu no UTSUWA to naru no desu.* "It is not until a man has received faith that he becomes a VESSEL, of the Shinshu." There is a sort of Pauline echo about the phrase which is not without significance. Before the acceptance of faith a man cannot be said to be *Shinshugyōja*, a practising believer of the Shinshu Faith. The *Zokutaimon* of the Shinshu Faith is therefore, properly speaking, an obligation which does not come into full force until a man has definitely accepted the Faith in Amida as laid down in the *Shintaimon* portion of the Shinshu creed.

Still, we are told, there are men who are within (*kamei # suru*) the fold (*hani #*) of the Shinshu, who have not yet made a personal acceptance of the faith upon which the Shinshu system is based, just as there are amongst ourselves persons who by Infant Baptism have entered into the congregation of Christ's Church without any very definite heart-acceptance of their Christian privilege. For such persons, because they belong to the Shinshu, it is more than expedient that they should understand and practise the religious obligations of life. It is a most important religious principle that, so long as men have to be in the world, they should do their duties as citizens of

the world, and these duties ought not to be shirked as indifferent, even though a man have not yet received the grace of a Saving Faith. (*Koto ni seken futsu no seikwatsu ni majiwarite tsutawaru shūfū # de aru kara, nao nao mishin no aida wa dō de mo yoi to iu wake de wa arimasenu.*)

The next paragraph (§ 73) treats of the authorities that may be quoted for this view of the *Zokutaimon*. It need not delay us here, it is fully treated of in *Shinshu Seikun*, and seems to have only an academic interest.

In § 78, the question is asked, if we may look upon the duties of the *Zokutaimon* as being natural obligations, or merely as voluntary duties, binding upon such men only as have made some sort of profession of religion. And to this the answer is, that whilst certain of the duties in this section are indeed nothing but natural duties, incumbent on all men as members of human society, there are certain others which concern believers only. These may be summed up in the one word *hō-on*, #, a phrase to be more fully discussed in our next chapter.

This section of the Catechism, (for Mr. Nishimoto now goes off into a consideration of the *hō on*,) closes with a warning against spiritual pride. (§ 75).

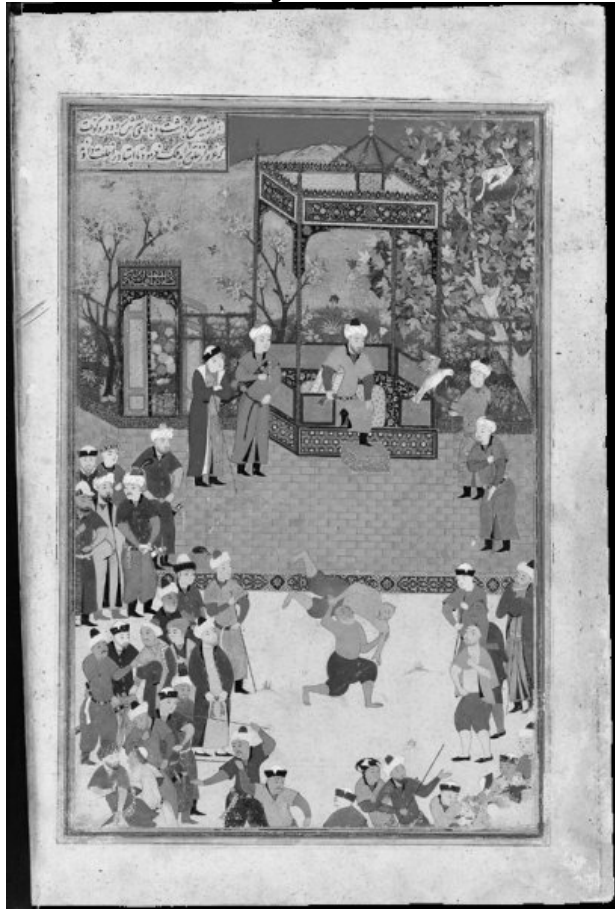
It is customary, in some sects of Buddhism, to give to men who have a peculiar reputation for sanctity, certain distinguishing titles such as "living Buddha," &c, &c. Mr. Nishimoto has already in § 70 given us some of these distinguishing names and titles of honour. Here he gives us two more, *Shōjōjū*, and *Zennin*, "righteous man," and again reiterates the warning against presumption or pride.

We must not expect, we are told, that the acceptance of Faith will work any outward change in us, either in our body, or in our life. Still there will be a change. When we have made the surrender of Faith, a living Fire has been kindled in our hearts, and the flames of Faith within will show themselves in the smoke of Conduct without (*shin-kwa uchi ni areba, gyō-en hoka ni arawaru*). We live in Amida's light as in an Ocean, and Amida's light dwells in us, and the consequence of this interpenetration, an idea not unknown to the Christian, is that, whether we try to be such or not, we are lights shining in the world (*shizen to tokkō no kagayaki ga gozaimasu*. cf. Phil ii. 15). As men, living among men, we have a variety of duties to perform, and are brought into multitudinous relationships with our fellow creatures, which we cannot shirk or escape from. But these responsibilities are not peculiar to ourselves. We share them with all our fellow-men, and this thought should keep us humble.

At the same time, it should be added, for our encouragement, when we look at the inner man of him that has accepted the principle of Faith, we find there a happiness and a peace, such as one who has not yet believed cannot possibly understand. That internal happiness and peace will necessarily show itself in the quiet, peaceful strength that will characterize our daily lives.

*Shinran and His Work, By Arthur Lloyd, [1910]*  
*sacred-texts.com*

# 'Bustan of Sadi – Forgotten Persian Islamic Mystic'



Bustan of Sadi

Bustan of Sadi was a pseudonym for Muslih-ud-Din Mushrif ibn Abdullah, a fascinating and fairly forgotten Persian Mystic Poet.

## Short Life of Bustan of Sadi

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards, [1911], sacred-texts.com*

Sheikh Muslih-ud-din Sadi was born in Shiraz, in Persia, A.D. 1175; that is to say, 571 years after the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Madina. He was the son of one Abdu'llah (servant of God), who held a Government office under the Diwan of that time. Sadi was a child when his father died, as is made clear from the pathetic poem in the second chapter, ending with these words:

Well do I know the orphan's sorrow,  
For my father departed in my childhood.

But poorly endowed with earthly riches, Sadi endured many hardships in consequence of this bereavement, and was eventually obliged to live, together with his mother, under the protection of a Saracen chief. How long he remained there it is impossible to say, for the reason that his biographers are the reverse of informing. This much is, however, known, that being imbued from early childhood with an insatiable thirst for knowledge, he eventually journeyed to Baghdad, then at the zenith of its intellectual fame, and was enabled to enter a private school there through the generosity of a wealthy native gentleman. Making full use of the opportunity so favourably presented, the young aspirant progressed rapidly along



the path of learning, and at the age of twenty-one made his first essays in authorship. Some fragmentary poems which he submitted with a long dedication to Shams-ud-din, the Professor of Literature at the Nizamiah College of Baghdad, so pleased that able and discerning man that he at once fixed upon Sadi a liberal allowance from his own private purse, with the promise of every further assistance in his power. Soon after this, Sadi was admitted into the college, and ultimately gained an Idrar, or fellowship. In the seventh chapter of the *Bustan* he narrates an instructive story reminiscent of his studies at Nizamiah, and, prone to conceit though he often is, he tells the story against himself.

His scholastic life did not terminate until he had reached the age of thirty. Of the value of this prolonged period of study he himself was fully cognisant. Dost thou not know," Sadi he asks in the seventh chapter, how Sadi attained to rank? Neither did he traverse the plains nor journey across seas. he In his youth he lived under the yoke of the wise: God granted him distinction in after-life. And it is not long before he who is submissive in obedience exercises command." No better example of the truth of this passage could be cited than that afforded by his own case.

On leaving Baghdad, he went in company with his tutor, Abdul Qadir Gilani, on a pilgrimage to Mecca. This was the first of many travels extending over a period of thirty years, in the course of which he visited Europe, India, and practically every part of what are known as the Near and Middle East. A trip through Syria and Turkey is specifically mentioned in this book as inspiring the composition of the *Bustan*. Not wishing, as he tells us, to return empty-handed to his friends at Shiraz, he built the Palace of Wealth, and offered it to them as a gift. He does

not conceal the high opinion which he himself placed upon this product of his gifted pen. The gracefully worded phrases with which he predicted the undying popularity of the *Gulistan* finds a parallel in the dedication of the *Bustan* to Atabak Abu Bakr-bin-Sad, the illustrious monarch of Persia beneath whose protection Sadi spent the latter half of his life.

"Although not wishing to sing the praises of kings," he writes, "I have dedicated this book to one so that perhaps the pious will say that Sadi, who surpassed all in eloquence, lived in the time of Abu Bakr Sad." Then, addressing the king, he adds: "Happy is thy fortune that Sadi's date coincides with thine, for as long as the moon and sun are in the skies thy memory will remain eternal in this book." This conceit is pardonable, since it has been amply justified by time.

After the thirty years of travel, Sadi, becoming elderly, settled down in Persia, where, as has been said, he gained the favour of the ruling prince, from whom he derived not only the dignity and the more tangible advantages of the post of Poet-Laureate, but his takhallus, or titular name, of Sadi. He died at the ripe age of 116, and was buried in his native city.

If the *Bustan* were the only monument that remained of his genius, his name would assuredly still be inscribed in the roll of the Immortals. One feature of his great intellectual faculties needs to be emphasized, and all the more so because it is apt to be overlooked. That is the increasing power which they assumed as he advanced in years, the truth of which can be understood when it is stated that he composed the *Bustan* at the age of 82, the *Gulistan* appearing twelve months later. Few, if any, instances of

such sustained mental activity are to be found elsewhere in the entire world's history of letters.

Under the several headings of the various chapters a wide range of ethical subjects is discussed, the whole forming a compendium of moral philosophy the broad principles of which must remain for all time as irrefutable as the precepts of Scriptural teaching.

Sadi's spiritual message is not that of a visionary. His religion was an eminently practical one—he had no sympathies with the recluse and the ascetic. To fulfil one's duties towards one's fellow-men is to fulfil one's duty towards the Deity. That is the root-idea of his teachings. "Religion," he observes, "consists only in the service of the people: it does not lie in the rosary, or prayer-rug, or mendicant's habit."

This couplet, occurring in the opening chapter, is put into the mouth of a certain pious man whom one of the kings of Persia is said to have visited in a repentant mood for the purpose of seeking counsel. The story, like many others in the book, may or may not have any foundation in fact, "the histories of ancient kings," which the poet frequently quotes as his authority, being rather too vague to be convincing. At the same time, the historical allusions form an interesting and instructive background to the legends and the moral precepts so abundantly interwoven among them.

Although Persia is only yet in the process of readjusting her ideas of government and the prerogatives of rulers, principles more advanced than seem compatible with despotism have been for many centuries current among her people, in theory, at least, if not in practice.

Muhammad said that a little practice with much knowledge was better than much practice with little knowledge. On that ground Persia has defence, for the knowledge certainly was there. What could better describe the true relationship between king and people than Sadi's thirteenth-century epigram?—

Subjects are as the root and the king is as the tree,  
And the tree, O son, gains strength from the root.

In 1910 the autocratic tree at Teheran was rudely severed from its root; perchance the successors of Abu Bakr were not of those to whom "the words of Sadi are agreeable."

The saving grace of benevolence is illustrated in the second chapter by means of some entertaining anecdotes, of two of which the hero is Hatim Tai, the famous Arabian chief, whose generosity was such that he preferred to die rather than disappoint the messenger sent by a jealous king to slay him. The story of the Darwesh and the Fox is noteworthy inasmuch as it throws a much-needed light upon the Eastern interpretation of all that is implied by "qismat." It is commonly supposed that the sense of inevitability removes from the Eastern's mind the necessity for individual effort. This view is distinctly erroneous. No such pernicious doctrine is, at any rate, subscribed to by the educated classes; to the lazy and ne'er-do-well who plead Fate as their excuse, Sadi points the moral.

After demonstrating in the two succeeding chapters the powerlessness of man to avert the decrees of Fate, and the virtues of contentment, the poet passes on to discuss the cultivation of the mind. The comparison here drawn between the human mind and a city "full of good and evil desires," of which the Ego is the Sultan and Reason the

Vazier, is original and full of meaning. Despite his own much-vaunted eloquence and facility of speech, Sadi condemns in scathing terms the man of many words, remarking poignantly that "a grain of musk is better than a heap of mud." So, too, in his opinion, is a thief better than a backbiter, and, apropos of the gentler sex, a woman of good nature better than one of beauty. The advice to take a new wife every year cannot be regarded seriously, even though it be true that last year's almanac has lost its usefulness. More worthy of the poet is the discourse on the training of children. Nothing truer than the sentiments expressed in this poem did he ever utter, and in England today there can be few who would dispute them.

Excessive charm pervades the three concluding chapters. If that bigotry and spirit of intolerance of which the Mussulman, no less than the followers of other creeds, is guilty is revealed in no small measure, criticism on that score must give place to wonder and admiration for the sincere and perfervid homage which the poet renders to the Deity whom, in the essence, all nations worship.

The narrative, in the eighth chapter, of Sadi's adventure with the idolaters in Guzerat will be found amusing as well as enlightening.

Nothing now remains for the translator but to join with Sadi in his plea for indulgent criticism:

Never have I heard it said  
 The wise found fault with what they read  
 Though of Chinese cloth a robe be made,  
 Inside must a cotton lining be laid.  
 If thou wouldst but the cloth, seek not to condemn—  
 Gloss over the cotton with acumen.

On the Day of Judgment the wicked will be  
Forgiven, through them that have purity.  
If in my words thou evil find,  
Do likewise, forgive, for more is behind.  
If a word in a thousand suit thy taste,  
Do not denounce the rest in haste.

The poet goes on to remark that his compositions are esteemed in Persia as is the choicest musk of Tartary: the translator is less fortunate and more modest.

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards,  
[1911], sacred-texts.com*

*Excerpts from:*

# *The Bustan of Sadi*

*Translated by A. Hart Edwards*

## THE BUSTAN OF SADI

### PROLOGUE

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL

IN the name of Him Who created and sustains the world,  
the Sage Who endowed tongue with speech.

He attains no honour who turns the face from the door of  
His mercy.

The kings of the earth prostrate themselves before Him in  
supplication.

He seizes not in haste the disobedient, nor drives away the  
penitent with violence. The two worlds are as a drop of  
water in the ocean of His knowledge.

He withholds not His bounty though His servants sin;  
upon the surface of the earth liar He spread a feast, in  
which both friend and foe may share.

Peerless He is, and His kingdom is eternal. Upon the head  
of one He placeth a crown; another he hurleth from the  
throne to the ground.

The fire of His friend He turneth into a flowergarden;  
through the waters of the Nile He sendeth His foes to  
perdition.

Behind the veil He seeth all, and concealeth our faults with  
His own goodness.

He is near to them that are downcast, and accepteth the  
prayers of them that lament.

He knoweth of the things that exist not, of secrets that are  
untold.

He causeth the moon and the sun to revolve, and  
spreadeth water upon the earth.

In the heart of a stone hath He placed a jewel; from  
nothing hath He created all that is.

Who can reveal the secret of His qualities; what eye can see  
the limits of His beauty?

The bird of thought cannot soar to the height of His  
presence, nor the hand of understanding reach to the skirt  
of His praise.

Think not, O Sadi, that one can walk in the road of purity  
except in the footsteps of Muhammad.

He is the patriarch of the prophets, the guide of the path of  
salvation; the mediator of mankind, and the chief of the  
Court of Judgment. What of thy praises can Sadi utter? The  
mercy of God be upon thee, O Prophet, and peace!



## CHAPTER II

### CONCERNING BENEVOLENCE

IF THOU art wise, incline towards the essential truth, for that remains, while the things that are external pass away.

He who has neither knowledge, generosity, nor piety resembles a man in form alone.

He sleeps at peace beneath the ground who made tranquil the hearts of men.

Give now of thy gold and bounty, for eventually will it pass from thy grasp. Open the door of thy treasure to-day, for to-morrow the key will not be in thy hands.

If thou would not be distressed on the Day of Judgment, forget not them that are distressed.

Drive not the poor man empty from thy door, lest thou should wander before the doors of strangers.

He protects the needy who fears that he himself may become needful of the help of others.

Art not thou, too, a supplicant? Be grateful, and turn not away them that supplicate thee.

### STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF DOING GOOD TO THE EVIL

A woman said to her husband: "Do not again buy bread from the baker in this street. Make thy purchases in the

market, for this man shows wheat and sells barley, and he has no customers but a swarm of flies."

"O light of my life," the husband answered, "pay no heed to his trickery. In the hope of our custom has he settled in this place, and not humane would it be to deprive him of his profits."

Follow the path of the righteous, and, if thou stand upon thy feet, stretch out thy hand to them that are fallen.

### **STORY CONCERNING FASTING**

The wife of an officer of a king said to her husband: "Arise, and go to the royal palace, that they may give thee food, for thy children are in want."

"The kitchen is closed to-day," he answered; "last night the Sultan resolved to fast awhile."

In the despair of hunger, the woman bowed her head and murmured: "What does the Sultan seek from his fasting when his breaking the fast means a festival of joy for our children?"

One who eats that good may follow is better than a Mammon-worshipper who continually fasts. Proper it is to fast with him who feeds the needy in the morning.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PRACTICAL CHARITY**

A certain man had generosity without the means of displaying it; his pittance was unequal to his benevolence. (May riches never fall to the mean, nor poverty be the lot

of the generous!) His charities exceeding the depth of his pocket, therefore was he always short of money.

One day a poor man wrote to him saying: "O thou of happy nature! Assist me with funds, since for some time have I languished in prison."

The generous man would have willingly acceded to the request, but he possessed not so much as the smallest piece of money. But he sent someone to the creditors of the prisoner with the message: "Free this man for a few days, and I will be his security."

Then did he visit the prisoner in his cell and say: "Arise, and fly with haste from the city."

When a sparrow sees open the door of its cage, it tarries not a moment. Like the morning breeze, the prisoner flew from the land. Thereupon, they seized his benefactor, saying: "Produce either the man or the money."

Powerless to do either, he went to prison, for a bird escaped is ne'er recaptured. Long there did he remain, invoking help from none, nor complaining, though he slept not at nights through restlessness.

A pious man came to him and said: "I did not think that thou wert dishonest; why art thou here imprisoned?"

"No villainy have I committed," he replied. I saw a helpless man in bonds and his freedom only in my own confinement. I did not deem it right that I should live in comfort while another was fettered by the legs."

Eventually he died, leaving a good name behind.

Happy is he whose name dies not! He who sleeps beneath the earth with a heart that lives is better than he who lives with a soul that is dead, for the former remains for ever.

### **STORY OF A MAN AND A THIRSTY DOG**

In a desert a man found a dog that was dying from thirst. Using his hat as a bucket, he fetched water from a well and gave it to the helpless animal. The prophet of the time stated that God had forgiven the man his sins because of his kindly act.

Reflect, if thou be a tyrant, and make a profession of benevolence.

He who shows kindness to a dog will not do less towards the good among his fellows.

Be generous to the extent of thy power. If thou hast not dug a well in the desert, at least place a lamp in a shrine.

Charity distributed from an ox's skin that is filled with treasure counts for less than a dinar given from the wages of toil.

Every man's burden is suited to his strength— heavy to the ant is the foot of the locust.

Do good to others so that on the morrow God may not deal harshly with thee.

Be lenient with thy slave, for he may one day become a king, like a pawn that becomes a queen.

**STORY APROPOS OF NEMESIS**

A poor man complained of his distressed condition to one who was rich as well as ill-dispositioned. The latter refused to help him, and turned roughly upon him in anger.

The beggar's heart bled by reason of this violence: "Strange!" he reflected, "that this rich man should be of such forbidding countenance! Perhaps he fears not the bitterness of begging."

The rich man ordered his slave to drive the beggar away. As a result of his ingratitude for the blessings that he enjoyed, Fortune forsook him, and he lost all that he possessed. His slave passed into the hands of a generous man of enlightened mind, who was as gladdened at the sight of a beggar as the latter is at the sight of riches.

One night a beggar asked alms of the latter, and he commanded his slave to give the man to eat. When the slave took food to the supplicant he involuntarily uttered a cry, and went back weeping.

"Why these tears?" his master asked.

My heart is grieved at the plight of this unfortunate old man," the slave replied. "Once was he the owner of much wealth, and I his slave."

The master smiled and said: This is not cause for grief, O son. Time, in its revolutions, is not unjust. Was not that indigent man formerly a merchant who carried his head high in the air through pride? I am he whom that day he drove from his door. Fate has now put him in the place

that I then occupied. Heaven befriended me and washed the dust of sorrow from my face. Though God, in His wisdom, closed one door, another, in His mercy, did He open."

Many a needy one has become filled, and many a Plutos has gone empty.

### **STORY OF A FOOL AND A FOX**

Some one saw a fox that was bereft of the use of its legs. He was wondering how the animal managed to live in this condition when a tiger drew near with a jackal in its claws. The tiger ate the jackal, and the fox finished the remains. The next day also did the Omnipotent Provider send the fox its daily meal.

The eyes of the man were thus opened to the light of true knowledge. "After this," he reflected, "I will sit in a corner like an ant, for the elephant's portion is not gained by reason of its strength."

So did he sit in silence, waiting for his daily food to come from the Invisible. No one heeded him, and soon was he reduced to skin and bones. When, at last, his senses had almost gone through weakness, a voice came out from the wall of a mosque, saying:

"Go, O false one! Be the rending tiger, and pose not as a paralytic fox. Exert thyself like the tiger, so that something may remain from thy spoil. Why, like the fox, appease thy hunger with leavings? Eat of the fruits of thine own endeavours; strive like a man, and relieve the wants of the needy."

Seize, O youth, the hand of the aged; fall not thyself, saying, "Hold my hand." In the two worlds does he obtain reward who does good to the people of God.

### **STORY OF A DEVOUT MISER**

In the remote regions of Turkey there lived a good and pious man, whom I and some fellow-travellers once visited. He received us cordially, and seated us with respect. He had vineyards, and wheat-fields, slaves and gold, but was as miserly as a leafless tree. His feelings were warm, but his fireplace was cold. He passed the night awake in prayer, and we in hunger. In the morning he girt his loins and recommenced the same politeness of the previous night.

One of our party was of merry wit and temper. "Come, give us food in change for a kiss," he said, "for that is better to a hungry man. In serving me, place not thy hand upon my shoe, but give me bread and strike thy shoe upon my head."

Excellence is attained by generosity, not by vigils in the night.

Idle words are a hollow drum; invocations without merit are a weak support.

### **STORY OF HATIM TAI**

Hatim Tai possessed a horse whose fleetness was as that of the morning breeze. Of this was the Sultan of Turkey informed.

"Like Hatim Tai," he was told, "none is equal in generosity; like his horse, nothing is equal in speed and gait. As a ship in the sea it traverses the desert, while the eagle, exhausted, lags behind."

"From Hatim will I request that horse," the king replied. "If he be generous and give it to me, then shall I know that his fame is true; if not, that it is but the sound of a hollow drum."

So he despatched a messenger with ten followers to Hatim. They alighted at the house of the Arab chief, who prepared a feast and killed a horse in their honour.

On the following day, when the messenger explained the object of his mission, Hatim became as one mad with grief. "Why," he cried, "didst thou not give me before thy message? That swift-paced horse did I roast last night for thee to eat. No other means had I to entertain thee; that horse alone stood by my tent, and I would not that my guests should sleep fasting."

To the men he gave money and splendid robes, and when the news of his generosity reached to Turkey, the king showered a thousand praises upon his nature.

### **STORY OF HATIM AND THE MESSENGER SENT TO KILL HIM**

One of the kings of Yaman was renowned for his liberality, yet the name of Hatim was never mentioned in his presence without his falling into a rage. "How long," he would ask, "wilt thou speak of that vain man, who possesses neither a kingdom, nor power, nor wealth?"



On one occasion he prepared a royal feast, which the people were invited to attend. Someone began to speak of Hatim, and another to praise him. Envious, the king despatched a man to slay the Arabian chief, reflecting: "So long as Hatim lives, my name will never become famous."

The messenger departed, and travelled far seeking for Hatim that he might kill him. As he went along the road a youth came out to meet him. He was handsome and wise, and showed friendliness toward the messenger, whom he took to his house to pass the night. Such liberality did he shower upon his guest that the heart of the evil-minded one was turned to goodness.

In the morning the generous youth kissed his hand and said: "Remain with me for a few days."

"I am unable to tarry here," replied the messenger, "for urgent business is before me."

"If thou wilt entrust me with thy secret," said the youth, "to aid thee will I spare no effort."

"O generous man!" was the reply, "give ear to me, for I know that the generous are concealers of secrets. Perhaps in this country thou knowest Hatim, who is of lofty mind and noble qualities. The king of Yaman desires his head, though I know not what enmity has arisen between them. Grateful shall I be if thou wilt direct me to where he is. This hope from thy kindness do I entertain, O friend!"

The youth laughed and said: "I am Hatim; see here my head! strike it from my body with thy sword. I would not that harm should befall thee, or that thou shouldst fail in thy endeavour."

Throwing aside his sword, the man fell on the ground and kissed the dust of Hatim's feet. "If I injured a hair on thy body," he cried, "I should no longer be a man." So saying, he clasped Hatim to his breast and took his way back to Yaman.

"Come," said the king as the man approached, "what news hast thou? Why didst thou not tie his head to thy saddlestraps? Perhaps that famous one attacked thee and thou wert too weak to engage in combat."

The messenger kissed the ground and said: "O wise and just king! I found Hatim, and saw him to be generous and full of wisdom, and in courage superior to myself. My back was bent by the burden of his favours; with the sword of kindness and bounty he killed me."

When he had related all that he had seen of Hatim's generosity, the king uttered praises upon the family of the Arab chief and rewarded the messenger with gold.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF MISDIRECTED KINDNESS**

A certain man, in the ceiling of whose house some bees had built their hives, asked his wife for a butcher's knife so that he might destroy them. "Do not so," the woman said, for the poor creatures will be greatly distressed when turned out of their homes."

Accordingly, the foolish man left the bees in peace.

One day the woman was stung by one of the insects and stood wailing on the doorstep. Hearing her cries, the husband left his shop and hurried towards the house.

Angered, he said: "O wife! show not such a bitter face to the world; remember thou didst say to me, 'Kill not the poor bees.'"

How can one do good to the evil? Forbearance with the wicked but increases their iniquity.

What is a dog that a dish of viands should be set before him? Command that they should give him bones. A kicking animal is best well-burdened.

If the night-watchman display humanity, no one sleeps at night for fear of thieves.

In the battle-field, the spear-shaft is worth more than a hundred thousand sugarcanes.

When thou rearest a cat, she destroys thy pigeons; when thou makest fat a wolf, he rends one who is dear to thee.

Raise not a building that has not a strong foundation; if thou dost, beware.

## **DISCOURSE CONCERNING KINDNESS TO ORPHANS**

Protect him whose father is dead; remove the dust from his raiment, and injure him not. Thou knowest not how hard is his condition; no foliage is there on a rootless tree. Give not a kiss to a child of thine own in the sight of a helpless orphan. If the latter weep, who will assuage his grief? If he be angered, who will bear his burden? See that he weeps not, for the throne of God trembles at the orphan's lament. With pity, wipe the tears from his eyes and the dust from

his face. If the protecting shadow of his father's care be gone, cherish him beneath the shadow of thy care.

Upon my head was a kingly crown when it reposed upon the bosom of my father. Then, if a fly settled upon my body, many were distressed on my behalf. Now, should I be taken in captivity, not one among my friends would come to aid me. Well do I know the orphan's sorrow, for my father departed in my childhood.

### CHAPTER III

#### CONCERNING LOVE

HAPPY are the days of them that are infatuated by love for Him, whether they be sorrowed by separation from Him or made joyous by His presence.

They are mendicants who fly from worldly sovereignty; in the hope of meeting Him they are patient in their mendicity. Oft have they drunk of the wine of anguish; be it bitter, they remain silent. In the remembrance of Him patience is not bitter, for wormwood is sweet from the hand of a friend.

They that are captive in the coils of His love, seek not to escape; they suffer reproach, but are monarchs in the seclusion of their meditation, and their way is not known. They are like the temple of Jerusalem, splendid of which is the interior, but whose outer wall is left in ruin.

Like moths, they burn themselves in the fire of love. Their beloved is in their breasts, yet do they seek Him; though near a fountain, their lips are parched.

**DISCOURSE CONCERNING CONSTANCY**

Thy love renders thee impatient and disturbed. With such sincerity hast thou placed thy head at her feet that thou art oblivious to the world.

When in the eyes of thy beloved riches count not, gold and dust are as one to thee.

Thou sayest that she dwelleth in thine eyes—if they be closed, she is in thy mind.

If she demand thy life, thou dost place it in her hand; if she place a sword upon thy head, thou holdest it forward.

When earthly love produces such confusion and such obedience demands, dost thou wonder if travellers of the road of God remain engulfed in the Ocean of Reality?

In the remembrance of their Friend they have turned their backs upon the world; they are so fascinated by the Cup-bearer that they have spilled the wine.

No medicine can cure them, for no one has knowledge of their pains.

With their cries of longing do they root up a mountain; with their sighs they dismember a kingdom.

Such is their weeping at dawn that the tears wash the collyrium of sleep from their eyes. Night and day are they immersed in the sea of love; so distracted are they that they know not night from day.

So enamoured are they of the beauty of the Painter that they care not for the beauty of His designs.

He drinks of the pure wine of Unity who is forgetful of both this world and the next.

### **STORY OF A DANCER**

I have heard that, at the singing of a musician, one of fairy-face began to dance. Surrounded by distracted hearts, the flame of a candle caught her skirt. She was distressed and angered.

One of her lovers said, "Why agitate thyself? The fire has burned thy skirts—it has entirely consumed the harvest of my life."

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE REALITY OF LOVE**

One who loved God set his face towards the desert. His father, being grieved at his absence, neither ate nor slept.

Some one admonished the son, who said "Since my Friend has claimed me as His own, no other friendship do I own. When He revealed to me His beauty, all else that I saw appeared unreal."

They that love Him care for no one else; their senses are confused and their ears are deaf to the words of them that reproach.

They wander through the desert of Divine Knowledge without a caravan.

They have no hope of approbation from their fellow-men, for they are the chosen of the elect of God.

### STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PATIENCE

An old man begged at the door of a mosque. Some one said to him: "This is not the place to beg; stand not here with impudence."

"What house is this," the man inquired, "from which no pity comes upon the condition of the poor?"

"Silence!" was the reply. "What foolish words are these! This is the house of our Master!"

The beggar raised a cry: "Alas," he said, "that I should be disappointed at this door. I have not gone hopeless from any street; why should I go thus from the door of God? Here will I stretch forth my hand of want, for I know that I shall not depart empty-handed."

For a year he remained devoutly employed in the mosque. One night, through weakness, his heart began to palpitate, and at daybreak his last breath flickered like a morning lamp. Thus did he exclaim with joy: "And whoever knocked at the door of the Bounteous One, it opened."

He who seeks God should be patient and enduring; I have not heard of an alchemist being sad. Much gold he reduces to ashes so that he may one day turn copper into gold. Gold is good with which to buy—and what couldst thou wish to buy better than the face of thy Friend?

## STORY OF ONE WHO WAS ASSIDUOUS IN PRAYER

An old man spent the night in worship and the morning in prayer. A guardian angel whispered to him: "Go, take thy way, for thy prayers are not acceptable at this door."

The next night again he passed the night in devotion; and a disciple, being informed of his circumstances, said: "When thou seest that the door is shut, why dost thou thus exert thyself?"

Weeping, he replied: "O my son! Dost thou suppose that although He has torn my reins I shall keep my hands from off his saddle-straps? When a supplicant is repelled at one door, what is his fear if he know of another?"

While thus he spoke, with his head upon the ground, the angel uttered this message in his ears: "Although there is no merit in him, his prayers are accepted, for except Me he has no refuge."

## STORY OF SULTAN MAHMUD AND HIS LOVE FOR AYAZ

Some one found fault with the king of Ghazni, saying: "Ayaz, his favourite slave, possesses no beauty. It is strange that a nightingale should love a rose that has neither colour nor perfume."

This was told to Mahmud, who said: "My love, O sir, is for his virtues, not for his farm and stature."

I have heard that in a narrow pass a camel fell and a chest of pearls was broken. The king gave the signal for plunder, and urged on his horse with speed. The horsemen did



likewise, and, leaving the king behind, gathered up the pearls. Not one of them remained near the king but Ayaz.

"O thou of curly locks!" said Mahmud, "what hast thou gained of the plunder?"

"Nothing," he replied. "I walked in haste behind thee: I do not occupy myself with riches away from thy service."

If an honourable place in the court be thine, be not neglectful of the king on account of gain elsewhere.

### **STORY OF A VILLAGE CHIEF**

A village chief passed with his son through the centre of the imperial army. In the presence of such pomp and splendour the man displayed humility and fled, through fear, into a corner.

"After all," observed his son, "thou art a 'village chief, and in chieftaincy greater than the nobles. Why dost thou tremble like a willow tree?"

"True," replied his father. "I am a chief and a ruler, but my honour lies as far as my village."

Thus are the saints overwhelmed with fear when they stand in the court of their King.

### **STORY OF A FIRE-FLY**

Perhaps thou mayest have seen the fire-fly shine like a lamp in the garden at night.

"O night-illuminating moth!" some one said, "why comest thou not out in the daytime?"

The fly gave an answer full of wisdom: Because I am not visible before the sun."

### **STORY OF A MOTH AND A CANDLE**

Some one said to a moth: "Go, thou contemptible creature, and make friendship with one worthy of thyself; go where thou seest the path of hope. How different is thy love from that of the candle! Thou art not a salamander—hover not around the fire, for bravery is necessary before combat. It is not compatible with reason that thou shouldst acknowledge as a friend one whom thou knowest to be thine enemy."

"What does it matter if I burn?" the moth replied. "I have love in my heart, and this flame is as a flower to me. Not of my own accord do I throw myself into the fire; the chain of her love is upon my neck. Who is it that finds fault with my friendship for my friend? I am content to be slain at her feet. I burn because she is dear to me, and because my destruction may affect her. Say not to the helpless man from whose hands the reins have fallen, 'Drive slowly.'"

### **ANOTHER STORY ON THE SAME SUBJECT**

One night, as I lay awake, I heard a moth

say to a candle: "I am thy lover; if I burn, it is proper. Why dost thou weep?"

The candle replied: "O my poor friend! Love is not thy business. Thou fliest from before a flame; I stand erect

until I am entirely consumed. If the fire of love has burned thy wings, regard me, who from head to foot must be destroyed."

Before the night had passed, some one put the candle out, exclaiming: "Such is the end of love!"

Grieve not over the grave of one who lost his life for his friend; be glad of heart, for he was the chosen of Him.

If thou art a lover, wash not thy head of the sickness of love; like Sadi, wash thy hands of selfishness.

A devoted lover holds not back his hand from the object of his affections though arrows and stones may rain upon his head.

Be cautious; if thou goest down to the sea, give thyself up to the storm.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCERNING HUMILITY

THOU, O creature of God, vast created of the dust; therefore, be humble as the dust. Be not covetous, nor oppressive, nor headstrong. Thou art from the dust; be not like fire. When the terrible fire raised his head in pride, the dust prostrated itself in humility.

And since the fire was arrogant and the dust was meek, from the former were the demons formed, and from the latter mankind.

### STORY OF A RAINDROP

A raindrop fell from a spring cloud, and, seeing the wide expanse of the sea, was shamed. "Where the sea is," it reflected, "where am I? Compared with that, forsooth, I am extinct."

While thus regarding itself with an eye of contempt, an oyster took it to its bosom, and Fate so shaped its course that eventually the raindrop became a famous royal pearl.

It was exalted, for it was humble. Knocking at the door of extinction, it became existent.

### STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PIOUS MEN REGARDING THEMSELVES WITH CONTEMPT

A sagacious youth of noble family landed at a seaport of Turkey, and, as he displayed piety and wisdom, his baggage was deposited in a mosque.

One day the priest said to him: "Sweep away the dust and rubbish from the mosque."

Immediately, the young man went away and no one saw him there again. Thus, did the elder and his followers suppose he did not care to serve.

The next day, a servant of the mosque met him on the road and said: "Thou didst act wrongly in thy perverse judgment. Knowest thou not, O conceited youth, that men are dignified by service?"

Sorrowfully, the youth began to weep. "O soul-cherishing and heart-illuminating friend!" he answered; "I saw no dirt

or rubbish in that holy place but mine own corrupt self. Therefore, I retraced my steps, for a mosque is better cleansed from such."

Humility is the only ritual for a devotee. If thou desire greatness, be humble; no other ladder is there by which to climb.

### **STORY OF SULTAN BAYAZID BUSTAMI**

When Bayazid was coming from his bath one morning during the Id festival, some one unwittingly emptied a tray of ashes from a window upon his head. With his face and turban all bespattered, he rubbed his hands in gratitude and said: I am in truth worthy of the fires of hell; why should I be angered by a few ashes?"

The great do not regard themselves; look not for godliness in a self-conceited man. Eminence does not consist in outward show and vaunting words, nor dignity in hauteur and pretension.

On the Day of Judgment thou wilt see in Paradise him who sought truth and rejected vain pretension.

He who is headstrong and obdurate falleth headlong; if thou desire greatness, abandon pride

### **DISCOURSE ON CONCEIT**

Expect not him who is possessed of worldly vanities to follow the path of religion, nor look for godliness in him who wallows in conceit.

If thou desire dignity, do not, like the mean, regard thy fellows with contemptuous eyes.

Seek no position more honourable than that of being known to the world as a man of laudable character.

Thou deemest him not great who, being of equal rank, is haughty towards thee; when thou makest a similar display before others, dost thou not appear before them as the arrogant appear before thee?

If thou art eminent, laugh not, if thou art wise, at them that are lowly. Many have fallen. from high whose places have been taken by the fallen.

Though thou be free from defect, revile not me who am full of blemishes.

One holds the chain of the Kaba temple in his hands; another lies drunken in the tavern.

If God call the latter, who can drive him away? If He expel the former, who can bring him back? The one cannot implore the divine help by reason of his good deeds, nor is the door of repentance closed upon the other.

### **STORY OF THE DARWESH AND THE PROUD CADI**

À poorly-clad doctor of law and divinity sat one day in the front row of seats in a Cadi's court. The Cadi gave him a sharp look, whereupon the usher took the man by the arm and said: "Get up; dost thou not know that the best place is not for such as thee? Either take a lower seat, or remain standing, or leave the court altogether. Be not so bold as to occupy the seat of the great. If thou art humble, pose not as

a lion. Not every one is worthy of the chief seat; honour is proportionate to rank, and rank to merit."

He who sits with honour in a place lower than that of which he is worthy falls not with ignominy from eminence.

Fuming with anger, the doctor moved to a lower seat. Two advocates in the court then entered into a spirited discussion, and flew at each other with their tongues like fighting-cocks with beak and claw. They were involved in a complicated knot which neither could unravel. From the last row of seats the tattered doctor roared out with the voice of a lion in the forest.

"It is not the veins of the neck that should stand out in argument," he said, "but the proofs, which should be full of meaning. I, too, have the faculty of argument."

"Speak on," they answered.

With the quill of eloquence that he possessed, the doctor engraved his words upon the minds of his listeners like inscriptions on a signet-ring; and, drawing his pen through the letters of pretension, he invoked applause from every corner. So hard did he drive the steed of speech that the Cadi lagged behind like an ass in the mire. Removing his cloak and turban, the latter sent them to the doctor as a token of his respect.

"Alas!" he said, "I did not discern thy merit, nor welcome thee on thy arrival. I regret to see thee in this condition with such a stock of knowledge."

The usher then approached the stranger courteously in order that he might place the Cadi's turban upon his head. But the doctor repelled him with his hands and tongue, saying:

"Place not upon my head the fetters of pride, for tomorrow this fifty-yarded turban would turn my head from those in jaded garb. Those who called me 'lord' and 'chief' would then appear insignificant in mine eyes. Is pure water different whether it be contained in a goblet of gold or an earthen ewer? A man's head requires brain and intellect, not an imposing turban like thine. A big head does not make one worthy; it is like the gourd, void of kernel. Be not proud because of thy turban and beard, for the one is cotton and the other grass. One should aim at the degree of eminence that is conformable with one's merit. With all this intellect, I will not call thee man, though a hundred slaves walk behind thee. How well spoke the shell when a greedy fool picked it out of the mire: 'None will buy me for the smallest price: be not so insane as to wrap me up in silk? A man is not better than his fellows by reason of his wealth, for an ass, though covered with a satin cloth, is still an ass.'"

In this way the clever doctor washed the rancour from his heart with the water of words. Thus do those who are aggrieved speak harshly. Be not idle when thine enemy has fallen. Dash out his brains when thou art able, for delay will efface the grudge from thy mind.

So overcome was the Cadi by his vehemence that he exclaimed, "Verily, this day is a hard one." He bit his fingers in amazement, and his eyes stared at the doctor like the two stars near the pole of the lesser bear. As for the latter, he went abruptly out and was never seen there



again. They in the court clamoured to know whence such an impertinent fellow had come. An official went in search of him, and ran in all directions, asking whether a man of that description had been seen. Some one said: "We know no one in this city so eloquent as Sadi."

A hundred thousand praises to him who said so; see how sweetly he uttered the bitter truth!

### **STORY OF THE HONEY-SELLER**

A man of smiling countenance sold honey, captivating the hearts of all by his pleasant manner. His customers were as numerous as flies around the sugar-cane—if he had sold poison people would have bought it for honey.

A forbidding-looking man regarded him with envy, being jealous of the way his business prospered. One day he paraded the town with a tray of honey on his head and a scowl on his face. He wandered about crying his wares, but no one evinced desire to buy. At nightfall, having earned no money, he went and sat dejectedly in a corner, with a face as bitter as that of a sinner fearful of retribution.

The wife of one of his neighbours jokingly remarked: "Honey is bitter to one of sour temper."

It is wrong to eat bread at the table of one whose face is as wrinkled with frowns as the cloth on which it is served.

O sir! add not to thine own burdens, for an evil temper brings disaster in its train.

If thou hast not a sweet tongue like Sadi; thou hast neither gold nor silver.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE FORBEARANCE OF GOOD MEN**

I have heard that a debased drunkard caught a pious man by the collar. The latter received his blows in silence, and in forbearance lifted not his head.

A passer-by remarked: "Art thou not a man? It is a pity to be patient with this ignorant fellow."

The pious man replied: "Speak not thus to me. A foolish drunkard collars one by the neck in the thought that he is fighting with a lion; there is no fear that a learned man will contend with an inebriated fool."

The virtuous follow this rule in life—when they suffer oppression they display kindness.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE NOBLE-MINDEDNESS OF MEN**

A dog bit the leg of a hermit with such violence that venom dropped from its teeth, and the poor man could not sleep all night through pain.

His little daughter chided him, saying: "Hast thou not teeth as well?"

The unfortunate parent wept, and then smilingly replied: "Dear child! Although I was stronger than the dog, I restrained my anger. Should I receive a sword-blow on the head, I could not apply my teeth to the legs of a dog."

One can revenge oneself upon the mean, but a man cannot act like a dog.

### STORY OF A KIND MASTER AND HIS DISOBEDIENT SLAVE

An eminent man, famous for his many virtues, possessed a slave of evil disposition, who in ugliness of feature surpassed every one in the city. He closely attended his master at meal-times, but he would not have given a drop of water to a dying man. Neither reproof nor the rod influenced him; the house was in a constant state of disorder through him. Sometimes, in his bad temper, would he litter the paths with thorns and rubbish; at other times, throw the chickens down the well. His unhappy temperament was written on his face, and never did he perform a task successfully.

Some one asked his master: "What is there that thou likest in this slave—his agreeable manners, or his skill, or beauty? Surely, it is not worth while to keep such an unruly knave and burden thyself with such an affliction. I will procure for thee a slave of handsome appearance and good character. Take this one to the slave-market and sell him. If a price is offered for him, do not refuse it, for he would be dear at that."

The good-natured man smiled and said: "O friend! although the character of my slave is certainly bad, my character is improved by him, for when I have learned to tolerate his manner I shall be able to put up with anything at the hands of others. It were not humane to sell him and thus make known his faults. And it is better to endure his affliction myself than to pass him on to others."

Accept for thyself what thou wouldst accept for others. If distressed thyself, involve not thy fellows.

Forbearance is at first like poison, but when engrained in the nature it becomes like honey.

### **STORY OF MARUF KARCHI AND THE SICK TRAVELLER**

No one follows the path of Maruf Karchi who does not first banish the idea of fame from his head.

A traveller once came to Maruf's house at the point of death—his life was joined to his body by a single hair. He passed the night in wailing and lamentation, sleeping not himself nor permitting any one else to sleep by reason of his groans. His mind was distressed and his temper was vile; though he died not himself, he killed many by his fretting. Such was his restlessness that every one fled from him. Maruf Karchi alone remained. He, like a brave man, girt his loins and sat up many nights in attendance at the sick man's bedside. But one night Maruf was attacked by sleep—how long can a sleepless man keep up?

As soon as the invalid saw him asleep he began to rave: "Cursed be thy abominable

race!" he cried: "what knows this glutton, intoxicated with sleep, of the helpless man who has not closed his eyes?"

Maruf took no notice of these words, but one of the women of the harem, overhearing them, remarked: "Didst thou not hear what that wailing beggar said? Turn him out, and tell him to take his abuse with him and die elsewhere. Kindness and compassion have their occasions,

but to do good to the evil is evil; only a fool plants trees in barren soil. A grateful dog is better than an ungrateful man."

Maruf laughed: Dear woman," he replied, "be not offended at his ungracious words. If he rave at me through sickness, I am not angered. When thou art strong and well thyself, bear gratefully the burdens of the weak. If thou cherish the tree of kindness, thou wilt assuredly eat of the fruits of a good name."

They attain to dignity who rid themselves of arrogance.

He who worships grandeur is the slave of pride; he knows not that greatness consists in meekness.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE FOLLY OF THE IGNOBLE**

An impudent fellow begged of a pious man, but the latter had no money in his house. Otherwise, would he have showered gold upon him like dust. The infamous rascal, therefore, went out and began to abuse him in the street.

The eye of the fault-finder sees no merits. What regard has he who has acted dishonourably for the honour of another?

Being informed of his words, the pious man smiled and said: "It is well; this man has enumerated only a few of my bad qualities—only one out of a hundred that are known to me. The evil that he has supposed in me I know for certain that I possess. Only one year has he been acquainted with me; how can he know the faults of seventy years? None but the Omniscient knows my faults

better than myself. Never have I known one who has attributed to me so few defects. If he bear witness against me in the Day or Judgment, I shall have no fear. If he who thinks ill of me seek to reveal my faults, tell him to come and take the record from me."

Be humble when the veil is torn from off thy character. If a pitcher were made of the dust of men, the calumnious would shatter it with stones.

### **STORY OF ONE WHO HAD A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE**

A certain man knew something of astronomy and his head, in consequence, was filled with pride. Journeying far, he visited Kushyar, the sage, who turned his eyes from him and would teach him nothing. When the disappointed traveller was on the point of leaving, Kushyar addressed him with these words:

"Thou imaginest that thou art full of knowledge. How can a vessel that is full receive of more? Rid thyself of thy pretensions, so that thou mayest be filled. Being full of vanity, thou goest empty."

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE HUMILITY OF THE PIOUS**

Some one heard the barking of a dog in the ruined hut of a pious man. Reflecting upon the strangeness of the fact, he went and searched, but found no traces of a dog. In truth, the devotee alone was in the house.

Not wishing his curiosity to be revealed, the man was departing, when the owner of the house cried out: "Come in; why standest thou upon the door? Knowest thou not, O

friend, that I it was who barked? When I discerned that humility was acceptable to God, I banished pride and vanity from my heart, and clamoured with barks at the door of God, for I saw none more lowly than a dog."

If thou desire to attain to dignity, let humility be thy path.

Behold, when the dew lies low upon the earth, the sun doth raise it to the skies.

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING THE VALUE OF SOFT WORDS**

The slave of a king escaped, and, though a search was made, was not discovered. Later, when the fugitive returned, the king, in anger, ordered that he should be put to death.

When the executioner brought out his scimitar, like the tongue of a thirsty man, the despondent slave cried out:

O God! I forgive the king the shedding of my blood, for I have ever enjoyed his bounty and shared in his prosperity. Let him not suffer for this deed on the Day of Judgment, to the delight of his enemies."

When the king heard these words his anger was appeased, and he appointed the slave to be an officer of the standard.

The moral of this story is that soft speech acts like water on the fires of wrath. Do not the soldiers on the battle-field wear armour consisting of a hundred folds of silk?

O friend! be humble when thou dealest with a fierce foe, for gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.

## STORY ILLUSTRATING THE WISDOM OF FEIGNING DEAFNESS

Many writers affirm the falsity of the idea that Hatim was deaf.

One morning his attention was attracted by the buzzing of a fly, which had become ensnared in a spider's web. "O thou," he observed, "who art fettered by thine own avarice, be patient. Wherever there be a tempting bait, huntsman and snare are close at hand."

One of his disciples remarked: "Strange it is that thou couldst hear the buzzing of a fly that hardly reached our ears. No longer can: they call thee deaf."

The Sheikh replied: "Deafness is better than the hearing of idle words. Those that sit with me in private are prone to conceal my faults and parade my virtues; thus, do they make me vain. I feign deafness that I may be spared their flattery. When my assumed affliction has become known to them they will speak freely of that which is good and bad in me; then, being grieved at the recital of my faults, I shall abstain from evil."

Go not down a well by a rope of praise. Be deaf, like Hatim, and listen to the words of them that slander thee.

## STORY ILLUSTRATING FORBEARANCE FOR THE SAKE OF FRIENDS

A certain man, whose heart was as pure as Sadi's, fell in love. Although taunted by his enemies in consequence, he showed no anger.



Some one asked him: "Hast thou no sense of shame? Art thou not sensible to these indignities? It is abject to expose oneself to ridicule, and weak to endure patiently the scoffs of enemies. To overlook the errors of the, ignorant is wrong, lest it be said that thou hast neither strength nor courage."

How elegantly did the distracted lover make reply! His words are worthy to be writ in letters of gold:

"Alone in my heart there dwelleth affection for my loved one; thus, it contains no room for malice."

### **STORY OF LUQMAN, THE SAGE**

I have heard that Luqman was of dark complexion and careless of his appearance. Some one mistook him for a slave, and employed him in digging trenches at Baghdad. Thus he continued for a year, no one suspecting who he was. When the truth was known the master was afeared, and fell at Luqman's feet, offering excuses.

The sage smiled and said: "Of what use are these apologies? For a year my heart has bled through thine oppression. How can I forget that in one hour? But I forgive thee, good man, for thy gain has caused to me no loss. Thou hast built thy house; my wisdom and knowledge have increased. I, too, possess a slave, and frequently set him to arduous labour. Nevermore, when I remember the hardships of my toil, will I afflict him."

He who has not suffered at the hands of the strong grieves not at the frailness of the weak.

If thou be sorrowed by those above thee, be not harsh with thine inferiors.

## **CHAPTER V**

### CONCERNING RESIGNATION

HAPPINESS comes from the favour of God, not from the might of the powerful. If the heavens bestow not fortune, by no valour can it be obtained.

The ant suffers not by reason of its weakness; the tiger eats not by virtue of its strength.

Since the hand reaches not to the skies, accept as inevitable the fortune that it brings.

If thy life is destined to be long, no snake nor sword will harm thee; when the fated day of death arrives, the antidote will kill thee no less than the poison.

### **STORY OF A SOLDIER OF ISFAHAN**

In Isfahan I had a friend who was warlike, spirited, and shrewd. His hands and dagger were for ever stained with blood. The hearts of his enemies were consumed by fear of him; even the tigers stood in awe of him. In battle he was like a sparrow among locusts; in combat, sparrows and men were alike to him. Had he made an attack upon Faridun, he would not have given the latter time to draw his sword. Neither in bravery nor magnanimity had he an equal.

This warrior formed a liking for my company; but as I was not destined to remain in Isfahan, Fate transferred me

from Iraq to Syria, in which holy land my staying was agreeable. After some time the desire for my home attracted me, so I returned to Iraq.

One night, the memory of the sepoy passed through my mind; the salt of his friendship opened the wounds of my gratitude, for I had eaten salt from his hand. To meet him, I went to Isfahan, and inquired as to where he lived.

I chanced upon him. He who had been a youth had become old; his form, once erect as an arrow, had become as a bow. Like a hoary mountain, his head was covered with snowy hair; Time had conquered him and twisted the wrist of his bravery. The pride of his strength had gone; the head of weakness was upon his knees, "O tiger-seizer!" I exclaimed, "what has made thee decrepit like an old fox?"

He laughed and said: "Since the day of the battle of Tartary, I have expelled the thoughts of fighting from my head. Then did I see the earth arrayed with spears like a forest of reeds. I raised like smoke the dust of conflict; but when Fortune does not favour, of what avail is fury? I am one who, in combat, could take with a spear a ring from the palm of the hand; but, as my star did not befriend me, they encircled me as with a ring. I seized the opportunity of flight, for only a fool strives with Fate. How could my helmet and cuirass aid me when my bright star favoured me not? When the key of victory is not in the hand, no one can break open the door of conquest with his arms.

"The enemy were a pack of leopards, and as strong as elephants. The heads of the heroes were encased in iron, as were also the hoofs of the horses. We urged on our Arab steeds like a cloud, and when the two armies encountered each other thou wouldst have said they had struck the sky

down to the earth. From the raining of arrows, that descended like hail, the storm of death arose in every corner. Not one of our troops came out of the battle but his cuirass was soaked with blood. Not that our swords were blunt—it was the vengeance of stars of ill fortune. Overpowered, we surrendered, like a fish which, though protected by scales, is caught by the hook in the bait. Since Fortune averted her face, useless was our shield against the arrows of Fate."

### **STORY OF THE DOCTOR AND THE VILLAGER**

One night a villager could not sleep owing to a pain in his side. A doctor said: "This pain is caused by his having eaten the leaves of the vine. I shall be astonished if he lasts through the night, for the arrows of a Tartar in his breast were better for him than the eating of such indigestible food."

That night the doctor died; forty years have since passed, and villager yet lives.

### **STORY OF THE VILLAGER AND HIS ASS**

The ass of a villager died, so he set the head upon a vine in his garden in order that it might ward off the Evil Eye.

A sage old man passed by and laughingly remarked: "Dost think, O friend, this will effect thy purpose? In life, the ass could not protect itself from blows; so, in weakness, did it die."

What knows the physician of the condition of the sick, when, helpless, he himself will die through illness?

### **STORY ILLUSTRATING LUCK**

A poor man dropped a dinar in the road. He searched much, but at last, despairing, abandoned the attempt.

Some one came along and found the coin by chance.

God and ill fortune are predestined. Our daily portion depends not upon our strength and efforts, for those who are strongest and strive the most stand often in the direst need.

### **STORY OF ONE WHO BLAMED HIS DESTINY**

There was once a rich and prosperous man named Bakhtyar. The wife of one of his neighbours, who was in the other extreme of poverty, upbraided her husband one night when he went to her empty-handed, saying: "No one is so poor and unfortunate as thee. Take a lesson from thy neighbours, who are well-to-do. Why art thou not fortunate, like them?"

The man replied: "I am incapable of aught; quarrel not with Fate. I have not been endowed with the power to make myself a Bakhtyar."

### **STORY OF A DARWESH AND HIS WIFE**

A Darwesh remarked to his wife, who was of ill-favoured countenance: "Since Fate has made thee ugly, do not encrust thy face with cosmetic."

Who can attain good fortune by force! Who, with collyrium, can make the blind to see?

Not one among the philosophers of Greece or Rome could produce honey from the thorn.

Wild beasts cannot become men; education is wasted upon them.

A mirror can be freed from stain, but it cannot be made from a stone.

Roses do not blossom on the branches of the willow; hot baths never yet made an Ethiop white.

Since one cannot escape the arrows of Fate, resignation is the only shield.

#### **STORY OF A VULTURE AND A KITE**

A vulture said to a kite: "No one can see so far as I."

"Possibly," replied the kite; "but what canst thou see across the desert?"

Gazing down, the vulture exclaimed: "Yonder do I see a grain of wheat."

Thereupon, they flew to the ground. When the vulture settled upon the wheat he became caught in a trap. He had not known that, through his eating the grain, Fate would ensnare him by the neck.

Not every oyster contains a pearl; not every archer hits the target.

"Of what use," the kite inquired, "was it to see the grain when thou couldst not discern the trap of thine enemy?"

"Caution," said the captive vulture, "availeth not with Destiny."

When the decrees of past eternity are brought to action, the keenest eyes are rendered blind by Fate.

In the ocean, where no shore-line appears, the swimmer strives in vain.

### **STORY OF A CAMEL**

A young camel said to its mother: "After thou hast made a journey, rest awhile."

"If the bridle were in my hands," was the reply, "no one would ever see me in the string of camels with a load upon my back."

Fate is the helmsman of the ship of life, no matter though the owner rend his clothes.

O Sadi! look not for aid from any man. God is the giver, and He alone. If thou worship Him, the door of His mercy sufficeth thee; if He drive thee away, no one will ease thee. If He make thee wear a crown, raise thy head; if not, bow thy head in despair.

### **DISCOURSE CONCERNING HYPOCRISY**

Who knows that thou art not pledged to, God even though thou standest in prayer without ablution?

That prayer is the key to hell which thou performest only before the eyes of men.

If the high-road of thy life lead to aught but God, thy prayer-mat will be thrown into the fire.

He whose heart is good and makes no outward show of piety is better than one of outward sanctity whose heart is false.

A night-prowling robber is better than a sinner in the tunic of a saint.

Expect not wages from Omar, O son, when thou workest in the house of Zaid.

If in private I am bad and mean, of what avail is it to pose before the world with honour? How much will the bag of hypocrisy weigh in the Scales of Justice?

The outside of the hypocrite's coat is neater than the lining, for the one is seen and the other is hidden.

## **CHAPTER IX**

### CONCERNING REPENTANCE

O THOU of whose life seventy years have passed, perhaps thou hast slept in negligence that thy days have been thrown to the winds. Worldly aims hast thou well pursued; no preparations hast thou made for the departure to that world to come.

On the Judgment Day, when the bazar of Paradise will be arrayed, rank will be assigned in accordance with one's deeds.



If thou shouldst take a goodly stock of virtues, in proportion will be thy profit; if thou be bankrupt, thou wilt be ashamed.

If fifty years of thy life have passed, esteem as a precious boon the few that yet remain.

While still thou hast the power of speech, close not thy lips like the dead from the praise of God.

### **AN OLD MAN'S LAMENT**

One night, in the season of youth, several of us young men sat together; we sang like bulbuls and raised a tumult in the street by our mirth.

An old man sat silent, apart; like a filbert-nut, his tongue was closed from speech. A youth approached him and said: "O old man! why sittest thou so mournfully in this corner? Come, raise thy head from the collar of grief and join us in our festivity."

Thus did the old man reply: "When the morning breeze blows over the rose-garden, the young trees proudly wave their branches. It becomes not me to mingle in thy company, for the dawn of old age has spread over my cheeks. Thy turn it is to sit at this table of youth; I have washed my hands of youthful pleasures. Time has showered snow upon my crow-like wings; like the bulbul, I could not sport in the garden. Soon will the harvest of my life be reaped; for thee, the new green leaves are bursting. The bloom has faded from my garden; who makes a nosegay from withered flowers? I must weep, like a child, in shame for my sins, but cannot emulate his pleasures."

Well has Luqman said: "It is better not to live at all than to live many years in sinfulness." Better, too, may it be to close the shop in the morning than to sell the stock at a loss.

### **ADVICE AND WARNING**

To-day, O youth, take the path of worship, for to-morrow comes old age. Leisure thou hast, and strength—strike the ball when the field is wide. I knew not the value of life's day till now that I have lost it.

How can an old ass strive beneath its burden?—go thy way, for thou ridest a swift-paced horse.

A broken cup that is mended—what will its value be? Now that in carelessness the cup of life has fallen from thy hand, naught remains but to join the pieces.

Negligently hast thou let the pure water go; how canst thou now perform thy ablutions, except with sand?

### **SADI'S REBUKE FROM A CAMEL-DRIVER**

One night in the desert of Faid my feet became fettered with sleep. A camel-driver awoke me, saying: "Arise; since thou heedest not the sound of the bell, perhaps thou desirest to be left behind! I, like thee, would sleep awhile, but the desert stretches ahead. How wilt thou reach the journey's end if thou sleepest when the drum of departure beats?"

Happy are they who have prepared their baggage before the beat of the drum! The sleepers by the wayside raise not their heads and the caravan has passed out of sight.

He who was early awake surpassed all on the road; what availed it to awaken when the caravan had gone?

This is the time to sow the seeds of the harvest thou wouldst reap.

Go not bankrupt to the Resurrection, for it availeth not to sit in regret. By means of the stock that thou hast, O son, profit can be acquired; what profit accrueth to him who consumeth his stock himself?

Strive now, when the water reacheth not beyond thy waist; delay not until the flood has 'passed over thy head.

Heed the counsel of the wise to-day, for to-morrow will Nakir question thee with sternness. Esteem as a privilege thy precious soul, for a cage without a bird has no value. Waste-not thy time in sorrow and regret, for opportunity is precious and Time is a sword.

### **STORY CONCERNING SORROW FOR THE DEAD**

A certain man died and another rent his clothes in grief. Hearing his cries, a sage exclaimed: "If the dead man possessed the power he would tear his shroud by reason of thy wailing and would say: ° Do not torment thyself on account of my affliction, since a day or two before thee I made ready for the journey. Perhaps thou hast forgotten thine own death, that my decease has made thee so distressed."

When he whose eyes are open to the truth scatters flowers over the dead, his heart burns. not for the dead but for himself.

Why dost thou weep over the death of a child? He came pure, and he departed pure.

Tie now the feet of the bird of the soul; tarry not till it has borne the rope from thy hand.

Long hast thou sat in the place of another; soon will another sit in thy place.

Though thou be a hero or a swordsman, thou wilt carry away nothing but the shroud.

If the wild ass break its halter and wander into the desert its feet become ensnared in the sand. Thou, too, hast strength till thy feet go into the dust of the grave.

Since yesterday has gone and to-morrow has not come, take account of this one moment that now is.

In this garden of the world there is not a cypress that has grown which the wind of death has not uprooted.

### **STORY OF A PIOUS MAN AND A GOLD BRICK**

A gold brick fell into the hands of a pious man and so turned his head that his enlightened mind became gloomy. He passed the whole night in anxious thought, reflecting: "This treasure will suffice me till the end of my life; no longer shall I have to bend my back before any one in begging. A house will I build, the foundation of which shall be of marble; the rafters of the ceiling shall be of aloewood. A special room will I have for my friends, and its door shall lead into a garden-house. Servants shall cook my food, and in ease will I nourish my soul. This coarse

woollen bed-cloth has killed me by its roughness; now will I go and spread a carpet."

His imaginings made him crazy; the crab had pierced its claws into his brain. He forsook his prayers and devotions, and neither ate nor slept.

Unable to rest tranquil in one place, he wandered to a plain, with his head confused with the charms of his vain fancies. An old man was kneading mud upon a grave for the purpose of making bricks. Absorbed in thought for a while, the old man said:

"O foolish soul! hearken to my counsel. Why hast thou attached thy mind to that gold brick when one day they will make bricks from thy dust? The mouth of a covetous man is too widely open that it can be closed again by one morsel. Take, O base man, thy hand from off that brick, for the river of thy avarice cannot be dammed up with a brick.

"So negligent hast thou been in the thought of gain and riches that the stock of thy life has become trodden underfoot. The dust of lust has blinded the eyes of thy reason—the simoom of desire has burned the harvest of thy life."

Wipe the antimony of neglect from off thine eyes, for tomorrow wilt thou be reduced to antimony under the dust.

### ADMONITION

Thy life is a bird, and its name is Breath. When the bird has flown from its cage it cometh not back to captivity.

Be watchful for the world lasts but a moment, and a moment spent with wisdom is better than an age with folly.

Why fix we thus our minds upon this caravanserai? Our friends have departed and we are on the road. After us, the same flowers will bloom in the garden, together will friends still sit.

When thou comest to Shiraz, dost thou not cleanse thyself from the dust of the road?

Soon, O thou polluted with the dust of sin, wilt thou journey to a strange city. Weep, and wash with thy tears thy impurities away.

### **MORAL FROM AN INCIDENT IN SADI'S CHILDHOOD**

I remember that, in the time of my childhood, my father (may God's mercy be upon him every moment!), bought me a gold ring. Soon after, a hawker took the ring from my hand in exchange for a date-fruit.

When a child knows not the value of a ring he will part with it for a sweetmeat. Thou, too, didst not recognise value of life, but indulged thyself in vain pleasures.

In the Day of Judgment, when the good will attain to the highest dignity and mount from the bottommost depths of the earth to the Pleiades, thy head will hang forward in shame, for thy deeds will gather around thee.

O brother! be ashamed of the works of the evil, for ashamed wilt thou be at the Resurrection in the presence of the good.

### **STORY OF A MAN WHO REARED A WOLF**

Some one reared a wolf-cub, which, when grown in strength, tore its master to pieces. When the man was on the point of death a sage passed by and said: "Didst thou not know that thou wouldst suffer injury from an enemy thus carefully reared?"

How can we raise our heads from shame when we are at peace with Satan and at war with God?

Thy friend regards thee not when thou turnest thy face towards the enemy.

He who lives in the house of an enemy deems right estrangement from a friend.

### **STORY OF A CHEAT**

Some one robbed the people of their money by cheating, and whenever he had accomplished one of his nefarious acts he cursed the Evil One, who said:

"Never have I seen such a fool! Thou hast intrigued with me secretly; why, therefore, dost thou raise the sword of enmity against me?"

Alas! that the angels should record against thee iniquities committed by the order of the Evil One!

Go forward when thou seest that the door of peace is open,  
for suddenly the door of repentance will be closed.

March not under a load of sin, O son, for a porter becomes  
exhausted on the journey.

The Prophet is the Mediator of him who follows the  
highway of his laws.

### **A RECOLLECTION OF CHILDHOOD**

In the time of my childhood I went out with my father  
during the Id Festival, and in the tumult of the mob got  
lost. I cried in fear, when my father suddenly pulled my  
ear, and said: Several times did I tell thee not to take thy  
hand from the skirt of my robe."

A child knows not how to go alone; it is difficult to travel  
on any road unseen.

Thou, poor man, art as a child in thine endeavour; go, hold  
the skirt of the virtuous. Sit not with the base, but fasten  
thy hand to the saddle-straps of the pious.

Go, like Sadi, glean the corn of wisdom so that thou  
mayest store a harvest of divine knowledge.

### **STORY OF ONE WHO BURNED HIS HARVEST**

In the month of July, a certain man stored his grain and set  
his mind at ease concerning it. One night, he became  
intoxicated and lighted a fire, which destroyed his harvest.

The next day he sat down to glean the ears of corn, but not  
a single grain remained in his possession. Seeing him thus



afflicted, some one remarked: "If thou didst not wish for this misfortune, thou shouldst not in folly have burned thy harvest."

Thou, whose years have been wasted in iniquity, art he who burns the harvest of his life.

Do not so, O my life! Sow the seeds of religion and justice, and throw not to the winds the harvest of a good name.

Knock at the door of forgiveness before thy punishment arrives, for lamentation beneath the lash is of no avail.

#### **DISCOURSE ON REPENTANCE**

He who supplicates the Deity by night will not be shamed on the Day of Judgment.

If thou art wise, pray for forgiveness in the night for the sins that thou hast committed in the day.

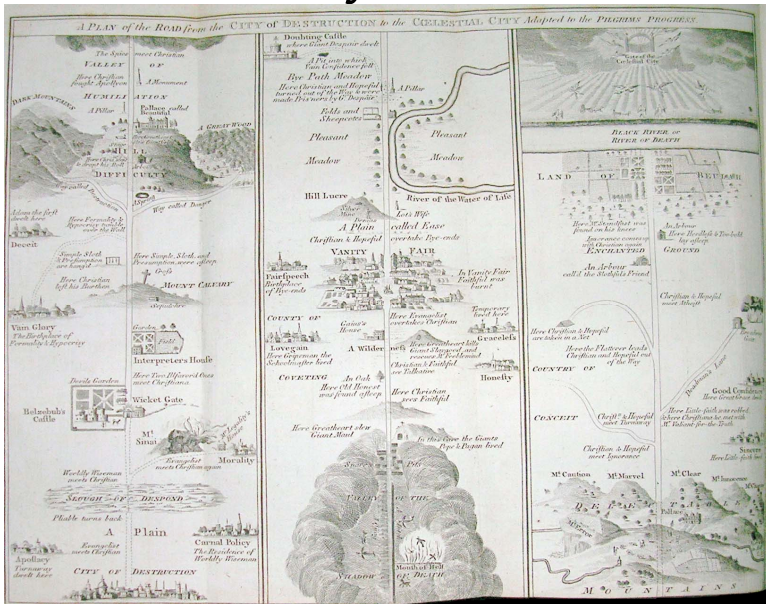
What is thy fear if thou hast made thy peace with God? He closes not the door of forgiveness upon them that supplicate Him.

If thou art a servant of God, raise thy hands in prayer; and if thou be ashamed, weep in sorrow.

No one has stood upon His threshold whose sins the tears of repentance have not washed away.

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards,  
[1911], sacred-texts.com*

# 'John Bunyan – Forgotten Protestant Christian Mystic'



Map from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City in Works of John Bunyan

John Bunyan wrote the mystical work 'The Pilgrims Progress' while in prison during a time of great religious persecution. This only makes his work more poignant and real. He even wrote an apology for the form of his book, which is profound and convicts each one of us of the vices we often would prefer to remain below the surface and unseen to even our own eyes. But Bunyan was a man of profound faith, and in prison, he wrote the second best selling book of all time next to the bible and it became this because it IS one of the greatest mystical allegories of all time. There is little doubt to me that this book was given to him in dreams and visions.

## John Bunyan's Apology

*The Pilgrims Progress, By John Bunyan, [1678] sacred-texts.com*

The Author's Apology

For His Book

When at the first I took my Pen in hand  
 Thus for to write; I did not understand  
 That I at all should make a little Book  
 In such a mode; Nay, I had undertook  
 To make another, which when almost done,  
 Before I was aware I this begun.

And thus it was: I was writing of the Way  
 And Race of Saints, in this our Gospel-day,  
 Fell suddenly into an Allegory  
 About their Journey, and the way to Glory,  
 In more than twenty things which I set down:  
 This done, I twenty more had in my Crown,

And they again began to multiply,  
 Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.  
 Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,  
 I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last  
 Should prove and infinitum, and eat out  
 The Book that I already am about.

Well, so I did; but yet I did not think  
 To shew to all this World my Pen and Ink  
 In such a mode; I only thought to make  
 I knew not what: nor did I undertake  
 Thereby to please my Neighbor; no not I;  
 I did it mine own self to gratifie.

Neither did I but vacant seasons spend  
 In this my Scribble; nor did I intend  
 But to divert myself in doing this  
 From worser thoughts which make me do amiss.

Thus I set Pen to Paper with delight,  
 And quickly had my thoughts in black and white.  
 For having now my Method by the end,  
 Still as I pull'd, it came; and so I penn'd  
 It down, until it came at last to be  
 For length and breadth the bigness which you see.

Well, when I had thus put mine ends together,  
 I shew'd them others, that I might see whether  
 They would condemn them, or them justifie;  
 And some said, Let them live; some, Let them die;  
 Some said, John, print it; others said, Not so:  
 Some said, It might do good; others said, No.

Now was I in a straight, and did not see  
 Which was the best thing to be done by me:

At last I thought, Since you are thus divided,  
I print it will, and so the case decided.

For, thought I, some I see would have it done,  
Though others in that Channel do not run.  
To prove then who advised for the best,  
Thus I thought fit to put it to the test.

I further thought, if now I did deny  
Those that would have it thus, to gratifie,  
I did not know but hinder them I might  
Of that which would to them be great delight.

For those which were not for its coming forth  
I said to them, Offend you I am loth,  
Yet since your Brethren pleased with it be,  
Forbear to judge till you do further see.

If that thou wilt not read, let it alone;  
Some love the meat, some love to pick the bone:  
Yea, that I might them better palliate,  
I did too with them thus Expostulate:

May I not write in such a stile as this?  
In such a method too, and yet not miss  
Mine end, thy good? why may it not be done?  
Dark Clouds bring Waters, when the bright bring none.  
Yea, dark or bright, if they their Silver drops  
Cause to descend, the Earth, by yielding Crops,  
Gives praise to both, and carpeth not at either,  
But treasures up the Fruit they yield together;  
Yea, so commixes both, that in her Fruit  
None can distinguish this from that: they suit  
Her well, when hungry; but, if she be full,  
She spues out both, and makes their blessings null.

You see the ways the Fisher-man doth take  
 To catch the Fish; what Engines doth he make?  
 Behold how he engageth all his Wits,  
 Also his Snares, Lines, Angles, Hooks, and Nets.  
 Yet Fish there be, that neither Hook, nor Line,  
 Nor Snare, nor Net, nor Engine can make thine;  
 They must be grop'd for, and be tickled too,  
 Or they will not be catch'd, whate'er you do.

How doth the Fowler seek to catch his Game  
 By divers means, all which one cannot name?  
 His Gun, his Nets, his Lime-twigs, Light, and Bell;  
 He creeps, he goes, he stands; yea who can tell  
 Of all his postures? Yet there's none of these  
 Will make him master of what Fowls he please.  
 Yea, he must Pipe and Whistle to catch this;  
 Yet if he does so, that Bird he will miss.

If that a Pearl may in a Toad's head dwell,  
 And may be found too in an Oyster-shell;  
 If things that promise nothing do contain  
 What better is than Gold; who will disdain,  
 That have an inkling of it, there to look,  
 That they may find it? Now my little Book  
 (Though void of all those Paintings that may make  
 It with this or the other man to take)  
 Is not without those things that do excel  
 What do in brave, but empty notions dwell.

Well, yet I am not fully satisfied,  
 That this your Book will stand, when soundly try'd.

Why, what's the matter? It is dark. What tho?  
 But it is feigned: What of that I tro?  
 Some men, by feigning words as dark as mine,

Make truth to spangle, and its rays to shine.  
 But they want solidness. Speak man thy mind.  
 They drowned the weak; Metaphors make us blind.

Solidity indeed becomes the Pen  
 Of him that writeth things Divine to men;  
 But must I needs want solidness, because  
 By Metaphors I speak? Were not God's Laws,  
 His Gospel-Laws, in olden time held forth  
 By Types, Shadows, and Metaphors? Yet loth  
 Will any sober man be to find fault  
 With them, lest he be found for to assault  
 The highest Wisdom. No, he rather stoops,  
 And seeks to find out what by Pins and Loops,  
 By Calves, and Sheep, by Heifers, and by Rams,  
 By Birds, and Herbs, and by the blood of Lambs,  
 God speaketh to him. And happy is he  
 That finds the light and grace that in them be.

Be not too forward therefore to conclude  
 That I want solidness, that I am rude:  
 All things solid in shew not solid be;  
 All things in parables despise not we;  
 Lest things most hurtful lightly we receive,  
 And things that good are, of our souls bereave.

My dark and cloudy words they do but hold  
 The Truth, as Cabinets inclose the Gold.

The Prophets used much by Metaphors  
 To set forth Truth; yea, whoso considers  
 Christ, his Apostles too, shall plainly see,  
 That Truths to this day in such Mantles be.

Am I afraid to say that Holy Writ,

Which for its Stile and Phrase puts down all Wit,  
 Is everywhere so full of all these things,  
 Dark Figures, Allegories? Yet there springs  
 From that same Book that lustre, and those rays  
 Of light, that turns our darkest nights to days.

Come, let my Carper to his Life now look,  
 And find there darker lines than in my Book  
 He findeth any; Yea, and let him know,  
 That in his best things there are worse lines too.

May we but stand before impartial men,  
 To his poor One I dare adventure Ten,  
 That they will take my meaning in these lines  
 Far better than his lies in Silver Shrines.  
 Come, Truth, although in Swaddling-clouts, I find,  
 Informs the Judgment, rectifies the Mind,  
 Pleases the Understanding, makes the Will  
 Submit; the Memory too it doth fill  
 With what doth our Imagination please;  
 Likewise it tends our troubles to appease.

Sound words I know Timothy is to use,  
 And old Wive's Fables he is to refuse;  
 But yet grave Paul him nowhere doth forbid  
 The use of Parables; in which lay hid  
 That Gold, those Pearls, and precious stones that were  
 Worth digging for, and that with greatest care.

Let me add one word more. O man of God,  
 Art thou offended? Dost thou wish I had  
 Put forth my matter in another dress,  
 Or that I had in things been more express?  
 Three things let me propound, then I submit  
 To those that are my betters, as is fit.



1. I find not that I am denied the use  
 Of this my method, so I no abuse  
 Put on the Words, Things, Readers; or be rude  
 In handling Figure or Similitude,  
 In application; but, all that I may,  
 Seek the advance of Truth this or that way.  
 Denied, did I say? Nay, I have leave,  
 (Example too, and that from them that have  
 God better pleased, by their words or ways,  
 Than any man that breatheth now a-days)  
 Thus to express my mind, thus to declare  
 Things unto thee, that excellentest are.

2. I find that men (as high as Trees) will write  
 Dialogue-wise; yet no man doth them slight  
 For writing so; Indeed if they abuse  
 Truth, cursed be they, and the craft they use  
 To that intent; but yet let Truth be free  
 To make her sallies upon thee and me,  
 Which way it pleases God. For who knows how,  
 Better than he that taught us first to Plow,  
 To guide our Mind and Pens for his Design?  
 And he makes base things usher in Divine.

3. I find that Holy Writ in many places  
 Hath semblance with this method, where the cases  
 Do call for one thing, to set forth another;  
 Use it I may then, and yet nothing smother  
 Truth's golden Beams: nay, by this method may  
 Make it cast forth its rays as light as day.

And now, before I do put up my Pen,  
 I'll shew the profit of my Book, and then  
 Commit both thee and it unto that hand  
 That pulls the strong down, and makes weak ones stand.

This Book it chalketh out before thine eyes  
 The man that seeks the everlasting Prize;  
 It shews you whence he comes, whither he goes,  
 What he leaves undone, also what he does;  
 It also shews you how he runs and runs,  
 Till he unto the Gate of Glory comes.

It shews too, who set out for life amain,  
 As if the lasting Crown they would obtain;  
 Here also you may see the reason why  
 They lose their labour, and like Fools do die.

This Book will make a Traveller of thee,  
 If by its Counsel thou wilt ruled be;  
 It will direct thee to the Holy Land,  
 If thou wilt its directions understand:  
 Yea, it will make the slothful active be;  
 The blind also delightful things to see.

Art thou for something rare and profitable?  
 Wouldest thou see a Truth within a Fable?  
 Art thou forgetful? Wouldest thou remember  
 From New-year's-day to the last of December?  
 Then read my Fancies, they will stick like Burrs,  
 And may be to the Helpless, Comforters.

This Book is writ in such a Dialect  
 As may the minds of listless men affect:  
 It seems a novelty, and yet contains  
 Nothing but sound and honest Gospel strains.

Would'st thou divert thyself from Melancholy?  
 Would'st thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?  
 Would'st thou read Riddles, and their Explanation?  
 Or else be drowned in thy Contemplation?

Dost thou love picking meat? Or would'st thou see  
A man i' th' Clouds, and hear him speak to thee?  
Would'st thou be in a Dream, and yet not sleep?  
Or would'st thou in a moment laugh and weep?  
Wouldest thou lose thyself, and catch no harm,  
And find thyself again without a charm?  
Would'st read thyself, and read thou know'st not what,  
And yet know whether thou art blest or not,  
By reading the same lines? O then come hither,  
And lay my Book, thy Head, and Heart together.

*The Pilgrims Progress, By John Bunyan, [1678] sacred-  
texts.com*

EXCERPTS FROM:

# The Pilgrim's Progress

*By John Bunyan*

## Section I.

### The Pilgrim's Progress, In The Similitude Of A Dream

As I walk'd through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a Den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a Dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a Man cloathed with Rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a Book in his hand, and a great Burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the Book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying What shall I do?

In this plight therefore he went home, and refrained himself as long as he could, that his Wife and Children should not perceive his distress, but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased: Wherefore at length he brake his mind to his Wife and Children; and thus he began to talk to them: O my dear Wife, said he, and you the Children of my bowels, I your dear friend, am in myself undone by reason of a Burden that lieth hard upon me; moreover, I am for certain informed that this our City will be burned with fire from Heaven; in which fearful overthrow, both myself, with thee my Wife, and you my sweet Babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found, whereby we may be delivered. At this his Relations were sore amazed; not for that they believed that what he had

said to them was true, but because they thought that some frenzy distemper had got into his head; therefore, it drawing towards night, and they hoping that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed: But the night was as troublesome to him as the day; wherefore, instead of sleeping, he spent it in sighs and tears. So, when the morning was come, they would know how he did; He told them Worse and worse: he also set to talking to them again, but they began to be hardened: they also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriages to him; sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect him: Wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber, to pray for and pity them, and also to condole his own misery; he would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading, and sometimes praying: and thus for some days he spent his time.

Now, I saw upon a time, when he was walking in the fields, that he was, as he was wont, reading in his Book, and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, What shall I do to be saved?

I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because, as I perceived, he could not tell which way to go. I looked then, and saw a man named Evangelist, coming to him, and asked, Wherefore dost thou cry?

He answered, Sir, I perceive by the Book in my hand, that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to Judgment, and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second.

Christian no sooner leaves the World but meets Evangelist, who lovingly him greets With tidings of another: and doth shew Him how to mount to that from this below.

Then said Evangelist, Why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils? The Man answered, Because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the Grave, and I shall fall into Tophet. And, Sir, if I be not fit to go to Prison, I am not fit to go to Judgment, and from thence to Execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry.

Then said Evangelist, If this be thy condition, why standest thou still? He answered, Because I know not whither to go. Then he gave him a Parchment - roll, and there was written within, Fly from the wrath to come.

The Man therefore read it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said, Whither must I fly? Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder Wicket-gate? The Man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining Light? He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that Light in your eye, and go up directly thereto: so shalt thou see the Gate; at which, when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do.

So I saw in my Dream that the Man began to run.

Now he had not run far from his own door, but his Wife and Children, perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the Man out his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying Life! Life! Eternal Life! So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the Plain.

The Neighbors also came out to see him run; and as he ran, some mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return; and among those that did so, there were two that resolved to fetch him back by force. The name of the one was Obstinate, and the name of the other Pliable. Now by this time the Man was got a good distance from them; but however they were resolved to pursue him, which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the Man, Neighbors, wherefore are you come? They said, To persuade you to go back with us. But he said, That can by no means be; you dwell, said he, in the City of Destruction, the place also where I was born, I see it to be so; and dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the Grave, into a place that burns with Fire and Brimstone: be content, good Neighbors, and go along with me.

Obst. What, said Obstinate, and leave our friends and our comforts behind us!

Chr. Yes, said Christian, for that was his name, because that all which you shall forsake is not worthy to be compared with a little of that that I am seeking to enjoy; and if you will go along with me and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there where I go, is enough and to spare: Come away, and prove my words.

Obst. What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?

Chr. I seek an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and it is laid up in Heaven, and safe there, to be bestowed at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it. Read it so, if you will, in my Book.

Obst. Tush, said Obstinate, away with your Book; will you go back with us or no?

Chr. No, not I, said the other, because I have laid my hand to the Plow.

Obst. Come then, Neighbor Pliable, let us turn again, and go home without him; there is a company of these craz'd-headed coxcombs, that, when they take a fancy by the end, are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason.

Pli. Then said Pliable, Don't revile; if what the good Christian says is true, the things he looks after are better than ours; my heart inclines to go with my Neighbor.

Obst. What! more fools still? Be ruled by me, and go back; who knows whither such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back, and be wise.

Chr. Come with me, Neighbor Pliable; there are such things to be had which I spoke of, and many more Glories besides. If you believe not me, read here in this Book; and for the truth of what is exprest therein, behold, all is confirmed by the blood of Him that made it.

Pli. Well, Neighbor Obstinate, said Pliable, I begin to come to a point: I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: but, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

Chr. I am directed by a man, whose name is Evangelist, to speed me to a little Gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.



Pli. Come then, good Neighbor, let us be going. Then they went both together.

Obst. And I will go back to my place, said Obstinate; I will be no companion of such mis-led, fantastical fellows.

Now I saw in my Dream, that when Obstinate was gone back, Christian and Pliable went talking over the Plain; and thus they began their discourse.

Chr. Come Neighbor Pliable, how do you do? I am glad you are persuaded to go along with me: Had even Obstinate himself but felt what I have felt of the powers and terrors of what is yet unseen, he would not thus lightly have given us the back.

Pli. Come, Neighbor Christian, since there are none but us two here, tell me now further what the things are, and how to be enjoyed, whither we are going?

Chr. I can better conceive of them with my Mind, than speak of them with my Tongue: but yet, since you are desirous to know, I will read of them in my Book.

Pli. And do you think that the words of your Book are certainly true?

Chr. Yes, verily; for it was made by him that cannot lye.

Pli. Well said; what things are they?

Chr. There is an endless Kingdom to be inhabited, and everlasting Life to be given us, that may inhabit that Kingdom for ever.

Pli. Well said; and what else?

Chr. There are Crowns of glory to be given us, and Garments that will make us shine like the Sun in the firmament of Heaven.

Pli. This is excellent; and what else?

Chr. There shall be no more crying, nor sorrow, for He that is owner of the place will wipe all tears from our eyes.

Pli. And what company shall we have there?

Chr. There we shall be with Seraphims and Cherubins, creatures that will dazzle your eyes to look on them: There also you shall meet with thousands and ten thousands that have gone before us to that place; none of them are hurtful, but loving and holy; every one walking in the sight of God, and standing in his presence with acceptance for ever. In a word, there we shall see the Elders with their golden Crowns, there we shall see the Holy Virgins with their golden Harps, there we shall see men that by the World were cut in pieces, burnt in flames, eaten of beasts, drowned in the seas, for the love that they bare to the Lord of the place, all well, and clothed with Immortality as with a garment.

Pli. The hearing of this is enough to ravish one's heart; but are these things to be enjoyed? How shall we get to be sharers hereof?

Chr. The Lord, the Governor of the country, hath recorded that in this Book; the substance of which is, If we be truly willing to have it, he will bestow it upon us freely.

Pli. Well, my good companion, glad am I to hear of these things; come on, let us mend our pace.

Chr. I cannot go so fast as I would, by reason of this Burden that is upon my back.

Now I saw in my Dream, that just as they had ended this talk, they drew near to a very miry Slough, that was in the midst of the plain; and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here therefore they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with the dirt; and Christian, because of the Burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

Pli. Then said Pliable, Ah Neighbor Christian, where are you now?

Chr. Truly, said Christian, I do not know.

Pli. At that Pliable began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect 'twixt this and our Journey's end? May I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave Country alone for me. And with that he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the Slough which was next to his own house: so away he went, and Christian saw him no more.

Wherefore Christian was left to tumble in the Slough of Dispond alone; but still he endeavoured to struggle to that side of the Slough that was still further from his own house, and next to the Wicket-gate; the which he did, but could not get out, because of the Burden that was upon his

back: But I beheld in my Dream, that a man came to him, whose name was Help, and asked him, What he did there?

Chr. Sir, said Christian, I was bid go this way by a man called Evangelist, who directed me also to yonder Gate, that I might escape the wrath to come; and as I was going thither, I fell in here.

Help. But why did you not look for the steps?

Chr. Fear followed me so hard, that I fled the next way, and fell in.

Help. Then said he, Give me thy hand: so he gave him his hand, and he drew him out, and set him upon sound ground, and bid him go on his way.

Then I stepped to him that pluckt him out, and said, Sir, wherefore, since over this place is the way from the City of Destruction to yonder Gate, is it that this plat is not mended, that poor travellers might go thither with more security? And he said unto me, This miry Slough is such a place as cannot be mended; it is the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin doth continually run, and therefore it is called the Slough of Despond; for still as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in this place: And this is the reason of the badness of this ground.

It is not the pleasure of the King that this place should remain so bad. His labourers also have, by the direction of His Majesties Surveyors, been for above these sixteen hundred years employed about this patch of ground, if

perhaps it might have been mended: yea, and to my knowledge, said he, here hath been swallowed up at least twenty thousand cart-loads, yea, millions of wholesome instructions, that have at all seasons been brought from all places of the King's dominions (and they that can tell say they are the best materials to make good ground of the place), if so be it might have been mended, but it is the Slough of Dispond still, and so will be when they have done what they can.

True, there are by the direction of the Lawgiver, certain good and substantial steps, placed even through the very midst of this Slough; but at such time as this place doth much spue out its filth, as it doth against change of weather, these steps are hardly seen; or if they be, men through the dizziness of their heads, step besides; and then they are bemired to purpose, notwithstanding the steps be there; but the ground is good when they are once got in at the Gate.

Now I saw in my Dream, that by this time Pliable was got home to his house again. So his Neighbors came to visit him: and some of them called him wise man for coming back, and some called him fool for hazarding himself with Christian: others again did mock at his cowardliness; saying, Surely since you began to venture, I would not have been so base to have given out for a few difficulties. So Pliable sat sneaking among them. But at last he got more confidence, and then they all turned their tales, and began to deride poor Christian behind his back. And thus much concerning Pliable.

Now as Christian was walking solitary by himself, he espied one afar off come crossing over the field to meet him; and their hap was to meet just as they were crossing

the way of each other. The gentleman's name that met him was Mr Worldly Wiseman: he dwelt in the Town of Carnal Policy, a very great Town, and also hard by from whence Christian came. This man then meeting with Christian, and having some inkling of him, - for Christian's setting forth from the City of Destruction was much noised abroad, not only in the Town where he dwelt, but also it began to be the town-talk in some other places, - Master Worldly Wiseman therefore, having some guess of him, by beholding his laborious going, by observing his sighs and groans, and the like, began thus to enter into some talk with Christian.

World. How now, good fellow, whither away after this burdened manner?

Chr. A burdened manner indeed, as ever I think poor creature had. And whereas you ask me, Whither away? I tell you, Sir, I am going to yonder Wicket - gate before me; for there, as I am informed, I shall be put into a way to be rid of my heavy Burden.

World. Hast thou a Wife and Children?

Chr. Yes, but I am so laden with this Burden, that I cannot take that pleasure in them as formerly; methinks I am as if I had none.

World. Wilt thou hearken to me if I give thee counsel?

Chr. If it be good, I will; for I stand in need of good counsel.

World. I would advise thee then, that thou with all speed get thyself rid of thy Burden; for thou wilt never be

settled in thy mind till then; nor canst thou enjoy the benefits of the blessing which God hath bestowed upon thee till then.

Chr. That is that which I seek for, even to be rid of this heavy Burden; but get it off myself, I cannot; nor is there any man in our country that can take it off my shoulders; therefore am I going this way, as I told you, that I may be rid of my Burden.

World. Who bid thee go this way to be rid of thy Burden?

Chr. A man that appeared to me to be a very great and honorable person; his name as I remember is Evangelist.

World. I beshrew him for his counsel; there is not a more dangerous and troublesome way in the world than is that unto which he hath directed thee; and that thou shalt find, if thou wilt be ruled by his counsel. Thou hast met with something (as I perceive) already; for I see the dirt of the Slough of Dispond is upon thee; but that Slough is the beginning of the sorrows that do attend those that go on in that way: Hear me, I am older than thou; thou art like to meet with, in the way which thou goest, Wearisomeness, Painfulness, Hunger, Perils, Nakedness, Sword, Lions, Dragons, Darkness, and in a word, Death, and what not! These things are certainly true, having been confirmed by many testimonies. And why should a man so carelessly cast away himself, by giving heed to a stranger?

Chr. Why, Sir, this Burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are all these things which you have mentioned; nay, methinks I care not what I meet with in

the way, so be I can also meet with deliverance from my Burden.

World. How camest thou by the Burden at first?

Chr. By reading this Book in my hand.

World. I thought so; and it is happened unto thee as to other weak men, who meddling with things too high for them, do suddenly fall into thy distractions; which distractions do not only unman men (as thine I perceive has done thee), but they run them upon desperate ventures, to obtain they know not what.

Chr. I know what I would obtain; it is ease for my heavy burden.

World. But why wilt thou seek for ease this way, seeing so many dangers attend it? Especially, since (hadst thou but patience to hear me) I could direct thee to the obtaining of what thou desirest, without the dangers that thou in this way wilt run thyself into; yea, and the remedy is at hand. Besides, I will add, that instead of those dangers, thou shalt meet with much safety, friendship, and content.

Chr. Pray Sir, open this secret to me.

World. Why in yonder Village (the village is named Morality) there dwells a Gentleman whose name is Legality, a very judicious man, and a man of very good name, that has skill to help men off with such burdens as thine are from their shoulders: yea, to my knowledge he hath done a great deal of good this way; ay, and besides, he hath skill to cure those that are somewhat crazed in



their wits with their burdens. To him, as I said, thou mayest go, and be helped presently. His house is not quite a mile from this place, and if he should not be at home himself, he hath a pretty young man to his Son, whose name is Civility, that can do it (to speak on) as well as the old Gentleman himself; there, I say, thou mayest be eased of thy Burden; and if thou art not minded to go back to thy former habitation, as indeed I would not wish thee, thou mayest send for thy Wife and Children to thee to this village, where there are houses now stand empty, one of which thou mayest have at reasonable rates; Provision is there also cheap and good; and that which will make thy life the more happy is, to be sure there thou shalt live by honest Neighbors, in credit and good fashion.

Now was Christian somewhat at a stand, but presently he concluded, If this be true which this Gentleman hath said, my wisest course is to take his advice; and with that he thus farther spoke.

Chr. Sir, which is my way to this honest man's house?

World. Do you see yonder high Hill?

Chr. Yes, very well.

World. By that Hill you must go, and the first house you come at is his.

So Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr Legality's house for help; but behold, when he was got now hard by the Hill, it seemed so high, and also that side of it that was next the wayside, did hang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the Hill should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still, and he wot not

what to do. Also his Burden now seemed heavier to him than while he was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the Hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned. Here therefore he sweat and did quake for fear.

When Christians unto Carnal Men give ear,  
 Out of their way they go, and pay for 't dear;  
 For Master Worldly Wiseman can but shew  
 A Saint the way to Bondage and to Wo.

And now he began to be sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly Wiseman's counsel. And with that he saw Evangelist coming to meet him; at the sight also of whom he began to blush for shame. So Evangelist drew nearer and nearer; and coming up to him, he looked upon him with a severe and dreadful countenance, and thus began to reason with Christian.

Evan. What doest thou here, Christian? said he: at which words Christian knew not what to answer; wherefore at present he stood speechless before him. Then said Evangelist farther, Art not thou the man that I found crying without the walls of the City of Destruction?

Chr. Yes, dear Sir, I am the man.

Evan. Did not I direct thee the way to the little Wicketgate?

Chr. Yes, dear Sir, said Christian.

Evan. How is it then that thou art so quickly turned aside? for thou art now out of the way.

Chr. I met with a Gentleman so soon as I had got over the Slough of Despond, who persuaded me that I might, in the village before me, find a man that could take off my Burden.

Evan. What was he?

Chr. He looked like a Gentleman, and talked much to me, and got me at last to yield; so I came hither: but when I beheld this Hill, and how it hangs over the way, I suddenly made a stand, lest it should fall on my head.

Evan. What said that Gentleman to you?

Chr. Why, he asked me whither I was going; and I told him.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He asked me if I had a family; and I told him. But, said I, I am so loaden with the Burden that is on my back, that I cannot take pleasure in them as formerly.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He bid me with speed get rid of my Burden; and I told him 'twas ease that I sought. And, said I, I am therefore going to yonder Gate, to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance. So he said that he would shew me a better way, and short, not so attended with difficulties as the way, Sir, that you set me; which way, said he, will direct you to a Gentleman's house that hath skill to take off these Burdens: So I believed him, and turned out of that way into this, if haply I might be soon eased of my Burden. But when I came to this place, and

beheld things as they are, I stopped for fear (as I said) of danger: but I now know not what to do.

Evan. Then, said Evangelist, stand still a little, that I may shew thee the words of God. So he stood trembling. Then said Evangelist, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven. He said moreover, Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. He also did thus apply them, Thou art the man that art running into this misery, thou hast begun to reject the counsel of the Most High, and to draw back thy foot from the way of peace, even almost to the hazarding of thy perdition.

Mountains Delectable they now ascend,  
Where Shepherds be, which to them do commend  
Alluring things, and things that Cautious are,  
Pilgrims are steady kept by Faith and Fear.

Shep. These mountains are Immanuel's Land, and they are within sight of his City; and the sheep also are his, and he laid down his life for them.

Chr. Is this the way to the Coelestial City?

Shep. You are just in your way.

Chr. How far is it thither?

Shep. Too far for any but those that shall get thither indeed.

Chr. Is the way safe or dangerous?

Shep. Safe for those for whom it is to be safe, but transgressors shall fall therein.

Chr. Is there in this place any relief for Pilgrims that are weary and faint in the way?

Shep. The Lord of these Mountains hath given us a charge not to be forgotten to entertain strangers; therefore the good of the place is before you.

I saw also in my Dream, that when the Shepherds perceived that they were way-faring men, they also put questions to them (to which they made answer as in other places) as, Whence came you? and, How got you into the way? and, By what means have you so persevered therein? For but few of them that begin to come hither do shew their face on these Mountains. But when the Shepherds heard their answers, being pleased therewith, they looked very lovingly upon them, and said, Welcome to the Delectable Mountains.

The Shepherds, I say, whose names were Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere, took them by the hand, and had them to their Tents, and made them partake of that which was ready at present. They said moreover, We would that ye should stay here a while, to be acquainted with us; and yet more to solace yourselves with the good of these Delectable Mountains. They then told them, that they were content to stay; and so they went to their rest that night, because it was very late.

Then I saw in my Dream, that in the morning the Shepherds called up Christian and Hopeful to walk with them upon the Mountains; so they went forth with them, and walked a while, having a pleasant prospect on every side. Then said the Shepherds one to another, Shall we shew these Pilgrims some wonders? So when they had concluded to do it, they had them first to the top of a Hill called Error, which was very steep on the furthest side, and bid them look down to the bottom. So Christian and Hopeful looked down, and saw at the bottom several men dashed all to pieces by a fall, that they had from the top. Then said Christian, What meaneth this? The Shepherds answered, Have you not heard of them that were made to err, by hearkening to Hymeneus and Philetus, as concerning the Faith of the Resurrection of the Body? They answered, Yes. Then said the Shepherds, Those that you see lie dashed in pieces at the bottom of this Mountain are they; and they have continued to this day unburied (as you see) for an example to others to take heed how they clamber too high, or how they come too near the brink of this Mountain.

Then I saw that they had them to the top of another Mountain, and the name of that is Caution, and bid them look afar off; which when they did, they perceived, as they thought, several men walking up and down among the Tombs that were there; and they perceived that the men were blind, because they stumbled sometimes upon the Tombs, and because they could not get out from among them. Then said Christian, What means this?

The Shepherds then answered, Did you not see a little below these Mountains a Stile, that led into a Meadow, on the left hand of this way? They answered, Yes. Then said the Shepherds, From that Stile there goes a path that leads

directly to Doubting Castle, which is kept by Giant Despair; and these men (pointing to them among the Tombs) came once on Pilgrimage, as you do now, even till they came to that same Stile; and because the right way was rough in that place, they chose to go out of it into that Meadow, and there were taken by Giant Despair, and cast into Doubting Castle; where, after they had been awhile kept in the Dungeon, he at last did put out their eyes, and led them among those Tombs, where he has left them to wander to this very day, that the saying of the Wise Man might be fulfilled, He that wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead. Then Christian and Hopeful looked upon one another, with tears gushing out, but yet said nothing to the Shepherds.

Then I saw in my Dream, that the Shepherds had them to another place, in a bottom, where was a door in the side of a Hill, and they opened the door, and bid them look in. They looked in therefore, and saw that within it was very dark and smoky; they also thought that they heard there a rumbling noise as of Fire, and a cry of some tormented, and that they smelt the scent of Brimstone. Then said Christian, What means this? The Shepherds told them, This is a by-way to Hell, a way that Hypocrites go in at; namely, such as sell their Birth-right, with Esau; such as sell their Master, as Judas; such as blaspheme the Gospel, with Alexander; and that lie and dissemble, with Ananias and Sapphira his Wife. Then said Hopeful to the Shepherds, I perceive that these had on them, even everyone, a shew of Pilgrimage, as we have now; had they not?

Shep. Yes, and held it a long time too.

Hope. How far might they go on in Pilgrimage in their day, since they notwithstanding were thus miserably cast away?

Shep. Some further, and some not so far as these Mountains.

Then said the Pilgrims one to another, We had need to cry to the Strong for strength.

Shep. Ay, and you will have need to use it when you have it too.

By this time the Pilgrims had a desire to go forwards, and the Shepherds a desire they should; so they walked together towards the end of the Mountains. Then said the Shepherds one to another, Let us here shew to the Pilgrims the Gates of the Coelestial City, if they have skill to look through our Perspective-Glass. The Pilgrims then lovingly accepted the motion; so they had them to the top of a high Hill, called Clear, and gave them their Glass to look.

Then they assayed to look, but the remembrance of that last thing that the Shepherds had shewed them, made their hands shake, by means of which impediment they could not look steadily through the Glass; yet they thought they saw something like the Gate, and also some of the Glory of the place.

Then they went away and sang this song,

Thus by the Shepherds Secrets are reveal'd:  
Which from all other men are kept conceal'd  
Come to the Shepherds then if you would see



Things deep, things hid, and that mysterious be.

When they were about to depart, one of the Shepherds gave them a Note of the way. Another of them bid them beware of the Flatterer. the third bid them take heed that they sleep not on the Incharnted Ground. And the fourth bid them Godspeed. So I awoke from my Dream.

And I slept, and Dreamed again, and saw the same two Pilgrims going down the Mountains along the Highway towards the City. Now a little below these Mountains, on the left hand lieth the Country of Conceit; from which Country there comes into the way in which the Pilgrims walked, a little crooked Lane. Here therefore they met with a very brisk Lad, that came out of that Country; and his name was Ignorance. So Christian asked him From what parts he came, and whither he was going?

Ignor. Sir, I was born in the Country that lieth off there a little on the left hand, and I am going to the Coelestial City.

Chr. But how do you think to get in at the Gate, for you may find some difficulty there?

Ignor. As other good people do, said he.

Chr. But what have you to shew at that Gate, that may cause that the Gate should be opened to you?

Ignor. I know my Lord's will, and I have been a good liver; I pay every man his own; I Pray, Fast, pay Tithes, and give Alms, and have left my Country for whither I am going.

Chr. But thou camest not in at the Wicket-Gate that is at the head of this way; thou camest in hither through that same crooked Lane, and therefore I fear, however thou mayest think of thyself, when the reckoning day shall come, thou wilt have laid to thy charge that thou art a Thief and a Robber, instead of getting admittance into the City.

Ignor. Gentlemen, ye be utter strangers to me, I know you not; be content to follow the Religion of your Country, and I will follow the Religion of mine. I hope all will be well. And as for the Gate that you talk of, all the world knows that that is a great way off of our Country. I cannot think that any man in all our parts doth so much as know the way to it, nor need they matter whether they do or no, since we have, as you see, a fine pleasant Green Lane, that comes down from our Country the next way into the way.

When Christian saw that the man was wise in his own conceit, he said to Hopeful whisperingly, There is more hopes of a fool than of him. And said moreover, When he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool. What, shall we talk further with him, or outgo him at present, and so leave him to think of what he hath heard already, and then stop again for him afterwards, and see if by degrees we can do any good of him? Then said Hopeful,

Let Ignorance a little while now muse  
 On what is said, and let him not refuse  
 Good counsel to embrace, lest he remain  
 Still ignorant of what's the chiefest gain.  
 God saith, Those that no understanding have,  
 (Although he made them) them he will not save.

Hope. He further added, It is not good, I think, to say all to him at once; let us pass him by, if you will, and talk to him anon, even as he is able to bear it.

So they both went on, and Ignorance he came after. Now when they had passed him a little way, they entered into a very dark Lane, where they met a man whom seven Devils had bound with seven strong cords, and were carrying of him back to the Door that they saw on the side of the Hill. Now good Christian began to tremble, and so did Hopeful his Companion; yet as the Devils led away the man, Christian looked to see if he knew him, and he thought it might be one Turn-away that dwelt in the Town of Apostacy. But he did not perfectly see his face, for he did hang his head like a Thief that is found. But being gone past, Hopeful looked after him, and espied on his back a paper with this inscription, Wanton Professor and damnable Apostate. Then said Christian to his fellow, Now I call to remembrance that which was told me of a thing that happened to a good man hereabout. The name of the man was Little-faith, but a good man, and he dwelt in the Town of Sincere. The thing was this; At the entering in of this passage, there comes down from Broad-way Gate, a Lane called Dead Man's Lane; so called because of the Murders that are commonly done there; and this Little-faith going on Pilgrimage as we do now, chanced to sit down there and slept. Now there happened at that time, to come down the Lane from Broad-way Gate, three sturdy Rogues, and their names were Faint - heart, Mistrust, and Guilt. (three Brothers) and they espying Little-faith where he was, came galloping up with speed. Now the good man was just awaked from his sleep, and was getting up to go on his Journey. So they came up all to him, and with threatening language bid him stand. At this Little-faith looked as white as a Clout, and had neither power to fight

nor fly. Then said Faint-heart, Deliver thy Purse. But he making no haste to do it (for he was loth to lose his Money) Mistrust ran up to him, and thrusting his hand into his Pocket, pull'd out thence a bag of silver. Then he cried out, Thieves, Thieves. With that Guilt with a great Club that was in his hand, struck Little - faith on the head, and with that blow fell'd him flat to the ground, where he lay bleeding as one that would bleed to death. All this while the Thieves stood by. But at last, they hearing that some were upon the road, and fearing lest it should be one Great-grace that dwells in the City of Good - confidence, they betook themselves to their heels, and left this good man to shift for himself. Now after a while Little-faith came to himself, and getting up made shift to scabble on his way. This was the story.

Hope. But did they take from him all that ever he had?

Chr. No; the place where his Jewels were they never ransacked, so those he kept still; but as I was told, the good man was much afflicted for his loss, for the Thieves got most of his spending Money. That which they got not (as I said) were Jewels, also he had a little odd Money left, but scarce enough to bring him to his Journey's end; nay, if I was not misinformed, he was forced to beg as he went, to keep himself alive, for his Jewels he might not sell. But beg, and do what he could, he went (as we say) with many a hungry belly the most part of the rest of the way.

Hope. But is it not a wonder that they got from him his Certificate, by which he was to receive his admittance at the Coelestial Gate?

Chr. 'Tis a wonder but they got not that, though they missed it not through any good cunning of his; for he

being dismayed with their coming upon him, had neither power nor skill to hide anything; so 'twas more by good Providence than by his endeavour, that they miss'd of that good thing.

Hope. But it must needs be a comfort to him that they got not this Jewel from him.

Chr. It might have been great comfort to him, had he used it as he should; but they that told me the story said that he made but little use of it all the rest of the way, and that because of the dismay that he had in their taking away his Money; indeed he forgot it a great part of the rest of his Journey; and besides, when at any time it came into his mind, and he began to be comforted therewith, then would fresh thoughts of his loss come again upon him, and those thoughts would swallow up all.

Hope. Alas poor man! This could not but be a great grief to him.

Chr. Grief! ay, a grief indeed. Would it not have been so to any of us, had we been used as he, to be robbed, and wounded too, and that in a strange place, as he was? 'Tis a wonder he did not die with grief, poor heart! I was told that he scattered almost all the rest of the way with nothing but doleful and bitter complaints; telling also to all that over-took him, or that he over-took in the way as he went, where he was robbed, and how; who they were that did it, and what he lost; how he was wounded, and that he hardly escaped with his life.

Hope. But 'tis a wonder that his necessity did not put him upon selling

or pawning some of his Jewels, that he might have wherewith to relieve himself in his Journey.

Chr. Thou talkest like one upon whose head is the Shell to this very day; for what should he pawn them, or to whom should he sell them? In all that Country where he was robbed, his Jewels were not accounted of; nor did he want that relief which could from thence be administered to him. Besides, had his Jewels been missing at the Gate of the Coelestial City, he had (and that he knew well enough) been excluded from an Inheritance there; and that would have been worse to him than the appearance and villainy of ten thousand Thieves.

Hope. Why art thou so tart my Brother? Esau sold his Birth-right, and that for a mess of Pottage, and that Birth-right was his greatest Jewel; and if he, why might not Little-faith do so too?

Chr. Esau did sell his Birth-right indeed, and so do many besides, and by so doing exclude themselves from the chief blessing, as also that caitiff did; but you must put a difference betwixt Esau and Little-faith, and also betwixt their Estates. Esau's Birth-right was typical, but Little-faith's Jewels were not so: Esau's belly was his god, but Little-faith's belly was not so: Esau's want lay in his fleshly appetite, Little-faith's did not so. Besides, Esau could see no further than to the fulfilling of his lusts: For I am at the point to die, said he, and what good will this Birth-right do me? But Little-faith, though it was his lot to have but a little faith, was by his little faith kept from such extravagancies, and made to see and prize his Jewels more than to sell them, as Esau did his Birth-right. You read not anywhere that Esau had faith, no not so much as a little; therefore no marvel if where the flesh only bears sway (as

it will in that man where no faith is to resist) if he sells his Birth-right, and his Soul and all, and that to the Devil of Hell; for it is with such, as it is with the Ass, who in her occasions cannot be turned away. When their minds are set upon their lusts, they will have them whatever they cost. But Little-faith was of another temper, his mind was on things Divine; his livelihood was upon things that were Spiritual, and from above; therefore to what end should he that is of such a temper sell his Jewels (had there been any that would have bought them) to fill his mind with empty things? Will a man give a penny to fill his belly with Hay? or can you persuade the Turtle-dove to live upon Carrion like the Crow? Though faithless ones can, for carnal Lusts, pawn or mortgage, or sell what they have, and themselves outright to boot; yet they that have faith, saving faith, though but a little of it, cannot do so. Here therefore my Brother is thy mistake.

Hope. I acknowledge it; but yet your severe reflection had almost made me angry.

Chr. Why, I did but compare thee to some of the Birds that are of the brisker sort, who will run to and fro in trodden, paths, with the Shell upon their heads; but pass by that, and consider the matter under debate, and all shall be well betwixt thee and me.

Hope. But Christian, these three fellows, I am persuaded in my heart, are but a company of Cowards; would they have run else, think you, as they did, at the noise of one that was coming on the road? Why did not Little-faith pluck up a greater heart? He might, me-thinks, have stood one brush with them, and have yielded when there had been no remedy.

Chr. That they are Cowards, many have said, but few have found it so in the time of Trial. As for a great heart, Little-faith had none; and I perceive by thee, my Brother, hadst thou been the man concerned, thou art but for a brush, and then to yield. And verily since this is the height of thy stomach, now they are at a distance from us, should they appear to thee as they did to him, they might put thee to second thoughts.

But consider again, they are but journeymen Thieves; they serve under the King of the bottomless Pit, who, if need be, will come in to their aid himself, and his voice is as the roaring of a Lion. I myself have been engaged as this Little-faith was, and I found it a terrible thing. These three Villains set upon me, and I beginning like a Christian to resist, they gave but a call, and in came their Master: I would, as the saying is, have given my life for a penny; but that, as God would have it, I was cloathed with Armor of proof. Ay, and yet though I was so harnessed, I found it hard work to quit myself like a man: no man can tell what in that Combat attends us, but he that hath been in the Battle himself.

Hope. Well, but they ran, you see, when they did but suppose that one Great-grace was in the way.

Chr. True, they have often fled, both they and their Master, when Great - grace hath but appeared; and no marvel, for he is the King's Champion. But I tro you will put some difference between Little-faith and the King's Champion. All the King's Subjects are not his Champions, nor can they when tried do such feats of War as he. Is it meet to think that a little child should handle Goliath as David did? Or that there should be the strength of an Ox in a Wren? Some are strong, some are weak; some have great



faith, some have little: this man was one of the weak, and therefore he went to the wall.

Hope. I would it had been Great-grace for their sakes.

Chr. If it had been he, he might have had his hands full; for I must tell you, that though Great-grace is excellent good at his Weapons, and has, and can, so long as he keeps them at Sword's point, do well enough with them; yet if they get within him, even Faint-heart, Mistrust, or the other, it shall go hard but they will throw up his heels. And when a man is down, you know, what can he do?

Whoso looks well upon Great-grace's face, shall see those scars and cuts there, that shall easily give demonstration of what I say. Yea, once I heard he should say, (and that when he was in the Combat) We despaired even of life. How did these sturdy Rogues and their fellows make David groan, mourn, and roar? Yet, Heman and Hezekiah too, though Champions in their day, were forced to bestir them when by these assaulted; and yet notwithstanding they had their Coats soundly brushed by them. Peter upon a time would go try what he could do; but though some do say of him that he is the Prince of the Apostles, they handled him so, that they made him at last afraid of a sorry Girl.

Besides their King is at their whistle. He is never out of hearing; and if at any time they be put to the worst, he if possible comes in to help them; and of him it is said, The Sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold, the Spear, the Dart, nor the Habergeon: he esteemeth Iron as Straw, and Brass as rotten Wood. The Arrow cannot make him fly; Sling-stones are turned with him into Stubble, Darts are counted as Stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a Spear.

What can a man do in this case? 'Tis true, if a man could at every turn have Job's Horse, and had skill and courage to ride him, he might do notable things; for his Neck is cloathed with Thunder, he will not be afraid as the Grasshopper, the glory of his Nostrils is terrible, he paweth in the Valley, rejoiceth in his strength, and goeth out to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth back from the Sword. The Quiver rattleth against him, the glittering Spear, and the Shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth he that it is the sound of the Trumpet. He saith among the Trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the Battle afar off, the thundering of the Captains, and the Shoutings.

But for such footmen as thee and I are, let us never desire to meet with an enemy, nor vaunt as if we could do better, when we hear of others that they have been foiled, nor be tickled at the thoughts of our own manhood; for such commonly come by the worst when tried. Witness Peter, of whom I made mention before. He would swagger, ay he would; he would, as his vain mind prompted him to say, do better, and stand more for his Master than all men; but who so foiled and run down by these Villains as he?

When therefore we hear that such Robberies are done on the King's High - way, two things become us to do: First, To go out harnessed and to be sure to take a Shield with us; for it was for want of that, that he that laid so lustily at Leviathan could not make him yield; for indeed if that be wanting he fears us not at all. Therefore he that had skill hath said, Above all take the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

'Tis good also that we desire of the King a Convoy, yea that he will go with us himself. This made David rejoice when in the Valley of the Shadow of Death: and Moses was rather for dying where he stood, than to go one step without his God. O my Brother, if he will but go along with us, what need we be afraid of ten thousands that shall set themselves against us? But without him, the proud helpers fall under the slain.

I for my part have been in the fray before now, and though (through the goodness of him that is best) I am, as you see, alive; yet I cannot boast of my manhood. Glad shall I be, if I meet with no more such brunts, though I fear we are not got beyond all danger. However, since the Lion and the Bear have not as yet devoured me, I hope God will also deliver us from the next uncircumcised Philistine. Then sang Christian,

Poor Little-faith! Hast been among the Thieves?  
 Wast robb'd Remember this: Whoso believes  
 And gets more Faith, shall then a victor be  
 Over ten thousand, else scarce over three.

What danger is the Pilgrim in,  
 How many are his Foes,  
 How many ways there are to sin,  
 No living mortal knows.

Some of the Ditch shy are, yet can  
 Lie tumbling on the Mire;  
 Some tho' they shun the Frying-pan,  
 Do leap into the Fire.

After this I beheld until they were come unto the Land of Beulah, where the Sun shineth Night and Day. Here, because they was weary, they betook themselves a while to rest. And because this Country was common for Pilgrims, and because the Orchards and Vineyards that were here belonged to the King of the Coelestial Country, therefore they were licensed to make bold with any of his things. But a little while soon refreshed them here; for the Bells did so ring, and the Trumpets continually sound so melodiously, that they could not sleep; and yet they received as much refreshing as if they had slept their sleep never so soundly. Here also all the noise of them that walked the Streets, was, More Pilgrims are come to Town. And another would answer, saying, And so many went over the Water, and were let in at the Golden Gates to-day. They would cry again, There is now a Legion of Shining Ones just come to Town, by which we know that there are more Pilgrims upon the road, for here they come to wait for them, and to comfort them after all their Sorrow. Then the Pilgrims got up and walked to and fro; but how were their Ears now filled with Heavenly Noises, and their eyes delighted with Coelestial Visions!

In this Land they heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing, smelt nothing, tasted nothing, that was offensive to their Stomach or Mind; only when they tasted of the Water of the River over which they were to go, they thought that tasted a little bitterish to the Palate, but it proved sweeter when 'twas down.

In this place there was a Record kept of the names of them that had been Pilgrims of old, and a History of all the famous Acts that they had done. It was here also much discoursed how the River to some had had its flowings, and what ebbings it has had while others have gone over.

It has been in a manner dry for some, while it has overflowed its banks for others.

In this place the Children of the Town would go into the King's Gardens and gather Nosegays for the Pilgrims, and bring them to them with much affection. Here also grew Camphire with Spikenard and Saffron Calamus and Cinnamon, with all its Trees of Frankincense Myrrh and Aloes, with all chief Spices. With these the Pilgrim's Chambers were perfumed while they stayed here, and with these were their Bodies anointed, to prepare them to go over the River when the time appointed was come.

Now while they lay here and waited for the good hour, there was a noise in the Town that there was a Post come from the Coelestial City, with matter of great importance to one Christiana the Wife of Christian the Pilgrim. So enquiry was made for her, and the house was found out where she was. So the Post presented her with a Letter, the contents whereof was, Hail, good Woman, I bring thee Tidings that the Master calleth for thee, and expecteth that thou shouldest stand in his presence in Cloaths of Immortality, within this ten days.

When he had read this Letter to her, he gave her therewith a sure token that he was a true Messenger, and was come to bid her make haste to be gone. The token was an Arrow with a point sharpened with Love, let easily into her heart, which by degrees wrought so effectually with her, that at the time appointed she must be gone.

When Christiana saw that her time was come, and that she was the first of this Company that was to go over, she called for Mr Great-heart her Guide, and told him how matters were. So he told her he was heartily glad of the

News, and could have been glad had the Post come for him. Then she bid that he should give advice how all things should be prepared for her Journey. So he told her, saying, Thus and thus it must be, and we that survive will accompany you to the River-side.

Then she called for her Children, and gave them her Blessing, and told them that she yet read with comfort the Mark that was set in their Foreheads, and was glad to see them with her there, and that they had kept their Garments so white. Lastly, she bequeathed to the Poor that little she had, and commanded her Sons and her Daughters to be ready against the Messenger should come for them.

When she had spoken these words to her Guide and to her Children, she called for Mr Valiant-for-truth, and said unto him, Sir, you have in all places shewed yourself true-hearted, be faithful unto Death, and my King will give you a Crown of Life. I would also entreat you to have an eye to my Children, and if at any time you see them faint, speak comfortably to them.

For my Daughters, my Sons' Wives, they have been faithful, and a fulfilling of the Promise upon them will be their end. But she gave Mr Stand-fast a Ring.

Then she called for old Mr Honest, and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile. Then said he, I wish you a fair day when you set out for Mount Zion, and shall be glad to see that you go over the River dry - shod. But she answered, Come wet, come dry, I long to be gone, for however the Weather is in my Journey, I shall have time enough when I come there to sit down and rest me and dry me.

Then came in that good man Mr Ready-to-halt to see her. So she said to him, Thy Travel hither has been with difficulty, but that will make thy Rest the sweeter. But watch and be ready, for at an hour when you think not, the Messenger may come.

After him came in Mr Dispondency and his Daughter Much-afraid, to whom she said, You ought with thankfulness for ever to remember your Deliverance from the hands of Giant Despair and out of Doubting Castle. The effect of that Mercy is, that you are brought with safety hither. Be ye watchful and cast away Fear, be sober and hope to the end.

Then she said to Mr Feeble-mind, Thou wast delivered from the mouth of Giant Slay-good, that thou mightest live in the Light of the Living forever, and see thy King with comfort. Only I advise thee to repent thee of thine aptness to fear and doubt of his goodness before he sends for thee, lest thou shouldest when he comes, be forced to stand before him for that fault with blushing.

Now the day drew on that Christiana must be gone. So the Road was full of People to see her take her Journey. But behold all the Banks beyond the River were full of Horses and Chariots, which were come down from above to accompany her to the City Gate. So she came forth and entered the River, with a beckon of Farewell to those that followed her to the River-side. The last word she was heard to say here was, I come Lord, to be with thee and bless thee.

So her Children and Friends returned to their place, for that those that waited for Christiana had carried her out of their sight. So she went and called, and entered in at the

Gate with all the Ceremonies of Joy that her Husband Christian had done before her.

At her departure her Children wept, but Mr Greatheart and Mr Valiant played upon the well-tuned Cymbal and Harp for Joy. So all departed to their respective places.

In process of time there came a Post to the Town again, and his business was with Mr. Ready-to-halt. So he enquired him out, and said to him, I am come to thee in the name of him whom thou hast loved and followed, tho' upon Crutches; and my Message is to tell thee that he expects thee at his Table to sup with him in his Kingdom the next day after Easter, wherefore prepare thyself for this Journey.

Then he also gave him a Token that he was a true Messenger, saying, I have broken thy golden bowl, and loosed thy silver cord.

After this Mr Ready-to-halt called for his fellow Pilgrims, and told them, saying, I am sent for, and God shall surely visit you also. So he desired Mr Valiant to make his Will. And because he had nothing to bequeath to them that should survive him but his Crutches and his good Wishes, therefore thus he said, These Crutches I bequeath to my Son that shall tread in my steps, with a hundred warm wishes that he may prove better than I have done.

Then he thanked Mr Great-heart for his Conduct and Kindness, and so addressed himself to his Journey. When he came at the Brink of the River he said, Now I shall have no more need of these Crutches, since yonder are Chariots



and Horses for me to ride on. The last words he was heard to say was, Welcome Life. So he went his way.

After this Mr Feeble-mind had Tidings brought him that the Post sounded his Horn at his Chamber-door. Then he came in and told him, saying, I am come to tell thee that thy Master has need of thee, and that in very little time thou must behold his Face in Brightness. And take this as a Token of the Truth of my Message, Those that look out at the Windows shall be darkened.

Then Mr Feeble-mind called for his Friends, and told them what Errand had been brought unto him, and what Token he had received of the Truth of the Message. Then he said, Since I have nothing to bequeath to any, to what purpose should I make a Will? As for my feeble mind, that I will leave behind me, for that I have no need of that in the place whither I go. Nor is it worth bestowing upon the poorest Pilgrim; wherefore when I am gone, I desire that you, Mr Valiant, would bury it in a Dunghill. This done, and the day being come in which he was to depart, he entered the River as the rest. His last words were, Hold out Faith and Patience. So he went over to the other side.

When days had many of them passed away, Mr. Dispondency was sent for. For a Post was come, and brought this Message to him, Trembling man, these are to summon thee to be ready with thy King by the next Lord's day, to shout for Joy or thy Deliverance from all thy Doubtings.

And said the Messenger, That my Message is true take this for a Proof; so he gave him The Grasshopper to be a Burden unto him. Now Mr Dispondency's Daughter whose name was Much-afraid said when she heard what

was done, that she would go with her Father. Then Mr Dispondency said to his Friends, Myself and my Daughter, you know what we have been, and how troublesomely we have behaved ourselves in every Company. My Will and my Daughter's is, that our Disponds and slavish Fears be by no man ever received from the day of our Departure for ever, for I know that after my Death they will offer themselves to others. For to be plain with you, they are Ghosts, the which we entertained when we first began to be Pilgrims, and could never shake them off after; and they will walk about and seek entertainment of the Pilgrims, but for our sakes shut ye the doors upon them.

When the time was come for them to depart, they went to the Brink of the River. The last words of Mr Dispondency were, Farewell Night, welcome Day. His Daughter went through the River singing, but none could understand what she said.

Then it came to pass a while after, that there was a Post in the town that enquired for Mr Honest. So he came to his house where he was, and delivered to his hand these lines, Thou art commanded to be ready against this day seven-night to present thyself before thy Lord at his Father's house. And for a Token that my Message is true, All thy Daughters of Musick shall be brought low. Then Mr Honest called for his Friends, and said unto them, I die, but shall make no Will. As for my Honesty, it shall go with me; let him that comes after be told of this. When the day that he was to be gone was come, he addressed himself to go over the River. Now the River at that time overflowed the Banks in some places, but Mr Honest in his lifetime had spoken to one Good - conscience to meet him there, the which he also did, and lent him his hand, and so

helped him over. The last words of Mr Honest were, Grace reigns. So he left the World.

After this it was noised abroad that Mr Valiant-for-truth was taken with a Summons by the same Post as the other, and had this for a Token that the Summons was true, That his Pitcher was broken at the Fountain. When he understood it, he called for his Friends, and told them of it. Then said he, I am going to my Fathers, and tho' with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the Trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My Sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my Pilgrimage, and my Courage and Skill to him that can get it. My Marks and Scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought his Battles who now will be my Rewarder. When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the Riverside, into which as he went he said, Death, where is thy Sting? And as he went down deeper he said, Grave, where is thy Victory? So he passed over, and all the Trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

Then there came forth a Summons for Mr Stand-fast, (This Mr Stand - fast was he that the rest of the Pilgrims found upon his Knees in the Incharnted Ground) for the Post brought it him open in his hands. The contents whereof, were, that he must prepare for a Change of Life, for his Master was not willing that he should be so far from him any longer. At this Mr. Stand - fast was put into a muse. Nay, said the Messenger, you need not doubt of the truth of my Message, for here is a Token of the Truth thereof, Thy Wheel is broken at the Cistern. Then he called to him Mr Great-heart who was their Guide, and said, unto him, Sir, altho' it was not my hap to be much in your good Company in the days of my Pilgrimage, yet since the time I

knew you, you have been profitable to me. When I came from home, I left behind me a Wife and five small Children, let me entreat you at your return, (for I know that you will go and return to your Master's house, in hopes that you may yet be a Conductor to more of the holy Pilgrims) that you send to my Family, and let them be acquainted with all that hath and shall happen unto me. Tell them moreover of my happy Arrival to this place, and of the present late blessed condition that I am in. Tell them also of Christian and Christiana his Wife, and how she and her Children came after her Husband. Tell them also of what a happy end she made, and whither she is gone. I have little or nothing to send to my Family, except it be Prayers and Tears for them; of which it will suffice if thou acquaint them, if peradventure they may prevail.

When Mr. Stand-fast had thus set things in order, and the time being come for him to haste him away, he also went down to the River. Now there was a great Calm at that time in the River; wherefore Mr Stand-fast, when he was about half-way in, he stood awhile, and talked to his Companions that had waited upon him thither. And he said,

This River has been a Terror to many, yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me. But now methinks I stand easy, my Foot is fixed upon that upon which the Feet of the Priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan. The Waters indeed are to the Palate bitter and to the Stomach cold, yet the thoughts of what I am going to and of the Conduct that waits for me on the other side, doth lie as a glowing Coal at my Heart.

I see myself now at the end of my Journey, my toilsome days are ended. I am going now to see that Head that was

crowned with Thorns, and that Face that was spit upon for me.

I have formerly lived by Hear-say and Faith, but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose Company I delight myself.

I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of, and wherever I have seen the print of his Shoe in the Earth, there I have coveted to set my Foot too.

His Name has been to me as a Civit-box, yea, sweeter than all Perfumes. His Voice to me has been most sweet, and his Countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the Light of the Sun. His Word I did use to gather for my Food, and for Antidotes against my Faintings. He has held me, and I have kept me from mine iniquities, yea, my Steps hath he strengthened in his Way.

Now while he was thus in Discourse, his Countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him, and after he had said, Take me, for I come unto thee, he ceased to be seen of them.

But glorious it was to see how the open Region was filled with Horses and Chariots, with Trumpeters and Pipers, with Singers and Players on stringed Instruments, to welcome the Pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful Gate of the City.

As for Christian's Children, the four Boys that Christiana brought with her, with their Wives and Children, I did not stay where I was till they were gone over. Also since I came away, I heard one say that they

were yet alive, and so would be for the Increase of the Church in that place where they were for a time.

Shall it be my Lot to go that way again, I may give those that desire it an account of what I here am silent about; mean-time I bid my Reader Adieu.

The Author's Vindication Of His Pilgrim, Found At The End Of His "Holy War"

Some say the Pilgrim's Progress is not mine,  
 Insinuating as if I would shine  
 In name and fame by the worth of another,  
 Like some made rich by robbing of their Brother.  
 Or that so fond I am of being Sire,  
 I'll father Bastards; or if need require,  
 I'll tell a lye in print to get applause.  
 I scorn it: John such dirt-heap never was,  
 Since God converted him. Let this suffice  
 To show why I my Pilgrim patronize.

It came from mine own heart, so to my head,  
 And thence into my fingers trickled;  
 Then to my pen, from whence immediately  
 On paper I did dribble it daintily.

Manner and matter too was all mine own,  
 Nor was it unto any mortal known,  
 Till I had done it. Nor did any then  
 By books, by wits, by tongues, or hand, or pen,  
 Add five words to it, or write half a line  
 Thereof: the whole and every whit is mine.

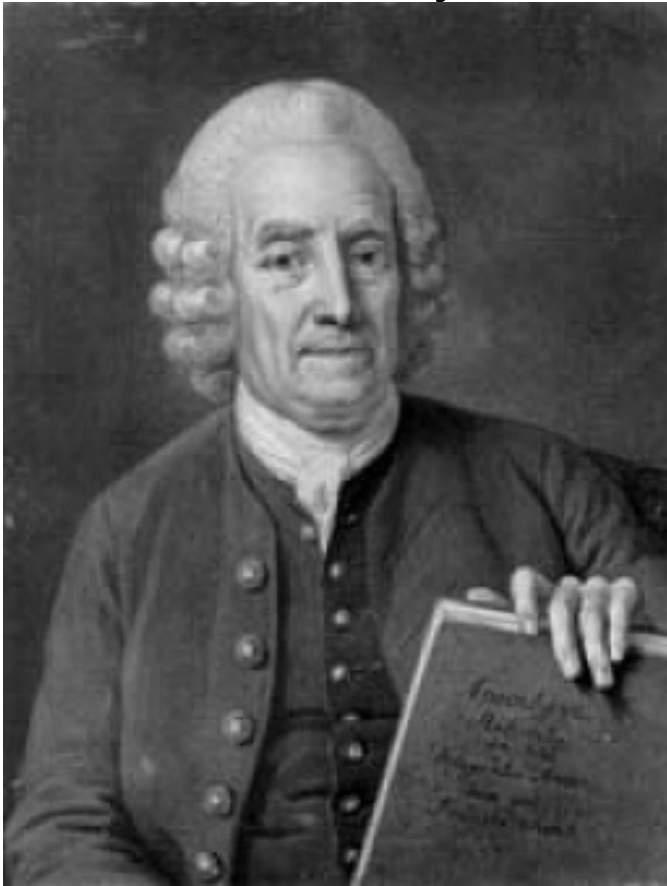
Also, for this thine eye is now upon,  
 The matter in this manner came from none

But the same heart and head, fingers and pen,  
As did the other. Witness all good men;  
For none in all the world, without a lye,  
Can say that this is mine, excepting I.  
I write not this of any ostentation,  
Nor' cause I seek of men their commendation;  
I do it to keep them from such surmise,  
As tempt them will my name to scandalize.  
Witness my name, if anagram'd to thee,  
The letters make, Nu hony in a B.

John Bunyan.

*The Pilgrims Progress, By John Bunyan, [1678] sacred-  
texts.com*

# 'Emanuel Swedenborg – Forgotten Swedenborgian Christian Mystic'



Emmanuel Swedenborg



# The Gist of Swedenborg

*Compiled by Julian K. Smyth and William F. Wunsch*

## FOREWORD

The reason for a compilation such as is here presented should be obvious. Swedenborg's theological writings comprise some thirty or more substantial volumes, the result of the most concentrated labor extending over a period of twenty-seven years. To study these writings in their whole extent, to see them in their minute unfoldment out of the Word of God, is a work of years. It is doubtful if there is a phase of man's religious experience for which an interpretation is not here to be found. Notwithstanding this immense sweep of doctrine there are certain vital, fundamental truths on which it all rests:--the Christ-God, Man a spiritual being, the warfare of Regeneration, Marriage, the Sacred Scriptures, the Life of Charity and Faith, the Divine Providence, Death and the Future! Life, the Church. We have endeavored to press within the small compass of this book passages which give the gist of Swedenborg's teachings on these subjects.

The compilers would gladly have made room for the interpretative and philosophical teachings which contribute so much to the content and form of Swedenborg's theology; but they have confined their effort to setting forth briefly and clearly the positive spiritual teachings where these seemed most packed with religious meaning and moment.

The translation of the passages here brought together has been carefully revised.

Julian K. Smyth.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Emanuel Swedenborg was born at Stockholm, January 29, 1688.

A devout home (the father was a Lutheran clergyman, and afterwards Bishop of Skara) stimulated in the boy the nature which was to become so active in his culminating life-work. A university education at Upsala, however, and studies for five years in England, France, Holland and Germany, brought other interests into play first. The earliest of these were mathematics and astronomy, in the pursuit of which he met Flamsteed and Halley. His gift for the detection and practical employment of general laws soon carried him much farther afield in the sciences. Metallurgy, geology, a varied field of invention, chemistry, as well as his duties as an Assessor on the Board of Mines and of a legislator in the Diet, all engaged him, with an immediate outcome in his work, and often with results in contributions to human knowledge which are gaining recognition only now. The *Principia* and two companion volumes, dedicated to his patron, the Duke of Brunswick, crowned his versatile productions in the physical sciences.

Academies of science, at home and abroad, were electing him to membership.

Conspicuous in Swedenborg's thought all along was the premise that there is a God and the presupposition of that whole element in life which we call the spiritual. As he pushed his studies into the fields of physiology and psychology, this premised realm of the spirit became the express goal of his researches. Some of his most valuable

and most startling discoveries came in these fields. Outstanding are a work on *The Brain* and two on the *Animal Kingdom* (kingdom of the *anima*, or soul). As his gaze sought the soul, however, in the light in which he had more and more successfully beheld all his subjects for fifty-five years, she eluded direct knowledge. He was increasingly baffled, until a new light broke in on him. Then he was borne along, in a profound humiliation of his intellectual ambitions, by another way. For when the new light steadied, he had undergone a personal religious experience, the rich journals of which he himself never published. But what was of public concern, his consciousness was opened into the world of the spirit, so that he could observe its facts and laws as, for so long, he had observed those of the material world, and in its own world could receive a revelation of the doctrines of man's spiritual life.

It was now, for the first time, too, that he gave a deep consideration to the condition of the Christian Church, revealed in other-world judgment to be one of spiritual devastation and impotency. To serve in the revelation of "doctrine for a New Church" became his Divinely appointed work. He forwent his reputation as a man of science, gave up his assessorship, cleared his desk of everything but the Scriptures. He beheld in the Word of God a spiritual meaning, as he did a spiritual world in the world of phenomena. In revealing both of these the Lord, he said, made His Second Coming. For the rest of his long life Swedenborg gave himself with unremitting labor but with a saving calm to this commanding cause, publishing his great Latin volumes of Scripture interpretation and of theological teaching at Amsterdam or London, at first anonymously, and distributing them to clergy and universities. The titles of his principal theological works

appear in the following compilation from them. Upon his death-bed this herald of a new day for Christianity solemnly affirmed the reality of his experience and the reception by him of his teaching from the Lord.

Swedenborg died in London, March 29, 1772. In 1908 his remains were removed from the Swedish Church in that city to the cathedral at Upsala, where they lie in a monument erected to his memory by the Swedish Parliament.

William F. Wunsch.

*Documents Concerning the Life and Character of Swedenborg* (3 Vols.) 1875-1877, R. L. Tafel, is the main collection of biographical material; *The Life and Mission of Emanuel Swedenborg*, 1883, Benjamin Worcester, and *Emanuel Swedenborg, His Life, Teachings and Influence*, 1907, George Trobridge, are two of the better known biographies.

### THE GIST OF SWEDENBORG

"At this day nothing but the self-evidenced reason of love will re-establish the Church."--*Canons*, Prologue.

### GOD THE LORD

"Believe in God: believe also in Me."  
*John*, XIV, 1

"My Lord, and my God!"  
*John*, XX, 28

## ONE AND INFINITE

GOD is One, and Infinite. The true quality of the Infinite does not appear; for the human mind, however highly analytical and exalted, is itself finite, and the finite-ness in it cannot be laid aside. It is not fitted, therefore, to see the Infinity of God, and thus God, as He is in Himself, but can see God from behind in shadow; as it is said of Moses, when he asked to see God, that he was placed in a cleft of the rock, and saw His hinder side. It is enough to acknowledge God from things finite, that is, created, in which He is infinitely.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 28*

## "INTO HIS MARVELLOUS LIGHT"

WE read in the Word that Jehovah God dwells in light inaccessible. Who, then, could approach Him, unless He had come to dwell in accessible light, that is, unless He had descended and assumed a Humanity and in it had become the Light of the world? Who cannot see that to approach Jehovah the Father in His light is as impossible as to take the wings of the morning and to fly with them to the sun?

*--True Christian Religion, n. 176*

## THE CHRIST-GOD

WE ought to have faith in God the Saviour, Jesus Christ, because that is faith in the visible God in Whom is the Invisible; and faith in the visible God, Who is at once Man and God, enters into man. For while faith is spiritual in essence it is natural in form, for everything spiritual, in

order to be anything with a man, is received by him in what is natural.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 339

Man's conjunction with the Lord is not with His supreme Divine Being itself, but with His Divine Humanity, and by this with the supreme Divine Being; for man can have no idea whatever of the supreme Divine Being of the Lord, utterly transcending his thought as it does; but of His Divine Human Being he can have an idea. Hence the Gospel according to John says that no one has at any time seen God except the only-begotten Son, and that there is no approach to the Father save by Him. For the same reason He is called a Mediator.

--*Arcana Coelestia*, n. 4211

## GOD-MAN

IN the Lord, God and Man are not two but one Person, yea, altogether one, as soul and body are. This is plain in many of the Lord's own utterances; as that the Father and He are one; that all things of the Father are His, and all His the Father's; that He is in the Father, and the Father in Him; that all things are given into His hand; that He has all power; that whosoever believes in Him has eternal life; that He is God of heaven and earth.

--*Doctrine Concerning the Lord*, n. 60

There is one God, and the Lord is He, His Divinity and Humanity being one Person.

--*Divine Providence*, n. 122

They who think of the Lord's Humanity, and not at the same time of His Divinity, by no means allow the expression "Divine Humanity"; for they think of the Humanity by itself and of the Divinity by itself, which is like thinking of man apart from his soul or life, which, however, is no conception of man, still less of the Lord.

--*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 26

### WHY HE CAME

THE Lord from eternity, Who is Jehovah, came into the world to subdue the hells and to glorify His Humanity. Without Him no mortal could have been saved; and they are saved who believe in Him.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 2

The Lord came into the world to save the human race which would otherwise have perished in eternal death. This salvation the Lord effected by subjugating the hells, which infested every man coming into the world and going out of the world, and by glorifying His Humanity; for so He can hold the hells subdued to eternity. The subjugation of the hells, and the glorification at the same time of His Humanity, were effected by temptations let into the Humanity He had from the mother, and by unbroken victories. His passion on the cross was the last temptation and complete victory.

--*Heavenly Doctrine*, n. 293

## HOW HE CAME

BECAUSE, from His essence, God burned with the love of uniting Himself to man, it was necessary that He should cover Himself around with a body adapted to reception and conjunction. He therefore descended and assumed a human nature in pursuance of the order established by Him from the creation of the world. That is, He was to be conceived by a power produced from Himself; He was to be carried in the womb; He was to be born, and then to grow in wisdom and in love, and so was to approach to union with His Divine origin. Thus God became Man, and Man God.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 838*

## THE LIFE ON EARTH

THE Lord had at first a human nature from the mother, of which He gradually divested Himself while He was in the world. Accordingly He kept experiencing two states: a state of humiliation or privation, as long and as far as He was conscious in the human nature from the mother; and a state of glorification or union with the Divine, as long and as far as He was conscious in the Humanity received from the Father. In the state of humiliation He prayed to the Father as to One other than Himself; but in the state of glorification He spoke with the Father as with Himself. In this state He said that the Father was in Him, and He in the Father, and that the Father and He were one.

The Lord consecutively put off the human nature assumed from the mother, and put on a Humanity from the Divine in Himself, which is the Divine Humanity and the Son of God.



--*Doctrine Concerning the Lord, nn. 29, 35*

### **THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE**

WHEN the Lord was in the world, His life was altogether the life of a love for the whole human race, which He burned to save forever. That life was of the intensest love by which He united Himself to the Divine and the Divine to Himself. For being itself, or Jehovah, is pure mercy from love for the whole human race; and that life was one of sheer love, as it can never be with any man.

--*Arcana Cælestia, n. 2253*

### **"COME UNTO ME"**

DO you, my friend, flee evil, and do good, and believe in the Lord with your whole heart and with your whole soul, and the Lord will love you, and give you love for doing, and faith for believing. Then will you do good from love, and from a faith which is confidence will you believe. If you persevere in this, a reciprocal conjunction will take place, and one that is perpetual, indeed is salvation itself, and everlasting life.

--*True, Christian Religion, n. 484*

### **THE TRINITY; THE FULNESS OF HIS BEING**

THEY who are truly men of the Church, that is, who are in love to the Lord and in charity toward the neighbor, know and acknowledge a Trine. Still, they humble themselves before the Lord, and adore Him alone, inasmuch as they know that there is no approach to the Divine Itself, called the Father, but by the Son; and that all that is holy, and of

the Holy Spirit, proceeds from Him. When they are in this idea, they adore no other than Him, by Whom and from Whom are all things; consequently they adore One.

--*Arcana Goelestia, n. 2329*

God is one in essence and in person. This God is the Lord. The Divinity itself, which is called Jehovah "the Father," is the Lord from eternity. The Divine Humanity is "the Son" begotten from His Divine from eternity, and born in the world. The proceeding Divinity is "the Holy Spirit."

--*Divine Providence, n. 157*

## MAN

"Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him; And the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

*Psalm, VIII, 4*

## GOD'S UNRELAXED EFFORT

THE object of creation was an angelic heaven from the human race; in other words, mankind, in whom God might be able to dwell as in His residence. For this reason man was created a form of Divine order. God is in him, and as far as he lives according to Divine order, fully so; but if he does not live according to Divine order, still God is in him, but in his highest parts, endowing him with the ability to understand truth and to will what is good. But as far as man lives contrary to order, so far he shuts up the lower parts of his mind or spirit, and prevents God from descending and filling them with His presence. Then God is in him, but he is not in God.

**AN INSTRUMENT OF LIFE**

MAN is an instrument of life, and God alone is life. God pours His life into His instrument and every part of him, as the sun pours its heat into a tree and every part of it. God also gives man to feel this life in himself as his own. God wills that he should do so, that man may live as of himself according to the laws of order, which are as many as there are precepts in the Word, and may dispose himself to receive the love of God. But still God perpetually holds with His finger the perpendicular above the scales, and regulates, but never violates by compulsion, man's free decision. Man's free will is from this: that he feels life in himself as his, and God leaves him so to feel, that reciprocal conjunction may take place between Him and man.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 504*

**"ABIDE IN ME"**

MAN is so created that he can be more and more closely united to the Lord. He is so united not by knowledge alone, nor by intelligence alone, nor even by wisdom alone, but by a life in accordance with these. The more closely he is united to the Lord, the wiser and happier he becomes, the more distinctly he seems to himself to be his own, and the more clearly he perceives that he is the Lord's.

*--Divine Providence, nn. 32 et al.*

## TWO MINDS: TWO WORLDS

MAN is so created as to live simultaneously in the natural world and in the spiritual world. Thus he has an internal and an external nature or mind; by the former living in the spiritual world, by the latter in the natural world.

--*Heavenly Doctrine*, n. 36

## INALIENABLE POWERS

THERE are in man from the Lord two capacities by which the human being is distinguished from the beasts. One capacity is the ability to understand what is true and what is good. It is called rationality, and is a capacity of his understanding. The other capacity is the ability to do the true and the good. It is called freedom, and is a power of the will. By virtue of his rationality, man can think what he pleases, as well against God as with Him, and with his neighbor or against his neighbor. He can also will and do what he thinks; and when he sees evil and fears punishment, by virtue of freedom he can refrain from doing. By these two capacities man is man and is distinguished from the beasts. Man has these twin powers from the Lord, and they are from Him every moment; nor are they ever taken away, for if they were, man's humanity would perish. The Lord is in these two powers with every man, with the evil as well as the good. They are His abiding-place in the race. Thence it is that every human being, evil as well as good, lives to eternity.

--*Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 240

## THE DRAG OF HEREDITY

MAN inclines to the nature he derives hereditarily, and lapses into it. Thus he strengthens any evil in it, and also adds others of himself. These evils are quite opposed to the spiritual life. They destroy it. Unless, therefore, a man receives new life from the Lord, which is spiritual life, he is condemned; for he wills nothing else and thinks nothing else than concerns him and the world.

--*Heavenly Doctrine*, n. 176

## LOVES OF SELF AND THE WORLD

THE reason why the love of self and the love of the world are infernal loves, and yet man has been able to come into them, and thus to ruin will and understanding in him, is as follows: By creation the love of self and the love of the world are heavenly loves; for they are loves of the natural man serving his spiritual loves, as a foundation does a house. From the love of self and the world, a man wishes well by his body, desires food, clothing and habitation, takes thought for his household, seeks occupation to be useful, wishes also for obedience's sake to be honored according to the dignity of the thing he does, and to be delighted and recreated by the pleasures of the world;--yet all this for the sake of the end, which must be use. By this a man is in position to serve the Lord and to serve the neighbor. But when there is no love of serving the Lord and the neighbor, but only a love of serving oneself at the world's hands, then from being heavenly that love becomes infernal, for it causes a man to sink mind and character in his *proprium*, or what is his own, which in itself is the whole of evil.

**THE NEED FOR SELF-ACTION**

NO one can cleanse himself of evils by his own power and abilities; but neither can this be done without the power and abilities of the man, used as his own. If this strength were not to all appearance his own, no one would be able to fight against the flesh and its lusts, which, nevertheless, is enjoined upon all men. He would not think of combat. Because man is a rational being, he must resist evils from the power and the abilities given him by the Lord, which appear to him as his own; an appearance that is granted for the sake of regeneration, imputation, conjunction, and salvation.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 438*

**THE WARFARE OF REGENERATION**

"Blessed be the Lord my strength,  
 Who teacheth my hands to war,  
 And my fingers to fight: My goodness,  
 and my fortress; My high tower and my deliverer;  
 My shield, and He in whom I trust;  
 Who subdueth my people under me."

*--Psalm, cxliv, 1, 2*

**"TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH"**

BECAUSE man is reformed by conflicts with the evils of his flesh and by victories over them, the Son of Man says to each of the seven Churches, that He will give gifts "to him that overcometh."

Without moral struggle no one is regenerated, and many spiritual wrestlings succeed one after another. For, inasmuch as regeneration has for its end that the life of the old man may die and the new and heavenly life be implanted, there will unfailingly be combat. The life of the old man resists and is unwilling to be extinguished, and the life of the new man cannot enter, except where the life of the old has been extinguished. From this it is plain that there is combat, and ardent combat, because for life.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 8403

### REPENTANCE AND THE REMISSION OF SINS

HE who would be saved, must confess his sins, and do repentance. *To confess sins* is to know evils, to see them in oneself, to acknowledge them, to make oneself guilty and condemn oneself on account of them. Done before God, this is to confess sins. *To do repentance* is to desist from sins after one has thus confessed them and from a humble heart has besought forgiveness, and then to live a new life according to the precepts of charity and faith, He who merely acknowledges generally that he is a sinner, making himself guilty of all evils, without examining himself,--that is without seeing his sins,--makes a confession but not the confession of repentance. Inasmuch as he does not know his evils, he lives as before.

One who lives the life of charity and faith does repentance daily. He reflects upon the evils in him, acknowledges them, guards against them, and beseeches the Lord for help. For of oneself one continually lapses toward evil; but he is continually raised up by the Lord and led to good.

Repentance of the mouth and not of the life is not repentance. Nor are sins pardoned on repentance of the mouth, but on repentance of the life. Sins are constantly pardoned man by the Lord, for He is mercy itself; but still they adhere to man, however he supposes they have been remitted. Nor are they removed from him save by a life according to the precepts of true faith. So far as he lives according to these precepts, sins are removed; and so far as they are removed, so far they are remitted.

--*Heavenly Doctrine, nn. 159-165*

### TEMPTATION AND PRAYER

WHEN a man shuns evils as sins, he flees them because they are contrary to the Lord and to His Divine laws; and then he prays to the Lord for help and for power to resist them--a power which is never denied when it is asked. By these two means a man is cleansed of evils. He cannot be cleansed of evils if he only looks to the Lord and prays; for then, after he has prayed, he believes that he is quite without sins, or that they have been forgiven, by which he understands that they are taken away. But then he still remains in them; and to remain in them is to increase them. Nor are evils removed only by shunning them; for then the man looks to himself, and thereby strengthens the origin of evil, which was that he turned himself back from the Lord and turned to himself.

--*The Doctrine Concerning Charity, n. 146*

### THE GREAT ARENA

IN temptations the hells fight against man, and the Lord for him. To every falsity which the hells inject, there is an



answer from the Divine. The falsities inflow into the outward man, the answer into the inward man, coming to perception scarcely otherwise than as hope, and the resulting consolation, in which, however, there is a multitude of things of which the man is unaware.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 8159

In temptations a man is left, to all appearance, to himself alone; yet he has not been left alone, for God is then most present in his inmost being, and upholds him. When anyone overcomes in temptation, therefore, he enters into closer union with God.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 126

### "BY LITTLE AND LITTLE"

WHEN man is being regenerated, he is not regenerated speedily but slowly. The reason is that all things which he has thought, purposed and done since infancy, have added themselves to his life and have come to constitute it. They have also formed such a connection among themselves that no one thing can be removed unless all are at the same time. Regeneration, or the implantation of the life of heaven in man, begins in his infancy, and continues to the last of his life in the world, and is perfected to eternity.

--*Arcana Coelestia*, n. 9334

### A NEW MAN

WHEN a man is regenerated, he becomes altogether another, and a new, man. While his appearance and his speech are the same, yet his mind is not; for his mind is

then open toward heaven, and there dwell in it love for the Lord, and charity toward the neighbor, together with faith. It is the mind which makes another and a new man. The change of state cannot be perceived in man's body, but in his spirit. When it [the body] is put off then his spirit appears, and in altogether another form, too, when he has been regenerated; for it has then a form of love and charity with inexpressible beauty, in the place of the earlier form, which was one of hatred and cruelty with a deformity also inexpressible. --*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 3212

### CHILDHOOD

"It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

--*Matthew*, XVIII, 14

Never could a man live,--certainly not as a human being,--unless he had in himself something vital, that is, some innocence, neighborly love, and mercy. This a man receives from the Lord in infancy and childhood. What he receives then is treasured up in him, and is called in the Word the *remnant* or *remains*, which are of the Lord alone with him, and they make it possible for him truly to be a man on reaching adult age. These states are the elements of his regeneration, and he is led into them; for the Lord works by means of them. These *remains* are also called "the living soul" in all flesh.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 1050

All states of innocence from infancy on, of love toward parents, brothers, teachers and friends; of charity to the neighbor, and also of mercy to the poor and needy; all states of goodness and truth, with their goods and truths,

impressed on; the memory, are preserved in man by the Lord, and are stored up unconsciously to himself in his internal man, and are carefully kept from evils and falsities. They are all so preserved by the Lord that not the smallest of them is lost.

Every state from infancy even to extreme old age not only *remains* in another life, but also returns. Returning, these states are such as they were during a man's abode in the world. Not only the goods and truths, stored up in the memory, remain and return, but likewise all the states of innocence and charity; and when states of evil and the false, or of wickedness and phantasy recur, these latter states are attempered by the former through the Divine operation of the Lord.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 561

## PRAYER

"O Thou who hearest prayer; Unto Thee shall all flesh  
come."

--*Psalm*, LXV, 2

PRAYER, in itself considered, is speech with God. There is then some inward view of the objects of the prayer, and answering to that something like an influx into the perception or thought. Thus there is a kind of opening of the man's interiors toward God, with a difference according to the man's state and according to the nature of the object of the prayer. If one prays out of love and faith and only about and for things heavenly and spiritual, then there appears in the prayer something like revelation, which shows itself in the affection of the suppliant, in hope, solace, or an inner gladness.

**THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP**

"I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy;  
In Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple."

*--Psalm, v, 7*

ONE should not omit the practice of external worship. Things inward are excited by external worship; and outward things are kept in holiness by external worship, so that things inward can flow in. Moreover, a man is imbued in this way with knowledge, and prepared to receive celestial things, so as to be endowed with states of holiness, though he is unaware of it. These states of holiness the Lord preserves to him for the use of eternal life; for in the other life all one's states of life recur.

*--Arcana Cælestia, n. 1618*

**THE SACRAMENTS**

BAPTISM and the Holy Supper are the holiest acts of worship. Baptism and the Holy Supper are as it were two gates, through which a man is introduced into eternal life. After the first gate there is a plain, which he must traverse; and the second is the goal where the prize is, to which he directed his course; for the palm is not given until after the contest, nor the reward until after the combat.

*--True Christian Religion, nn. 667, 721*

**I. BAPTISM**

BAPTISM was instituted for a sign that a man is of the Church and for a memorial that he is to be regenerated. For the washing of baptism is no other than spiritual washing, which is regeneration. All regeneration is effected by the Lord through truths of faith and a life according to them. Baptism, therefore, testifies that a man is of the Church and that he can be regenerated; for it is in the Church that the Lord is acknowledged, Who regenerates man, and there the Word is, where are truths of faith, by which is regeneration.

--*Heavenly Doctrine, nn. 202, 203*

The sign of the cross which a child receives on the forehead and breast at baptism is a sign of inauguration into the acknowledgment and worship of the Lord.

--*True Christian Religion, n. 682*

## II. THE HOLY SUPPER

THE Holy Supper was instituted that by means of it there might be conjunction of the Church with heaven, and thus with the Lord. When one takes the bread, which is the Body, one is conjoined with the Lord by the good of love to Him, from Him; and when one takes the wine, which is the Blood, one is conjoined to the Lord by the good of faith in Him, from Him.

--*Heavenly Doctrine, nn. 210, 213*

In the Holy Supper the Lord is fully present, both as to His glorified Humanity, and as to the Divine. And because He is fully present, therefore the whole of His redemption is; for where the Lord the Redeemer is, there redemption is.

Therefore all who observe the Holy Communion worthily, become His redeemed, and receives the fruits of redemption, namely, liberation from hell, union with the Lord, and salvation.

*--True Christian Religion, nn. 716, 717*

### THE RESPONSIBLE LIFE IN THE WORLD

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me."

*--Matthew, XI, 29*

THERE are those who believe that it is difficult to live the life which leads to heaven, which is called the spiritual life, because they have heard that one must renounce the world, must divest himself of the lusts called the lusts of the body and the flesh, and must live spiritually. They take this to mean that they must cast away worldly things, which are especially riches and honors; that they must go continually in pious meditation on God, salvation, and eternal life; and must spend their life in prayers and in reading the Word and pious books. But those who renounce the world and live in the spirit in this manner acquire a melancholy life, unreceptive of heavenly joy. To receive the life of heaven a man must by all means live in the world and engage in its duties and affairs and by a moral and civil life receive the spiritual life.

That it is not so difficult to live the life of heaven, as some believe, may be seen from this: when a matter presents itself to a man which he knows to be dishonest and unjust, but to which he inclines, it is only necessary for him to think that it ought not to be done because it is opposed to the Divine precepts. If a man accustoms himself to think so, and from so doing establishes a habit of so thinking, he

is gradually conjoined to heaven. So far as he is conjoined to heaven the higher regions of his mind are opened; and so far as these are opened he sees whatever is dishonest and unjust; and so far as he sees these evils they can be dispersed--for no evil can be dispersed until it is seen.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 528, 533

### THE DECALOGUE

"Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

--*Jeremiah*, 1, 5

THE conjunction of God with man, and of man with God, is taught in the two Tables which were written with the finger of God, called the Tables of the Covenant. These Tables obtain with all nations who have a religion. From the first Table they know that God is to be acknowledged, hallowed and worshipped. From the second Table they know that a man is not to steal, either openly or by trickery, nor to commit adultery, nor to kill, whether by blow or by hatred, nor to bear false witness in a court of justice, or before the world, and further that he ought not to will those evils. From this Table a man knows the evils which he must shun, and in the measure that he knows them and shuns them, God conjoins him to Himself, and in turn from His Table gives man to acknowledge, hallow and worship Him. So, also, He gives him not to meditate evils, and, in so far as he does not will them, to know truths freely.

--*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1179

As one views the two tables, it is plain that they are so conjoined that God from His table looks to man, and that in turn man from his table looks to God. Thus the regard is reciprocal. God for His part never ceases to regard man, and to put in operation such things as are for his salvation; and if man receives and does the things in his table, reciprocal conjunction is effected, and the Lord's words to the lawyer will have come to pass, "This do, and thou shalt live."

--*True Christian Religion, n. 287*

## MARRIAGE

"Jesus said: ' Have ye not read that He who 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. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'"

--*Matthew, XIX, 4, 5*

## A PRICELESS JEWEL

THE conjugal inclination of one man to one wife is the jewel of human life and the depository of the Christian religion.

--*Conjugal Love, n. 457*



## THE PROGRESSIVE CHASTITY OF MARRIAGE

THE love in marriage is from its origin and correspondence heavenly, spiritual, holy, pure and clean above every other love which the angels of heaven or men of the Church have from the Lord. It is such from its origin, which is the marriage of good and truth; also from its correspondence with the marriage of the Lord and the Church. If it be received from its Author, Who is the Lord, sanctity from Him follows, which continually cleanses and purifies it. Then, if there be in man's will a longing for it and an effort toward it, this love becomes continually cleaner and purer. All who are in such love shun extra-conjugal loves (which are conjunctions with others than their own conjugal partner) as they would shun the loss of the soul and the lakes of hell; and in the measure that married partners shun such conjunctions, even in respect of libidinous desires of the will and any intentions from them, so far love truly conjugal is purified with them, and becomes successively spiritual.

--*Conjugal Love, nn. 64, 71*

## THE HEIGHT OF SERVICE

CONJUGIAL love is the love at the foundation of all good loves, and is inscribed on all the least life of the human being. Its delights therefore surpass the delights of all other loves, and it also gives delight to other loves, in the measure of its presence and union with them. Into it all delights from first to last are collected, on account of the superior excellence of its use, which is the propagation of the human race, and from it of an angelic heaven. As this service was the supreme end of creation, all the beatitudes, satisfaction, delights, pleasantnesses and pleasures, which

the Lord the Creator could possibly confer upon man, are gathered into this love.

--*Conjugal Love, n. 68*

### ITS WHOLE ESTATE

THE states of conjugal love are Innocence, Peace, Tranquillity, Inmost Friendship, full Confidence, and mutual desire of mind and heart to do each other every good. From all of these come blessedness, satisfaction, agreeableness and pleasure; and as the eternal fruition of them, heavenly happiness. These states can be realized only in the marriage of one man with one wife.

--*Conjugal Love, nn. 180, 181*

### THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

"They testify of Me."

--*John, V, 39*

### GOD'S WORD

IN its inmosts the Sacred Scripture is no other than God, that is, the Divine which proceeds from God.....In its derivatives it is accommodated to the perception of angels and men. In these it is Divine likewise, but in another form, in which this Divine is called "Celestial," "Spiritual," and "Natural." These are no other than coverings of God. Still the Divine, which is inmost, and is covered with such things as are accommodated to the perceptions of angels and men, shines forth like light through crystalline forms, but variously, according to the state of mind which a man has formed for himself, either from God or from self. In the

sight of the man who has formed the state of his mind from God, the Sacred Scripture is like a mirror in which he sees God, each in his own way. The truths which he learns from the Word and which become a part of him by a life according to them, compose that mirror. The Sacred Scripture is the fulness of God.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 6*

### **IN ITS BOSOM SPIRITUAL**

THE Word in its bosom is spiritual. Descending from Jehovah the Lord, and passing through the angelic heavens, the Divine (in itself ineffable and imperceptible) became level with the perception of angels and finally the perception of man. Hence the Word has a spiritual sense, which is within the natural, just as the soul is in the body, or as thought is in speech, or volition in action.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 193*

### **THE LETTER OF THE WORD**

THE truths of the sense of the letter of the Word are in part appearances of truth, and are taken from things in nature, and thus accommodated and adapted to the grasp of the simple and also of little children. But being correspondences, they are receptacles and abodes of genuine truth; and are like enclosing and containing vessels. The naked truths themselves, which are enclosed and contained, are in the Word's spiritual sense; and the naked goods in its celestial sense, The doctrine of genuine truth can also be drawn in full from the literal sense of the Word; for the Word in this sense is like a man clothed,

whose face and hands are bare. All that concern's man's life, and so his salvation, is bare; the rest is clothed.

--*Doctrine Concerning the Sacred Scripture, nn. 40, 55*

### ITS LANGUAGE

THE whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world; not only generally, but in detail. Whatever comes forth in the natural world from the spiritual, is therefore called correspondent. The world of nature comes forth and subsists from the spiritual world, just as an effect does from its efficient cause.

--*Heaven and Hell, n. 89*

What is Divine presents itself in the world in what corresponds. The Word is therefore written wholly in correspondence. Therefore the Lord, too, speaking as He did from the Divine, spoke in correspondence.

--*True Christian Religion, n. 201*

"And behold a ladder set on the earth, and its head reaching to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold Jehovah standing above it." The ladder set between earth and heaven, or between the lowest and the highest, signifies communication. In the original tongue the term ladder is derived from an expression which signifies a path or way, and a path or way is predicated of truth. By a ladder, therefore, one extremity of which is set on the earth, while the other reaches to heaven, is signified the communication of truth which is in the lowest place with truth which is in the highest, indeed with inmost good and

truth, such as are in heaven, and from which heaven itself is an ascent as it were from what is lowest and afterward when the order is inverted a descent, and is. the order of man's regeneration. The arcanum which lies concealed in the internal sense of these words is, that all goods and truths descend from the Lord, and ascend to Him, for man is so created that the Divine things of the Lord may descend through him even to the ultimates of nature and from the ultimates of nature may ascend to Him; so that man might be a medium uniting the Divine with the world of nature, and uniting the world of nature with the Divine, that thus, through man, as through the uniting medium, the very ultimate of nature might live from the Divine, which would be the case had man lived according to Divine order.

--*Arcana Gælestia*, nn. 3699-3702

### ITS FUNCTION

DIVINE truth, in passing from the Lord through the three heavens to men in the world, is written and made the Word in each heaven. The Word, therefore, is the union of the heavens with one another, and of the heavens with the Church in the world. Hence there flows in from the Lord through the heavens a holy Divine with the man who acknowledges the Divine in the Lord and the holy in the Word, while he reads it. Such a man can be instructed and can draw wisdom from the Word as from the Lord Himself or from heaven itself, in the measure that he loves it, and thus can be nourished with the same food with which the angels themselves are fed, and in which there is life, according to these words of the Lord:

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

--*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1074

### HOW TO USE IT

THEY who, in reading the Word, look to the Lord, by acknowledging that all truth and all good are from Him, and nothing from themselves,--they are enlightened, and see truth and perceive what is good from the Word. That enlightenment is from the light of heaven.

--*Arcana Gcelestia*, n. 9405

### ITS DISSEMINATION OF LIGHT

THERE cannot be any conjunction with heaven unless somewhere upon the earth there is a Church where the Word is and by it the Lord is known. It is sufficient that there be a Church where the Word is, even though it should consist of few relatively. The Lord is present by it, nevertheless, in the whole world. The light is greatest where those are who have the Word. Thence it extends itself as from a centre out to the last periphery. Thence comes the enlightenment of nations and peoples outside the Church, too, by the Word.

--*Doctrine concerning the Sacred Scripture*, nn. 104, 106

## A CANON ON A NEW PRINCIPLE

THE books of the Word are all those which have an internal sense. In the Old Testament they are the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the Psalms of David, the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; and in the New Testament the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; and the Apocalypse.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 10,325

### THE LIFE OF CHARITY AND FAITH

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and  
what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to  
love mercy, and  
to walk humbly with thy God."

--*Micah*, VI, 8

### THE LAW OF CHARITY

NOT to do evil to the neighbor is the first thing of charity, and to do good to him fills the second place.....That a man cannot do good which in itself is good before evil has been removed, the Lord teaches in many places: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

--*Matt.* XVI, 18.

So in Isaiah: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well" (I, 16,17).

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 445

### GOOD IN ITS WHOLENESS

BEFORE repentance good is not done from the Lord, but from the man. It has not, therefore, the essence of good within it, however it appears like good outwardly. Good after repentance is another thing altogether. It is a whole good, unobstructed from the Lord Himself. It is lovely; it is innocent; it is agreeable, and heavenly. The Lord is in it, and heaven. Good itself is in it. It is alive, fashioned of truths. Whatever is thus from good, in good, and toward good, is nothing less than a use to the neighbor, and hence it is a serving. It puts away self and what is one's own, and thus evil, with every breath. Its form is like the form of a charming and beautifully colored flower, shining in the rays of the sun.

--*The Doctrine of Charity*, n. 150

### THE MAN OF CHARITY

EVERY man who looks to the Lord and shuns evils as sins, if he sincerely, justly and faithfully performs the work which belongs to his office and employment, becomes an embodiment of charity.

--*The Doctrine of Chanty*, VII

In common belief charity is nothing else than giving to the poor, succoring the needy, caring for widows and orphans,



contributing to the building of hospitals, infirmaries, asylums, orphanages, and especially churches, and to their decoration and income. But most of these things are not the proper activities of charity, but extraneous to it. A distinction is to be made between the duties of charity, and its benefactions. By the duties of charity those exercises of it are meant, which proceed directly from charity itself. These have to do primarily with one's occupation. By the benefactions those aids are meant which are given outside of, and over and above the duties.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 425

### THE ACTIVITY OF CHARITY

CHARITY is an inward affection, moving man to do what is good, and this without recompense, So to act is his life's delight.

The life of charity is to will well and to do well by the neighbor; in all work, and in every employment, acting out of regard to what is just and equitable, good and true. In a word, the life of charity consists in the performance of uses.

--*Heavenly Doctrine*, nn. 106, 124

### FAITH THE PARTNER OF CHARITY

NEITHER charity alone nor faith alone can produce good works, any more than a husband alone or a wife alone can have offspring. The truths of faith not only illuminate charity, but qualify it, too; and, moreover, they nourish it. A man, then, who has charity and not truths of faith, is like one walking in a garden in the night-time, snatching fruit

from the trees without knowing whether it is of a good or evil use.

--*True Christian Religion, n. 377*

### THE PATRIOTISM OF CHARITY

ONE'S country is the neighbor more than a society, for it consists of many societies, and consequently the love of it is a more extended and a higher love. Besides to love one's country is to love the public welfare. A man's country is the neighbor because it is like a parent; for there he was born; it has nourished and still nourishes him; it has protected him from harm, and still protects him. From love for it he ought to do good to his country according to its needs, some of which are natural, and others spiritual. The country ought to be loved, not as a man loves himself, but more than himself. This is a law inscribed on the human heart. And from the law has issued the proposition, which has the assent of every true man, that if ruin threatens the country from an enemy or other source, it is illustrious to die for it, and glorious for a soldier to shed his blood for it. This is a common saying, because so much should one's country be loved. Those who love their country, and from good will do good to it, after death love the Lord's kingdom, for this is their country there; and they who love the Lord's kingdom, love the Lord, for He is the All in all of His Kingdom.

--*True Christian Religion, n. 414*

### FAITH AND DOUBT

THERE are those who are in doubt before they deny, and there are those who are in doubt before they affirm. Those

in doubt before they deny, are men who incline to a life of evil. When that life sways them, they deny things spiritual and celestial to the extent that they think of them. But those in doubt before they affirm, are men who incline to a life of good. When they suffer themselves to be turned to this life by the Lord, they then affirm things spiritual and celestial to the extent that they think of them.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 2568

### THE FAITH OF THE FAITHFUL

IT is one thing to know truths, another to acknowledge them, and yet another to have faith in them. Only the faithful can have faith.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 896

The only faith that endures with man springs from heavenly love. Those without love have knowledge merely, or persuasion. Just to believe in truth and in the Word is not faith. Faith is to love truth, and to will and do it from inward affection for it.

--*Heaven and Hell*, n. 482

If a man thinks to himself or says to another, "Who can have that inward acknowledgment of truth which is faith? I cannot" I will tell him how he may: "Shun evils as sins, and go to the Lord, and you will have as much as you desire."

--*Doctrine Concerning Faith*, n. 12

## NEIGHBORS

NOT only is the individual man the neighbor, but the collective man, too. A society, smaller or larger, is the neighbor ; the Church is; the Kingdom of the Lord is; and above all the Lord Himself. These are the neighbor, to whom good is to be done from love. These are also the ascending degrees of the neighbor; for a society consisting of many is the neighbor in a higher degree than is the individual; one's country in a still higher degree; the Church in a still higher degree than one's country; in a degree higher still the Kingdom of the Lord; and in the highest degree the Lord Himself. These degrees of ascent are like the steps in a ladder, at the top of which is the Lord.

*--Heavenly Doctrine, n. 91*

## DIVERSIONS

THERE is an affection in every employment, which puts the mind upon the stretch and keeps it intent upon its work or study. If it is not relaxed, this becomes heavy, and its desire meaningless; as salt, when it loses its saltness, no longer stimulates, and as the bow on the stretch, unless it is unbent, loses the force it gets from its elasticity. Continuously intent upon its work, the mind wants rest; and dropping to the physical life, it seeks pleasures there that answer to its activities. As is the mind in them, such are the pleasures, pure or impure, spiritual or natural, heavenly or infernal. If it is the affection of charity which is in them, all diversions will recreate it--shows, games, instrumental and vocal music, the beauties of field and garden, social intercourse generally. There remains deep in them, being gradually renewed as it rests, the love of work

and service. The longing to resume this work breaks in upon the diversions and puts an end to them. For the Lord flows into the diversions from heaven, and renews the man; and He gives the man an interior sense of pleasure in them, too, of which those know nothing who are not in the affection of charity.

--*Doctrine of Charity, nn. 127, 128, 130*

### THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE

"He leadeth me."

--*Psalm, XXIII, 2*

### THE DIVINE PURPOSE

THE Divine Providence has for an end a heaven which shall consist of men who have become angels or who are becoming angels, to whom the Lord can impart from Himself all the blessedness and felicity of love and wisdom.

--*Divine Providence, n. 27*

### THE LAWFUL ORDER OF PROVIDENCE

IN all that proceeds from the Lord the Divine Providence is first. Indeed, we may say that the Lord *is* Providence, as we say that God is Order; for the Divine Providence is Divine Order with regard above all to the salvation of man. As order is impossible without laws, it follows that as God is order so is He the Law of His order. And as the Lord is His Providence, He is also the Law of His Providence. The Lord cannot act contrary to the laws of

His Providence, for to act contrary to them would be to act contrary to Himself.

--*Divine Providence, n. 331*

### **A WORLD-WIDE LEADING**

THE Lord provides that there shall be religion everywhere, and in each religion the two essentials of salvation, which are to acknowledge God, and not to do evil because it is contrary to God. It is provided furthermore that all who have lived well and acknowledge God should be instructed by angels after death. Then, they who, in the world, were in the two essentials of religion, accept the truths of the Church, such as they are in the Word, and acknowledge the Lord as the God of heaven and the Church. It has also been provided by the Lord that all who die infants shall be saved, wherever they may have been born.

--*Divine Providence, n. 328*

### **THE DIVINE PERSEVERANCE**

THE Divine Providence differs from all other leading and guidance in this, that it continually regards what is eternal, and continually leads to salvation, and this through various states, now glad, now sad,--states which a man cannot understand at all, and yet they all conduce to his life to eternity.

--*Arcana Cælestia, n. 8560*

## IN THE STREAM OF PROVIDENCE

THE Divine Providence is universal, that is, in the least of all things. They who are in the stream of Providence are borne along continually to happiness, whatsoever the appearance of the means may be. They are in the stream of Providence, who put their trust in the Divine, and ascribe all things to Him. They are not in the stream of Providence who trust themselves alone and ascribe all things to themselves. As far as one is in the stream of Providence, so far one is in a state of peace. Such alone know and believe that the Divine Providence of the Lord is in each and all things, yea, in the least of all things.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 8478

## CARE FOR THE MORROW

IT is not contrary to order to look out for one's self and one's dependents. Those have "care for the morrow" who are not content with their lot, who do not trust in the Divine but themselves, and who regard only worldly and earthly things and not heavenly. With such there prevails universally a solicitude about things future, a desire to possess everything, and to rule over all. They grieve if they do not get what they desire, and suffer torment when they lose what they have. Then they grow angry with the Divine, rejecting it to-

gather with everything of faith, and cursing themselves. Altogether different is it with those who trust in the Divine. Though they have care for the morrow, yet they have it not; for they do not think of the morrow with solicitude, still less with anxiety. Whether they get what they wish or not, they are composed not lamenting over

losses, but being content with their lot. If they become rich, they do not set their hearts upon riches. If they are exalted to honors, they do not look upon themselves as worthier than others. If they become poor, they are not cast down. If their condition be mean, they are not dejected. They know that with those who put their trust in the Divine, all things work toward a happy state to eternity.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 8478

### THE SUFFERANCE OF EVIL

THE chief aim and effort of the Lord's Divine Providence is that a man shall be in what is good and in what is true at the same time; for thereby man is man, since he is then an image of the Lord. But because, in his life in the world, he can be in what is good and in what is false at the same time, and also in what is evil and what is true at the same time, nay, even in evil and at the same time in good, and thus be a double man, as it were, and because this division destroys God's image and so destroys the man, therefore the Lord's Divine Providence in all its workings seeks to prevent this division. Furthermore, because it is better for man to be in what is evil and in the same time in what is false than to be in good and at the same time in evil, therefore the Lord permits it; not as one willing it, but as one unable to prevent it consistently with the end, which is salvation.

--*Divine Providence*, n. 16



## DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION

"I laid me down and slept: I awaked: for the Lord sustained me."  
 --*Psalm, III, 5*

"Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for to Him all are living."  
 --*Luke, XX, 37, 38*

## IMMORTAL BY ENDOWMENT

MAN has been so created that as to his inward being he cannot die; for he can believe in God, and also love God, and thus be united to God in faith and love; and to be united to God is to live to eternity.

--*Heavenly Doctrine, n. 223*

## FROM WORLD TO WORLD

WHEN the body is no longer able to perform its functions in the natural world, a man is said to die. Still the man does not die; he is only separated from the bodily part which was of use to him in the world. The man himself lives. He lives, because he is man by virtue, not of the body, but of the spirit; for it is the spirit in man which thinks; and thought together with affection makes the man. It is plain, then, that when a man dies, he only passes from one world into the other. ....The spirit of man after separation remains awhile in the body, but not after the motion of the heart has entirely ceased. This takes place with a variation according to the diseased condition of

which the man dies. As soon as the motion ceases, the man is resuscitated. This is done by the Lord alone.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 445, 447

### UNHURT BY DEATH

WHEN a man passes from the natural world into the spiritual, he takes with him everything that belongs to him as a man except his earthly body. (This he leaves when he dies, nor does he ever resume it.\*) He is in a body as he was in the natural world; and to all appearance there is no difference. But his body is spiritual, and is therefore separated or purified from things terrestrial. And when what is spiritual touches and sees what is spiritual, it is just the same as when what is natural touches and sees what is natural..... A human spirit also enjoys every sense, external and internal, which he enjoyed in the world. He sees as before, hears and speaks as before, smells and tastes as before, and feels when he is touched. He also longs, desires, craves, thinks, reflects, is stirred, loves, wills, as he did previously.....In a word, when a man passes from the one life into the other, or from the one world into the other, it is as though he had passed from one place to another; and he carries with him all that he possesses in himself as a man. It cannot, then, be said, that after death a man has lost anything that really belonged to him. He carries his natural memory with him, too; for he retains all things whatsoever which he has heard, seen, read, learned and thought in the world, from earliest infancy even to the last of life.

--*Heaven and Hell*, n. 461

## THE WORLD OF SPIRITS

EVERY man at death comes first into the world of spirits, which is midway between heaven and hell; and there he passes through his own states, and is prepared either for heaven or for hell according to his life.....It is to be observed that the world of spirits is one thing, and the spiritual world another. The spiritual world embraces the world, of spirits and heaven and hell.

--*Divine Love and Wisdom, n. 140*

## THE WAY OF ONE'S OWN LOVE

AFTER death every one goes the way of his love--he who is in a good love, to heaven, and he who is in a wicked love, to hell. Nor does he rest until he is in that society where his ruling love is. What is wonderful, every one knows the way.

Every one's state after death is spiritual, which is such that he cannot be anywhere but in the delight of his own love, which he has acquired for himself by his life in the natural world. From this it appears plainly that no one can be let into the delight of heaven who is in the delight of hell.....This may be still more certainly concluded from the fact that no one is forbidden after death to ascend to heaven. The way is shown him, opportunity is given him, and he is let in. But when one who is in the delight of evil comes into heaven and breathes in its delight, he begins to be oppressed, and racked at heart, and to feel in a swoon, in which he writhes like a snake put near a fire; and with his face turned away from heaven and toward hell, he flees headlong, nor does he rest until he is in the society of his own love.

It is an abiding truth that every man rises again after death into another life, and presents himself for judgment. This judgment, however, is circumstanced as follows: As soon as his bodily parts grow cold, which takes place after a few days, he is raised by the Lord at the hands of celestial angels who first are with him. If he is such that he cannot be with them, he is received by spiritual angels, and in turn afterwards by good spirits. For all who come into the other life, whoever they may be, are grateful and welcome new-comers. But as every one's desires follow him, he who has led a bad life cannot remain long with angels or good spirits, but in turn separates himself from them, until at length he comes to spirits of a life conforming with the life he had in the world. Then it seems to him as if he were back in the life of the body; his present life being, in fact, a continuation of his past life. With this life his judgment commences. They who have led a bad life in process of time descend into hell; they who have led a good life, are by degrees raised by the Lord into heaven.

*--Arcana Caelestia, n. 2119*

### **THE FIRST THREE STATES AFTER DEATH**

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

*--Rev., XXII, II*

## CONTINUATION OF THE OUTWARD LIFE

THERE are three states through which a man passes after death, before he enters either heaven or hell. The first state is that of his outward nature and life; the second, that of his inward nature and life; and the third, one of preparation. A man passes through these states in the world of spirits. The first state of a man after death is like his state in the world, because he is then similarly in things outward. His appearance is similar, and so are his speech, his mental habit, and his moral and civil life. As a result he does not know but that he is still in the world, unless he pays attention to things that meet his eye, and to what the angels told him at his resuscitation, that now he is a spirit. Thus one life is carried on into the other, and death is only the transition.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 491, 493

## REVELATION OF THE INNER LIFE

AFTER the first state is past, which is the state of the outward nature and life, a spirit is admitted into the state of his inward will and thought, in which, on being left to himself to think freely and unchecked, he had been in the world. He slips unawares into this state, just as he did in the world. When he is in this state, he is in himself, and in his very life; for to think freely from the affection properly one's own, is the very life of man, and is the man.

When a spirit is in the state of his inward nature and life, it appears plainly what manner of man he was in the world; for then he acts from his very self. A man who was inwardly in good in the world, then acts rationally and wisely--more wisely, in fact, than he did in the world; for

he has been loosed from connection with the body, and so with worldly things, which caused obscurity and, as it were, interposed a cloud. But a man who was in evil in the world, then acts foolishly and insanely-- more insanely, in fact, than he did in the world, for now he is in freedom and not coerced. For when he lived in the world, he was sane in his outward life, for so he assumed the appearance of a rational man. When, therefore, his outward life is laid off, his insanities reveal themselves.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 502, 505

### INSTRUCTED FOR HEAVEN

THE third state of a man after death is a state of instruction. This is a state in the experience of those who enter heaven and become angels.

Instruction in heaven differs from instruction on earth, in that knowledge is not committed to memory, but to life; for the memory of spirits is in their life, inasmuch as they receive and become imbued with everything that agrees with their life, and they do not receive, still less do they become imbued with, anything that disagrees with it; for spirits are affections, and are in a human form like their affections. Being such, they have inspired in them continually an affection for truth for the sake of the uses of life; for the Lord provides that every one may love the uses which suit his genius, a love that is exalted, too, by the hope of becoming an angel.....With every one, therefore, the affection of truth is united to the affection of use, so fully that they act as one. Thereby truth is planted in service, so much so that the truths which angelic spirits learn, are truths of use. Thus are they instructed and prepared for heaven.

**HEAVEN**

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; and may enter in through the gates into the city.

*--Rev., XXII, 14*

"Thou wilt show me the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy; At Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."

*--Psalm, XVI, II*

**"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU"**

HEAVEN is in a man; and they who have heaven within themselves, come into heaven. Heaven in a man is to acknowledge the Divine, and to be led by the Divine.

Every angel receives the heaven which is around him according to the heaven which is within him. Unless heaven is within a man, none of the heaven around him flows in and is received.

Love to the Lord is the love regnant in the heavens; for there the Lord is loved above all things. Thus the Lord is All in all there. He flows into all the angels, and into each of them. He disposes them; He induces a likeness of Himself on them, and causes Heaven to be where He is. Hence an angel is heaven in the least form; a society is heaven in a greater form; and all the societies together are heaven in the greatest form.

*--Heaven and Hell, nn. 319, 54, 58*

## AN ACTUAL WORLD

IN general, what appears in heaven, appears the same as it does in our material world of three kingdoms. Things appear before the eyes of angels just as objects of the three kingdoms do before the eyes of men in the world. Still there is this difference: the things which appear in heaven, have a spiritual origin, and those which appear in our world a material origin. Objects of a spiritual origin affect the senses of angels because these senses are spiritual, as those of a material origin affect the senses of men, inasmuch as their senses are material. Heavenly objects are said to have a spiritual origin, because they exist from the Divine which proceeds from the Lord as a Sun; and the Divine that proceeds from the Lord as a Sun is spiritual. For there the Sun is not fire, but Divine Love, appearing before the eyes of the angels as the sun of the world does before the eyes of men; and whatever proceeds from the Divine Love is Divine and is spiritual. Of this origin are all things which exist in the heavens, and they appear in forms like those in our world. It is due to the order of creation that they appear in such forms. According to that order, things which are of love and wisdom with the angels, on descending into the lower sphere in which angels are in respect of their bodies and of their sensation, present themselves in such forms and under such types. These are correspondences.

--*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 926

## A WORLD OF ACTION

ALL heaven's delights are united to uses and inhere in them, because uses are the goods of love and charity, in which the angels are. The angels find all their happiness in



use, from use, and according to use. There is the highest freedom in this because it proceeds from interior affection, and is conjoined with ineffable delight. Uses exist in the heavens in all variety and diversity. Never is the use of one angel quite the same as that of another; nor the delight. What is more, the delights of any one person's use are countless. These countless and various delights are nevertheless united in an order so that they mutually regard one another, as do the uses of every member, organ and inner part of the body. They are even more like the uses of each vessel and fibre in every member, organ and vital part; each and all of which are so related that they regard each of its own good in the other, and thus in all, and all in each. As a result of this general and several regard they act as one.

*--Heaven and Hell, nn. 402, 403, 404, 405*

### OUR CHILDREN IN HEAVEN

EVERY little child, wheresoever born, whether within the Church or out of it, whether of pious parents or of impious, is received by the Lord at death; is educated in heaven; is taught and imbued with affections of good and by these with knowledges of truth; and then, as he is perfected in intelligence and wisdom, is introduced into heaven and becomes an angel.

When children die, they are still children in the other life. They have the same infantile mind, the same innocence in ignorance, and the same tenderness in all things. They have only the rudimentary capacity of becoming angels; for children are not yet angels, but are to become angels. The state of children in the other life far surpasses that of children in the world; for they are not clothed with an

earthly body, but with a body like that of the angels. The earthly body is in itself heavy, and does not receive its first sensations and impulses from the interior or spiritual world, but from the exterior or natural world. In this world, therefore, infants must learn to walk, to control the body's motions, and to talk. Even their senses, like sight and hearing, must be developed by use. It is quite otherwise with children in the other life. Being spirits, they act at once in expression of their inner being, walking without practice, and also talking, but at first from general affections not yet distinguished into ideas of thought. They are quickly initiated into these, too, however; and this for the reason that outer and inner are homogeneous with them.

The Lord flows into the ideas of children chiefly from their inmost soul, for nothing has closed their ideas, as with adults. No false principles have closed them to the understanding of truth, nor any evil life to the reception of good, nor to becoming wise.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 416, 330, 331, 836

### TOWARD THE MORNING OF LIFE

THE Lord is present with every human being, urgent and instant to be received; and when a man receives Him, as he does when he acknowledges Him as his God, Creator, Redeemer and Saviour, then is His first Coming, which is called the dawn. From this time the man begins to be enlightened, as to understanding in things spiritual, and to advance into a more and more interior wisdom. As he receives this wisdom from the Lord, so he advances through morning into day, and this day lasts with him into old age, even to death; and after death he passes into

heaven to the Lord Himself, and there, though he died an old man, he is restored to the morning of his life, and to eternity he develops the beginnings of the wisdom that was implanted in the natural world.

*--True Christian Religion, n. 766*

The people of heaven are continually advancing towards the spring-time of life; and the more thousands of years they live, the more delightful and happy is the spring to which they attain. Women who have died old and worn out with age, and have lived in faith in the Lord and in charity to the neighbor, come, with the succession of years, more and more into the flower of youth and early womanhood, and into a beauty exceeding every idea of beauty ever formed through the sight. In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young.

*--Heaven and Hell, n. 414*

## HELL

"If I make my bed in hell; behold, Thou art there."

*--Psalm, CXXXIX, 8*

## EVIL IS HELL

EVIL with man is hell with him; for it is the same thing whether we say evil or hell. And as a man is the cause of his own evil, therefore he, and not the Lord, also leads himself into hell. So far is the Lord from leading man into hell, that He delivers him from it as far as a man does not will and love to be in his own evil, All a man's will and love remains with him after death. He who wills and loves evil in the world, wills and loves the same evil in the other

life; and then he no longer suffers himself to be withdrawn from it. This is the reason that a man who is in evil is bound fast to hell and is actually there, too, in spirit, and after death he desires nothing more than to be where his evil is. After death, therefore, a man casts himself into hell, and not the Lord.

*--Heaven and Hell, n. 547*

### EVIL AND PUNISHMENT

ALL evil bears its punishment with it. Evil spirits are punished because the fear of punishment is the one means of subduing evils in this state. Exhortation no longer avails, nor instruction, nor fear of the law nor fear for one's reputation; for now the spirit acts from a nature which cannot be coerced or broken except by punishment.

*--Heaven and Hell, n. 509*

It is a law in the other life that no one shall become worse than he had been in the world.

*--Arcana Cælestia, n. 6559*

### GOD WILL THE DAMNATION OF NONE

IF men could be saved by immediate mercy, all would be saved, even those in hell; and indeed there would be no hell, because the Lord is mercy itself and good itself. Therefore it is contrary to His Divine Nature to say that He can save all immediately, and does not save them. We know from the Word that the Lord wills the salvation of all and the damnation of none.

### MASTER PASSIONS OF HELL

LOVE of self and love of the world rule in the hells and also constitute them. Love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor rule in the heavens and also constitute them. These loves are diametrically opposite. Love of self consists in wishing well to oneself alone, and not to others except for the sake of oneself, not even to the Church, to one's country, or to any human society; also in doing good to them, but for the sake of one's reputation, honor and glory. Unless he sees these in the services he renders them, he says in his heart, "Of what use is it? Why should I do it? Of what advantage will it be to me?", and he leaves it undone. His delight is only that of self-love. And because the delight which springs from his love makes the life of a man, therefore his life is the life of self; and the life of self is life from man's *proprium*; and the *proprium* of man, viewed in itself, is nothing but evil. Love of self is of such a quality, too, that, as far as the reins are given it, it rushes on until at length it desires to rule not only over the whole earth, but over the whole heaven, too, and over the Divine Himself.

--*Heaven and Hell*, nn. 554, 556, 559

### "OUR NAME IS LEGION"

MEN have believed hitherto that there is some one devil who is over the hells, and that he was created an angel of light; but that after he turned rebel, he was cast down with his crew into hell. Men have had this belief because the Devil is named in the Word, and Satan, and also Lucifer, and in these passages the Word has been understood

according to the sense of the letter, when yet hell is meant in them by the Devil and Satan.....That there is no single Devil to whom the hells are subject, is also evident from this fact, that all who are in the hells, like all who are in the heavens, are from the human race; and that from the beginning of the creation to this time they amount to myriads of myriads, every one of whom is a devil of a sort according with his opposition to the Divine in the world.

*--Heaven and Hell, n. 544*

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night,"

*--Psalm, I, 1, 2*

## ONE'S SPIRITUAL COMPANY

THE mind of a man is his spirit which lives after death; and a man's spirit is constantly in company with spirits like himself in the spiritual world. Man does not know that in respect to his mind he is in the midst of spirits because the spirits with whom he is in company in that world, think and speak spiritually. The spirit of man, however, while in the material body, thinks and speaks naturally; and spiritual thought and speech cannot be understood, nor perceived, by the natural human being; nor the reverse. Hence, too, it is that spirits cannot be seen. Yet when a man's spirit is in society with spirits in their world, then he is in spiritual thought and speech with them, too, because his inner mind is spiritual, but the outer natural; wherefore by his inner nature he communicates with them,

and by his outer being with men. By this communication a man perceives and thinks analytically. If there were no such communication, man would no more think than a beast, nor any differently from a beast. Indeed, were all commerce with spirits cut off, a man would instantly die.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 475

### "MINISTERS OF HIS, THAT DO HIS PLEASURE"

MAN is quite ignorant that he is governed by the Lord through angels and spirits, and that there are at least two spirits with a man and two angels. Through the spirits a communication of the man with the world of spirits is effected; and through the angels, with heaven. As long as a man is not regenerated, he is governed quite otherwise than when he is regenerated. While unregenerated, there are evil spirits with him, who dominate him so fully that the angels, though present, can scarcely do more than guide him, so that he shall not hurl himself into the lowest evil, and bend him to some good--to some good by means of his own desires, indeed, and to some truth through even fallacies of sense. Then, through the spirits who are with him, he has communication with the world of spirits, but not so much with heaven, for the evil spirits rule with him, and the angels only avert their rule. When, however, a man is regenerated, then the angels rule and inspire in him all good and truth, and a horror and dread of evil and falsity. The angels lead the man indeed, but serve only as ministers, for it is the Lord alone, Who, by angels and spirits, governs man.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 50

It is an office of the angels to inspire charity and faith in a man, to observe the direction his enjoyments take, and to restrain and bend them to good, as far as they can in man's free choice. They are forbidden to act violently, and so to break a man's cupidities and principles ; but are bidden to act gently. It is also an office of theirs to govern evil spirits who are from hell. When evil spirits infuse evils and what is false, the angels instill what is true and good, by which they at least temper an evil. Infernal spirits are continually assaulting, and angels constantly giving protection. Especially do the angels call forth goods and truths which are with a man, and oppose them to the evils and falsities which the evil spirits excite. Hence a man is in the midst, nor does he apper-ceive the evil or the good; and being in the midst, is free to turn himself to the one or to the other. By such means angels from the Lord lead and protect a man, and this every moment, and every moment of a moment. For, should the angels intermit their care a single instant, man would be plunged into evil from which he could never afterward be led forth. These offices the angels do from a love which they have from the Lord; for they know nothing pleasanter and happier than to remove evils from a man, and to lead him to heaven. That this is their joy, see *Luke, XV, 7*. Scarcely any man believes that the Lord has such a care for man, and this continually, from the first thread of his life to the last, and on to eternity.

--*Arcana Cælestia, n. 5992*

### WHOLESOME AND UNWHOLESOME COMMUNICATION

MANY believe that a man can be taught by the Lord through spirits who speak with him. They who believe so, and will this communication, do not know, however, that



it is attended with danger to their souls. While a man is living in the world, he is in the midst of spirits as to his spirit; nevertheless spirits do not know they are with man, nor a man that he is with spirits. But as soon as spirits begin to speak with a man, they come out of their spiritual state into the man's natural state; and then they know that they are with man, and they unite themselves to the thoughts of his affection, and they speak with him from those thoughts. Thence it is that the spirit speaking is in the same principles as the man, whether these be true or false. These he stirs up, and through his affection, united to the man's, strongly confirms them. All this shows the danger in which a man is who speaks with spirits, or who manifestly perceives their operation. Of the nature of his affection, good or bad, a man is ignorant, also with what others he is associated. If his is a pride of self-intelligence, the spirit favors every thought from that source. Likewise there is the favoring of principles which are inflamed from the fire which those have who are not in truths from any genuine affection for them. Whenever from a like affection a spirit favors a man's thoughts or principles, then the former leads the latter, as the blind lead the blind, until both fall into the ditch.

It is otherwise with those whom the Lord leads. He leads those who love and will truths from Him. Such are enlightened when they read the Word, for there the Lord is, and He speaks with every one according to the latter's apprehension. When these hear speech from spirits, as they do sometimes, they are not taught, but are led, and this so prudently that the man is still left to himself. For every man is led through the affections by the Lord, and he thinks from these freely as if of himself. Were it otherwise, a man could not be reformed, nor could he be enlightened.

**AN UNBROKEN ASSOCIATION**

MARRIED partners, who have lived in truly conjugal love, are not separated in the death of one of them. For the spirit of the deceased partner lives continually with the spirit of the other, not yet deceased, and this even to the death of the other, when they meet again and reunite, and love each other more tenderly than before; for now they are in the spiritual world.

*--Conjugal Love, n. 321*

**THE CHURCH**

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

*--Rev., XXI, 3*

**THE CHURCH IN GOD'S SIGHT**

THE Church is in man, and not outside of him; and the Church at large consists of the men who have the Church in them. --The Church consists of those who from the heart acknowledge the Divine of the Lord, who learn truths from Him by the Word, and do them.--Every one who lives in the good of charity and of faith is a Church and a Kingdom of the Lord.--The Church in general is constituted of those who are severally Churches, however remote they are from one another.--The Church of the Lord is scattered throughout the whole world.

*--Heaven and Hell, n. 57*

--*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 388

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 6637; *ib.*, n. 9256

## A SUCCESSION OF CHURCHES

THERE have been four Churches on this earth since the day of creation; a first, to be called the Adamic, a second, to be called the Noachic; a third, the Israelitish; and a fourth, the Christian. After these four Churches, a new one will arise, which is to be truly Christian, foretold in *Daniel* and in the *Apocalypse*, and by the Lord Himself in the Evangelists, and looked for by the Apostles.

--*Coronis*, Summary, I, VIII

## EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND ITS DECLINE

WHEN a Church is raised up by the Lord, it is in the beginning blameless; and one then loves the other as his brother, as we know of the primitive Church after the Lord's advent. At that time, all the sons of the Church lived together like brothers, and also called one another brother, and mutually loved each other. But in the course of time charity diminished, and vanished; and as it vanished, evils succeeded; and together with evils falsities insinuated themselves. Hence came schisms and heresies, which would never come to be, were charity regnant and alive.

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 1834

## THE LORD'S SECOND COMING: WHEN? HOW?

NOW is the Lord's Second Coming, and a New Church is to be instituted. The Second Coming of the Lord is not a coming in Person, but in the Word, which is from Him, and is Himself. We read in many places that the Lord will come in the clouds of heaven. The "clouds of heaven" mean the Word in its natural sense, and "glory" the Word in its spiritual sense, and "power" the Lord's power by means of the Word. So the Lord is now to appear in the Word. He is not to appear in Person because, since His ascension into heaven, He is in the Glorified Humanity, in which He cannot appear to any man, unless He opens the eyes of his spirit first, and this cannot be done with any one who is in evils and thence in falsities. It is vain, therefore, to believe that the Lord will appear in a cloud of heaven in Person; but He will appear in the Word, which is from Him, and so is Himself.

*--True Christian Religion, nn. 115, 776, 777*

What occurred at the end of the Jewish Church has occurred similarly now; for at the end of that Church, which was when the Lord came into the world, the Word was interiorly opened. Interior Divine truths were revealed by the Lord, which were to serve the New Church to be established by Him, and did serve it, too. To-day, again, for similar reasons, the Word has been interiorly opened, and divine truths still more interior have been revealed, which are to serve a New Church, which will be called the New Jerusalem.

*--Apocalypse Explained, n. 948*

## A NEW CHURCH

IT was foretold in the *Apocalypse* (XXI, XXII) that at the end of the former Church a New Church was to be instituted, in which this would be the chief teaching: that God is One in Person as well as in Essence, in Whom is the Trinity, and that that God is the Lord. This Church is what is there meant by the New Jerusalem, into which only he can enter who acknowledges the Lord alone as God of Heaven and earth.

--*Divine Providence*, n. 263

The descent of the New Jerusalem cannot take place in a moment, but becomes a fact as the falsities of the former Church are removed. For what is new cannot enter where falsities have previously been engendered, unless these are eradicated; which will take place with the clergy, and so with the laity.

--*True Christian Religion*, n. 784

## THE ULTIMATE GOAL

WERE it received as a principle, that love to the Lord and charity to the neighbor are what the whole Law hangs on and are what all the Prophets speak of, and thus are the essentials of all doctrine and worship, then the mind would be enlightened in innumerable things in the Word, which other-wise lie hidden in the obscurity of a false principle. In fact, heresies would be scattered then, and out of many one Church would come to be, however the doctrines flowing therefrom or leading thereto, and the rituals, might differ. Were the case so, all men would be governed as a single human being by the Lord; for all

would be as members and organs of one body, which, dissimilar in form and function though they are, still have relation to one heart only, whereon they each and all depend. Then, in whatever doctrine or outward worship one might be, he would say of another, "This man is my brother. I see that he worships the Lord, and that he is a good man."

--*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 2385

### MEMORABLE SAYINGS

All religion has relation to life; and the life of religion is to do good.

Love in act is work and deed.

Heaven is a kingdom of uses.

No one who believes in God and lives well is condemned.

Shunning evils as sins is the mark of faith.

To resist one evil is to resist many; for every evil is united with countless evils.

If you wish to be led by the Divine Providence, employ prudence as a servant and attendant who faithfully dispenses his Lord's goods.

Where men know doctrine and think according to it, there the Church *may be*; but where men act according to doctrine, there alone the Church *is*.

It is not the desire of an intelligent man to be able to confirm whatever he pleases; but to be able to see truth as truth, and falsity as falsity, and to confirm his insight, is the way of an intelligent man.

To reason only whether a thing is so or not, is like reasoning about the fit of a cap or a shoe without ever putting it on.

It is the essence of God's love to love others outside Himself, to desire to be one with them, and from Himself to render them blessed.

The absence of God from man is no more

possible than the absence of the sun from the earth through its heat and light.

Truths perish with those who do not desire good.

Peace has in it confidence in the Lord-- that He governs all things, and provides all things, and leads to a good end.

The Lord powerfully influences the humble.

Innocence is willingness to be led by the Lord.

One's distance from heaven is in proportion to the measure of one's self-love.

Peace in the heavens is like spring in the world, gladdening all things.

No two things mutually love each other more than do truth and good.

Love consists in desiring to give our own to another and in feeling as our own his delight.

A wicked man may shun evils as *hurtful*; none but a Christian can shun them as *sins*.

If a man studies the neighbor and the Lord more than himself, he is in a state of regeneration.

The Lord acts mediately through heaven, not because he needs the aid of the angels, but that they may have functions and offices, life and happiness.

Good is like a little flame which gives light, and causes man to see, perceive and believe.

Evil itself is disunion.

To serve the Lord is to be free.

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\* Heavenly Doctrine, n. 225.

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# Forgotten Mystics

## In World Religions

Lesser Known Out-of-Body Experiences

Compiled by Marilyn Hughes

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*'Forgotten Mystics in World Religions: Lesser Known Out-of-Body Experiences' presents a fascinating path in the study of Mysticism and Out-of-Body Travel.*

*In my studies, I have found that there are a great deal of Forgotten Mystics and thus, Out-of-Body Experiences, in many religious traditions whose work was powerful, meaningful, vibrant and eternal. It seems unfortunate and definitely at odds with the will of the God that such works be lost in our time when such great effort was made during theirs to bring their individual Out-of-Body Travel revelations to light. So we've decided to feature Forgotten Mystics and Out-of-Body Travelers, some of whom are less forgotten than others, but all of whom have fallen out of the public limelight despite the fantastic and profound messages they were sent to receive and give to the rest of us through Out-of-Body Experiences.*

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