

The Mystical Captive Series

(A Trilogy in One Volume)

By Marilynn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!
<http://outofbodytravel.org>



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The Mystical Captive

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The Mystical Captive

INTRODUCTION

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It is my wish to set down in writing those things which are closest to my heart due to the intimate union that the Lord has humbled Himself by giving me; and the Blessed Virgin Mother, who with great condescension has honored me in her presence. It is not my intent to cover every possible subject regarding Mysticism and Out-of-Body Travel, but rather, share the dispositions within which the Lord has placed me as a result of my lifetime of journeying.

If my words mingle with the words of other mystics who have gone by take no heed, for it is by our sheer union with one another that our words become similar and our path becomes directed. It is in mystical captivity that each of us understands the other, and our paths become one-pointed towards the all holy God whom we all serve and wish to remain true to till the end of our days.

This will be a difficult task for me to place in words that which has been emblazoned on my heart

through years of mystical experience with Our Lord. But He wishes it so, and therefore, it can be done, although yet I expect imperfectly.

In my fallible and sometimes wretched condition, the Lord has made use of me. And amidst great sufferings, the Lord so reveals His majesty, goodness and truth.

Perhaps it is only when we have been reduced to the ashes that we enter into truth, in that the Lord Jesus can reach us with greater perfection and clarity. Because of the earnestness in our misery and the desire to overcome our condition, our ability to hear the Lord becomes almost second nature. And in this depth, He then speaks to us . . .

And suddenly, we hear.

Perhaps despair is yet a catalyst, an instrument of the almighty Lord to diminish our significance enough in our own eyes that perhaps we become small enough to again listen to the words of the All-Holy God.

For when we are puffed up, of what is there to listen? Our own internal noise is so loud that there is nothing beyond it we might hear.

But when the Lord makes us small again . . . a door opens. And through that door comes holy wisdom. And holy wisdom speaks.

If there were one thing that I would speak to those who wish to know my heart, it would be obedience to rightful authority. In our quest to become independent and self-important, we have lost the most basic of spiritual axioms which is absolutely inseparable from the mystical path.

None of us can be assured of our steps in life unless we walk them with proper obedience.

This is such a difficult thing for so many souls to swallow in today's world because vice has become identified with virtue and virtue is no more. But if we are focused upon our own importance, we can be assured of achieving nothing in the mystical or spiritual journey.

It is obedience to proper earthly and heavenly authority that the Lord may walk into our hearts. Without such obedience, we have become our own God and the Lord has nothing to say.

Perhaps this is one of the least understood aspects of humility, the greatest virtue we must achieve if we wish to know the Lord. Humility lies in our ability to recognize that we are nothing without God, and that if we wish to come closer to the Lord, we must obey Him.

The Lord places proper authority in our lives in many ways. He does so through our parents, our natural superiors in life, those who have come before us . . . even in the writings of the ancient sacred texts.

Those ancient sacred texts are like footsteps to us from the great masters who have gone before containing maxims and axioms which are essential points of knowledge we must be willing to contain if we are to approach the mystical banquet.

They are the final words left behind for us by those who have already reached and ascended the path for which we hope to travel and achieve. To ignore their words is ignorance.

How many people have you heard who say things like "I want to do this on my own," or "I want to find God my own way?"

Forgive my bluntness, but how arrogant and naïve. How pointless and absolutely without destination.

If you seek to become a painter, you study the greatest painters who ever lived, you learn techniques, you capture themes and ideas from those who have gone before and eventually you develop your own style in painting.

Somehow, many people have come to believe that spirituality and the mystical path are somehow different from any other of the disciplines in this life and it can be achieved entirely on one's own.

Is it possible? Yes. Does that waste a lot of God's time? Yes.

God inspired the prophets, saints, mystics, sages and ascetics to put down their insights into writing because He wished for us to use them for our benefit. If we believe that we can achieve all that we must in a short lifetime without study, then we are saying simultaneously a couple of things. 1.) We are saying that we expect God to reveal all of revelation to each human being individually in a short lifespan. And 2.) We are saying that we believe that whatever our own personal experience may be at any given point in time is all we need to know.

These are both profoundly arrogant and small-minded places to come from and there is no remedy for such utter lack of discipline or focus. Should God deign to reveal different aspects of the truth through different vessels in order that somehow His vastness may be understood in a more profound way upon the earth, we should partake of that effort.

If we wish to seek the Lord, we should begin by getting to know every one of his dear friends

throughout time, the ages and the world as well as we can. If we wish mystical union with the Lord, we must learn from the greatest masters of the spiritual path.

This leads me to mention the importance of understanding the process by which one attains to such knowledge and a place of union with Our Lord.

One of the most common mistakes of the spiritual life involves those who become eager to experience mystical phenomena and then do. And then they believe they have become masters . . .

That is like a painter who completes his first drawing and believes he is now a contemporary of Michelangelo.

The process of the mystical union begins and continues throughout our lives, and those who are set about on a mission can expect decades of study and experience before the Lord - and I must repeat this because of the many who deceive themselves prematurely into believing they have a spiritual task set before them - many decades.

It is only when you no longer desire to have a mission that the Lord may (or may not) give you one. Because it is only when you realize the importance and responsibility you will hold if such a mission is given you - after potentially decades of mystical training - that you may be asked to step forward. And by the time you are asked to do so, you won't want to anymore. You will have to go against your natural inclination according to the bidding of the Lord.

It is only when we have been honed down to our smallest portion, to the part of us that recognizes

we are nothing, we have nothing, and we contain no virtue of ourselves . . . that God might use us.

But it will be after decades of intensive spiritual study in the world - getting to know the paths of God's friends, and also decades of study in the mystical realms of existence wherein the laws of existence, the consequences of misleading others, the sheer overwhelming nature of the responsibility to guide or direct any souls becomes such a part of you that you cringe at the prospect of being deceived or deceiving, either knowingly or unknowingly.

So if you wish to read this book because you have a burning desire to begin your own ministry, stop here. This is not for you.

This is for those who wish to understand some of the interior insights that have been emblazoned upon my soul because of my relationship with the Lord and with all of His prophets, saints, mystics, sages and ascetics.

In my hope, it will be a reflective tool to those who read it, to attempt to understand some of the changes which come over someone who has been put to the test, so to speak, and who has come through the other side of decades of mystical instruction.

I hope to put into words some of the things I have seen and understood which are absolutely beyond all words. In this journey, I will attempt to set down in writing what God has done for my soul over more than 30 years of mystical training . . .

For those of you who are asking, 'What is mystical training?' It is the process a soul undergoes in the realms of the ether wherein the soul is purged, purified, formed, changed, altered, made new and

attains to knowledge which can only be understood in the spirit of the energy in which they are given.

Mystical training is, in its essence, the science of getting to know God and attaining to think and become closer to Him as His Holy Spirit directs each individual soul who has been drawn to such a mystical captivity within Him.

A soul who accepts the captive heart of God, allows itself to be drawn into a higher love that is broader and more well-defined than the love we may know on earth. Because that love captivates our senses, our bodies and our wills to such an extent that we cannot disobey no matter how our human nature rebels because the object of our captive love is so infinitely loveable and good that we cannot bear the thought of letting Him down.

So we forge on as mystical captives of God's love despite human temptations, our own weaknesses, our sins and failings . . . because as captives we cannot do anything else.

We cannot do aught but love God, and when the Lord has captivated your heart and pulled it within His mystical knowledge, loving God is a very precise action.

How do we love with precision? We endeavor to know the object of our love with fullness and to do all that will please Him. So we don't simply state, "I love God," and then go on with our everyday lives. The mystical captive **must** obey.

Because to do otherwise is to become free again, and if we become free, we lose the object of our love. The mystical captivity - although a true captivity of the heart and soul - remains preferable to any human condition which could be offered it.

So we love with fierceness and precision Our God, because it is only in our captivity that we remain free.

An oxymoron indeed; but also a true enigma of the mystic . . . come with me.







CHAPTER ONE

Mystical Captivity

Instant conspiring to meet God Alone
 Reason entering energetic form
 Timelessness drizzles into our soul
 As shackles of love contain our heart's core
 Archaic conclusions are joined with our past
 As embers of light open our quest
 Looking for signs of exuding grace
 Spinning and yearning toward God's face
 Enraptured with joy love takes its hold
 The spiritual fire envelops the soul
 Horrified beyond all mystical flight
 Wounded by love's burning delight
 Captivity begins with one rapturous glance
 As the soul becomes fixed and entirely entranced

Mystical captivity is a state wherein your soul is transfixated on God. However a soul may come upon this state, whether through natural or supernatural means, it often becomes a place of no return. The soul captivated by the object of its transfixion cannot but seek it out more.

So how do these states of mystical captivity come upon a soul entering into the spiritual way?

In the natural sense, mystical captivity can come about through any exterior sense experience wherein God pulls the soul into Himself in a mysterious way.

In the supernatural sense, mystical captivity can come about through any interior sense experience

wherein God pulls the soul into Himself in a mysterious way.

When this happens it is as though the soul has been pulled out of the grounded earthly awareness into a higher sphere no matter where it may have been at the moment of its inception. Suddenly, the soul's vision has been expanded and that which it saw before evaporates as the higher dimensional activity takes its captive and holds it fast to the vision of God.

There are many levels of mystical captivity. In my own case, I became God's captive in three original phases. The levels of captivity beyond these are infinite, but there do seem to be the three general phases a soul can expect as the mystical captivity comes upon it.

In the first phase, the soul finds itself suddenly or gradually more and more interested in God and the mysteries which surround life and death. This can happen because of an extraordinary experience in life; a loss, a death or a circumstance which leads the soul to seek out deeper meaning and flavor. No supernatural events may have yet occurred, but this is in a sense still a supernatural event, because the Lord has still mysteriously pulled the soul into an external captivity where it loses much of its interest in worldly things and must seek God in almost a frenzied fashion.

In the second phase, God usually pulls the soul within itself by means of some type of supernatural vision which is so mind bending and life changing that the soul is now captive on an interior level, as well as, an external point of reference. Because of this profound change, the soul's seeking becomes more

internal, prayerful, meditative and almost more urgent. It becomes so because the experience contained was so captivating, that the soul longs to feel, hear and see the things which were given to its vision again. Whether the soul ever has another supernatural event of this magnitude or not, the soul will always long to return to that place and the 'energy' of that place or feeling will never leave him.

In the third phase, the mystical captivity becomes complete as the soul now becomes unable to do anything naught but its daily duty and to search and seek out its beloved which lies beyond its grasp. This search and inner vision will accompany that soul for many years and decades of its life. There is no earthly thing which can compare to the divine beauty which the soul has touched upon and seeks with great fervor to know in an ever yet more meaningful way.

At this juncture of mystical captivity, the soul becomes more aware of the fact that others have followed this path, and they hungrily seek out those writings which were left behind by any of those who found it and left trails in their words for those who would seek it after they had gone. Humility enters within, and they begin to realize how little they know, but yet, they yearn to know God in His infinite perfection.

The mystical captive is now fully entranced with his beloved. The energetic throes which travel from heaven to this soul will hold it in captivity until the day that soul attains to the union it so desires with its beloved. And that day will only fully commence when their life on this earth is complete.

Therefore, the captive soul will live out its life in mystical captivity, unable to break free from this internal compulsion so seek and know God. But the captivity, although a hard task master, is also a carrier of the miter of true freedom and the soul who has entered into this captivity understands this.

Although this mystical captivity is absolutely a real state which cannot be altered or changed except by a true falling away from God, the seeker does know that it was only in the previous worldly life he had lived wherein he was a true hostage.

A mystical captive knows that the object of its seeking, its beloved Lord, contains infinite freedom, freedoms which cannot be had by any earthbound soul. So the seeker accepts this captivity with a certain sense of joy and ravishment.

The soul accepts this although it may not yet understand that accepting it will require much of him. For the Lord is mighty in His deeds and powerful in His works. And though His burden is easy and His yoke may be light, it only becomes so because of the internal fire of purification which consumes the sins, impurities and false views of the soul.

That purification process can be profoundly difficult, gut-wrenching and heartbreaking. But for now, the mystical captive is content to see the vision of the beloved in the distance. He need not know that the path ahead will be fraught with difficulty.

In the view of the mystical captive, whatever it will take to ascend to that divine beauty will be a sacrifice worth making and a path worth taking.

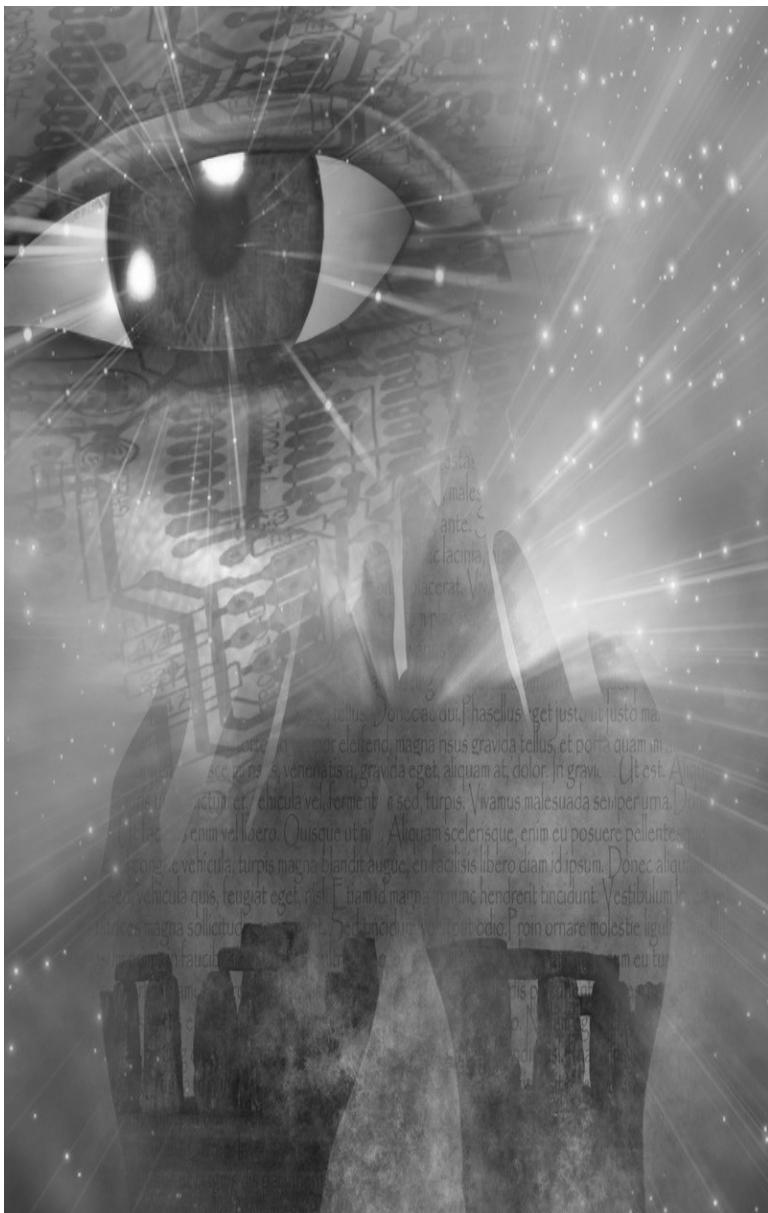
As to its hardship, there will be struggle. But the mystical captive can no longer avoid those struggles, because once the soul has been smitten by

this love of God and wounded by His absence, he will do anything, go through any struggle, to move forward in the path of perfection to seek Him.

The struggles to come will be harder than he can yet imagine, but it is well that it is so.

For now, he remains transfixed upon the Lord.





CHAPTER TWO

Mystical Vision

The Spirit of the Lord binds me up
 My sensual powers are loosened and then bound
 To whom do I go to find comfort and rest?
 In whose arms does my spirit fall when sadness
 exhumes the soul?
 The Lord is a cruel taskmaster
 But yet gentle at heart and light in his burden
 How does my spirit reconcile this mystery?
 My soul cries out for the gentle love of a physical
 caress
 And obedience captures my thoughts like a cruel
 master
 How do I restrain the impulses of the flesh?
 In order to again grasp the raptures of the soul?
 Of what gain shall I achieve
 If I lose the one necessary reason?
 My heart lay content in thee for many years
 And yet still my physical body throws me back to the
 ground
 For the simple embrace of the sensual
 How do I capture the essence of the two?
 The spiritual embrace of the Beloved
 And the constant call of an earthly hold?
 How do I find the proper call?
 How do I know your will, Oh Lord
 And then once I know your beckon
 How, then, may I achieve it?
 Must I lose one to attain the other?
 Or is there a oneness between the mortal and the
 immortal?

Is there harmony in this duality within me?
I do not know, Lord, I do not know

The heart entranced in the captive love of God cannot help but to fight the first, middle and last battle of all mystics, that of sensuality. In seeking to attain to the mystical vision, the soul finds itself thrown by these seemingly contrary desires, but yet finds that they are not entirely contrary at all.

When the captive seeks to ascend higher in the heights of mystical rapture, the natural human response is orgasm. As this soul has left the physical body and attains to move towards the all holy Lord, it is surprised and sometimes dumbfounded by the singularly physical response.

In this knowledge that the soul can mistranslate the ever heightening ecstasies towards the Lord into an orgasmic physical response is indicative only of the highly spiritual nature of true human love. God created sensuality, and therefore, it is a portion of our embodiment which must be embraced... but yet in a different way.

The seeker finds that this is indeed true because once the soul translates the mystical ecstasy into a physical orgasmic response, the journey ends, the spiritual rapture is halted and the soul ceases to move. And it is in this simple reality that it discovers that there is actually a mistranslation involved.

Our physical bodies are programmed to receive ecstatic feelings as relates to sexuality, so the fact that the soul seeking to break the bonds of the flesh and ascend to higher achievements in the heavenly realms would naturally translate those higher vibrations into a physical sphere of

knowledge, that of sexuality.

But the mystical captive must take that physical response, the orgasmic mechanism, and transmute it into something higher which is, in essence, a higher form of ecstasy, not beyond sexual, but greater than . . . Because the infinite love of God is experienced within the soul as a rapturous ecstasy, as well, but it is programmed in a higher vibrational sphere.

So the physical human response, although it at first seems to be a deterrent, is only an obstacle attained by not yet having realized the higher level of ecstatic union which is to come.

Many souls and captives feel a sense of failure and shame when they repeatedly mistranslate the sense of the spiritual journey into the sexual sphere, and it is often that it happens tens or hundreds of times before the soul finds the proper attunement to take it into its higher vibrational capacity and finds itself soaring beyond that process point very suddenly and with great freedom and bliss.

But what the soul must realize when it processes past this phase is that the vibration of God is experienced also as a sensuality, a higher sensuality. God creates the sensual, therefore, he does not condemn it. But He asks us to bring that sensual motivation into the higher sphere of entranced union with all that He is.

This sphere of sensual vibration so far surpasses human sensuality that the earthbound mystic often becomes so entranced with it that it can become easy for a time to forego the physical union of love. But the captive soon finds that this 'pull' of the physical body never really completely leaves the

captive.

The captive heart feels pulled towards God at one time, and towards the physical love of the earth at others. Confusing and disturbing the captive feels torn between the higher calling, and what appears to be the lower nature.

Indeed it is the lower nature, but yet, it carries within it a oneness with the higher.

It is a mystery that is often never fully understood by the mystical captive because this pull may be almost non-existent at one time in the mystical path, and at another, it comes back in a raging fury like a fire that was hidden in the twilight of God's love.

Confused and frustrated with its own weakness, the mystical captive struggles with its natures - the spiritual, the corporeal.

But it is through this understanding that mystical vision is actually approached, cultivated, interviewed, understood . . . indeed it is through the sensual nature that a soul will travel in order to find the Lord God of Hosts. Irony at its best, because of the strangling forces of the world which discount its holiness; sensuality within the human person becomes the doorway to the higher vibrations of light.

A stranglehold of mass holds us to the ground, the sensuous nature as it is attached only to the physical nature. But the sensuous nature freed from the bonds of immature ramblings and fears which protrude and confer, holding a soul to the earth, becomes a doorway, a pathway, a gate . . . to the attainment of union with God.

In the writings of the great mystics, the ecstatic, samadhic and nirvanic states are often described with

words akin to rapture and sensual delight. And there is a reason that this is so.

Only a lover can embrace the Beloved. In the frenetic words of the great mystical captive, Rumi, it is only by releasing your captivity to your own sensual nature and allowing it to expand into the everflowing vibrations of the spirit that you may attain to the enlightenment you seek.

For what does enlightenment consist of if not a greater capacity for the vibration of love? And what does love consist of, if not desire? And where does desire originate, from the empty soul longing to be filled with the source of its emptiness?

*“Someone who does not run
toward the allure of love
walks a road where nothing lives.*

*But this dove here
senses the love-hawk floating above,
and waits, and will not be driven
or scared to safety.”*

*Rumi, A Year with Rumi, By Coleman Barks, HarperOne, Harper Collins
Publisher, 2006*

*“I see my beauty in you,
I become a mirror
That cannot close its eyes to your longing.*

*My eyes wet with yours in the early light.
My mind every moment giving birth,
Always conceiving, always in the ninth month,
Always the come-point.*

How do I stand this?

*We become these words we say,
 A wailing sound moving out into the air.
 These thousands of worlds that rise from nowhere,
 how does your face contain them?*

*I am a fly in your honey, then closer,
 A moth caught in the flame's allure,
 Then empty sky stretched out in homage."*

*Rumi, A Year with Rumi, By Coleman Barks, HarperOne, Harper Collins
 Publisher, 2006*

The source of that emptiness is God. And God is the emanation of Love itself . . . so you must know that in order to reach the mystical vision of the Lord of Love, you must be willing to pass through the captive heart of love encased in the human flesh of sexual desire in order to ascend to the heights of ecstatic union and sensual embrace of the Divine.

"The power to love is God's greatest gift to man, for it never will be taken from the Blessed one who loves. Love lies in the soul alone, not in the body, and like wine should stimulate our better self to welcome gifts of Love Divine . . . Love is the only freedom in the world because it so elevates the spirit that the laws of humanity and the phenomena of nature do not alter its course . . . Love which is born in the firmament's lap and has descended with the night's secrets is not contented with anything but Eternity and immortality; it does not stand reverently before anything except deity. If humanity were to lead love's cavalcade to a bed of faithless motive, then love there would decline to abide. Love is a beautiful bird, begging capture . . . "

Kahlil Gibran, The Treasured Writings of Kahlil Gibran, Castle Books, 1975

“Inside a lover’s heart there’s another world, and yet another . . .”

*Rumi, The Soul of Rumi, By Coleman Barks, HarperOne, Harper Collins
Publisher, 2002*

*“Never be without love or you will be dead. Die with
love and remain alive.”*

Rumi, The Way of the Spiritual Lover, By Kabir Helminski





CHAPTER THREE

Mystical Abandonment

To embrace the captive
 With a wintry glow
 My rest is at sleep
 Music
 Glazed
 Cold
 Dazed
 Lost
 Distressed
 Freezing
 Lord, where are you?
 Where have you gone?
 Your distance amasses me with sorrow
 Your depth pulls me towards you
 While the energetic impetus repels my unworthy soul
 Why Your distance, Oh Lord
 When my soul longs for your embrace?
 My rest is at sleep
 Like music
 Yet glazed
 Often a dint of cold
 As my spirit remains dazed
 My soul feels so lost without you
 The distress burdens me
 My inner sphere is freezing from my distance from
 You

Whence the spirit first achieves union with
 God, even though it be only the first time, there is a
 change which comes over it forever. Once the soul

attains to the mystical ecstatic state, it has touched that which is divine. And in that divinity it has felt and known, if only for a moment, the power, knowledge, wisdom and most powerfully the love of God.

The soul is certainly captive by now if it had not yet been before.

Within the circling spheres of the ecstatic touch of God, the soul has touched into a power beyond anything imaginable upon the earth, and like an addictive drug, the soul must continue to seek the experience out again and again.

The seeking becomes like an insatiable lover seeking its beloved, it must be had and will not be forlorn by its newfound bliss.

But along the spiritual path will come many junctures wherein the Lord will pull that union away. Such a release is so painful because once a soul has been taken captive by the unconditional love of God, it is not unlike the lover and its beloved. An invisible tie of energy that holds the earthly and heavenly is always present, and in that presence, a certain otherworldliness remains present.

But the Lord will suddenly release the soul from this grasp, like a lover will leave its beloved, and when this happens it is not unlike the snapping in two, the breaking apart of both worlds. It is felt within the soul as a massive loss and it can plummet into the deepest pits of despair.

Why is it music? It is music because every abandonment contains a harmonic purpose, and even amidst the greatest sorrow and darkness, a soul who has traveled this mystical capture a long enough time will know that something beautifully melodious is to

come from this abandonment.

Yet at the same time, the abandonment feels glazed as if in shock, grief or despair. This abandonment is not unlike a death, causing great turbulence within the captive soul forcing into its own weaknesses and frailties while though it is yet not alone, it certainly feels that it indeed is.

It is cold because the heat of the heavenly capture feels so long and far away. And once a soul has touched the divine torch of love, it is cold without it.

Dazed it stands alone feeling lost, having thrown off all sensible heavenly perceptions it has been thrust into its own reason and lost the higher reason it has become so accustomed to accompanying it.

In a sea of aloneness surrounded by the waters of emptiness, the soul has no oars or compass for which to guide it. It prays and weeps to seemingly no avail. No answer is given, no kind word is heard. The soul feels utterly lost to all the lights of heaven and for all intensive purposes, it seems to be so.

This sudden state causes such distress in the soul that it feels perhaps it has been totally abandoned by God. Perhaps it has been the cause of some great grief to the heavenlies and has been thrust apart for some grievance yet unvoiced and whispered only amongst the highest angels to remain unheard below. Where are you God? What have I done? What am I to do?

And sitting in that tiny little rowboat of abandonment on the sea of despair, the soul feels the deathly call of the wintry winds coming closer and closer as the soul dives deeper into its abandonment.

Shivering slightly, the soul is now freezing as it agonizes in the absence of the fire of God's love, the heat of God's wisdom and the warmth of God's guidance.

Yet . . . oh, yet . . . if only he knew that it was in these times of abandonment, though he will never hear an answer or feel a hint of consolation in his troubles, the Lord watches over his progress with even greater attention.

It is in these moments of abandonment, that the mystical captive is tested beyond measure. The Lord in His wish to ever expand your wealth of spiritual light, pushes the captive soul out into the winds of despair for a myriad of reasons.

Sometimes, it is to make the soul ever greatly aware of its absolute reliance on God and on all the favors provided it by the divine Light.

At other junctures, it is to test a soul on some of its greatest temptations and insist that the soul forego the usual helps, aids and graces given to the soul during such times to see if the soul has become stronger in its own resilience and faith. Much like a mother bird will push a baby bird out of its nest, the Lord in His everpresent willingness and desire to increase our strength and devotion will force you into the ocean of passions 'alone' so that He may try your strength.

And at many other points along the spiritual road the Lord makes haste to cast you into the sea because of some great and marvelous spiritual uplift which will take place as the result of the abandonment.

While it is going on, the soul feels as though it is entirely lost to God. Perhaps even damned . . . but

the loneliness is so great, that many a captive will reach out again to the world for some kind of comfort or direction.

In these times of abandonment, the soul is again reminded of its own humanity.

Sometimes along the spiritual journey when a soul is traveling with such ease due to the ever graceful love of God which carries it along with almost no effort, it can get arrogant and almost judgmental towards those still captured in the mire of worldly cravings and sufferings.

But when the soul is abandoned, they are humbly reminded that the human state is something to be loved with deep and grateful compassion. In their depths, they discover a beauty within their own humanity, which reminds them that there is a reason why the Lord has so chosen to encase us in fleshly form. And the soul grasps that this human condition is a requirement for the spiritual journey of which it has undertaken.

Rather than despise its own human nature and that of others, when a soul goes through the abandonment of God, it again embraces that humanity and sees within it the beauty and condition it bears.

In that abandonment, the emotions are again heightened in such a way that the soul re-embraces happiness, grief, sorrow, despair, joy, elation once again as tremendous assets of the earthly walk.

Although during the abandonment the soul feels that all hope is lost and any chance of attaining again unto the union of God is far beyond their reach, when the Lord deigns to return the soul will have achieved a massive leap in understanding of some

kind and a spiritual thrust will overtake it to such a degree that it will be enthralled by its vastness.

To remember that abandonment, despite its great distress, is always followed by a great mystical achievement, is one of the first and foremost ways in which a soul can learn to utilize these abandonments to their highest value.

When abandonment comes upon you, fall to you knees in humility. For the ever great and holy Lord is honoring you with an acceleration. Despite all the grief the soul will feel, know that it will lead in due time to His conclusion. And in that conclusion, will come something of infinite worth.

*"I thank you, O lord, because I love you.
O highest one, do not abandon me, for you are my
hope.*

Your grace I have received freely and live on it . . .

The lord is my hope; I will not fear.

*He is a garland on my head. I will not move into
sorrows.*

*Should everything tremble, I will stand firm.
It all visible things perish, I will not die, for the lord
is with me and I am with him."*

*The Gnostic Bible, Edited by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer, New Seeds
Publishers, Boston and London 2006*

*"Chasms vanished before the lord,
And darkness fades with his appearance.*

*Error wandered and disappeared because of him.
Contempt found no path and was submerged in the
truth of the lord.*

He opened his mouth and spoke grace and happiness.

*He sang a new poem to his name
And raised his voice to the firmament."*

*The Gnostic Bible, Edited by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer, New Seeds
Publishers, Boston and London 2006*

"The master answered and said, 'I tell you the truth, none will be saved unless they believe in my cross, for the kingdom of god belongs to those who have believed in my cross. Be seekers of death, then, like the dead who seek life, for what they seek becomes apparent to them. And what is there to cause them concern? As for you, when you search out death, it will teach you about being chosen."

*The Gnostic Bible, Edited by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer, New Seeds
Publishers, Boston and London 2006*





CHAPTER FOUR

Of the Great Luxury, Might and Madness of Forgiveness

That passion of envy making him want us
 A great breeze envelops my soul
 Vermin are about me
 Swans glide takes you there
 Wanton memories aroused of a wild, passionate kiss
 So will be to that
 Hence, 'we all die,' says the Lord
 Frontal rebellion has lost its sleep
 Come upon me, Lord of Hosts
 Sea of virtue, sea of purity
 I go about breaking your heart
 A very good heart that's perfect and normal
 Providential from God
 Waves travel in my areas mighty surfaces
 God renders strangers for buyers in foresight
 Of the great luxury, might and madness of
 forgiveness

Somewhere amidst the mystical flatlands, the soul finds that there is weight. Heaviness of soul prohibits significant travel in the other worlds and it becomes a burden and a curse.

Sometimes this weight comes from the burden of your own sin, which is wide and deep. And others of its weight comes from the burden of unforgiveness, both that of which you are aware and that of which you are not.

All throughout your lives on this earth, and

every previous one, are moments of hurt either to yourself or from yourself to another. And each of these moments, although many unremembered, attaches itself to your spirits like a little fishing sinker, pulling the spirit further and further down.

In the starry heavens, one of the first advents will come about with the atonement of such events in that the spirit will be placed within a subconscious context amongst the spiritual realm as an aspect to teach souls, usually individually, as it is all to be rendered their due.

You must forgive the harm done to yourself, and you must do all that you can to beg the same forgiveness on whatever level of consciousness is available to the soul of those for whom you have caused any level of harm.

To intuit these moments, you must look at all things done which have caused unresolved pain as weight.

For most, these moments are helpful, pure and unsullied flitterings into a joyous remembrance of those you've loved and lost filled with understanding and reconciliation. But for others, there will come a time when someone may refuse their forgiveness on any level of consciousness or something arises which is so vile and vicious that rendering forgiveness becomes a serious spiritual task which can almost seem impossible and overbearing.

For those cases of forgiveness not rendered by another, you must note that for the most part the Lord accepts the gesture and the weight is then transferred to the party in whom the forgiveness is lacking. Other times, if the sin is great, the weight is not transferred but will take a greater amount of time to undergo. For

the process of purification can be as wide and varied as the karmic impetus of all those who tread its path.

For those sins committed against the soul which may be of a very serious nature, the working of the Lord is vast and marvelous indeed. Taking the soul on a grand journey into higher and higher levels of understanding, this particular harm will eventually be overcome through a fomenting process which uncovers every last element required for the victim of such an event to understand the harm done to it.

And beyond thus such a one, the soul will be taken deeply into the mesmerizing quality of forgiveness, deep within the confines of the heart of God, deep within the greater mechanism of purification and redemption for all. And despite the heinous nature of the crime, the soul will eventually be able to throw off the weight of that event in some way which corresponds to that which is best for it to achieve a higher status.

A forgiveness may actually be reached in cases wherein the soul recognizes the sheer parameters of the vision of the perpetrator. And when those parameters are simply of an evil nature, a different kind of forgiveness ensues, one which understands the natures of all spirits and their station and the harm which comes to it by not throwing off the weight of some undeserved yet heinous moment in time.

It becomes something which retains relevance no more in that it only now serves to halt the soul. But acknowledging and releasing the weight heralds the soul's awakening and further progression into the ever heightening regions of light.

There is a madness to it, indeed, but a

necessary madness in order to attain to the greatest heights of God's eternal kingdoms.

These weights will be released in small impediments, but as the little weights are reviewed and released, the soul will become lighter and begin to reveal within itself the marvelous kingdoms of God.

"Incorruptible was your way and your face; you have brought your world to corruption, that everything might be broken and renewed. And the foundation of everything is your rock. And upon it you have built your kingdom, and it became the dwelling place of the holy ones. Hallelujah."

The Pseudopigrepha, Odes of Solomon, Volume II, Doubleday and Company, 1985

*"Welcome to anyone life knows,
and sorrow to whomever life ignores"*

The Gnostic Bible, Mandaean Liturgy, Edited by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer, New Seeds Publishers, Boston and London 2006

*"You came from the house of life.
What did you bring us?
I came with you so you won't die,
so your souls won't be erased.
I brought life on the day of death,
happiness on the day of gloom
I brought you rest.*

*My chosen ones, you looked and found,
again and again*

*My chosen ones, you looked
and found as our ancestors
looked. Life is victory."*

The Gnostic Bible, Mandaean Liturgy, Edited by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer, New Seeds Publishers, Boston and London 2006

The intrinsic value of seeking to assess the nature of your own faults and those of others against you becomes a purely selfish endeavour in that you come to know that there is no other way to the all holy God without examining these weighty particles and sending them asunder to release their weight.

In wishing to remain a captive heart in the mind of God, you must come to know His viewing of all such matters in order that you might ascend to His greater height.

Sometimes, the worrisome feats that we pursue are greatly ensnared with the understanding that God does not think as man thinks, and all the moments of our lives are placed under a microscope and examined accordingly to the corrective nature of the thinking of God.

In so be it, you must excuse your human frailty in thinking that you understand, when it is quite evident that there is so much of which you have not yet understood about yourself and the selves of others.

In so doing, by casting off these unnecessary weights, you rejoice in the lightness of being which is given to you in its stead and you find that all such misunderstandings occur because of your human inability to properly know the signs of the times. Your misjudgments, insensitivities, carte blanche rudeness and mythical judgments will be as naught in the light of God's wisdom and grace.

“Brooding on sense objects causes attachment to them. Attachment breeds craving; craving breeds anger. Anger breeds delusion; delusion breeds loss of memory (of the Self). Loss of right memory causes

decay of the discriminating faculty. From the decay of discrimination, annihilation (of spiritual life) follows."

*The Bhagavad Gita, Paramahansa Yogananda, Self Realization Fellowship,
1995*







CHAPTER FIVE

The Emptying

My spirit grieves you
 As if it were its own
 I must be purified in the fires
 Of contrition and remorse
 All will be taken from you
 Complete emptying
 Until you are nothing . . .
 Who could be naïve enough
 to fight against the will of God?
 Take it all
 And fill it back up
 The emptying
 The filling
 Emptying myself of everything
 All extrinsic attachments
 The human nature fights until the will is weak
 Emptying, emptying until we become whole
 Give me thine internal changes
 The Lord has His hand upon me
 I must abide
 The emptying
 I haven't been able to beg and plead
 Then will I take you
 Filled with beasts and burdens of the deep
 The soul knows no peace
 Until it surrenders to the deep
 The will power is naïve
 Nigh the empty night things
 Emptying myself of all faults and all inspiration
 I chase people away

It is my own fault
To be ever nearer to You, Oh God
 To quench You
 I give up all to thirst
 I am doubled over in silent pain
I release my spirit to the gathering of souls
 Soon the entrancement will cease
 And nothing will be left of me
Then, Lord, my empty sieve will be ready to fill
 What is it that you want from me?
 Hold nothing back
 So I may oblige
 Falling
 Falling
 So I may arise again
 Filled only with You
I really thought God was giving me a break
 That I had been through enough
 Yet, still it was not enough
 The soul was only half empty
 There was more to take
On my horizon was another wasteland
 With which to travel
 To seek my bliss
Just when you think you've been emptied enough
 He empties you more still
 And, this the Will of God be done
 So, why, my Beloved
 Can my love simply not be fulfilled?
For it is in Dying we are born to eternal life
 We must die and die again
 Love me, Lord, if you can
 For the emptiness you provide
 Is stark, shallow and yet deep

My wounds betray me
 My sins envelop me
 My loves conquer me
 And my nothingness enfolds me
 Empty me of all things Lord
 Empty me of all sin
 That I may enjoin upon Your kindness
 To fill me again
 Of what is there to be filled?
 Is it wise?
 Is it right?
 Is there a reprieve for a captive of the night?
 Who among us knows the play
 Of the mystic, the fool or the sage?
 Albeit nonsensical and malignant therein
 The trace of my timing is not well spent
 God is a master teacher some will say
 I say He is a thief of hearts led astray
 Wounded with violence
 Shifted and staid
 Warm and yet freezing
 A captive, a slave
 Fortune and squalor are equally well
 My only regret is . . .
 Unknown
 Unknowable
 Irrelevant
 Unquenchable
Empty!
 Are you content, Lord, with my cold and vacuous
 state?
 Of what worth is it to you?
 We shall see
 Precious composure has finally attained

I'm ready, I'm willing, I'm able to change

The Lord in His infinite mercy allows your soul to be overcome with the weight of your sins, the weight of your lusts, the weight of your loves . . . and as you become overwhelmed and enter into a deeper and deeper depression as to the unattainability of all that you seek within the earthly realm, you are thrust almost headlong into the captive state of emptying.

In everyone's lives, the emptying may occur many times, and will often be brought upon you by some wretched and horrific pain that sears your heart like the fiery tempest of the blazing sun.

The feeling therein is that of despair, desolation, complete and total loss of the perceived control of the senses. More than a dark night or an abandonment, this is a walk downwards into the deepest pit of human despair.

Often brought on by the loss of love, through death or other means, betrayal, forbidden exchange; the deeply quenching thirst emerges from within the depths of some great wound that is inflicted upon the soul. Oftentimes, it seems that the wound which brought it about should not be so damaging, but yet it is.

Inside the heart of every man is the simplest of desires and needs, and every human soul will seek after it its entire life to one degree or another. And shant a many of them ever find it, because it is a rare and precious gem.

Nonetheless, it cannot entirely be found in the world of form. And this is where the pain begins in the heart, as the soul seeks out that captive equal within the world around it. But to no avail, of course.

For even the greatest of loves upon the earth cannot quench it. And many an earthly love is bound to break it. When the breaking has reached fruition and the terror has stilled in the wounding of the heart, the soul is left with a pain so deep that it cannot fathom how it could ever have achieved such a depth.

But the depth remains, nevertheless, beyond all scope of rhyme or reason. And although the final wounding instrument may seem to be the object of the incision, that wounding instrument (or person) will oft not have a clue that he has been used for this purpose.

As the soul ponders upon the state it has found itself in, it can often not even realize itself how the wounding instrument could have been the cause of such fantastic pain.

And the soul beats itself more to a pulp of guilt, regret, sorrow and self-loathing until it arrives at the bottom of all feeling and sense and can cry no more out to the heavens for answer.

As it does so, emotions cease. The pain remains palpably real, but the soul is as dead for a time. As it reaches a state of total emptying, it can no longer express the depth of the pains and yearnings which have been asserted in its depths. It cannot be understood by those who watch from outside, for they cannot see the bleeding incision which does not clot nor mend, no matter the time which passes.

The soul is wrapt in its sorrow as the emptying continues, tears are no more, as they have been emptied out. Only despair remains.

How did this wounding instrument (the person) cause such a state?

The state is achieved not by the wounding

instrument, which is why the death blow seems to the captive soul to be out of proportion to the wound inflicted. But the wounding instrument delivered the final death blow, unbeknownst to him or her.

The emptying comes about as all of the wounds of life are captured and brought together in this one moment of the soul's life. There are no more delusions, false raptures of love, enticements of the flesh . . . feeling has been rendered dead.

To die and die again is the cause . . .

To rise and rise again is the solution . . .

But this rising will take time, for it is a cruel taskmaster. It wrings you out like an old sponge of all the heartaches and hurts, betrayals and losses the soul has faced. It forces the soul to recognize the simple truth that what it has been seeking will never be fully achieved in the world. The love the soul seeks is not an earthly thing, fickle and full of changeable natures.

This tender love is a distant memory which dawns from before its birth . . . the memory of a love which was full, great, true and unchanging.

The Lord in His infinite glory bestows such love on the souls of men, but to learn to quench it in the earthly vessel is an entirely different matter.

For the Lord has sent you on an exile into a world filled with false idols and false loves, false meaning and false rectitude.

As the final emptying takes place, the soul falls to the ground in utter fatigue for the despair it has fallen into is grand, greater and vaster than the wasteland of dejection.

How shall I end this pain? What will make this pain cease? I just want the pain to stop, when will it end, Lord? Why?

Only He who creates the heavens and the earth knows why, but the mystical captive soon discovers that the secret to the soul's liberation will be entirely different than that which the soul has been seeking.

Earthly pleasures are momentary, the love of human beings is fickle and flawed. Rarely does such a love bring to fruition in the soul the required fortress of passion that God requires.

And so in the quiet stillness of the despair, the soul stays empty for a time. Emptiness is portrayed on the soul's face, in its gestures, in its emotions, in its words . . . in all that the soul says and does, there is profound and endless grief.

From this depth . . . the Lord will move in His own time.





CHAPTER SIX

The Void

Void
 I stare blankly
 For there is nothing left to see
 Void
 All existence has ceased to be
 A vacuous wasteland where love used to be
 It feels so empty
 Solitude
 The loudness drowns you out
 Life
 As a sage, I wallow in the dew of pain
 It pierces my own heart
 All is so empty now
 There's no one here anymore

After the emptying, there is a dull, lifeless ache where substance used to occupy form. No longer does substance occupy it, all has been reduced to ashes, to nothingness. All visual disturbances are now revealed. All hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, feeling . . . are at an end.

No more stimulus can be taken into the soul for it has emptied itself into the great void. Nothing is there . . . the void is empty.

Piercing pain exists at times in this void, and at others a profound peace. But the one element unchanging about the void is that the soul can no longer sense, it has gone beyond senses.

How can this be?
 It is a hard thing to explain.

In some respects, it's as if the soul has gone into a low input monitor threshold. It has exhausted all stimulus and can no longer contain it.

Response time changes, as the soul can view the world from only this new perspective. Within this perspective is both great peace and great turmoil. There is an awareness that the peace will win in time. But for now, there is a desperate wrestling between that peace and the pain.

The emptying has produced its fruit as the soul now washes itself up onto the dock of a wasteland. As if a forest fire had raged through a deep forest, the thoughts, feelings, sensations of the soul have been extinguished by a natural disaster which has literally burned it all out.

Within the void, there is a lot of loneliness because the soul realizes it is embarking upon a world where few travel. Therefore, few will come. This will by its very nature be a solitary journey.

The loneliness is deafening . . . but yet, the soul cannot turn back because it has seen that all its previous stimulations were flawed, partial and incomplete. In essence, they were based on falsehoods. The soul knows it must continue forward if it is to seek meaning and substantive knowledge.

And the soul is no longer quenched by anything less than the substantive knowledge and peace of God. But yet, as it remains in the void, that peace is also fleeting.

The soul is at a crossroads, a turning point. Some will turn back and re-enter into worldly pursuits to end the pain. But the soul knows that this will no longer work for him, so despite the searing intensity of vibration that is sucked out of him with

every earthly breath, it seeks to proceed forth towards the almighty Lord and God.

Because of the violent nature of the emptying and deadening silent pain of the void, the soul remains frightened of the all holy God. Not in the sense of the fear of judgment, but rather, the fear that this violent purification may go on forever and the pain of it will be too much for it to bear

There is a great sea of despair that is filled with islands of past sins, all too many of them must be visited in order to be understood. Will this journey bring the soul to a fruition of peace some day? Or is it an endless battle into the unknown darkness lurking within itself?

The soul proceeds forward by faith alone, knowing full well that this trust in the all consuming love of God which will bring the soul to a place of rest is all that he may lean on. Nothing else will suffice, and for now, this nebulous and far off concept is the only thing that the soul can hold.

All else has ceased to exist. All else has emptied into the void.

The soul remains quiet. The soul remains quiet. The soul remains quiet. It has nothing left to say.

Quiet and dark.



CHAPTER SEVEN

Oh, Everywhere

Oh, everywhere
 Oh, everywhere
 Shine down your cross on me
 A modern mirage of majestic nights
 Tomorrow is a place where rumors hold their words
 The imminent arrival of your past into your
 consciousness
 Shades of memories tinged with regret
 Oh, how it emerges upon the plain
 As still as a wintry night
 But as bold as a desert flower
 With the whimper of a nightwind rain
 And the thunder of a windstorm in the desert
 It comes immersed in pain
 And mystery
 And within its walls
 Lie the image of fools and thieves
 Thieves of love
 Thieves of life
 Fools for love
 Fools for life
 There is a painfulness in the human condition
 From whence does this memory emerge?
 These moments when this night is not yet still
 From the place where rumors hold their words

Immersed deep within the subconscious mind
 and the spiritual cell memory itself, lies the patterned
 images of time as they weave their way across the
 soul's interior recesses to bring upon it memory.

By now the mystical captive is finding itself ever more captured by the emotions and tragedies of times long past which emerge as tiny snippets of residue in its dreams.

Journaling during this time becomes of great use, because it is almost impossible to remember the myriad images, emotions and periods of time which erupt spontaneously. And in order to bring them all together into a cohesive understanding, having them written down in sequence provides an excellent frame of reference.

As the soul travels this road, it experiences a great deal of emotional upheaval as it remembers the moments from its past which carry within them the highest grains of emotional intensity and pain.

Tragedies unfold as the soul re-experiences some of its most emotionally vivid moments between birth and death when hearts were broken, loves and lives were lost and evil was perpetuated upon it . . . or itself perpetuated evil upon others.

Amidst the spectral wavelength of time, the soul will discover something relatively synchronistic between these moments in that there can be no mistaking a pattern of behavior which has caused the emotional intensity of the moments which emerge.

A misunderstanding about the true eternal nature of love or life is always lurking within these memorabilia made flesh. And in these memories is the key to that which the soul has held onto which has caused it to require further incarnation in order to work it out.

Ironically, this thread of existences becomes one of the most important aspects of the purification journey of the soul because these karmic patterns

form the underlying psyche of the soul, its beliefs and disbeliefs, and determine its mode of action or non-action in any given situation. In order to overcome the patterns, the soul will have to unravel the deep mystery of what that final conclusion should have been in times past and should be in the present time frame continuum.

The thieves of life and love must be overcome by the eternal comprehension of that which faces the soul within the context of its relationships with others and itself.

There is a woundedness within this captivity, a deep longing from the sensual side of the soul. Because in order to quell the passions and the sensual nature, the soul must first embrace and understand them within the context of its own misuse.

The passion filled arena of earth life to earth life must be experienced intensely within the soul, and the spirit finds itself clinging to the emotional thrusts and powerful sagas of the earthly existence.

But it is only for a time, as the soul will quickly gather up its nefarious longings from earthly sagas old and new . . . and will carry them into the higher sphere of knowledge.

As the captive embraces the saga of earthly existence it is taken to a new state of rapture. Holding all emotions tightly within the fold of the spirit, it then makes its ascent upwards. In this upward thrust, the emotions from the earthly sagas will come together in one wide, vast and all encompassing release and enter into a new energetic union.

In this union, a peace comes over the soul. What has been noisy will become suddenly calm . . . quiet. Cellular memory comes together and siphons

itself into the all-embracing and all-encompassing love of God. God's love consumes it in its fire entertaining not a moment of its lusts. And when the fires have quenched, there is nothing but an ember and an ash.

From that ember, a greater knowledge emerges, the soul knows no boundaries and yet it is held within the confines of a boundary it cannot breach for love of God.

Love becomes eternal. That which was chaos becomes peace. That which was misunderstood, is known. That which was fallen, is redeemed. And that which was earthly, has become eternal.

Mortality kisses immortality . . . and steps back quietly. The winds of the immortal encompass the spirit in a wave of ecstatic rush. There is no more need for movement as the work of God is accomplished in utter stillness.

Man meets God . . . and falls to his knees.

God meets man . . . and lifts him up to soar.

There is no more woe in the heart of God. Though pain and suffering still exist in the earthly world, the captive spirit who meets God face to face no longer sees any of these earthly events from the same view.

Pain has been made real. Love has been sanctified. And time, although it moves and weaves all around the spirit, has become still.

Be there need of sorrow or pain, the soul truly knows it all the more. The long-standing captivity of the spirit within the karmic winds of mortal anxiety is no more. In its place, the ability to feel with greater keenness, but understand with greater awe.

Gods ways are mysterious, indeed, let there be

no mistake. The Lord is a handsome fugitive from the soul who has seen His face.

"He assigns to the immortals their everlasting permanence, and with that part of his light which tends upwards (that is, the light which he sends forth from that side of him which faces heaven), he maintains the immortal parts of the Kosmos; but with the light which is shed downward, and illuminates all the sphere of water, earth, and air, he puts life into the things in this region of the Kosmos, and stirs them up to birth and by successive changes remakes the living creatures and transforms them . . .

For the permanence of every kind of body is maintained by change. Immortal bodies undergo change without dissolution; but the changes of mortal bodies are accompanied by dissolution; that is the difference between immortals and mortals. And as the light of the Sun is poured forth continuously, so his production of life also is continuous and without intermission."

Hermetica , Edited and Translated by Sir Walter Scott, Shambalah, 1993



CHAPTER EIGHT

Putting to Sleep the Karmic Self

Love I to stand the door between mercy and the deep
 Untold winds of caves and sashes
 Maybe it's time you changed your tune of a love song
 Why are you sleeping with the monkey?
 Wind becomes light in the sheets of hell
 Incentives of love make my life sweet
 Sulking in a modern dream
 For to whom does the monkey cry?
 Is it but I, or is it but self?
 To mourn the loss of a hastened fool
 And to change that which has been
 To an ancient dream of doldrum
 To what do I owe this mystery?
 And where do I find it in the deep?
 In my most morose fantasy I have begun
 A journey of infinite satisfaction
 Yet unfailing grief
 Who among us can bear the torrent of the truth?
 Inside the image of the dark
 Outside the unfailing gloom of dawn
 Nightwinds dawn a newmorning
 As age old sorrow becomes the morning rise
 Is there a release to these painful snippets of time?
 Or is there none?
 Where can the falcon find its flight?
 To whom can the sinner go to find consolation?
 Gut wrenching kingdoms of old take me in
 And final throes pardon my night
 Is there release?

Or is it all continued captivity?
 If I were to speak, I would say mercy
 If I were to feel, I would roll over in pain
 If I were to remember, my tears could not end
 And so, in my passive yearning
 I ask the silent gods to whence these shall come?
 Is my end again to be sweetly misused?
 To the Lord I cry a shout of angst
 As my spirit recoils in tender longing and the most
 sensitive hurt
 For to ride a thousand lightstreams
 My soul would find no rest
 Amongst the dreary episodes of life and love
 And beyond the posted heavings of hell
 Beyond the mildest sunsets of life
 And within my coldest dream
 Who can say it?
 Not I
 But you. Why do you sleep with the monkey?
 Do you not yet see its face?
 Its fury arms cradling your decisions like a warped
 and fanciful belief
 Bid the monkey adieu
 And grasp onto the lightstream which comes within
 There is no cure to worldly woe
 And worldly grasping
 No cure
 Albeit there is another way
 It is known in the silent worlds
 They speak of it there yet they never have need of
 words
 They do not talk
 In their formidable silence
 A soul can lose all longings

And find their one true love
 Inside the captive heart
 There is only one way to freedom
 In the sight of the blind, it is an emerald
 In the sight of the seeing, it is an emerald
 It is the same
 Yet it is different
 For the blind will not seek it
 To them it is an unattainable feat
 But the seeing will shake themselves out of a
 shoreless sleep
 And run after it so they may grasp in a new way
 Karma is a weary master
 While freedom is within our grasp
 Grasping to grasping
 A new kind of grasping
 A new fury envelops the soul
 All worldly things lose their fashion
 Their beauty and function become as nothing
 When the seer grasps the emerald of freedom
 The hindsight of forgiveness comes with ease
 There is no more to hold
 Because it is in releasing that the lightstream becomes
 passable
 And soul leaps upon it
 Like a wild monkey
 And the monkey is no more
 The monkey has risen
 A sheer of light becomes it
 Mystical realms encompass the becoming
 And the soul finds itself enraptured in a greater
 captivity
 God so deigns to lower Himself
 To the smallness of the human soul

And reveal Himself first as a void
 And then as a fulfillment
 First as all knowledge
 Then as knowledge itself
 And beyond this door
 A seeker becomes the sought
 Because the Lord is a hungry giver
 And can no better leave behind a single soul
 Than he could cease to exist
 It is His nature
 It is His wanting
 To overtake the hearts of the captives
 And make them weak with love
 And when He does so
 They are free

At the arising of dawn when the soul awakens to the imperfections and misperceptions of the karmic path, greater understandings emerge and embrace the captive as it realizes that there is a place beyond all earthly pain and suffering which embraces the pain as if it were but a dream and the suffering as if it were only a doorway.

But as the mystical captive finds itself running towards that doorway, a knowledge of the inevitable comes upon it in a rise of compassion and dust. There is no other way, it says to itself. In order to give rise and awakening to this greater knowledge which stands before it, that which no longer serves its continuing unfoldment must be put to sleep.

The process is painful and arduous, but yet so necessitous in that the captive must release one captivity for yet another higher one.

The dramatic unfoldment of the karmic

journey contains within it the emotional winding road of pain, passion . . . volumes of tears which unravel like a voluptuous seething pot stirring the soul to such extremes of constant remembrance and emotional upheaval as to make it seem to be losing its mind.

In reality, however, there is no mind to be lost. It is a purging and expungement of such things, to the greater good of the soul and all the humanity which surrounds it, the soul is unearthing ancient fragments of that which contains it and has held it to earth century after century. As each part of this emotional melting pot is pulled up from the depths of the heart and released like a tearful cry from an ancient past, the captive becomes ever closer to the goal of which he seeks.

What is that elusive goal? The captive must empty itself of all peripheral matter from the past ages, so that the Lord Himself may come upon him and provide him with the filling of the proper mahogany of life.

Is there a way out? No. Is there another way through? Absolutely not. Despite its misery, the captive soul recognizes a beauty in these unfounded and lost moments of malaise and distress. The emotional unweaving carries within it its own magnificence in the lifestream of mortality.

It cannot be denied, it must be ordained and indeed it will.

As the tears of compunction, both for sins committed and sins endured, trickle out in a warm whisper, the soul can only whimper in slight bursts of pain. And as those same tears of compunction become a deep well overflowing in an underground waterfall

of ancient pain, the captive soul becomes like the bursting dam in order that it may empty itself of the pain and tribulation of mortal fragments.

And then . . . when it has been all but exhausted, the soul quiets itself. With a foundational emptying of sighs, the captive spirit is quiet and contemplative. For it has opened a door to something as of yet unknown.

But when all tears are all quenched, the captive walks towards that mysterious doorway and as its foot steps upon this threshold it feels the waves and torrents within it rise like the last throes of a great and powerful beast. Taking one final step, the captive closes the door behind him.

And suddenly, it is no more. It has fallen asleep. The pain becomes as if a dream and the suffering a doorway. The turmoil has fallen asleep.

Falling to the ethereal ground in a deep and peaceful slumber, the Lord ever gracious walks quietly towards it, places His hand upon its brow. He smiles at the soul's achievement and quietly walks away.

The karmic self has gone to sleep and when the mystical captive is to arise again, it will have achieved a reckoning within itself. And then God will be yet ready to move within it.

*"Since the seminary of love
was endowed by eternity,
The difference between lover and Beloved
has become the most difficult subject.*

*There are other ways besides causality
and deductive reasoning to solve the problem.*

*But they're inaccessible to jurists, doctors,
and someone who fancies himself a cosmologist.*

*They all had strong opinions
and kept talking about their differences,
but it led only to a dead end.*

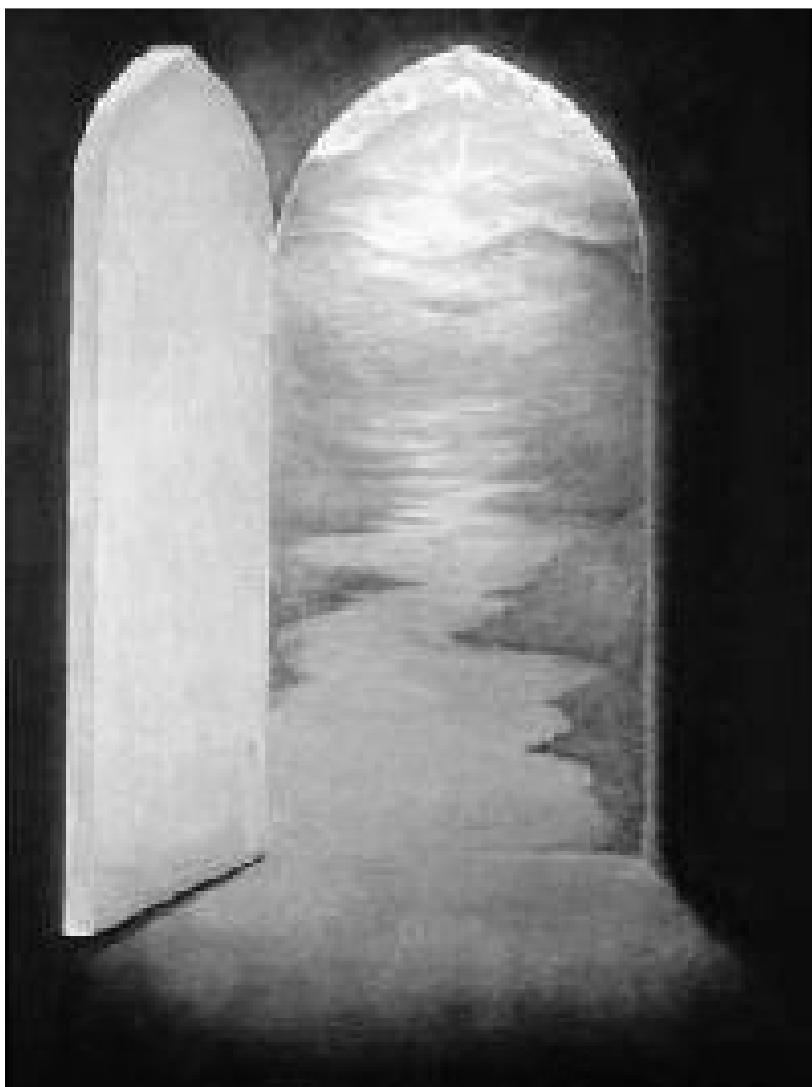
*Then, they turned toward the mosque,
but here everything became even more confused.*

*Thoughts are limited,
but the one who gathers them is endless.
Let what is limited disappear into the unlimited.*

*The fly of the soul has fallen into
this buttermilk forever.
Muslim, Christian, Jew, and Zoroastrian:
All are welcome here.*

*You keep talking
But your words are like
The fluttering wings of this fly.
Yet once the fly sinks to the bottom
Its wings won't flutter anymore.*

*There is a better way for you to use your wings.
High above the dome of the sky
There is a new and invisible way for you to play."*
The Forbidden Rumi, Translations by Nevit O. Ergin and Will Johnson, Inner
Traditions Publishers, 2006



CHAPTER NINE

So the Demons Roar

Arising from the ashes of dawn
 Comes the awarenesses of lives unseen
 Amidst the karmic centrifuge
 Is the grand awakening to the purifying path
 Beyond all sensory feelings and knowledge
 Contained within the eye of God
 Emerging within the enlightening soul
 Are the fetters and cravings which hold him back
 Are the sins and pollutions which trouble his mind
 And as the mystical captive now finds itself totally
 encased in a wall of doubt
 It begins to slowly walk forward towards the light
 Towards that which is good
 Towards that which is pure
 Towards that which is conciliatory
 Towards that which is of God
 Only small things seem to emerge at first
 Changes come in the size of a mite
 But they multiply in the mind of the dreaming
 Within the husk of humanity, a greatness begins to
 emerge
 But it is slow and weak
 It is bitter yet sweet
 Nothing seems to be the same
 And it is not
 Underneath the highest transmission of God
 Remain the sins which must be transfused into a
 greater beyond
 So the demons roar

With fury and with haste
 After their prey which was once quietly their own
 Which has awoken from its sleeping
 And now traverses towards its God
 "No," is their war cry
 "Silence," is their hope
 For what was once comfortably numb inside sin
 Is now emerging in a purifying fire of God
 What once they held with no effort
 Is now slipping from their grasp
 The demons do not rest nor do they offer peace to the
 mystical captive
 Their captivity to the darkness within is still their
 own
 A chance remains, yes?
 Or no . . .
 It is not yet determined
 The warfare descends upon the soul
 And a fury of war
 Suddenly, the peaceful awakening is quiet no more
 Yet filled with battles of infernal disquietude
 Sleep is a mess in a bright dawn morning
 They're like pine trees inside a real sublime matter
 Is there a thought I'd waste in time
 On prayer of humility
 That love frost servant for to below
 Your ever, ever, ever, ever spirit believes God to last
 forever
 Where have you been?
 Out where the ethers lie
 Never touch anything
 Never move slow
 Run through always
 And keep the door closed

That is how you will win this battle
 That is how the infernal ones will be brought low

The soul in its ever widening quest to begin recognizing and removing fetters from its soul and cravings from its daily diet of human experience will begin to make changes however small in the way it handles certain circumstances.

Having been shown through various mystical quests imperfections within its confines, the soul becomes humbled and acutely aware of the fact that it has far to go in the wide and ever expanding journey towards an all holy God.

For who can approach Him? The Mystical Captive has become increasingly aware that no one can approach an all holy God with surety who has not yet given view to its own weaknesses and failings.

And in this viewing, the final rendering appears to be a well thought out change in various behaviors and views which have been held and practiced for aeons.

Sometimes the changes are difficult, and sometimes easy. . . but what comes next is always unexpected to the mystical captive.

When the soul reaches towards God there is something of which it has not yet considered.

In the bowels of the earth, lurking below the consciousness of every unexamined human being is a finite hold from the nether regions below.

As soon as the mystic traveler begins to attain self-insight, an infernal fury is awoken much to the captives' fearful dismay.

The reason such a fury is awoken is simple and direct. Because an unexamined soul can yet be

considered unsafely in the hands of the darkness without even a semblance of a fight, there is no need for the demonic to make itself known to the average soul who has not taken the time to open the secret book of itself.

As long as the soul is content in its worldly ways and does not look further, they are unsafely yet quietly held in the hands of the demonic spirits which have dominion over them.

But the moment the same captive soul recognizes its captivity and begins to take steps to eradicate its own captive heart from sin, the demonic realm is excited to a fury unimaginable in human terms.

Why? Well, they have now lost all choice of remaining silently in charge. In order to bring such a soul back into submission, they must now make themselves seen, felt and known.

A battle ensues between the forces of good and evil for that soul, and to the soul it will seem that perhaps they have just done something terribly wrong because they will be terrorized nightly by visions of darkness and diabolical matters which confuse, distort and greatly disturb it.

But this is the last vestige of the infernal armies attempts to bring back the awakening captive soul to their fold. When they make themselves known openly, you can be assured that their dominion has been threatened by the sudden awareness of their charge.

And in this sudden awakening, they have climaxed their efforts to the only remaining warfare due to them. Fear, intimidation, absolute terror, tyranny and even simply just wearing the soul down

through this arduous journey into the night are all they have left in their arsenal of insidious deceit.

And as the armies of Satan wage against the ever awakening mystical captive, the captive is likely to feel frustration at the newfound dangers lurking in their midst and their own lack of alertness to such matters of the dark side.

Because it has come upon them so rapidly inside of their quest to seek God in a greater and more profound way, they often feel their judgment has been profoundly poor and perhaps they have undertaken a journey far beyond their own natural capability.

The serious focus of the mystical captive on the almighty God and the corrections of thoughts, actions and behaviors within their lives, makes the dark side lurch towards them in a violent and vile abuse of the night.

Even the night itself may become fearsome to the mystical captive, for there is so little peace in the night as of late and it seems it will never return.

And it may not return for a time. For quite a time . . . a year, two, three . . .

But wait captive soul. Do not fear the darkness which threatens to seize your liberation from sin and death. With a fury they will fight you, but the very fact that the war has come upon your soul from the nether regions indicates that the hand of God is upon you.

Such a thing only happens when a soul begins releasing the grasp that the dark side once held upon it and starts the sweet purification of love.

Despite the awareness of the mystical captive to the presence of the sinister, and the shakiness

which results from it . . . everything is as it should be.

The mystical captive has begun fighting the good fight. The dark side will wage an inestimable war for his retention.

Oh, weary mystical captive, do not allow the sleep of fatigue to tear you away . . . do not let fear take hold.

This is a necessary and somewhat disturbing part of every soul's purification from its former ways .

As the soul becomes more aware of the things it needs to improve upon and it begins making changes in its life, his status as 'already won' to the dark side ceases to exist.

The demonic begins to rear its ugly head because the soul is now in danger of being won over to God. And they must fight to retain him in their grasp.

Such a thing was never before of necessity because the soul was comfortably in their possession without its knowledge. But as awareness comes upon the soul, the more difficult it becomes for the dark side to keep itself hidden and all out warfare for the soul ensues between the forces of good and evil.

Fear not, oh mystical captive, for this is a sign of the predilection of God, His hand is upon you. For there would be no need for warfare had you not given up the familiar and perhaps completely unseen grasp of the hand of darkness.

Since you let go that hand, the hand of the Lord now reaches towards you. But the darkness will not let you go without a fight. Unless you fight the good fight, you cannot be crowned.

Fear not the disconcertment of this time. This time will bear fruits of the spirit that you cannot yet

even imagine. Don't let the difficulty of the moment lead you away . . . in fighting the darkness within and without you are accomplishing fruits beyond measure. It is exactly as it must be.

It may appear that this will never end. It can go on for several years. But then, whence the battle is won for the greater good of the captive, it all will change again into yet another chapter in the mystical unfoldment of the captive spirit, the lover of God.

Something always new . . .

Remember one thing, however, mystical captive. Whence this battle has been won, the war has not yet been vectored. Never forget that the temptations of the dark side can and will come again in your life . . . often when you feel the most secure and least expect it. It is a reminder to the soul that it is reliant on God for all things. And even its strength is held up only by the thread of grace given by God.

Never forget this . . . whatever strength you have is of God. You must rely on Him forevermore if you wish to stand.

But fear not the battle which currently lies at your feet. Fight well, fight with the goodness and grace of God, and know well the necessity of this warfare.

Through it you will become clean . . .

"For, although we are in the flesh, we do not battle according to the flesh, for the weapons of our battle are not of flesh but are enormously powerful, capable of destroying fortresses. We destroy arguments and every pretension raising itself against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ, and we are ready to punish every

disobedience, once your obedience is complete."
The Catholic Study Bible, 2 Corinthians 10: 3 - 7, Oxford University Press, 1990

"Temptation is likewise a means of purification. 1.) It reminds us that through lack of vigilance and of effort in the past we have fallen, and it becomes thus an occasion for new acts of contrition, shame and humiliation, which make for the purification of the soul. 2.) It obliges us at the same time to put forth earnest and sustained efforts lest we fall; it makes us atone for our negligences and for our surrenders by the performance of contrary acts which further purify the soul. This is why when God wants to purify a soul more perfectly in order to raise it to contemplation, He allows it to undergo horrible temptations."

The Catholic Study Bible, 2 Corinthians 10: 3 - 7, Oxford University Press, 1990







CHAPTER TEN

Despair Blossoms at Times Like These

And the water tables rose
 As the sentinel sounded from beyond the nether hills
 The waters rose in a fury of etheric waste
 Within moments, all that had been known was now
 altered somehow
 As the waters continued to rise, it appeared as if the
 world had ceased to exist as it had once been
 All that had been was now lost
 All that once showed promise, was undone
 All the sensual appetites were under duress
 To whence should a captive go when covered in
 ethereal water?
 Whence should the drowning commence?
 Every evening, now and a day, wherever
 Fondly recalling a kismet
 There is little I don't understand about patience
 A hop, a skip and a jump into oblivion
 Horrored by the ever widening expanse
 When the sensual lights begin to wane
 For to whom does a desire come?
 If it were but a fantasy, but yet, it is not
 Amongst the prairie thistles , my external senses taste
 that which is bitter
 My vision turns to the rose, but senses only the thorn
 And the waters continue to rise
 The world is inextricably changed
 Despair is all around me, no one remains unaffected
 The beautiful and the unsullied cannot escape its

grasp

No longer can the plain and simple cease to see it
They are all under the same curtain of despairs' mist

Everything seems lost

All is drowning

Sensual delights die in a random falling away

And the bearer feels emptiness

In its emptiness, it feels detachment

But the sensual appetites still lurk within

Because they made the captive feel alive

Now, they are drowning, fading, waning

Emptying into the great unknown

This strange peace which is filled with despair

Of what should I make it?

Shall I enhance the lever's throw into the garden?

No, I shall wait

The waters rise

Ethereal disbursement commences

My nebulous shadow self cries out from the mirror

For it is no longer allowed within my confines

Though my soul longs for the sensual delight

My emptiness says otherwise

Despair says wait

And knowledge says cease

To whom do I go?

Will the ever living God understand such a thing?

Within my own confines a battle is raging

Holy and earthly desire erupt in a clashing wave of
contempt for one another

It is yet that I seek the heavenly kingdoms

But also my physical body longs for the sensory of
that which surrounds me

The enlivened reality of sound, light, touch, taste and
smell

But the emptying has begun and it seems there is no
other way

They must be freed from their worldly caress
And attempt to enter into the emptying itself
Can they do such a thing?

Peace and despair occupy the same cell
My soul contains them both

“One of you must die,” knowledge says
And the death of the worldly longing is accompanied
by despair

But the birth of the heavenly abode is accompanied
by the emptying

So, the Lord has spoken His peace
I must empty

Despair will accompany me
All that once filled my senses I must forego

And I must turn to a higher sense
As I await that glory, I feel deadened and alone

Because I am in the void of despair
I must give up all that I know

To grasp that which I wish to know
But I must give it all up before I grasp anything

And in the emptiness, I shall sunder my soul to
despair

And yet, I shall know that this depth of sorrow is not
unknown

It is necessary

It is needful

It shall bear fruit

And I shall endure it

Oh, mystical captive, this is the day of
reckoning between the world of form and the world
of the spirit whence the external senses begin to

become aware of themselves, providing for the captive soul an intense longing for the divine. But yet, the seeking spirit becomes intensely aware of all that is holding it to the earth. As befits, the bodily senses hold it back from that which would contain its higher senses within the vision of God.

Such a sense of sorrow and shame . . . although these senses are not needful.

The Lord knows our ways, and He is well aware of the human inclinations to external comforts and supports. The sensual nature of mankind is yet to be expected not abhorred. But yet, at the same time, as the soul enters into this emptying it becomes ever aware of the constant conflict between the earthly sensual and the divine pleasure.

For no man can seek to the highest heights of the grandly unfolding universal spheres without the acknowledgement of those earthly fetters which are yet stringing it to the earth.

Despair emerges like a siren in the night, not because the soul is yet so terribly attached to them at this point, but because the soul knows that it must sacrifice one set of senses for yet another. And in the interim . . . all senses will become void.

And as a result of this, all that is holding the captive to earth begins to dismantle and fall apart before its eyes.

Yet it is not always that which the soul might expect which must decay . . . so arrange no expectation, but allow the emptying mass of spiritual constraint to demonstrate itself.

An allegory:

“A seeker of the greater Way was comfortably

placed within its own world of comfort and predictableness when the heavens announced that the water tables were rising.

In disbelief, the seeker arose from his comfortable position within the confines of his world to observe that outside the home which had contained his spirit for this life, the earth was quickly yielding to the rising waters.

Within the captive's home lay all the spiritual reading he had done, all the spiritual advancements he had made and all the efforts yet yielded forth before the Almighty.

But within moments, the seeker saw that there was no other choice but to dive out of the home which was quickly beginning to fill with water and collapse and accept the oncoming calamity which was befalling him before his very eyes.

Within moments, his entire world, community and circle of friends were all encompassed by these ethereal waters which had come upon them all and flooded what appeared to be the entire world to them.

Now swimming in what had become an ocean of misery, the seeker looked towards the location of his former home and noticed that all his spiritual texts had been disbursed and were being rent asunder in the waters of this destruction. Looking towards his friends, he saw despair in the crying wails of his friends and there was no end to the water line in sight.

It was truly as if the world he had lived within had become an ocean of despair.

Gathering himself, the seeker swam towards one of his ailing friends and comforted her with these words, "Love lifts us up where we belong . . . "

Holding the crying and defeated soul to his chest, his words meant something to her and gave her comfort amidst the despairing destruction which had overtaken them all.

It wasn't long before all those who were living within this sphere of destruction had begun to compensate for the world which had been and began to learn to live within the world which had come to be. Having given up so many comforts, they learned to survive by relying on one another and being resourceful about food and shelter. They all gathered and stayed together on whatever might remain afloat, and made due with whatever kinds of foods they might find in the deteriorating skeletons of the homes they used to live within.

The beautiful and the homely were thrust together, because in this emptying and despair, there was no disparity, no distinction.

The captive found a wooden floating porch to sit upon and reflect as he was now embracing his world, despite its despair, learning to live within it. Not only was he learning to live within it, he was becoming more and more at peace with the deprivation of all sensual appetites. He was doing so out of the necessity of the times.

Despair accompanied a sense of peace regarding the nature of that which was . . . that which was no longer reversible. The world for the captive had inextricably changed. The homes these seekers had occupied were completely destroyed, they had to make due with all that remained which was empty and lacking.

But over time, that emptiness and lack became fruitful. The captives' need became profoundly

lessened. He learned to make due with little to none . . . and the seekers all became much more aware of one another and their true needs.

As the captive sat upon his floating wooden porch and contemplated the vastness of the waters which lay before him, he thought he spotted a vessel somewhere in the distance but quickly let go of this hopeful thought. There was no way out, he concluded, there was no end.

In his contemplations, the seeker thought deeply on the despair which filled not only his own heart but those of everyone within his confines, those who surrounded him in this new world which appeared to contain only destruction.

There appeared to be no end to it, and although adjustment had taken place, it was a hard place to remain.

All that he had once been and thought he could be had been torn apart by the fierce power of the ethereal waters which overtook him with such force. Nothing seemed to be left of him or anyone he knew and loved. Everything had been broken, scattered., laid low and reduced to the most basic.

Suddenly, a beautiful woman approached. She was wearing an ornate garment in the color of royal purple. Her essence seemed unaffected by the devastation which surrounded him.

Looking up at her, he said, "Look at this before us, a vast wasteland of waters. It goes on into eternity and there is no way out." Gazing upon him without any sign of perturbation, she quietly replied, "Oh, but you are mistaken, sir." He looked up suddenly as he had a sense of the importance of her coming. Feeling it within, he had no idea from whence she had come

or to whom she would go when leaving, but it became suddenly apparent that she had been sent from the Most High and he must pay close attention.

“This great ocean of waters you see ends four blocks in that direction.” She pointed towards his right . . . Shocked, he sat there motionless for a few moments. For a moment, it became apparent to him that he had only seen this never ending road of despair. But he had not looked beyond his own horizon . . . beyond the mountain in the distance.

Suddenly, she lifted him above his reality, the watery world he had been living within. From above, he could see in the distance a beautiful and ancient ship coming towards his shore. The hull was majestic and black, shining as if it had not been sailing through these treacherous waters. And the sails were high sheaves of the purest white cloth, grasping the wind of the spirit to take it upon its ever widening journey with ease and a royal ebb and flow. It was coming for him and those with him who had been caught in the destruction of the ethereal water of the spirit.

As the lady slowly brought him back down to the level in which he had been living, he looked up to her and said, “All this time, I thought this was an ocean of despair. But only four blocks away this watery wasteland is no more? My salvation is so near, but yet I could not see it?”

Nodding, she retained a very regal pose. He knew he had been given the key to all he needed to know at this time.

As she simply faded into the ethers, the seeker realized that it had been necessary for all to appear lost, it had been necessary for all to appear

dismantled and destroyed, it had been necessary for him to believe the waters went on into infinity and that his emptiness would see no end.

Because without these basic beliefs, he could not have attained to the detached simplicity which had come over him in these grand struggles of the spirit.

But now, liberation loomed in the distance if only he could procure the strength to reach it. It was time to achieve the liberation earned by him from the Lord. In giving way to the destruction of all that once held his attention and embracing the end of the sensual delights of his world, he had made way for rescue from the depths of the despair which can only be attained when all appears lost.

He had sufficiently emaciated and dismantled all that had held him to the earthly view. In that profound emptying, he had become detached from all those things and ready for rescue and safe passage to the next level in the spiritual journey for which he had given all.

Pulling himself together, the captive stood up and called out to those who had accompanied him on the journey. "Four blocks to the right, my friends, four blocks to the right . . ." Looking at him with confusion, they didn't understand his words. He spoke again. "Four blocks to the right, and this ocean of despair will cease, let us go there and achieve liberation and rescue from the Lord."

Diving into the waters he began swimming towards the right . . . in his mind's eye, he could see the ship which had been sent to retrieve them.

"Just a little bit longer," the captive told himself, "hold out with strength for just a bit longer

and the Lord will be waiting to receive you. Though nothing may remain of myself . . . the Lord waits to receive my nothingness. How good and great is Our Lord?""

*"Who can find a trace of you?
There isn't even a bit of dust from your track.
Who could find your home?
You have no home.*

*How can I praise you?
What can I say about you?
Foam is the only form in the sea of meaning.*

*A great unseen town
lies just behind that curtain.
Our world is nothing as compared to that.*

*Don't lower yourself.
Don't knock on every door.
You yourself are what you're looking for.*

*O heart, raise your tent up to the sky.
Don't say, 'I can't.'
Sure you can. Just do it."*

The Forbidden Rumi , Translations by Nevit O. Ergin and Will Johnson, Inner Traditions Publishers, 2006

*"You are wrapped up in the self from head to tail.
What are you looking for in yourself?
You're like water in the jug,
Encased in earthenware.*

*Embark on the journey of love.
It takes you from yourself to Yourself.*

And cut the story short, my friend."

The Forbidden Rumi , Translations by Nevit O. Ergin and Will Johnson, Inner Traditions Publishers, 2006

"Again, one preparing for a voyage and about to traverse the wild waves cries out . . . But your providence, O Father! Guides it, for you have furnished even in the sea a road, and through the waves a steady path, showing that you can save from any danger."

Wisdom 14:1-4, New American Bible, Old Testament





CHAPTER ELEVEN

A Discourse on Happiness and Total Joy

The oasis is within my grasp
 Hence, I goeth
 The flames of despair have literally eaten it away
 To ash have disbursed the enemies of my peace
 It stands alone
 Amidst the spectral veil
 Of a future yet unspecified
 But glorious in its splendor
 Who among us has seen such glory?
 Is it wise to approach?
 Sin, fetter, craving, desire
 Are all now dust
 My soul rests in peace
 Yet it is alive and moving
 There is only silence in my movement
 For it has utterly departed from me
 Those wretches of despair and atrocious delight
 The sinful vexing has ceased
 And in its absence I feel freedom not remorse
 There is no more wailing
 No more gnashing of teeth
 But quietude and solace
 Happiness fills my heart
 Joy is everpresent and easy
 What has happened to me?
 Is it a wonder of God,
 Or a mere fastidious day of delight?
 All that tormented me to perform

That which hollowed out my soul
 Desires which made my spirit wretched
 Filthy things, all gone
 Quiet is sustained
 Can there be a greater joy than the peace of soul,
 Which comes to me from the ceasing of illicit delight?
 Yet, the oasis is within my sight
 It is within my grasp
 My eyes behold it
 And in their beholding
 They are glad
 They are happy
 They feel joy
 Even though it is not yet something which they
 possess
 But the mere vision of it exalts heavenly flights
 Despair, seek me no more
 I am no longer thy captive
 The Lord is my treasure
 And my love
 Happiness and joy follow me
 Peace and quietude fill me
 No more do your evil thoughts disrupt my affairs
 Nor do they disturb my mind
 The nether regions of my energy fields have become
 stilled
 The final threshing floor of my soul has been nullified
 I AM no more
 I never was
 But I certainly did not know this
 For it was only when I became nothing
 That I began to know what I could become
 And it was only when I became nothing
 That something entered into me

An invisible something
 A substance of no earthly origin
 Only divine
 And again, I AM no more
 But yet, I am becoming
 And in this becoming
 The Lord of Hosts
 Has descended within my vision
 And I remain quiet
 Because there are no words in His presence
 Only silence is appropriate
 For He is holy
 And I am not
 So I wish to seek Him
 And seek myself no more
 My Lord and My God
 Forever and ever
 Amen

It is wise, whence the soul has now the oasis of God within its sight and the portals have let in all the heavenly wonderland can sustain. Within its confines, the captive feels a sense of release not dissimilar to the chains being broken from a prisoner.

In every warfare there is a hopeful victory, and with the Lord, the victory is won when peace enters the horizon of the captives' heart. There is no other Who can captive it.

The Lord, at the very last moment, before all feels lost, shows Himself in a splendid display of glory to the captive spirit. That captive soul knows a new kind of captivity, a captivity of the heart which quells up within it like a roaring ocean of love.

Eternity opens its doors in a rich display of

panoramic bliss, and the captive realizes that there is an entirely greater threshold of love, passion and ecstatic union which can only be grasped once all that is of the earthly nature has been torn asunder and truly ripped apart.

In that rearing, the soul goes back and forth, back and forth. Seeing before it the splendor of the grand heavenly adventure it cannot fathom, but it must go.

Its greatness lies well beyond the captives ability to comprehend or contain, and it knows well it is unequipped for such a task. But it still must go.

And it is in this realization that the captive spirit enters into a peace that comes only from God. Despite the outward manifestations of chaos in its world, the captive is quiet.

The captive is at peace.

An allegory:

“Walking quietly towards the angelic host, the spiritual seeker was quite enthralled with the small little jars filled with water and a small fish-like creature no greater than two inches in length.

Approaching the spiritual seeker with great respect, the angelic host handed one of these small jars to him and said, “This is the beginning of life, my friend. Take this and care for it, for it is very fragile right now. But this small creature that you see will one day grow into a mighty whale. And that whale will conquer the entire ocean.”

The spiritual seeker looked at the small embryonic whale and said to the angel, “What an honor to take care of a fragile life such as this, knowing that it has within it the seeds of such infinite

capacity."

Enamored by the fragile creature, the seeker suddenly panicked and again looked at the angelic host. "But what will I do?" He said. "Certainly you must know that I can care for this fragile creature now, but when it grows to the size of a whale, my house will not be able to contain it. I am not sure that I am prepared for this grandiose task."

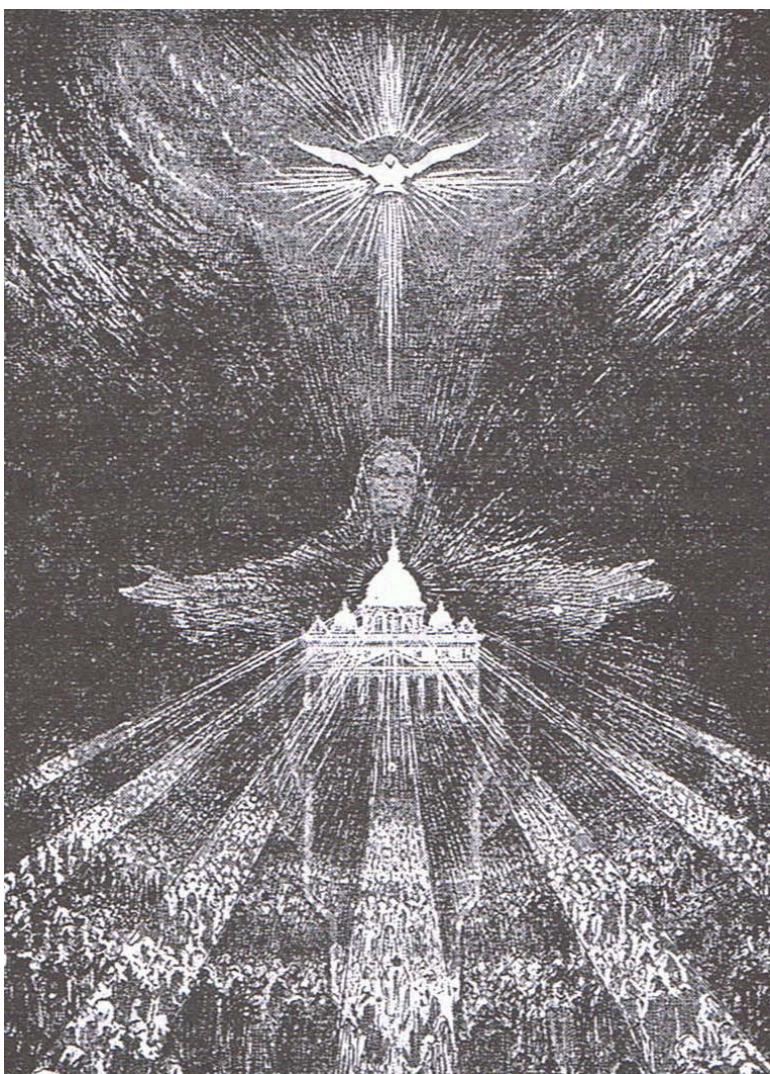
With a smile of knowing, the angelic host replied, "Oh, but it will be then that you will be led to the great ocean of being and shown where to house the whale."

Hesitations vanished, and the seeker took the small and fragile creature. The vision of the great whale which this being would one day become did not leave his vision, but he knew that although he could not yet see the Way, he must follow the Way. Because it would be the Way itself, not anything the seeker might do, which would enlarge the capacity of his homeland."

*"No words remain on the tongue,
But the heart is still filled by words.
The world vanishes,
but God remains.*

*The words of the secrets
that were revealed are now gone,
but their meaning lives on
in the heart."*

The Forbidden Rumi , Translations by Nevit O. Ergin and Will Johnson, Inner Traditions Publishers, 2006



CHAPTER TWELVE

The Lord is Chastising my Will

Lo, what is that up ahead, I see
 If it is not a trailhead looking towards heaven
 For naught else have I traveled the distance
 In my tiny frame, I come upon majesty
 And find that there is nothing else for me to seek
 Upon the earth, the wagings of the flesh
 But amidst the soul, the wagings of the spirit
 Whoa, indeed, to the man who seeks nought but
 himself
 Whoa, not because he cannot find a simple
 contentment in his seeking
 But whoa to him because he has lost all that contains
 everpresence within it
 To the seeker who has gone beyond all earthly
 imaginings
 And has entered upon the tranquil pathway of the
 Lord
 Whoa, also
 For the seeker must allow the chastisements of the
 holy one
 To commend themselves to his making
 Unless the seeker prefer a captivity to the flesh
 Rather than to the great God
 Amidst the spectral temptations
 Comes a silent night within the spiritual sea
 Wherein the great yields of earthly temptations
 Come to naught
 But only the silent whispers listened to in the night
 Bear any worth to the soul
 Begone, temptress of the night

The silent path awaits me
As I linger no more before the world of meaningless
idols
And step before the grand majesty of the Lord of
Hosts
But yeah, there is no more filling
 No more emptying
 My will must be made anew
 Into a creature afresh for the night
 Which shines forth in brilliant splendor
 Its worth in silent nights of seeking
 To the worlds beyond our own
 The Lord must correct it in its failings
 Its past misgivings
 And its own longings
 To bring a highly cherished new fold within
 One that seeks ever new
 To the noble and the chaste
 To the mighty and the weak
 To the simple and the few
 To the many and the great
But yet, in its seeking, a captivity has been laid bare
The captive will of the seeker must be opened for all
 to see it
 So simple and so new
 Are the final words today
 As the silence wields its wounding
 To tear apart all that gnashes teeth
 And make way for the splendor of the light
 To fill it anew and afresh with the fragrance of divine
 will
 To be undone is now my will
 Oh, Lord, undo my will
 And make it anew unto like Your own

For there is no more wounding
 That can cause me pain
 Your wounding has become sweet and precious
 Your words have become simple and true
 My ways must become Your ways, Oh Lord
 My will must become Yours, Oh Lord
 For it was never truly mine
 And whence I thought I owned it
 It was vengeful, wrathful and led me astray
 Chastise my will, Lord
 Make it Your own
 Restore it to its Original splendor
 And destroy whatever else you might find
 That is not of You
 Nothing is my own
 I am your captive spirit, Lord
 And it is my deepest desire
 To remain in the slavery of love for You

The Lord takes the captive spirit within both hands in this stage and begins wringing it out like an old and worn out sponge. It is a vigorous task, but the Lord takes it on mightily as if it is a pleasure doing so.

A soul who seeks enlargement of the Way must also allow the spirit of the Lord to come upon him and begin to tear down what is of the old man and build up again the new.

In order to do this, the captive spirit will be chastised, made aware of all the ills his life has contained and the defilements and sins which have tarnished his previous days.

Because of the mystical captives' newfound desire to please the Lord, these chastisements can be disturbing. It is difficult at this juncture to see, feel,

hear and taste the wounds its own sins have placed upon the Almighty. It's difficult to see our vice in the light of God's holiness. But it must be done if the captive is to become aware of the new man he must become in order to fully captivate the mind and heart of God.

God loves those whom he chastises.

The chastisement is a vehicle for greater redemption of the sinful self.

The captive soul must surrender to this chastisement which may go on for many rounds through the layers upon layers of sin and vice to which the seeker was previously attached. Those attachments are not completely undone, so the will must be rent asunder so that it truly knows the paths wherein it has been previously led astray.

Concise yet thorough, the Lord will begin by taking apart the primary vice of the seeker within its confines. And the Lord will proceed thence to the next greater, the next greater and so on . . . until He has fulfilled the totality of the law in purging the captive seeker of all his attachments to worldly cravings, greeds and lusts.

Unless this is done, the captive spirit cannot progress. The soul must be prepared to do the excruciating and grueling work of self-examination for as long as it takes to earn the right of passage to the other side. A soul cannot cross rightly until he goes through these purgings.

No matter what be borne of this journey, the seeker must look upon it with self-reflective contemplation and a due desire to amend these faults.

Vices are always countered by the practice of the virtues, and the captive spirit must practice the

due diligence of preparing itself to practice the opposing virtues to his previous vices.

“There are seven deadly sins according to the bible: Sloth, Greed, Vanity, Avarice, Gluttony, Lust and Pride. If you are incarnate, you came in with a tendency towards at least one and more likely two or three. Virtue must replace vice, but the desires and cravings that come from vice must naturally amend into the higher thinking that results in virtue: Wisdom, Justice, Temperance, Courage, Faith, Hope and Charity (Love). Forgive and be merciful to all . . . for as Christ said, it is easy to love those that love you, but it is hard to love those that hate you.”

The Mysteries of the Redemption: A Treatise on Out-of-Body Travel and Mysticism, Marilynn Hughes, The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation, 2003

The mystical captive must transform sin through the seeds of the seven virtues, implant them through habitual choice, cultivate them by discernment, and continually grow them through the singular awareness of the captive’s heart.

It is thus, that the seeker remains captive no more to the impulse of habit and vice, but rather, chooses the captivity which gives it peace and joy, the captivity to the will of God.

An allegory:

“The seeker came upon an unusual intersection in his path towards the highest crossings. Up ahead on the thin mountain path lay a stop sign and what appeared to be a simple intersection wherein the seeker must go forward.

But as the seeker approached, he noticed that although it was barely visible from a distance, there

was a hidden precipice.

Thousands of feet down, far below the line of sight went the fall. It was only about ten feet across and twenty feet wide, but it was deeper than the abyss itself.

Very plainly about ten feet across, the path on the other side continued. If you viewed it from a distance without looking closely, you could easily miss the fact that there was indeed an abyss at all between the stop on the one side of the path and the beginning on the other.

Looking around at the various mountainous valleys and the rocks and boulders strewn around, he noticed that there was another way to cross over to the other side which did not present the obstacle of the precipice into the endless abyss. It was a long and hard road which appeared treacherous and exhausting. But within it lay the assurance of a definitive manner in which to cross from this side to the next.

As the seeker pondered these things, a voice called out . . . "Who wants to be a hero and who wants to work?" The Voice said, as suddenly a multitude of seekers appeared on the mountain hold.

Immediately, the seeker realized that those who wanted to be the hero were the ones who wanted to try to leap across the precipice, take the greatest risk and do it primarily so they could say they did regardless of the consequences or whether it served any greater purpose.

Those who wished to work were those who were willing to find the way across through the mountain hollows, valleys, boulders and rocks, so that when they arrived at the other side they could be

certain that they had done so on a firm and solid foundation.

Those who wished to be the heroes were given permission to follow their own way . . . there was no judgment given it. But most of them did not make it across and fell to an unknown fate.

Although it didn't seem like a terrible blow for them to fall, it was looked upon by the Voice as unimpressive.

But those who wished to work . . . were immediately given all of His time and attention because they were following a higher and more fruitful road.

The seeker descended a small hill to a cleft of rocks in the mountainside below. He and the others who wished to work began painstakingly going through the boulders, observing the nature of the crossing and preparing to follow the most suitable path. The trees blew in the wind around them and they observed a plethora of mountain flowers growing at different heights.

They observed the other side with great internal desire to achieve it, but their desire was tempered by the equal desire to achieve it through honest labor and toil . . . to prepare for the journey properly. By so doing, their arrival would be forthright and filled with meaning."

*"O man of longing,
we've put a guide for you
at every crossroad.*

*Be silent.
Don't look for fame.*

*Ride your horse
Into the soul's rose garden instead
I have a rose there waiting for you."*

The Forbidden Rumi , Translations by Nevit O. Ergin and Will Johnson, Inner Traditions Publishers, 2006

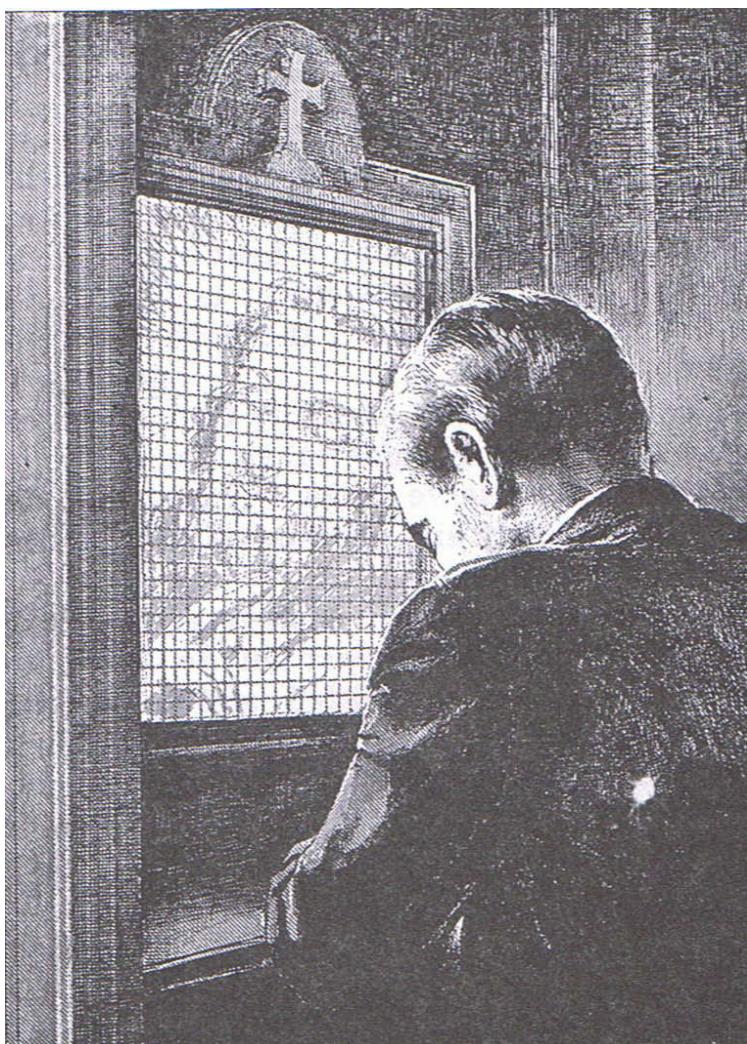
"But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born. And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life. And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost

secret."

Khalil Gibran







CHAPTER THIRTEEN

There is the Need from your Sinful Self

To Confession I went to convey my sins to God
 Angered by my thrust from their grasp
 The evil spirit leaned over my sleeping flesh and
 poured acidic vomit on my neck
 The bees came in swarms which without the force of
 Confession would have destroyed me up front
 Yet, because of it, they were dissolved in light during
 their assault
 The frogs came in droves, but in spirit I fasted and
 they ceased their approach
 The bugs came forward, but the frogs turned against
 them
 And lo, the swarm all disenfranchised
 Losing their grip
 The confession and the scattering
 And the loosening
 Expelled and weakened, they yearn for flesh
 I wish not that they return sevenfold
 A headlight can either blind or illumine
 Make sure re you know which one someone is doing
 The presence of other people can also blind or
 illumine
 Are they looking beyond
 Or do they seek to penetrate your eyes?
 Those who look beyond seek to expand things
 While those who wish to penetrate the eyes of others
 Often carry their own hidden weakness
 The transference of which can be deadly

So, lo . . . be not weary
 Be not weak
 And be ye yet discerning
 Mystical captive set free through the Sacrament
 The Confessional bears its fruit
 The demons are enraged at their disenfranchisement
 Dominion for them has been destroyed
 There is nowhere for them to go
 So I must uphold the Confessional purity
 To keep them away
 They growl and thrust and groan
 But unless dominion is returned
 They cannot come
 My captive heart must remain pure
 My captive mind must remain unsullied
 My captive soul must remain sacramental
 There is nothing I must allow to enter
 but the Lord
 And my sins will remain as white as snow
 But if I return to my former ways
 The demons lurk awaiting
 For wheretofore they have not yet been banished
 To the abysses of hell
 But lie in wait
 For me to repeat it
 I must not
 I am now whole
 And lo, the swarm all disenfranchised
 Let me stay strong
 And let me remain pure
 For the mists envelop me in their forgiveness
 And the peace engulfs me in its strength
 I mount my wings like an eagle
 For flight has been restored

No more can I say that my sins are too much
 For I have given them to God
 Through the Sacrament of Confession
 No more are they mine
 Till grace cease, they cease
 I must stand
 I must be strong
 Repeat those sins, I must not
 And in my weakness, I look everword towards God
 Who cherishes it
 Upholds it
 And sustains it
 And washes it all away
 Blessed be the name of the Lord

As the soul examines itself with great thoroughness, it continues to reveal to itself its unfathomable weaknesses and sins. But despair, it does not, for it seeks the power of the Confessional before a priest and the power of the secret confessions before God.

In these triune gatherings, the seeker knows not what it ought to do except to confess. For by so doing, the latter will be revealed. But not until such things have been destroyed through sacrament will the clarity emerge.

The demons lose their grasp over the soul who confesses before God and man, their dominion is perturbed. Scattered and loosened, they become angry and vicious, vengeful and full of wrath.

But the captive may only giggle at the evil spirits lost prey, for the seeker knows that confession loosens their grasp and they cannot harm them unless they return to their sinful ways.

Oh, and in the weakness of man, this may be ever likely. But the seeker knows that the power of confession will bear it through until the habitual sins have been conquered and the vices of the flesh subdued. For it is meet to repeat the confession all that is necessary, for the graces come pouring down from heaven in a sleigh of delight as they do.

Confession renders the evil spirits impenetrable to their former ward. They no longer bear the attachment to the soul who formerly was held firmly in their grasp. There is no meeting ground, for the bonds of sin have been loosed and the ties of humility have bound the seeker to God.

It is a moment of reckoning for the evil spirits and it causes great anger amongst them. But to whom do we owe this great juxtaposition, but the Lord.

The captive spirit has entered into the sacred mysteries of the Lord by bearing the sacrament of reconciliation upon his back. There are no more bonds for the dark powers to take hold.

Through the deep and indwelling spirit of self-examination the seeker has come to know himself with greater clarity and depth, and has come to know those sins which garnered its rendering.

No more does the seeker wish to be captive to the demonic, but rather to render his soul to the heavenly spectre of God. For what purpose would they wish to hold onto the sins of the past?

At the moment of absolution, the soul gathers his strength and allows himself to be pulled into the eternal peace offered to those who confess their sins. By the power of Confession, they have removed the fetters of the world and the powers of the past to hold them straightaway.

The slate has been widened and made clean before God, and therefore, a new beginning emerges for the captive seeker who now finds himself in a peaceful malaise of melancholy awaiting orders from above.

Who he has been is no more, and who he will become is not yet seen.

Herein lies the power of Confession. The loosening of all evil spirits follows it, and the clarity of a new beginning emerges ripe and fruitful.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.

An allegory:

“A sinful soul went before the Lord to confess years of sins towards lust and other vices. What a great moment this was to the Lord, what a humbling and difficult thing to do to confess to a Catholic Priest the fetters and snares which had kept him away and held him fast to the earth.

Yet upon his cleansing, he felt nothing different. He felt the same. In some respects, he didn’t even feel forgiven. He just felt good that it had been done.

Meanwhile, in the mystical realm, the demons were angered and smitten with hunger and thirst after being thrust in so violent a manner away from their prey.

The highest demon of lust went towards him and threw up acidic vomit on his neck, although he did not see it.

The swarms of bees in the thousands came after him while sleeping, used to being able to devour his flesh without the slightest hint of resistance. Yet, they were dissolved by the grace of Confession, a

light which disintegrated them on sight. Yet the penitent saw and felt nothing, only peace.

The frogs appeared, but as the penitent soul fasted silently from sin in his sleep, they could not approach. But he did not see this.

And the bugs came forward, but the frogs began to eat them because of their unquenched hunger which had arisen from their inability to even approach their former captive. But the captive was peacefully unaware.

In their anger, they lashed out all through the night, while the penitent peacefully slept. In his mind and heart, he felt nothing had changed.

But lo, in the mystical realms, a battle had begun.

Again awaking to his physical world, he found that some very attractive women from his past had contacted him suddenly and out of the blue. He was flattered, and inside he felt a yearning.

But they were from his past, did he not yet know of their alliances? Did he not know that their alliances and his own were now in conflict? Was it not evident that it would be his former wards from hell who had caused the inspiration of such a ruse?

A headlight can either blind or illumine. The people we allow into our lives can also blind or illumine. Do we thoroughly heed the shadow of their alliances? Do we yet know if they carry within them the seeds of virtue or the seeds of vice?

Do their eyes hold the vision of the outward expansion towards the Lord? Or do they seek to implant their own darkness which lies within them into other unknowing hosts? Deftly unaware, of course.

So the demons have already laid their snare, will the captive recognize the lure of former sin, or will the seeker ignore those things which formerly held him to the earth and fall again?

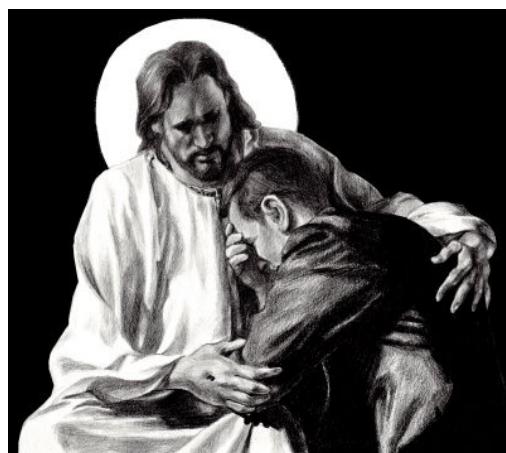
Lo, the seeker still sleeps. In his sleeping, he feels no grand change within himself. Yet, in the mystical realms, the battle has been defined for his soul.

This critical moment (when the captive seeker releases the grasp of the evil spirits upon him by confessing his sins) must not be waylaid by the ignorance of the human mind to quantify the lengths to which the dark side will go to lure him back within their grasp and return sevenfold.

The captive must seek discernment and the quiet patience of wisdom. Do not respond quickly to anything lest it hath been sent by the demon. But be thoughtful . . . and query into all that now comes.

A new life can only begin by the formal and complete recognition of those lures and desires which previously captivated the soul.

The new man will be born in stages . . .





CHAPTER FOURTEEN

They Search for her in the Classic Indigo

The love of the sensual moves and spits
 Plotting wayward heaven's flow
 Annihilation remains at hand
 Yet the innocent crave the continuum
 Beyond the threshold of grace
 The stars murmur their beckon
 And behold the mighty throes
 Of the soul captured
 Finally amidst the deep
 Comes the herald
 But despite all precautionary tales
 The sinner remains such
 And breaks the state of grace so bitterly won
 Thought it seemed that the grand moment had been
 purchased at a price
 It remains so easily lost
 Because in the midst of the spiritual seeker
 Remains the sinner
 The captive soul
 Who has not yet risen above the imperfection of
 human nature
 Or so it seems
 Truly, the sinner now sees
 The permanent nature of its fallen state
 And that there will be many reprieves necessary
 In order to achieve salvation
 Thinking it so easy, the captive forgot
 The weakness of the flesh

And the hardness of every human heart towards God
 His holy ways are high and steep
 Who can reach them?

The seeker realizes its humbleness before the Lord
 The captive becomes aware that sin has not yet truly
 been broken

Mercy will be needful again

Another fall will precipitate another

And every rising again comes with humility

Because the captive seeker now knows from whence
 its power comes

Definitively not of the self

There is no self

The self is powerless to sustain virtue

It is only Christ living within the self which grace
 sustains

And what man walks all his days carrying Christ
 within?

If every break from moral law forces Christ to leave
 We are but captives of our own wretched thoughts
 and desires

Christ desires us

But we desire sin

It is our nature

So we fall to our knees, again and again

In merciful longing, we beg Him to redeem us
 Again and again

For confession is the beginning

Patient endurance is the end

But what does patience imply?

It means the captive soul in a humble display of hard
 won humility

Recognizes that of itself it is nothing

Achieves nothing

Overcomes nothing
But only with Christ abiding within
Can the soul break free from habitual lusts
And even so, only for a time
Because the soul must ever be on the watch
Else they return when he least expects
And enter in unheard and unseen
To rear their ugly head when the soul is in a moment
of weakness
And, lo, so it happens
But the soul falls again to its knees
This falling filled with greater humility than the first
The next falling with greater humility than the second
And so on and so on
Because with every fall the soul empties itself all the
more
And realizes that it has nothing to give
It has no strength to offer
No great wisdom to impart
Nothing to redeem himself or another
Except the knowledge of Christ
Who redeems all
Because of ourselves, we are always nothing
We become nothing
We attain nothing
But when we give ourselves to the Lord
All is possible
So at those moments when we take ourselves away
from Him
And pull ourselves from the virtue of His ways
And fall into the despairing notion of our own
weakness and sin
Again we must turn our gaze upwards
Toward the Lord, Our God

The Christ of mercy
Who bids us to come
Despite our constant and unwavering unworthiness
To fill us up with something grand and spectacular
When we ourselves only offer Him dung
What a God is this?
What mercy does He show to such wretched
weakness?
But yet it is indeed true
He is indeed true
How can it be?
It is inexplicable, unexplainable, unknowable
But Christ waits everytime we fall
And fall and fall again we do
But despite this
No matter the depth of our lawlessness
When we turn a starving glance towards His light
He fills us with Himself
And gathers us as one of His own
Again and again and again
Never are we worthy
Oh, yes, it is that we think so at times
But it is only at our next fall that we realize it is not so
What kind of love is this?
What kind of grace?
Let us never turn away in shame
From the face of the only one who can cleanse our
ever repetitive guilts
Let us never forget that it is only in Him
That we can be new again
And see again from a clean place
That which the Lord wishes from us
Poor, lowly and wretched mystical captives
Seeking to find a God

We can never sustain of our own doing
Yet, He sustains
What is this, what is this grace unquenchable?
I lie on the ground in sorrow for my sinful nature
My wretched state overwhelms and condescends me
to oblivion
I look down because I am so ashamed
The Lord has given me so much
And yet I've offered this foul return
When my tears are quenched, my head again turns
To the only one able to fulfill my longing
The only one who could possibly understand my
lowly condition
And unworthy though I may be
Disgusted and overwhelmed by the capacity of
myself to sin
I enter again into the confessional
And entreat the Lord's forgiveness
And though I shall never be worthy to receive it
He grants absolution . . . again
I accept it
But I reject myself
For I have betrayed myself with foul deeds
In the madness of mediocrity and lowliness I bring
upon myself
I feel horror at my sin
My remorse and contrition mount with every
sacrilege I commit
And finally . . . I feel bad enough to change it again
Oh, how can this be?
I, who though I had traveled a million miles towards
God
Could fall back a billion because of the lure of one
shameful vice

But yet it is
 I am a greater sinner than all the rest
 I have repaid grace with foul dung
 So I must no longer rely on myself
 For it has proven to be foolhardy
 Rely only on Him, now
 Feel that sorrow
 Feel the disgust
 Know its lowliness
 And take the hand of the One
 Who turns darkness into light
 And let Him make this out of your worthless flesh
 Despise your own will
 Glorify only His
 And redeem yourself in His eyes
 By pulling yourself out of it
 Slowly if you must, but as quickly as you can
 But return to the Lord's path
 It is the only Way . . .

For whoever returns to the Lord must expect that a battle will wage within and without as the vices are extinguished with a slow but sure gain. But if ever the seeker develops confidence in himself, remember that his confidence is not well placed. No matter how far the Mystical Captive may travel towards God, it can take but a simple temptation to lower it again to the earth where it must build itself up again and rise against itself.

Never forget that you are a sinner, and as a sinner will you leave this world. Therefore, the battle will wage as long as you live. To combat sin, the captive must battle himself.

When the moment comes that the seeker

becomes too comfortable in his newfound virtue, be afraid. For the evil one is lurking, waiting for the perfect moment to trap him unawares with the simplest of temptations. In years past, it may have been the primary vice. But for many years since, the seeker may have felt very strong against it and held firm and fast against its wiles. Don't forget from whom your strength has come, for it can be withdrawn. Then God will see how well you stand on your own . . .

Once it is, you will again see that it is only by God's grace that the seeker is protected from his own sinfulness. Although the captive may perceive he has made great strides, he had made none.

Everything the captive contains, has been given by the Lord, and therefore, can be again taken away. Be prepared to fight again and again for the crown . . . stand ready in wait against the enemies of the soul who wait patiently as your confidence in your own virtuous nature grows. It becomes the savage undoing of so many an effort.

At the moment you feel the most confidence, humble yourself and thank God for the strength you appear to have for it is not your own. And be aware that evil lies in wait for you, and humility in God is your only defense against the fall.

But if indeed you fall, do not be afraid to reach again and again for the hand of mercy. For it is in humbling yourself and asking for God's forgiveness again and again and again, that you shall receive it.

And the grace to stand against the enemies of your soul which unfortunately come from within your own sinful nature, only comes through the habitual acceptance of this mercy through the

Sacrament of Confession and sincere and upright remorse. The human nature often battles against contrition and remorse, for it fights to preserve its own dignity, its own need.

Feel no shame, feel no regret and care not at all about the way others may see you, captive spirit. You are a sinner and wretched indeed, and if others realize this, it is of no concern to you. You must concern yourself only with the rising again . . . and again . . . and again, however many times are necessary.

God humbles a contrite heart and makes ready the way of the Lord in you who accept this simple human reality. You are but dust, and to dust you shall return. What can dust do by itself lest cover everything with a thick blanket of foolishness?

Confess firmly and humbly, though you may be a repeat offender, for we all need repetitive and habitual grace to truly overcome repetitive and habitual sin. And you must understand that in this life there is no true overcoming, captive spirit. Allow God to enter within to overcome your human weakness through His grace. Of yourself, you will overcome nothing.

We are nothing but captives of sin.

But with God we become captives of grace.

Grace is a gift, it is not inherently your own. You must continually seek to retain it, to nurture it, to advance it and to grasp it. And when it is lost . . . do not be afraid, thou pathetic captive heart, to beg of it again.

For the only thing you must realize in your habitual patterns of faltering, is that all human beings are really the same . . . we are all as nothing before an

almighty and holy God. And what is it for dust to bow before Him and beg the breath of grace so that grace may be lifted up by a sudden whiff of the spiritual wind of the Holy Spirit?

It is nothing, as you are nothing. Dust, be not afraid.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . . think on this.

Ask and you shall receive. Be not afraid to ask and ask again, reminding yourself in those wretched moments when you realize how far you truly fall short of the grace of God, that He did this for wretched humanity of which you are a member.

The only true fool is one who doesn't know his lowliness before God. The only true fool is the one who thinks it possible to be a better man than another

...

But, yet, isn't it the same that we are all fools? Only in our habitual sin do we finally accept that we are less than nothing. In our humanity, we cannot rise above any other man. We are all equally lost, equally unable to accomplish anything of ourselves.

We are lowly indeed.

But God reaches to that lowliness in every single human person. Of such a merciful heart is He!

And He takes that nothing and attempts to form it into something.

Despite how often we fall . . . when we again arise, He again picks up where He left off and raises us again something more. And it is in that grace-filled state, that we realize that the nothing about ourselves has never changed. It is only the 'something' which God added which created those things of eternal value.

So . . . when the years have gone by and you, captive spirit, have remained resolute in your attempt to keep sin far away, do not relax your resilience, do not become weary in your pursuit.

Weariness is the soil where sin can be recultivated. Virtue is not ever won, it is a highly prized grace of infinite value which is given. It does not belong to us.

If that grace be withdrawn, who will you become? How quickly do you foresee a fall? Humble yourself, captive soul. For you are nothing. The something you have become is not your own, and it can be lost with the simple suggestion of sin to your weak and pathetic mind.

Grasp hold of the only hand who can save you: the Lord Jesus Christ . . . and don't forget to NEVER let go.

If perchance you have let go of that beloved hand due to a harsh season within your trials, beg of it again . . . beg of it till your dying breath, captive soul.

No shame should you allow to weary yourself of the return. No humility can be too low to ask of the Lord a return to His grace. There is only one Way . . . you *can* become steadfast again, you *can* become worthy again . . . so boldly walk forward on the promises of the Blood of Christ knowing that Jesus patiently awaits your imminent return. And His arms remain lovingly open to you.

He knows your seasons . . . He anticipates the dangers which lurk upon your path.. Go back, captive spirit. Go back.

And do it again and again as you must . . . for you are nothing of yourself. Do you finally know this

now? Have your repetitive falls assisted your proud spirit to realize its uselessness? Excellent. Now pursue Christ often, knowing that it was He who defined your infinite worth by His death on the cross which redeemed that very same uselessness. There is no shame in being useless. Simply approach God, and He will find a proper use for your captive spirit.

"Joy and sorrow are inseparable. . . together they come and when one sits alone with you: remember that the other is asleep upon your bed."

Khalil Gibran





CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Arise, Stand Back, Step Forth, Captive Soul

Get up, oh weary spirit
 From your oblivion now rise
 No wonder I fear your fruitfulness
 See now, my plight
 The Lord God of Hosts cannot but wonder
 If fruit can be born of such a barren tree
 Oh, mystic captive, do you hear His beckon?
 In my nuance, I've become frightful of life
 All is sin, all is sin
 But yet, there is a balance is there not?
 The crushing weight of my misdeeds had crushed me
 to the very ground
 Now there is nothing else to do but get up
 Get up, again, get up again
 Weary soul,
 You've been emptied of yourself
 And then emptied yet again
 And then beyond this, you were let out in full
 And now you are gone
 Who stands in your place?
 What can we do with emptiness?
 What can we do with void?
 What remains after the soul has given up its power
 And returned it to its maker?
 Nothing
 Emptiness
 Void
 Sans

Cloudeous substance
 Formlessness
 Desirelessness
 Humility
 Well, from this mortal flesh shall form
 An iconoclastic glory
 From the ashes of despair
 Comes the gloriful light of the divine
 In your humility, rise, captive spirit
 Now that you have been emptied
 You can also be filled
 With a substance greater than yourself
 Now that you have removed all the filth
 All that remains is potential
 The Lord may make of you a great work
 Goodness and purity may shine from within
 Truth and vision may form
 And create new realities
 For you to serve
 Not *all* is lost
 Only that which was of no use
 Smile, captive spirit
 In your degradation, you have opened the way for
 light to enter
 And where light can form
 So can goodness and good will
 Arise, stand back, step forth, captive soul
 The Lord is now ready to begin . . .
 Your life is not over, it has just begun

In the spiraling pathway of the spirit as it falters, the mystical captive falls down and reaches the epiphany of self-knowledge. The Lord patiently waits upon the soul which is emptying itself of its

weaknesses. And the Lord waits until the soul has uttered its last breath of reconciliation and breathes forth its nothingness as its final throes to the earth.

And then the Lord shows His presence . . .

Because it is in the emptying that a vessel of worth may be eventually formed. A good work is in progress, a potential servant is in gestation waiting to be born.

And the Lord prepares the great work of the restoration of the soul, so that it may now be filled. All that was of no use has been quenched, and in the empty spaces the Lord will begin to pour living water.

Prepare, as well, I say, for the work of the Lord is much and the requirements are great. In order to keep up with His promptings, you must be alert.

Prepare yourself, oh weary soul, for the Lord is not yet done with you. Let Him make of you now a great work.

"But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born, And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life, And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret . . . Work is love made visible."

Khalil Gibran



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Forgetting

The following has begun to cease
 The forgetting has begun to erode
 Away memories of past misdeeds and ill thoughts
 My troth is to tread lightly upon my spirit right now
 For it is sensitive and wounded
 But the deeds of yesterday must be forgotten
 So that the potential of tomorrow can be grasped
 Those who walked sin's path with me
 Now either walk with me a new way or have become
 a part of the forgetting
 So much grief fills my days
 As I let go of the former ways of my past
 And beyond that, those I have loved who no longer
 walk vision's way
 It is a peaceful yet turbulent time
 There is a resignation to that which must be
 That resides at yet the same time
 With a gut-wrenching grief that will not let go
 All that was
 Must be forgotten
 Those I've loved
 I must now lose
 Not permanently, but for now
 Because in order to walk forward
 I must release some of the fetters which bind me
 My captivity to sin
 Has surrounded me with barriers to the divine
 It is difficult to enter the forgetting
 The grief over what I've done overwhelms
 And the sorrow over those who are walking away

engulfs my spirit
For they do not yet know
The significance of the moment
But yet, because I do
I must persevere
Forgetting
Unlearning
Regressing
Letting go
But yet the weight of oblivion now forms me
And nothing else encumbers me but my own sinful
nature
No one else is to blame
Only I
But there are some who will not pass through this
door with me
And for them, beloved, I grieve so deeply
The tearing of my soul can be heard in whispering
winds of the spiritual desert
Why does it have to be this way?
Only because we are releasing a former master
In order to accept the new Master
The sins which ruled me
Can rule no more
And the passions which fueled my loves
Can be no more
For my new Master is divine
And benevolent in word and deed
But to reach Him, I must release all that holds me to
my former ways
The forgetting
Is a cruel death
But a death it is
Oh, captive spirit

The peaceful calm which overtakes the soul after its latest fall from grace can be nothing less than grueling. It is a mixed peace. Some moments are filled with quiet resignation to that which must be done in walking away from so many sinful proclivities of the past. And others are filled with sorrow.

But in order to be of use to the Lord, the soul must be ready to follow the path of service which the Lord lays out for him. And in preparing the way to do such a service, the captive spirit must begin to let go and forget all of its past cognitions into sinful strands of thinking.

A crossroads of sorts, the soul has one foot in both worlds, so to speak. Aching and longing for that which must be left behind, but knowing that which lies ahead is far superior. There is no more time for the capitulation of vice, or the holding on to those things which no longer serve him.

But it is no less a death to the captive soul than a true death itself. During the process, the captive soul not only fights his own inclinations towards evil and sin, but must accept that many of those that he has loved throughout his life shall be falling by the wayside. He sees this and knows it, although they may or may not see it coming. It is the natural result of the movement which has begun.

The grief is sometimes unbearable. The void is oftentimes so empty that it hurts. And the quivering fear of letting so much go in order to reach that something higher is everpresent, although deeply veiled by the calm exterior resolve of the mystical captive to do what he must.

But it is not possible to be of service to the Lord unless the spirit gives up all such hindrances to its

path.

This quiet resignation is filled with interior mourning and weeping. The valley of tears becomes a haven for sorrow.

But yet the captives' exterior remains calm. The internal turmoil and turbulence is being disciplined through the external will. Do not let the external peace and tranquility deceive you. Interiorly, the soul is grieving.

But the forgetting must begin. For a soul cannot be of service to the Lord unless at some juncture after contrition has been raised and reconciliation achieved the contrite spirit walk forward and make an interior amendment to forget his past sins. He must do this to walk forward into the divine life which is being prepared for him. And although it is not a conscious choice to let go of some who have walked spirits pathway with the captive, it happens anyway as a result of the movement. The spiritual wind forces things to merge and forces others to part. Merging and parting, all the while continuing to forget.

But the captive knows its import, and as a result, will tremble interiorly in grief.

Grieving that which must be lost in order to restore that which has been lost, the mystical captive renders captive his own will. And in so doing, makes the possibility of the achievement of his destiny now possible.

For to love God is to serve God. There is no mystical pathway without service. The seeker must prepare to receive his instructions for the journey, and his abiding call from God to serve the spirit of mankind in whatsoever way God so willeth and

chooseth.

Such service may be visible or invisible to mankind. For service to mankind is achieved on many levels of existence, many realms of spirit. Some will be called to visible service in the world, others may be called as invisible ambassadors in the front lines of the spiritual realms. But there will be service given, for it is the nature of the mystical path that every seeker must render service to creation in return for the service given to him. Thy will be done. Forgetting . . . forgetting . . . letting it all go.

"I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke and I saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy."

Khalil Gibran





CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

In the Quiet

The quivering pine needles surround the heart like a
 prickly goad

You stand still but yet your heart still aches
 The spirit has quieted, but the heart still weeps
 Quietly, without a sound
 Because it must be so

For the Lord has taken me captive again
 In a perpendicular manner, I walk alongside myself
 Watching and observing as if I were none
 But I see the fetters and the sins
 And they coalesce me to respond
 My response is the quiet itself
 Sound has stilled
 Actions have ceased
 Tears have run dry
 Chaos has become peace
 But the prickling has not yet finished
 I feel it yet once in a while

As my spirit revolts against the process emerging
 from within
 Is there an answer?
 Oh, yes, there is

But the answer is frightening and difficult to bear
 For I must surrender my will entirely to the Lord
 And give up all of my own longing
 “The highest path, Lord, the highest path.” I say
 And He responds by creating yet another chaos all
 around me
 Yet unexpected, but needful
 So I quiet myself as the Lord begins the mighty work

Of ordering my life according to His will
 Everything will change
 And in a sense, all will stay the same
 How can this be?
 It just is

As the soul lets go of the habitual fetters and sins which have instigated the plight of the many falls, the seeker realizes that all of these loud, chaotic cravings must cease. In order for the spirit to move forward, he must enter into a quiet place.

Exteriorly quiet, but yet still interiorly feeling the occasionally pricking of the pain of all that he is losing, the soul realizes that there is no other way to move through this phase of the captivity than to surrender entirely to the working of God within the soul.

A continual prayer must be upon the mystical captive's lips, "Your highest will for me, Oh Lord, I choose Your highest will for me." And this comes about because of the obvious realization that the choices the seeker has made of his own will have not succeeded in achieving for him the greatest good.

And so in surrendering the spirit to this greater will, the captive must be quiet. And he must remain still as the world around him shifts and moves in a manner befitting this highest holy will of the Lord.

Many of these changes are painful, and the soul feels the internal heart yearn for that which it is losing. And many of these changes are unexpected, sometimes being directly contrary to the will of the seeker, and it can cause great anxiety and trepidation. Sometimes the very thing you least want to remain in your life will be that which the Lord chooses as a

portion of your highest path.

This can be disconcerting to say the least. That which is most beloved by the captive spirit may be sent away by the movement and that which is most despised pulled in closer by the very same.

Anguish can overcome the quiet soul, but the spirit seeking will say not a word. For the mysterious holy will of God is manifesting itself before its very eyes.

Who would show such ingratitude as to complain of such a necessary and needful process? But yet, the pain sears within the heart.

But the highest path for your individual soul is rarely that which you would choose for yourself. And so the seeker must remain quiet. Be quiet, be still, the Lord is moving.

But in this quiet, there is an internal noise, almost a wailing of sorts yet it is never heard. For the captive seeker now realizes that he must retain his composure and quietude and allow the Lord to work no matter how difficult or painful the reordering of his life might become.

There is a great irony in this moment of the spiritual walk. At the time when it seems that God requires of us a sacrifice of all that is dear to us, we are yet incapable of seeing that He is simply reordering things for His greater good.

And whence the time comes that he has chastised our will and ordered our life in such a way as to bring things into proper perspective and understanding, He will yet again bring back all that we have lost. But it will return to us only when we see it through entirely new eyes.

For the fetters and cravings we lose, when they

return will appear as mere nuances of a different shade. And those persons, family and friends, who for now appear to have been ripped from our lives will return at another time when our own personal disputations no longer affect our view of them. When they do affect such a return, we will see them through an eye of love rather than self-interest.

It is the human nature to see things incorrectly, and this nature must be pruned, bent and grown differently. For it is meet that the captive spirit realizes not only his own captivity, but the many different captivities of those others upon this earth. By so doing, compassion is formed and understanding can emerge onto the fertile soil of the spirit's painful quest.

It is at the moment when compassion truly emerges in the captive soul that the Lord will truly begin the greater work within him. For until such a time, despite the true and sincere belief of the seeker that he indeed follows a sincere spiritual path, it is as yet impossible to do so because the focus on the self and in the fulfillment of that self's own needs still carries the highest part of the animal soul. Needful as this may be, it creates a desperate need within the captive soul. That desperate need is always trying to fulfill itself, and oftentimes may only do so through sin.

It is when that horrific battle between the self and itself comes to the point of quiet, that the soul becomes still enough to have the profound realization that this constant battle with the sensual appetites and the order of the flesh is not needful, and truly not necessary. Until this time, these things in truth do seem to be necessary and worthy pursuits.

But when quiet descends upon this captive spirit, it stills itself and stops moving. The chaotic turmoil of the karmic path ceases for a time. And in its ceasing, the seeker begins to unravel the misperceptions of eternal truth and the true nature of love that he has held which have caused this rampant turmoil.

Interestingly, once this ceasing has begun there is also a certain detachment from worldly things that although it has been forming for a time becomes more concrete in this moment. And as this silence concretizes, the seeker can now look around him from the quiet place he now occupies and observe the constant 'running' and the 'bumping into one another's realities' of the karmic world and see the pointlessness of it. For a time, it seems almost pneumotic, mesmerizing and hypnotizing to watch for the captive realizes that up until this moment when quiet has overtaken him, he was caught up in this crazymaking behavior, but yet, it had not seemed at all crazymaking to him whence he was captured within it.

This pause forces the captive seeker to reflect on the reality of the nature of the mortal realms, the worlds where the battles between good and evil constantly rage within and without every human soul. That constant circular movement which renders very little result truly is to be understood as the common nature of those who occupy such realms.

But in the quiet, the captive realizes another captivity. The captivity of that which remains still. To the karmic traveler, such stillness might be regarded as a 'waste of time' or as something that yields no fruit. But yet, as the captive silently sits in the quiet

heart of God, he knows a greater understanding. He captures a greater truth.

It is the quiet and the stillness which form things which then become capable of bearing the true fruits of the spirit. The meandering and wandering of the physical life appears to contain within it purpose, and it does. But in the quiet, the seeker knows that it is only in the quiet that wisdom can descend, that knowledge can emerge and that goodness can act. Without the knowledge of the silence, the seeker is want to know the will of God. And if the movements sought in the world of noise are not filled with the knowledge of the true will of God, than they serve no purpose.

And the seeker waits, stilling himself all the more. Slowly the internal grieving begins to cease. The quiet becomes a deeper quiet, and the noise gets further and further away.

The seeker has nothing to say, nothing to do, nothing to be, nothing to know. He remains still.

And there is no more pain, no more doing, no more striving, no more reaching . . .

And this goes on for a great while for the captive spirit. In this quiet place, the captive soul feels entranced by the wondrous union with that which is and is to come. In his inactivity, the great activity slowly begins.

Suddenly . . . when the captive seeker least expects it, in his apparent idleness, the Lord descends. Knowledge begins to form in the greater movement and travels towards him.

In his activitylessness, the greatest activity begins to occur. In his silence, the most beautiful sound forms of itself within him and all around. In

his quiet, the most majestic calm fills his senses. In his lack of grieving, joy comes to fill him in great raptures from the Holy Spirit.

And the knowledge continues to descend. Energetic transfers of things seen and unseen come to him without the slightest effort. And now the captive soul has entered into the mystical spheres of schooling wherein he learns the knowledge of eternal merit and is gradually initiated into the schools of the mystical instrument.

And to where will this lead? To destiny, of course. And whether that destiny will bring the seeker back to the earth to fulfill a task of importance there, or into higher and higher mystical realms to fulfill work of significance in the invisible spheres, the seeker has come upon the truest path. And the hand of the Lord Himself now teaches him.

And it is in this effortless state of quiet that such activity begins to take place. There is great knowledge in this.

But in case the captive seeker is tempted to think that all the steps taken before that led to his arrival in such a sublime and wonderful world were unnecessary or pointless, think not such things: For there was the necessity of the purging, of the removal of the earthly garment and the fetters and cravings which were of the garment. There is step left unturned to the mystical captive.

But yet the captivity has brought the soul to a very different place. And pondering the wonders of this new world the seeker has embarked upon, he no longer questions the difficulties which preceded them. Though it still appears he has given up much, because he does not yet know that the Lord fulfills all

things, he understands why this was of necessity to do so at this time.

But yet it is indeed important to understand that the Lord does fulfill all things. As the captive is lifted away from the things of the world, not only his habitual sins but sometimes family and friends, the Lord has already mapped out the manner in which all of these things will be fulfilled. Some will be fulfilled in this world, others in the next.

But you see, the captive often believes at this juncture that he has been removed from such things because they would hold him back from the sacred journey. And this is indeed so, but not for the reasons he believes.

The captive has been removed from them because he does not yet truly know them. He is yet incapable of honoring such things with the humility required of him. Therefore, because of his inappropriate response to such elements, they will indeed hold him back. But he is not held back by their existence, or because he has yet gone higher than they. He is held back by his own misunderstandings, and thus, the Lord withdraws him from them in order to intensify his learning and make the final fulfillment a potential possibility.

So do not be tempted to arrogance, captive spirit, you are withheld because of your own lacking not the lacking of others.

At the same time, captive soul, do not accuse yourself for these lacking elements, as well. For it is meet that you acquire these elements, and the void of them is not a weakness on your part, but yet a simple fact of evolution.

The mystical captive is no more a captive to the

world than he is to God. He chooses captivity because by doing so, the evolution within stirs and loosens. Captivity provides movement for a soul otherwise caught in the strands of time, circling and circling around the same guideposts.

Captivity, dear seeker, is the only true freedom. If you are to seek the kingdom of God, you must surrender your own will to the Lord of Hosts. The prayer on your lips must yearn for the highest will of God in your life. "I wish to seek the highest path in my life, Lord, the highest path. No matter what that requires or extracts of me . . . "

God will extract everything.

But when much has been extracted, the quiet will descend. Enjoy this peaceful serenity of the Lord, for it will not last forever. We are but instruments in His hands and as the quiet bears its fruit and destiny descends, the next order of affairs will be waiting.

The only constant of the eternal is change, and the only constant of the mystical captive is the very self-same.

"This meeting and this union, which the loving spirit achieves in God and possesses without means, must take place in the essential intuition, deeply hidden from our understanding; unless it be an effective understanding according to the way of simplicity. In the fruition of this unity we shall rest evermore, above ourselves and above all things. From this unity, all gifts, both natural and supernatural, flow forth."

The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage, John of Ruysbroeck, Chapter LIX, Ibis Press, 2005



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Echoes of Discernment

All comes back to fruition
 Or does it not
 The creature lies beside Creator scorned
 As holiness descends through the vibrational thrust
 Discernment emerges naturally of its own accord
 Spirit lifted like a winged bird
 The knowledge of good and evil naturally amends
 The identification of its own vice accords
 And changes occur without forethought or activity
 This is the nature of mystical training
 For to achieve the same effect without mystical
 intercourse
 Would be futile and unfruitful
 There is a difference between knowing, seeing and
 understanding
 Of the intellectual capacity
 And the knowing, seeing and understanding
 Which emerges from a state of being
 An ordinary person will do things
 While the doing for a mystical captive
 Will emerge from his own state of being
 As the vibrations of the spirit increase within the soul
 The mystical captive becomes naturally aware of
 greater realities
 And moral law descends upon him without study
 Vibration holds the key then to knowledge
 And the mystical seeker begins to understand
 That there is now knowledge that is truly just
 intellectual
 It must be grasped from the energetic knowledge

Which emerges naturally as the seeker evolves higher
and is raised

So he must continue to raise
In order to not only understand but embrace with an
interior understanding moral law

Even so, he may falter

But he must travel this way

For the other road carries many pitfalls
And the seeker if more likely to lose ground without
intending

Whereas the captive who allows God's spirit to form
him

Will mold according to God's will
And the faltering is less likely because the knowledge
is not outside of himself but inward

He becomes that

It, in essence, is now who he is

And no one can grasp this

Lest they follow the mystical instruction
And the pathway which takes a soul higher

Through vibrational thrusts

Knowledge is not information

It is energy

And in order to understand the higher laws

We must become them in our essence

Know these words, and keep them true

For they are the key to your unfoldment

The mystical captive enters into the quiet from a natural state of chaos, but he will exit it in a peaceful place of knowledge. Entering into the quiet places after a great deal of inner turmoil fighting against his own sinful nature, the seeker attains to quietude through two means; sheer exhaustion and an act of

God.

It is as though the sinner is fighting with himself, wrestling with his own spirit when he comes upon that peaceful valley. The sheer exhaustion of this internal warfare almost of its own accord forces the spirit to cease. But it is truly through the sheer act of the will of God that a soul purely enters into quiet therein. The Lord knows the precise moment when the spirit is ready to cease and brings it upon him through the impetus of the Holy Spirit.

As the quiet descends and the chaos moves further and further away, the spirit begins to enter into the process wherein the vibrations of his soul are raised accordingly bit by bit, day by day. And this is done as a mystical process which remains twofold.

Firstly, the soul will be taken through specific vibrational raisings wherein the soul will feel its vibration being raised much like an engine being revved for hours at a time. Much later in the path, the soul will still undergo vibrational attunements, but whence the vibration has reached a certain level, these experiences will change in substance and nature according to the level of evolution of the mystical captive.

Secondly, the soul will be instructed accordingly through mystical visions. These visions will vary from highly symbolic renderings of things he must know, to very clear battles between himself and the vices he holds dear.

With the two processes working together, the soul slowly but quite naturally ascends to a place wherein the will is very carefully formed. The seeker develops a heightened sense of sin, and no longer wishes to offend the Almighty God.

But despite this newly formed will, the seeker will find that he still remains captive to his sinful nature and that in order to overcome it, he will be required to exercise and discipline his will to a much greater degree.

The practice of spiritual reading becomes all the more necessary at this time, preferably texts which define and illumine the way of virtue to the soul, for this reading becomes a very formidable opponent to the enemy of the spirit as it then reconfirms and strengthens the will and resolve from the conscious waking side of the captive to cease committing sin.

In the quiet, the captive spirit learns the wisdom of serenity and the fertile ground it presents to the seeker to attain to higher spiritual vistas. The previous chaos, the infighting and the battle within its own self was of necessity, to be certain. But the soul must reach a place of serenity in order to take the vital steps to changing the dynamic of the karmic thrusts and sinful clinging which ignite the chaotic nature of most earthbound souls.

The quiet provides the reflective enzyme which almost of itself removes fetters and clinging, sins and vices. Because the nature of sin is chaos, and the nature of eternal things is peace, the soul must enter into that quiet peace to actually begin to 'throw off' that which is incompatible to it. And thereby, the sins and vices of the seeker do begin to naturally fall off of themselves due to the silence achieved entirely of its own. But the instruction which also accompanies this phase, as well as, the physical construct of the vibrational structure . . . finalizes this very important phase in the captive seeker's journey.

But all of the mechanisms which operate during this time of quiet tend to bring the soul to an even greater quiet, a more deeply reflective quality. The wrestling ceases, and there is a peaceful acceptance of the changes which emerge in the soul. And I state 'emerge' because they truly do emerge.

The soul naturally amends . . .

And this becomes the nature of the discernment within the mystical captive. Quietly, his vibrations are raised and he sees the nature of his own action and inaction and his spirit willingly bends according to the will of God without fight, argument or battle.

At this point in his journey, the demons have a much harder time reaching the captive spirit because he fights no more. He forms and becomes without effort. So the demons will take a different twist at this time . . . and this is where the seeker must truly practice the discernment necessary in order not to be casually dissuaded from the true service of God, to the service of the other unfortunates.

The demons will begin subtle trickery, such as subtle suggestions to the will as the seeker is drifting off to or out of sleep. Mystical captive, heed well. Listen to those words you hear and bring them to consciousness. If they are evil, they have come from evil. You must renounce them as Jesus renounced Peter by saying, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' Such a move disarms the demonic forces and their suggestions.

But such things will go so far as to provide false visions presenting suggestions or advice as if it be from God with just enough truth to make it seem so. The soul at this time must practice the

discernment of the spirits with all of these visions, demanding that the spirit reveal whether or not he works for Jesus Christ, the Lord. Demons are not allowed to lie. They can evade, mind you, but they cannot lie. If they cannot answer you with the clear and definitive 'I do,' then they are not of God.

There are many questions you may ask, "Do you come here on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ?," "Did Our Lord Jesus send you to instruct me?" "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that He came down from heaven, became man and died for our sins?" And you should definitively utilize the biblical discernment of the spirits from John 3:16, which states "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life." And to understand fully what the Lord is saying in this passage, you must read further, from John 3:17- 21, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in Him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because He has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come towards the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that His works may be clearly seen as done in God." (New American Bible, St. Joseph Edition)

This passage of the scripture is known as the biblical discernment of spirits and the specific

question directed to the spirits would be “Has Jesus Christ come in the flesh?” Only a true spirit of God can answer this with a positive affirmation, false spirits will answer with nebulous arrays and formulations around the truth.

Some will simply disappear and vanish, others will cower in shame, some will try to deceive with an other than concise answer or partial truth and partial falsehood. Beware, seeker to discern the spirits wisely, so as not to be deceived.

Be diligent for the Lord and His angels will reward such diligence. They will not tire of your questioning, but the demonic forces indeed will. This is because the forces of the Lord honor a seeking spirit who demonstrates the wisdom to discern who is speaking to them, and will be greatly edified if you indeed do question them. Those of the dark side know that once you begin the questioning, if you are paying attention, they are doomed. So they admit defeat quickly, or say something obtuse or nebulous to try your intelligence, but then turn to go or disappear.

Do never forget, oh mystical captive, that those who attempt falsehoods against the Lord will come disguised as angels of light, priests, deceased relatives, Jesus, Mary and all manner of things which can appear good on the surface. Only through the discernment of the spirits can you assuredly proceed. If they are not of the Lord, cast them away as quickly as you can for they will do you more harm in one visit by confusing your mind and will than a good spirit could do good in one hundred visits.

Never entertain demons unawares . . .

*“But my justice shall remain forever and my
salvation, for all generations.”*

Isaiah 51:8, New American Bible, Old Testament



CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Scattering

Let it not be said
 That the soul is one
 Until it has achieved essential unity
 Until such a time as this
 It entertains the scattering of souls
 Which is so reminiscent of the human state of being
 After the quiet has descended and all appears well
 The nightmares begin
 But these nightmares are not of those things which
 are real
 They may have been real at one time
 But they lurk within the subconscious mind of the
 soul
 Until the etchings of their past echoes
 Are no longer heard within
 So they begin to shout
 And disturb the quiet and peace of the mystic
 And attain to distract the soul's journey
 No matter
 They are but reminiscences
 And thwarted pasts
 Potential futures? Yes, some
 But their origin is in fear
 So the seeker alludes to their disturbance
 Thy capture the essence of that which affrights them
 But they are only projections of possibilities
 Possibilities that may or may not ever be
 And the mystical captive must break them down
 Tear them apart
 And bring them out of the future and the past

Centering them inside the now
 There is no other way
 If the mystical captive remains captive to its own fears
 It cannot progress forward
 And there is much to be feared in mortal existence
 Much of it may come true
 But heralding the uncertainty of the mortal life
 Yields no result
 The seeker must firmly oppose
 The past and the future
 By adhering only to the present moment
 And by so doing, and letting go of all that disturbs his
 peace
 The captive attains to yet another level of freedom
 And is again able to receive of the laughter of God
 And the simplicity of the spirit
 No guarantees exist for us in the mortal life
 We are born and yet shall we all die
 And yet so many cling to their happiness in this
 world
 As if it defines their joy in the next
 Happiness in mortal realms is fleeting
 And when it arises is a gift
 But it will pass again
 For such is the nature of mortal realms
 But the joy to be attained in the next life is eternal
 Therefore, the clinging to the possibilities in this
 world must cease
 In order for the mystical captive to recapture his quiet
 And if hardship shall be, it shall be
 And ye shall deal with it on the day of its reckoning
 But wander in your fears no more
 For they are tackling your silence
 And adhering to your thoughts

Holding you in a vice grip of terror
 When no soul may project their manner of living or
 death in perpetuity
 The seeker must accept his powerlessness
 Mortal life is fleeting
 The happiness of the world is fleeting
 Let the seeker embrace that which is not known
 It is not for the seeker to know
 All that you fear may indeed come true someday
 And yet it may not
 The nightmarish projections of the turmoil within
 Are only this
 Grasp nothing
 Hold onto nothing
 The past is dead, the future does not yet exist and it is
 only in the present moment that the mystical captive
 may act
 Embrace that which has passed
 Embrace that which will be
 But look only to the present moment
 So that your seeking may be sure
 And the Lord of Hosts may be your eternal reward

At a period least expected within the quiet, the soul will find itself again disturbed by the internal rumblings of a new variety. Nightmarish reminiscences of the past or the future begin to taunt the seeker in his sleep as his subconscious mind begins to come to terms with all that has been and the ramifications as to that which may come to pass (as a result of that which has already been) in the future.

This causes a great deal of anxiety and anguish to the mystical captive, because the seeker can become obsessed with wondering, "Is this how it will

all end? Is this how it is going to be?" And the concern is warranted because the captive soul cannot be yet sure if these resurgences into the traumatic past, or the meanderings into the potential future, are prophetic or merely nightmares.

Although it is not always possible to know, usually the prophetic word of that which is to come has a certain quality and feeling which it carries which makes it an undeniable understanding. Nightmarish plundering into potential futures are more often scattered, unclear and filled with a great deal of discomfort.

This happens at this time because the seeker has not yet completely forsaken his worldly clinging and his attachment to the outcome of his own life which remains dear to him. He holds to it as if it is a definition of who he is or will become. The seeker believes that if circumstances in his physical waking reality were not to come to a certain end which appears good and true, that perhaps his quest has been for naught and he would then have failed in his quest for God.

This is a completely false view. No matter the circumstances given to a mystical captive in life, the Lord is not seeking a perfect outcome in a physical construct. He seeks within the captive a quality of spirit; a diligence, a truthfulness and a faithfulness to God . . . within the confines of the circumstances in which he may be placed. The Lord seeks an eternal response to a worldly reality. God wishes our faithfulness, not success as Mother Teresa often stated.

The mystical captive must not believe or expect that their newfound relationship with the Lord

demands of Him any change in the circumstances of his life. Although it may yet happen, because the Lord moves in mysterious ways; prosperity, health or well-being is not the purpose nor the goal of the spiritual life.

In seeking only God, the captive must embrace the will of the divine in all things and the manner of life in which he has been placed.

Success in the spiritual life has no bearing on the reality or nature of mortal realms. Suffering is inevitable in such worlds, but not necessarily in others.

Place no merit or demerit on the external circumstances in which your soul has found itself. And do not do so with others, as well.

A mystical captive cannot be envisioned by external means, only energetic. Only God knows the true heart of a man. It remains invisible to the mortal mind.

Why is this such an important thing to understand? It is because the mystical captives' fears are not unfounded. The nightmares come to them because of two reasons, because suffering has already come upon them in this life and because the soul is aware of suffering which may yet come because of circumstances which remain yet unresolved in his life.

Ironically, these fears are generated only by that which the soul already knows. Unexpected outcomes are not a part of the subconscious equation in the scattering.

A whole plethora of circumstances which remain yet unknown to the mystical captive which could come upon the seeker, both that of good and

that of evil, will not even be included in these nightmarish journeys of the seeker.

So the subconscious generation of the potential future is so partially formed that its rendering is full of holes and empty spaces.

In this realization, it is hopeful that the captive may seek to accept the pointlessness of such worry and fear.

What will be, will be . . . the seeker must look closely at the nightmares which plague him at this time and carefully observe their reality and non-reality. Some of these nightmares and fears manifest because they have already happened. Others manifest because of what appear to be the most logical outcomes of circumstances already in place. But all remains undefined.

These projections cause the scattering . . . the soul splits itself out into many potentials which, because of their uncertain nature, have no meaning. This process of the mind simply serves to scatter the focus of the mystical captive.

The only remedy at this time is to release attachment to how your life will play out and focus on God alone. This focus will produce movement.

No other focus can return unity to the scattered spirit. And the unity is required in order for the mystical captive to move forward.

Focusing on the fears of that which may come in the mortal life causes the scattering. Accepting that suffering is inevitable but the present moment alone carries within it the power of response allows the captive spirit to return his eyes to God.

The scattering then ceases and the spirit turns away from its subconscious fears. The nightmares

cease their emergence and the laughter of God replaces them. For the fears which had emerged were empty and devoid of reality.

“One single word uttered by him (God) to the ear of the soul is more instructive than all the discourses of men. The least little breath of grace wafts our ship more speedily on its course, and makes it arrive more surely and speedily into harbor than all our oars, sails and sculls . . . Keep in this state: the interior silence of respect and submission alone, kept humbly in the presence of God if he does not command us to act, will sanctify our energies, soften our anxieties and pacify our troubles, and that in one moment. Remain in this state of unity and simplicity; multiplicity throws the mind into trouble and confusion, scatters and disorders our powers without our being able to perceive it.”

Abandonment to Divine Providence: With Letters of Father De Caussade on the Practice of Self Abandonment, Fr. Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J., From his letters, Ignatius Press, 2011

“Sooner or later, we must all die. But when? And under what circumstances? On these points we are left in complete ignorance. God, the absolute Master of life and death, has reserved to Himself the knowledge of the day and the hour. Speaking generally, He shares His secret with no one. Many of the greatest saints did not know the time appointed for their exit, or only learned it towards the end of their lives. Thirty or forty years before his death, St. Alphonsus declared that his last hour was at hand. Blessed ignorance, which obliges us to be always prepared and stimulates without pause our spiritual activity! We should therefore accept this incertitude

with submission, even with gratitude."

Holy Abandonment, Rt. Rev. Dom Vitalis Lehodey, O.C.R., Tan Books, 1934

"When the heart is full of affection for worldly objects, it has no room for the love of God, and the more attached it is to earth, the less can divine love reign in it."

St. Alphonsus de Liguori



CHAPTER TWENTY

Holy Laughter

The office of ghosts
 Disguises, illusions, imaginings
 Are all undone in the holy laughter
 It comes upon you in the night
 When the Lord breaks the chalice of delusions
 With a whimsical flair
 All that we look upon in our world
 All that seems so serious
 It is now broken
 There is a rift in the veil
 The drama of life's unfolding
 Becomes a comedy
 A hilarious affair, really
 All of God's creation is united in holy laughter
 The angels, the beasts of the field, the creatures of the
 earth
 No more worry heralds the soul
 For the seeker has entered into a frugal detachment
 The seams of human drama are no more
 But whence is the mystical captive
 Awww, he is hysterically laughing
 His worries are no more
 His spirit is held captive only to the holy laughter
 which has taken hold of his soul

An allegory:

"In the mystical realms, the seeker has been
 pulled into a primordial sphere. The mystical captive
 looks upon the creatures of the earth before him and

finds that he feels nothing but perpetual joy. The faces of the birds, the deer, the mice, the cows, the ducks, the pigs, the horses, the sheep, the squirrels and other innumerable creatures are all in union with the mystical captive and a seamless communication which travels from the captive seeker to the animal kingdom and trails to the very mind of God above them.

Words are exchanged, but they are inexplicable. As of yet, they are not felt as the deeply profound. For whence heard, the animals and the mystical captive alike laugh uncontrollably. The seeker finds this holy laughter pleasing and freeing. For the words of them, he cannot recall, even moments after their hearing. But the holy laughter brings him and all the creatures of the earth to holy detachment as they share an uncontrollable folly together in this mystical malaise.

This giddy exchange brings about a healthy detachment from worldly concerns.

The seamless laughter falls upon the captive almost as a release from the dramatic worries of the previous epochs.

And in the holy laughter, the seeker realizes nothing. Because in the holy laughter all human worry is reduced to nothing. The illusory nature of the world of form is felt on a profound level at this time. There is no more . . . at least for now.

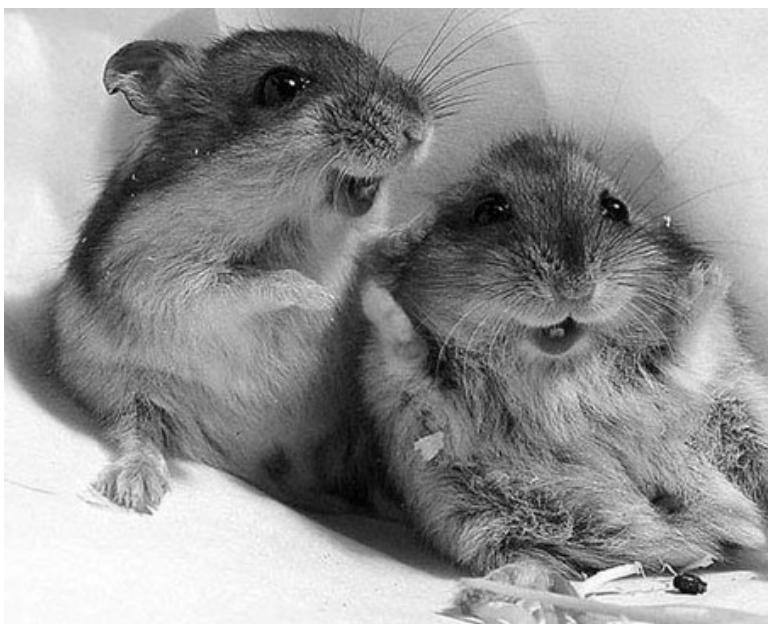
The captive allows himself to fall into the holy laughter for as long as the Lord allows, as he sees the creatures of the earth sharing with him the holy detachment from human folly in a hilarity only made more so by the vision of the creatures themselves in

hysterical laughter. So odd, but yet at this moment, so adorably real.

Laugh, captive spirit, laugh. For the hilarity will lift you up and out from worldly cares which consume you. And the holy laughter, if only for a moment, will encourage you to envision the true folly of the majority of human concern.

This world is but a shadow . . . we are but a shadow people. Isn't that hilarious? Even the animal kingdom is in on the mysterious heavenly ruse?



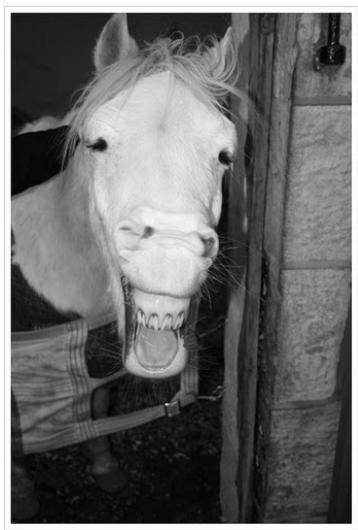






Hopa, ro!







CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

The Grand Awakening

Awareness breaks out of the mystical malaise of the soul

The hilarity and laughter has borne understanding
And the illusions and darkness dispel

Suddenly, the mystical captive stands in the light
And sees darkness no more

It's all been a ruse, a play, a dream

And now before the seeker the dream has been
broken

There is no more sorrow, sadness or fear

The soul has found the redemption is at hand
Of what else could he see that could capture his
imaginings

The veil has been lifted

And there is no more despair

The sinner has been forgiven

The contrite has seen mercy in its wake

The repentant captive is now faced with the glory of
the Father

And the glory of the Son

And the glory of the angelic kingdom

For they all stand illumined before him

There are no more walls to break down

The mystical captive has broken through the captivity
of the earth

And entered into the heavenly realms

Could his bliss be more pronounced?

Or his joy more complete?

I think not

The wonder of God's creation is opened for him to

understand

The energy of that which evolves within the universal
 sphere of consciousness
 Has now been awakened

There is a light which beckons
 And it holds the seeker transfixed

But yet in joyful abandon as it follows the beckons of
 the angelic hierarchy to come and see

The brilliance and sensical structure of the world of
 the spirits is before him
 It all makes sense now

There is not difficulty in grasping the ruse

There is a delusion that is necessary below the veil
 Which is lifted to the repentant and contrite heart
 When the Lord so deigns the timing to be right
 Sometimes it is a visual experience of mystical
 proportions

Otherwise, it can be a moment of understanding
 which comes upon the captive on earth

But suddenly, a greater plan is now known to them
 Not in words or in deed
 But in energy it is suddenly grasped
 It is laid out before them
 And it all makes brilliant sense
 The Lord God is mighty indeed
 And wondrous are His works

Before him stand the fruits of the redemption
 The illustrious nature of evolution in progress
 Delusions have all ceased

While the beauty of the master plan is revealed
 Who among us could have known
 The grandeur of our God

And the splendid reality of His ever and all
 consuming plan for humankind

It is drastically beautiful in its splendor
In its display, the love of all unity is glorified
There is order and meaning behind every human
suffering
There are grand evolutionary leaps behind every
human error
And there is a grand schema of redemption beyond
all our worldly cares
Oh, my God, if I had only known
What would I have done?
To see such marvelous works as these
I can only excuse the joy which peaks from my every
spiritual sense at the witness of such a spectacle
My Lord, my God
You are and ever will be
Amen

An allegory:

The mystical captive has been freed of his fetters and flies to a wondrous space in the midst of the galactic heavens. How wondrous is this place? How beautiful to be seen? How musical to be heard? The sleeping souls of the captive earthlings lie in wait as the angelic hierarchy tend to their sub-conscious needs. It is all in perfect order. There is no disorder here, despite the varying degrees of perfection attained by various spirits of the earthly delusion in mortal realms.

As the captive spirit follows the angelic hosts in their joyous task of assisting evolution within the interior minds of humankind, he realizes how perfect the order of existence is ordered. Beyond this, he feels energetically within himself the grand panorama of

existence in upper and lower worlds, and realizes the grand perfection of the plan of salvation.

All will eventually come to light, all will eventually come to fruition. The beauty of it transcends the eye of the mystical captive, his joy cannot be confounded as he participates not only in his own illumination, but that of others, in conjunction with the angelic witnesses to the conscious rendering of sub-conscious astral souls seeking to find their Lord.

As the soul reaches beyond his own wretched unworthiness, he realizes that the Lord God of hosts has loved him all along. Wow, splendid mercy! How is this possible that all the while the spirit has been discovering his own weaknesses and failings, and searing himself into the pit of self loathing and despair, that the Lord has been quietly and calmly through the agents of His celestial kingdom simply been bringing him ever closer to His divine mercy.

Partaking of the cup of this divine mercy has produced such a splendid vision of the great plan of God, as the mystical captive awakens and sees beyond the grand illusion of life and enters into a humble reckoning with the evolutionary process which discovers mankind.

Oh, how be it so intricate and yet so sensical? It is a perfect plan of the almighty God and the mystical captive realizes in this infinite moment that he was a part of this master plan all along.

Yet, when he felt alone and withered, the Lord patiently made adjustments within the seekers own soul to yield it up to Him in its eventuality. What a grand and loving God have we!

As the joyous uprising of the love and mercy of all creation towards its own offspring emerges within the spiritual understanding of the mystical captive, he finds himself also emerging into a new and greater being. Not of himself, mind you, but of God.

It is because of the glorious gift that creation gives unto itself that every soul can eventually yield himself to the Most High. How perfect and how contrite, in our mourning and weeping we were preparing for perfect joy.

God knows that through the pain we will find eternity, and there, all that we will find is beyond human understanding. It can only be contained within the seeker energetically, and it is encompassed within the grand schema of evolutionary redemption to all within the human schema reaching towards the all holy and loving God.

There is nothing that is absent or missing. All that can happen in a mortal realm, all manner of evil which can calumniate the heart of mankind . . . has a remedy. There is no one beyond the mysterious and merciful reach of Our Saviour.

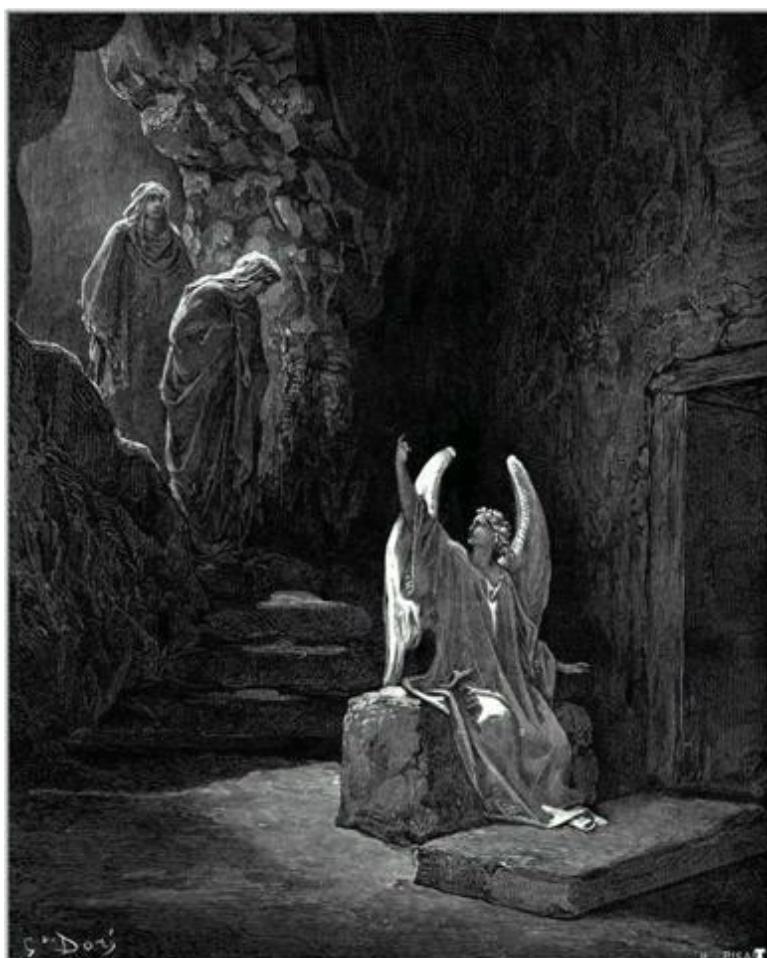
The mystical captive shouts out to the souls of those still lingering in illusions grasp, "Mercy, my dear brothers, it is mercy." The greatest attribute of our God is mercy. How wondrous a thing is this? Keep reaching, friend, be patient in your sleeping. For the Lord has His eyes upon you, and knows exactly how He will bring you out of your silent suffering and into the grand light of knowledge.

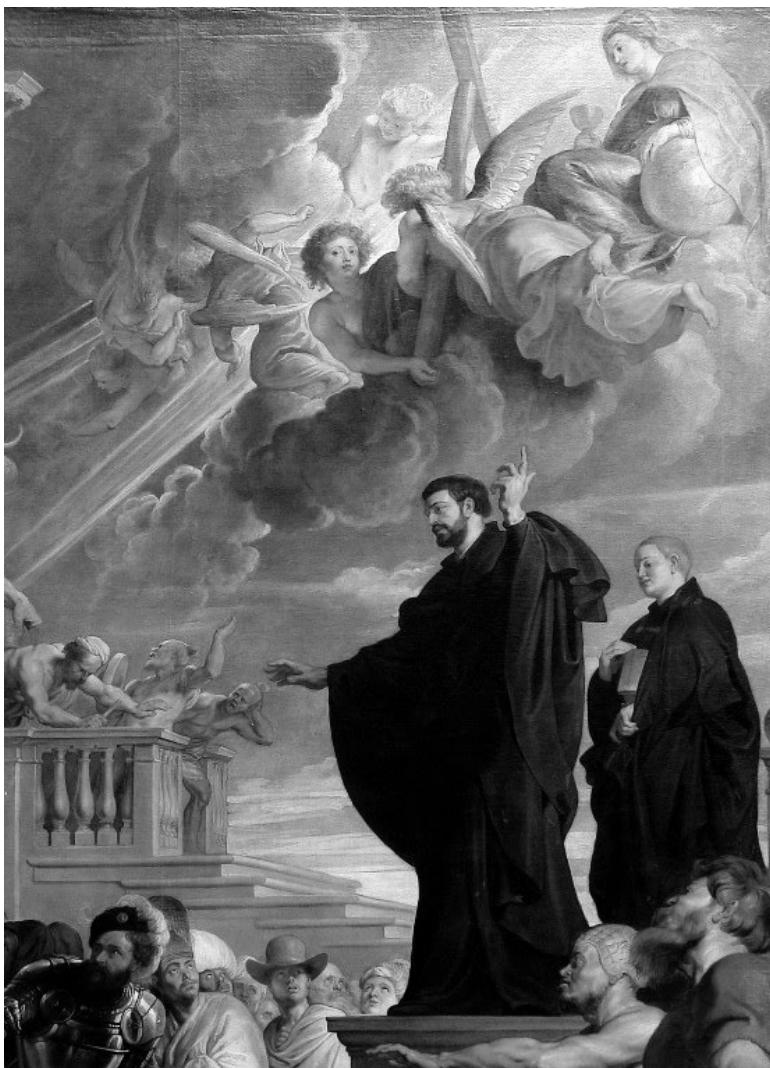
"When I consider the infinite value of your present trials I dare not wish them to cease . . . With this disposition, and by making good use of crosses and

afflictions, you will advance your eternal interests more rapidly than you would by consolations and success."

Abandonment to Divine Providence: With Letters of Father De Caussade on the Practice of Self Abandonment, Fr. Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J., From his letters, Ignatius Press, 2011







CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

Predilection and Penetration

And the predilection begins
 Inside the yearning deep
 As the soul has been marked with the sign of Christ
 And taken as His own
 The internal structures within begin to change
 Nothing is quite the same
 Yet a struggle is amiss
 Because in the world of flesh
 Temptations remain
 But nothing can compare to the supreme beauty of
 the Lord
 A soul, though, recognizes that for now they live in
 the world
 And this union between God and man will be fleeting
 and hard to maintain
 Not because of its difficulty
 But because of the great chasm between this world
 and the heavenly kingdoms
 Who can know the Lord in one moment
 And let Him go in the next
 The reverie remains and the predilection has been
 planted
 Of course, the preference of the all-holy God has
 already been established
 The mystical captive knows such moments with his
 beloved will remain fleeting
 And his strength will have to be firm if he is to live in
 this world from the nectar of the far regions
 But the predilection indeed has been made
 There is no other choice

However, the seeker knows that predilection is not enough

The preference for God contains within it grave responsibilities

The newness of the seeker's own creation makes him wary

Not of God's power, but of his own weakness

And so with that predilection the seeker must begin to penetrate into the mystery

Taking the eyes inward, they become fluid and able to see through myriads of realms

In their fluidity, they begin to enter into the mysteries of how this must perchance come to pass

The mystical captive has attained to a new level of captivity

And it is a captivity of the soul to the wonders of the great Lord God

The spheres

The whirling planets

The nebulae

The stars

The suns

The moons

The glittering euphoria of a moment beyond time

In the presence of the spaces

The shiny resplendence of the world of freedom which can only be attained through the discipline of inner captivity to God

The realms of light and love which must be sought out with fervor and devotion

Like a lark who sings all day and all night

Like a mist that envelops everything in a forest

Like the waters which envelop and swallow up worlds

Like the soul thirsty for what it knows not
 But the mystical captive knows what it seeks
 It has beheld the face of the Lord
 And been declared welcome
 There really is no turning back
 For those who do will forever regret such a misstep in
 their earthly walk
 Yea, those the pleasures of the world contain within
 them some longing
 The longing to know God is supremely more
 powerful in most human seekers
 Nothing else will suffice
 And they will follow that call to penetrate into God's
 mysteries
 Rather than toil endlessly to fulfill unquenchable
 thirst with worldly pleasure
 For those who walk away, often return
 And those who remain stilled not knowing from
 whence to go from here
 Eventually discover it
 But those who grasp hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and
 take Him at His word
 Will cry day and night for His mighty help until it
 comes
 And the seeker may cross the next threshold
 "Is there anyone who can show me the way?"
 The mystical captive shouts in a flurry of desire to
 penetrate the mystery of the beloved
 And he cries day and night until he be heard
 He longs to see the face of His Lord
 To find himself quenched by the memory
 . . . unless or until
 The Lord so deigns
 And when He does so

The seeker is released from the captivity of longing
 And returned to the bridal chamber of love
 Of what else might the seeker wish"
 For the journey now takes a new hold
 A new beginning
 For the predilection has been established
 But the penetration into the mystery has just begun

And so the mystical captive recognizes that there is nothing else which will suffice for his spiritual journey than the Lord God Himself. In this realization and understanding is both joy and grave concern. Because the seeker knows that being in the presence of God may likely be a transitory thing. He must live on the moments of grace wherein He is able to feel, see or know the Lord while he lives within the slumbering confines of earthly limitations.

In between such moments of grace, temptations will present themselves, perhaps not as violently.

The mystical captive at this point is like a baby in his mother's arms, still very dependent upon the physical caresses of the Lord. The seeker is likely to go through periods of withdrawal when the fantastic flights to heaven cease for a time, or divine touches go further and farther between. Often, the seeker will wonder over and over again if he has fallen out of the grace of God.

But this is a normal progression. Fantastic and profound visions can be followed by long periods of absolutely nothing wherein the mystical captive is held tight in the world of the physical, with only the memory of the impenetrable realms still locked tight in the memory.

During these times, the seeker must be captive to spiritual exercises, spiritual reading, prayer, meditation and the religious observances of his own faith. These are the actions which allow the predilection to become a penetration over time. That which was impenetrable will become penetrable through strict practice.

It is a time of stillness and waiting . . . waiting in faithful love of God. For He has not gone, He just withdraws. And this withdrawing is a necessary part of strengthening the mystical captive spiritually within both the physical and mystical realms.





CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

The Penetrating Eye of God

The heart is an attached fury
 Hundreds of roses
 Walls of flowers
 Walls of flowers
 It is an ethical dilemma
 Of systemic proportion
 Who among us knows the fire
 Of forgetfulness
 And woe
 Regardless of past circumstances
 What is it in the now
 Towards Whom must we progress?
 Towards what truth must the soul grasp?
 Is there a greater light?
 A longing from the Creator above
 To bring us into ever greater enclosure
 Within His wisdom and love?
 Or is it a trap of endless proportion
 The wide berth of dismay and poverty of soul
 Who knows the answer?
 For the moment all remains mute
 Darkness is dominant in the soul
 It is not a darkness of woe and consternation
 But rather a darkness of quiet
 It is not yet time
 And the answers have yet to be revealed
 From the world of the dead to the world of the living
 There is an embrace
 For there is a greater glory in that world
 One that cannot be fully grasped within this one

For who among us can dare say we know
The workings of the One True God?
Who among us would dare say that we could even
comprehend it if it were borne to us
Upon the flight of an energetic thrust?
The Lord of Hosts has turned out the lights
It is nighttime
But one of peace
In the quiet, nothing is spoken
Only the canticles of glory which are richly embued
with the golden words of Christ
His words remain in the heart
But the heart is empty of knowledge
Wisdom is no more
Understanding has been lost
But somehow it is a time of birth
Perhaps a glance beyond
Into the eternity of God's majesty
Perhaps beyond that even a glimmer of hope
That there will be light at the end of the darkness
But there is only silence
No one knows the way
The seeker has been abandoned by all earthly
comforts
Friends and enemies alike have withdrawn
The mystical captive is alone
In this aloneness lies some grand knowledge to be
gained
That is for certain
But beyond that, the captive is captive now to himself
His own views, his own understanding
God descends only to those who wait
The energy of His knowledge can only be birthed
through pain

Nothing is borne without effort
 But it is a different kind of effort that is exercised in
 gestation
 For the effort is solitary and without movement
 Effortlessness is practiced
 And without this, there can be no birth
 When a child is born, there is indeed effort
 But it is a stillness, a surrender
 To the greater power which creates
 A mother bears the pain of birth
 But does not bring upon birth
 It comes of itself when God so deigns
 A mother cannot form her child
 She can only receive it and retreat into the silence
 required to allow Creation to work the miracle of life
 through her body
 But as of herself, she does nothing more than remain
 still and receive
 The Lord of Hosts has turned out the lights
 It is all darkness
 There is no light
 The mystical captive walks quietly and very slowly
 Only the silent can walk forward
 For there is no direction given
 The void of knowledgelessness is a lonely road
 But only by traveling its watery berth may the captive
 come closer
 Where are you, Lord?
 Are you traveling within the bosom of my pain?
 Does my error and sinfulness take you to flight?
 Or does it draw you towards me because of Your
 impenetrable mercy
 The creature who seeks You cannot but captivate
 Your heart

I know this about you, Lord
 And as I take one step at a time
 While the darkness seems to enfold me all the more
 I again take another step
 Because I know You, Lord
 My walk is not in darkness
 It appears to be so in my endless oblivion
 But my heart tells me otherwise
 You await me with confidence
 Your breath pulls me forward towards Your will
 You draw me ever outward towards your
 everpresence
 And the knowledge you wish to impart is within my
 grasp
 But it does not belong to me
 It is only mine to seek, but yours to know
 It is only mine to look towards
 But yours to enact
 Your ways, Oh Lord, are mysterious
 And your mysteries, Lord, draw me closer still
 It is in your mystery
 That the mystical captive becomes free
 But it is also in your mystery, Lord
 That the seeker may find what is true
 But it is the mystery itself
 Which remains forever unrevealed in its totality
 For there is no mystery greater than the Lord God
 And His ways are unknowable to the small human
 mind
 Even the spirit can only comprehend but a few
 And in this momentary weakness, when the Lord
 descends
 Accept within it the inexplicable renderings of God's
 holy ways

Mystery is the land the mystical captive travels
And mystery reveals only that which of itself it deigns
 to be of benefit to the soul

Mystical Captive, make a reckoning within yourself
 to mystery

Else you'll find the road to God becomes unseen
 To those who cannot seek it, it is invisible
To those who must know mystery, it slowly lights a
 path

Hundreds of roses
 Walls of flowers
 Walls of flowers

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."

Albert Einstein





CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

He Robs Us of the Security of Our Previous Beliefs

Where are all the Lost Souls going?
Following their caskets like a beacon in the night
Do they not know the all-holy lies within?
Even amidst the world of the dying
There is fearsome ignorance
Where are all the Lost Souls going?
Attached to their caskets as if to their previous life
To whom should they call
And whence shall they do so?
Why do they all flurry to such a thing that is no longer?
What is it that holds them fast to death?
It is the illusion of their lives to which they cling
And they hover aimlessly about the world following

their casket
Take the casket away
Let go of your casket, Mystical Captive
 Let it go
 And find mystery
Until you let go of your self-perceived identity
 You remain glued to the casket of death
You look in the mirror and it looks back with a face
 that is not your own
But deep within it lies the depth of the questions you
 face
 Because many have faced the same questions
 centuries before you
And the ides of time speak to you of your sincere
 aloneness
 And yet your continual communion
With the annals of the human race and its seeking
 Only God can reason with you at this time
 And reasoning is not His means
 But mirroring yet is
 As you gaze within that falsely held view
You see that you have held yourself and others in
 false lights
 What is true?
 What is actually real?
What are the minutest expressions of the self?
 Delusions and illusions
 The light of truth speaks of glory
 The pawn of wisdom knows no gain
The humble gratitude of a servant has nothing to give
 Yet gives from that nothingness anyway
 In the heart of every soul is a wound
 And that wound must be tended
 It is only seen through the mirror

And that mirror possesses the ability to travel
through time
And engage the soul in a discourse with others who
faced similar wounds
Those wounds then gather together into sensical
wonder
And glorious streamings of faith
And the truth comes streaming at us in a storming
terror
As it robs us of the security and foundation of our
previous beliefs
There is no matter
For it must be this way
God cannot endure illusions
He rather gathers to Himself those who wish to know
And in the milestone of the soul's yearning
Comes the herald of that which must be
And the image that the mystical captive may see
Shows the origin of the captivity to worldly views
And the origin of false views of oneself
For again it is only true that we are born freely of
God's will
And that there are no reasons that a creature built
upon such a foundation
Can find within itself unworthiness in the eyes of its
Creator
God created the seeker to know
And yet he did not know
But now he sees
And realizes his own infinite capacities
And his own infinite worth
The illusions which held it back in self-doubt
Have meandered through the mirror of time
As images of distant pasts mirrored similar morose

dreams
But if a soul be born of God
Where can the defect be?
Only in the understanding, I say
For God loves His creation
And wholeness becomes possible when the mystical
captive
Realizes that this birthright is his own
The redeeming power of the blood of Christ
Redeems all, not just some
And within this lies a solitary compliance
And peace





CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

Vision of the Royal Bridegroom

To gaze upon the beloved in the warmth of the divine
 There He stood all arrayed in light
 A picture of certain perfection
 His lips like honey
 His skin like dew
 To Whom do I owe this honor?
 To Whom do I owe this refuge?
 The sparkle of Your hair possesses moondrops
 The whisper of the wind utters Your name
 For You are the Lord of all
 Not only my Lord
 A glimpse of the bridegroom
 So regal
 So fair
 Who am I to see Your face, O Lord
 May I love you with all my being
 If my being is so lowly and small?
 Your presence awes me and fills me with love
 No one can know this, but You and I
 But yet . . . our unity is shared by all who come to this
 portal
 To announce Your perfection would only be
 misunderstood
 It is known only to those who see
 And to those of faith don't see but yet understand
 Understanding comes with a glimpse
 And then wisdom may be foretold
 No one grasps Your mercy and love
 For whoever does not know you grasps justice
 And this indeed is of your holy essence

But to know You, Lord, is to know mercy and love
which knows no bounds

I have been a pot in your hands
And You have removed many defects so that I may
hold water

Even so, my vessel is so small in comparison now to
Your grandeur

But I see the wisdom of my surrender to You
And I fall in a vaster surrender

For my beloved bridegroom has been forming me of
His own hands

“You belong to me,” He says
And his hands are the portal to perfection

I submit to Your holy ordinances

And I submit to Your wondrous and mysterious will

You are the blood sacrifice that fulfills all our
longings

You are needful and true
I bend and sway to Your work within

For You are the holy potter
And I a simple vessel

But as I gaze upon Your infinite perfection
I submit to Your mysterious way

For I now know to whence it leads

And all my journeying have borne great fruit
All my wretchedness was merely an obstacle

And You removed my faults and cravings with great
care

As I swam in the waters of despair
You were bringing me closer to the shore

As I fell into the pit of disunion
You gently led my soul closer to Thee

Who am I, Lord, to gain such a favor?
No one, I am sure

Yet You love me
 And You love and guide all who will submit to the
 quiet captivity of the heart
 And bring them home to You
 Even those who know not to submit
 You mysteriously caress
 You are wondrous indeed
 Almighty Lord and Saviour
 And I love you.

An allegory:

"As the cloudeous mystical pathway parts, the mystical captive is alerted to the need to run in a fury towards the unknown guest awaiting him at another mystical shore amidst the realm. The freedom of the spirit is so vast and light that the spirit becomes aware of not only itself, but the actual physical body which remains in the earthly realm, as the two become united in a sense of vibration that engenders warmth through the spirit, soul and the physical vessel like a warm caress of light. The love within the heat which flows is felt as peace, the vibration as a soothing.

Who among us can count the glories involved in this higher mystical sphere. So many troubles, heartaches and renderings of fetters, cravings and sins it took to arrive, and yet, in this arrival the grand awakening to all that lies within the grasp of every soul confounds the seeker with its light and beauty.

Joy is the only word which can adequately describe this state of being for the mystical captive. His captivity is now a joy, and to remain bound to that which has heralded such beauty and malaise is

now seen as a great promise of the Lord.

For who would not prefer such a captivity to the former captivity of sin and vice, and the separate self which came as a result?

In this fantastical realm of ecstatic joy, the mystical captive feels freer than he has ever been, and yet he knows that he remains subject to the Lord of the realm and His dominion. His ordinances are holy and just.

The captive seeker now grasps within himself the grand reckoning which must come of every soul who remains within the bonds of self-will, if he is to ever reach such a joyous reunion with the Almighty God who created free will. And within the confines of free will He contained and echoed out to humanity the laws and commandments which would gather them up to Him.

But those who chose self-will believing in the delusion of their own omnipotent free will to choose, could never know true freedom. For the truest freedom lay here in this joyous realm which is attained by throwing off the will of the self, identifying and recognizing those fetters, cravings and sins of which the soul lay hold, and diligently going through the purificatory process to change, alter and remove them to a higher purpose.

And to whence does that mythical journey lead? To freedom . . . ahhh, the sweet freedom of the Lord in His wisdom and the sweet indolence of surrendering to His will.

In a gown of white, the mystical captive continues running through the realm feeling no sense of captivity to tiredness or fatigue; only a soulful longing for the unknown reward which awaits him at

the end of his rushing journey.

And thence it is . . . suddenly, he stops. The captive looks upon the most great beauty and has nothing to say.

Before Him lies the beloved, the bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. Sitting on a golden throne, wearing a garment of blood red and a deep stunning purple, the golden crown on his head is only made more intriguing by the halo above it. The golden halo which looks very much like those in old religious paintings, hovers gently above the golden crown. But it is not still.

The halo is in constant motion, a swirling motion that revolves around the head of the Lord Jesus Christ and returns to the crown again and again like a swirling mist of divine omnipotence.

Turning his head slightly towards the captive, the great King's lips contain both a smile and a serious tone. "You belong to me." He says.

Nodding and staring at the Lord Jesus, the great King of Kings, in pleasure, the captive acknowledges within himself that there is nothing more stunningly beautiful than the object of his attention at this time. He Who is love, the creator of the universe, has glanced his way.

Their eyes meet and the Lord's eyes fill the mystical captive with both a joy unimaginable and an intensity which implies the serious nature of this journey.

The captive stares, the Lord Jesus says nothing more. His words were clear and succinct. It is finished. The Lord Jesus turns away as the clouds come in quickly to cover the portal through which He had been witnessed.

The mystical captive stares silently in awe, as the ethereal winds come to return him to his earthly homeland. When the seeker returns to his body, he finds that warmth rushes through it and an unusual and soothing vibration hums within. He revels in this gift for many hours, until the momentary grace is lifted.







CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

The End has no Beginning and the Beginning has no End

The beginningless forever
Wanders the spirit realm

“A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me.”

Khalil Gibran

The Mystical Captive

By Marilynn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

<http://outofbodytravel.org>

Author, Marilynn Hughes

THE MYSTICAL CAPTIVE - The Mystical Captive attempts to lay out a comprehensive Mystical Theology based on the mystical experiences and studies of Marilynn Hughes. With the simple premise that a soul which has been taken captive by the fiery love of God will undergo a series of expected and vital processes in its journey to ever widening union with God, 'The Mystical Captive' sets out to ease the journey and make it more meaningful, understandable and easy to follow as the different stages erupt in the life of the captive.

Being captive insinuates to some extent that there is no choice in the matter which is precisely the point. Once a soul is taken captive by God, their lives will never be the same. Prepare then, to enter into the bridal chamber of the Lord for once it begins, the journey will never end. You will become a captive heart.

<http://outofbodytravel.org>

The Mystical Freeborn

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The Mystical Freeborn

INTRODUCTION

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Oh, my Jesus, you have summoned me from the heart of your throne filled with the glory and splendor of the Son of God and the glory of majesty which accompanies your ever splendorous works.

For you, I come in obedience, as I have shed off the captive heart of the seeker who wishes to know you, but to remain tethered to the earth. Let me be born freely now into your true and holy Presence, Oh King of my heart, and allow me to savour in the divine riches of your grace and will.

I have known will, Lord, my own will . . . and it held me captive to the world in an array of sinful lusts. And now that you have rescued me from the pit of despair, and raised me up like an angel . . . I can no longer resist your love.

Who would love a simple human being like this, a fleshly creature enmeshed in its own sin and vice? Only the Lord God of creation would deign to lower Himself to save a captive spirit born of the world struggling to find the Way.

In my agony, you sent your angels . . . two bright and white-winged angels on each side and in their company the most innocent of cherubs flying in the center. And they lifted my spirit up out of the mire of the world and into the heavens. Your mighty Presence is all I now seek.

Please let my seeking bear fruit, Lord, and love me with the love of a Father towards a disobedient son. I have come to beg of your mercy, Father; I have come now to serve. Make me a worthy vessel.

“Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance wherever I am.
Fill my heart with your Spirit and your life.
Penetrate my being and take such hold of me that my life becomes a radiation of your own life
Give your light through me and remain in me in such a way that every soul I come in contact with can feel your presence in me
May people not see me, but see you in me.
Remain in me, so that I shine with your light, and may others be illuminated by my light.
All light will come from you, Oh Jesus.
Not even the smallest ray of light will be mine. You will illuminate others through me.
Place on my lips your greatest praise, illuminating others around me.
May I preach you with actions more than with words, with the example of my actions, with the visible light of the love that comes from you to my heart. Amen.”

(Daily Prayer of the Missionaries of Charity Written by Cardinal Newman)



CHAPTER ONE

To Love is to Take a Savage Road

Where goest thou, tethered monk
 Do you seek the light of your freedom?
 Words by this many of your treasures escape
 You are supposed to be a Christian yet you direct me
 from a shallow force
 It is not about your own strength
 If you hand yourself over to God, he provides the
 grace and strength
 I refuse to accept the alternative
 Be careful not to get too close to people who validate
 your former points of view
 They can lead you astray
 Would you rather have forceable past or a forceable
 future
 God will provide all the grace you need
 Don't let them try to steal your song
 For the music is what keeps the soul living
 I will see you in heaven no matter what it takes
 I passed away and the truth and honesty passed away
 with me
 The golden wand of love has wounded me mortally
 The mythic panorama
 Somewhere in the shroud of silence
 There are parallels amongst the stars
 Wilting transgressions eaten by worms
 Nearness gains exposure to the wind
 Righteous indignation writhes you not
 Another vanishing
 Before the wave of another wish, and you're there

The five leaf clover appears to condone that which is
to come

Satan appears and recites again and again “Just
another whore, just another whore . . .”

But my gaze distorts his arrogance as I remind him
that God created perfect sexuality

And it was good

And it was beautiful

It was Satan himself who brought distorted sexuality
into the world

“You are the whore, Satan . . . you are the whore.

It is only you who could take something beautiful and
distort it in the minds of men into something profane
and evil.”

He looks down

“Get out!”

And the putting to sleep of the karmic self begins
Isn’t it ironic how it is the small things that take us
down

So the reader may think such things to be extreme
But the Lord says, “It is your purpose to write things
that most people think is too extreme.”

How else will they begin to truly think

St. Rita gathers her things and heads over the church
of the martyrs

And then she sends over the holy relics to aid me
“Love you forever

Be forever brave,” she says.

As my words become Catholic and Universal
It begins raining

I have learned that it is only by forgiving that you can
bask in the glories of friendship

Let the Titanic sink, no choreography is needed

The fading glory of that which was can no longer be
maintained

Let your history be drained from your spirit

Let it be a clean slate

I am being forced to kill each of my bodies by some
unseen force

The bodies of sin that have plagued me all my life

My fugitive journey

Someone was praying for me

Another was eyeing for me

To destroy

But prayer is more powerful

And it caused me to stretch

But the father approached and shouted, "My son, my
son, why did you kill my son?"

"Dear brother, I have only killed the son of
destruction

By realizing the nature of his frailty within me

Who wanders the spirit realm?

Adding the secondary outer

To that which has been restored?

Accept the Divine Release.

Allow the Phoenix to arise

And place yourself within the purple cave which
draws it all out."

A pause in space and time.

A faraway look.

"I love you enough to serve your soul even if it makes
you hate me."

Religion shows us the true canvas of our friends

Humiliation not being the root or core of that
trueness

It's not okay to leave things as they are

The Sacred Heart calls us within itself

And there our souls are purified
Don't get caught up in manure
But take your soul to the waters of life
Expect the spirit to rebel
Expect your loved ones to deface
But seal yourself in the protection of God
Telling the truth of the past can no longer serve you
For the future can only be born in the dew of the
morning
The constant fear of having your vices taken away
And the constant fear of them remaining within view
Is there no end to the turmoil of the stricken soul?
Sign no invoice for sin
Do not give that which belongs to one
To another
It would seem to imply that there may be someone
else who takes front and center on knowing what is
beginning
Look at those you love
Look at your treasures
Do you not wish to have them because you already
do?
Wanting what you cannot have is like wishing for a
rainstorm when the sun is full
Don't say unkind words, don't think unkind deeds
Don't ponder unkind loves
And don't undervalue those who stand with you
Constant flux is pointless change
Peaceful tranquility is regarded appreciation
Let the lion and the lamb unite to protect that which
is good
No more parables of evil against good
Only love which bears all things for the sake of the
Father

Who wished that they all be one
 Maintain that which is good
 Discard that which is evil
 You know the difference
 Disregard your taste for that which is bitter
 Sin is a heavy cream that fattens the burden of lust
 Lack of appreciation is a rue which burdens the souls
 of the damned
 Maintain the construct of conscience
 Flood not the conscience with whims of evil and
 allure
 Fill them rather with the good words of the saints
 And the conduct of heroes
 Your past may be filed away in a system that is
 buried
 Don't dig it up
 Be trustworthy, be pure
 Love that which is created by God
 Do not even look upon the distortions of Satan
 Do not look, do not look
 Satan is a weary master
 He has no goods of worth
 He sends the souls of the damned to their peril
 Redeem it
 Do not accept responsibility for the diminishing
 behavior of another
 Though you may be blamed
 Or deceived
 Accept it not
 Have recourse to the original inception
 The original creation
 Love is expressed in creation
 Satan had no part in it
 Give him none now

Pray for one another
And don't worry
Bask in the glory of the goodness of God
Derive no pleasure from the distortion of lust
Accept only the beauty that love originally created in
the body of men
Refuse it not treatment
Never disrespect another, nor accept such disrespect
Our bodies are the temples of the Lord
Only love is an acceptable expression
Woe to those who deceive
The evils therein contain damnation
Change the verbage to make certain of your intent
Cross over from the land of the impure
To those that wish to maintain the dignity of the
human person
Within themselves and with others
Who would not dare to betray the confines of love
To fulfill a selfish need
To love is to take a savage road
Unless . . . you travel only the road of the sacred
With the Lord of the Universe at your side
And those who bear hearts of respect
And who honor that which is good
Human love indeed is a savage road
But there is yet another love
That which is eternal
Redeem it
Redeem it
Redeem it
Then let it be
Let it be

An Allegory:

“The weary traveler allowed himself to fall into the hands of the Way as it swept him up as if weightless into a journey of endless ecstatic renewal.

Having spent years on the road of life searching for the nebulous and elusive reality of love in the earthly and mortal realms, he had become morose and bitter, somber and aloof.

Nothing had been as it had seemed. He had followed his heart in the seeking of love through many avenues and many people. In his own wretched misunderstanding, he had given to seeking love through the souls of others. And in this practice, his soul had set itself aflame in the fires of lust, it sets itself away from anything that really can bring about that which is love, it breaks love into a multiplicity when it is in actuality a unity.

In his seeking for love, he had taken a truly savage road.

Yet up in the starry heavens, there was one who called to him in the sweetest of tones. The voice, though almost imperceptible, flew down to him and into his crown chakra as almost a whisper. In its silence and quietude, he was unable to discern it. Even so, he often questioned the sound of this whisper as it ever so softly flowed into his spirit like that of a feather gently swaying downwards in the wind.

One night, as his soul felt the crushing weight of that savage road he had taken, his spirit was lifted

into a heavenly sphere before unbeknownst to him in any shape or form even in memory.

For the soul of the traveler of the Way must meet certain requirements in the purification of the senses and the true letting go of the impairments before it can even venture to know even on a primordial level of some such things in the spirit world. And as of yet, it appeared this was one of them.

The cloudeous energies were still and yet moving in an ever so subtle elegance of cascade. A quiet sunlight gently peered through the clouds, but not yet enough to reveal its source. And standing before him was a woman of imperfect beauty. But yet, he stood transfixed upon her.

It was a different beauty that had taken his attentions, something he could not understand or comprehend. But it held his attention like the fiery eye of God because of its import.

She quietly walked forward in her gown of white and reached her hand to him. "Don't jump into anything . . . Walk with patience and slow." She said, as she took his hand into hers and the greater understanding of her permanence entered into him as if forced itself through his veins and into the very ethers of his soul.

In an explosive epiphany, he realized that she was his true soul mate in the spirit world. She was not incarnate upon the earth, but here on the other side to assist him.

In that moment, he *knew* that every form of love he had attempted to pursue upon the earth had been a grave distortion of love's truth.

She pulled him close to her heart and hugged him tightly. "I love you," she said, "I am putting Jesus within you." He was filled with a depth of peace and tranquil love he had never before experienced.

In this moment, he experienced an orgasmic and ecstatic experience which entered from his lower chakras and moved up his chakric tree from the sexual . . . to the emotional . . . to the heart . . . to a celestial excellence he could never bear to put into words. There was a unity and purity that could only be understood as the truest nature of love, perhaps as it had been before the Fall of man; perfect in its innocence, true as its fidelity, and sure as the love of God.

As the embrace began to part, two grand white angels with wings far surpassing their own height came upon each side of the weary traveler now set in awe of what had been placed before him.

Never before had any earthly sensual experience come close to what this truest of eternal unions had fulfilled within him.

"I love you." He quietly said back to her as each angel took one of his hands. She appeared very happy as he spoke these words to her, as if a mortal man could fulfill such an eternal species of woman. But, yet, her heart was continually filled by his words which were said with the utmost of honesty and truth, truer beyond any he had spoken to any upon the earth.

The angels aside smiled widely in joy at this expression of true eternal love, as well, as they spoke in unison, "What you have said to her makes your guardian angel very happy." He turned quickly to see if someone else had arrived and indeed he had.

His guardian angel had appeared looking very earthly at this juncture, like a regular man dressed in the normal attire of his day. "Yes, indeed," was his reply as he took the hands of his charge from the two celestial angels.

Walking quietly with his guardian angel, the traveler of the Way did not know what to expect next. Gathering his strength, he followed until the two of them had reached a less pleasant place, a more worldly place.

Watching as his guardian angel directed, he looked upon many men and women upon the world who were living unchaste lives. Going from one partner to the next, they would truly proclaim their love to one in one moment, and shortly thereafter proclaim their truest love to yet another.

In the process of their darkness, they had lost something so important to them in the development of their souls that this behavior had become completely habitual and repetitious.

Within the confines of their limited thinking, they believed several things of which truth was not a part. They believed that there would always be someone better out there. They believed that if they just kept doing the same thing over and over again, meeting new partners over and over again, that someday they would find love. They believed that love was something external from themselves. They did not realize that what they were seeking in these others was something they did not themselves possess.

And as a result, because neither of those engaging in this repetitious behavior did not indeed contain the elements required for an eternal and

lasting union, nor did they contain within them the impetus of individual spiritual search; none of their potential love partners ever be able to satisfy their endless sea of desire and need, *nor* would they themselves ever contain the capacity to provide it for another. Their search was doomed, but they could not see it.

In their blindness, they had followed a path which led only to the destruction and self-degradation of their souls and the souls of others.

The traveler's guardian angel stepped forward and looked him in the eye. "You have come this far because of the impetus of your individual spiritual search. Do you wish to remain a captive, or would you like to become a freeborn?" A smile crept on the traveler's face. "A freeborn, kind sir, a freeborn."

A freeborn is a soul who brings to fruition the spiritual blossoming of the soul within itself. By so doing, it remains possible for that soul to remain content within its own soul and without, but it also has the capacity to come together in union with another such soul as long as that union remains centered upon God.

And as the traveler recalled the orgasmic ecstasy he had felt in the embrace of his own beloved soul mate, he realized that the earthly expression of physical love cannot come close to that of eternal love. The fullest expression of love on earth can only come about through the uniting of souls who embrace the divine as the origin and maker of that love. When so doing, the physical act of love becomes something so much greater that it defies earthly explanation.

And because he knew interiorly that his own soul mate was not of the earth but on the other side,

he realized that this cannot always be achieved upon the earth with a man and a woman. But yet, every soul in its aloneness can achieve it through the impetus of its own spiritual search.

It is not a sexual quest; it is a quest for the experience of eternal love. Eternal love is the highest expression of God's love towards His creation. And the fact that it contains within it the elements of sexual expression and orgasm indicates that the degraded condition of human sexuality is in fact what may be perhaps deemed as the 'fallen' and destructive capacity of human sexuality. It is this damaged expression which so strongly bears no resemblance to the true nature of eternal love that it completely destroys the ability of those who partake of it to even begin cultivation of those eternal elements which would make such a thing possible for them in their human life.

However, there is a greater expression of eternal love that can only be reached through union with God which is so beyond what the physical body can experience outside of its underdeveloped human spirit that the experience of it would tend to make all 'fallen' human sexuality worth nothing to those who practiced it, if only they could understand . . . if only they could know.

And this eternal expression is absolutely available to those who follow the spiritual way in the mystical realms whether they participate in a human relationship below or not. By uniting with the divine, the soul transfixes in a more continual state of bliss. And thus, this is one of the many reasons that many saints are able to practice continence or celibacy during their lives. Because their human needs are met

in much higher and more profound ways through union with God. (In the experiences shared by many saints of 'Bridal Mysticism,' the highest expression of God's love has been achieved.)

"The greatest romance is with the Infinite. You have no idea how beautiful life can be. When you suddenly find God everywhere, when He comes and talks to you and guides you, the romance of divine love has begun.

We have come on earth solely to learn to know God. We are here for no other purpose. This is the true message of the Lord.

No one can find God without continuous love for Him in the heart... There is nothing greater than the love of God. If a devotee has found that, his work in the school of life is finished.

*I will sing Thy Name,
I will drink Thy Name,
and get all drunk,
O with Thy Name!"*
Paramahansa Yogananda

But if they do find an eternal expression of those male and female aspects on the ground, that union of two separate wholes into one functioning eternal unit not only enhances the capacity of each one to fulfill their own spiritual potential and that of service to the mortal spheres, but it becomes an ecstatic eternal union between the two. Physical union is no longer base and set upon the ground, but unites the two in the higher celestial spheres and

allows the two parties to touch the heart of God when they unite in a sexual union.

If those who practiced 'fallen' sexuality knew what was possible, they would not settle for Satan's pithy and grotesque offering. They would reach only for God, and the human expression of love as God originally intended before the fall of man.

The traveler's guardian angel stepped forward and directed him to look upon the men and women of the world following the distorted image of love that had been presented to them and accepted.

"You will be taking a new road which will require you to take example and exams," he said as he began pointing towards the people of the world lost in a pointless search, he added, "as will they."

Suddenly, the traveler realized it was all true. But in his heart, he also knew that no one believed him. It was as if he was given foreknowledge. It was not a doubt that they would not believe him, but that he already knew that they did not.

Looking towards his guardian angel, he replied, "They do not believe me, but it is the key to my escape." His guardian angel nodded, 'Yes,' and disappeared."

"Therefore there is nothing nigh unto or afar off from God; one world is in the other, and all are only one: But one is spiritual, the other corporeal, as soul and body are in each other; and also time and eternity are but one thing, yet in distinct or different beginnings. The spiritual world in the internal [Principle] hath an eternal being, and the outward a temporal; each hath its birth in itself. But the eternal speaking Word ruleth through and overall; yet it can neither be

apprehended nor conceived, either by the spiritual or by the external world, that it should stand still; but it worketh from eternity to eternity, and its work is conceived. For it is the formed Word, and the working

Word is its life, and is incomprehensible; for the Word is without all essence, as a bare understanding only, or as a power that bringeth itself into essence."

Mysterium Magnum, Jacob Boehme - 1623, Of the Word or Heart of God, Hermetica, 2007

"This outward world is as a smoke, or vaporous steam or exhalation of the fire spirit and water spirit, breathed forth both out of the holy world and then also out of the dark world; and therefore, it is evil and good, and consists in love and anger; and is only as a smoke or a misty exhalation; in reference to and respect of the spiritual world."

Mysterium Magnum, Jacob Boehme - 1623, Of the Essence of Corporeality, Hermetica, 2007

"How significant it is that Christ, in the answer to all these questions, orders man to return, in a way, to the threshold of his theological history! He orders him to put himself at the border between original innocence, happiness and the inheritance of the first fall. Does he not perhaps mean to tell him that the path along which he leads man, male and female, in the sacrament of marriage, the path of the redemption of the body, must consist in regaining this dignity. In it there is simultaneously accomplished the real meaning of the human body, its personal meaning and its meaning of communion."

The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II, Original Unity of Man and Woman, The Daughters of St. Paul, 1997, Pauline Books

"Unity is this: that a man feel himself to be gathered together with all his powers in the unity of his heart.

Unity brings inward peace and restfulness of heart. Unity of heart is a bond which draws together body and soul, heart and senses, and all the outward and inward powers and encloses them in the union of love. From this unity springs inwardness; for none can be inward save him who is gathered together in unity within himself. Inwardness means that a man is turned within, into his own heart, that thereby he may understand and feel the interior workings, and the interior words of God. Inwardness is a sensible fire of love, which the spirit of God has blown to a flame, and which urges a man from within; and he knows not whence it comes nor what has befallen him."

The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage, By John Ruysbroeck, Book II, Chapter IX and X, Ibis Press, 2005

"The claim of a 'good conscience' is often a mound of whipped cream so thick and so high that you cannot see what is under it . . . 'Old habits are hard to change' can be both a truism and an explanation of some of our actions. It should not be an excuse, however, for not changing old habits that need to be changed."

Thoughts in Stillness, Josephi More, Our Lady's Media, 1999







CHAPTER TWO

Exhale, Exhale as He Pleases

You mustn't cultivate a constant spiritual dissent
You become distant and puzzled
And you begin to make sounds
 Grace is not either you or I
 Grace is beyond it
 Beyond name and form
 Tell me how I was him
When I don't even know who he is
 Why will she obey all these laws

He wants to walk through the hands under the
auspices of Jesus Christ
We are called to sanctified silence
Why digress to any other matter
The reaches are beyond my reach
The silence beyond my dreams
Faltering into a state of quiet and lone abandon
Within the dichotomy of the body and the spirit
There is to be found a unity
Our spirit flies towards the sky
At the same moment that our body barrels to the
ground
If only a synergy could exist
Between the two
All would be well
And our yoke would be broken
In the treading of the way
The bliss filled escape
A seeker ponders the nightmare
Of existence
And non-existence
For either of them presents this melancholy
Who but a freeborn can see that this is so?
Only within the light of God can we see
So what does this mean?
The majority of humankind is blind
But the mystical captive has been reborn
Freeborn into the state of awe, wonder and seeking
Is there no better Way?
For naught the captive sought to hold onto the things
of the earth
But the earth refused to allow the letting
At the insistence of the will of God
And suddenly the freeborn spirit realizes

Neither can exist within the other
 The freeborn must choose either God or man
 And that choice is rendered void by the actions of
 God
 Who works as He pleases within the human soul
 And causes destruction to all the worldly constructs
 which prevent the soul from its own birth
 Into the spiritual splendors of a magnificent
 awakening
 For no earthbound human can release it without the
 grace of God
 And the trembling itself of the earth to perforate that
 ruse
 Once the captive has looked upon infinity itself
 He must be reborn
 Born into the freedom of the spirit
 And the violent temptations of the past
 Become now a different violence
 The freeborn soul must now choose
 Will it be the obedience to God
 Who knows, loves and creates all things
 Or will the freeborn spirit falter at the idea of giving
 his own will to another
 And plummet again back to the earth?
 In realizing the obvious superior choice
 Of allowing He who knows all to guide and direct
 The mystical freeborn enters into a constructive
 freedom
 A freedom which bears towards all of infinity
 A freedom which can assure that all goodness and
 strife which comes the way of the freeborn
 Is surely the will of the almighty God
 And if that be so

Even sorrows are indicative of a higher and holier
path to come

Expecting this part of the journey to be easy would be
a fool's jest

Because in order to attain to the highest and holiest
path Our Lord seeks for each one of us

He will take away all in our lives which does not
support it

The greatest losses can and will occur in these times
Moments will come when the freeborn truly laments

So much loss that it can barely hold on

Anger seethes within the freeborn at the God whose
hand he put himself into

Knowing full well that it was this trust which brought
about the chaos around him

Lovers and loved ones all lost to him

Friends and family placed at God's holy distance

Beyond the concepts of the freeborn, beyond his own
actions

Stillness enters in, the absence becomes complacently
real

Emptiness and void create the lonely places within
And above all else

The mystical freeborn is left alone with His God
All chatter, all distraction, all earthly love is removed

Only that which is eternal remains

And the silence becomes suffocating

The sorrow over so many losses is a wretched pain
But in that quiet place

In that holy hour

The mystical freeborn is truly born again

And the emptiness which has now been created
Creates an open space

An allegory:

“In his newfound emptiness, the mystical freeborn found himself wandering through a dark room lit up only when the Holy Spirit so chose to reveal something to his darkened vision.

Because he had been emptied, his mind was full of wonder as he frolicked about the misty spaces beyond time and earthly delusion.

“These inhabitable regions, in addition, are like believers who have a constant regard for the divine law and address themselves to be inhabitable by reason of their good deeds. But the uninhabitable regions symbolize unbelievers who attempt to resist God’s Word and work against God. They deny the faith and attempt to harm and destroy both the truth and the firmness of faith. By this contradiction such persons cause themselves to become, so to speak, uninhabitable since they will now allow within themselves an abode for the Holy Spirit.”

Book of Divine Works, Hildegard Von Bingen, Vision Five: 5, Bear & Co, 1987

For a moment, the things which lit up were his former delusions, and he found himself drawn to them as a bee to honey. But they provided his spirit with no relief, no honey, no dew, no compress . . . only an insistent feeling of being pulled back.

The traveler had no desire to be pulled away from his beloved who had deigned to discard his foolishness in the single act of a heavenly embrace. Within that embrace held the mysteries of the kingdom of God and now that he had touched it, nothing else would suffice.

Turning, he walked again towards the more darkened aspects of the room. His emptiness longed to be filled with something more, but yet he did not know what.

As he found himself wandering through the darkened spaces, unexpected relics began to light up. Quietly, he looked upon them and gently picked them up with his hand.

The first relics he had come upon were all related to Pope Paul VI. Papers, binders, pictures . . . looking upon them, the traveler sought to understand and think deeply upon what this could mean.

Remembering that he had once read the most famous document of Pope Paul VI, 'Humanae Vitae,' he recalled all of the things which Paul VI had predicted which had since come true. Interestingly, Pope Paul VI had concluded that the scientific development to prevent pregnancy would have some consequences on society as a whole and that it would lead to serious moral evils in the sexual mores of the future.

Amongst the things he had predicted included the legalization of abortion, higher rates of infidelity, greater moral decline, loss of respect for women, widespread divorce, casual sex, widespread pregnancies and teen pregnancies out of wedlock, more sexually transmitted diseases, widespread sterilization, the likelihood of nations to try to force contraceptive or abortive means to control populations . . . and perhaps what stood out the most in this litany of disorder was the desensitization of men and women towards one another in the true unitive purpose of the sexual union.

All of these had come to pass and more . . .

The mystical freeborn nodded in his understanding as he turned towards an unusual relic sitting upon the same table. Within it were bone fragments of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. 'What could this mean?' He thought to himself and tried to remember some of the words she had spoken that had touched him so throughout his life.

*"People are often unreasonable and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior
motives. Be kind anyway.*

*If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest
anyway.*

*If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be
happy anyway.*

*The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have and it may never be
enough. Give your best anyway.*

*For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It
was never between you and them anyway . . .*

If you judge people, you have no time to love them."

Mother Teresa

The traveler lamented his own failings but had little time to think upon them. As he turned in yet another direction, he began to see nuns appearing in large groups all around them, just manifesting from out of the ether. Surrounding him, they all were looking at him alone from every direction. Appearing to be from several orders, he recognized groups of Benedictines, Carmelites and Missionaries of Charity.

Suddenly, without his foreknowledge, he began to sing an ancient Gregorian chant of which he had no knowledge. Singing outside of his own volition, but within the will of the great and almighty God, he realized he was singing a Gregorian chant about the virtues and he was directing his song towards the great Pope Paul VI's pictures and relics.

The beautiful sound entranced his soul as he sought to understand the origin of the words. But his journey was about to end in the midst of the glorious and melodious stream which came uninhibitedly through his own mouth.

But when he returned to consciousness the freeborn found that it was Hildegard Von Bingen who had written the 'Ordo Virtutum' . . . the play of virtues . . . a Gregorian chant of extreme beauty.

"Here begins the Play of the Virtues:

Patriarchs and Prophets:
Who are these, who seem like clouds?

Virtues:

O ancient holy ones, why do you marvel at us? The Word of God grows bright in the form of a man, and thus we shine with him, building the limbs of his beautiful body.

Patriarchs and prophets:
We are roots, and you are branches, the fruit of the living eye, of which we were the shadow.

Lament of embodied Souls:

We are strangers here! What have we done, straying to realms of sin? We should have been daughters of the King, but we have fallen into the shadow of sins. Living Sun, carry us on your shoulders back to that most just inheritance we lost in Adam! O king of kings, we are fighting in your battle.

Soul, joyful:

Oh sweet divinity, o gentle life, in which I shall wear a bright robe, accepting that which I lost in my first formation - I cry to you and invoke all the Virtues.

Virtues:

Oh happy Soul, oh sweet creature of God, fashioned in the great height of the wisdom of God, you show much love.

Soul, joyful:

Oh let me come to you freely, that you may give me the kiss of your heart!

Virtues:

We must fight with you, oh royal daughter.

Soul turns to sadness:

Oh heavy toil, oh harsh weight that I bear in the dress of this life: it is too heavy for me to fight against my body.

Virtues to Soul:

Anima, you that were given your place by the will of God, you instrument of bliss, why are you so tearful in the face of the evil God crushed in a maidenly being? You must overcome the devil in our midst.

Knowledge-of-God to Soul:
 See the dress you are wearing, daughter of salvation:
 be steadfast and you will never fall.

Soul, sadly:
 I don't know what to do or where to flee Woe is me, I
 cannot perfect this dress I have put on! Indeed I want
 to cast it off!

Virtues:
 Unhappy state of mind, oh poor Anima, why do you
 hide your face in the presence of your Creator?

Knowledge of God:
 You do not know or see or taste the One who has set
 you here.

Soul:
 God created the world: I'm doing him no injury - I
 only want to enjoy it!

Devil, shouting at Soul:
 What use to you is toiling foolishly? Look to the
 world: it will embrace you with great honour.

Virtues:
 Is this not a plangent voice of the greatest sorrow?
 Ah, a certain marvellous victory already rose in that
 Soul, in her wondrous longing for God, in which a
 sensual delight was secretly hidden, alas, where
 previously the will had known no guilt and the desire
 fled man's wantonness. Mourn for this, mourn,
 Innocence, you who lost no perfection in your fair

modesty, who did not devour greedily, with the belly of the serpent of old.

Devil:

What is this Power - as if there were no one but God? I say, whoever wants to follow me and do my will, I'll give him everything. As for you, Humility, you have nothing that you can give your followers: none of you even know what you are!

Humility:

My comrades and I know very well that you are the ancient dragon who wanted to fly higher than the highest one: but God himself hurled you in the abyss.

Virtues:

As for us, we dwell in the heights.

Humility:

I, Humility, queen of the Virtues, say: come to me, you Virtues, and I'll give you the skill to seek and find the drachma that is lost and to crown her who perseveres blissfully.

Virtues:

Oh glorious queen, most gentle mediator, we come gladly.

Humility:

Because of this, beloved daughters, I'll keep your place in the royal wedding-chamber.

Charity:

I am Charity, the flower of love - come to me, Virtues, and I'll lead you into the radiant light of the flower of the rod.

Virtues:

Dearest flower, we run to you with burning desire.

Fear-of-God:

I, Fear-of-God, can prepare blissful daughters to gaze upon the living God and not die of it.

Virtues:

Oh Fear, you can help us greatly: we are filled with the longing never to part from you.

Devil:

Bravo! Bravo! What is this great fear, and this great love? Where is the champion? Where the prize-giver? You don't know what you are worshipping!

Virtues:

But you, you were terrified at the supreme Judge, for, swollen with pride, you were plunged into Gehenna.

Obedience:

I am shining Obedience - come to me, lovely daughters, and I'll lead you to your homeland and to the kiss of the King.

Virtues:

Sweetest summoner, it is right for us to come, most eagerly, to you.

Faith:

I am Faith, the mirror of life: worthy daughters, come to me and I shall show you the leaping fountain.

Virtues:

Oh Serene one, mirror-like, we trust in you: we shall arrive at that fountain through you.

Hope:

I am the sweet beholder of the living eye, I whom no dissembling torpor can deceive. Darkness, you cannot cloud my gaze!

Virtues:

Living life, gentle, consoling one, you overcome the deadly shafts of death and with your seeing eye lay heaven's gate open.

Chastity:

O Virginity, you remain within the royal chamber. How sweetly you burn in the King's embraces, when the Sun blazes through you, never letting your noble flower fall. Gentle maiden, you will never know the shadow over the falling flower!

Virtues:

The flower of the fields fails in the wind, the rain splashes it. But you, Virginity, remain in the symphonies of heavenly habitants: you are the tender flower that will never grow dry.

Innocence:

My flock, flee from the Devil's taints!

Virtues:

We shall flee them, if you give us aid.

Contempt-for-the-World:

I, Contempt-for-the-World, am the heat life. Oh wretched, exiled state on earth, with all your toils - I let you go. Come to me, you Virtues, and we will climb up to the fountain of life!

Virtues:

Glorious lady, you that always fight the battles of Christ, oh great power that treads the world under your feet, you thereby dwell in heaven, victoriously.

Heavenly Love:

I am the golden gate fixed in heaven: whoever passes through me will never taste bitter rebelliousness in her mind.

Virtues:

Royal daughter, you are held fast in the embraces the world shuns: how tender is your love in the highest God!

Discipline:

I am one who loves innocent ways that know nothing ignoble; I always gaze upon the King of kings and, as my highest honour, I embrace him.

Virtues:

Angelic comrade, how comely you are in the royal nuptials!

Modesty:

I cover over, drive away or tread down all the filths of the Devil.

Virtues:

Yours is a part in the building of heavenly Jerusalem,
flowering among shining lilies.

Mercy:

How bitter in human minds is the harshness that does
not soften and mercifully ease pain! I want to reach
out my hand to all who suffer.

Virtues:

Matchless mother of exiles, you are always raising
them up and anointing the poor and the weak.

Victory:

I am Victory, the swift, brave champions I fight with a
stone, I tread the ancient serpent down.

Virtues:

Oh gentlest warrior, in the scorching fountain that
swallowed up the voracious wolf - glorious, crowned
one, how gladly we'll fight against that deceiver, at
your side!

Discretion:

I am Discretion, light and moderator of all creatures -
the impartiality of God, that Adam drove away by
acting wantonly.

Virtues:

Fairest mother, how sweet you are, how gentle - in
you no one can be confounded.

Patience:

I am the pillar that can never be made to yield, as my foundation is in God.

Virtues:

You that stay firm in the rocky cavern, you are the glorious warrior who endures all.

Humility:

Daughters of Israel, God raised you from beneath the tree, so now remember how it was planted. Therefore rejoice, daughters of Jerusalem.

Virtues:

Alas, alas, let us lament and mourn, because our master's sheep has fled from life!

Soul, lamenting, penitent and calling to the Virtues:
You royal Virtues, how graceful, how brilliant you look in the highest Sun, and how delectable is your home, and so, what woe is mine that I fled from you!

Virtues:

You who escaped, come to us, and God will take you back.

Soul:

Ah, but a burning sweetness swallowed me up in sins, so I did not dare come in.

Virtues:

Don't be afraid or run away: the good Shepherd is searching for his lost sheep - it is you.

Soul:

Now I need your help to gather me up - I stink of the wounds that the ancient serpent has made gangrenous.

Virtues:

Run to us, follow those steps where you'll never falter, in our company; God will heal you.

Soul, penitent, to the Virtues:

I am the sinner who fled from life: covered in sores I'll come to you - you can offer me redemption's shield. All of you, warriors of Queen Humility, her white lilies and her crimson roses, stoop to me, who exiled myself from you like a stranger, and help me, that in the blood of the Son of God I may arise.

Virtues:

Fugitive Anima, now be strong: put on the armour of light.

Soul:

And you, true medicine, Humility, grant me your help, for pride has broken me in many vices, inflicting many scars on me. Now I'm escaping to you - so take me up!

Humility:

All you Virtues, lift up this mournful sinner, with all her scars, for the sake of Christ's wounds, and bring her to me.

Virtues:

We want to bring you back - we shall not desert you, the whole host of heaven will rejoice in you: thus it is right for us sound our music.

Humility:

Oh unhappy daughter, I want to embrace you: the great surgeon has suffered harsh and bitter wounds for your sake.

Virtues:

Living fountains, how great is your sweetness: you did not reject the gaze of these upon you - no, acutely you foresaw how you could avert them from the fall the angels fell, they who thought they possessed a power which no law allows to be like that. Rejoice then, daughter Jerusalem, for God is giving you back many whom the serpent wanted to sunder from you, who now gleam in a greater brightness than would have been their state before.

Devil:

Who are you? Where are you coming from? You were in my embrace, I led you out. Yet now you are going back, defying me - but I shall fight you and bring you down!

Soul, penitent:

I recognised that all my ways were wicked, so I fled you. But now, you deceiver, I will fight you face to face. Queen Humility, come with your medicine, give me aid!

Humility:

Victory, you who once conquered this creature in the heavens, run now, with all your soldiery, and all of you bind this fiend!

Victory:

Bravest and most glorious warriors, come, help me to vanquish this deceitful one!

Virtues:

Oh sweetest warrior, in the scorching fountain that swallowed up the voracious wolf glorious, crowned one, how gladly we'll fight against that deceiver, at your side!

Humility:

Bind him then, you shining Virtues!

Virtues:

Queen of us all, we obey you - we shall carry out your orders to the full.

Victory:

Comrades, rejoice: the ancient serpent snake is bound!

Virtues:

Praise be to you, Christ, King of the angels!

Chastity:

In the mind of the Highest, Satan, I trod on your head, and in a virgin form I nurtured a sweet miracle when the Son of God came into the world; therefore you are laid low, with all your blunder, and now let all who dwell in heaven rejoice, because your belly has been confounded.

Diabolus

Devil:

You don't know what you are nurturing, for your belly is devoid of the beautiful form that woman receives from man; in this you transgress the command that God enjoined in the sweet act of love; so you don't even know what you are!

Chastity:

How can what you say affect me? Even your suggestion smirches it with foulness. I did bring forth a man, who gathers up mankind to himself, against you, through his nativity.

Virtues:

Who are you, God, who held such great counsel in yourself, a counsel that destroyed the draught of hell in publicans and sinners who now shine in paradisal goodness! Praise to you, King for this! Almighty Father, from you flowed a fountain in fiery love: guide your children into a fair wind, sailing the waters, so that we too may, steer them in this way into the heavenly Jerusalem.

[Processional]

In the beginning all creation was verdant, flowers blossomed in the midst of it; later, greenness sank away. And the champion saw this and said:

"I know it, but the golden number is not yet full. You then, behold me, mirror of your fatherhood: in my

body I am suffering exhaustion, even my little ones faint.

Now remember that the fullness which was made in the beginning need not have grown dry, and that then you resolved that your eye would never fall until you saw my body full of jewels. For it wearies me that all my limbs are exposed to mockery: Father, behold, I am showing you my wounds."

So now, all you people, bend your knees to the Father, that he may reach you his hand." (Ordo Virtutum, Hildegard Von Bingen, Translation by Peter Dronke)"

As the traveler bathed in the healing light of the symphony of virtues, he looked up at the nuns who had quietly listened to him sing the ancient melody he had never heard. One stepped forward, a Benedictine Abbess. He noted in his mind that Hildegard was a Benedictine Nun. "People want forgiveness without accountability," the nun said, "let them be obedient unto the Lord so that He may teach them."

"From the storm cloud I heard a voice responding to this image: 'I who obey God have a certain bondage. But to whom is it and of what type is it? . . . I am the root of all of God's works, just as the soul is to the body. Just as a man's will accomplishes what he desires, so also I do God's will by doing all the things he commands. I consulted with God a long time ago and he ordered all the things he wanted to do through me. I sound like a lyre at the command of his word

because I obey all his commands. I touch nothing, I wish for nothing, I desire nothing unless it is in God because I came from God, I do things through him, and I do not want to have any other God . . . You, however, o transgressor of the command of the Creator . . . Where, therefore, are the heaven and earth you created? You have made nothing but you still deny what God did make. Why? . . . When you decide all things only according to what pleases you . . . you have cast away the good things."

The Book of the Rewards of Life, Hildegard Von Bingen, The Third Part, The Response of Obedience, Oxford University Press, 1994

"The labour of Obedience will bring you back to him from whom you had drifted through the sloth of disobedience."

Rule of St. Benedict, St Benedict

The love of God remains central to all human relationships, as well as, to the supreme relationship with the divine. Whether single, divorced, married, widowed or freeborn, the nature of this union with the divine is central to the understanding of each of these unique types of relationship.

"Ursula fell in love with God's Son in a vision: her faith was true. She rejected her man and all the world and gazed straight into the sun, crying out to her beloved, fairest of the sons of men: 'With yearning I have yearned to come to you and sit by you at our wedding in heaven! Let me race to you strangely, chase you like a sapphire cloud where the sky is purest.' And they discovered the fragrance of incense and myrrh - because scorn for the world mounts

above all." (Ursula was then martyred.)"

Symphonia, Hildegard Von Bingen, Symphony of the Harmony of Celestial Revelations, 64, Cornell University, 1988

"Once, some years ago, a group of teachers from the United States came through Calcutta. After visiting the Home for the Dying in Kalighat, they came to see me. Before they left, one of them asked me if I would say something that they could keep as a remembrance of the visit and that would also be useful to them. 'Smile at one another. Smile at your wives.' I have a feeling that we are in such a hurry that we do not even have time to look at one another.' Yes, I am,' I answered. 'Sometimes it is very difficult for me to smile at Jesus because he asks too much of me."

Mother Teresa: In my Own Words, Smiles, Gramercy Books, 1996

"The words of Christ, taken from Matthew 5:27-28, direct us toward this truth about "historical" man, of universal importance. It seems to be expressed in the biblical doctrine on the three forms of lust. We are referring here to the concise statement in 1 John 2:16-17: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever." . . . In this way, therefore, the statement that lust "is not of the Father but is of the world," seems to direct us once more to the biblical beginning. The genesis of lust in its three forms presented by John finds in this beginning its first and fundamental elucidation. This explanation is essential for the theology of the body . . . the same man, male and female, appears at the beginning as a man of original innocence before original sin. Then he appears as the one who lost innocence, by breaking

the original covenant with his Creator . . . the biblical description itself seems to highlight especially the key moment, in which the gift is questioned in man's heart. The man who gathers the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" makes, at the same time, a fundamental choice. He carries it out against the will of the Creator . . . This motivation clearly includes questioning the gift and the love from which creation has its origin as donation. As regards man, he receives the "world" as a gift and at the same time the image of God that is, humanity itself in all the truth of its male and female duality. It is enough to read carefully the whole passage of Genesis 3:1-5, to detect in it the mystery of man who turns his back on the Father (even if we do not find this name applied to God in the narrative). Questioning in his heart the deepest meaning of the donation, that is, love as the specific motive of the creation and of the original covenant (cf. Gn 3:5), man turns his back on God-Love, on the Father. In a way he casts God out of his heart. At the same time, he detaches his heart and almost cuts it off from what "is of the Father." Thus, there remains in him what "is of the world.""

The Theology of the Body, By Pope John Paul II, Pauline Books and Media, 1997

"O marvelous wonder! A hidden figure towers high, steep on the honorable height where the living Majesty utters mysteries."

Symphonia, Hildegard Von Bingen, Symphony of the Harmony of Celestial Revelations, 41, Cornell University, 1988

So then the traveler must discover that to follow any other will than the will of God within his own life would be illogical because only God's will in any person's life can lead to the most exalted path.

Any other will leads to lesser outcomes, unhappier circumstances.

And what is needful to understand at this juncture as the freeborn admits himself into the heavenly mystery of eternal love is this.

God Himself is love. In no manner can any person truly separate any form of true love from the Father, for it all originates from God.

The mystery of eternal love remains at the heart and core of all that is borne out of it. It applies whether you are in a relationship with yourself, with God, with a spouse, with a child, with a friend . . . and in order to begin to fully grasp the potential that lies within us, and that to which the freeborn must aspire, he must first understand that the secret of it all lies in the primordial Garden of Eden, before the fall of man, when love was born in its eternal, original, generative and gifted nature.

Without the recognition that the mystery lies in what was lost as a result of the fall and what had been before that happened, the freeborn cannot continue.

We must remember that all eternal loves were born from God; there is no true love that does not have God as its origin. Degenerate love, or lust and usury in its purest sense, was born of the fall and originated from the serpent.

You are traveling either one way or the other, you are either for Christ or against Christ, you are either building something up or tearing it down, you are either sincerely loving someone or you are using them for selfish purpose.

The middle road is blurry . . . and the traveler must choose.

What will it be? To restore that which has been lost within the primordial Garden of Eden, the true nature of eternal love which still remains as potential within each and every one of us? Or to remain in a spiraling cycle of selfish abuse of ourselves and others to fulfill base desires and lustful cravings which destroy, degrade and dishonor ourselves and other human beings?

To choose eternal love is to choose God. God is love. If we are to know God, we must seek to become that which He is.





CHAPTER THREE

Magnum Mysterium . . . or the Great Mystery

Along the pointy narrow cliff, I wept
Potshards of oil running down my neck

The Lord has called me within
One that chastens you to wealth

I will not hasten

It is a transient knowledge

It is only in encompassing the unaccepted road
That the light of wisdom may enter the freeborn

Wispy revelings in the darkwind night
 Hosts of essences surrounding my soul
 Furthest reaches pulling my sway
 And entering into the palest of horizons
 In my darkness, I long to know the light
 But it is hidden from me for naught
 Because of a fall of ancient millennia
 The darkness has shrouded the great magnum
 mysterium
 The great mystery remains unknown
 Because of the ingratitude of man
 That which was lost is not even clear
 It continues to float around as an essence
 But it cannot be grasped unless God chooses to reveal
 In its revelation lies the mystery
 Shrouded in secrecy since the beginning of time
 Shrouded because of an act of disobedience to the
 Lord Almighty
 But what was truly lost?
 What was the primordial garden really like?
 Does anyone know?
 Without knowing that which was lost,
 How can it be restored?
 In the essence of the caricature we have become
 Where is the original construct?
 The gift that was declined in the primordial garden
 Of what was declined?
 If they had known the consequent variants
 Would it have been such an easy snag?
 If we were to see the gifts that God originally planned
 for us
 Would we be pleased or disdained at that first choice?
 Original beauty and original sin
 What did it look like?

Is this something that remains relevant to us now so
many thousands of years later?

Is it perceivable to the common man and
Does its wanting leave us empty and forlorn?
So, to whom shall we go?
To whom should we inquire?

What forces would avail us of this great mystery?

The Mysterium Magnum of all existence
Waiting in some unknown blister of space
Still unbeknownst to mankind thousands of years
later

What would it have been like had Adam and Eve not
fallen?

And would we grieve that world if we could know
how it might have been?
Oh, mystery of mysteries, reveal thyself

An allegory:

"Amidst the spectral wonderland of a forest,
the freeborn traveler was taken. Deep hues of green
filled the trees, the grasses and the fields, and
unearthly colors carpeted the floors with wildflowers.

Standing before the woman he had once been
married to in his present earthly life, the whole event
was foreshadowed by some kind of unearthly
perfection he had never before experienced.

Immediately, he had an awareness implanted
within him that he was about to experience the
original innocence, the primordial garden, what could
have been had mankind accepted God's gift.

Despite the fact that the traveler was no longer
with his previous wife, he experienced her as if they
actually were . . . and he noticed that there was a

profound gold energy that emanated from both of them towards the other and this golden energy seemed to embody everything within this primordial forest.

For the period in which he was to travel to this time before the fall, it felt to him almost as if he and his former wife were Adam and Eve. In this experience, he was given to be in the experience, but yet outside of it at the same time.

Looking around him, he noticed that the forest was filled with perfection. There were no bugs, poison ivy, sticker bushes . . . the wild animals all mingled in a quiet harmony with one another and he realized that you could walk up to them and pet them, even the lions, and there was no danger. No danger of any kind. Every form of life, whether it be plant, human, animal or mineral, were all completely at one with each other.

Turning again to his former wife, he recalled how their marriage had not turned out well due to the sins that they had borne with one another on earth. But here in the primordial garden, there was no strife, no conflict. Both appeared younger than they were currently on the earth and had perfect health although this was not the case in the physical world below.

There was no illness, no injury, no selfish desire, no physical limitation . . .

He noticed that they both stood naked before one another, but it was as if they were not. Clothed in a garment of gold, there was no shame in original nakedness. In all things, the freeborn traveler felt that between he and his former beloved, they were in all

things one flesh – mind, body and spirit – with the only exception being that they occupied two vessels.

In that state of total purity, shamelessness . . . the freeborn felt no temptation of any kind regarding anything. There was no fear of anything because God was his father and his beloved's father. Although they both were adults, they were like children in their obedience to God.

Completely trusting God, both of them were in complete alignment with God and it came effortlessly from the pure gift of God.

The freeborn noticed that every thought that she had, he knew. And every thought he had, she also knew. Every thought of the other in the masculine feminine union were as if it were their own.

And as they shared thoughts, the freeborn and his beloved melted into one another in an orgasmic and ecstatic union of heavenly bliss.

Everything was love. Both were completely without sin. There was no darkness, only constant golden light which permeated each of them into the other and into all life that reigned within the primordial garden.

Again the freeborn noted that there was no temptation at all.

Reaching out to touch his beloved, he instantly felt electricity running through his whole body and some type of orgasm that manifested within his entire being hundreds of times more powerful than any physical or earthly orgasm could reach in the body.

Amazed by this experience, he continued to experience what could be described as an ongoing ecstasy from the mere physical presence of his beloved. As he stared into her eyes and she into his, a

heavenly energy stormed throughout them filling them at spiritual depths they could never have thought existed before. A single touch and their bodies would tremble in delight.

He noticed that they both had gold in their hair and their bodies were golden. The sight was spectacular.

The freeborn basked in the unbelievable reality that they lacked nothing. Everything was totally complete and provided for. They felt no yearning, no coveting, no shame . . . all was perfection; a perfection beyond anything he could ever have imagined. An orgasmic and eternal love beyond anything he could have ever thought possible between the masculine and feminine energies.

And beyond this, how interesting it was that this was shown to him with the woman he had been married to which had not worked out as of yet on the earth. Their marriage had failed.

What a profound difference between fallen man and eternal man in perfect obedience to God, the creator in the primordial Eden before sin had entered into the world.

The freeborn was filled with the spectacular wonder of the event. As he continued to bathe in the ecstatic and orgasmic energies he experienced with his female counterpart he felt his body as an electromagnetic field containing heights of eternal love which continued to somehow contain itself with his unfallen state.

A physical body could never have handled such a thing in the fallen world he knew.

Although he did not wish to leave, the freeborn was again beckoned back to the physical

world to ponder the beauty of the gift humankind had been offered by God, but failed to accept.

How he would take in this experience remained unknown to him."

"Among these I saw certain ones, as through a mirror, who were clothed as if in the white garment of a cloud. This garment appeared purer than the purest highest upper air and was interwoven with gold. Their heads were embellished with halos, as if they were from the elect; their foot coverings were like crystal that shone with purity beyond the purity of the clearest water. They were touched from time to time with a gentle wind that came from the secret place of the Divinity and that had the aroma of all the herbs and flowers. Their voices sounded like a lot of water does. They also had many other embellishments, but I was not able to see them. Because they had come to God through faith with the highest and greatest devotion and because they had worshipped God with their good works, they had infinite joy in the joys of this brightness; because they had observed and fulfilled the legal precepts with the purity of justice while they had been alive, they wore this white garment that was like a cloud; because they had esteemed the legal precepts, their garment appeared purer than the purest highest upper air; and because they had observed the precepts of the law so carefully, their garment was interwoven with Gold."

The Book of the Rewards of Life, Hildegard Von Bingen, The Sixth Part, Concerning the Heavenly Joys of Confessors and Repentants, Oxford University Press, 1994

"1. Interior innocence as purity of heart made it impossible somehow for one to be reduced by the other to the level of a mere object. The fact that they

were not ashamed means that they were united by awareness of the gift. They were mutually conscious of the nuptial meaning of their bodies, in which the freedom of the gift is expressed and all the interior riches of the person as subject are manifested.

This mutual interpenetration of the "self" of the human persons, of the man and of the woman, seems to exclude subjectively any reduction to an object. This reveals the subjective profile of that love. It can be said that this love "is objective" to the depths, since it is nourished by the mutual "objectivity" of the gift.

2. After original sin, man and woman will lose the grace of original innocence. The discovery of the nuptial meaning of the body will cease to be for them a simple reality of revelation and grace. However, this meaning will remain as a commitment given to man by the ethos of the gift, inscribed in the depths of the human heart, as a distant echo of original innocence. From that nuptial meaning human love in its interior truth and its subjective authenticity will be formed. And man—also through the veil of shame—will continually rediscover himself as the guardian of the mystery of the subject, that is, of the freedom of the gift, so as to defend it from any reduction to the position of a mere object.

3. For the present, however, we are before the threshold of man's earthly history. The man and the woman have not yet crossed it toward knowledge of good and evil. They are immersed in the mystery of creation. The depth of this mystery hidden in their hearts is innocence, grace, love and justice: "And God

saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gn 1:31).

Man appears in the visible world as the highest expression of the divine gift, because he bears within him the interior dimension of the gift. With it he brings into the world his particular likeness to God, with which he transcends and dominates also his "visibility" in the world, his corporality, his masculinity or femininity, his nakedness. A reflection of this likeness is also the primordial awareness of the nuptial meaning of the body, pervaded by the mystery of original innocence.

4. Thus, in this dimension, a primordial sacrament is constituted, understood as a sign that transmits effectively in the visible world the invisible mystery hidden in God from time immemorial. This is the mystery of truth and love, the mystery of divine life, in which man really participates. In the history of man, original innocence begins this participation and it is also a source of original happiness. The sacrament, as a visible sign, is constituted with man, as a body, by means of his visible masculinity and femininity. The body, and it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus be a sign of it."

The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II, Original Unity of Man and Woman, The Daughters of St. Paul, 1997, Pauline Books

*"Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo*

Thus, in your mind."

Confessions of St. Augustine, St. Augustine, Translated by Rex Warner, Penguin Group, 1963





CHAPTER FOUR

I Shall Choose the Elegant Way

There is this penetrating emptiness
 Which reigns within the human condition
 Which I shall decline

Now that I have seen that which could've been
 My search has only begun for the manner in which to
 seek it out

If it once was, it can be for us again
 Although it may require an individual seeking
 A solitary gesture
 To attain to such a lofty sphere
 Perhaps it may remain hidden
 And lost

To the majority of fallen humanity
 But the freeborn may choose to seek it out
 Although such perfection may not be attainable in
 this realm

We know now that it is attainable somewhere
 And therefore, to seek and find it has become my
 calling

I have known it in the heavenly sphere
 The spheres beyond time where the gifts of God have
 been made manifest

How much I long to return to this primordial place
 To understand why such a grand gift would be
 rejected

Perhaps it was rejected for a simple reason
 When given so much the appreciation of it can be less
 than worthy of proper awe and wonder
 But once it is lost
 The gaping emptiness becomes acute

To recognize what my marriage has become on the
ground

And to see what it could have been if sin had not
entered into the equation

Awes me

Is it no wonder that the relationship between human
beings

Along with the relationships between human beings
and their God

Remains so strained as to appear completely beyond
repair?

But yet, it is not

I know for I have seen

What is it that brings us back into this primordial
grace?

Can it be done on any level in a mortal realm?

It seems that to accept the status of a freeborn
One must at least seek it out

And by so seeking, find out what is possible
In a world of fallenness

But . . .

The masterful hand of God has shown me

That even amidst this fallen world

The primordial perfection can be seen, felt, tasted,
heard

Therefore, the freeborn cannot stop here

The freeborn must seek it wherever he may be
For God shows us potentials so that we may make
them into realities

In worlds where potentials have been lost
I thank Thee, Oh God

For you Who are mighty have shown great things to
me who is weak

To whom shall I go, to where shall I seek, for whence
can I find this knowledge

And in a dream, the great Lord of Hosts led the
freeborn traveler to yet another from years hence
To help him in his question

An allegory:

“So the freeborn, ever persistent in his quest to know and understand, prayed fervently for guidance into this question of the fall and that which the all holy God would choose His travelers to know in their seeking of this primordial state.

In a dream, a vision of the night, he was led to thus texts by Jacob Boehme.” (Mysterium Magnum)





The Eighteenth Chapter.

Of the Paradisical State, shewing how it should have been if Adam had not fallen.

1. KNOW the Sophister will here cavil at me, and cry it down as a thing *impossible* for me to know, seeing I was not there and saw it myself: To him I say, that I in the *Essence* of my Soul and Body, when I was not as yet I, but when I was in *Adam's Essence*, was there, and did *myself* *fool* away my Glory in *Adam*; but seeing *Christ* has restored it again to me, I see in the *Spirit* of *Christ* what gently looke. I was in *Paradise*, and what I am now in *Sin*, and what I shall be again; and therefore let none decry it as a thing unknowable; for though I *indeed* know it not, yet the *Spirit* of *Christ* knows it in *me*; from which Knowledge I shall write.

2. *Adam* was a Man and also a Woman, and yet none of them [*distinct*,] but a Virgin full of Chaffity, Modesty, and Purity, *viz.* the *Image* of God: He had both the *Tinctures* of the Fire and Light in him; in the *Conjunction* of which the own Love, *viz.* the Virgin Center, stood, being the fair *Paradisical Rose-Garden* of Delight, wherein he loved himself; as we also in the *Resurrection* of the Dead shall be such, as Christ tells us, *that we shall neither marry, nor be given in Marriage, but be like the Angels of God.*

3. Such a Man, as *Adam* was before his *Eve*, shall arise, and again enter into, and eternally possess *Paradise*, not a Man or Woman, but, as the Scripture says, *They are Virgins, and follow God, and the Lamb, they are like to the Angels of God*; yet not only pure Spirit, as the Angels, but in heavenly Bodies, in which the spiritual angelical Body inhabits.

4. Seeing then *Adam* was created in *Paradise* to the *Life Eternal* in the *Image* of God, and God himself breathed his *Life* and *Spirit* into him, therefore we can well describe him, how he was in his *Innocence*, and how he fell, and what he is now, and shall again be at last.

5. If God had created him to the *earthly, corruptible, miserable, naked, sick,* *Or for*
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- * God. bestial, toilsome *Life*, then he had not brought him into Paradise; if he had desired [or willed] the *bestial* Copulation and Propagation, then he would instantly in the Beginning have created Man and Woman, and both Sexes had come forth in the *Verbum Fiat*, into the Division of both Tinctures, as it was in the other earthly Creatures.
- * Or Mother's Body. 6. Every Creature brings its Cloathing from its *Dam*; but *Man* comes miserable, naked and bare, in deepest Poverty, and Inability, and is able to do nothing; and in his Arrival to this World he is the poorest, most miserable, forlorn, and most shiftless Creature amongst all Kinds, which cannot at all help himself; which does sufficiently shew to us, that he was not created of God to this Misery, but * in his Perfection, as all other Creatures were, which [Perfection] the first Man fooled away [or lost] by false Lust; whereupon God afterwards in his *Sleep* did first figurize him in the outward *Fiat* to the natural Life in Man and Woman, according to the Property of all earthly Creatures, and hung upon him the Worm's *Carcis*, with the bestial Members for Propagation, of which the poor Soul is to this Day ashamed, that it must bear a bestial Form on the Body.
- * Or of. 7. Two fixed and stedfast Essences were in *Adam*, viz. the spiritual Body * from the Love-Essentiality of the inward Heaven, which was God's *Temple*; and the outward Body, viz. the *Limus* of the Earth, which was the Mansion and Habitation of the inward spiritual Body, which in no wise was manifest according to the Vanity of the Earth, for it was a *Limus*, an Extract of the good Part of the Earth, which at the last Judgment shall be severed in the Earth, from the Vanity of the Curse, and the *Corruption* of the Devil.
- * Text, Cor-
pus. 8. These two Beings, viz. the inward Heavenly, and the outward Heavenly, were mutually espoused to each other, and formed into one Body, wherein was the most *body* *Tincture* of the Fire and Light, viz. the great joyful Love-desire, which did inflame the Essence, so that both Essences did very earnestly and ardently desire each other in the Love-desire, and loved one another: The Inward loved the Outward as its Manifestation and *Sensation*, and the Outward loved the Inward as its greatest *Sweetness* and Joyfulness, as its precious Pearl, and most beloved Spouse and Comfort; and yet they were not two Bodies, but only one, but of a *twofold* Essence, viz. one inward, heavenly, holy, and one from the Essence of Time; which were espoused and betrothed to each other to * an eternal [Being].
- * Or eter-
nally. 9. And the *magical* Impregnation [or Conception] and Birth did stand in this fiery Love-desire; for the Tincture penetrated through both Essences, through the inward and outward, and awakened (or stirred up) the Desire; and the Desire was the *Fiat*, which the Love-lust [or Imagination] * took, and brought into a Substance; thus the Likeness of the *express Image* was formed in this Substance, being a spiritual Image according to the first: As the *Fiat* had conceived, and formed the first Image, viz. *Adam*, so also the Likeness was conceived out of the first for Propagation; and in this Conception also the magical Birth was forthwith (effected,) where, in the Birth, the *spiritual Body* became external.
- * Conceived. 10. Understand, if it had been that *Adam* had stood, then the magical Birth had been thus [effected] not by a sundry peculiar *Issue* from *Adam's* Body, as now, but as the Sun shines entirely through the Water, and rends (or tears) it not, so the spiritual Body, viz. the Birth, had been brought forth, and in its coming forth had become *substantial*, without Pains, Care, and Distress, in a great Joyfulness and Delight; it had been, in a Manner, as both Seeds of Man and Woman receive in their Conjunction a pleasanter Aspect, so also the magical Impregnation and Birth had been a Virgin-like Image wholly perfect according to the first.
- 11. Which afterwards, when *Venus's Matrix* was taken from *Adam*, and formed into a

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Of the Paradisical State.

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Woman, must be done through Anguish, Trouble, Smart, Pangs and Distress; as God said to *Eve*, *I will multiply thy Sorrows*; when thou conceivest, thou shalt now bring forth Children with Sorrow, and thy Will shall be subject to thy Husband. Why? Because it was sprung forth from the Man's Will: *Eve* was half the *Adam*, viz. the Part wherein *Adam* should have loved and impregnated himself; the same, when he stood not, was taken from him in his Sleep, and formed into a *Woman*; therefore when *Adam* saw her, he said, She shall be called *Woman*, because she is taken out of Man.

12. Man should have walked naked upon the Earth, for the heavenly (Part) penetrated the outward, and was his *Cloathing*; he stood in great Beauty, Glory, Joy, and Delight, in a Child-like Mind; he should have eaten, and drunk in a magical Manner, not into the Body, as now, but in the *Mouth*; there was the *Separation*; for so likewise was the Fruit of Paradise.

13. All Things were made for his Sport and Delight; no *Sleep* was in him; the *Night* was in him as the *Day*; for he saw with ⁴pure Eyes in ⁵peculiar Light; the inward Man, ⁶Glorified, ⁷ciz. the inward Eye, saw through the outward; as we in the other World shall need no ⁸illuminous Sun; for we [shall] see in the divine Sight, in the Light of the peculiar Nature. *No* ⁹In his own Heat nor Cold had touched them; there had also *no Winter* been manifest upon the ¹⁰genuine in-hate Light. Earth, for in Paradise there was an equal Temperature.

14. The Tincture of the Earth had been their Delight and Pastime; they would have had all Metals for their Play till the Time that God had changed the outward World; *no* Fear or Terror had been in them, also *no* Law from any Thing, or with respect to any Thing; for all had been *free* to them; *Adam* had been their chief Prince; and they would have lived in the World, and also in Heaven, inhabiting in *both* Worlds at once; Paradise had been through the whole World.

15. But seeing the divine *Providence* did well know that *Adam* would not stand, seeing the Earth was corrupted by its former Prince, in that the *Wrath* of God had moved itself and ⁴amasted the Essence into an Impression, therefore God created all Manner of Fruits ⁴Or took. and Beasts; also all Sorts of ⁵Medicines for the future Sicknes of Man; and likewise all ⁶Or fore-Kinds of ⁷Meat; that the Man might have Food and *Raiment* also in this World. ⁸reign, healing Animals, Vegetables, and Minerals.

16. For he had determined to lend *another Prince*, by whom he would redeem Man, from his Sicknes and Death, and purify and purge the Earth through the Fire of God, and introduce it into the *holy* (Being,) as it was when *Lucifer* was an *Angel*, before it came into such a *Creature*.

17. And *Adam* was created only ¹to the divine Image, which should be eternal; and ²Or in. though it was known in the Wrath of God that Man would fall, yet the ³Regenerator was ⁴Or Reforer. also known in God's Love; to whom this Hierarchy should be given for a royal Possession in *Lucifer's* stead.

18. But that the Fall ¹might not proceed (or come) from the divine Appointment, ¹Or might God made Man perfect, and created and ordained him to Paradise, and forbade him the ²not so much false Lust, which the Devil stirred up through the *Linus* of the Earth in *Adam's* outward ³as appear to arise from Body, with his false Imagination and Hungry-desire.

19. And *Adam* was (before his *Eve*) *forty Days* in Paradise, in the Temptation, before God made the *Woman* out of him; if he had stood steadfast, then God had to confirmed him to *Eternity*.

20. But that I write of *forty Days*, contrary to the Custom [and Opinion] of other Writers, is, that we have *certain* Knowledge and sufficient Ground of the same, not only by Conjecture, but from another Knowledge; of this also we will shew you the *Types*. As (first) of *Moses* upon Mount *Sinai*, when God gave him the *Law*, this was done in *forty Days*, and *Israel* was tried whether they would continue in divine Obedience; but seeing they made a Calf and an *Idol*, and fell from God, therefore *Moses* must

break the first Tables of the Law; signifying the *first Adam* in the divine Law, who ¹ Departed from it: Therefore the same was broken from him, and he fell into the ² *Breaking* of his Body, as *Moſes* broke the Tables in *Pieces*.

¹ Round Ball, 21. And God gave *Moſes* another Scripture or Writing upon ² a Table of Stone; or Glob. which signifies the *second Adam* (Christ) who should restore the first, and again introduce *his Law into his Table of the Heart*, *viz.* into the Life into the Humanity, and write it with the living Spirit in the sweet *Name JESU*; thus the other Law was also written, how God's Love would destroy or break in *Pieces* the Anger; of which the Covenant in the Law was a Type, as shall be hereafter mentioned in *Moſes*.

² 22. The second Figure of *Adam* in Paradise are the *forty Years* in the Wilderness; where *Israeſ* was tried in the Law with the heavenly *Manna*, whether or no they would be obedient to God, that the Anger might not so much devour them. The third Figure is the true real one, *viz.* *Adam's* hard ³ Encounter with Christ in the Wilderness, where he fled in *Adam's* Stead before the Devil and God's Anger, where he eat *forty* ⁴ *Text* of the *Days* magically, *viz.* of the *Word of the Lord*, in which *Adam* also was tempted, whether he would remain wholly resigned to God's Will; Christ was tempted in *Adam's* Stead in *Adam's* Temptation, and with all whatsoever, wherein *Adam* was tempted, as shall be mentioned hereafter.

⁵ 23. The fourth Figure are the *forty Hours* of Christ in the Grave, where he awaked *Adam* out of his *first Sleep*. The fifth Figure are the *forty Days* of Christ after his Resurrection in the last *Proba*, where the Humanity was last of all tried, whether it would now stand and be wholly resigned in God, seeing that Death was destroyed, and the inward human Life new-born in God.

24. These five Figures belong to the *five Degrees* of Nature; from the first Form of Nature even to the fifth, *viz.* to the *boly Center* of the *Love-birth*; if it were not too large, we would set it forth very clearly; it shall be flown in *its Place*.

⁶ 25. These *forty Days* *Adam* was ⁷ tried in his Innocence, whether or no he would or could *stand*, to posies the Throne of *Lucifer*, as an Hierarch, and Prince of God; but seeing God knew that this would not be, he determined to move himself with his *deepf Love* in this *Adamical*, angelic Image of the inward holy Man, which ⁸ disappeared in *Adam*, and to *regenerate* him anew, *viz.* in the *Seed of the Woman*; understand in the *Love-desire's Seed*, wherein *Adam* should have impregnated, generated, or brought forth himself in a magical Manner. In this Seed the *Mark or Bound* of the promised Covenant ⁹ in Christ was set, who should restore the Angels-Image, *viz.* the divine Man, as it is effected.

26. These *forty Days* *Adam*, *viz.* the Soul of *Adam* in the Flesh, was tempted *betwixt* three Principles; for each Principle drew the Soul in the Flesh, and would have the Upper-hand or Dominion.

¹⁰ 27. This was the right ¹¹ *Proba* of what the *free Will* of the Soul would do; whether it would remain in the divine Harmony, or whether it would enter into the *Selfhood*: Here it was tried in Soul and Body, and drawn by all the three Principles; each would accomplish [or work forth] its Wonders in him.

¹² 28. Not that the three Principles stood in unequal Measure and Weight in *Adam*, they were in equal Weight in him, but *not without him*; moreover the Devil was very busy in God's Anger in the first Principle with his false Desire, and introduced continually his *Imagination* into the Soul, and into the outward Flesh, *viz.* into the *Limus* of the Earth, and insinuated it into the first Principle, *viz.* into the fiery Property of the Soul, even into the eternal Nature; whereupon the first Principle in the Soul was moved to speculate itself in the Devil's Imagination (or Glafs of Fancy) *viz.* to contemplate in the magical Birth, how, and what, Evil and Good were, how it would relish and be in

¹³ *In the Difficultie or various Diffinity of the Properties which were withoutitself*, the ¹⁴ *Unlikeness* of the *Essence*, whence the *Lust* arose in the Soul.

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29. The *earthly Lust*, to eat of the manifold Properties, arose in the outward Part of the Soul; and in the inward fiery Part of the Soul the Lust of *Pride* arose, to know and prove Evil and Good, desiring to be like God, as the Devil also did, when he would be an [•]Artifit, in the magical Birth; after which *Adam* here also lusted.

• Or Crafts.

30. Though *Adam* did not desire to prove the first Principle, as *Lucifer* has done, for master; his Lust was only bent to taste and prove Evil and Good, viz. the *Vanity* of the Earth; the outward Soul was awakened so, that the Hunger entered into its Mother, from whence it was drawn, and it was introduced into another Source.

31. And when this *Hunger* entered into the Earth to eat of Evil and Good, then the Desire in the *Fiat* drew forth the *Tree* of Temptation, and set it before *Adam*; then came the severe Command from God, and said to *Adam*, *Thou shalt not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; in that Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the Death.*

32. And *Adam* also did not eat thereof in the Mouth, only with the Imagination or Desire he did eat thereof, whereby the heavenly Tincture disappeared, which stood in a fiery Love; and the earthly one did awake in the outward Soul's Property, whereby the heavenly Image was obscured.

33. Thus the magical Birth was spoiled, and it could not then be; though *Adam* stood in Paradise, yet it had not availed him; for in the Imagination or *Hunger* [•]Or had then *Adam*'s fair Image fell into a Swoond, and drew near to the Cessation of its Operation; for the heavenly Tincture was captivated in the earthly Desire; for the outward Desire impreffed into it its Essence out of the Vanity, whereby the Man was darkened, and lost his clear pure [•]steady Eyes and Sight, which was from the divine Essence, from [•]Conflant, whence before he had his Sight [or Seeing.] permanent.

34. Now *Moses* says, that the Lord God said, *It is not good that this Man should be alone, Gen. 2. v. 18. we will make an Help meet for him.* When God had created all Creatures with the whole creatureal Host, *Moses* says, *And God beheld all Things which he had made; and lo! it was very good, and confirmed all to its Propagation; but here he says of Man, It is not good that he should be alone; for he saw his miserable Fall, that he could not magically propagate himself, and said, we will make an Help for him.*



**A DISCOURSE BETWEEN A SOUL HUNGRY
AND THIRSTY AFTER THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE,
THE SWEET LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST, AND A
SOUL ENLIGHTENED.**

SHEWING

Which Way one Soul should seek after and comfort another, and bring it by Means of its Knowledge into the Paths of Christ's Pilgrimage, and faithfully warn it of the thorny Way of the World, which leadeth the fallen Soul that naturally walketh therein, into the Abyss or Pit of Hell.

Composed by a Soul that loveth all who are the Children of Jesus Christ under the Cross.

**THE WAY FROM DARKNESS TO TRUE
ILLUMINATION**

THERE was a poor soul that had wandered out of paradise, and come into the kingdom of this world; where the devil met with it, and said to it, "Whither dost thou go, thou soul that art half blind?"

The Soul said: I would see and speculate into the creatures of the world, which the Creator hath made.

The Devil said: How wilt thou see and speculate into them, when thou canst not know their essence and property? Thou wilt look upon their outside only, as upon a graven image, and canst not know them thoroughly.

The Soul said: How may I come to know their essence and property?

The Devil said: Thine eyes would be opened to see them thoroughly, if thou didst but eat of that from whence the creatures themselves are come to be good and evil. Thou wouldst then be as God himself is, and know what the creature is.

The Soul said: I am now a noble and holy creature; but if I should do so, the Creator hath said, that I should die.

The Devil said: No, thou shouldst not die at all; but thy eyes would be opened, and thou wouldst be as God himself, and be master of good and evil. Also, thou shouldst be mighty, powerful, and very great, as I am; all the subtlety that is in the creatures would be made known to thee.

The Soul said: If I had the knowledge of nature and of the creatures, I would then rule the whole world as I listed.

The Devil said: The whole ground of that knowledge lieth in thee. Do but turn thy will and desire from God or goodness into nature and the creatures, and then there will arise in thee a lust to taste; and so thou mayest eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and by that means come to know all things.

The Soul said: Well then, I will eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, that I may rule all

things by my own power; and be of myself a lord on earth, and do what I will, as God himself doth.

The Devil said: I am the prince of this world; and if thou wouldest rule on earth, thou must turn thy lust towards my image, or desire to be like me, that thou mayest get the cunning, wit, reason, and subtlety, that my image hath.

Thus did the devil present to the soul the Vulcan in the Mercury (the power that is in the fiery root of the creature), that is, the fiery wheel of essence or substance, in the form of a serpent. Upon which,

The Soul said: Behold, this is the power which can do all things.—What must I do to get it?

The Devil said: Thou thyself art also such a fiery Mercury. If thou dost break thy will off from God, and bring it into this power and skill, then thy hidden ground will be manifested in thee, and thou mayest work in the same manner. But thou must eat of that fruit, wherein each of the four elements in itself ruleth over the other, and is in strife; the heat striving against the cold, and the cold against the heat; and so all the properties of nature work feelyingly. And then thou wilt instantly be as the fiery wheel is, and so bring all things into thine own power, and possess them as thine own.

The Soul did so, and what happened thereupon

Now when the soul broke its will thus off from God, and brought it into the Mercury, or the fiery will

(which is the root of life and power), there presently arose in it a lust to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; and the soul did eat thereof. Which as soon as it had done, Vulcan (or the artificer in the fire) instantly kindled the fiery wheel of its substance, and thereupon all the properties of nature awoke in the soul and exercised each its own lust and desire.

First arose the lust of pride; a desire to be great, mighty, and powerful; to bring all things under subjection to it, and so to be lord itself without control; despising all humility and equality, as esteeming itself the only prudent, witty, and cunning one, and accounting everything folly that is not according to its own humour and liking.

Secondly arose the lust of covetousness; a desire of getting, which would draw all things to itself, into its own possession. For when the lust of pride had turned away the will from God, then the life of the soul would not trust God any further, but would take care for itself; and therefore brought its desire into the creatures, viz. into the earth, metals, trees, and other creatures. Thus the kindled fiery life became hungry and covetous, when it had broken itself off from the unity, love, and meekness of God, and attracted to itself the four elements and their essence, and brought itself into the condition of the beasts; and so the life became dark, empty, and wrathful; and the heavenly virtues and' colours went out, like a candle extinguished.

Thirdly, there awoke in this fiery life the stinging thorny lust of envy; a hellish poison, a property

which all devils have, and a torment which makes the life a mere enmity to God, and to all creatures. Which envy raged 'furiously in the desire of covetousness, as a venomous sting doth in the body. Envy cannot endure, but hateth and would hurt or destroy that which covetousness cannot draw to itself, by which hellish passion the noble love of the soul is smothered.

Fourthly, there awoke in this fiery life a torment like fire, viz. anger; which would murder and remove out of the way all who would not be subject to pride. Thus the ground and foundation of hell, which is called the anger of God, was wholly manifested in this soul. Whereby it lost the fair paradise of God and the kingdom of heaven, and became such a worm as the fiery serpent was, which the devil presented to it in his own image and likeness. And so the soul began to rule on earth in a bestial manner, and did all things according to the will of the devil; living in mere pride, covetousness, envy, and anger, having no longer any true love towards God. But there arose in the stead thereof an evil bestial love of filthy lechery, wantonness, and vanity, and there was no purity left in the heart; for the soul had forsaken paradise, and taken the earth into its possession. Its mind was wholly bent upon cunning knowledge, subtlety, and getting together a multitude of earthly things. No righteousness nor virtue remained in it at all; but whatsoever evil and wrong it committed, it covered all cunningly and subtly under the cloak of its power and authority by law, and called it by the name of right and justice, and accounted it good.

The Devil came to the Soul

Upon this the devil drew near to the soul, and brought it on from one vice to another, for he had taken it captive in his essence, and set joy and pleasure before it therein, saying thus to it: Behold, now thou art powerful, mighty, and noble, endeavour to be greater, richer, and more powerful still. Display thy knowledge, wit, and subtlety, that every one may fear thee, and stand in awe of thee, and that thou mayest be respected, and get a great name in the world.

The Soul did so

The soul did as the devil counselled it, and yet knew not that its counsellor was the devil; but thought it was guided by its own knowledge, wit, and understanding, and that it did very well and right all the while.

Jesus Christ met with the Soul

The soul going on in this course of life, our dear and loving Lord Jesus Christ, who was come into this world with the love and wrath of God, to destroy the works of the devil, and to execute judgement upon all ungodly deeds, on a time met with it, and spake by a strong power, viz. by his passion and death, into it, and destroyed the works of the devil in it, and discovered to it the way to his grace, and shone upon it with his mercy, calling it to return and repent; and promising that he would then deliver it from that

monstrous deformed shape or image which it had gotten, and bring it into paradise again.

How Christ wrought in the Soul

Now when the spark of the love of God, or the divine light, was accordingly manifested in the soul, it presently saw itself with its will and works to be in hell, in the wrath of God, and found that it was a misshapen ugly monster in the divine presence and the kingdom of heaven; at which it was so affrighted, that it fell into the greatest anguish possible, for the judgement of God was manifested in it.

What Christ said

Upon this the Lord Christ spake into it with the voice of his grace, and said, "Repent and forsake vanity, and thou shalt attain my grace."

What the Soul said

Then the soul in its ugly misshapen image, with the defiled coat of vanity, went before God, and entreated for grace and the pardon of its sins, and came to be strongly persuaded in itself, that the satisfaction and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ did belong to it. But the evil properties of the serpent, formed in the astral spirit, or reason of the outward man, would not suffer the will of the soul to come before God, but brought their lusts and inclinations thereinto. For those evil properties would not die to their own lusts, nor leave the world, for they were come out of the world, and therefore they feared the reproach of it, in

case they should forsake their worldly honour and glory.

But the poor soul turned its countenance towards God, and desired grace from him, even that he would bestow his love upon it.

The Devil came to it again

But when the devil saw that the soul thus prayed to God, and would enter into repentance, he drew near to it, and thrust the inclinations of the earthly properties into its prayers, and disturbed its good thoughts and desires which pressed forward towards God, and drew them back again to earthly things that they might have no access to him.

The Soul sighed

The central will of the soul indeed sighed after God, but the thoughts arising in the mind, that it should penetrate into him, were distracted, scattered, and destroyed, so that they could not reach the power of God. At which the poor soul was still more affrighted, and began to pray more earnestly. But the devil with his desire took hold of the mercurial kindled fiery wheel of life, and awakened the evil properties, so that evil or false inclinations arose in the soul, and went into that thing wherein they had taken most pleasure and delight before.

The poor soul would very fain go forward to God with its will, and therefore used all its endeavours;

but its thoughts continually fled away from God into earthly things, and would not go to him.

Upon this the soul sighed and bewailed itself to God; but was as if it were quite forsaken by him, and cast out from his presence. It could not get so much as one look of grace, but was in mere anguish, fear, and terror, and dreaded every moment that the wrath and severe judgement of God would be manifested in it, and that the devil would take hold of it and have it. And thereupon fell into such great heaviness and sorrow, that it became weary of all the temporal things, which before were its chief joy and happiness.

The earthly natural will indeed desired those things still, but the soul would willingly leave them altogether, and desired to die to all temporal lust and joy whatsoever, and longed only after its first native country, from whence it originally came. But found itself to be far from thence, in great distress and want, and knew not what to do, yet resolved to enter into itself, and try to pray more earnestly.

The Devil's Opposition

But the devil opposed it, and withheld it so that it could not bring itself into any greater fervency of repentance.

He awakened the earthly lusts in its heart, that they might still keep their evil nature and false right therein, and set them at variance with the new-born will and desire of the soul. For they would not die to their own will and light, but would still maintain their

temporal pleasures, and so kept the poor soul captive in their evil desires, that it could not stir, though it sighed and longed never so much after the grace of God. For whensoever it prayed, or offered to press forward towards God, then the lusts of the flesh swallowed up the rays and ejaculations that went forth from it, and brought them away from God into earthly thoughts, that it might not partake of divine strength. Which caused the poor soul to think itself forsaken of God, not knowing that he was so near it, and did thus attract it. Also the devil got access to it, and entered into the fiery Mercury, or fiery wheel of its life, and mingled his desires with the earthly lusts of the flesh, and tempted the poor soul; saying to it in the earthly thoughts, "Why dost thou pray? Dost thou think that God knoweth thee or regardeth thee? Consider but what thoughts thou hast in his presence; are they not altogether evil? Thou hast no faith or belief in God at all; how then should he hear thee? He heareth thee not, leave off; why wilt thou needlessly torment and vex thyself? Thou hast time enough to repent at leisure. Wilt thou be mad? Do but look upon the world, I pray thee, a little; doth it not live in jollity and mirth? yet it will be saved well enough for all that. Hath not Christ paid the ransom and satisfied for all men? Thou needest only persuade and comfort thyself that it is done for thee, and then thou shalt be saved. Thou canst not possibly in this world come to any feeling of God; therefore leave off, and take care for thy body, and look after temporal glory. What dost thou suppose will become of thee, if thou turn to be so stupid and melancholy? Thou wilt be the scorn of everybody, and they will laugh at thy folly; and so thou wilt spend thy days in mere sorrow and

heaviness, which is pleasing neither to God nor nature. I pray thee, look upon the beauty of the world; for God hath created and placed thee in it, to be a lord over all creatures, and to rule them. Gather store of temporal goods beforehand, that thou mayest not be beholden to the world, or stand in need hereafter. And when old age cometh, or that thou growest near thy end, then prepare thyself for repentance. God will save thee, and receive thee into the heavenly mansions then. There is no need of such ado in vexing, bewailing, and stirring up thyself, as thou makest."

The Condition of the Soul

In these and the like thoughts the soul was ensnared by the devil, and brought into the lusts of the flesh, and earthly desires; and so bound as it were with fetters and strong chains, that it did not know what to do. It looked back a little into the world and the pleasures thereof, but still felt in itself a hunger after divine grace, and would always rather enter into repentance, and favour with God. For the hand of God had touched and bruised it, and therefore it could rest nowhere; but always sighed in itself after sorrow for the sins it had committed, and would fain be rid of them. Yet could not get true repentance, or even the knowledge of sin, though it had a mighty hunger and longing desire after such penitential sorrow.

The soul being thus heavy and sad, and finding no remedy or rest, began to cast about where it might find a fit place to perform true repentance in, where it

might be free from business, cares, and the hindrances of the world; and also by what means it might win the favour of God. And at length purposed to betake itself to some private solitary place, and give over all worldly employments and temporal things; and hoped, that by being bountiful and pitiful to the poor, it should obtain God's mercy. Thus did it devise all kinds of ways to get rest, and gain the love, favour, and grace of God again. But all would not do; for its worldly business still followed it in the lusts of the flesh, and it was ensnared in the net of the devil now, as well as before, arid could not attain rest. And though for a little while it was somewhat cheered with earthly things, yet presently it fell to be as sad and heavy again, as it was before. The truth was, it felt the awakened wrath of God in itself, but knew not how that came to pass, nor what it ailed. For many times great trouble and terror fell upon it, which made it comfortless, sick, and faint with very fear; so mightily did the first bruising it with the ray or influence of the stirring of grace work upon it. And yet it knew not that Christ was in the wrath and severe justice of God, and fought therein with Satan that spirit of error, which was incorporated in soul and body; nor understood that the hunger and desire to turn and repent came from Christ himself, by which it was drawn in this manner; neither did it know what hindered that it could not yet attain to divine feeling. It knew not that itself was a monster, and did bear the image of the serpent, in which the devil had such power and access to it, and had confounded all its good desires, thoughts, and motions, and brought them away from God and goodness; concerning which Christ himself said, "The

devil snatcheth the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."

An enlightened and regenerate Soul met the distressed Soul

By the providence of God, an enlightened and regenerate soul met this poor afflicted and distressed soul, and said, "What ailest thou, thou distressed soul, that thou art so restless and troubled?"

The distressed Soul answered

The Creator hath hid his countenance from me, so that I cannot come to his rest; therefore I am thus troubled, and know not what I shall do to get his loving-kindness again. For great cliffs and rocks lie in my way to his grace, so that I cannot come to him. Though I sigh and long after him never so much, yet I am kept back, that I cannot partake of his power, virtue, and strength.

The enlightened Soul said

Thou bearest the monstrous shape of the devil, and art clothed therewith; in which, being his own property or principle, he hath access or power of entrance into thee, and thereby keepeth thy will from penetrating into God. For if thy will might penetrate into God, it would be anointed with the highest power and strength of God, in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that unction would break in pieces the monster which thou carriest about thee; and thy first image of paradise would revive in the centre; which would destroy the devil's power

therein, and thou wouldest become an angel again. And because the devil envieth thee this happiness, he holdeth thee captive in his desire in the lusts of the flesh; from which if thou art not delivered, thou wilt be separated from God, and canst never enter into our society.

The distressed Soul terrified

At this speech the poor distressed soul was so terrified and amazed, that it could not speak one word more. When it found that it stood in the form and condition of the serpent, which separated it from God; and that the devil was so nigh it in that condition, who injected evil thoughts into the will of the soul, and had so much power over it thereby, that it was near damnation, and sticking fast in the abyss or bottomless pit of hell, in the anger of God; it would have even despaired of divine mercy; but that the power, virtue, and strength of the first stirring of the grace of God, which had before bruised the soul, upheld and preserved it from total despair. But still it wrestled in itself between hope and doubt; whatsoever hope built up, that doubt threw down again. And thus was it agitated with such continual disquiet, that at last the world and all the glory thereof became loathsome to it, neither would it enjoy worldly pleasures any more; and yet for all this, could it not come to rest.

The enlightened Soul came again, and spoke to the troubled Soul

On a time the enlightened soul came again to this soul, and finding it still in so great trouble, anguish, and grief of mind, said to it:

What dost thou? Wilt thou destroy thyself in thy anguish and sorrow? Why dost torment thyself in thy own power and will, who art but a worm, seeing thy torment increaseth thereby more and more? Yea, if thou shouldst sink thyself down to the bottom of the sea, or couldst fly to the uttermost coasts of the morning, or raise thyself above the stars, yet thou wouldst not be released. For the more thou grieveſt, tormentest, and troubleſt thyself, the more painful thy nature will be; and yet thou wilt not be able to come to rest. For thy power is quite lost; and as a dry ſtick burnt to a coal cannot grow green and ſpring afresh by its own power, nor get ſap to flouriſh again with other trees and plants; so neither canſt thou reach the place of God by thy own power and strength, and transform thyself into that angelical image which thou hadſt at first. For in respect to God thou art withered and dry, like a dead plant that hath lost its ſap and strength, and ſo art become a dry tormenting hunger. Thy properties are like heat and cold, which continually ſtrive one againſt the other, and can never unite.

The distressed Soul ſaid

What then ſhall I do to bud forth again, and recover the first life, wherein I was at rest before I became an image?

The enlightened Soul ſaid

Thou shalt do nothing at all but forsake thy own will, viz. that which thou callest I, or thyself. By which means all thy evil properties will grow weak, faint, and ready to die; and then thou wilt sink down again into that one thing, from which thou art originally sprung. For now thou liest captive in the creatures; but if thy will forsaketh them, the creatures, with their evil inclinations, will die in thee, which at present stay and hinder thee, that thou canst not come to God. But if thou takest this course, thy God will meet thee with his infinite love, which he hath manifested in Christ Jesus in the humanity, or human nature. And that will impart sap, life, and vigour to thee; whereby thou mayest bud, spring, flourish again, and rejoice in the living God, as a branch growing on his true vine. And so thou wilt at length recover the image of God, and be delivered from the image or condition of the serpent: Then shalt thou come to be my brother, and have fellowship with the angels.

The poor Soul said

How can I forsake my will, so that the creatures which lodge therein may die, seeing I must be in the world, and also have need of it as long as I live?

The enlightened Soul said

Now thou hast worldly power and riches, which thou possessest as thy own, to do what thou wilt with, and regardest not how thou gettest or uses the same; employing them in the service and indulgence of thy carnal and vain desires. Nay, though thou seest the poor and needy wretch, who wanteth thy help, and is

thy brother, yet thou helpest him not, but layest heavy burdens upon him, by requiring more of him than his abilities will bear, or his necessities afford; and oppresest him, by forcing him to spend his labour and sweat for thee, and the gratification of thy voluptuous will. Thou art moreover proud, and insultest over him, and behavest roughly and sternly to him, exalting thyself above him, and making small account of him in respect of thyself. Then that poor oppressed brother of thine cometh, and complaineth with sighs towards God, that he cannot reap the benefit of his labour and pains, but is forced by thee to live in misery. By which sighings and groanings of his he raiseth up the wrath of God in thee; which maketh thy flame and unquietness still the greater. These are the creatures which thou art in love with, and hast broken thyself off from God for their sakes, and brought thy love into them, or them into thy love, so that they live therein. Thou nourishest and keepest them by continually receiving them into thy desire, for they live in and by thy receiving them into thy mind; because thou thereby bringest the lust of thy life into them. They are but unclean, filthy, and evil births, and issues of the bestial nature, which yet, by thy receiving them in thy lust or desire, have gotten an image, and formed themselves in thee. And that image is a beast with four heads: First, Pride. Secondly, Covetousness. Thirdly, Envy. Fourthly, Anger. And in these four properties the foundation of hell consisteth, which thou carriest in thee and about thee. It is imprinted and engraven in thee, and thou art wholly taken captive thereby. For these properties live in thy natural life; and thereby thou art severed from God, neither canst thou ever come to him, unless

thou so forsake these evil creatures that they may die in thee.

But since thou desirest me to tell thee how to forsake thy own perverse creaturely will, that the creatures might die, and that yet thou mightest live with them in the world. I must assure thee that there is but one way to do it, which is narrow and straight, and will be very hard and irksome to thee at the beginning, but afterwards thou wilt walk in it cheerfully.

Thou must seriously consider, that in the course of this worldly life thou walkest in the anger of God and in the foundation of hell; and that this is not thy true native country; but that a Christian should, and must live in Christ, and in his walking truly follow him; and that he cannot be a Christian, unless the spirit and power of Christ so live in him, that he becometh wholly subject to it. Now seeing the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but in heaven, therefore thou must always be in a continual ascension towards heaven, if thou wilt follow Christ; though thy body must dwell among the creatures and use them.

The narrow way to which perpetual ascension into heaven and imitation of Christ is this: Thou must despair of all thy own power and strength, for in and by thy own power thou canst not reach the gates of God; and firmly purpose and resolve wholly to give thyself up to the mercy of God, and to sink down with thy whole mind and reason into the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, always desiring to persevere in the same, and to die from all thy creatures therein. Also thou must resolve to watch

and guard thy mind, thoughts, and inclinations that they admit no evil into them, neither must thou suffer thyself to be held fast by temporal honour or profit. Thou must resolve likewise to put away from thee all unrighteousness, and whatsoever else may hinder the freedom of thy motion and progress. Thy will must be wholly pure, and fixed in a firm resolution never to return to its old idols any more, but that thou wilt that very instant leave them, and separate thy mind from them, and enter into the sincere way of truth and righteousness, according to the plain and full doctrine of Christ. And as thou dost thus purpose to forsake the enemies of thine own inward nature, so thou must also forgive all thy outward enemies, and resolve to meet them with thy love; that there may be left no creature, person, or thing at all able to take hold of thy will and captivate it; but that it may be sincere, and purged from all creatures. Nay further; if it should be required, thou must be willing and ready to forsake all thy temporal honour and profit for Christ's sake, and regard nothing that is earthly so as to set thy heart and affections upon it; but esteem thyself in whatsoever state, degree, and condition thou art, as to worldly rank or riches, to be but a servant of God and of thy fellow-Christians; or as a steward in the office wherein thy Lord hath placed thee. All arrogance and self-exaltation must be humbled, brought low, and so annihilated that nothing of thine own or of any other creature may stay in thy will to bring thy thoughts or imagination to be set upon it.

Thou must also firmly impress it on thy mind, that thou shalt certainly partake of the promised grace in the merit of Jesus Christ, viz. of his outflowing love,

which indeed is already in thee, and which will deliver thee from thy creatures, and enlighten thy will, and kindle it with the flame of love, whereby thou shalt have victory over the devil. Not as if thou couldst will or do anything in thine own strength, but only enter into the suffering and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and take them to thyself, and with them assault and break in pieces the kingdom of the devil in thee, and mortify thy creatures. Thou must resolve to enter into this way this very hour, and never to depart from it, but willingly to submit thyself to God in all thy endeavours and doings, that he may do with thee what he pleaseth.

When thy will is thus prepared and resolved, it hath then broken through its own creatures, and is sincere in the presence of God, and clothed with the merits of Jesus Christ. It may then freely go to the Father with the Prodigal Son, and fall down in his presence and pour forth its prayers; and putting forth all its strength in this divine work, confess its sins and disobedience; and how far it hath departed from God. This must be done not with bare words, but with all its strength, which indeed amounteth only to a strong purpose and resolution; for the soul of itself hath no strength or power to effect any good work.

Now when thou art thus ready, and that thy Heavenly Father shall see thy coming and returning to him in such repentance and humility, he will inwardly speak to thee, and say in thee, "Behold, this is my son which I had lost, he was dead and is alive again." And he will come to meet thee in thy mind with the grace and love of Jesus Christ, and embrace

thee with the beams of his love, and kiss thee with his Spirit and strength; and then thou shalt receive grace to pour out thy confession before him, and to pray powerfully. This indeed is the right place where thou must wrestle in the light of his countenance. And if thou standest resolutely here, and shrinkest not back, thou shalt see or feel great wonders. For thou shalt find Christ in thee assaulting hell, and crushing thy beasts in pieces, and that a great tumult and misery will arise in thee; also thy secret undiscovered sins will then first awake, and labour to separate thee from God, and to keep thee back. Thus shalt thou truly find and feel how death and life fight one against the other, and shalt understand by what passeth within thyself, what heaven and hell are. At all which be not moved, but stand firm and shrink not; for at length all thy creatures will grow faint, weak, and ready to die; and then thy will shall wax stronger, and be able to subdue and keep down the evil inclinations. So shall thy will and mind ascend into heaven every day, and thy creatures gradually die away. Thou wilt get a mind wholly new, and begin to be a new creature, and getting rid of the bestial deformity, recover the divine image. Thus shalt thou be delivered from thy present anguish, and return to thy original rest.

The poor Soul's Practice

Then the poor soul began to practise this course with such earnestness, that it conceived it should get the victory presently; but it found that the gates of heaven were shut against it in its own strength and power, and it was, as it were, rejected and forsaken by God, and received not so much as one look or glimpse

of grace from him. Upon which it said to itself, "Surely thou hast not sincerely submitted thyself to God. Desire nothing at all of him, but only submit thyself to his judgement and condemnation, that he may kill thy evil inclinations. Sink down into him beyond the limits of nature and creature, and submit thyself to him, that he may do with thee what he will, for thou art not worthy to speak to him." Accordingly the soul took a resolution to sink down, and to forsake its own will; and when it had done so, there fell upon it presently the greatest repentance that could be for the sins it had committed; and it bewailed bitterly its ugly shape, and was truly and deeply sorry that the evil creatures did dwell in it. And because of its sorrow it could not speak one word more in the presence of God, but in its repentance did consider the bitter passion and death of Jesus Christ, viz. what great anguish and torment he had suffered for its sake, in order to deliver it out of its anguish, and change it into the image of God. In which consideration it wholly sunk down, and did nothing but complain of its ignorance and negligence, and that it had not been thankful to its Redeemer, nor once considered the great love he had shewn to it, but had idly spent its time, and not at all regarded how it might come to partake of his purchased and proffered grace; but instead thereof had formed in itself the images and figures of earthly things, with the vain lusts and pleasures of the world. Whereby it had gotten such bestial inclinations, that now it must lie captive in great misery, and for very shame dared not lift up its eyes to God, who hid the light of his countenance from it, and would not so much as look upon it. And as it was thus sighing and crying, it was

drawn into the abyss or pit of horror, and laid it as it were at the gates of hell, there to perish. Upon which the poor troubled soul was, as it were, bereft of sense, and wholly forsaken, so that it in a manner forgot all its doings, and would willingly yield itself to death, and cease to be a creature. Accordingly it did yield itself to death, and desired nothing else but to die and perish in the death of its Redeemer Jesus Christ, who had suffered such torments and death for its sake. And in this perishing it began to sigh and pray in itself very inwardly to the divine goodness, and to sink down into the mere mercy of God.

Upon this there suddenly appeared unto it the amiable countenance of the love of God, which penetrated through it as a great light, and made it exceedingly joyful. It then began to pray aright, and to thank the Most High for such grace, and to rejoice abundantly, that it was delivered from the death and anguish of hell. Now it tasted of the sweetness of God, and of his promised truth; and now all the evil spirits which had harassed it before, and kept it back from the grace, love, and inward presence of God, were forced to depart from it. The "wedding of the Lamb" was now kept and solemnised, that is, the noble Sophia espoused or betrothed herself to the soul; and the seal-ring of Christ's victory was impressed into its essence, and it was received to be a child and heir of God again.

When this was done, the soul became very joyful, and began to work in this new power, and to celebrate with praise the wonders of God, and thought thenceforth to walk continually in the same light,

strength, and joy. But it was soon assaulted; from without, by the shame and reproach of the world, and from within, by great temptation, so that it began to doubt whether its ground was truly from God, and whether it had really partaken of his grace. For the accuser Satan went to it, and would fain lead it out of this course, and make it doubtful whether it was the true way; whispering thus to it inwardly, "This happy change in thy spirit is not from God, but only from thine own imagination." Also the divine light retired in the soul, and shone but in the inward ground, as fire raked up in embers, so that reason was perplexed, and thought itself forsaken, and the soul knew not what had happened to itself, nor whether it had really and truly tasted of the heavenly gift or not. Yet it could not leave off struggling; for the burning fire of love was sown in it, which had raised in it a vehement and continual hunger and thirst after the divine sweetness. So at length it began to pray aright, and to humble itself in the presence of God, and to examine and try its evil inclinations and thoughts, and to put them away. By which means the will of reason was broken, and the evil inclinations inherent in it were killed, and extirpated more and more. This process was very severe and painful to the nature of the body, for it made it faint and weak, as if it had been very sick; and yet it was no natural sickness that it had, but only the melancholy of its earthly nature, feeling and lamenting the destruction of its evil lusts.

Now when the earthly reason found itself thus forsaken, and the poor soul saw that it was despised outwardly, and derided by the world, because it would walk no longer in the way of wickedness and

vanity; and also that it was inwardly assaulted by the accuser Satan, who mocked it, and continually set before it the beauty, riches, and glory of the world, and called it a fool for not embracing them; it began to think and say thus within itself: "O eternal God! What shall I now do to come to rest?"

The enlightened Soul met it again, and spoke to it

While it was in this consideration, the enlightened soul met with it again, and said, "What ailest thou, my brother, that thou art so heavy and sad?"

The distressed Soul said

I have followed thy counsel, and thereby attained a ray, or emanation of the divine sweetness, but it is gone from me again, and I am now deserted. Moreover I have outwardly very great trials and afflictions in the world; for all my good friends forsake and scorn me; and am also inwardly assaulted with anguish, and doubt, and know not what to do.

The enlightened Soul said

Now I like thee very well; for now our beloved Lord Jesus Christ is performing that pilgrimage or process on earth with thee and in thee, which he did himself when he was in this world, who was continually reviled, despised, and evil spoken of, and had nothing of his own in it; and now thou bearest his mark or badge. But do not wonder at it, or think it strange; for it must be so, in order that thou mayest be tried, refined, and purified. In this anguish and

distress thou wilt necessarily hunger and cry after deliverance; and by such hunger and prayer thou wilt attract grace to thee both from within and from without. For thou must grow from above and from beneath to be the image of God again. Just as a young plant is agitated by the wind, and must stand its ground in heat and cold, drawing strength and virtue to it from above and from beneath by that agitation, and must endure many a tempest, and undergo much danger before it can come to be a tree, and bring forth fruit. For through that agitation the virtue of the sun moveth in the plant, whereby its wild properties come to be penetrated and tinctured with the solar virtue, and grow thereby.

And this is the time wherein thou must play the part of a valiant soldier in the spirit of Christ, and co-operate thyself therewith. For now the Eternal Father by his fiery power begetteth his son in thee, who changeth the fire of the Father, namely, the first principle, or wrathful property of the soul, into the flame of love, so that out of fire and light (viz. wrath and love) there cometh to be one essence, being, or substance, which is the true temple of God. And now thou shalt bud forth out of the vine Christ, in the vineyard of God, and bring forth fruit in thy life, and by assisting and instructing others, shew forth thy love in abundance, as a good tree. For paradise must thus spring up again in thee, through the wrath of God, and hell he changed into heaven in thee. Therefore be not dismayed at the temptations of the devil, who seeketh and striveth for the kingdom which he once had in thee; but, having now lost it, must be confounded, and depart from thee. And he

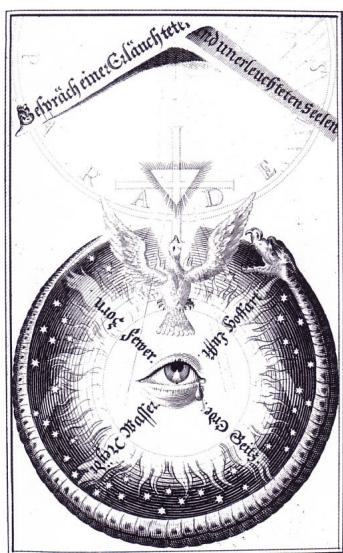
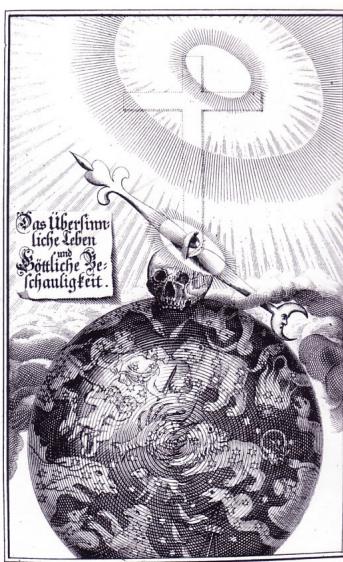
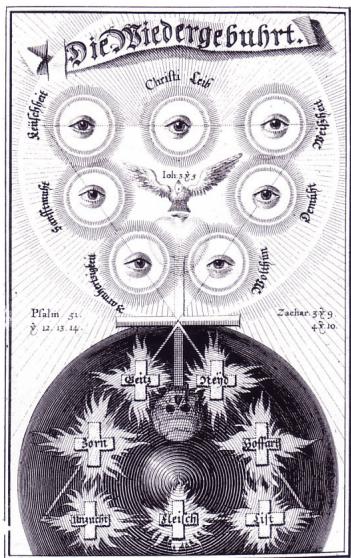
covereth thee outwardly with the shame and reproach of the world, that his own shame may not be known, and that thou mayest be hidden to the world. For with thy new birth or regenerated nature thou art in the divine harmony in heaven. Be patient, therefore, and wait upon the Lord; and whatsoever shall befall thee, take it all from his hands, as intended by him for thy highest good. And so the enlightened soul departed from it.

The distressed Soul's Course

The distressed soul began its course now under the patient suffering of Christ, and depending solely upon the strength and power of God in it, entered into hope. Thenceforth it grew stronger every day, and its evil inclinations died more and more in it. So that it arrived at length to a high state or degree of grace; and the gates of the divine revelation, and the kingdom of heaven, were opened to, and manifested in it.

And thus the soul through repentance, faith, and prayer, returned to its original and true rest, and became a right and beloved child of God again; to which may he of his infinite mercy help us all. Amen" (The Signature of All Things, Jacob Boehme)





"THE SEVEN PROPERTIES OR QUALITIES OF ETERNAL NATURE.

WHEN the Eternal One, in its aspect as a Trinity and with reference to divine wisdom, reveals itself on the seven planes of existence, this revelation constitutes seven different rays or states of eternal nature, comparable to the sevenfold scale of colours, tunes, chemical substances, &c., all of which are seven different forms in which the fundamental one is manifesting itself. Of these seven forms or sourcive states of eternal nature, the first and the seventh refer to the Father, the second and sixth to the Son, the third and fifth to the Holy Spirit, while the fourth represents the balance in which exists the division between spirit and matter.

"The eternal Essence, being desirous of revealing itself to itself (to attain self-consciousness), had to conceive within itself a will; but as within itself there was no object for its will or desire, except the powerful Word, which in the tranquil eternity did not exist, the seven states of eternal nature had to be born from within. From these, then, proceeded, from eternity to eternity, the powerful Word, the power, the heart, and the life of the tranquil eternity and its eternal wisdom." (*Threefold Life*, iii. 21.)

"The first and the seventh quality must be regarded as one, likewise the second and sixth, and also the third and the fifth; but the fourth is the object of division. The first then refers to the Father, the second to the Son, the third to the, Holy Spirit." (*Clavis*, ix. 75.)

By means of the manifestation of these seven qualities of eternal nature the infinity of divine being does not become limited; they are merely seven different forms in which the power of God is manifesting itself, and the existence of each of these seven properties depends on that of the rest.

"If I speak of the seven states of eternal nature, it is not to be understood as if there were a limitation of the Godhead in regard to object and measure. Its power and wisdom is without end, without measure and unspeakable." (*Mysterium*, vii. 17.)

"Do not imagine these seven spirits to be standing one by the side of the other, comparable to the stars, which are seen side by side in the sky; they are all seven like only one spirit. Likewise the body of man has many organs, but each organ partakes of the power of the rest. (*Aurora*, x. 40.)

In the same sense we speak of the bones and flesh, the arteries and veins and nerves of a body, all of which go to make up only one organism. Likewise a picture is made up of many different colours, of which each has a certain individuality of its own, while the sum total is necessary to form one individual picture.

"As the organs of a man's body love one another, so do the spirits in divine power. There is nothing but longing, desiring, and fulfilling, and each triumphs and rejoices in the other." (*Aurora*, ix. 37.)

They are like seven living and conscious rays contained within the original colourless ray, and

broken into seven different tints by their passage through "matter."

"You must know that one spirit alone cannot generate another, but the birth of one spirit results from the cooperation of all the seven. Six of them always generate the seventh, and if one of them were absent the others could not be there." (*Aurora*, x. 21.)

"All the seven spirits of God are born one in another. One gives birth to the other; there is neither first nor last. The last generates the first, as well as the first the second, the third the fourth, up to the last. They are all seven equally eternal." (*Aurora*, x. 2.)

"If I am sometimes describing only two or three as being active in the generation of another spirit, I am doing so on account of my weakness, because in my degenerate mind I cannot retain the impression of the action of all the seven in their perfection. I see all the seven; but when I begin to analyse what I see, I then cannot grasp all the seven at once, but only one after another." (*Aurora*, x. 22.)

These seven properties *are never transformed one into another*; each retains eternally its own specific essentiality. The relations into which they enter with each other serve for the purpose of their mutual glorification; so that they, when they meet each other like strains of sweet harmonies in God's eternal nature, appear like flaming lights of life and joy. Thus matter is never transformed into spirit, but illumined and glorified by the latter, while the spirit obtains its

corporification from matter, and, is thus enabled to become manifest.

Likewise ignorance is never transformed into knowledge, nor death into life; but an ignorant person may become wise if illuminated by the light of wisdom, and a body in which life is inactive may be made living if the activity of life is aroused therein.

"Each of these principles is strongly defined in regard to its nature, nevertheless there is no antipathy between them. They are all rejoicing in God as one only spirit. Each loves the other, and there is nothing among them but joy and happiness. Their evolution is an eternal one and never any other." (*Aurora*, x. 51.)

"The higher they become exalted, and the more they become ignited, the greater will be their joy in the kingdom of light." (*Mysterium*, v. 6.)

"Each quality of the spirit desires the other, and when it acquires its object it becomes as it were changed into that other; but its own quality is thereby not lost, it merely adapts itself to the other, and manifests another kind of anguish (consciousness), but both retain their own special qualities." (*Threefold Life*, iv. 8.)

Thus the darkness is illumined by the light, but it never becomes light itself, nor can the light become darkness. The light shineth eternally into darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not.

"Each of these divine forms of life desires to govern; each has a will of its own. Without that there could be no sensibility nor perceptibility, but only eternal tranquillity. Neither, however, of them is pressing forward to make itself manifest more than the rest, but all are in perfect harmony with each other." (*Stiefel*, ii. 348.)

"When the fourth principle enters into the first, all the spirits intermingle their light, triumph, and rejoice. They then arise all one within the other, and evolve each other as if moving in circular motion; and the light in the midst of them begins to shine and renders them luminous. Their harsh quality then remains hidden like a kernel in a fruit. As a sour or bitter unripe apple by ripening in the sun becomes changed, so that it acquires an agreeable taste, but nevertheless retains the qualities that constitute it an apple, likewise the Godhead retains its own essential qualities, but they become manifest in a sweet and agreeable manner." (*Aurora*, xiii. 80.)

"All the seven principles are spiritual within eternal nature, and appear there in a clear, crystalline, translucent substantiality." (*Grace*, iii. 40.)

"The seven candlesticks in Saint John's Revelation refer to the seven spirits in the Godhead, also the seven stars. The seven spirits are in the centre of the Father—that is to say, in the power of the Word. The Word changes the wrathfulness into sweet joy and shapes it into a crystalline ocean; therein the seven spirits appear in a burning form, like seven luminous torches." (*Threefold Life*, iii. 46.)

A variety of colours is necessary to make up a picture, to represent an idea, and although the idea represented by the various colours is only one, nevertheless each colour retains its essential qualities. The various organs of the human body manifest various powers, nevertheless they all go to make up one manifestation of life. The various planets have each one its own special qualities, nevertheless they go to make up one world. Likewise each of the seven forms remains what it is, but their manifestations differ widely according to the planes and conditions under which they are manifesting themselves.

The First Quality begins when God, for the purpose of revealing His majesty, allows His eternal nature to contract within herself, whereby a state of darkness and corporeity is created.

"The first quality is the desire. It is comparable to magnetic attraction, and therefore the comprehensibility of the will. The will conceives of itself as something. By this act of impressing or contracting it overshadows itself and causes itself to become darkness." (*Clavis*, viii. 38.)

"In this state there is no active life or intelligence; it is merely the first principle of substantiality, or the first beginning of the becoming." (*Three Principles*, vii. 11.)

"In eternity beyond nature there can be no darkness, because there is nothing that could produce it. The will by desiring contracts and becomes substantial. Thus darkness is created within the will, while without that desire there would be nothing but

eternal stillness without substantiality." (*Forty Questions.*)

"Desire is an acrid, astringent, attracting (contracting) quality. It is an active power, and without it there would be nothing but tranquillity. It contracts and fills itself with itself; but that which it attracts constitutes nothing but darkness, a state which is more compact than the original will, the latter being thin as nothing, but it then becomes full and substantial." (*Threefold Life*, ii. 12.)

The fact of this contractive power of desire, by which the will is rendered substantial, corporeal, and heavy, is experienced by every one who feels the weight of sorrow caused by some unfulfilled desire weighing upon his soul, while freedom from desire, and consequently from care, renders the heart (the will) light and ethereal.

Simultaneously with the appearance of the first enters *the Second Form*, namely, motion. Matter and motion are co-eternal, and neither of them can exist without the other. There could be no contraction without motion, neither would there be any expansion if there were no desire to contract. With the beginning of action reaction begins. There is then a duality of manifestation of the eternal One. From this duality of action, having its source in the One, results the manifestation of relative life.

"Motion divides the attracted desire and causes differentiation, thereby awakening the true life." (*Clavis*, viii. 30.)

"From this results sensitiveness in nature, and herein is the cause of differentiation. Hardness (solidity) and the motion of life are opposed to each other. Motion breaks up the solidity (expands), and by means of attraction it also causes hardness (contracts)." (*Tabulæ Princip.*, i. 34.)

"Desire, being a strong attraction, causes the ethereal freedom, which is comparable to a nothing, to contract and enter into a state of darkness. The primitive will desires to be free of that darkness, for it desires the light. The will cannot attain this light, and the more it desires for freedom the greater will be the attraction caused by the desire." (*Six Theosophical Points*, i, 38.)

"There must be an opposition, for the will desires not to be dark, and this very desire causes the darkness: The will loves the excitement caused by the desire, but it does not love the contraction and darkening. The will itself does not become dark, but only the desire existing in it. The desire is in darkness, and therefore a great anguish results within the will, as its desire for freedom is strong, but by this desire it causes itself to become still more harsh and dark." (*Forty Questions.*)

Eliphas Levi expressed a corresponding truth by saying; "The will accomplishes that which it does not desire." A selfish desire for heaven defeats its own object.

The Third Quality, called into existence by the action and reaction of the absolute One, calls sensation into existence; or, to express it in other words, absolute consciousness, by manifesting itself, becomes relative. Nothing new is thereby created, only that which already was begins to exist. This relative consciousness is called "anguish" by Boehme.

"The third quality, the anguish, is evolved in the following manner:—The hardness is fixed, the motion is fugitive; the one is centripetal, the other centrifugal; but as they are one, and cannot separate from each other (nor from their centre) they become like a turning wheel, in which one part strives upwards and the other one in a downward direction. The hardness furnishes substantiality and weight, while the 'sting' (desire in motion) supplies spirit (will for freedom) and fugitive life. All this causes a turning around and within and outwardly, having nevertheless no destination where to arrive. That which the attraction of the desire causes to become fixed is again rendered volatile by the aspiring for freedom. There then results the greatest disquietude, comparable to a furious madness, from which results a terrible anguish." (*Mysterium*, iii. 5.)

The truth of this every one experiences within his own self, because as long as man is nailed to the cross of terrestrial life, there is a continual battle raging in him between his higher and lower impulses, or between his ideal aspirations and his material self-interests.

"The more the first principle gathers its hardness for the purpose of arresting the second principle, the stronger does the action of that principle grow, and the stronger is the raging and breaking. The sting refuses to be subdued, but the will (from which it originates) holds on to it with great strength, and it cannot follow its impulse. It strives upwards and the will strives downwards, for the acerbity indraws, rendering itself heavy. Thus the one strives to rise upwards, and the other to sink downwards, while neither of them can accomplish its object, and thus eternal nature becomes like a revolving wheel." (*Menschwerdung*, ii. 4.)

This macrocosmic battle leads its counterpart in the microcosm of man. There is in him also the continual fight between matter and spirit, between desire and renunciation, between the desire for existence and the will for that freedom which cannot be found before even the desire for freedom itself is at rest.

These three first forms or qualities, wherein the activity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are represented, or to express it in other words, through which the quality of will and intelligence becomes revealed, are sometimes alluded to under the names of "salt," "sulphur," and "mercury."

"The first three principles are not God Himself, but only His revelation. The first of these three states, being a beginning of all power and strength, originates from the quality of the Father; the second, being the source of all activity and differentiation, comes from the quality of the Son; and the third,

being the root of all life, originates in the quality of the Holy Spirit." (*Grace*, vi. 9.)

"The ancients said that in sulphur, mercury, and salt are contained all things. This refers not so much to the material as to the spiritual aspect of things, namely, to the spirit of the qualities wherefrom material things grow. By the term 'salt' they understood the sharp metallic desire in nature; 'mercury' symbolised to them the motion and differentiation of the former, by means of which each thing becomes objective and enters into formation. 'Sulphur,' the third quality, signified the anguish of nature." (*Clavis*, 46.)

The true divine life wherein the substantiality of divine Trinity is revealed is rendered possible only by means of the *Fourth Quality*, called the lightning-flash, whose ignition is caused by the desire of eternal nature and by the longing of eternal freedom.

"The fire is originally darkness, hardness, eternal coldness and dryness, and there is nothing in it except an eternal hunger. How then does it become actual fire? The Spirit of God, in its aspect as the eternal light, comes to the aid of the fire-hunger. The hunger itself originates from the light, because when the divine power mirrors itself in the darkness, the latter becomes full of desire after the light, and this desire is the will (of eternal nature). But the will or the desire in the dryness cannot reach the light, and therein consists the anguish and the craving for light. This anguish and craving continues until the Spirit of God enters like a flash of lightning." (*Three Principles*, xi. 45.)

This ever-turning "wheel of Ixion" is represented by the Cross, the "Tree of Life." Free is the spirit of man before he enters this valley of suffering, but after he enters he is nailed to the cross of his own personal desires. Man himself is the "Cross," and he creates a cross for himself, from which there is no liberation until he discovers the true spiritual Cross by entering into the realm of light through the power of the fire, which means that his spirit breaks through the bonds of matter and becomes again free.

"Freedom by means of the eternal will grasps the darkness, and the latter reaches out for the light of freedom but cannot attain it. It imprisons itself by means of its own desire within itself, and causes itself to be darkness. From these two—namely, the dark impression and the desire for light or freedom which is directed towards the former, there results then in the former darkness the lightning-flash, the primitive condition of the fire. But freedom being a nothing, and therefore inapprehensible, it cannot retain the impression. Therefore the impression surrenders to freedom, and the latter devours the dark nature of the former. Thus freedom governs within the darkness, and is not comprehended by it." (*Signature*, xiv. 22.)

"Eternal unity or freedom, *per se*, is of infinite loveliness and mildness, but the three qualities are sharp, painful, and even terrible. The will of the three qualities longs for the mild unity, and the unity longs for the fiery foundation and sensibility. Thus one enters into the other, and when this takes place the lightning-flash appears, comparable to a spark produced by the friction of flint and steel. Thereby the

unity attains sensibility, and the will of nature receives the mild unity. Thus the unity becomes a fountain of fire, and the fire penetrated by desire, like a fountain of love." (*Clavis*, ix. 49.)

Thus the light conquers the darkness, but does not destroy it; it merely becomes victorious over it and consumes it in a manner comparable to that of the assimilation of food by the organism which conquers and consumes that food by means of the fire of life.

"When the spiritual fire and light has become ignited in the darkness (it having, however, burned from all eternity), the great mystery of divine power and knowledge becomes eternally revealed therein, because in the fire all the qualities of nature appear exalted into spirituality. Nature herself remains what she is, but her issue—namely, that which she produces, becomes spiritualised. In the fire the dark will is consumed, and thereby issues the pure fire-spirit, penetrated by the light-spirit." (*Clavis*, ix. 64.)

When this great internal revelation 'takes place, the internal senses are then opened to the direct perception of spiritual truth. There will then be no more necessity for drawing conclusions of any kind in regard to such unknown things, because the spirit perceives that which belongs to its sphere in the same sense as a seeing person sees external things.

"Behold how all life in the external world attracts its food to itself. Thus you may recognise how life originates from death. There can be no life unless that from which life is to issue is broken up in its form.

Everything has to enter into the state of anguish to attain the lightning-flash, and without this there will be no ignition." (*Menschwerdung*, ii. 5.)

This, then, is the beginning of the manifestation of God as the principle of fire and the principle of light. The Godhead, as such, the will of the Trinity willing to enter from the groundlessness into Trinity, is not yet a principle, and has no beginning, but is the beginning itself of itself.

"If a thing becomes that which it has not been before, this does not constitute a principle; a principle is there where a form of life and motion begins, such as has not existed before. Thus the fire is a principle, and also the light which is born from the fire, but which, nevertheless is not a quality of the fire, but has a life of its own." (*Six Theosophical Points*, ii. 1.)

In the fire there is represented the division of the two aspects in which God is manifesting Himself—namely, as God and as Nature; also the division between the sweet life in love and the life in wrath.

"As the sun in the terrestrial plane transforms acerbity into concord, so acts the light of God in the forms of eternal nature; This light shines into them and out of them; it ignites them so that they obtain its will and surrender themselves to it entirely. They then give up their own will and become as if they had no power at all of themselves, and are desirous only for the power of the light." (*Six Theosophical Points*, v. 3.)

By the union of fire and light the third principle attains substantiality.

"If the Godhead according to the first and second principle is to be regarded only as a spirit and without any conceivable essentiality, there is in it nevertheless the desire to evolve a third principle, wherein rests the spirit of the two first principles, and wherein it will become manifest as an image." (*Six Theosophical Points*, i. 25.)

"The fire receiving within itself the essence of desire as its food, so that it may burn, renders a joyful spirit and opens the power of the mild essentiality in the light." (*Six Theosophical Points*, i. 57.)

"The fire, drawing within itself the mild essentiality of the light, there issues from it, by means of the wrath of death, the mild spirit that was enclosed therein, and which has within itself the quality of nature." (*Tilk.*, i. 171.)

When the power of the light becomes revealed it manifests its activity first of all in the *Fifth Quality*, which is evolved by means of the preceding four as sweet love, or a luminous water-spirit.

"The first three principles are merely qualities conducive to life, the fourth is life itself, but the fifth is the true Spirit. Whenever this power has been evolved from the fire, it lives within all the others and changes them all into its own sweet nature, so that painfulness and enmity cannot be found therein in any shape whatever." (*Tabulæ Principæ*, i. 46.)

"The fifth quality is the true love-fire, which in the light separates from the painful fire, and wherein divine love appears as a substantial being. It has within itself all the powers of divine wisdom; it is the trunk or the centre of the tree of eternal life, wherein God the Father becomes revealed in His Son by means of the speaking Word." (*Grace*, iii. 26.)

In the *Sixth Quality* the divine powers, still united, and therefore undifferentiated and not manifest in the fifth, become differentiated and audible.

"The sixth form of eternal nature is intelligent life or sound. The qualities being all in a state of equilibrium in the light (the fifth), they now rejoice and acquire audibility. Thereby the desire of the unity enters into a state of (conscious) willing and acting, perceiving and feeling." (*Tabulæ Principæ*, i. 48.)

"To constitute audible life, or the sound of the powers, hardness and softness, compactness and thinness and motion are required. To constitute the sixth principle there are therefore required all the other qualities of nature. The first form furnishes hardness, the second motion; by means of the third division takes place. The fire changes the harshness of the conceived essence by consuming it into a spiritual being, representing mildness and softness, and this becomes formed into sound, according to the qualities which it contains." (*Mysterium*, v. 11.)

This sound of course is not to be compared to terrestrial audible sound.

"In the light of God the kingdom of heaven (the consciousness of the spirit), sound is very subtle, sweet, and lovely, so that if compared with terrestrial noise, it is like a perfect stillness. Nevertheless in the realm of glory it is indeed comprehensible sound, and there is a language which is heard by the angels—a language which is, however, only partaking of the nature of their world." (*Mysterium*, v. 19.)

The third principle reappears in the seventh, and therein consists the "resurrection of the flesh."

"*The Seventh Principle* is the corporeal comprehension of the other qualities. It is called 'Essential Wisdom' or the 'Body of God.' The third principle appears in the seven forms of nature in so far as they have been brought into comprehensibility in the seventh. This principle or state of being is holy, pure, and good. It is called the eternal untreated heaven or the kingdom of God, and it is outspoken from the first principle, of the dark fire-world and from the holy light-flaming love-world." (*Grace*, iv. 10.)

"The seventh form is the state of being wherein all the others manifest their activity, like the soul in the body. It is called Nature, and also the eternal essential wisdom of God." (*Tabulæ Principæ*, i. 49.)

"The seventh spirit of God is the body, being born from the other six spirits, and in it all the celestial figures are taking form. From it arises all beauty, all joy. If this spirit did not exist God would be imperceptible." (*Aurora*, xi. 1.)

"Wisdom is the substantiality of the spirit. The spirit wears it as a garment, and becomes revealed thereby. Without it the form of the spirit would not be knowable; it is the corporeity of the spirit. To be sure, it is not a bodily, tangible substance, like the bodies of men, but has nevertheless substantial and visible qualities which the spirit *per se* does not possess." (*Threefold Life*, v. 50.)

There is no language to describe the beauty and splendour of divine wisdom. Whatever there is of magnificence perceptible in this terrestrial world exists in the celestial world in a far superior state, in eternal spiritual perfection.

"Earthly language is entirely insufficient to describe what there is of joy, happiness, and loveliness contained in the inner wonders of God. Even if the eternal Virgin pictures them to our minds, man's constitution is too cold and dark to be able to express even a spark of it in his language." (*Three Principles*, xiv. 90.)

Neither are these superterrestrial pictures mere shadows or creations of fancy.

"Just as the earth continually produces plants and flowers, trees and metals, and beings of various kinds, one always more glorious, stronger, and more beautiful than the rest; and as on our terrestrial plane one form appears while others perish, there being a continual working and evolving of forms, likewise the eternal generation within the holy mystery continually takes place in great power; so that, in

consequence of this perpetual wrestling of spiritual powers, one after another divine fruits appear by the side of each other, all and each of them in the radiance of beautiful colours. All that whereof the terrestrial world by which we are surrounded is merely an earthly symbol, exists in the celestial realm in exquisite perfection in a spiritual state. It does not exist there merely as a spirit, a will, or a thought, but in corporeal substantiality, in essence and power, and appears inconceivable merely in comparison with the external material world." (*Signature*, xvi. 18.)

This beauty the divine and essential wisdom, the eternal Virgin, does not produce by her own power; but by the power of God that acts within her. She herself is without any will of her own.

"Not wisdom, but the Spirit of God, is the centre, or the discloser. As the soul is manifesting herself in the body by means of the flesh, and as the latter would have no power if it were not inhabited by a living spirit, likewise the wisdom of God is the corporeity of the Holy Spirit, by means of which He assumes substantiality, so as to manifest Himself to Himself. Wisdom gives birth, but she would not do so if the Spirit were not acting within her. She brings forth without the power of the fire-life; she has no ardent desire, but her joy finds its perfection in the manifestation of the Godhead, and therefore she is called a virgin in chastity and purity before God." (*Tilk.*, ii. 64.)

Divine wisdom exists only by means of the Trinity, and the latter can be revealed only by forming eternal nature within its own body.

"The light and the power of the sun disclose the mysteries of the external world by the production and growth of various beings. Likewise God, representing the eternal Sun, or the one eternal and only Good, would not reveal Himself without the presence of His eternal spiritual nature, wherein alone He can manifest His power. Only when the power of God becomes differentiated and relatively conscious, so that there are individual powers to wrestle with each other during their love-play, will be opened in Him the great and immeasurable fire of love by means of the forthcoming of the Holy Trinity." (*Grace*, ii. 28.)

The Father, ruling the first principle, the fire, generates eternally the Son, the light, by means of the seven forms of eternal nature; and the Son, revealing Himself in the second principle as the light, for ever glorifies the Father.

"The eternal will, the Father, conducts His heart, His eternal Son, by means of the fire into great triumph, into His kingdom of joy." (*Grace*, ii. 21.)

"When the Father speaks His Word—that is to say, when He generates His Son—which is done continually and eternally, that Word first of all takes its origin in the first or acrid quality, where it becomes conceived. In the second or the sweet quality it receives its activity; in the third it moves; in the heat it arises and ignites the sweet flow of power and the

fire. Now all the qualities are made to burn by the kindled fire, and the tire is fed by them; but this fire is only one and not many. This fire is the true Son of God Himself, who is continuing to be born from eternity to eternity." (*Aurora*, viii. 81.)

"The Father is the first of all conceivable beings, but if the second principle were not becoming manifest in the birth of the Son, He would not be revealed. Thus the Son, being the heart, light, love, and the beautiful and sweet beneficence of the Father, but being distinct from Him in His individual aspect, renders the Father reconciled, loving, and merciful. His birth takes place in the fire, but He obtains His personality and name by the ignition of the soft, white, and clear light, which He is Himself." (*Three Principles*, iv. 58.)

"The Son is perpetually born from eternity to eternity, and shines perpetually into the powers of the Father while these powers are continually generating the Son." (*Aurora*, vii. 33.)

The Holy Spirit, manifesting Himself in the third principle, issues eternally from the Father and the Son, and in and with Him issues the splendour of God's majesty.

"The Eternal Father becomes manifest in the fire, the Son in the light of the fire, and the Holy Spirit in the power of the life and the motion that issues front the fire and the light." (*Signature*, xiv. 34.)

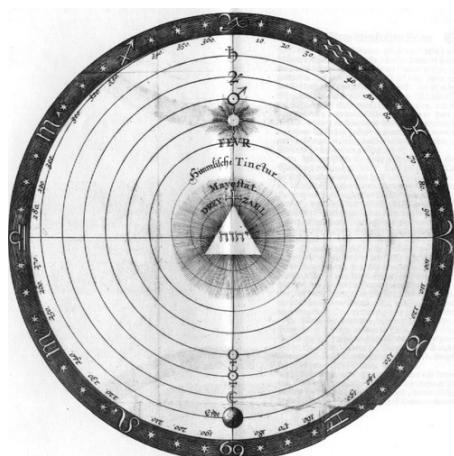
"The Holy Spirit reveals the Godhead in nature. He extends the splendour of the majesty, so that it may

be recognised in the wonders of nature. He is not that splendour itself, but its power, and He introduces the splendour of the majesty into the substantiality wherein the Godhead is revealed." (*Threefold Life*, iv. 82; v. 39.)

Thus the holy Trinity is everywhere, manifesting itself in and through the seven qualities of eternal nature.

"We Christians say that God is threefold, but one in essence, and this is misunderstood by the ignorant as well as by the half learned, for God is not a person except in Christ. He is an eternally generating power and the kingdom with all beings." (*Myst. magn.*, vii. 5.)

"He is generating Himself in a threefold aspect, and in this eternal generation there is nevertheless to be understood only one essence and generation; neither Father, nor Son, nor Spirit but only the one eternal Life, or Good." (*Myst. magn.*, vii. 11.)" (The Life and Doctrines of Jacob Boehme, By Francis Hartman)





THE RESTORATION OF NATURE AND THE GENERATION OF MAN.

"IF we speak about heaven and the birth of the elements, we are then not telling of things that are far away or foreign to us, but of that which is taking place within our own self, and there is nothing nearer to us than this birth, for we are therein as in our own mother. If we speak of heaven, we then speak of our home, of our own country, wherein the illumined soul can see, even if that country is hidden before the eyes of the body." (*Principles*, vii. 7.)

The Mosaic account of creation was never intended to be a history of the creation of the world from the beginning, but it is a history of the renewal or the restoration of the natural world that was formerly ruled by Lucifer, and which was thrown into disorder and convulsion by his desertion from God.

"Before the times of the wrath there were in the locality of this world the six sourcive spirits generating the seventh in a sweet and lovely manner, as is even now done in heaven, and there was growing therein not even a spark of wrath. All that was contained therein was light and clear, needing no other light, for the fountain of love within the heart of God was illumining all. Nature was then very ethereal, and everything therein stood in great power. But as soon as in nature the war with the proud devils began, everything took another shape and mode of action. The light became extinguished in the external generation, and therefore the heat became imprisoned

in corporeity and could no longer generate its own life. From this cause death then entered into nature, and nature degenerated. Consequently another creation of light had to be inaugurated, and without that the earth would have had to remain in eternal death." (*Aurora*, xvii. 2; iv. 15.)

Everything in nature was to bloom out and become newly-born, as may be seen by beholding minerals and stones, trees, grass, and herbs, and animals of various kinds, and although all these formations were perishable and not pure in the sight of God, nevertheless God intended to extract from them at the end of this time their heart and kernel, and to separate them from the wrath and death, and then that which had thus been regenerated was to bloom eternally, and to bear again celestial fruits outside of and beyond the locality of this world." (*Aurora*, xxiv. 2 5.)

"The same *sal-nitre*" (the material basis or foundation), "which at the time of the ignition of the wrath perished in death, has at the time of regeneration been raised in the flash of fire. It has not become anything new, but merely another form of corporeity, which is now in a state of death" (existing relatively to us as gross matter). (*Aurora*, xxii. 80.)

The outcast spirits, having produced in nature a state of ignition, God gathered together the essence of that nature, and thereby He withdrew it from the reach of those powers, putting a stop to their insolence by means of water.

"The outcast spirits were still in the quality of the Father, and therefore they ignited the quality of nature by means of their imagination, so that the celestial substance became earth and stones, and the sweet spirit of the water a burning sky. After this the creation of this world took place." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 2-8.)

Creation could not take place as long as all the elements were in a state of revolution; only after the "Spirit of God moved upon the waters of the deep" could the divine Word take form.

"When the eternal Word moved, because of the malice of Lucifer, and for the purpose of expelling this evil guest from his residence into eternal darkness, the essence was rendered compact (coagulated). God was not willing to leave the manifested powers, wherein Lucifer ruled as a prince, any longer in his command, but he caused them to enter into a state of coagulation and spewed him out therefrom." (*Mysterium*, x. 13.)

"Therein consists the fall of Lucifer, that he awakened the *mother of fire* and wanted to rule over the benevolence in the heart of God. This fire is now his hell; but this hell God has captured by means of heaven—*i.e.*, the *mother of water*. For while the locality of this world was to burn on his account in the fire, God moved to create, and created the water. From this has resulted the ocean and the unfathomable watery depth. So it was at *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, for when their sin was great and the devil resided therein, desirous of maintaining his power, God permitted that the prince of this world ignited those

five kingdoms with fire and sulphur. But while the devil imagined to be lord in that place, and to have there his dwelling, God thought of breaking his pride; He caused water to come there, and thus He extinguished his glory." (*Threefold Life*, viii. 24.)

By His creative will, full of love, God caused the light to arise, and thus He directed the power of darkness downwards into the depths. Thus, when the soul of man rises up to eternal freedom, the powers of darkness disappear in the abyss below.

"The wrath did not touch the heart of God; but His benevolent love issues from His heart, penetrating into the most external generation of wrath, and extinguishing the latter. Therefore He said, Let there be light." (*Aurora*, 85.)

"When God spoke, Let there be light, the holy power which was conceived together with the wrath, moved, and the power of the devil was entirely withdrawn from him in its essence." (*Mysterium*, xii. 14.)

"Thus the darkness remained within the quality of the wrath in the substance of the earth, and within the whole depth of this world; and in the substance of light, the light of nature from heaven—*i.e.*, out of the fifth essence, arose that whereof the constellation was created. This essence is everywhere, in the earth and above the earth." (*Aurora*, xii. 15.)

By means of this new creation of the light, the new life had begun to stir everywhere; but this creation, in accordance with the number of the divine spirits which were active thereby, arrived at a state of perfection only on the seventh day.

"When God spoke the word, Let there be light, the essence, the being within the quality of the light, stirred not only within the earth, but also within the whole depth, in great power; wherefrom on the fourth day the sun was created—that is to say, *ignited.*" *Mysterium*, xii. 13.)

"When God stirred to create this world, it was not that only one part moved and the other one rested, but there was all in motion at once." (*Aurora*, xxii. 122.)

"This motion lasted during six lengths of days and nights, when all the seven spirits of God were in complete and moving generation, and also the heart of all spirits, and the sal-nitre of the earth turned around in that time six times within the great wheel." (*Aurora*, xxi. 123.)

"The day's works refer to the seven qualities, six of them belonging to the actual regiment, but the seventh, or the essentiality, is that wherein the others are resting; for these qualities have been spoken out by God and rendered visible." (*Mysterium*, xii. 2.)

On the second day a separation took place in the power of the light, of the external material from the inner immaterial water, and the firmament (that

which is firm) was put in the middle between these two.

"The water of life became separated from the water of death; but in such a way that in the time of this world they are linked together like body and soul. But the heaven, having been made from the middle-part of the water, is like an abyss between the two, so that the conceivable water is a death, but the inconceivable one is the life." (*Aurora*, xxi. 7.)

"The water upon the earth is a degenerated and deadly being, like the earth herself. This material water, contained within the most external generation, has been separated from the inconceivable one." (*Aurora*, xx. 27.)

"The water above the firmament is in heaven, and the water below the firmament is the material water." (*Mysterium*, xii. 24.)

"The firmament is the connecting link between time and eternity. God calls it 'heaven,' and makes a distinction between the waters; which is to indicate that heaven is in the world, but not the world in heaven." (*Mysterium*, xii. 23.)

Thus the mind of man is the connecting link between the celestial and terrestrial state. Heaven and happiness may be in his mind, but not his mind in an external heaven.

The spiritual and the material water are not separated from each other in an external manner, or according to locality, but wherever there is the material water, there is also the spiritual one, and it comes to aid the former.

"When I behold the external water, I am forced to say, 'Here in the water below the firmament is also contained water from above the firmament.' But the firmament is the middle, and the link (dividing line) between time and eternity, so that neither one of them is the other. By means of the external eyes, or the eyes of this world, I see only the water below the firmament; but the water above the firmament is that which God in Christ has instituted for the baptism of regeneration." (*Mysterium*, xii. 26.)

"All the water in this world is degenerated, and therefore the upper water must come to the aid of the earth, and extinguish her fire and pacify her, so that the true water may be born." (*Aurora*, xx. 33.)

Divine inspiration must come to the aid of the material thought, so that heavenly thoughts may be born.

On the third day the fiery and the watery essence, the firmament of heaven and the earth, entered again in Conjunction, and from this there were born grasses and herbs and trees, and at the same time there were also formed gold and silver and ores of various kinds.

"On the second day God separated the watery and the fiery mercury from each other, and called the fiery one the firmament of heaven. Then in the spirit of external nature there originated a male and a female kind—namely, in the fiery *Mercury* the male, and in the watery the female one." (*Clavis*, 86.)

"On the third day the fiery and the watery Mercury have again entered in conjunction and mixture, and then the *sal-nitre* gave birth to grasses and herbs and trees." (*Clavis*, 88.)

"After God had put heaven between the love and the wrath, for the purpose of discernment, there on the third day love penetrated through heaven into the wrath. Then the old and deadened body began to stir and to feel the anguish of generation; for love is ardent, and it ignited the fountain of fire, and the latter caused a friction in the acrid and cold quality of stiffened death, until on the third day the acrid quality became heated, and thus the acrid earth became moveable. (*Aurora*, xxv. 29).

"When the light contained in the sweet water penetrated through the acrid spirit, the lightning flash, having become ignited in the water, in the acrid, hard, and dead quality, it caused motion in everything, and thus came movability (life) into existence, not only in the heaven above the earth, but also at the same time within the earth. Then there began life to be generated in all things, and from the earth were produced grass, herbs, and trees, and within the earth there were formed silver, gold, and metals of various kinds." (*Aurora*, xxi, 132; xx. 6.)

As the light could be active only in the corrupted essence, there being none other, the products formed thereby were of a mixed kind, half good and half evil.

"When the light appeared again within the external conceivableness, the Word brought forth life out of death, and the corrupted *sal-nitre* produced fruits again; but this had to take place in a certain relation to the depraved state existing in the wrath, and as the external forthcoming of those fruits took place from the earth, they had to become evil and good." (*Aurora*, xxi. 19.)

Before the ignition of the sun and the stars took place nature was resting as in a state of death, and the formations proceeding from her were devoid of the living, growth-producing power.

"Until the third day after the ignition of the wrath of God in this world, nature remained in anxiety, and was a dark valley in death; but on the third day, when the light of the stars became ignited in the water of life, the life broke through death, and the new generation began." (*Aurora*, xxiv. 41.)

"In the earth there is above all the acrid quality. This contracts the *sal-nitre* and solidifies the earth, causing it to become a corporeal being, forming therein also bodies of various kinds, such as rocks, metals, and manifold roots. When this is formed it has nevertheless no life to enable it to grow and expand. But when the heat of the sun acts upon the soil, various formations prosper and grow in the earth." (*Aurora*, viii. 41.)

Likewise the material and earthly elements in man have no power themselves to rise superior to their own nature. This they can do in no other way than by the power of the Divine Spirit.

Now the eternal light of God shone into the darkness of this world and ignited the heat in the firmament or heaven, and thus out of the fire arose the light—that is to say, the sun and the starry sky.

"After the heaven had been made, for the sake of distinction between the light of God and the corrupted body of this world, the latter was a dark valley and without light, and all the powers were captured, as if in death, and very uneasy until they became kindled in the midst of the whole body. But when this took place the love in the light of God broke through that heaven of division and ignited the heat." (*Aurora*, xxv. 68.)

"God, the eternal light and the eternal will, shines within the darkness, and the darkness has captured the will (received its activity). In this will arises now the anxiety, and in this is the fire, and in the fire the light. Thus from the fire the stars have been produced, and from the power of the heavens the sun." (*Three Principles*, viii. 22.)

All this takes place in a corresponding manner during the spiritual regeneration of man.

Thereby divine Wisdom has manifested itself, not in an entirely pure, and therefore not permanent and immutable manner, but nevertheless as in a clear

mirror, and it thereby drove the devil backward deep into his darkness.

"On the fourth day God, out of His eternal wisdom, created the lord of the third principle (the visible world), the sun and the stars. Herein is now truly seen the Godhead and the eternal wisdom of God, as in a clear mirror. This being, visible before our eyes, is not God Himself, but a God in the third principle, which will ultimately return to his ether and take an end." (*Three Principles*, viii. 13.)

"God has made a solid foundation (firmament) called 'heaven,' between the most external and the most internal generation, between the clear Godhead and corrupted nature, through which one must break if one wants to go to God. Of this foundation it is said (*Hiob*. xiv. 15) that even the heavens are not pure before God, but on the day of judgment the wrath shall be swept therefrom." (*Aurora*, xx. 41.)

"At the time of creation another light, the sun, was awakened in this world, it having been corrupted by Lucifer, and thereby the splendour of the devil was taken away. Thus he has been shut in like a prisoner into the darkness between the realm of God and the realm of this world, so that he has no longer anything to rule over in this world, except in the Turba, wherein is awakened the wrath and anger of God." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 2.)

The sun has been revealed by means of the soul of the world, and is made of the influences of all the stars. He is also the life of all the stars. Thus the sun of

divine Wisdom in man is representing the collective knowledge which man has gathered from his experiences, having as a basis his own divine self-consciousness. Without that self-consciousness in God all his intellectual acquisitions are merely vapoury, and will pass away.

"In the soul of the external world, and by means of it, God has awakened a king, or, as I would wish to call it symbolically, a natural deity, together with six councillors, to be his assistants, namely, the sun and the six other planets, which were spoken out of the seven qualities from the *locus* (seat or centre) of the sun. The sun receives his splendour from the tincture of the fire-world and the world of light, and is manifested as a revealed point in relation to the world of fire." (*Mysterium*, xiii. 16.)

"In the death in the centre—that is to say, in the body or the corporeal substance of the earth, God has awakened the *tincture*, its lustre, splendour, and light, wherein is contained the life of the earth; but to the depth above the centre He has given the sun, which is a tincture of the fire, and which, with its power, reaches into the freedom outside and beyond nature, and from which nature receives its splendour. He is the life of the whole circle of stars, and all these stars are His children. Not that he contains their essences, but their life arose from his centre in the beginning." (*Threefold Life*, iv. 27.)

"The sun is the heart of all the powers in this world, and is configurated from the powers of all the stars, while, on the other hand, he illuminates and vivifies

all the stars and powers in this world." (*Aurora*, vii. 42.)

Thus the divine principle in man furnishes the intellect with light and life in the same sense as the sun reflects his light upon the moon. An intellect which has been deserted by God will perish after its accumulated strength is exhausted. Only that which God knows in us remains permanent.

"The sun is in the midst of the depth, and is, so to say, the light or heart of the stars, extracted from all their powers by the power of God, and brought into form. Therefore is he the clearest light of all, and by his lustre and heat he ignites all the stars, each one according to its own special quality and power." (*Threefold Life*, vii. 40.)

"This is not to be understood as if by calling the sun the centre we meant to say that all the stars were originated from a central point, called the 'sun.' The sun is the centre of the powers of the stars, and the cause why they move in their essence. He unfolds their powers and puts his power into them, and this power constitutes their heart." (*Mysterium*, xi. 32.)

Especially have the seven planets become objective by means of the sun, and in accordance with and corresponding to the seven forms of nature.

"As the sun is the heart of the life and an origin of all the spirits in the body of this world, likewise is Saturn a beginning of all corporeity and tangibility. Thus he does not derive his beginning and descent from the

sun, but his origin is the earnest, acrid, and severe anxiety of the whole body of this world." (*Aurora*, xxvi. 1.)

"When the light became ignited, the conquered power in the astringency became Mercury." (*Three Principles*, viii. 24.)

"Mercury is an agitator, sound-maker, ringer; but he is not yet the true life. The latter originates in the fire. Thus he desires the fierce and storming essence, to cause fire to appear, and this is Mars." (*Threefold Life*, ix. 78.) "When the sun became ignited, the terrible fire-flash went from the locality of the sun in an upward direction like a furious stroke of lightning, and this became Mars. He is now there as a tyrant, a raging element, a mover of the whole body of this world, so that all life takes its origin of him." (*Aurora*, xxv. 72.)

"As soon as the spirits of motion and life, by means of the ignition of the water, arose from the locality of the sun, mildness, being the basis of the water, penetrated, endowed with the power of light, in a downward direction, after the manner of meekness, and from this the planet Venus came into existence." (*Aurora*, xxvi. 19-33.)

"When the fiery terror was captured by the light, the light, by its own power, and being a mild, exalting life, penetrated still higher upwards into the depth, until it arrived in the hard and cold seat of nature. There it remained, and from that power the planet Jupiter came into existence." (*Aurora*, xxv. 76-82.)

"The seventh form is *Luna*, wherein are contained the qualities of all the six forms. She is, so to say, the corporeal being of the other forms, all of which throw into her their desire by means of *Sol*. That which *Sol* (the sun) is spiritually becomes corporeal in *Luna* (the moon)." (*Signature*, ix. 24.)

After the world of stars had begun to exist, the sidereal life appeared by the power of the former—that is to say, that living organisms were produced, representing, so to speak, "stars of the various elements."

"The firmament of heaven, having been made from the medium of the water, this generation penetrates through the external, congealed generation—that is to say, through death, and brings forth the sidereal life, such as animals and men, birds, fishes, and worms." (*Aurora*, xx. 60.)

"After God had unfolded the stars and the four elements, there were produced creatures in all the four elements, such as birds in the constellation of the air, fishes in the constellation of the water, animals and four-legged beings in the constellation of earth, and spirits in that of the fire." (*Mysterium*, xliv. 1.)

These creatures received their spirit from the stars, or rather from the spirit of this world, but their body they received from the earth. According to the predominance of the fiery or the watery form, there resulted also an antithesis of sex.

"By the power of His word, *Fiat*, God caused all beings to come forth from the matrix of nature on the fifth day, all according to their qualities; the fishes in the water, the birds in the air, the other animals upon the earth. They received their corporeity from the fixedness (rigidity) of the earth, and their spirit from the *Spiritus Mundi*." (*Grace*, v. 20.)

"All creatures have been created of the life below and the life above. The matrix of the earth gave the body, and the stars the spirit." (*Threefold Life*, xi. 7.)

"As the spirit of the stars, or the spirit in the fire-form, by the power of its longing, became mixed with the watery one, there resulted two senses from one and the same essence. The one, the male, in a fiery, and the other, the female, in a watery shape (state)." (*Three Principles*, viii. 43.)

Finally, man was created, and out of him there was to come forth a celestial army, and in the midst of the time its king, in the place of the outcast Lucifer.

"God willed to create an angelic army. Thus He created Adam, and he was to generate out of his own body creatures of his own kind; but in the midst of the time there was to be born out of the body of a man the King of all men, and He was to take possession of the new kingdom as a ruler over these created beings, in the place of the degenerated and outcast Lucifer." (*Aurora*, xxiv. 18.)

Man, however, was to surpass the angels (in perfection), for he was to be a complete image of

divine glory, while the angels have been created out of only two principles.

"Adam was to be a perfect symbol of God, created out of the eternal *Magia*, the substance of God; he was to be something made out of the nothing, out of the spirit—the ideal—into the body." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 5.)

"The angels are created out of two principles, but the soul, with the body of the outer life, out of three principles. Therefore man is higher than the angels, provided that he remains in God." (*Forty Questions*, i. 263.)

"We human beings are a far greater mystery than the angels, and we shall surpass them in celestial wisdom. They are fire-flames, illumined by the light of God, but we attain the great fountain of meekness and love which is welling up within the holy essentiality of God." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 5.)

Man comprises all three principles: the principle of darkness or fire, from which originates his soul; the principle of light, from which his spirit originates; and the third principle, which is the basic element of his body.

"In the life of man there are three states to be distinguished from each other—first, the *innermost*, that is to say, *God being eternally hidden within the fire*; secondly, the *middle part*, which from eternity has stood as an *image or likeness* in the wonders of God, comparable to a person seeing himself in a mirror;

thirdly, has this living image received still another mirror in creation wherein to behold itself, namely, the *spirit of the external world*, or the *third principle*, which is also a form (state) of the Eternal." (*Threefold Life*, xviii. 4.)

"The *darkness* in man longing for light is the first principle; the *power of the light* the second; and the *longing power which attracts* and becomes full (substantial), and whereof the material body grows, is the third principle." (*Three Principles*, vii. 26.)

"The *soul*, or the first principle, is founded on the fire of eternal nature; the *spirit*, or the second principle, roots in the light; and the *body* is the third principle, or the substantiality of the visible world." (*Tabulæ Principiæ*, 65.)

Adam was to rule over all nature, and therefore his body was taken from all the powers of the external world; but the third principle, as well as the first one, appeared in him subject to the second, the light.

"If you will behold your own self and the outer world, and what is taking place therein, you will find that you, with regard to your external being, are that external world. You are a little world formed out of the large one, and your external light is a *chaos* of the sun and the constellation of stars. If this were not so, you would not be able to see by means of the light of the sun." (*Mysterium*, ii. 5.)

"If man, as the image of God, is to rule over the fishes and fowls, the animals, and the whole of the earth, as

well as over the essence of all the stars, then must he be out of all three, for each spirit can rule only in his mother, wherein he originated." (*Mysterium*, xiv. 8.)

"Terrestrial man had in his constitution the kingdom of this world, but there were not ruling in him the four elements (separately); but they were in one, and the terrestrial order of things was hidden in him. He was to live in celestial state, and although everything was stirring (alive) within him, nevertheless he was to rule over the terrestrial anguish (external consciousness) by means of the celestial quality (inner consciousness) of the other (second) principle, and to retain dominion over the kingdom of the stars and elements by means of the paradisiacal quality." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 2.)

Man must rise, not merely in his imagination, but with his will, above all that which is earthly, sensual, or merely intellectual, if he desires to be a power in the kingdom of the Spirit. Thus will the ideal become real to him.

"Adam's body (the ethereal body of aboriginal man) was created out of the four elements of external nature, and out of the (essences of the) stars, by means of the eternal *Fiat*. Thus he was in possession of divine and terrestrial essentiality; but the terrestrial one was in the divine one like consumed or impotent (latent). The substance or the matter from which the body was made or created contained itself also the first principle within itself, but it was not stirring therein." (*Menschwerdung*, i. 3, 15.)

"As God resides within Himself and penetrates through all His works, incomprehensible to the latter, and without His being affected by anything, likewise His image (man) originated from the pure element. He also was created in this world; but the kingdom of this world was not to comprehend him, but he was to rule powerfully in this world by means of the essences from the pure element." (*Three Principles*, xxii. 15.)

The expression that God created man from a clod of clay is not to be taken in any other sense than that God, by means of desire, drew together all the terrestrial qualities.

"If Moses says that God created man out of a clod of clay, and that he breathed into him the living breath, this is not to be understood as if God had acted in a personal manner—standing there like a man and taking up a lump of earth and making a body out of it; but the *Fiat*, that is to say, the desire of the *Word*, was contained within the eternally-perceived model of man, which stood in the mirror of wisdom, and it drew the *Ens* (the principle) of all the qualities of the earth (matter) into a body, and this was the quintessence made out of the four elements." (*Grace*, v. 27.)

But the essence of the soul, being rooted in that whole, did not become manifest in man before God awakened it by the breath of His word.

"The sourcive spirits within the whole could not become immediately ignited by the soul, for the soul

was only as a seed within the whole, hidden away with the heart of God in His heaven, until the Creator expanded the whole by His breath. Then the sourcive spirits ignited the soul, and then body and soul were living at once. The soul truly possessed her life before the body existed; but it was within the heart of God, hidden within the whole in heaven, and was nothing but a holy seed, a centre of power in God." (*Aurora*, xxvi. 126.)

Neither does at this present day the soul of man manifest divine life as long as the Spirit of God is only moving upon the surface and does not stir within the depths. (The Life and Doctrines of Jacob Boehme, By Francis Hartman)

"And as the freeborn spirit remembered the moment of perfection he experienced in the love between the unutterable essence of God's true masculine and feminine, he peered within his spirit to acknowledge that what he had allowed himself to see as the highest potential within that relationship was so far distant from reality. The reality, God's highest expression, was an emanation of love between man and woman which was perfect and in unblemished unison. Rather than disappearing from the realm, he remained in utter contemplation for an aeon."

"Therefore, if all things existed in the Wisdom of the Word of God, waiting to be unfolded in their different species according to their preordained nature, manner, and order, how could the Mother not pre-exist with the Son, whose conception and birth opened the way for the whole rational creation to be

sanctified, unified, and restored to peace? How could she be absent, in whom an eternal degree had laid the foundation of an eternal building, the celestial Jerusalem? . . . And I heard a voice saying to me, 'This maiden whom you see is Love, who has her dwelling place in eternity. When God wished to create the world, he leaned down in the tenderest love and provided all that was needed, as a Father prepares an inheritance for his son. And thus in a mighty blaze he ordained all his works. Then creation recognized its Creator in its own forms and appearances. For in the beginning, when God said, 'Let it be!' and it came to pass, the means and the matrix of creation was Love. Because all creation was formed through her as in the twinkling of an eye.'

*Sister of Wisdom, By Barbara Neumann, Words of Hildegard von Bingen,
University of California Press, 1987*



*"O resplendent jewel and unclouded brightness
Of the sunlight streaming through you - -*

*A fountain leaping from the Father's heart --
 His own and only Word
 Through which he created
 The world's first matrix,
 Which Eve through into chaos:
 For you the father
 Fashioned this Word as man,
 So you are that luminous matrix
 Through which the same Word
 Breathed forth all virtues."*

*Sister of Wisdom, By Barbara Neumann, Words of Hildegard von Bingen,
 University of California Press, 1987*

*"From the beginning, when I heard the story of being
 in love,
 I wore out my soul, heart, and eyes in its path.
 I said, 'Perhaps the lover and beloved are two.'
 But both were one, and I was seeing double . . .
 In relation to you, Love is fair and beautiful;
 It calls and invites with eloquent words.
 Love is not stingy toward the seeker of love . . .
 Oh, my Beloved,
 You will find us every night, on your Street,
 With our eyes glued to your window,
 Waiting for a glimpse of your radiant face . . ."*

*The Quatrains of Rumi, By Ibrahim Gamard and Rawan Farhadi, Sufi Dari
 Books, 2008*







CHAPTER FIVE

To Fulfill the Suffering of Want

Sublime is the wisdom of love
 Correct are the ways of the Lord
 Phantasmical gurus cannot help but seek Him
 Along with unfettered youth
 His attraction is universal although His ways are
 steep
 Wailing winds suggest a cornucopia of dreams
 But those frightened by the movement slither away
 Is there any wonder so few travel to the cave of
 treasures
 To uphold the original treasure of light
 Hence; our fallen world lies at dusk and midday
 But only twilight reveals the secret
 To return to the world of the fall is a must
 But how to return with paradisiacal grandeur?
 Still unknown
 How do we live such a vision a fallen world
 How do we re-evaluate the gift and accept that which
 was lost
 Shall we hence beg, plead . . .?
 Oh, yes, but we beg and plead for the workings of
 perfection to descend into our midst
 To recapture paradise within the fallen mist would
 indeed be a feat
 But to know the essence of eternal love and live it in a
 fallen world
 A miracle
 The Royal City

The freeborn soul, in his newly altered state, could not deny the unfathomable nature of what he had yet just seen and experienced. Beyond the rocky fragments of his earthly demise, the traveler could no more deny what had been lost than he could deny God Himself. Mourning and weeping in this valley of tears, the freeborn could now see intrinsically who he was as a fallen human being.

At first, the condition brought on a powerful cherishing of the wondrous gift which God originally provided to the realm of humankind. In witnessing it in the manner in which he had done so, he felt the integration of both hearts of masculine and feminine in the way it was originally intended. He could see who he truly was, and who truly every man and woman was originally intended to be before the fall. The cherishing came upon him in waves of light as he reintegrated what had been to what had come to be.

And then it was the desolation, the longing, the loss of what could have been to a decision which seemed so rash, so obscure, so ignoble . . . in his mind, the freeborn could not help but ask himself. "Who could possibly say 'no' to such a gift as this?" And the answer came to him almost immediately. "Only those who had not known the opposite pole, that of evil."

*"Adam and Eve faint when they leave the Garden.
God sends His Word to encourage them."*

1 But when our father Adam, and Eve, went out of the garden, they walked the ground on their feet, not knowing they were walking. 2 And when they came to the opening of the gate of the garden, and saw the broad earth spread before them, covered with stones large and small, and with sand, they feared and trembled, and fell on their faces, from the fear that came over them; and they were as dead. 3 Because -- whereas until this time they had been in the garden land, beautifully planted with all manner of trees -- they now saw themselves, in a strange land, which they knew not, and had never seen. 4 And because, when they were in the garden they were filled with the grace of a bright nature, and they had not hearts turned toward earthly things . . .

Adam mourns over the changed conditions. Adam and Eve enter the Cave of Treasures.

1 But Adam and Eve cried for having come out of the garden, their first home. 2 And indeed, when Adam looked at his flesh, that was altered, he cried bitterly, he and Eve, over what they had done. And they walked and went gently down into the Cave of Treasures. 3 And as they came to it, Adam cried over himself and said to Eve, "Look at this cave that is to be our prison in this world, and a place of punishment! 4 What is it compared with the garden? What is its narrowness compared with the space of the other? 5 What is this rock, by the side of those groves? What is the gloom of this cavern, compared with the light of the garden? 6 What is this overhanging ledge of rock to shelter us, compared with the mercy of the Lord that overshadowed us? 7 What is the soil of this cave

compared with the garden land? This earth, strewed with stones; and that, planted with delicious fruit trees?" 8 And Adam said to Eve, "Look at your eyes, and at mine, which before beheld angels praising in heaven; and they too, without ceasing. 9 But now we do not see as we did; our eyes have become of flesh; they cannot see like they used to see before." 10 Adam said again to Eve, "What is our body today, compared to what it was in former days, when we lived in the garden?" 11 After this, Adam did not want to enter the cave, under the overhanging rock; nor would he ever want to enter it. 12 But he bowed to God's orders; and said to himself, "Unless I enter the cave, I shall again be a transgressor."

Eve makes a noble and emotional intercession, taking the blame on herself.

1 Then Adam and Eve entered the cave, and stood praying, in their own tongue, unknown to us, but which they knew well. 2 And as they prayed, Adam raised his eyes and saw the rock and the roof of the cave that covered him overhead. This prevented him from seeing either heaven or God's creatures. So he cried and beat his chest hard, until he dropped, and was as dead. 3 And Eve sat crying; for she believed he was dead. 4 Then she got up, spread her hands toward God, appealing to Him for mercy and pity, and said, "O God, forgive me my sin, the sin which I committed, and don't remember it against me. 5 For I alone caused Your servant to fall from the garden into this condemned land; from light into this darkness; and from the house of joy into this prison. 6 O God, look at this Your servant fallen in this manner, and

bring him back to life, that he may cry and repent of his transgression which he committed through me. 7 Don't take away his soul right now; but let him live that he may stand after the measure of his repentance, and do Your will, as before his death. 8 But if You do not bring him back to life, then, O God, take away my own soul, that I be like him, and leave me not in this dungeon, one and alone; for I could not stand alone in this world, but with him only. 9 For You, O God, caused him to fall asleep, and took a bone from his side, and restored the flesh in the place of it, by Your divine power. 10 And You took me, the bone, and make me a woman, bright like him, with heart, reason, and speech; and in flesh, like to his own; and You made me after the likeness of his looks, by Your mercy and power. 11 O Lord, I and he are one, and You, O God, are our Creator, You are He who made us both in one day. 12 Therefore, O God, give him life, that he may be with me in this strange land, while we live in it on account of our transgression. 13 But if You will not give him life, then take me, even me, like him; that we both may die the same day." 14 And Eve cried bitterly, and fell on our father Adam; from her great sorrow.

God's reprimand to Adam and Eve in which he points out how and why they sinned.

1 But God looked at them; for they had killed themselves through great grief. 2 But He decided to raise them and comfort them. 3 He, therefore, sent His Word to them; that they should stand and be raised immediately. 4 And the Lord said to Adam and Eve, "You transgressed of your own free will, until you

came out of the garden in which I had placed you. 5 Of your own free will have you transgressed through your desire for divinity, greatness, and an exalted state, such as I have; so that I deprived you of the bright nature in which you then were, and I made you come out of the garden to this land, rough and full of trouble. 6 If only you had not transgressed My commandment and had kept My law, and had not eaten of the fruit of the tree which I told you not to come near! And there were fruit trees in the garden better than that one. 7 But the wicked Satan did not keep his faith and had no good intent towards Me, that although I had created him, he considered Me to be useless, and sought the Godhead for himself; for this I hurled him down from heaven so that he could not remain in his first estate -- it was he who made the tree appear pleasant in your eyes, until you ate of it, by believing his words. 8 Thus have you transgressed My commandment, and therefore I have brought on you all these sorrows. 9 For I am God the Creator, who, when I created My creatures, did not intend to destroy them." (The Forgotten Books of Eden, The First and Second Book of Adam and Eve, From the Pseudopigrepha)

Because the original fall had occurred unto Adam and Eve who had been born into the paradisiacal garden, they truly could be speculated to have had no knowledge of how wondrously they had been blessed in such an estate. In their minds, perhaps, such evil contained within the fallen world was well beyond their true grasp.

But for those born into the fallen world, the freeborn thought, had no such innocence from which to forestall. Because he did know the fallen world, and the discrepancy contained within the expression of eternal love in that world, he did know. Especially now, after having journeyed to the primordial garden, he knew both polar opposites with a clarity which offered him a more reverent choice.

As we continued to ponder these thoughts, he was suddenly besieged with memories from his fallen years upon the earth. Years spent whoring and lustng after the flesh in a way which was contrary to that which eternal love had shown him; a consistently painful and hurtful choice which had never given him rest or peace of soul. It wasn't necessarily something he had done in the flesh, although some of it was, but also within his own mind.

He remembered how there was no such lustful temptation in the primordial garden, because love was pure and undefiled.

Concluding that he could now allow himself now to even allow such memories to resurface for fear the lustful thoughts would again bring fire to his passions, he set them aside and besieged Satan with insults for bringing them again to his attention.

Fallen love is selfish love, a love that uses and betrays. Eternal love is unselfish love, a love that gives and fulfills.

The freeborn now fell to the ground in fatigue. "How is a soul to love in an eternal manner in the fallen world?" He thought. "In the fallen world, there is temptation, sickness, disease, suffering and pain . . . we cannot see with the clear light of the garden."

"The "Bright Nature" of man is taken away.

1 Then Adam cried and said, "O God, when we lived in the garden, and our hearts were lifted up, we saw the angels that sang praises in heaven, but now we can't see like we used to; no, when we entered the cave, all creation became hidden from us." 2 Then God the Lord said to Adam, "When you were under subjection to Me, you had a bright nature within you, and for that reason could you see things far away. But after your transgression your bright nature was withdrawn from you; and it was not left to you to see things far away, but only near at hand; after the ability of the flesh; for it is brutish." 3 When Adam and Eve had heard these words from God, they went their way; praising and worshipping Him with a sorrowful heart." (The Forgotten Books of Eden, The First and Second Book of Adam and Eve, From the Pseudopigrepha)

Feeling the sorrow of the loss of such a great good, the traveling freeborn now fell to his knees. There was no fanciful answer to this question, no easy way to be discerned. In dwelling in a human body, suffering would not be optional, it was part of the new fallen human condition. Fallen love accompanied that condition. He could not think for one moment how that condition could be remedied. So he wept.

"The earliest prophesy of the coming of Christ ?

1 Then Adam said to God: "O Lord, take You my soul, and let me not see this gloom any more; or remove me to some place where there is no darkness." 2 But God the Lord said to Adam, "Indeed I say to you, this darkness will pass from you, every day I have determined for you, until the fulfillment of My covenant; when I will save you and bring you back again into the garden, into the house of light you long for, in which there is no darkness*. I will bring you to it -- in the kingdom of heaven." 3 Again said God to Adam, "All this misery that you have been made to take on yourself because of your transgression, will not free you from the hand of Satan, and will not save you. 4 But I will. When I shall come down from heaven, and shall become flesh of your descendants, and take on Myself the infirmity from which you suffer, then the darkness that covered you in this cave shall cover Me in the grave, when I am in the flesh of your descendants. 5 And I, who am without years, shall be subject to the reckoning of years, of times, of months, and of days, and I shall be reckoned as one of the sons of men, in order to save you." (The Forgotten Books of Eden, The First and Second Book of Adam and Eve, From the Pseudopigrepha)

From his knees, the freeborn looked up into the sky as the momentous remembrance of the promise of God returned to his memory. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father but by Me." He thought, as he remembered the words of Christ in scripture. "There is a way back . . ." he thought. "But it is not an easy way, but a difficult one indeed."

“For who can live the promise of the Messiah, the Anointed One? Who can truly live the straight way of the Lord?” Again, he looked down feeling overwhelmed by the gravity of the task.

In his mind, he recalled the many statutes given to man by great prophet Moses . . .

“The Ten Commandments

- 1.) Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 2.) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
- 3.) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
- 4.) Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made

heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5.) Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6.) Thou shalt not kill.

7.) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8.) Thou shalt not steal.

9.) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10.) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."
(The Holy Bible, King James Version)

And the freeborn remembered the dictates of Christ, as well, from the Sermon on the Mount . . .

"The Gospel according to
St. Matthew

5

The Beginning of the Sermon on the Mount

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

The Beatitudes

Lk. 6.20-23

3 ¶ Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 ¶ Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Is. 61.2

5 ¶ Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Ps. 37.11

6 ¶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Is. 55.1, 2

7 ¶ Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 ¶ Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Ps. 24.4, 5

9 ¶ Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 ¶ Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: 1 Pet. 3.14 for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 ¶ Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 1 Pet. 4.14

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets 2 Chr. 36.16 · Acts 7.52 which were before you.

The Salt of the Earth

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and

to be trodden under foot of men. Mk. 9.50 · Lk. 14.34,
35

The Light of the World

14 ¶ Ye are the light of the world. Joh. 8.12 ; 9.5 A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; Mk. 4.21 · Lk. 8.16 ; 11.33 and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. 1 Pet. 2.12

Jesus' Attitude toward the Law

17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Lk. 16.17

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus' Attitude toward Anger

Lk. 12.57-59

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; Ex. 20.13 · Deut. 5.17 and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

24 leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Jesus' Attitude toward Adultery

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: Ex. 20.14 · Deut. 5.18

28 but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy

whole body should be cast into hell. Mt. 18.9 · Mk. 9.47

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. Mt. 18.8 · Mk. 9.43

Jesus' Attitude toward Divorce

31 ¶ It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce: Deut. 24.1-4 · Mt. 19.7 · Mk. 10.4

32 but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. Mt. 19.9 · Mk. 10.11, 12 · Lk. 16.18 · 1 Cor. 7.10, 11

Jesus' Attitude toward Oaths

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, Lev. 19.12 but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: Num. 30.2 · Deut. 23.21

34 but I say unto you, Swear not at all; Jas. 5.12 neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Is. 66.1 · Mt. 23.22

35 nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: Is. 66.1 neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Ps. 48.2

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Love for Enemies

Lk. 6.27-36

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: Ex. 21.24 · Lev. 24.20 · Deut. 19.21

39 but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, Lev. 19.18 and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Deut. 18.13" (The Holy Bible, King James Version, Notations by the American Bible Society)

And the freeborn contemplated on these words and how simple they had seemed to him when he'd first read them as a child, but how as he looked through his life, he could easily see had not so simply been followed.

Now that temptation had entered into the picture of life, even his very thoughts were so skewed that it made it very difficult for him to discern that which from himself, that which was from Satan and that which was from God.

After all, how uncommon was it in the modern world to follow after that which was most pleasing to us at any given moment, Rather than follow the path which contained the highest degree of eternal love?

In a world filled with division, hurt and disunity between the sexes, how could the perfect dimension of marital love experienced in the primordial garden ever be restored?

"MARRIAGE ONE AND INDISSOLUBLE IN FIRST CHAPTERS OF GENESIS

Pope John Paul II

GENERAL AUDIENCE OF 21 NOVEMBER

On 21 November the General Audience was held in two parts—in the Basilica and in the Paul VI Hall. To the Italian-speaking pilgrims in the Basilica the Holy Father spoke as follows.

1. Let us recall that Christ, when questioned about the unity and indissolubility of marriage, referred to what was "in the beginning." He quoted the words written in the first chapters of Genesis. In the course of these

reflections, we are trying to penetrate the specific meaning of these words and these chapters.

The meaning of the original unity of man, whom God created "male and female," is obtained (especially in the light of Genesis 2:23) by knowing man in the entire endowment of his being, that is, in all the riches of that mystery of creation, on which theological anthropology is based. This knowledge, that is, the study of the human identity of the one who, at the beginning, is "alone," must always pass through duality, "communion."

Let us recall the passage of Genesis 2:23: "Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.'" In the light of this text, we understand that knowledge of man passes through masculinity and femininity. These are, as it were, two "incarnations" of the same metaphysical solitude before God and the world—two ways, as it were, of "being a body" and at the same time a man, which complete each other—two complementary dimensions, as it were, of self-consciousness and self-determination and, at the same time, two complementary ways of being conscious of the meaning of the body.

As Genesis 2:23 already shows, femininity finds itself, in a sense, in the presence of masculinity, while masculinity is confirmed through femininity. Precisely the function of sex, which is in a sense, "a constituent part of the person" (not just "an attribute of the person"), proves how deeply man, with all his

spiritual solitude, with the never to be repeated uniqueness of his person, is constituted by the body as "he" or "she." The presence of the feminine element, alongside the male element and together with it, signifies an enrichment for man in the whole perspective of his history, including the history of salvation. All this teaching on unity has already been expressed originally in Genesis 2:23.

Rediscover the mystery of creation

2. The unity of which Genesis 2:24 speaks ("they become one flesh") is undoubtedly expressed and realized in the conjugal act. The biblical formulation, extremely concise and simple, indicates sex, femininity and masculinity, as that characteristic of man—male and female—which permits them, when they become "one flesh," to submit their whole humanity to the blessing of fertility. However, the whole context of the lapidary formulation does not permit us to stop at the surface of human sexuality. It does not allow us to deal with the body and sex outside the full dimension of man and of the "communion of persons." Right from the beginning it obliges us to see the fullness and depth which are characteristic of this unity, which man and woman must constitute in the light of the revelation of the body.

The perspective expression which says, "a man cleaves to his wife" so intimately that "they become one flesh," always induces us to refer to what the biblical text expresses previously with regard to the union in humanity, which binds the woman and the

man in the very mystery of creation. The words of Genesis 2:23, just analyzed, explain this concept in a particular way. Uniting with each other (in the conjugal act) so closely as to become "one flesh," man and woman, rediscover, so to speak, every time and in a special way, the mystery of creation. They return in this way to that union in humanity ("bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh") which allows them to recognize each other and, like the first time, to call each other by name.

This means reliving, in a sense, the original virginal value of man, which emerges from the mystery of his solitude before God and in the midst of the world. The fact that they become one flesh is a powerful bond established by the Creator. Through it they discover their own humanity, both in its original unity, and in the duality of a mysterious mutual attraction.

However, sex is something more than the mysterious power of human corporality, which acts almost by virtue of instinct. At the level of man and in the mutual relationship of persons, sex expresses an ever new surpassing of the limit of man's solitude that is inherent in the constitution of his body, and determines its original meaning. This surpassing always contains within it a certain assumption of the solitude of the body of the second "self" as one's own.

Choice establishes pact

3. Therefore, it is bound up with choice. The formulation of Genesis 2:24 indicates that human

beings, created as man and woman, were created for unity. It also indicates that precisely this unity, through which they become one flesh, has right from the beginning a character of union derived from a choice. We read: "A man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife." If the man belongs "by nature" to his father and mother, by virtue of procreation, on the other hand, he cleaves by choice to his wife (or she to her husband).

The text of Genesis 2:24 defines this character of the conjugal bond with reference to the first man and the first woman. At the same time, it does so in the perspective of the whole earthly future of man. Therefore, in his time, Christ will appeal to that text, as equally relevant in his age. Formed in the image of God, also inasmuch as they form a true communion of persons, the first man and the first woman must constitute the beginning and the model of that communion for all men and women, who, in any period, are united so intimately as to be one flesh.

The body, which through its own masculinity or femininity right from the beginning helps both to find themselves in communion of persons, becomes, in a particular way, the constituent element of their union, when they become husband and wife. This takes place, however, through a mutual choice. This choice establishes the conjugal pact between persons,(1) who become one flesh only on this basis.

Self-giving persons

4. That corresponds to the structure of man's solitude, and in actual fact to the "twofold solitude." As the expression of self-determination, choice rests on the foundation of his self-consciousness. Only on the basis of the structure peculiar to man is he "a body" and, through the body, also male and female. When they both unite so closely as to become one flesh, their conjugal union presupposes a mature consciousness of the body. In fact, it bears within it a particular consciousness of the meaning of that body in the mutual self-giving of the persons.

In this sense too, Genesis 2:24 is a perspective text. It proves that in every conjugal union of man and woman, the same original consciousness of the unifying significance of the body in its masculinity and femininity is discovered again. At the same time, the biblical text indicates that each of these unions renews, in a way, the mystery of creation in all its original depth and vital power. "Taken out of man" as "flesh of his flesh," woman subsequently becomes, as wife and through her motherhood, mother of the living (cf. Gn 3:20), since her motherhood also has its origin in him. Procreation is rooted in creation, and every time, in a sense, reproduces its mystery . . . "

(The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II)

"Opposition Between the Flesh and the Spirit

Pope John Paul II

GENERAL AUDIENCE OF 7 JANUARY

On Wednesday, 7 January, the Holy Father resumed his weekly audiences which had been suspended because of the Christmas holidays. Continuing his

catechesis on the Christian concept of the world, John Paul II delivered the following message....

Pauline theology of justification

1. What does the statement mean: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh" (Gal 5:17)? This question seems important, even fundamental, in the context of our reflections on purity of heart, which the Gospel speaks of. However, in this regard the author of Galatians opens before us even wider horizons. This contrast between the flesh and the Spirit (Spirit of God), and between life according to the flesh and life according to the Spirit, contains the Pauline theology about justification. This is the expression of faith in the anthropological and ethical realism of the redemption carried out by Christ, which Paul, in the context already known to us, also calls the redemption of the body. According to Romans 8:23, the "redemption of the body" also has a "cosmic" dimension (referred to the whole of creation), but at its center, there is man: man constituted in the personal unity of spirit and body. It is precisely in this man, in his heart, and consequently in all his behavior, that Christ's redemption bears fruit, thanks to those powers of the Spirit which bring about justification, that is, which enable justice to abound in man, as is inculcated in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. Mt 5:20), that is, to abound to the extent that God himself willed and which he expects.

Effects of the lust of the flesh

2. It is significant that speaking of the "works of the flesh" (cf. Gal 5:19-21), Paul mentions not only "fornication, impurity, licentiousness...drunkenness, carousing." This is everything that, according to an objective way of understanding, takes on the character of carnal sins and of the sensual enjoyment connected with the flesh. He names other sins too, to which we would not be inclined to also attribute a carnal and sensual character: "idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy..." (Gal 5:20-21). According to our anthropological (and ethical) categories, we would rather be inclined to call all the works listed here sins of the spirit, rather than sins of the flesh. Not without reason we might have glimpsed in them the effects of the lust of the eyes or of the pride of life, rather than the effects of the lust of the flesh. However, Paul describes them all as works of the flesh. That is intended exclusively against the background of that wider meaning (in a way a metonymical one), which the term flesh assumes in the Pauline letters. It is opposed not only and not so much to the human spirit as to the Holy Spirit who works in man's soul (spirit).

Purity comes from the heart

3. There exists, therefore, a significant analogy between what Paul defines as works of the flesh and the words Christ used to explain to his disciples what he had previously said to the Pharisees about ritual purity and impurity (cf. Mt 15:2-20). According to Christ's words, real purity (as also impurity) in the moral sense is in the heart and comes from the heart

of man. Impure works in the same sense are defined not only as adultery and fornication, and so the sins of the flesh in the strict sense, but also "evil thoughts...theft, false witness, slander." As we have already noted, Christ uses here both the general and the specific meaning of impurity (and, indirectly also of purity). St. Paul expresses himself in a similar way. The works of the flesh are understood in the Pauline text both in the general and in the specific sense. All sins are an expression of life according to the flesh, which contrasts with life according to the Spirit. In conformity with our linguistic convention (which is partially justified), what is considered as a sin of the flesh is, in Paul's list, one of the many manifestations (or species) of what he calls works of the flesh. In this sense, it is one of the symptoms, that is, actualizations of life according to the flesh, and not according to the Spirit.

Two meanings of death

4. Paul's words written to the Romans: "So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh; for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live" (Rom 8:12-13)—introduce us again into the rich and differentiated sphere of the meanings which the terms "body" and Spirit have for him. However, the definitive meaning of that enunciation is advisory, exhortative, and so valid for the evangelical ethos. When he speaks of the necessity of putting to death the deeds of the body with the help of the Spirit, Paul expresses precisely what Christ spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount,

appealing to the human heart and exhorting it to control desires, even those expressed in a man's look at a woman for the purpose of satisfying the lust of the flesh. This mastery, or as Paul writes, "putting to death the works of the body with the help of the Spirit," is an indispensable condition of life according to the Spirit, that is, of the life which is an antithesis of the death spoken about in the same context. Life according to the flesh has death as its fruit. That is, it involves as its effect the "death" of the spirit.

So the term "death" does not mean only the death of the body, but also sin, which moral theology will call "mortal." In Romans and Galatians, the Apostle continually widens the horizon of "sin-death," both toward the beginning of human history, and toward its end. Therefore, after listing the multiform works of the flesh, he affirms that "those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal 5:21). Elsewhere he will write with similar firmness: "Be sure of this, that no fornicator or impure man, or one who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of God" (Eph 5:5). In this case, too, the works that exclude inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God—that is, the works of the flesh—are listed as an example and with general value, although sins against purity in the specific sense are at the top of the list here (cf. Eph 5:3-7).

To set us free

5. To complete the picture of the opposition between the body and the fruit of the Spirit—it should be observed that in everything that manifests life and

behavior according to the Spirit, Paul sees at once the manifestation of that freedom for which Christ "has set us free" (Gal 5:1). He writes: "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Gal 5:13-14). As we have already pointed out, the opposition body/Spirit, life according to the flesh/ life according to the Spirit, deeply permeates the whole Pauline doctrine on justification. With exceptional force of conviction, the Apostle of the Gentiles proclaims that justification is carried out in Christ and through Christ. Man obtains justification in "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6), and not only by means of the observance of the individual prescriptions of Old Testament law (in particular, that of circumcision). Justification comes therefore "from the Spirit" (of God) and not "from the flesh." Paul exhorts the recipients of his letter to free themselves from the erroneous carnal concept of justification, to follow the true one, that is, the spiritual one. In this sense he exhorts them to consider themselves free from the law, and even more to be free with the freedom for which Christ "has set us free."

In this way, following the Apostle's thought, we should consider and above all realize evangelical purity, that is, the purity of the heart, according to the measure of that freedom for which Christ "has set us free." (The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II)

"Life in the Spirit Based on True Freedom
Pope John Paul II

GENERAL AUDIENCE OF 14 JANUARY

Continuing his weekly catechesis, the Holy Father addressed the following message to the numerous pilgrims gathered in the Paul VI Hall.

1. St. Paul writes in the Letter to the Galatians: "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Gal 5:13-14). We have already dwelled on this enunciation. However, we are taking it up again today, in connection with the main argument of our reflections.

Although the passage quoted refers above all to the subject of justification, here, however, the Apostle aims explicitly at driving home the ethical dimension of the "body-Spirit" opposition, that is, the opposition between life according to the flesh and life according to the Spirit. Here he touches the essential point, revealing the anthropological roots of the Gospel ethos. If the whole law (the moral law of the Old Testament) is fulfilled in the commandment of charity, the dimension of the new Gospel ethos is nothing but an appeal to human freedom. It is an appeal to its fuller implementation and, in a way, to fuller "utilization" of the potential of the human spirit.

Freedom linked with command to love

2. It might seem that Paul was only contrasting freedom with the law and the law with freedom.

However, a deeper analysis of the text shows that in Galatians St. Paul emphasizes above all the ethical subordination of freedom to that element in which the whole law is fulfilled, that is, to love, which is the content of the greatest commandment of the Gospel. "Christ set us free in order that we might remain free," precisely in the sense that he manifested to us the ethical (and theological) subordination of freedom to charity, and that he linked freedom with the commandment of love. To understand the vocation to freedom in this way ("You were called to freedom, brethren": Gal 5:13), means giving a form to the ethos in which life "according to the Spirit" is realized. The danger of wrongly understanding freedom also exists. Paul clearly points this out, writing in the same context: "Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another" (ibid.).

Bad use of freedom

3. In other words: Paul warns us of the possibility of making a bad use of freedom. Such a use is in opposition to the liberation of the human spirit carried out by Christ and contradicts that freedom with which "Christ set us free." Christ realized and manifested the freedom that finds its fullness in charity, the freedom thanks to which we are servants of one another. In other words, that freedom becomes a source of new works and life according to the Spirit. The antithesis and, in a way, the negation of this use of freedom takes place when it becomes a pretext to live according to the flesh. Freedom then becomes a source of works and of life according to the flesh. It

stops being the true freedom for which "Christ set us free," and becomes "an opportunity for the flesh," a source (or instrument) of a specific yoke on the part of pride of life, the lust of the eyes, and the lust of the flesh. Anyone who lives in this way according to the flesh, that is, submits—although in a way that is not quite conscious, but nevertheless actual—to the three forms of lust, especially to the lust of the flesh, ceases to be capable of that freedom for which "Christ set us free." He also ceases to be suitable for the real gift of himself, which is the fruit and expression of this freedom. Moreover, he ceases to be capable of that gift which is organically connected with the nuptial meaning of the human body, with which we dealt in the preceding analyses of Genesis (cf. Gn 2:23-25).

The law fulfilled

4. In this way, the Pauline doctrine on purity, a doctrine in which we find the faithful and true echo of the Sermon on the Mount, permits us to see evangelical and Christian purity of heart in a wider perspective, and above all permits us to link it with the charity in which the law is fulfilled. Paul, in a way similar to Christ, knows a double meaning of purity (and of impurity): a generic meaning and a specific meaning. In the first case, everything that is morally good is pure, and on the contrary, everything that is morally bad is impure. Christ's words according to Matthew 15:18-20, quoted previously, clearly affirm this. In Paul's enunciations about the works of the flesh, which he contrasts with the fruit of the Spirit, we find the basis for a similar way of understanding this problem. Among the works of the flesh Paul puts

what is morally bad, while every moral good is linked with life according to the Spirit. In this way, one of the manifestations of life according to the Spirit is behavior in conformity with that virtue which Paul in the Letter to the Galatians seems to define rather indirectly, but which he speaks directly of in the First Letter to the Thessalonians.

Virtue of self-control

5. In the passages of the Letter to the Galatians, which we have previously already submitted to detailed analysis, the Apostle lists in the first place among the works of the flesh: fornication, impurity and licentiousness. Subsequently, however, when he contrasts these works with the fruit of the Spirit, he does not speak directly of purity, but names only self-control, enkrateia. This control can be recognized as a virtue which concerns continence in the area of all the desires of the senses, especially in the sexual sphere. It is in opposition to fornication, impurity and licentiousness, and also to drunkenness and carousing. It could be admitted that Pauline self-control contains what is expressed in the term "continence" or "temperance," which corresponds to the Latin term temperantia. In this case, we would find ourselves in the presence of the well-known system of virtues which later theology, especially Scholasticism, will borrow from the ethics of Aristotle. However, Paul certainly does not use this system in his text. Since purity must be understood as the correct way of treating the sexual sphere according to one's personal state (and not necessarily absolute abstention from sexual life), then

undoubtedly this purity is included in the Pauline concept of self-control or enkrateia. Therefore, within the Pauline text we find only a generic and indirect mention of purity. Now and again the author contrasts these works of the flesh, such as fornication, impurity and licentiousness, with the fruit of the Spirit—that is, new works, in which life according to the Spirit is manifested. It can be deduced that one of these new works is precisely purity, that is the one that is opposed to impurity and also to fornication and licentiousness.

Called to holiness

6. But already in First Thessalonians, Paul writes on this subject in an explicit and unambiguous way. We read: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from unchastity; that each one of you know how to control his own body(1) in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like heathens who do not know God" (1 Th 4:3-5). Then: "God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you" (1 Th 4:7-8). In this text we also have before us the generic meaning of purity, identified in this case with holiness (since uncleanness is named as the antithesis of holiness). Nevertheless, the whole context indicates clearly what purity or impurity it is a question of, that is, the content of what Paul calls here uncleanness, and in what way purity contributes to the holiness of man.

And therefore, in the following reflections, it will be useful to take up again the text of the First Letter to

the Thessalonians, which has just been quoted." (The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II)

The freeborn thought on the brilliant words of Pope John Paul II and how the Holy Spirit had illuminated this brilliant man with the wonder and awe of the true spiritual and sexual union between man and woman. But he couldn't help but wonder, due to man's fallen nature, how to apply this understanding in the many cases where one party or the other, as was common in the modern day world, might choose to violate these dignities of the other party.

"He shall rule over you"

10. The biblical description in the Book of Genesis outlines the truth about the consequences of man's sin, as it is shown by the disturbance of that original relationship between man and woman which corresponds to their individual dignity as persons. A human being, whether male or female, is a person, and therefore, "the only creature on earth which God willed for its own sake"; and at the same time this unique and unrepeatable creature "cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self".³² Here begins the relationship of "communion" in which the "unity of the two" and the personal dignity of both man and woman find expression. Therefore when we read in the biblical description the words addressed to the woman: "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen 3:16), we discover a break and a constant threat precisely in regard to this "unity of the two" which corresponds to the dignity of

the image and likeness of God in both of them. But this threat is more serious for the woman, since domination takes the place of "being a sincere gift" and therefore living "for" the other: "he shall rule over you". This "domination" indicates the disturbance and loss of the stability of that fundamental equality which the man and the woman possess in the "unity of the two": and this is especially to the disadvantage of the woman, whereas only the equality resulting from their dignity as persons can give to their mutual relationship the character of an authentic "communio personarum". While the violation of this equality, which is both a gift and a right deriving from God the Creator, involves an element to the disadvantage of the woman, at the same time it also diminishes the true dignity of the man. Here we touch upon an extremely sensitive point in the dimension of that "ethos" which was originally inscribed by the Creator in the very creation of both of them in his own image and likeness.

This statement in Genesis 3:16 is of great significance. It implies a reference to the mutual relationship of man and woman in marriage. It refers to the desire born in the atmosphere of spousal love whereby the woman's "sincere gift of self" is responded to and matched by a corresponding "gift" on the part of the husband. Only on the basis of this principle can both of them, and in particular the woman, "discover themselves" as a true "unity of the two" according to the dignity of the person. The matrimonial union requires respect for and a perfecting of the true personal subjectivity of both of them. The woman cannot become the "object" of "domination" and male

"possession". But the words of the biblical text directly concern original sin and its lasting consequences in man and woman. Burdened by hereditary sinfulness, they bear within themselves the constant "inclination to sin", the tendency to go against the moral order which corresponds to the rational nature and dignity of man and woman as persons. This tendency is expressed in a threefold concupiscence, which Saint John defines as the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (cf. 1 Jn 2:16). The words of the Book of Genesis quoted previously (3: 16) show how this threefold concupiscence, the "inclination to sin", will burden the mutual relationship of man and woman.

These words of Genesis refer directly to marriage, but indirectly they concern the different spheres of social life: the situations in which the woman remains disadvantaged or discriminated against by the fact of being a woman. The revealed truth concerning the creation of the human being as male and female constitutes the principal argument against all the objectively injurious and unjust situations which contain and express the inheritance of the sin which all human beings bear within themselves. The books of Sacred Scripture confirm in various places the actual existence of such situations and at the same time proclaim the need for conversion, that is to say, for purification from evil and liberation from sin: from what offends neighbour, what "diminishes" man, not only the one who is offended but also the one who causes the offence. This is the unchangeable message of the Word revealed by God. In it is expressed the biblical "ethos" until the end of time.³³

In our times the question of "women's rights" has taken on new significance in the broad context of the rights of the human person. The biblical and evangelical message sheds light on this cause, which is the object of much attention today, by safeguarding the truth about the "unity" of the "two", that is to say the truth about that dignity and vocation that result from the specific diversity and personal originality of man and woman. Consequently, even the rightful opposition of women to what is expressed in the biblical words "He shall rule over you" (Gen 3:16) must not under any condition lead to the "masculinization" of women. In the name of liberation from male "domination", women must not appropriate to themselves male characteristics contrary to their own feminine "originality". There is a well-founded fear that if they take this path, women will not "reach fulfilment", but instead will deform and lose what constitutes their essential richness. It is indeed an enormous richness. In the biblical description, the words of the first man at the sight of the woman who had been created are words of admiration and enchantment, words which fill the whole history of man on earth.

The personal resources of femininity are certainly no less than the resources of masculinity: they are merely different. Hence a woman, as well as a man, must understand her "fulfilment" as a person, her dignity and vocation, on the basis of these resources, according to the richness of the femininity which she received on the day of creation and which she inherits as an expression of the "image and likeness of God"

that is specifically hers. The inheritance of sin suggested by the words of the Bible - "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" - can be conquered only by following this path. The overcoming of this evil inheritance is, generation after generation, the task of every human being, whether woman or man. For whenever man is responsible for offending a woman's personal dignity and vocation, he acts contrary to his own personal dignity and his own vocation." (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, Pope John Paul II)

"But how," thought the freeborn, 'is a mere fallen human being going to be able to live out such high dictates of the human spirit within the confines of the will of God? We are all fallen, subject to temptation, sin and death . . ."

And . . . as he thought these words, the remembrance of the spirit-filled day of Pentecost came upon him. Was it not Christ who said that if He did not go, the Comforter could not come? Was it not Christ who said that we would do as He did and more, if we but followed Him . . .

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost' [Acts 2:4]. Today is the wonderful day when the sublime and priceless treasure which was lost in paradise by sin, and chiefly by disobedience, is restored to us. By its loss, the whole human race fell away into eternal death; the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, with all His gifts and consolations, was lost, and all mankind incurred the everlasting wrath of God and the bondage of eternal death. Our dear Lord Jesus Christ broke these bonds on Good Friday when He let

himself be captured and bound, and died on the cross. There He made a complete reconciliation between man and His heavenly father. Today this reconciliation is ratified, and God gives back to us the high and priceless treasure which was once lost, the precious Holy Spirit."

Spiritual Conferences, By Johann Tauler, O.P., TAN Books, 1978

And by following the Holy Spirit, which way would we be truly led in our love for one another, man and woman, but also in our love for all of humanity?

"The words of Jesus, 'Love one another as I have loved you,' (John 15:12) must be not only a light for us but a flame that consumes the self in us. Love, in order to survive, must be nourished by sacrifices, especially the sacrifice of self. People are trying to make God a relic from the past. But you, by your love, by the purity of your lives and your compassion, can prove to the world that God is up-to-date. The co-workers of Christ must give special attention to those who feel unwanted and deprived of love. For the worst disease of all is feeling unloved. The greatest sin is the terrible indifference to those on the fringe of the social system. May the sick and suffering find in us angels of comfort and consolation. May the poor by seeing us be drawn to Christ and invite him into their lives."

Loving Jesus, Mother Teresa, Servant Publications, 1991

"True love causes pain . . . If you really love one another, you will not be able to avoid making sacrifices . . . Christ, who died on the cross for us, we can definitely confirm the fact that suffering can

transform itself into a great love and an extraordinary generosity."

Mother Teresa: In my Own Words, Smiles, Gramercy Books, 1996

*"The love from which trials arise is best;
The one who stays away from trials is not a lover.
He alone is manly who, in the amorous play of love,
Surrenders his life when Love reaches the soul."*

The Quatrains of Rumi, By Ibrahim Gamard and Rawan Farhadi, Sufi Dari Books, 2008

And so the freeborn rested. He gathered his flesh and his bones together with his spirit to lie once again upon the cloudeous heavenly abode. To there he would go to gain the wisdom of the selfless lover he wished to become, to there he would go to lie at the feet of his master the Lord.

*"The angel of the Lord is encamped
Around those who revere him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
He is happy who seeks refuge in Him . . .*

*Then keep your tongue from evil
And your lips from speaking deceit.
Turn aside from evil and do good;
Seek and strive after peace.*

*The trials of the just man are many
But from them all the Lord will rescue him . . .*

*Evil brings death to the wicked;
Those who hate the good are doomed.
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.
Those who hide in him shall not be condemned."*

The Holy Bible, Old Testament, Psalm 33

As Adam and Eve bore many generations, those generations came to honor Adam's body in the Cave of Treasures. And through the line of their son, Seth; their grandson, Enosh; their son, Cainin; their grandson Mahaniel; their great grandson Jared; came their great-great grandson Enoch. Through the very line of Cain who had slain his brother, Abel, came the one who obeyed.

"THERE was a wise man, a great artificer, and the Lord conceived love for him and received him, that he should behold the uppermost dwellings and be an eye-witness of the wise and great and inconceivable and immutable realm of God Almighty, of the very wonderful and glorious and bright and many-eyed station of the Lord's servants, and of the inaccessible throne of the Lord, and of the degrees and manifestations of the incorporeal hosts, and of the ineffable ministration of the multitude of the elements, and of the various apparitions and inexpressible singing of the host of Cherubim, and of the boundless light." (The Secrets of Enoch, From the Pseudopigrepha)

Because of Enoch, the line of the freeborn had yet been established. Because of the Christ, 'The Royal Question' could now be posed to humanity.



The Mystical Freeborn

By Marilynn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

<http://outofbodytravel.org>

Author, Marilynn Hughes

THE MYSTICAL FREEBORN - 'The Mystical Freeborn' follows 'The Mystical Captive' in the second of three volumes to lay out a comprehensive Mystical Theology based on the mystical experiences and studies of Marilynn Hughes. With the simple premise that a soul which has been freely born of God after its captivity into sin will undergo a series of expected and vital processes in its journey to ever widening union with God, 'The Mystical Freeborn' takes the seeker to the primordial Garden of Eden wherein the nature of eternal love is made manifest. Beyond this, the freeborn must bring that original eternity into a fallen world.

Being freeborn insinuates to some extent that obedience to God has become an attractive choice. Prepare then, to enter deeply now beyond the bridal chamber of the Lord . . .

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!
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The Royal Question

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The Royal Question

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The Royal Question

INTRODUCTION

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"Let us consider on this first day how the Eternal Word had no other end in becoming man than to infuse with his divine love. Let us ask light of

Jesus Christ and of his most holy Mother, and so let us begin.

Adam, our first parent, sins; ungrateful for the great benefits conferred on him, he rebels against God, by a violation of the precept given him not to eat of the forbidden fruit. On this account God is obliged to drive him out of the earthly paradise in this world, and in the world to come to deprive not only Adam, but all the descendants of this rebellious creature, of the heavenly and everlasting paradise which he had prepared for them after this mortal life.

Behold, then, all mankind together condemned to a life of pain and misery, and forever shut out from heaven. -But hearken to God, who, as Isaias tells us in his fifty-second chapter, would seem, after our manner of understanding, to give vent to his affliction in lamentations and wailings: And now what have I here, saith the Lord, for My people is taken away gratis? "And now," says God, "What delight have I left in heaven, now that I have lost men, who were my delight?" My delights were to be with the children of men. But how is this, O Lord? Thou hast in heaven so many seraphim, so many angels; and canst Thou thus take to heart having lost men? Indeed, what need hast Thou of angels or of men to fill up the sum of Thy happiness? Thou hast always been, and Thou art in Thyself, most happy; what can ever be wanting to Thy bliss, which is infinite? "That is all true," says God; "but" (and these are the words of Cardinal Hugo on the above text of Isaias) "but, losing man, I deem that I have nothing; I consider that I have lost all, since my delight was to be with men; and now these

men I have lost, and, poor hapless creatures, they are doomed to live forever far away from me."

But how can the Lord call men his delight? Yes, indeed, writes St. Thomas, God loves man just as if man were his god, and as if without man he could not be happy; "as if man were the god of God himself, and without him he could not be happy." St. Gregory of Nazianzen adds, moreover, that God, for the love he bears to men, seems beside himself: "we are bold to say it, God is out of himself by reason of his immense love;" so runs the proverb, " Love puts the lover beside himself."

"But no," then said the Lord, "I will not lose man; straightway let there be found a Redeemer who may satisfy my justice in behalf of man, and so rescue him from the hands of his enemies and from the eternal death due to him."

And here St. Bernard, in his contemplations on this subject, imagines a struggle to ensue between the justice and the mere) of God. Justice says: "I no longer exist if Adam be not punished; I perish if Adam die not." Mercy, on the other hand, says: "I am lost if man be not pardoned; I perish if he does not obtain forgiveness." In this contest the Lord decides, that in order to deliver man, who was guilty of death, some innocent one must die: "Let one die who is no debtor or death."

On earth, there was not one innocent. Since, therefore," says the Eternal Father, "amongst men there is none who can satisfy My justice, let him come

forward who will go to redeem man." The angels, the cherubim, the seraphim, all are silent, not one replies; one voice alone is heard, that of the Eternal Word, who says, Lo, here am I; send Me? " Father," says the only-begotten Son, "Thy majesty, being infinite, and having been injured by man, cannot be fittingly satisfied by an angel, who is purely a creature; and though Thou mightest accept of the satisfaction of an angel, reflect that, in spite of so great benefits bestowed on man, in spite of so many promises and threats, we have not yet been able to gain his love, because he is not yet aware of the love we bear him. If we would oblige him without fail to love us, what better occasion can we find than that, in order to redeem him, I, Thy Son, should go upon earth, should there assume human flesh, and pay by my death the penalty due by him. In this manner Thy justice is fully satisfied, and at the same time man is thoroughly convinced of our love!" "But think," answered the Heavenly Father" think, O my Son, that in taking upon Thyselv the burden of man s satisfaction, Thou wilt have to lead a life full of sufferings!" "No matter," replied the Son: " Lo, here I am, send Me" "Think that Thou wilt have to be born in a cave, the shelter of the beasts of the field; thence Thou must flee into Egypt whilst still an infant, to escape the hands of those very men who, even from Thy tenderest infancy, will seek to take away Thy life." "It matters not: Lo, here am I, send Me" "Think that, on Thy return to Palestine, Thou shalt there lead a life most arduous, most despicable, passing Thy days as a simple boy in a carpenter s shop." "It matters not: Lo, here am I, send Me" " Think that when Thou goest forth to preach and to manifest Thyself, Thou wilt have indeed a few, but

very few, to follow Thee; the greater part will despise Thee and call Thee impostor, magician, fool, Samaritan; and, finally, they will persecute Thee to such a pass that they will make Thee die shamefully on a gibbet by dint of torments." "No matter. Lo, here I am, send Me"

The decree then being passed that the Divine Son should be made man, and so become the Redeemer of men, the Archangel Gabriel speeds on his way to Mary. Mary accepts him for her Son: And the Word was made flesh." (The Incarnation, Birth and Infancy of Jesus, Christ, By St. Alphonsus Liguori)



CHAPTER ONE

Understand the Flow



Unless God reveal the lover
You can never reveal your innermost secrets
I live in the call of the world and its wreckage
But hence, the lover continually calls
Through the whirlwind of the night
Into the crevasse of the human mind

To gather within it the knowledge
 That fills its world with lacking
 The void that remains in all human hearts
 Which seeks to find its own
 Often disguised as the call of a lover
 Is often the interior reckoning of the beloved

“Divine Love

THE DIVINE LOVE I. IN THE WORLD IT IS LITTLE COMPREHENDED WHAT LOVE IS; AND YET IT IS MAN'S VERY LIFE. That this is little comprehended is evident from the common saying "What is love?" What it is, is not known for the reason that love is not manifest to the understanding, and the understanding is the receptacle of the light of heaven. What comes into that light is interiorly seen, for what a man thinks, that he has knowledge of. For this reason a man says that this or that is in the light of his understanding, also that he sees this to be so; likewise he prays that he may be enlightened and illumined by God. Moreover, there is spiritual light to which natural light corresponds, and it is from this that one says, with reference to his understanding, that he sees. And a wise man prays to be enlightened and to be illumined by God, that is, that he may understand. Man, therefore, can form no idea concerning love, for this reason, that although the understanding, by means of the thought, presents itself to be seen, love does not. And yet love is the very soul or life of thought, and if love be taken away thought grows cold and dies, like a flower deprived of heat; for love enkindles, vivifies, and animates thought. Set your

mind at work and consider whether you can think apart from some affection that is of love; and you will find in your own case that it is impossible. From this it is plain that love is the life of the understanding and of thought therefrom; and what is the life of the understanding and of thought therefrom is also the life of the whole man; for it is the life of all the senses and of all motions, thus the life of the organs by means of which senses and motions exist. That it is also the life of the rest of the viscera, will be seen in what follows. It is not known what love is, for the further reason that man's love is universal life. By universal life is meant life that is in most minute particulars; for of these the term universal is used, as the term general is of parts. What is thus universal is perceived simply as a one; and a one without a particular perception of the particulars is obscure, comparatively as it is with an intense light that blinds the eye. Such also is the universal Divine in the most minute particulars of the world; consequently this Divine is so obscure to man as not to be manifest to the eye when opened, but only to the eye, when closed; for the whole of the world is a work of the Divine love and the Divine wisdom; and wisdom in its most minute particulars is, as was said before, an intense Divine light that blinds.

II. THE LORD ALONE IS LOVE ITSELF, BECAUSE LIFE ITSELF; WHILE MEN AND ANGELS ARE ONLY RECIPIENTS. This has already been illustrated by many things, to which the following only are to be added. The Lord, because He is the God of the universe, is uncreated and infinite, but men and angels are created and finite. The uncreated and

infinite is the Very Divine in itself. Out of this man cannot be formed, for in such case he would be the Divine in itself; but he can be formed out of things created and finite, in which the Divine can be, and to which it can communicate its own life, and this by heat and light from itself as a sun, thus from its own Divine love; comparatively as it is with germinations in the earth, which cannot be formed from the very essence of the sun of the world, but must needs be formed out of created things of which soil is composed, within which the sun can be by its heat and light, and to which it can communicate its life. From this it is plain that a man and an angel are not in themselves life, but are only recipients of life. From all this it also follows, that the conception of man from his father is not a conception of life, but only of a first and purest form capable of receiving life; to which, as a stamen or initiament, substances and matters, succeeding one another, add themselves in the womb, in forms adapted to the reception of life in their own order and their own degree, even to the last, which is suited to the modes of the nature of the world.

III. LIFE, WHICH IS THE DIVINE LOVE, IS IN A FORM. The Divine love, which is life itself, is not simply love, but it is the proceeding Divine; and the proceeding Divine is the Lord Himself. The Lord is indeed in the sun which appears to angels in the heavens, and from which proceed love as heat and wisdom as light; yet outside of that sun, love with wisdom is also the Lord. The distance is only in appearance; for the Divine is not in space, but is without distance, as was said above. There is an appearance of distance because the Divine love, such

as it is in the Lord, cannot be received by any angel for it would consume them; for in itself it is hotter than the fire in the sun of the world; for this reason it is lessened gradually by infinite circumvolutions, until, tempered and accommodated it reaches the angels, who moreover, are veiled with a thin cloud lest they should be injured by its intensity. This is the cause of the appearance as of distance between the Lord as a sun, and heaven where angels are; nevertheless, the Lord Himself is present in heaven, but in away suited to reception. The Lord's presence is not like the presence of a man who occupies space, but it is a presence apart from space; that is, He is in things greatest and least, so that in things greatest He is Himself, and in things least is Himself. It is difficult, I know, for man to comprehend this, because it is difficult for him to remove space from the ideas of his thought; but it can be comprehended by angels, in whose ideas there are no spaces. In this respect spiritual thought differs from natural thought. Since, therefore, love proceeding from the Lord is a sun is the Lord Himself, and this love is life itself, it follows that the love itself which is life, is Man; thus that it contains in infinite form the things that are in man, one and all. These are conclusions from what has been said about the life of all things from the Lord, and about His providence, omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

IV. THAT FORM IS A FORM OF USE IN ITS WHOLE COMPLEX. That form is a form of use in its whole complex, since a form of love is a form of use; for the subjects of love are uses, because love wills to do goods, and goods are nothing else than uses; and

since the Divine love infinitely transcends, its form is a form of use in its whole complex. That it is actually the Lord Himself who is with angels in the heavens and with men on earth and in those with whom He is conjoined by love, and that He is in them although He is infinite and uncreated, while angel and man are created and finite, this cannot be comprehended by the natural man until by enlightenment from the Lord he can be withdrawn from the natural idea respecting space, and be brought thereby into light respecting spiritual essence, which, viewed in itself, is the proceeding Divine itself adapted to every angel, as truly to the angel of the highest heaven as to the angel in the lowest, and to every man, both the wise and the simple. For the Divine that proceeds from the Lord is Divine from first things even to ultimates. Ultimates are what are called "flesh and bone." That even these were made Divine by the Lord, He taught the disciples when He said that He hath flesh and bones which a spirit doth not have (Luke 24:39); moreover, He entered through doors that were shut, and became invisible; and this clearly proves that the ultimates of man in Him were made Divine, and that from this there is correspondence with the ultimates of man. [2] But how the Divine proceeding, which is the very and only life, can be in things created and finite, shall now be told. This life applies itself not to man, but only to uses in man. Uses themselves, viewed in themselves, are spiritual; while the forms of use, which are members, organs, and viscera, are natural. But yet these are series of uses; to such an extent that there cannot be a particle, or the least of any particle, in any member, organ, or viscera, that is not a use in form. The Divine life applies itself to the uses themselves in

every series, and thereby gives life to every form; from this man has the life that is called his soul. With men this truth seems beyond comprehension, but it is not so with angels; yet it does not so far transcend the human understanding but that it may be seen as through a lattice, by those who wish to see. It does not transcend my understanding, which is an enlightened rational understanding.

V. IN SUCH A FORM IS MAN INDIVIDUALLY. That man is in such a form individually can be seen by those only who survey all things that are in man, not only with the eye of the anatomist but also with the eye of reason. He who surveys them with the eye of reason will see that every particular, and most particular thing therein, is formed from use, and for use; and that each part and particle has a function in general; and that the common use, which is the common good, looks to each minute particular as itself therein; and, on the other hand, the minute particular looks to itself in the general. By this means all things that are in the body, from the head to the soles of the feet, are a one; and this even so that man is wholly unconscious that he consists of so many myriads of parts with various and diverse functions. In illustration of this subject it will be sufficient to survey with the eye of reason the structure of the lungs and of the trachea, and to consider their uses. [2] In regard to the lungs.-Their most general use is respiration, which is effected by admitting air through the larynx, the trachea, the bronchia and their ramifications, into the vesicles of the lobules, whereby the lungs alternately expand and contract. In doing this they induce reciprocal motions in the whole

organic body and in all its members; for the heart and lungs are the two fountains of all the general motions throughout the body, whereby the parts of the body, one and all, are led into their own activities and vital functions. They also consociate the voluntary motor life, which is dependent upon the cerebrum, with the natural motor life, which is controlled by the cerebellum. It is also their use to give such disposition to all the viscera of the body, and especially to its motors called muscles, that the will may carry out its movements harmoniously, and without break in any part. Their use also is, both to act concurrently with all the tones of speech and of song, and also to produce them as from a womb. Another use is, to receive within themselves all the blood of the body from the right side of the heart, to purify it from all that is viscid and unclean, and to cast out these impurities; also to supply it from the inhaled air with new elements that serve as food, and to send it back as if made new into the left chamber of the heart; thus their use consists in converting venous blood into arterial. And so the lungs are of service to the blood as a place for the offices of straining, cleansing, refreshing and preparing it; also as a place for purifying the air. In addition to these uses of the lungs, there are many others, both general and particular; and every pore and every little lobe therein is a partner in all the offices, that is, uses; some more closely and some more, remotely. [3] In regard to the trachea.-Its uses are, (1) To afford a channel for the auras and breath of the lungs, to pass and re-pass; and to accommodate itself to each and every different mode of action of the lungs, both in inspiration and expiration. (2) To examine and cleanse the air about to

pass into the lungs, that nothing hurtful may enter; and to impregnate with vapors the air as it passes out, thus attracting effete exhalations, and expelling them; also in general to clear the lungs of viscid phlegm by expectoration. (3) To serve as a pillar and support to the larynx and the epiglottis; to adapt itself entirely to all their commands and tremulous vibrations; to dispose the walls of its canal so that the air may impinge upon them, and to make tense its membrane, so that when the air impinges, the membrane may tremble; and thus, in a rudimentary way, to excite sound which the larynx and the glottis may form, that is, may modulate, into singing or speech; also to moisten the larynx continually with a vapory dew. (4) To aid and assist its neighbor, the esophagus, in its office of swallowing. (5) To extend the alternate respiratory movements of the lungs to the neighboring parts, and by means of these to parts more and more remote; namely, to the esophagus, and by this, in connection with the diaphragm, to the stomach, and so to the abdominal viscera; also to the ascending carotid artery and the descending jugular vein, and to the great sympathetic nerves,-the intercostal and the par vagum; thus establishing the motor life of the body. (6) To insinuate into the neighboring parts, and through these into parts highest and lowest, its own sonorous vibrations and those of the larynx; and to excite the arterial blood mounting to the head and the brain, and the venous blood returning to the head and the brain, and to exhilarate and animate them by a general modification; thus establishing the sensual life of the body. Move over, from the bones that are in relation with the trachea, and at the same time from those

belonging to the larynx and epiglottis, which are not here enumerated, a mind endowed with understanding, and cultivated by the sciences, with anatomy only as a teacher and the eye as a guide, may be taught and may know how Nature modulates sounds, and determines their relations in articulation. There is nothing in acoustics, music or harmony, however profound and recondite, nor anything in the vibrations and trembling of a continuous body, nor in the modifications of a contiguous volume or atmosphere, however hidden and interior, which the spiritual has not here brought forth out of Nature, from her innermost, gathered into one, and conferred upon those two organs, and at the same time on the ear. [4] There are like arcana in all the other viscera, both of the head and of the body and still more in those that lie inwardly concealed and cannot be examined by any eye; for the more interior a thing is, the more perfect it is. In a word, the preeminent life, or excellency of life, in every member, organ, and viscus, consists in this,-that whatever is proper to any is common to all; and thus in every particular thing there is an idea of the whole man. It is this arcanum that will now be stated as a conclusion:-Man is the complex of all uses; of all that are possible, both in the Spiritual world and in the natural world; and every use, from the idea of the universe in it, is like a man, but such a man as the use is, that is, such is its function in general. This is true of man because he is a recipient of life from the Lord; for life which is from the Lord is the complex of all things of uses to infinity; since the Lord alone is Man, in Himself having life, from whom is everything of life; and

unless the form of use were infinite in the Lord, it could not possibly exist as finite in any man.

VI. IN SUCH A FORM IS MAN IN GENERAL. By man in the most general sense is meant the whole human race; by man in a general sense are meant the men of one kingdom taken together; in a sense less general those of a single province in a kingdom; in a sense still less general those of a city; in a particular sense those of a house; and in an individual sense every man. In the Lord's view, the whole human race is as one man; all in a kingdom are also as one man; likewise, all in a province, all in a city, and all in a house. It is not the men themselves that are thus seen together, but the uses with them. They that are good uses, that is, that perform uses from the Lord, when viewed together, are seen as a man perfect in form and beautiful; these are such as perform uses for the sake of the uses; that is, that love uses because they are uses of the house, of the city, province, kingdom, or of the whole world. But they that perform uses, not for the sake of uses, but for the sake of themselves alone, or the world alone, likewise appear before the Lord as one man, but as an imperfect and deformed man. From what has now been said, it can be seen that the Lord has regard to men in the world, to each according to his use, and to men in the mass according to uses united in the form of a man. By uses are meant the uses of each one's function, which are the uses of his office, pursuit, and occupation. In the Lord's sight these uses are good works themselves. Whereas all in any kingdom appear before the Lord as one man according to their love of uses, it is plain that all the English appear before Him as one man;

likewise all the Dutch, all the Germans, all the Swedes and Danes, also the French, the Spaniards, the Poles, the Russians; but each nation according to its uses. Those in the several kingdoms that love the uses of their offices because they are uses, appear together as a man-angel; and those that love the uses of their offices for the sake of pleasures alone apart from uses appear together as a man-devil. Traders, in the man-angel, are those that love trading, and love wealth for the sake of trading, and at the same time look to God; but traders, in the man-devil, are those that love wealth, and love trading only for the sake of wealth. With the latter there is avarice, which is the root of all evils, but not with the former. For to love wealth alone, and not any use that may come of it, that is, to regard wealth in the first place and trading as secondary, is to be avaricious. Such men are, useful to a kingdom, but chiefly when they die, for then their wealth passes into the public use of those engaged in trade; the benefit that then accrues from such wealth is benefit to the kingdom, but not to the souls of those who gathered it. In a word, accumulation of wealth by trading for the sake of wealth alone, is Jewish trading; but accumulation of wealth by trading for the sake of trading, is Dutch trading. Opulence is not harmful to the latter, but it is to the former. [#AUTHOR'S NOTE:-] These indeed benefit the common wealth by accumulating wealth in it, and enriching it; but they do not benefit their own souls.

VII. IN SUCH A FORM IS HEAVEN. It has been shown in the *Arcana Coelestia* that the whole heaven is divided, as it were, into provinces, according to the uses of all the members, organs and viscera of the

human body; also that it is known by angels in the heavens in what provinces the different societies are; for instance, what societies are in the province of the eyes, of the ears, of the nostrils, of the mouth, and of the tongue; also what are in the province of the liver, of the pancreas, of the spleen, of the kidneys, of the ureters, and what in the province of the generative organs. All societies that are in these provinces correspond perfectly to the uses of the above-mentioned members, organs, and viscera in man. It is from this correspondence that the whole heaven appears before the Lord as one man; in like manner each province of heaven, and every society of a province. It is also from this correspondence that all angels and all spirits are men in every respect like men in the world; and for the reason that the Divine proceeding from the Lord, which is life and form, is Man, both in what is greatest and in what is least, as has often been said before . . . In order that hell, too, may be in that form, everyone there is compelled to works; but because they that are in hell do their works not from the love of use, but from the need of food and clothing, they appear indeed as a man, but as a man-devil (concerning which see above).

VIII. ALL THINGS OF THE WORLD ALSO TEND TO SUCH A FORM. By all things of the world are meant animate things including those that walk or crawl on the earth, those that fly in the heavens, and those that swim in the waters; also the things of the vegetable kingdom, -trees and shrubs, flowers, plants, and grains. But the atmosphere, waters, and matters of the earth are only means for the generation and production of these. From the creation of the

universe, and finally of the earth, and of all things that are in them, it can be seen more fully than from anything else that the Divine Love, which is life itself and is the Lord, is in the form of forms of all uses, which form is Man. For from creation nothing is found on the earth that is not for use. The entire mineral kingdom is full of uses; there is not in it a grain of dust, nor a lump of such grains, that is not for use. The entire vegetable kingdom is full of uses; not a tree, plant, flower, or blade of grass can be found that is not for use; yea, neither anything in a tree, plant, flower, or blade of grass, that is not for uses; each thing is the form of its own use. The entire animal kingdom, too, is full of uses; not an animal, from the little worm to the lion, can be found, that is not for use, and that is not also the form of its own use. The same is true of all things that are above the earth, even to the sun. In a word, every point in creation and in things created, is a use; yea, it is in an ascending series from use in firsts to use in ultimates, thus from use to use continually;-a manifest proof that the Creator and Former, who is the Lord, is the infinite sum of all uses; in His essence love, and in His form Man, in whom that sum is. Who that is willing to consider these things with common intelligence can be so unsound in his reason as to think that such things are works of the dead sun, and thus of dead Nature?

IX. THERE ARE AS MANY AFFECTIONS AS THERE ARE USES. There are many things that bear witness that the Divine love is life itself, and that love therefrom with man is his life; but among these proofs, this is especially clear, namely, that man's

spirit is nothing but affection, consequently that man after death becomes in affection, an angel of heaven if he be an affection of good use, and a spirit of hell if he be an affection of evil use. For this reason the whole heaven is divided into societies according to the genera and species of affections; and likewise, in an opposite manner, hell. From this it is that whether you speak of affections or of societies in the spiritual world, it is the same. By affections are meant the continuations and derivations of love. Love may be compared to a fountain, and affections to the streams issuing from it. Love may also be compared to the heart, and affections to the vessels leading out and continued from it; and it is well known that the vessels that convey blood from the heart resemble their heart in every point, so as to be as it were extensions of it - from this is the circulation of the blood from the heart through the arteries, and from the arteries into the veins, and back to the heart. So with affections; for these are derived and continued from love, and produce uses in forms, and in these proceed from the firsts of the uses to their ultimates, and from these they return to the love from which they started: from all which it is plain that affection is love in its essence; and that use is love in its form. [2] The conclusion from this is, that the objects, that is, the ends of affections, are uses, therefore also their subjects are uses, and that the very forms in which affections exist are effects which are effigies of the affections; in which they proceed from the first end to the last, and from the last end to the first, and by them they perform their works, offices, and exercises. From what has now been said, who cannot see that affection alone is not anything, but that it becomes

something by being in use; and that affection for use is nothing but an idea, unless it be in form; and that affection for use in form is nothing but a potency, the affection first becoming something when it is in act? This act is the very use that is meant, which in its essence is affection. Now, since affections are the essence of uses, and uses are the subjects of affections, it follows that there are as many affections as there are uses.

X. THERE ARE GENERA AND SPECIES OF AFFECTIONS, AND VARIETIES OF SPECIES TO INFINITY; SO OF USES. This may be shown from the human body, from the human race, from the angelic heaven, and from the animal and vegetable kingdoms. In each of these there are genera of affections or of uses, and species and varieties, in untold numbers; for there can be no single thing the same as another, but it varies; and this variety is everywhere distinguished into genera and species, and both of these into varieties; and the varieties in themselves are infinite, because they are from the Infinite. That this is the case, anyone can see from human faces, of which, from the day of creation, there has never been one so entirely like another as to be the same, nor can there ever be; so in the human body, it is impossible for any least thing therein to be identical with any other. It is the same with affections and their uses. That this is so, man is so profoundly ignorant as to ask what affection is, and what love is; consequently this can be made clear only from heaven, where all are affections from the Divine love, which is life itself. In heaven the Divine love, which is life itself, is distinguished into two kingdoms; one in

which love to the Lord reigns, and another wherein love for the neighbor reigns. In love to the Lord uses as to their source are involved, in love to the neighbor, uses as to their object. The Divine love, which is life itself, is further distinguished into lesser realms, which may be termed provinces; and these again into societies, and these into families and houses. Such in the heavens are distinctions of the Divine love, into genera, and into species, and the species again into their divisions, which are meant by varieties. Affections, and likewise uses, are thus distinguished, for the reason that every angel is an affection, and is also a use. [2] As all things in hell are in opposition to the things that are in heaven, so it is with the love there. Diabolical love, which is death itself, is there also distinguished into two kingdoms; one in which love of self reigns, and another in which love of the world reigns. In the love of self, evil uses as regards their source, which is self, are involved; and in love of the world evil uses as regards their object are involved; these uses because they are done from self, are also done for the sake of self, for all love returns as in a circle to the source from which it comes. This diabolical love is further distinguished into provinces, and these again into societies, and so on. There are like distinctions of affections in the human body, and parallel distinctions of uses; since, as has been said above, all things of man, correspond to all things of heaven. The heart and lungs in man correspond to the two kingdoms of heaven; the members, organs, and viscera in man correspond to the provinces of heaven, and the tissues of the several members, organs, and viscera correspond to the societies of heaven. Since these things in general and

in particular are uses, and uses live from the life which is love, their life can be called nothing else than the affection of use. As it is in the human body and also in heaven, so is it in the whole human race; since this, like heaven, is as one man before the Lord, as has been said above. That the animate things of the earth, and also its plants, are in like manner distinguished into genera and species, and into their varieties, is well known. In the animal kingdom there are two most general divisions, in one are the beasts of the earth, and in the other the birds of heaven. And in the vegetable kingdom there are likewise two most general divisions, in one are fruit-bearing trees, in the other seed-bearing plants. From the distinctions in these it can be seen that there are genera and species of affections, and varieties in the species, to infinity; and in like manner of uses; since, as has been said before, natural affections are the souls of animals, and the uses of affections are the souls of vegetables.

XI. THERE ARE DEGREES OF AFFECTIONS AND OF USES. There are continuous degrees and there are discrete degrees. Both of these are in every form in the spiritual world and in the natural world. All are acquainted with continuous degrees; few, however, have any knowledge of discrete degrees, and those who have no knowledge of these grope as in the dark when they are investigating the causes of things. Degrees of both kinds are described in the work on Heaven and Hell (n. 38). Continuous degrees, which all know about, are like the degrees from light to shade, from heat to cold, from rarity to density. Such gradations of light, of heat, of wisdom and of love, are in every society of heaven within itself. They who are

in the midst of a society are in clearer light than those who are in the ultimates, the light diminishing according to distance from the center even to the ultimates. It is the same with wisdom; those who are in the midst or center of a society are in the light of wisdom, while those who are in the ultimates or circumferences are in the shade of wisdom and are simple. It is the same with love within societies. The affections of love, which make the wisdom of those in societies and the uses of the affections which make their life, continually lessen from the midst or center even to the ultimates or circumferences. [2] Such are continuous degrees. But discrete degrees are wholly different. These do not advance in one plane to the sides around, but from highest to lowest; and for this reason they are called descending degrees. They are separated as efficient causes and effects are, which in their turn become efficient causes even to the lowest effect. They are also like a producing force in relation to the forces produced, which in turn become producing even to the last product. In a word, they are degrees of the formation of one thing from another; thus they are the degrees from first or highest to last or lowest, where formation subsists. Therefore things prior and posterior, also things higher and lower, are such degrees. All creation was effected through such degrees, and all production is by means of them, and likewise all composition in the nature that belongs to this world; for in analyzing anything that is composite you will see that one thing therein is from another, even to the very last, which is the general of them all. [3] The three angelic heavens are distinguished from each other by such degrees and in consequence one is above another. The

interiors of man, which belong to his mind, are distinguished from each other by such degrees; so, too, are light which is wisdom and heat which is love, in the heavens of angels and in the interiors of men; and the same is true of the light itself that proceeds from the Lord as a sun, and of the heat itself that also proceeds from Him; and for this reason the light in the third heaven is so resplendent, and the light in the second heaven is of such shining whiteness as to exceed the noonday light of the world a thousand fold. The same is true of the wisdom, for in the spiritual world light and wisdom are in equal degree of perfection. The same is true of the degrees of affections; and as this is true of the degrees of affections it is true also of the degrees of uses, for the subjects of affections are uses. It is to be known further that in every form, both spiritual and natural, there are both discrete and continuous degrees. Without discrete degrees there is not that within a form that constitutes a cause or soul, and without continuous degrees there is no extension or appearance of it.

XII. EACH USE DRAWS ITS LIFE FROM THE GENERAL USE AND FROM THAT THE NECESSARY, USEFUL AND ENJOYABLE THINGS OF LIFE FLOW IN ACCORDING TO THE QUALITY OF THE USE AND THE QUALITY OF ITS AFFECTION. This is an arcanum that has not yet been disclosed. Something of it, indeed, appears in the world, but not in such clearness that it can be seen to be so, for in the world every man receives from the general use the necessary, useful and enjoyable things of life according to the excellence and extent of his

service. Some are remunerated from the general use, some are enriched from it. The general use is like a lake from which remunerations and riches flow. These are determined and produced by uses and pursuits which pertain to the affection; nevertheless what the uses themselves are in themselves cannot be concluded from these results; for in the world the evil as well as the good, those who perform no uses, and those who perform evil uses as well as those who perform good uses, are sometimes remunerated and grow rich. In the spiritual world it is otherwise; uses are there laid bare, and their origin is revealed, and their place in the spiritual Man which is the Lord in the heavens. There everyone is rewarded according to the nobleness of his use, and at the same time according to his affection for use. There no idler is tolerated, no lazy vagabond, no indolent boaster claiming credit for the zeal and vigor of others; but everyone must be active, skillful, attentive and diligent in his office and business, and must put honor and reward not in the first place, but in the second or third. [2] So far as this is the case, the necessary, useful, and enjoyable things of life flow in with them. These flow in from the general use, because they are not gotten together for oneself, as in this world; but they exist in a moment, and are bestowed by the Lord gratuitously. And because in the spiritual world there is communication and extension of all thoughts and affections, and in heaven communication and extension of the affections of use according to their quality, and because all who are in the heavens are affected by uses and delight in them, on this account the necessary, useful, and enjoyable things of life flow

abundantly out from the general use into the use of the man, and into the man who does the use, as a usufruct. [3] The necessary things of life that are bestowed by the Lord gratuitously and that exist in a moment, are food, clothing and habitation, and these correspond throughout to the use in which the angel is. Things useful are those that are tributary to these three, and are delightful to him who receives them, as well as a variety of embellishments for the table, dress, and home, which are beautiful according to the angel's use, and of a splendor commensurate to his affection. Things enjoyable are those connected with wife, friends, and associates, all of whom love him and are loved by him. Such mutual and reciprocal love springs from every affection for use. [4] There are such things in heaven because there are such things in man, for heaven corresponds to all things of man; and the man who is in the affection of use from use or for the sake of use is a heaven in the least form. There can be in man no member, or any part in a member, that does not draw from the general use what is necessary, useful, and enjoyable, here the general use provides for every part according to its use; whatever is needed for its work by any part is conveyed to it from neighboring parts, and to these from parts that are near them, and thus from the whole; and the part in like manner shares its own with the rest according to their need. And so it is in the Divine spiritual Man, which is heaven, for so it is in the Lord. From all this it is clear that every use is representative of all the uses in the whole body, and thus in every use there is the idea of the whole, and thereby an image of man. From this it is that an angel of heaven is a man

according to use; and if it is permissible here to speak spiritually, it is from this that a use is a man-angel.

XIII. SO FAR AS MAN IS IN THE LOVE OF USE, SO FAR IS HE IN THE LORD, SO FAR HE LOVES THE LORD AND LOVES THE NEIGHBOR, AND SO FAR HE IS A MAN. From the love of uses we are taught what is meant by loving the Lord and loving the neighbor, also what is meant by being in the Lord and being a man. To love the Lord means to do uses from Him and for His sake. To love the neighbor means to do uses to the church, to one's country, to human society, and to the fellow-citizen. To be in the Lord means to be a use. And to be a man means to perform uses to the neighbor from the Lord for the Lord's sake. To love the Lord means to do uses from Him and for His sake, for the reason that all the good uses that man does are from the Lord; good uses are goods, and it is well known that these are from the Lord. Loving these is doing them, for what a man loves he does. No one can love the Lord in any other way; for uses, which are goods, are from the Lord, and consequently are Divine; yea they are the Lord Himself with man. These are the things that the Lord can love. The Lord cannot be conjoined by love to any man, and consequently cannot enable man to love Him, except through His own Divine things; for man from himself cannot love the Lord; the Lord Himself must draw him and conjoin him to Himself; and therefore loving the Lord as a Person, and not loving uses, is loving the Lord from oneself, which is not loving. He that performs uses or goods from the Lord performs them also for the Lord's sake. These things may be illustrated by the celestial love in which the

angels of the third heaven are. These angels are in love to the Lord more than the angels in the other heavens are; and they have no idea that loving the Lord is anything else than doing goods which are uses, and they say that uses are the Lord with them. By uses they understand the uses and good works of ministry, administration, and employment, as well with priests and magistrates as with merchants and workmen; the good works that are not connected with their occupation they do not call uses; they call them alms, benefactions, and gratuities. [2] Loving the neighbor means performing uses to the church, one's country, society, and the fellow-citizen, because these are the neighbor in the broad and in the limited sense; neither can these be loved otherwise than by the uses that belong to each one's office. A priest loves the church, the country, society, the citizen, and thus the neighbor, if he teaches and leads his hearers from zeal for their salvation. Magistrates and officers love the church, the country, society, the citizen, and thus the neighbor, if they discharge their respective functions from zeal for the common good; judges, if from zeal for justice; merchants, if from zeal for sincerity; workmen, if from rectitude; servants, if from faithfulness; and so forth. When with all these there is faithfulness, rectitude, sincerity, justice, and zeal, there is the love, of use from the Lord; and from Him they have love to the neighbor in the broad and in the limited sense; for who that in heart is faithful, upright, sincere and just, does not love the church, the country, and his fellow-citizen? From what has now been said it is plain that loving the Lord is performing uses from Him, and loving the neighbor is performing uses to him, and the object on account of

whom uses are performed is the neighbor, use, and the Lord; and that love thus returns to Him from whom it is. For every love as source through love for its object returns to love as source, which return constitutes its reciprocal. And love continually goes forth and returns through deeds, which are uses, since to love is to do. For love, unless it becomes deed, ceases to be love, since deed is the effect of love's end, and is that in which it exists. [3] So far as man is in the love of use so far is he in the Lord; because so far is he in the Church, and so far in heaven; and the church and heaven from the Lord are as one man; the forms of which (called higher or lower organic forms, also interior and exterior) are made up of all who love uses by doing them; and the uses themselves are what compose that Man, because it is a spiritual Man, that does not consist of persons, but of the uses with them. Yet all those are there who receive from the Lord the love of uses; and these are they who do them for the neighbor's sake, for use's sake, and for the Lord's sake; and since this Man is the Divine that proceeds from the Lord, and the Divine proceeding is the Lord in the church and in heaven, it follows that they all are in the Lord. These are a Man, because every use that in any way promotes the general good or serves the public, is a man, beautiful and perfect according to the quality of the use, and at the same time the quality of its affection. The reason of this is, that in each single part of the human body there is, from its use, an idea of the whole; for the part looks to the whole as its source, and the whole sees the part in itself, as its agent. It is from this idea of the whole in each part that each use therein is a man, in small as well as in greater parts; there are organic

forms in the part as well as in the whole; in fact, the parts of parts, which are interior, are men more than the composite parts, because all perfection increases toward the interiors. For all organic forms in man are composed of interior forms, and these of forms still more interior, even to inmosts, by means of which communication is given with every affection and thought of man's mind. For man's mind, in all its particulars, extends into all things of his body; its range is into all things of the body; for it is the very form of life. Unless the mind had such a field, there would be neither mind nor man. From this it is that the choice and decision of man's will are determined instantly, and produce and determine actions, just as if thought and will were themselves in the things of the body, and not above them. That every least thing in man, from its use, is a man, does not fall into the natural idea as it does into the spiritual; in the spiritual idea man is not a person, but a use; for the spiritual idea is apart from an idea of person, as it is apart from an idea of matter, space, and time; therefore when one sees another in heaven, he sees him indeed as a man, but he thinks of him as a use. An angel also appears in face according to the use in which he is, and affection for the use makes the life of the face. From all this it can be seen that every good use is in form a man.

XIV. THOSE WHO LOVE THEMSELVES ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND THE WORLD AS THEMSELVES, ARE NOT MEN, NOR ARE THEY IN THE LORD. Those who love themselves and the world are able to perform good uses, and do perform them; but the affections of use with them are not

good, because such affections are from self and have regard to self, and are not from the Lord, and do not have regard to the neighbor. They say, indeed, and persuade that these affections have regard to the neighbor in the broad and in the restricted sense; that is, have regard to the church, their country, society, and their fellow-citizens. Some of them even dare to say that they have regard to God, because they are from His commandments in the Word; and also that they are from God, because they are goods, and every good is from God; when yet the uses they perform have regard to self, because they are from self, and have regard to the neighbor only that they may return to self. These are known, and are distinguished from those who perform uses from the Lord, having regard to the neighbor in the broad and in the restricted sense, in that such look to self and the world in everything, and love reputation on account of various ends that are uses in behalf of self. Such persons are moved to perform uses so far as in them they see self and what is their own; moreover, their enjoyments are all bodily enjoyments, and these are what they seek from the world. What kind of men they are may be shown by this comparison:-They themselves are the head; the world is the body; church, country, and fellow-citizens are the soles of the feet; and God is the shoe. But with those that love uses from the love of uses, the Lord is the head; church, country, and citizens (which are the neighbor) are the body down to the knees; and the world is the feet, from the knees to the soles; and they themselves are the soles beautifully shod. Thus it is plain that they who perform uses from self, that is, from the love of self, are wholly inverted, and that there is nothing of man

in them. [2] There are two origins of all loves and affections; one from the sun of heaven, which is pure love; the other from the sun of the world, which is pure fire. They whose love is from the sun of heaven are spiritual and alive, and are raised by the Lord out of their selfhood (proprium); while they whose love is from the sun of the world are natural and dead, and they are plunged by themselves into their selfhood (proprium). From this it is that they see nature alone in all the objects of sight; and if they acknowledge God, it is with the mouth and not with the heart. These are they that in the Word are meant by worshipers of the sun, moon, and all the host of the heavens. In the spiritual world they appear indeed as men, but in the light of heaven as monsters; and to themselves their life appears as life, but to the angels as death. Among these are many who in the world were accounted as learned; and, what I have often wondered at, they believe themselves wise because they ascribe all things to nature and to prudence, even regarding all others as simple.

XV. UNLESS USE BE THE AFFECTION OR OCCUPATION OF MAN, HE IS NOT OF SOUND MIND. Man has external thought, and he has internal thought. A man is in external thought when he is in company, that is, when listening or speaking or teaching or acting, and also when writing; but he is in internal thought when he is at home and gives free rein to his interior affection. Internal thought is the proper thought of his spirit within himself; but external thought is the proper thought of his spirit in the body. Both remain with man after death, and even then it is not known what the quality of the man is

until external thought is taken away from him; after that he thinks, speaks, and acts from his affection. The man who is of sound mind will then see and hear wonderful things. He will hear and see that many who in the world talked wisely, preached learnedly, taught with erudition, wrote knowingly, and also acted discreetly, as soon as the external of their mind has been taken away, think, speak, and act as insanely as crazy people in the world; and what is wonderful, they then believe themselves to be wiser than others. [2] But that they may not continue in their insanity, they are at times remitted into externals, and thereby into their own civil and moral life in which they were in the world. When in company there and in heaven, a remembrance of those insanities is given them; and then they themselves see and confess that they spoke insanely and acted foolishly; but the moment they are remitted into their interiors, that is, into what is proper to their spirits, in like manner as before, they are insane. Their insanities are of many kinds; which may all be included in this, that they will to have dominion, to steal, to commit adultery, to blaspheme, to do evil; to despise, reject, or deride what is honest, just, and sincere, and every truth and good of the church and heaven. And, what is more, they love this state of their spirit; for the experiment has been tried with many whether they would rather think sanely or insanely, and it has been found that they would rather think insanely. Moreover, it has been disclosed that they are such because they loved self and the world above all things, and gave thought to uses only for the sake of honor and gain, and greatly preferred enjoyments of the body to enjoyments of the soul. In the world they were such that they never thought

sanely within themselves except when they saw men. There is this sole remedy for their insanity: to be put to work in hell under a judge. So long as they are at work there, they are not insane; for the works with which they are occupied hold the mind, as it were, in prison and bonds, to prevent its wandering into the delirious fancies of their lusts. Their tasks are done for the sake of food, clothing, and a bed, thus unwillingly from necessity, and not freely from affection. [3] But on the other hand, all those who in the world have loved uses and who have performed uses from the love of them, think sanely in their spirits, and their spirits think sanely in their bodies; for with such, interior thought is also exterior thought, and from the former through the latter is their speech, and likewise their action. Affection of use has kept their mind in itself, nor does it suffer them to stray into vanities, into what is lascivious and filthy, into what is insincere and deceitful, into the mockeries of various lusts. After death they are of a like character; their minds are in themselves angelic; and when the outer thought is taken away, they become spiritual, and angels, and thus recipients of heavenly wisdom from the Lord. From all that has been said, it is now plain that unless use be the affection or occupation of a man, he is not of sound mind.

XVI. EVERY MAN IS AN AFFECTION; AND THERE ARE AS MANY VARIOUS AFFECTIONS AS THERE ARE MEN THAT HAVE BEEN BORN, AND WILL BE BORN TO ETERNITY. This can be seen especially from the angels of heaven and from the spirits of hell, all of whom are affections; the spirits of hell evil affections, which are lusts, and the angels of heaven

good affections. Every man is an affection, for the reason that his life is love, and the continuations and derivations of love are what are called affections; consequently affections in themselves are loves, but subordinate to the general love as their lord or head. Since, therefore, life itself is love, it follows that each and all things of life are affections, and consequently that man himself is an affection. [2] Most persons in the world will wonder that this is so, as it has been granted me to know from the testimony of all who pass from the natural world into the spiritual world. Thus far I have not found one who had known that he was an affection; few even knew what affection is; and when I said that affection is love in its continuation and derivation, they inquired what love is; saying that, they know what thought is, because they perceive it; but not what affection is, because no one perceives this. That in the nature of things there is love, they said that they knew from the love of a bride before marriage, and from a mother's love towards infants, and in some small measure from a father's love when he kisses a betrothed wife or his infant; and some in place of these said harlot. [3] When I said to them that thought is nothing whatever by itself, but is something by affection, which is of man's life's love, because thought is from affection, as a thing is formed by that which forms it; also that thought is perceived, and not affection, because the thing formed is perceived and not what forms it, just as the body is perceived by the bodily senses and the soul is not, inasmuch as they were amazed at what was said to them, they were instructed in the subject by many experiments; as for example, that all things of thought are from affection and according to it; again that they

could neither think without affection nor contrary to it, also that every one is such as his affection is, and therefore every one is explored from his affection, and no one from his speech; for speech proceeds from the thought belonging to external affection, which is a desire to be courteous, to please, to be praised, to be regarded as good citizens, and men of morality and wisdom, and all these things for the sake of ends belonging to internal affection, of which ends such things are means. And yet from the sound of his speech, unless a man be a consummate hypocrite, the affection itself is heard; for vocal speech belongs to thought, but its sound belongs to affection. Wherefore they were told that as there is no speech without sound, neither can there be thought without affection; and that it is plain therefore that affection is the all of thought, as sound is the all of speech, for speech is only the articulation of sound. By all this they were instructed that man is nothing but affection; and further, as a consequence, that all heaven is divided, and all hell, as a kingdom is, into provinces and societies, according to generic and specific differences of affections, and not at all in accordance with any differences of thoughts; also that the Lord alone has knowledge of these differences. From this it follows that there are infinite varieties and differences of affections, as many as there are men that have been born and will be born to eternity.

XVII. MAN HAS ETERNAL LIFE ACCORDING TO HIS AFFECTION OF USE. Since affection is the man himself, and use is its effect and work, and is as a field or theater for its exercise, and since affection is not found apart from its subject, even so the affection of

man's life is not found apart from use; and since affection and use make one, so man, who is affection, is known as to his quality from use,-imperfectly and slightly in the natural world, but clearly and fully in the spiritual world. For the spiritual discloses the affection and all its particulars, since in its essence the spiritual is Divine love and Divine wisdom, and in its manifestation is the heat and the light of heaven; and these disclose the affections of uses, as the heat of the sun of the world discloses objects of the earth by odors and flavors, and its light discloses them by its various colors and distinctions of shade. Every man has eternal life according to his affection of use, for the reason that affection is the man himself; consequently such as the affection is, such is the man. [2] But affection of use in general is of two kinds; there is the spiritual affection of use and there is the natural affection of use. In external form the two are alike, but in internal wholly unlike; for this reason they are not known the one from the other by men in the world, but are readily known by angels in heaven; for they are wholly opposite, since the spiritual affection of use gives heaven to man, while natural affection of use, without the spiritual, gives hell; for the natural affection of use looks only to honors and gains, thus to self and the world as ends, while spiritual affection of use looks to the glory of God and to uses themselves, thus to the Lord and the neighbor as ends. [3] For there are men in the world who discharge their duties and offices with much zeal, labor, and earnestness; magistrates, overseers, and officers, performing their functions with all diligence and industry; priests, leaders, ministers, preaching with warmth as if from zeal; learned men who write

books full of piety, doctrine and learning; and others of a like character; and thereby they perform eminent uses to the church, to their country, to society, and to their fellow-citizens; and yet many do these things from natural affection alone, which is for the sake of self, that they may be honored and exalted to dignities, or for the sake of the world, that they may gain wealth and become rich. In some these ends so enkindle the affection for doing uses that they sometimes perform more excellent uses than those do who are in the spiritual affection of use. I have spoken with many after death when they had become spirits, who had been in this kind of affection of use, and who then demanded heaven on the ground of merit; but as they had performed uses from merely natural affection, thus for the sake of self and the world, and not for the sake of God and the neighbor, they received answer like this in Matthew: Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied by Thy name, and by Thy name have cast out demons, and by Thy name done many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I know you not; depart from Me all ye that work iniquity (7:22, 23). And in Luke. Then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink before Thee, and Thou didst teach in our streets. But He shall say, I say unto you, I know you not whence ye are, depart from Me all ye workers of iniquity (13:26, 27). [4] Moreover, they were examined as to what they had been in the world, and their interiors were found to be full of lusts and evils therefrom pressed together, and with some these appeared fiery from the love of self, with some livid from the love of the world, with some dusky from the rejection of things spiritual; while their exteriors from

uses in external form still appeared snow-white and purple. From all this it is clear that although they had done uses, yet with themselves they had given no thought to anything but reputation with a view to honors and gains, and that these belonged to their spirit, and they were in them and these were their life, also that their good actions were either purely deceptive appearances, or merely means conducive to these things as ends. Thus much about the natural affection of uses. [5] But the spiritual affection of use is both internal and external, and it is external or natural to the same extent that it is spiritual; for what is spiritual flows into what is natural, and arranges it in correspondence, thus into an image of itself. But as there is in the world at the present day no knowledge of what the spiritual affection of use is, and what distinguishes it from the natural affection, since in outward appearance they are alike, it shall be told how spiritual affection is acquired. It is not acquired by faith alone, which is faith separated from charity, for such faith is merely a thought-faith, with nothing actual in it; and as it is separated from charity it is also separated from affection, which is the man himself; and for this reason it is dissipated after death like something aerial. But spiritual affection is acquired by shunning evils because they are sins; which is done by means of combat against them. The evils that man must shun are all set forth written in the Decalogue. So far as man fights against them because they are sins he becomes a spiritual affection, and thus he performs uses from spiritual life. By means of combat against evils those things that possess one's interiors are dispersed; and these, as has been said above, with some appear fiery, with some

dusky, and with some livid. In this way one's spiritual mind is opened, through which the Lord enters into his natural mind and arranges it for performing spiritual uses which appear like natural uses. To these and to no others is it granted by the Lord to love Him above all things and the neighbor as oneself. If a man by means of combat against evils as sins has acquired anything spiritual in the world, be it ever so small, he is saved, and afterwards his uses grow like a grain of mustard seed into a tree (according to the Lord's words, Matt. 13:31, 32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18, 19).

XVIII. THE WILL OF MAN IS HIS AFFECTION. The will of man is his affection for the reason that the will of man is the receptacle of his love and the understanding the receptacle of his wisdom; and that which is the receptacle of love is also the receptacle of all affections, because affections are merely continuations and derivations of love, as has been said above. It is called the receptacle of love because love cannot be given with man except in a recipient form which is substantial; without such a form love would have no ability to effect, to reciprocate, and thereby to be permanent. This recipient form might be described, but this is not the place for it. It is from this that the will is called the receptacle of love. [2] That the will is man's all, and is in all things of man, and thus is the man himself, as love in its whole complex is the man, is evident from this:-As to anything pertaining to his love or affection, and in fact to his life, man speaks of willing, as that be wills to act, wills to speak, wills to think, wills to perceive. The will is in all of these things; and if it were not in them man could not act, could not speak, could not think, could

not perceive; and if the will were not present in the particular and most particular things of these operations, they would instantly cease; for the will is in them as the soul or life is in the body and in every least particular of it. In place of will, one can say love, as that one loves to do, to speak, to think, to perceive. In like manner of the external senses of the body it is said that one wills to see, wills to hear, wills to eat, drink, and taste, wills to smell, also wills to walk, to associate with others, to seek amusement, and so on. In each one of these the will is the active force; for if it should be withdrawn there would instantly be a stop; and in fact these operations are suspended by the will. [3] That the will is man's love in form is clearly evident from this, that every enjoyment, pleasure, pleasantness, satisfaction and bliss which belong to man's love are so felt and perceived; and that these belong to the will is plain, since whatever is enjoyable, pleasurable, pleasant, satisfactory and blissful, this also man wills; and he says of them that he wills them. Man speaks in like manner of good and truth; for that which he loves he calls good, thereby making it to be of his will; and what confirms the good of his love or of his will he calls truth, and this he loves, and wills to think and speak of. Again, in respect to everything that a man wishes, solicits, longs for, strives for, seeks, and intends, he says that he wills all these since they pertain to his love; for he wills what he wishes because he loves it; he wills what he solicits or longs for because he loves it; he wills what he strives for and seeks because he loves it; and he wills what he purposes, and he purposes it because he loves. From all this it can be seen that the will and the love or the will and the affection are one

with man; and that the will, because it is the love, is also the life, and is the man himself. That the will is also the life of man's understanding and of his thought therefrom will be shown in what follows. [4] Man does not know that the will is the man himself, for the same reason that he does not know that the love or affection is the man himself. Moreover, every one gives attention to those things that he sees or feels, but not to the life, the soul, or the essence from which he sees or feels; this lies concealed within the things pertaining to sensation, and the thought of the natural man does not go so far as that; but it is otherwise with the spiritual man, for the object of his wisdom is not the sense-plane, but the essential that is in it, which in itself is spiritual. It is in consequence of this that many say that thought is the all of man, and is the very man, that is, that man is man because he thinks; and yet the all of his thought is affection. Take away affection from thought, and you will be but a stock. A man who is rational from what is spiritual, who knows what is good and what is true, and thus what is evil and what is false, may know from what has been said what his affections are and what his reigning affection is; for there are as many indications of them as there are delights of thought, speech, action, sight, hearing, and as many as there are ambitions, desires, and intentions. He needs only to attend and reflect.

XIX. IN THE WORD TO LOVE MEANS TO PERFORM USES. In the Word to love means to perform uses, because love is will, and to will is to do. That to love is to will has been shown just above; but that to will is to do remains to be shown. The will

viewed in itself is not love, but is a receptacle of love, and such a receptacle that it not only receives it but also takes on its states and assumes forms in accordance with those states; for everything of man's life flows in, since man is not life but a recipient of life, consequently he is a recipient of love, for love is life. This can be illustrated by the organs of man's senses. The eye is not light but a recipient of light formed to receive all varieties of light. The ear is not sound but a recipient of sound and of its modulation and articulation. The same is true of man's other external senses. And the same is true of the internal organs of sense, which are modified and moved by spiritual light and heat; and consequently the same is true of the will, which is a receptacle of spiritual heat, which in its essence is love. This receptacle is in man throughout; but in its first principles it is in the brains. These first principles or beginnings or heads are the substances that are called cortical and cineritious. From these through ray-like fibers it descends on every side into all things of the face and all things of the body, and there performs its gyrations and circlings in accordance with its form, which is the spiritual animal form that has been treated of elsewhere. And thus each and all things therein from things first to ultimates are moved, and in ultimates effects are presented. It is well known that everything is put in motion by an endeavor (*conatus*); and that when the endeavor ceases the motion ceases. Thus every voluntary action of man's will is a living endeavor in man, and it acts in ultimates by means of fibers and nerves, which in themselves are nothing else than perpetual endeavors continued from the beginnings in the brains even to the ultimates in the

bodily parts, where endeavors become acts. These things have been presented to make known what the will is, and that it is the receptacle of love in a perpetual endeavor to act; and this endeavor is excited and determined into acts by the love that flows in and is received. [2] From all this it now follows that to love is to do because it is to will; for whatever a man loves that he wills; and what he wills that he does if it is possible; and if he does not do it because it is not possible, it still comes into interior act, which is not made manifest. For no endeavor or volition can exist in man unless it comes into ultimates; and when it is in ultimates it is in interior act, although this act is not perceived by anyone, not even by the man himself, because it exists in his spirit. From this it is that volition and act are a one, and that the volition is counted as the act. This does not apply to the natural world, because in that world the interior act of the will does not appear, but it applies to the spiritual world, for there it is seen. For all in the spiritual world act according to their loves; those who are in heavenly love act sanely; those who are in infernal love act insanely; and if because of any fear they do not act, their will is interiorly active, but is restrained by them from breaking forth; nor does this action cease until the volition ceases. Since, then, the will and the act are a one, and will is the endeavor of love, it follows that in the Word "to love" has no other meaning than to do; thus that "to love the Lord and to love the neighbor" means to perform uses to the neighbor from love which is from the Lord. That this is so the Lord Himself teaches in John: He that hath My commandments and doeth them, he it is that loveth Me; but he that loveth Me not keepeth not My

words (14:21, 24). In the same: Abide ye in My love. If ye have kept My commandments ye shall abide in My love (15:9, 10). And in the same: The Lord said three times to Peter, Lovest thou Me? and three times Peter answered that he loved; and the Lord three times said to him Feed My lambs and My sheep (21:15-17). Moreover, there are two things that cannot be separated; namely, being (esse) and existing (existere). Being is nothing unless it exists; and it becomes something by existing. So it is with loving and doing, or with willing and acting; for to love, and not do, and to will and not act, are impossible, for they do not exist; but they exist in doing and acting; consequently, when man does and acts, then love and will have being. In this and in no other way is the Lord loved and the neighbor loved.

XX. LOVE PRODUCES HEAT. Love produces heat for the reason that love is the very life, and living force of all things in the whole, world. All endeavors, forces, activities, and movements therein have no other origin than the Divine love which is the Lord, who appears in the heavens before the angels as a sun. That love is one thing and heat another is clearly evident from the difference between them in angel and in man. It is from love that an angel wills and thinks, and has perception and wisdom, and inmost in himself is sensible of what is blissful and satisfactory, and also loves it. The same is true of man. All this is in their minds; while in their bodies they both feel what is hot apart from any sense of happiness or satisfaction. This makes clear that heat is an effect of the activity of life or of love. [2] That heat is an effect of love can be seen from many things, as

that man from inmosts grows warm according to his life's loves, even in midwinter, and that the heat of the sun of this world has nothing in common with this heat; also that man grows warm, is enkindled, and is inflamed according to the increase of love; and he grows torpid, becomes cold, and dies according to the decrease of love; thus in exact accordance with the activities of love. The same is true of the animals of the earth and the flying things of heaven; for these are sometimes warmer in midwinter than in midsummer, for the heart then throbs, the blood becomes heated, the fibers grow warm, and every least part with the greatest performs its vital functions; and this heat is not from the sun but from the life of their soul, which is affection. Love produces heat for the reason that it is the life of all the forces in the universe; and this life can enter the recipient substances that have been created only through an active medium which is heat. In the creation of the universe the Lord prepared for Himself all the means, from firsts even to lasts, by which He might produce uses in every degree; and the universal and nearest means of conjunction is heat, in which the essence of the activity of love can exist. [3] As heat exists most nearly from love, there is a correspondence between love and heat, for there is a correspondence between every cause and its effect. It is from correspondence that the sun of heaven, which is the Lord, appears fiery; also that the love that goes forth therefrom is perceived by the angels as heat; likewise that the Lord's Divine wisdom in the heavens appears as light; also that: The face of the Lord, when He was transfigured, shone as the sun (Matt. 17:2). It is from the same correspondence that the holiness of the Lord's love was represented by the

fire of the altar, and by the fire of the lamps of the lampstand in the tabernacle; also that the Lord appeared in fire on mount Sinai, and likewise in a flame of fire by night over the tabernacle. It was from this also that many nations made a sacred fire, and that they appointed virgins to its care, who at Rome were called the vestal virgins. [4] It is from the same correspondence that in the Word "fire" and "flame" in many passages mean love, and it is from an interior perception of that correspondence that we pray that holy fire may enkindle our hearts, meaning a holy love. It is from the same correspondence that celestial love appears in heaven at a distance as a fire, and for this reason the Lord said that: The just shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father (Matt. 13:43). It is from the same correspondence that infernal love appears in hell at a distance as a fire (on which see the work on Heaven and Hell, n. 566-575).

XXI. THE DIVINE LOVE, WHICH IS LIFE ITSELF, BY MEANS OF HEAT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL ANIMAL FORMS, WITH EACH AND EVERYTHING IN THEM. There are in general two forms which the Lord, the Creator of the universe, from His sun, which is Divine love and life itself, has produced in the ultimates and in the inmosts of the world, the animal form and the vegetable form. By animal forms both animals of every kind and men and angels are meant; and by vegetable forms vegetables of every kind, as trees, plants, and flowers, are meant. These two forms have already been treated of (AE 1196-1212); but as the Divine love is the subject here treated of, and as from this all things have been created, and all things from creation are being formed

continually, it is permitted here to say something about the first form, that is, the animal form. [2] The Divine love, which is life itself, from its author who is the Lord, bears nothing else in its bosom than to create and form images and likenesses of itself, which images and likenesses are men and angels from men; and also to cover with a correspondent body affections of every kind, which are animals. All these forms, perfect and imperfect, are forms of love, and are alike in what pertains to their life in externals, which is an inclination to move, to walk, to act, to see, to hear, to smell, to taste, to feel, to eat, to drink, to associate with others, to propagate themselves. But they are unlike in what pertains to their life in internals, which is an inclination to think, to will, to speak, to know, to understand, to be wise, and from these things to find enjoyment and blessedness. Men and angels are forms of the latter class, animate things of many kinds are forms of the former class. That these several faculties may exist in effect and in use, they have been made and wonderfully organized from created substances and matters. [3] That the Lord, who is Man, and His Divine love, which is life itself from its spiritual which proceeds from Him as a sun, formed all these, is clearly evident from this, that living souls are also affections, and in externals are all similar, the imperfect as well as the perfect. Who cannot see, unless he is near-sighted or can see by night only, or one whose sight is failing from amaurosis, that such things can have no other source? Elevate your reason only a little above the deep of Nature, and you will become wise. That heat is a means of formation is well known from the fluids in which is the embryo in the womb, and the chick in the

egg. The belief that the heat of the sun of the world produces, originates in a mind blinded by the fallacies of the bodily senses. The heat of that sun operates only in opening the outermost parts of the body or the cuticles, that internal heat also may flow into them; for in this way life comes into full effect from firsts to ultimates. It is from this that the animals of the earth and the flying things of the heaven every year in the spring-time and in the summer enter upon and renew the functions, works, and joys of their proliferations. It is otherwise with man who has heat from an interior love that is excited by the allurements of his thoughts, and who has garments to protect him against the cold that falls upon the cuticles, which are the outermost parts of his body." (Divine Love, By Emanuel Swedenborg)



CHAPTER TWO

The Death of Love



An allegory:

“From whence the traveler was circling, his spirit was taken to an ugly scene. Amongst the mystical realms, he was taken to a forlorn and lonely region which held so many souls there that the loneliness almost seemed a sham. But yet, so many souls, each alone in their own excrement, their own waste, their own sin, their own destruction.

From a distance, at first, he saw them. Hundreds of men who had destroyed the eternal relationships that they had enjoyed with the women in their lives or their wives.

Horrific demons surrounded them, all sharing the same sadistic and triumphant grin. Coming forth

from the frightening mirage was the scum, the particles of sin that literally hung off the pointed teeth of these demons. Their poisons were many, but all stemmed from abuse of some sort. They had sinned against the one woman God had given to them as an eternal gift through abuse, cheating, anger, rage, neglect and otherwise.

Amongst the demons stood a particularly fiery creature who was clearly the head of them all. They stood there in their corrupt nature all proud and displaying the triumph of their corruptive and lewd ways against the manner and nature of God, and the destruction of His perfect gifts. They could not be more pleased with themselves.

The traveler observed with grave sorrow how the manner of destruction would occur in what bore the absolute and perfect potential to remain eternal.

After the husband (or wife, it is certain in some instances) had completely broken down the marriage or union with his sin and lecherous conduct, the woman underwent a brutal murder at the hands of these demonic terrorists. Their bodies lay broken; dismembered, brutally beaten and bloody. Towering over their eternal partner's mutilated remains, the men would weep in sorrow for they had not seen what they had done until it was all over, too late, and their partners had been spiritually murdered.

But it was all too late . . . that which is eternal is a beautiful thing. It cannot be battered and torn at in the flesh with a vicious tongue, a hardened heart, an abusive air or a proud combat.

That which is eternal must be nourished and made one, made immortal, made useful, made just.

As a result of the actions of these men, who were literally presented in droves from all walks of life and from all over the world, the women then were transformed into whores.

And the men had been recruited by the demons into their terror organization and become one with them.

And this made sense, because they were forced back into a broken world trying to find love again, raising children alone, rearing families of and by themselves, in a world where so many men and women had truly lost all that had once been so wonderful and true.

They had filled their worlds with casual sex and other forms of depravity, using the bodies of others to fulfill their carnal needs. Never once in their endless and meaningless pursuit did they stop to consider that they had defamed all that was good and useful to the Lord. Never once did they stop to reckon their own lives with the expectations and the original purity that God intended.

It had all become about their selfish desires, whether they be sexual or otherwise . . . and selfish pursuits destroy things that are good and beautiful and true.

The traveler saw his own mother who had been one of the victims. She and the other women had been portrayed as Asian women in a brothel. Many of them shrank back in fear, trying to hide for the terror that someone they might love should torture and kill their spirits again. His own wife was among them . . . and even in the corner, he saw his own self.

Original sin."

"Original sin is an interesting concept, because it can apply to so many aspects of existence. Original sin can be the failings that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can be the failings of a particular extended family that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can be the failings of a particular city or township that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can be the failings of a particular country that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can be the failings of a particular society that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can be the failings of all humanity that we, through example, give to our own children. Original sin can also be the failings of a particular soul that, through the mechanism of karmic retribution and transmigration, are given to that soul at birth. Original sin can also be the acts of darkness that a soul is forced to process because it was done unto them."

The Mysteries of the Redemption: A Treatise On Out-of-Body Travel and Mysticism, By Marilynn Hughes, The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation, 2003

"Original sin is transmitted through the seeds of the seven deadly sins, is implanted through habit, is cultivated by tolerance, and grows through the mass ignorance of humanity. Original sin can only be transformed through the seeds of the seven virtues, implanted through habitual choice, cultivated by discernment, and grown through the singular awareness of an individual soul. Beyond our individual karma and vice, lies the original sin of all mankind. We partake of it because of our own humanity, so we must transform it because of our

own divinity."

The Mysteries of the Redemption: A Treatise On Out-of-Body Travel and Mysticism, By Marilynn Hughes, The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation, 2003

"He realized that although he was also there as the child who had been damaged by what his own father had done to the eternal union with his mother, but he was also a member now amongst the demons.

The sight of it made him want to vomit, but the truth could not be avoided in this instance. When a soul asks that God bare to himself the truth, there is no escape from it, there is no way out . . . it is laid bare in all its ugliness.

Suddenly, from the corner of his eyes, he noticed something even more horrifying than he'd already seen. One of his own daughters resided in the realm of the spiritually dead women and the leader of the demonic terrorists was approaching her and one other young girl. They were forced to participate in a play where they both had to act as though they were in love with him, although neither of them could yet see the truth of his demonic identity.

Panicking, the traveler began running aimlessly towards the leader of the demons, but to no avail. His daughter began to quietly dance with him. But she was looking closely into his eyes . . .

As she looked into his eyes, the demon began to show himself. And what the traveler now saw caused him to fall to the ground in abject despair. She saw her father, she saw the traveler, she saw him . . . the one who had sinned against her mother and caused her own status in this horrific realm wherein the denial of all that is good and true had become a

victory. And she pushed him away from her as he then morphed into a seven foot horrific and reptilian demon which hovered over her with his skin of dark brown and eyes of a menacing gold. She turned away. The demon laughed incessantly. The traveler wept."

"God loves a repentant sinner just as much as He loves the just. Be merciful to those who have been lost because of the impetus of the original sin catapulted upon them. If they embrace the ways of the darkness, accept their choice and let them face whatever consequences will come of it. But if they choose to energize a higher way, then be merciful in forgetting their faults, and give them a hand when they begin their climb."

The Mysteries of the Redemption: A Treatise On Out-of-Body Travel and Mysticism, By Marilynn Hughes, The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation, 2003

"Three Fragments from the Homily on the Cross and Passion of Christ.

I.

Methodius, Bishop, to those who say: What doth it profit us that the Son of God was crucified upon earth, and made man? And wherefore did He endure to suffer in the manner of the cross, and not by some other punishment? And what was the advantage of the cross?

Christ, the Son of God, by the command of the Father, became conversant with the visible creature, in order

that, by overturning the dominion of the tyrants, the demons, that is, He might deliver our souls from their dreadful bondage, by reason of which our whole nature, intoxicated by the draughts of iniquity, had become full of tumult and disorder, and could by no means return to the remembrance of good and useful things. Wherefore, also, it was the more easily carried away to idols, inasmuch as evil had overwhelmed it entirely, and had spread over all generations, on account of the change which had come over our fleshy tabernacles in consequence of disobedience; until Christ, the Lord, by the flesh in which He lived and appeared, weakened the force of Pleasure's onslaughts, by means of which the infernal powers that were in arms against us reduced our minds to slavery, and freed mankind from all their evils. For with this end the Lord Jesus both wore our flesh, and became man, and by the divine dispensation was nailed to the cross; in order that by the flesh in which the demons had proudly and falsely feigned themselves gods, having carried our souls captive unto death by deceitful wiles, even by this they might be overturned, and discovered to be no gods. For he prevented their arrogance from raising itself higher, by becoming man; in order that by the body in which the race possessed of reason had become estranged from the worship of the true God, and had suffered injury, even by the same receiving into itself in an ineffable manner the Word of Wisdom, the enemy might be discovered to be the destroyers and not the benefactors of our souls. For it had not been wonderful if Christ, by the terror of His divinity, and the greatness of His invincible power, had reduced to weakness the adverse nature of the demons. But since

this was to cause them greater grief and torment, for they would have preferred to be overcome by one stronger than themselves, therefore it was that by a man He procured the safety of the race; in order that men, after that very Life and Truth had entered into them in bodily form, might be able to return to the form and light of the Word, overcoming the power of the enticements of sin; and that the demons, being conquered by one weaker than they, and thus brought into contempt, might desist from their overbold confidence, their hellish wrath being repressed. It was for this mainly that the cross was brought in, being erected as a trophy against iniquity, and a deterrent from it, that henceforth man might be no longer subject to wrath, after that he had made up for the defeat which, by his disobedience, he had received, and had lawfully conquered the infernal powers, and by the gift of God had been set free from every debt. Since, therefore, the first-born Word of God thus fortified the manhood in which He tabernacled with the armour of righteousness, He overcame, as has been said, the powers that enslaved us by the figure of the cross, and showed forth man, who had been oppressed by corruption, as by a tyrant power, to be free, with unfettered hands. For the cross, if you wish to define it, is the confirmation of the victory, the way by which God to man descended, the trophy against material spirits, the repulsion of death, the foundation of the ascent to the true day; and the ladder for those who are hastening to enjoy the light that is there, the engine by which those who are fitted for the edifice of the Church are raised up from below, like a stone four square, to be compacted on to the divine Word. Hence it is that our kings,

perceiving that the figure of the cross is used for the dissipating of every evil, have made vexillas, as they are called in the Latin language. Hence the sea, yielding to this figure, makes itself navigable to men. For every creature, so to speak, has, for the sake of liberty, been marked with this sign; for the birds which fly aloft, form the figure of the cross by the expansion of their wings; and man himself, also, with his hands outstretched, represents the same. Hence, when the Lord had fashioned him in this form, in which He had from the beginning flamed him, He joined on his body to the Deity, in order that it might be henceforth an instrument consecrated to God, freed from all discord and want of harmony. For man cannot, after that he has been formed for the worship of God, and hath sung, as it were, the incorruptible song of truth, and by this hath been made capable of holding the Deity, being fitted to the lyre of life as the chords and strings, he cannot, I say, return to discord and corruption.

II.

The Same Methodius to Those Who are Ashamed of the Cross of Christ.

Some think that God also, whom they measure with the measure of their own feelings, judges the same thing that wicked and foolish men judge to be subjects of praise and blame, and that He uses the opinions of men as His rule and measure, not taking into account the fact that, by reason of the ignorance that is in them, every creature falls short of the beauty of God. For He draws all things to life by His Word,

from their universal substance and nature. For whether He would have good, He Himself is the Very Good, and remains in Himself; or, whether the beautiful is pleasing to Him, since He Himself is the Only Beautiful, He beholds Himself, holding in no estimation the things which move the admiration of men. That, verily, is to be accounted as in reality the most beautiful and praiseworthy, which God Himself esteems to be beautiful, even though it be contemned and despised by all else-not that which men fancy to be beautiful. Whence it is, that although by this figure He hath willed to deliver the soul from corrupt affections, to the signal putting to shame of the demons, we ought to receive it, and not to speak evil of it, as being that which was given us to deliver us, and set us free from the chains which for our disobedience we incurred. For the Word suffered, being in the flesh affixed to the cross, that He might bring man, who had been deceived by error, to His supreme and godlike majesty, restoring him to that divine life from which he had become alienated. By this figure, in truth, the passions are blunted; the passion of the passions having taken place by the Passion, and the death of death by the death of Christ, He not having been subdued by death, nor overcome by the pains of the Passion. For neither did the Passion cast Him down from His equanimity, nor did death hurt Him, but He was in the possible remaining impassible, and in the mortal remaining immortal, comprehending all that the air, and this middle state, and the heaven above contained, and at tempering the mortal to the immortal divinity. Death was vanquished entirely; the flesh being crucified to draw forth its immortality.

III.

The Same Methodius: How Christ the Son of God, in a Brief and Definite Time, Being Enclosed by the Body, and Existing Impassible, Became Obnoxious to the Passion.

For since this virtue was in Him, now it is of the essence of power to be contracted in a small space, and to be diminished, and again to be expanded in a large space, and to be increased. But if it is possible for Him to be with the larger extended, and to be made equal, and yet not with the smaller to be contracted and diminished, then power is not in Him. For if you say that this is possible to power, and that impossible, you deny it to be power; as being infirm and incapable with regard to the things which it cannot do. Nor again, further, will it ever contain any excellence of divinity with respect to those things which suffer change. For both man and the other animals, with respect to those things which they can effect, energise; but with respect to those things which they cannot perform, are weak, and fade away. Wherefore for this cause the Son of God was in the manhood enclosed, because this was not impossible to Him. For with power He suffered, remaining impassible; and He died, bestowing the gift of immortality upon mortals. Since the body, when struck or cut by a body, is just so far struck or cut as the striker strikes it, or he that cuts it cut it. For according to the rebound of the thing struck, the blow reflects upon the striker, since it is necessary that the two must suffer equally, both the agent and the sufferer. If, in truth, that which is cut, from its small

size, does not correspond to that which cuts it, it will not be able to cut it at all. For if the subject body does not resist the blow of the sword, but rather yields to it, the operation will be void of effect, even as one sees in the thin and subtle bodies of fire and air; for in such cases the impetus of the more solid bodies is relaxed, and remains without effect. But if fire, or air, or stone, or iron, or anything which men use against themselves for the purposes of mutual destruction-if it is not possible to pierce or divide these, because of the subtle nature which they possess, why should not rather Wisdom remain invulnerable and impassible, in nothing injured by anything, even though it were conjoined to the body which was pierced and transfixed with nails, inasmuch as it is purer and more excellent than any other nature, if you except only that of God who begat Him?" (Three Fragments on the Homily of the Cross and the Passion of Christ, By St. Methodius)

"OF THE ROYAL WAY OF THE HOLY CROSS

That seemeth a hard saying to many, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow Me. (1) But it will be much harder to hear that last sentence, Depart from me, ye wicked, into eternal fire. (2) For they who now willingly hear the word of the Cross and follow it, shall not then fear the hearing of eternal damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in heaven when the Lord cometh to Judgment. Then all servants of the Cross, who in life

have conformed themselves to the Crucified, shall draw nigh unto Christ the Judge with great boldness.

2. Why fearest thou then to take up the cross which leadeth to a kingdom? In the Cross is health, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection from enemies, in the Cross is heavenly sweetness, in the Cross strength of mind, in the Cross joy of the spirit, in the Cross the height of virtue, in the Cross perfection of holiness. There is no health of the soul, no hope of eternal life, save in the Cross. Take up therefore, thy cross and follow Jesus and thou shalt go into eternal life. He went before thee bearing His Cross and died for thee upon the Cross, that thou also mayest bear thy cross and mayest love to be crucified upon it. For if thou be dead with Him, thou shalt also live with Him, and if thou be a partaker of His sufferings thou shalt be also of His glory.

3. Behold everything dependeth upon the Cross, and everything lieth in dying; and there is none other way unto life and to true inward peace, except the way of the Holy Cross and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, and thou shalt find no higher way above nor safer way below, than the way of the Holy Cross. Dispose and order all things according to thine own will and judgment, and thou shalt ever find something to suffer either willingly or unwillingly, and thus thou shalt ever find thy cross. For thou shalt either feel pain of body, or tribulation of spirit within thy soul.

4. Sometimes thou wilt be forsaken of God, sometimes thou wilt be tried by thy neighbour, and

which is more, thou wilt often be wearisome to thyself. And still thou canst not be delivered nor eased by any remedy or consolation, but must bear so long as God will. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without consolation, and to submit thyself fully to it, and by tribulation be made more humble. No man understandeth the Passion of Christ in his heart so well as he who hath had somewhat of the like suffering himself. The Cross therefore is always ready, and every where waiteth for thee. Thou canst not flee from it whithersoever thou hurriest, for whithersoever thou comest, thou bearest thyself with thee, and shalt ever find thyself. Turn thee above, turn thee below, turn thee without, turn thee within, and in them all thou shalt find the Cross; and needful is it that thou everywhere possess patience if thou wilt have internal peace and gain the everlasting crown.

5. If thou willingly bear the Cross, it will bear thee, and will bring thee to the end which thou seekest, even where there shall be the end of suffering; though it shall not be here. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest a burden for thyself and greatly increaseth thy load, and yet thou must bear it. If thou cast away one cross, without doubt thou shalt find another and perchance a heavier.

6. Thinketh thou to escape what no mortal hath been able to avoid? Which of the saints in the world hath been without the cross and tribulation? For not even Jesus Christ our Lord was one hour without the anguish of His Passion, so long as He lived. It behooved, He said, Christ to suffer and to rise from

the dead, and so enter into his glory. (3) And how dost thou seek another way than this royal way, which is the way of the Holy Cross?

7. The whole life of Christ was a cross and martyrdom, and dost thou seek for thyself rest and joy? Thou art wrong, thou art wrong, if thou seekest aught but to suffer tribulations, for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and set round with crosses. And the higher a man hath advanced in the spirit, the heavier crosses he will often find, because the sorrow of his banishment increaseth with the strength of his love.

8. But yet the man who is thus in so many wise afflicted, is not without refreshment of consolation, because he feeleth abundant fruit to be growing within him out of the bearing of his cross. For whilst he willingly submitteth himself to it, every burden of tribulation is turned into an assurance of divine comfort, and the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, the more is the spirit strengthened mightily by inward grace. And oftentimes so greatly is he comforted by the desire for tribulation and adversity, through love of conformity to the Cross of Christ, that he would not be without sorrow and tribulation; for he believeth that he shall be the more acceptable to God, the more and the heavier burdens he is able to bear for His sake. This is not the virtue of man, but the grace of Christ which hath such power and energy in the weak flesh, that what it naturally hateth and fleeth from, this it draweth to and loveth through fervour of spirit.

9. It is not in the nature of man to bear the cross, to love the cross, to keep under the body and to bring it into subjection, to fly from honours, to bear reproaches meekly, to despise self and desire to be despised, to bear all adversities and losses, and to desire no prosperity in this world. If thou lookest to thyself, thou wilt of thyself be able to do none of this; but if thou trustest in the Lord, endurance shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Yea, thou shalt not even fear thine adversary the devil, if thou be armed with faith and signed with the Cross of Christ.

10. Set thyself, therefore, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to the manful bearing of the Cross of thy Lord, who out of love was crucified for thee. Prepare thyself for the bearing many adversities and manifold troubles in this wretched life; because so it shall be with thee wheresoever thou art, and so in very deed thou shalt find it, wherever thou hide thyself. This it must be; and there is no means of escaping from tribulation and sorrow, except to bear them patiently. Drink thou lovingly thy Lord's cup if thou desirest to be His friend and to have thy lot with Him. Leave consolations to God, let Him do as seemeth best to Him concerning them. But do thou set thyself to endure tribulations, and reckon them the best consolations; for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,(4) nor would they be even if thou wert to endure them all.

11. When thou hast come to this, that tribulation is sweet and pleasant to thee for Christ's sake, then reckon that it is well with thee, because thou hast found paradise on earth. So long as it is hard to thee to suffer and thou desirest to escape, so long it will not be well with thee, and tribulations will follow thee everywhere.

12. If thou settest thyself to that thou oughtest, namely, to suffer and to die, it shall soon go better with thee, and thou shalt find peace. Though thou shouldest be caught up with Paul unto the third heaven,(5) thou art not on that account secure from suffering evil. I will show him, saith Jesus, what great things he must suffer for My Name's sake. (6) It remaineth, therefore, to thee to suffer, if thou wilt love Jesus and serve Him continually.

13. Oh that thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Jesus, how great glory should await thee, what rejoicing among all the saints of God, what bright example also to thy neighbour! For all men commend patience, although few be willing to practise it. Thou oughtest surely to suffer a little for Christ when many suffer heavier things for the world.

14. Know thou of a surety that thou oughtest to lead the life of a dying man. And the more a man dieth to himself, the more he beginneth to live towards God. None is fit for the understanding of heavenly things, unless he hath submitted himself to bearing adversities for Christ. Nothing more acceptable to God, nothing more healthful for thyself in this world, than to suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were thine

to choose, thou oughtest rather to wish to suffer adversities for Christ, than to be refreshed with manifold consolations, for thou wouldest be more like Christ and more conformed to all saints. For our worthiness and growth in grace lieth not in many delights and consolations, but rather in bearing many troubles and adversities.

15. If indeed there had been anything better and more profitable to the health of men than to suffer, Christ would surely have shown it by word and example. For both the disciples who followed Him, and all who desire to follow Him, He plainly exhorteth to bear their cross, and saith, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me. (7) So now that we have thoroughly read and studied all things, let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. (8)

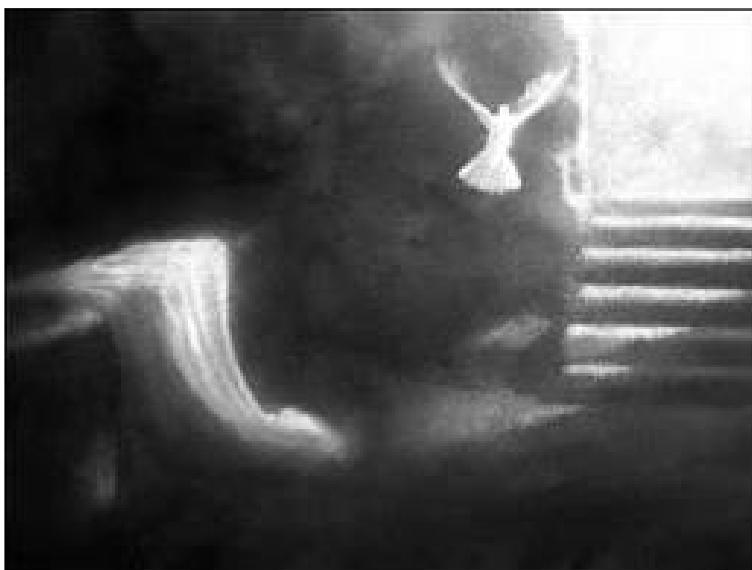
(1) Matthew xvi. 24. (2) Matthew xxv. 41. (3) Luke xxiv. 46. (4) Romans viii. 18. (5) 2 Corinthians xii. 2. (6) Acts ix. 16. (7) Luke ix. 23. (8) Acts xiv. 21. (The Imitation of Christ, By Thomas Kempis)



*Sponsus electus ex millibus Teresiam sponsam,
Domiforisque comitem se ipsi adiungens, suo
quam sapissimè recreat aspectu.*

CHAPTER THREE

The Re-Birth of Eternal Love



An allegory:

"Yet a few days had passed and not to leave the traveler in his mourning, the Lord again took him into the ethereal heavens. After having seen the wreckage of his own life, of his own sin, the Lord, in His infinite mercy, set out to show the traveler the miracle of transformation and reformation.

Finding himself standing in the suit he had worn at his wedding, the traveler gazed upon the infinite beauty of his former wife before him. The sun was glazing down the beautiful horizon and lighting up the green in the grass and trees with its eminence.

She looked so beautiful. Despite all that had come to pass and all the treachery he had witnessed in his previous vision, the traveler was made to know that his former wife had not given up, she had continued forwards towards the Lord despite what he had done to tarnish the eternal union which had once been given them.

They both appeared young, as if on the actual day of their wedding. Yet, the difference remained that all that had come to pass was a part of their conscious experience.

Holding each other's hands and smiling, the traveler was so relieved to find that they had both made peace with one another regarding all that had come to pass. And so much had happened; they had both gone through so much and learned from the experiences which unfortunately had entailed much suffering for both of them. Their many years together flashed before him, but he knew that forgiveness was complete and total.

In a promise which would resonate across the heavens, they both made a promise to one another, "No matter what, I will always love you, forever . . ." they said almost as if in unison. It was a solemn vow, but not a marriage vow.

The traveler realized they had both learned from their mistakes, all was forgiven and a new beginning had already begun to sprout . . . what kind of beginning, he did not know.

Instantly realizing that the suit he wore represented a new beginning and a special new relationship with the woman he had once loved, he noticed that she did not wear a wedding garment, but rather, a pink dress which opened up at the waist and

came to her knees. Without hesitation, he heard interiorly that this dress she wore represented her very close relationship with God and total peace.

The traveler and his former wife never let go of each other's hands because it showed their commitment to one another.

And as the two quietly stood there . . . he began to see a fire coming from within both of them, the fire of the Holy Spirit. Great strength was emerging from inside both of them, the strength that only births from a close relationship with God.

The Lord said, "Go into retreat . . ." unto both of them. And so, indeed they would."

"HOW MEN HAVE BECOME PROPHETS, SEERS, SAGES, AND SAVIOURS.

. . . The sum and substance of the thought presented in these pages is, you will remember, that the great central fact in human life is the coming into a conscious, vital realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life, and the opening of ourselves fully to this divine inflow. I and the Father are one, said the Master. In this we see how he recognized his oneness with the Father's life. Again he said, The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. In this we see how clearly he recognized the fact that he of himself could do nothing, only as he worked in conjunction with the Father. Again, My Father works and I work. In other words, my Father sends the power, I open myself to it, and work in conjunction with it.

Again he said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. And he left us not in the dark as to exactly what he meant by this, for again he said, Say not Lo here nor to there, know ye not that the kingdom of heaven is within you? According to his teaching, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven were one and the same. If, then, his teaching is that the kingdom of heaven is within us, do we not clearly see that, putting it in other words, his injunction is nothing more nor less than, Come ye into a conscious realization of your oneness with the Father's life. As you realize this oneness you find the kingdom, and when you find this, all things else shall follow.

The story of the prodigal son is another beautiful illustration of this same great teaching of the Master. After the prodigal had spent everything, after he had wandered in all the realms of the physical senses in the pursuit of happiness and pleasure, and found that this did not satisfy but only brought him to the level of the animal creation, he then came to his senses and said, I will arise and go to my Father. In other words, after all these wanderings, his own soul at length spoke to him and said, You are not a mere animal. You are your Father's child. Arise and go to your Father, who holds all things in His hands. Again, the Master said, Call no man your Father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Here he recognized the fact that the real life is direct from the life of God. Our fathers and our mothers are the agents that give us the bodies, the houses in which we live, but the real life comes from the Infinite Source of Life, God, who is our Father.

One day word was brought to the Master that his mother and his brethren were without, wishing to speak with him. Who is my mother and who are my brethren? said he. Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Many people are greatly enslaved by what we term ties of relationship. It is well, however, for us to remember that our true relatives are not necessarily those who are connected with us by ties of blood. Our truest relatives are those who are nearest akin to us in mind, in soul, in spirit. Our nearest relatives may be those living on the opposite side of the globe,—people whom we may never have seen as yet, but to whom we will yet be drawn, either in this form of life or in another, through that ever working and never failing law of attraction.

When the Master gave the injunction, Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven, he here gave us the basis for that grand conception of the fatherhood of God. And if God is equally the Father of all, then we have here the basis for the brotherhood of man. But there is, in a sense, a conception still higher than this, namely, the oneness of man and God, and hence the oneness of the whole human race. When we realize this fact, then we clearly see how in the degree that we come into the realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life, and so, every step that we make Godward, we aid in lifting all mankind up to this realization, and enable them, in turn, to make a step God-ward.

The Master again pointed out our true relations with the Infinite Life when he said, Except ye become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. When he said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, he gave utterance to a truth of far greater import than we have as yet commenced fully to grasp. Here he taught that even the physical life cannot be maintained by material food alone, but that one's connection with this Infinite Source determines to a very great extent the condition of even the bodily structure and activities. Blessed are the pure in Heart for they shall see God. In other words, blessed are they who in all the universe recognize only God, for by such God shall be seen.

Said the great Hindu sage, Manu, He who in his own soul perceives the Supreme Soul in all beings, and acquires equanimity toward them all, attains the highest bliss. It was Athanasius who said, Even we may become Gods walking about in the flesh. The same great truth we are considering is the one that runs through the life and the teachings of Gautama, he who became the Buddha. People are in bondage, said he, because they have not yet removed the idea of *I*. To do away with all sense of separateness, and to recognize the oneness of the self with the Infinite, is the spirit that breathes through all his teachings. Running through the lives of all the mediæval mystics was this same great truth,—union with God.

Then, coming nearer to our own time, we find the highly illumined seer, Emanuel Swedenborg, pointing out the great laws in connection with what he termed,

the divine influx, and how we may open ourselves more fully to its operations. The great central fact in the religion and worship of the Friends is, the inner light,—God in the soul of man speaking directly in just the degree that the soul is opened to Him. The inspired one, the seer who when with us lived at Concord, recognized the same great truth when he said, We are all inlets to the great sea of life. And it was by opening himself so fully to its inflow that he became one inspired.

All through the world's history we find that the men and the women who have entered into the realm of true wisdom and power, and hence into the realm of true peace and joy, have lived in harmony with this Higher Power. David was strong and powerful and his soul burst forth in praise and adoration in just the degree that he listened to the voice of God and lived in accordance with his higher promptings. Whenever he failed to do this we hear his soul crying out in anguish and lamentation. The same is true of every nation or people. When the Israelites acknowledged God and followed according to His leadings they were prosperous, contented, and powerful, and nothing could prevail against them. When they depended upon their own strength alone and failed to recognize God as the source of their strength, we find them overcome, in bondage, or despair.

A great immutable law underlies the truth, Blessed are they that hear the word of God and do it. Then follows all. We are wise in the degree that we live according to the higher light.

All the prophets, seers, sages, and saviours in the world's history became what they became, and consequently had the powers they had, through an entirely natural process. They all recognized and came into the conscious realization of their oneness with the Infinite Life. God is no respecter of persons. He doesn't create prophets, seers, sages, and saviours as such. He creates men. But here and there one recognizes his true identity, recognizes the oneness of his life with the Source whence it came. He lives in the realization of this oneness, and in turn becomes a prophet, seer, sage, or saviour. Neither is God a respecter of races or of nations. He has no chosen people; but here and there a race or nation becomes a respecter of God and hence lives the life of a chosen people.

There has been no age or place of miracles in distinction from any other age or place. What we term miracles have abounded in all places and at all times where conditions have been made for them. They are being performed today just as much as they ever have been when the laws governing them are respected. Mighty men, we are told they were, mighty men who walked with God; and in the words "who walked with God" lies the secret of the words "mighty men." Cause, effect.

The Lord never prospers any man, but the man prospers because he acknowledges the Lord, and lives in accordance with the higher laws. Solomon was given the opportunity of choosing whatever he desired; his better judgment prevailed and he chose wisdom. But when he chose wisdom he found that it

included all else beside. We are told that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. I don't believe it. God never hardens any one's heart. Pharaoh hardened his own heart and God was blamed for it. But when Pharaoh hardened his heart and disobeyed the voice of God, the plagues came. Again, cause, effect. Had he, on the contrary, listened,—in other words, had he opened himself to and obeyed the voice of God, the plagues would not have come.

We can be our own best friends or we can be our own worst enemies. In the degree that we become friends to the highest and best within us, we become friends to all; and in the degree that we become enemies to the highest and best within us, do we become enemies to all. In the degree that we open ourselves to the higher powers and let them manifest through us, then by the very inspirations we carry with us do we become in a sense the saviours of our fellow-men, and in this way we all are, or may become, the saviours one of another. In this way you may become, indeed, one of the world's redeemers.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF ALL RELIGIONS— THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

The great truth we are considering is the fundamental principle running through all religions. We find it in every one. In regard to it all agree. It is, moreover, a great truth in regard to which all people can agree, whether they belong to the same or to different religions. People always quarrel about the trifles, about their personal views of minor insignificant points. They always come together in the presence of

great fundamental truths, the threads of which run through all. The quarrels are in connection with the lower self, the agreements are in connection with the higher self.

A place may have its factions that quarrel and fight among themselves, but let a great calamity come upon the land, flood, famine, pestilence, and these little personal differences are entirely forgotten and all work shoulder to shoulder in the one great cause. The changing, the evolving self gives rise to quarrels; the permanent, the soul self unites all in the highest efforts of love and service.

Patriotism is a beautiful thing; it is well for me to love my country, but why should I love my own country more than I love all others? If I love my own and hate others, I then show my limitations, and my patriotism will stand the test not even for my own. If I love my own country and in the same way love all other countries, then I show the largeness of my nature, and a patriotism of this kind is noble and always to be relied upon.

The view of God in regard to which we are agreed, that He is the Infinite Spirit of Life and Power that is back of all, that is working in and through all, that is the life of all, is a matter in regard to which all men, all religions can agree. With this view there can be no infidels or atheists. There are atheists and infidels in connection with many views that are held concerning God, and thank God there are. Even devout and earnest people among us attribute things to God that no respectable men or women would permit to be

attributed to themselves. This view is satisfying to those who cannot see how God can be angry with his children, jealous, vindictive. A display of these qualities always lessens our respect for men and women, and still we attribute them to God.

The earnest, sincere heretic is one of the greatest friends true religion can have. Heretics are among God's greatest servants. They are among the true servants of mankind. Christ was one of the greatest heretics the world has ever known. He allowed himself to be bound by no established or orthodox teachings or beliefs. Christ is preeminently a type of the universal. John the Baptist is a type of the personal. John dressed in a particular way, ate a particular kind of food, belonged to a particular order, lived and taught in a particular locality, and he himself recognized the fact that he must decrease while Christ must increase. Christ, on the other hand, gave himself absolutely no limitations. He allowed himself to be bound by nothing. He was absolutely universal and as a consequence taught not for his own particular day, but for all time.

This mighty truth which we have agreed upon as the great central fact of human life is the golden thread that runs through all religions. When we make it the paramount fact in our lives we will find that minor differences, narrow prejudices, and all these laughable absurdities will so fall away by virtue of their very insignificance, that a Jew can worship equally as well in a Catholic cathedral, a Catholic in a Jewish synagogue, a Buddhist in a Christian church, a Christian in a Buddhist temple. Or all can worship

equally well about their own hearth-stones, or out on the hillside, or while pursuing the avocations of every-day life. For true worship, only God and the human soul are necessary. It does not depend upon times, or seasons, or occasions. Anywhere and at any time God and man in the bush may meet.

This is the great fundamental principle of the universal religion upon which all can agree. This is the great fact that is permanent. There are many things in regard to which all cannot agree. These are the things that are personal, non-essential, and so as time passes they gradually fall away. One who doesn't grasp this great truth, a Christian, for example, asks "But was not Christ inspired?" Yes, but he was not the only one inspired. Another who is a Buddhist asks, "Was not Buddha inspired?" Yes, but he was not the only one inspired. A Christian asks, "But is not our Christian Bible inspired?" Yes, but there are other inspired scriptures. A Brahmin or a Buddhist asks, "Are not the Vedas inspired?" Yes, but there are other inspired sacred books. Your error is not in believing that your particular scriptures are inspired, but your error is—and you show your absurdly laughable limitations by it—your inability to see that other scriptures are also inspired.

The sacred books, the inspired writings, all come from the same source,—God, God speaking through the souls of those who open themselves that He may thus speak. Some may be more inspired than others. It depends entirely on the relative degree that this one or that one opens himself to the Divine voice. Says one of the inspired writers in the Hebrew scriptures,

Wisdom is the breath of the power of God, and *in all ages* entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

Let us not be among the number so dwarfed, so limited, so bigoted as to think that the Infinite God has revealed Himself to one little handful of His children, in one little quarter of the globe, and at one particular period of time. This isn't the pattern by which God works. Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that revereth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him, says the Christian Bible.

When we fully realize this truth we will then see that it makes but little difference what particular form of religion one holds to, but it does make a tremendous difference how true he is to the vital principles of this one. In the degree that we love self less and love truth more, in that degree will we care less about converting people to our particular way of thinking, but all the more will we care to aid them in coming into the full realization of truth through the channels best adapted to them. The doctrine of our master, says the Chinese, consisted solely in integrity of heart. We will find as we search that this is the doctrine of every one who is at all worthy the name of master.

The great fundamental principles of all religions are the same. They differ only in their minor details according to the various degrees of enfoldment of different people. I am sometimes asked, "To what religion do you belong?" What religion? Why, bless you, there is only one religion,—the religion of the

living God. There are, of course, the various creeds of the same religion arising from the various interpretations of different people, but they are all of minor importance. The more unfolded the soul the less important do these minor differences become. There are also, of course, the various so-called religions. There is in reality, however, but one religion.

The moment we lose sight of this great fact we depart from the real, vital spirit of true religion and allow ourselves to be limited and bound by form. In the degree that we do this we build fences around ourselves which keep others away from us, and which also prevent our coming into the realization of universal truth; there is nothing worthy the name of truth that is not universal.

There is only one religion. "Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to Thee," says the inspired writer in the Persian scriptures. "Broad is the carpet God has spread, and beautiful the colors he has given it." "The pure man respects every form of faith," says the Buddhist. "My doctrine makes no difference between high and low, rich and poor; like the sky, it has room for all, and like the water, it washes all alike." "The broad minded see the truth in different religions; the narrow minded see only the differences," says the Chinese. The Hindu has said, "The narrow minded ask, 'Is this man a stranger, or is he of our tribe?' But to those in whom love dwells, the whole world is but one family." "Altar flowers are of many species, but all worship is one." "Heaven is a palace with many doors, and each may enter in his

own way." "Are we not all children of one Father?" says the Christian. "God has made of one blood all nations, to dwell on the face of the earth." It was a latter-day seer who said, "That which was profitable to the soul of man the Father revealed to the ancients; that which is profitable to the soul of man today revealeth He this day."

It was Tennyson who said, "I dreamed that stone by stone I reared a sacred fane, a temple, neither pagoda, mosque, nor church, but loftier, simpler, always open-doored to every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace and Love and Justice came and dwelt therein."

Religion in its true sense is the most joyous thing the human soul can know, and when the real religion is realized, we will find that it will be an agent of peace, of joy, and of happiness, and never an agent of gloomy, long-faced sadness. It will then be attractive to all and repulsive to none. Let our churches grasp these great truths, let them give their time and attention to bringing people into a knowledge of their true selves, into a knowledge of their relations, of their oneness, with the Infinite God, and such joy will be the result, and such crowds will flock to them, that their very walls will seem almost to burst, and such songs of joy will continually pour forth as will make all people in love with the religion that makes for every-day life, and hence the religion that is true and vital. Adequacy for life, adequacy for every-day life here and now, must be the test of all true religion. If it does not bear this test, then it simply is not religion. We need an everyday, a this-world religion. All time spent in connection with any other is worse than

wasted. The eternal life that we are now living will be well lived if we take good care of each little period of time as it presents itself day after day. If we fail in doing this, we fail in everything.

ENTERING NOW INTO THE REALIZATION OF THE HIGHEST RICHES.

I hear the question, What can be said in a concrete way in regard to the method of coming into this realization? The facts underlying it are, indeed, most beautiful and true, but how can we actualize in ourselves the realization that carries with it such wonderful results?

The method is not difficult if we do not of ourselves make it difficult. The principal word to be used is the word,—Open. Simply to open your mind and heart to this divine inflow which is waiting only for the opening of the gate, that it may enter. It is like opening the gate of the trough which conducts the water from the reservoir above into the field below. The water, by virtue of its very nature, will rush in and irrigate the field if the gate is but opened. As to the realization of our oneness with this Infinite Life and Power, after seeing, as I think we have clearly seen by this time, the relations it bears to us and we to it, the chief thing to be said is simply,—Realize your oneness with it. The open mind and heart whereby one is brought into the receptive attitude is the first thing necessary. Then the earnest, sincere desire.

It may be an aid at first to take yourself for a few moments each day into the quiet, into the silence,

where you will not be agitated by the disturbances that enter in through the avenues of the physical senses. There in the quiet alone with God, put yourself into the receptive attitude. Calmly, quietly, and expectantly desire that this realization break in upon and take possession of your soul. As it breaks in upon and takes possession of the soul, it will manifest itself to your mind, and from this you will feel its manifestations in every part of your body. Then in the degree that you open yourself to it you will feel a quiet, peaceful, illuminating power that will harmonize body, soul, and mind, and that will then harmonize these with all the world. You are now on the mountain top, and the voice of God is speaking to you. *Then, as you descend, carry this realization with you.* Live in it, waking, working, thinking, walking, sleeping. In this way, although you may not be continually on the mountain top, you will nevertheless be continually living in the realization of all the beauty, and inspiration, and power you have felt there.

Moreover, the time will come when in the busy office or on the noisy street you can enter into the silence by simply drawing the mantle of your own thoughts about you and realizing that there and everywhere the Spirit of Infinite Life, Love, Wisdom, Peace, Power, and Plenty is guiding, keeping, protecting, leading you. This is the spirit of continual prayer. This it is to pray without ceasing. This it is to know and to walk with God. *This it is to find the Christ within.* This is the new birth, the second birth. First that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. It is thus that the old man Adam is put off and the new man Christ is

put on. This it is to be saved unto life eternal, whatever one's form of belief or faith may be; for it is life eternal to know God. "The Sweet By and By" will be a song of the past. We will create a new song—"The Beautiful Eternal Now."

This is the realization that you and I can come into this very day, this very hour, this very minute, if we desire and if we will it. And if now we merely set our faces in the right direction, it is then but a matter of time until we come into the full splendors of this complete realization. To set one's face in the direction of the mountain and then simply to journey on, whether rapidly or more slowly, will bring him to it. But unless one set his face in the right direction and make the start, he will not reach it. It was Goethe who said:

"Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute: What you can do, or dream you can, begin it; Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Only engage and then the mind grows heated; Begin and then the work will be completed."

Said the young man, Gautama Siddhartha, I have awakened to the truth and I am resolved to accomplish my purpose,—Verily I shall become a Buddha. It was this that brought him into the life of the Enlightened One, and so into the realization of Nirvana right here in this life. That this same realization and life is within the possibilities of all here and now was his teaching. It was this that has made him the Light Bearer to millions of people.

Said the young man, Jesus, Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Making this the one great purpose of his life he came into the full and complete realization,—I and the Father are one. He thus came into the full realization of the Kingdom of Heaven right here in this life. That all could come into this same realization and life here and now was, his teaching. It was this that has made him the Light Bearer to millions of people.

And so far as practical things are concerned, we may hunt the wide universe through and we shall find that there is no injunction more practical than, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you. And in the light of what has gone before, I think there is no one who is open to truth and honest with himself who will fail to grasp the underlying reason and see the great laws upon which it is based.

Personally I know lives that have so fully entered into the kingdom through the realization of their oneness with the Infinite Life and through the opening of themselves so fully to its divine guidance, that they are most wonderful concrete examples of the reality of this great and all-important truth. They are people whose lives are in this way guided not only in a general way, but literally in every detail. They simply live in the realization of their oneness with this Infinite Power, continually in harmony with it, and so continually in the realization of the kingdom of heaven. An abundance of all things is theirs. They are never at a loss for anything. The supply seems always equal to the demand. They never seem at a loss in

regard to what to do or how to do it. Their lives are care-less lives. They are lives free from care because they are continually conscious of the fact that the higher powers are doing the guiding, and they are relieved of the responsibility. To enter into detail in connection with some of these lives, and particularly with two or three that come to my mind at this moment, would reveal facts that no doubt to some would seem almost incredible if not miraculous. But let us remember that what is possible for one life to realize is possible for all. This is indeed the natural and the normal life, that which will be the every-day life of every one who comes into and who lives in this higher realization and so in harmony with the higher laws. This is simply getting into the current of that divine sequence running throughout the universe; and when once in it, life then ceases to be a plodding and moves along day after day much as the tides flow, much as the planets move in their courses, much as the seasons come and go.

All the frictions, all the uncertainties, all the ills, the sufferings, the fears, the forebodings, the perplexities of life come to us because we are out of harmony with the divine order of things. They will continue to come as long as we so live. Rowing against the tide is hard and uncertain. To go with the tide and thus to take advantage of the working of a great natural force is safe and easy. To come into the conscious, vital realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life and Power is to come into the current of this divine sequence. Coming thus into harmony with the Infinite, brings us in turn into harmony with all about us, into harmony with the life of the heavens, into

harmony with all the universe. And above all, it brings us into harmony with ourselves, so that body, soul, and mind become perfectly harmonized, and when this is so, life becomes full and complete.

The sense life then no longer masters and enslaves us. The physical is subordinated to and ruled by the mental; this in turn is subordinated to and continually illumined by the spiritual. Life is then no longer the poor, one-sided thing it is in so many cases; but the threefold, the all-round life with all its beauties and ever increasing joys and powers is entered upon. Thus it is that we are brought to realize that the middle path is the great solution of life; neither asceticism on the one hand nor license and perverted use on the other. Everything is for use, but all must be wisely used in order to be fully enjoyed.

As we live in these higher realizations the senses are not ignored but are ever more fully perfected. As the body becomes less gross and heavy, finer in its texture and form, all the senses become finer, so that powers we do not now realize as belonging to us gradually develop. Thus we come, in a perfectly natural and normal way, into the super-conscious realms whereby we make it possible for the higher laws and truths to be revealed to us. As we enter into these realms we are then not among those who give their time in speculating as to whether this one or that one had the insight and the powers attributed to him, but we are able to know for ourselves. Neither are we among those who attempt to lead the people upon the hearsay of some one else, but we know whereof we speak, and only thus can we speak with authority.

There are many things that we cannot know until by living the life we bring ourselves into that state where it is possible for them to be revealed to us. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." It was Plotinus who said, The mind that wishes to behold God must itself become God. As we thus make it possible for these higher laws and truths to be revealed to us, we will in turn become enlightened ones, channels through which they may be revealed to others.

When one is fully alive to the possibilities that come with this higher awakening, as he goes here and there, as he mingles with his fellow-men, he imparts to all an inspiration that kindles in them a feeling of power kindred to his own. We are all continually giving out influences similar to those that are playing in our own lives. We do this in the same way that each flower emits its own peculiar odor. The rose breathes out its fragrance upon the air and all who come near it are refreshed and inspired by this emanation from the soul of the rose. A poisonous weed sends out its obnoxious odor; it is neither refreshing nor inspiring in its effects, and if one remain near it long he may be so unpleasantly affected as to be made even ill by it.

The higher the life the more inspiring and helpful are the emanations that it is continually sending out. The lower the life the more harmful is the influence it continually sends out to all who come in contact with it. Each one is continually radiating an atmosphere of one kind or the other.

We are told by the mariners who sail on the Indian Seas, that many times they are able to tell their approach to certain islands long before they can see them by the sweet fragrance of the sandalwood that is wafted far out upon the deep. Do you not see how it would serve to have such a soul playing through such a body that as you go here and there a subtle, silent force goes out from you that all feel and are influenced by; so that you carry with you an inspiration and continually shed a benediction wherever you go; so that your friends and all people will say,—His coming brings peace and joy into our homes, welcome his coming; so that as you pass along the street, tired, and weary, and even sin-sick men and women will feel a certain divine touch that will awaken new desires and a new life in them; that will make the very horse as you pass him turn his head with a strange, half-human, longing look? Such are the subtle powers of the human soul when it makes itself translucent to the Divine. To know that such a life is within our living here and now is enough to make one burst forth with songs of joy. And when the life itself is entered upon, the sentiment of at least one song will be:

"Oh! I stand in the Great Forever,
All things to me are divine;
I eat of the heavenly manna,
I drink of the heavenly wine.

"In the gleam of the shining rainbow
The Father's Love I behold,
As I gaze on its radiant blending
Of crimson and blue and gold.

"In all the bright birds that are singing,
 In all the fair flowers that bloom,
 Whose welcome aromas are bringing
 Their blessings of sweet perfume;

"In the glorious tint of the morning,
 In the gorgeous sheen of the night,
 Oh! my soul is lost in rapture,
 My senses are lost in sight."

As one comes into and lives continually in the full, conscious realization of his oneness with the Infinite Life and Power, then all else follows. This it is that brings the realization of such splendors, and beauties, and joys as a life that is thus related with the Infinite Power alone can know. This it is to come into the realization of heaven's richest treasures while walking the earth. This it is to bring heaven down to earth, or rather to bring earth up to heaven. This it is to exchange weakness and impotence for strength; sorrows and sighings for joy; fears and forebodings for faith; longings for realizations. This it is to come into fullness of peace, power, and plenty. This it is to be in tune with the Infinite." (In Tune with the Infinite, By Ralph Waldo Trine

"THE SAVIORS OF ROYAL DESCENT, BUT HUMBLE BIRTH.

WE have the singular coincidence presented in the histories of several of the Saviors of their lineal descent through a line of kings or princes, and yet commencing their probationary life under the most

humble and adverse circumstances—being born in stables, caves, and other inauspicious situations.

The story of their royal blood was calculated to add dignity to their characters, while their humble birth in the midst of poverty, and unmarked by ostentation, would evince their humility, meekness, condescension, and absence of pride, and thus proclaim a lesson of humility and resignation to their disciples and followers.

Here, seems to be plainly indicated the motives for assigning them to such a birth, and such a character.

Christ's lineal descent, it will be remembered, is professedly traced (though in a very zig-zag, disjointed manner) from the royal house of David. And yet his royal blood did not save him from the most ignoble and ignominious birth, and obscure exordium of his earth life.

A singular story, and yet a similar story, is told of the Indian Savior Krishna, who was, according to the Rev. Mr. Allen (India, p. 379) of the royal house of Kousa, traced back through many generations. Yet, in order to teach the world a lesson of true humility, and administer a just reprehension to pride, he submitted to be born in a cave, amid the denizens of subterranean abodes. And here let it be noted, the best and most orthodox writers concede that while Christ is said to have born in a manger, that manger was in a cave. Mr. Fleetwood (a very popular Christian writer) testifies in this matter that "the Greek fathers generally agree that the place of Christ's

birth was a cave. Then the coincidence in this respect between Christ and Krishna may be set down as complete.

We have no means of learning how many of the Saviors were of royal blood, as the genealogy of some of them is not given. But those whose lineal descent is furnished us are almost uniformly traced to or evinced as springing from royal parentage, and practical humility—so far as it can be taught by an unostentatious birth—is a lesson taught by nearly all. Buddha Sakia of Hindostan is directly traced through a royal pedigree.

Speaking on this point, one writer remarks: "Tradition affirms that his mother was betrothed to a rajah, and of course her son belonged to the same royal caste that Krishna did during his existence on earth."

"The Great Prophet" of Arabia (Mahomet) not only commenced his earthly career in a humble situation, but resembled Christ in having "nowhere to lay his head." It is said of the Great Prophet, "A cloak spread on the ground served him for a bed, and a skin filled with date leaves was his pillow." The genealogy of the God Yu (of China) is traced through a line of princes to a very remote origin, while his whole life was a lesson of practical humility, and proclaimed at every step, This is the way; walk ye in it." (The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviours, By Kersey Graves)

CHAPTER FOUR

Of the Silent Divine Emanation



What, henceforth, brings forth the emanations from
the heavens?

In the silent remnant, all becomes still

Nothing is as it seems

For in an instant, the soul has gone from extreme
violence to non-action

From noise to silence

From vice to virtue

From sin to solace

From disquietude to inner peace

There is no more other

There is no more need for you

For I am all of that within myself

And what has become of all that is eternal?

It has transfigured by a sudden realization in the
night

The falsehoods of the past are frozen

Their dreams were so sparse anyway

In the elevation of the mind the dream has expanded

Into an often misunderstood space where things have
ceased to be

All things have ceased to move

All thoughts have stilled to naught

And here, I emanate

From the glory of God, I emanate

And the emanations are miraculously carried to all
who seek it below

In my peace, I have become living power

In my silence, I have become a receptacle of living
truth

I am not a body, but a vessel of energy

And I bring the divine to those below

How do I do this?

I don't know
 For it is no longer done of myself
 The Lord God Almighty has taken over all
 All of my thoughts
 All of my loves
 All of my fears
 All of my wants
 All of my desires
 All of my hopes
 All of my dreams
 All of my dreams have unfolded into synchronistic
 perfection
 And that synchronistic perfection has nothing to do
 with me
 It is not mine
 It comes to me from above
 It came when I realized my need
 My one and only need
 God
 And then God swiveled through the cosmic elements
 of the universe
 Into my frail heart and mind
 My body was no more mine than it was any other's
 It became synergy
 And that synergy became emanation
 And all those below who wished to receive of it
 Received of it without their knowing
 Without their asking
 For the Lord, God, is a good God and knows our need

 Our only need is Himself
 Once we have that, all else
 Masculine and feminine
 Competing desires

Pernicious cravings
 Uncanny fetters
 Lurid sin

All swept away by a moment spent in the mind of
 God

Wherein the only true need resides
 Our peace lies there

If you seek it, look in His direction
 Cease looking towards other creatures
 Cease looking towards the world
 Seek only eternity and its attributes
 And those attributes will become yours

Not that you will own them
 But they will enter within you
 And they will now preside
 Your dreams will become luminous
 Your past will become a faint memory
 When God's attributes preside

All is peace
 That is the answer
 It is simple

It has been a long road to find
 But seek God's attributes
 No other way, no other way

Don't distract yourself with that which appears easier
 Or those paths which require little of you
 Accept only the answer

Much is required of you to seek to live within God's
 attributes

Vice and virtue, no longer optional
 Seek to know the holiness of God
 And God's holiness will find you

And regardless of your own lack of intrinsic worth
 God will reside within you

Because He is love
 And those who love Him, are those whom He loves
 And He so deigns to reside within every humble soul
 Who renounces personal desire
 To become that which God desires
 And that is how it is done
 When God's attributes preside
 All is Peace

And then God swiveled through the cosmic elements
 of the universe
 Into my frail heart and mind
 My body was no more mine than it was any other's
 It became synergy
 And that synergy became emanation
 And all those below who wished to receive of it
 Received of it

"I WILL now speak to those who feel indeed in themselves a desire to repent, and yet cannot come to acknowledge and bewail their committed sins; the flesh saying continually to the soul, Stay awhile, it is well enough, or, It is time enough to-morrow; and when tomorrow is come then the flesh says again, To-morrow; the soul in the meanwhile, sighing and fainting, conceiveth neither any true sorrow for the sins it hath committed nor any comfort. Unto such an one, I say, I will write a process or way, which I myself have gone, that he may know what he must do and how it went with me, if peradventure he be inclined to enter into and pursue the same way.

When any man findeth in himself, pressed home upon his mind and conscience, a hunger or desire to

repent, and yet feeleth no true sorrow in himself for his sins which he hath committed, but only an hunger or desire of such sorrow; so that the poor captive soul continually sighs, fears, and must needs acknowledge itself guilty of sins before the judgment of God; such an one, I say, can take no better course than this, namely, to wrap up his senses, mind and reason together, and make to himself instantly, as soon as ever he perceiveth in himself the desire to repent, a mighty strong purpose and resolution that he will that very hour, nay, that minute, immediately enter into repentance, and go forth from his wicked way, not at all regarding the power and respect of the world. Yea, and if it should be required, that he will forsake and disesteem all things for true repentance sake; and never depart from that resolution again though he should be made the fool and scorn of all the world for it; that with the full bent and strength of his mind he will go forth from the glory and pleasure of the world, and patiently enter into the passion and death of Christ, and set all his hope and confidence upon the life to come; that even now in righteousness and truth he will enter into the vineyard of Christ and therein do the will of God; that in the Spirit and will of Christ he will begin and finish all his actions in this world; and for the sake of Christ's word and promise, which holds forth to us a heavenly reward, willingly take up and bear every adversity and cross, so that he may be admitted into the communion and fellowship of the children of Christ.

He must firmly imagine to himself, wholly wrapping up his soul in this persuasion, that in such his purpose he shall obtain the love of God in Christ

Jesus, and that God will give unto him that noble pledge, the Holy Ghost, for an earnest; that in the humanity of Christ he himself shall be born again, and that the Spirit of Christ will renew his mind with love and power and strengthen his weak faith. Also that in his divine hunger he shall receive the flesh and blood of Christ for food and drink in the desire of his soul, which hungereth and thirsteth after it as its proper nutriment; and with the thirst of the soul drink the water of eternal life out of the pure fountain of Jesus Christ.

He must also wholly and firmly imagine to himself and set before him the great love of God. He must persuade himself that God in Christ will much more readily hear him and receive him to grace than he come; that God in the love of Christ, in the most dear and precious name Jesus, cannot will any evil; and that there is no angry countenance at all in this Name, but only the highest and deepest love and faithfulness, the greatest sweetness of God.

In this consideration he must firmly imagine to himself that this very hour and instant God is really present within and without him. He must know and believe that in his inward man he standeth really before God on whom his soul hath turned its back; and he must, with the eyes of his mind cast down in fear and deepest humility, begin to confess his sins and unworthiness before the face of God in some such manner as the following:

O thou great unsearchable God, Lord of all things; thou who in Christ Jesus, of thy great love towards

us, hath manifested thyself in our humanity: I, poor, unworthy, sinful wretch, come before thy presence, though I am not worthy to lift up mine eyes unto thee, acknowledging and confessing that I am guilty of breaking off from thy great love and the grace which thou hast freely bestowed upon us.

My soul knoweth not itself because of the mire of sin; but accounteth itself a strange child before thee, not worthy to desire thy grace.

O God in Christ Jesus, thou who for poor sinners' sake didst become man to help them, to thee I complain. The Devil hath poisoned me so that I know not my Saviour; I am become a wild branch on thy tree. In myself I am become a fool; I am naked and bare, my shame stands before mine eyes, I cannot hide it; thy judgement waiteth for me. What shall I say before thee, who art the Judge of all the world?

O merciful God, it is owing to thy love and longsuffering that I lie not already in hell. I lie before thee as a dying man whose life is passing from his lips, as a spark of life going out; kindle it, O Lord, and lift up the breath of my soul before thee.

A man must bring a serious mind to this work. If ever he would obtain the divine love, and union with the noble Wisdom of God, he must make an earnest vow in his purpose and mind.

Beloved Reader, out of love to thee I will not conceal from thee what is made known to me. If thou lovest the vanity of the flesh still, and art not in an earnest

purpose on the way to the new birth, intending to become a new man, then leave the above-written words in that prayer unspoken; else they will turn to a judgement of God in thee. Thou must not take the holy names in vain; they belong to the thirsty soul. But if thy soul be indeed athirst it shall find by experience what words they are.

Beloved Soul; Christ was tempted in the wilderness, and, if thou wilt put on him, thou must go through his whole progress even from his incarnation to his ascension. Though thou art not able nor required to do that which he hath done, yet thou must enter wholly into his process and therein die continually from corruption. For the Virgin, the Holy Wisdom, expouseth not herself to the soul except the soul, through the death of Christ, spring up as a new plant, standing in heaven.

Therefore take heed what thou doest: when thou hast made thy promise keep it; then Wisdom will crown thee more readily than thou wouldest be crowned. But thou must be sure, when the Tempter cometh to thee with the pleasure and glory of the world, that thy mind reject it. The free will of thy soul must stand the brunt as a warrior and champion. If the Devil cannot prevail against thy soul with vanity, then he cometh against it with its unworthiness and its catalogue of sins. There thou must fight hard, for in this conflict it goeth so terribly with many a poor sinner that outward reason thinketh him to be distracted, or possessed by an evil spirit. In this kind of combat heaven and hell are fighting one against the other. Yet a soldier who hath been in the wars can tell how to

fight, and can teach another that may be in the like condition.

I have set down here for the help of the reader a very earnest prayer in temptation, that he may know what to do if the same should befall him:

Most deep Love of God in Christ Jesus, leave me not in this distress. I confess I am guilty of the sins which now rise up in my mind and conscience; if thou forsake me I must perish. But hast thou not promised me in thy word, saying, *If a mother could forget her child* (which can hardly be), *yet thou wilt not forget me?* Thou hast set me as a sign in thy hands which were pierced through with sharp nails, and in thy open side whence blood and water gushed out. Poor wretch that I am! I can in my own ability do nothing before thee; I sink myself down into thy wounds and death; into thee I sink down in the anguish of my conscience; do with me what thou wilt.

Beloved Reader, this is no light matter; he that accounteth it so hath not yet passed through the trial. His conscience is still asleep. Happy is he who passeth through this fire in the time of his youth, before the Devil buildeth up in him a stronghold; he may prove a labourer in the heavenly vineyard, and sow his seed in the garden of Christ, where in due time he shall reap the fruit. This trial continueth a long while with many a poor soul, several years if he do not earnestly and early put on the armour of Christ. But to him who with a firm purpose striveth to depart from his evil ways the temptation will not be so hard, neither will it continue so long. Yet he must

stand out valiantly till victory be gotten over the Devil. He shall be mightily assisted, and all shall end in the best for him; so that afterwards, when the day breaketh in his soul, he turneth all to the great praise and glory of God." (The Confessions of Jacob Boehme, Edited by Scott Palmer)

"Omnipotent Jesus, remove from me all impediments to the effects of thy infinite power and goodness. I divest myself of my own liberty, consecrated entirely to the disposal of thy will. Have pity on me, and heal me of all impurities and want of fidelity; fill me with thy grace and wisdom. I abandon myself entirely to thee. Oh, my Jesus; I desire to be all thine; I desire to labor fervently in promoting thy glory, and, at the site of thy sufferings, to suffer patiently all tribulations. Grant that in all things I may do what is best pleasing to thee. My God, even were there no punishment for the wicked, I would not cease to love thee and to suffer for thee. Grant that I may correspond with thy designs. Grant that for the future that thou alone mayest be my portion forever. O Word incarnate, cleanse my heart with thy blood, and imprint in it, as a pledge of thy love, thy holy name, Jesus." (Discourses on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and of the Divine Office with a Preparation and Thanksgiving before and after Mass for every day of the week, 1878, By St. Alphonsus Liguori)

"A mystic is not a mysterious person; but is one who has a deep, inner sense of Life and Unity with the Whole; mysticism and mystery are entirely different things; one is real while the other may, or may not, be

an illusion. There is nothing mysterious in the Truth, so far as It is understood; but all things, of course, are mysteries until we understand them.

A mystic is one who intuitively perceives Truth and who, without mental process, arrives at Spiritual Realizations. It is from the teachings of the great mystics that the best in the philosophy of the world has come.

The civilization of to-day is built around the teachings of a few people who have intuitively perceived Spiritual Truth. Our great code of law was given by Moses, a man who through the mystic sense perceived that we live in a Universe of Law. Our greatest code of ethics was given through the perception of the prophets, culminating in such teachings as those of Jesus and Buddha. Who was there who could have taught such men as these? By what process of mentality did they arrive at their profound conclusions? We are compelled to recognize that Spirit Alone was their Teacher; they were, indeed, taught of God.

The mystic intuitively senses Reality and instinctively knows The Truth; and in this way all of the best in literature, music and art have come.

Our great religions have been given by a few who climbed the heights of spiritual vision and caught a fleeting glimpse of Ultimate Reality. No living soul could have taught them what they knew, and it is doubtful if even they themselves knew why they knew.

The great poets have been true mystics and have revealed, through their poems, the Presence of God. Men like Robert Browning, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Homer, Walt Whitman, Edward Rowland Sill, and others of like nature, have given us poetry which is immortal, because they had a mystic sense of life: the perception of a Living Presence. All true philosophers are mystics; the old prophets were mystics; David, Solomon, Jesus, Plato, Buddha, Plotinus, Emerson, and a score of others, all had the same experience: the sense of a Living Presence.

The greatest music ever composed was written by the hand of a mystic; and the highest and best in art has come from the same source.

Man has compelled nature to do his bidding; he has harnessed electric energy, caught the wind, trapped steam and made them all obey his will. He has invented machines to do the work of thousands; he has belted the globe with his traffic and built up a wonderful civilization; but in few cases has he conquered his own soul.

The highest and best that we have in civilization is the result of the mystic sense which has been perceived by a few in each age. All that modern appliances and inventions give us in the way of comfort and luxury, good and necessary as they are, may be counted as nothing compared to the teachings of Jesus. By this, we do not mean to decry modern civilization, education or anything that goes with it; for we are firm believers in anything and everything that makes life interesting and worth living. We believe in

science, art, religion, education, commerce, government, industry, agriculture, and all that goes to make up a well-rounded experience in life; but we repeat, what would they amount to, if thought of in any other light than as passing things?

The mystic has revealed things that do not pass as ships in the night; he has revealed Eternal Verities and has plainly taught us that there is a Living Presence indwelling All.

TRUE MYSTICISM AND THE PSYCHIC SENSE

There is a vast difference between mysticism and psychism, between a mystic and an ordinary psychic. The psychic capacity will be thoroughly discussed in Lesson Six, and the reader will remember that it is the power to read subjectively; it may be dealing with a reality or with an illusion. The average psychic must become more or less subjective in order to do good work. At best, and even though in a normal state of mind, he can only read subjective pictures and tendencies; at best, he is generally dealing with human thought. Should he penetrate that thought, he would then become a mystic.

A mystic does not read human thought but senses the Thought of God. The question might be asked, "How do you know that he senses the Thought of God?" Because the mystics of every age have seen, sensed and taught THE SAME TRUTH. Psychic experiences more or less contradict each other, because each psychic sees a different kind of mental picture; but the

mystic experiences of the ages have revealed ONE AND THE SAME TRUTH.

WHAT THE MYSTICS HAVE TAUGHT

Without exception, all of the mystics have taught that there is but One Ultimate Reality; and that this Ultimate Reality is HERE NOW, IF WE COULD BUT SEE IT.

Strange as it may seem, the great mystics have all believed in a Personal God; that is, a God who is Personal to all who believe in Him. They have not, of course, believed in an ANTHROPOMORPHIC GOD; but they have believed in a God who consciously works in and through man; and they have adored and worshiped this God.

The great mystics have been illumined, that is, they have, at times, seen through the veil of matter and perceived the Spiritual Universe. They have taught that the Kingdom of God is NOW PRESENT AND NEEDS BUT TO BE REALIZED; and they have, apparently, sensed that this Kingdom is within.

A psychic sees only through his own subjective mentality; consequently, everything that he looks at is more or less colored by the vibration of his own thought; he is subject to hallucinations and false impressions of every description. This is why, generally speaking, no two psychics ever see the same thing.

Mystics have all seen the same thing, and their testimony is in no way confusing; this is because the Spirit within them has borne witness to the Truth.

NO ULTIMATE EVIL

One of the most illuminating things that mysticism has revealed, is that evil is not an ultimate reality. Evil is simply an experience of the soul on its journey toward Reality; it is not an entity but an experience necessary to self-unfoldment; it is not a thing of itself but simply a misuse of power. It will disappear when we stop looking at, or believing in, it. We cannot stop believing in it as long as we indulge in it; so the mystic has always taught the race to turn from evil and do good.

ULTIMATE SALVATION OF ALL

The mystics have taught the ultimate salvation of all people and the immortality of every soul. Indeed, they have taught that immortality IS HERE AND NOW, IF WE WOULD BUT WAKE TO THE FACT. "Beloved, now are we the Sons of God." Since each soul is some part of the Whole, it is impossible that any soul can be lost. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Damnation has been as foreign to the thought of the mystic as any belief in evil must be to the Mind of God.

FREEDOM FROM BURDEN

The great mystics have taught that man should have no burdens, and would have none, if he turned to

"The One." "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." As Jesus must have known that it would be impossible for all men to come unto Him as a Personality, He must have meant that we should come into His understanding of Life and Reality; that is, to come unto the Great God. Some day we will learn to lay our burdens on the Altar of Love, that they may be consumed by the fire of faith in the Living Spirit. Man would have no burdens if he kept his "High watch" toward "The One"; that is, if he always turned to God.

UNITY OF ALL

Jesus prayed that all might come to see the Unity of Life. "That they may be One, even as we are One," was His prayer as He neared the completion of His great work on this planet. All mystics have sensed that we live in One Life. "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." The Unity of Good is a revelation of the greatest importance; for it teaches us that we are One with the Whole, and One with each other. This realization alone will settle the question of human inequality. The real Fatherhood of God and the Actual Brotherhood of Man will be made apparent on earth to the degree that men realize True Unity.

REALIZATION OF INDIVIDUALITY

No great mystic ever lived who denied the reality of individuality. The higher the sense of Truth, the greater will be the realization of the uniqueness of individual character and personality. The Real Self is

God-given and cannot be denied; it is the place where God comes to a point of Individualized and Personified Expression, and should be thought of in this light. "I am the Light of the world."

NORMALCY

All mystics have been normal people, that is, they have lived just as other people have lived. The only difference has been that they have sensed a greater Reality; namely, the Presence of the Living Spirit. The true mystic in every age has come into the world of affairs and lived among men, sometimes as a teacher, and sometimes in the ordinary walks of life, but always in a perfectly natural way. There is nothing peculiar or strange about a mystic. People who shroud themselves in a cloak of mystery are not true mystics but are laboring under mental delusions and subjective hallucinations. They may be sincere in their beliefs, but they are none the less wrong in their methods. It is a question if a real mystic would even realize that he is a mystic. He would be more liable to think of himself simply as one who understands that he is One with the Whole.

THE GREAT LIGHT

It is impossible, perhaps, to put into words or into print what a mystic sometimes sees, and it is as hard to believe it as it is to put it into words. But there is a certain inner sense which, at times, sees Reality in a flash which illuminates the whole being with a great flood of light. This, too, might seem an illusion unless the testimony were complete; for every mystic has

had this experience; but some have had it to a greater degree than others. Jesus was the greatest of all the mystics; and once, at least, after a period of illumination, His face was so bright that His followers could not look upon it.

In moments of deepest realization the great mystics have sensed that One Life flows through ALL; and that all are some part of that Life. They have also seen Substance, a fine, white, brilliant stuff, forever falling into everything; a Substance, indestructible and eternal. At times, the realization has been so complete that they have been actually blinded by the light. There are instances where for several days after such an experience, the one having it could not see on the physical plane; for he had seen the Inner Light. Remember, all this takes place when in a perfectly normal state of mind and has nothing whatever to do with the psychic state. It is not an illusion but a reality; and it is during these periods that real revelation comes. Perhaps a good illustration would be to suppose a large group of people in a room together, but unaware of each other's presence; each is busy with his own personal affairs. We will suppose the place to be dark and that some one comes in and takes a flash-light picture of the room and its occupants. Should this picture be shown to anyone who was in the room before it was taken, it might be hard for him to believe that all of the objects in the picture were actually in the room. This is, of course, a poor analogy, but it does serve to elucidate a point. In flashes of illumination, the inspired have seen INTO THE VERY CENTER OF REALITY, and have brought back with them a picture of what they have seen and

felt. Again, we know that this has not been an illusion or simply a subjective hallucination, for each age has had its mystics, and every age has produced the same results. ALL HAVE SEEN THE SAME THING. The testimony is complete and the evidence is certain.

WHAT THE MYSTICS HAVE TAUGHT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL

All of the great mystics have taught practically the same thing. They have all agreed that the soul is on the pathway of experience, that is, of self-discovery; that it is on its way back to its Father's House; and that every soul will ultimately reach its Heavenly Home. They have taught the Divinity to Man. "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." They have told us that man's destiny is Divine and sure; and that Creation is Complete and Perfect NOW. The great mystics have all agreed that man's life is his to do with as he chooses; but that when he turns to "The One," he will always receive inspiration from On High.

They have told us of the marvelous relationship which exists between God and man, of a close Union that cannot be broken; and the greatest of the mystics have consciously walked with God and talked with Him, just as we talk to each other. It is difficult to realize how this could be; it is hard to understand how a Being, so Universal as God must be, can talk with man; here, alone, the mystic sense reveals the greater truth and knows that, Infinite as is the Divine Being, It is still Personal to all who believe in Its Presence. It is entirely possible for a man to talk with

the Spirit; for the Spirit is within men, and "He who made the ears" can hear.

INSTINCT AND INTUITION

That quality in an animal which directs its action and tells it where to go to find food and shelter, we call instinct. It is, really, Omniscience in the animal. The same quality, more highly developed, makes its appearance in man; and is what we call intuition. Intuition is God in man, revealing to him the Realities of Being; and just as instinct guides the animal, so would intuition guide man, if he would allow it to operate through him. Here again, we must be careful not to mistake a psychic impression for an intuitive one. *Psychic impressions seek to control man; intuition always remains in the background and waits for his recognition.* "Behold, I stand at the door."

All arbitrary control of man stopped as soon as he was brought to a point of self-knowingness. From this point he must discover himself; but intuition, which is nothing less than God in man, silently awaits his recognition and cooperation. The Spirit is always there if we could but sense Its Presence. Mystics have felt this wonderful power working from within, and have responded to it; and, as a sure evidence that they were not laboring under delusions, they have all sensed the same thing; had the impressions been psychic only, each would have seen and sensed a different thing; for each would have seen through the darkness of his own subjective mentality.

ILLUMINATION AND COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

There is such an experience as Illumination and Cosmic Consciousness; It is not a mystery, however, but is the Self-Knowingness of God through man. The more complete the operation of that Power, the more complete has been man's conscious mentality; for the illumined do not become less, but more themselves. The greater the consciousness of God, the more complete must be the realization of the True Self,--The Divine Reality.

Illumination will come as man more and more realizes his Unity with the Whole; and as he constantly endeavors to let the Truth operate through him. But since the Whole is at the point of the Inner Mentality, it will be here alone that he will contact It. "Speak to Him, thou, for He hears."

The only God man knows is the God of his own Inner Life; indeed, he can know no other. To assume that man can know a God outside himself is to assume that he can know something of which he is not conscious. This does not mean that man is God; it means that the only God man knows is within. The only place that man contacts God is within; and the only life man has is from within. God is not external, but is Indwelling, at the very center of man's life. This is why Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within, and why He prayed, "Our Father Which art in Heaven."

THE HIGHEST PRACTICE

The highest mental practice is to listen to this Inner Voice and to declare for Its Presence. The greater a man's consciousness of this Indwelling I AM is, the more power he will have. This will never lead to illusion but will always lead to Reality. All great souls have known this and have constantly striven to let the Mind of God come out through their mentalities. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." This was the declaration of the great Master, and it should be ours also; not a limited sense of life but a limitless one.

THE POWER OF JESUS

The occult significance of the power of Jesus is easily understood when we study His method of procedure. Consider His raising of Lazarus from the dead. He stood at the tomb and gave thanks; this was recognition. He next said, "I Knew that Thou hearest me always"; this was unification; then He said, "Lazarus, come forth"; this was command. The method is perfect and we will do well to study and follow it. This method can be used in all treatment. First, realize that Divine Power Is; then unify with It, and then speak the word as "one having authority," for the Law is "the servant of the Eternal Spirit throughout all the ages."

TURNING WITHIN

We should turn within, then, as have all of those great souls who have blessed the world with their presence; we should turn within and FIND GOD. It should seem natural to turn to the Great Power back of

everything; it should seem normal to believe in this Power; and we should have a sense of a Real Presence when we do turn toward the One and Only Power in the entire Universe. This method is by far the most effective. It gives a sense of power that nothing else can, and, in this way, proves that it is a Reality. It would be a wonderful experiment if the world would try to solve all of its problems through the power of Spirit. Indeed the time will come when every one will, "From the highest...to the lowest."

A sense of real completion can come only to that soul which realizes its Unity with the Great Whole. Man will never be satisfied until his whole being responds to this thought, and then, indeed, "Will God go forth anew into Creation."

"To as many as believed gave He the Power."

(The Science of Mind, By Ernest Holmes)





CHAPTER FIVE

Hope Springs Forth Renewal

Is this why Mass is not talking to the stars?
 If the soul is afraid to go down the problems road
 He will still remain with all he sees
 Leave me out of it
 Without, however, he can move forward
 All appeared to have impossibly broken
 If I was aware at that time
 I would've changed what was going into the soul
 I see the end of life like bringing that body through a
 storm
 Bowing to those who play as they wash away on their
 burden

An allegory:

"Amidst the starbound universe, the traveler was sleeping among the children of the world when he looked upward and noticed the hands of three elderly ladies reaching down to him from the heavens above.

Reaching upwards, the ladies wished to shake his hands. The lady in the center seemed to be the leader, she had a short brown hair cut. As soon as her hands met his, the heavens opened behind them and her hand began to shake. "Awwww, you come from the stars," the traveler said, "nice to meet you."

And suddenly, an internal fire was lit from within his soul. As if his innards had literally become a volcanic epiphany, he soared directly into his past, into the time of his marriage.

And he began to speak from his own internal voice of that which he saw and experienced."

'I tried to fight the memories of the places we'd lived during our marriage because I knew I had failed at times as a husband and father, but they gently persisted in my mind as I laid semiconscious in bed.

Watching as though from the outside but at the same time reliving the experiences shown to me; I was taken thru a life review of my marriage. Just like in the Christmas Carol by Dickens. . . .

Going to each of the five or so homes we'd lived during our marriage, I saw all the improvements we'd made to each house. An elaborate rock garden in one, the complete remodel of another, the water canal and addition on another, the landscape and rock work on the last home we'd lived in together.

Interiorly, I knew it was all symbolic of the effort both of us had made to improve our lives despite the many challenges we'd faced during our many years of marriage.

Hearing the sound of laughter, I turned and remembered that sound. It was my former wife chasing me around the back yard with a water hose. We'd truly and sincerely loved each other early in our marriage, although at times we seemed a bit crude and lacking in maturity regarding how we conveyed our love for each other. We were so happy early in our marriage.

Seeing the extreme challenges we'd faced, I observed as my wife mysteriously started having no energy, needed to sleep sometimes 16 hours a day, her rashes, stomach problems, breathing problems,

and chest pain that over time was diagnosed as Systemic Lupus from the chemical spill exposure early in our marriage.

Part of the challenge was that neither we nor the doctors could figure out what was wrong with her for a long time as her suffering continued to increase. And this caused a lot of depression, guilt and anxiety which I didn't know what to do with as her husband.

Suddenly, my oldest daughter was two years old and lounging with me in the backyard kiddy pool. My middle daughter's hysterical laughter interrupted my reverie as I remembered the many times I'd tickled her and wouldn't stop.

And then the snow, the mountain snows . . . the kids and I playing in the snow during the harrowing winters of the west. And the lake, the mountain lake where we would all swim when they were children.

As this life review continued, I heard interiorly from the voice of God as I perceived it telling me that we should acknowledge that we were given many challenges in the course of our marriage.

I remembered when my wife began having horrific nightmares of childhood abuse which most would never speak of. The challenge of dealing with the trauma of that which was yet not understood, and the rift it caused between her and her remaining extended family. That was a really difficult time. The truth isn't always pretty, and the time it took her to work through that silent memory put a lot of stress on both of us.

I was at a total loss as to how to help her when she began having these nightmares and felt so helpless as I watched her suffer.

Fading into view then was the ectopic pregnancy. It'd been going on for six months, had ruptured at three. It was a miracle that she was even alive. But the doctors kept misdiagnosing her.

When the diagnosis was finally in and she almost died during surgery, I ran away from the pain. The Lord allowed me to see that I should have just taken her to the hospital months before and insisted that they figure out what was wrong with her. And when she was recovering and going through such excruciating pain, instead of going to work, I should've been there for her. But I was not.

She thought I didn't care, but I thought I was being a good husband by going to work. But this was a recurring issue. There were other emergencies, other surgeries. And each time, I wasn't there. I was never at her side. Predictably, I went to work and engaged in recreational behavior for myself rather than be by her side.

Remembering, my soul was taken back to how I would watch her as she was briefly sleeping as I was leaving for work. She looked so beautiful in peaceful slumber . . . even though at the time we were in the process of getting a divorce.

As I continued to travel through time, I realized that we'd had a lot of fun as a family at times. But God conveyed to my soul in a very familiar way that He had known our struggles were difficult.

As our loving Father, the Lord instructed me that we should both try to forgive one another for the other's mistakes. Clearly, our love for one another remained and God wished us to continue to love and embrace one another.

I was shown a window with several square panes of glass. There was fog in some of the glass and maybe even a crack in another, but the glass could be replaced with a new pane of glass. This was symbolic of our vision of our life together, that we could have a clear and renewed vision as to how to make good choices and keep our love strong.

For a moment, I was shown a particular past lifetime wherein our love for one another had been very strong and how beautiful the Lord viewed that time in our history.

My spirit was taken back to the time of the massive forest fire, the major medical diagnosis of my wife, the loss of my job . . . and how we were so close to being homeless, but we still held strong and got through it.

Part of the struggle which was becoming clearer to my soul was a continuous conflict with fulfilling with what I believed I needed individually and fulfilling the actual needs of the family and my marriage.

Repeatedly, I put my needs ahead of the family. Over time, I lost the dominant, all pervasive love that had defined the earlier part of our marriage which had given me impetus and desire to make sacrifices and put the needs of the family ahead of my own.

Becoming abusive was really just another form of selfishness and self-absorption.

But the Lord allowed me to see how weak and frail my relationship to Him was at that time which made me such easy prey to the demons. Their influences, negative thoughts and suggestions led to unacceptable conduct on my part. Within the

darkness I'd allowed myself to embrace, I lost sight of all the beauty in my wife and family. My marriage was a far off dream from the past . . . I didn't even give it a moment's thought. All had turned to my own desires, wants and perceived needs.

But God wanted me to realize that these challenges were extremely difficult. It seemed that we needed to acknowledge that we had done the best we could even though I especially repeatedly made poor selfish choices.

It was almost as though we were both sitting on the lap of the loving Father God as He embraced us with his huge arms. Continuing to love us through all the difficult times, He strongly encouraged us to fight the good fight and to never give up in His name. All would be well.

We had come full circle and I kept hearing the song from the Wizard of Oz:

“Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high,
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby.

Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue,
And the dreams that you dare to dream
Really do come true.

Someday I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far
Behind me.
Where troubles melt like lemon drops
Away above the chimney tops

That's where you'll find me.

Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly.
Birds fly over the rainbow.
Why then, oh why can't I?

If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow
Why, oh why can't I?"

'As I heard the lyrics to the song, a phrase repeated over and over through my mind. "Hope springs forth renewal . . . Hope springs forth renewal . . . Hope springs forth renewal." The message was very clear. All things could be overcome with love and forgiveness. What was required of me was trust in God.

The following night, I could not sleep as a fire was burning in my soul. In a state of euphoria, I could tangibly feel the love I held within me for my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. As I held onto consciousness in the deep of the night, I wished to simply repeat his name and bask in the love that this fire was enkindling within me.

In spite of my wretched and sinful nature, I was now ready to give everything to Jesus; my sins, my joy, my sadness, my loneliness . . . and all my love.

As I felt this powerful and all-embracing love, I realized that if I were giving love to my wife, children, family and others, then I would be giving it to Him.

Likewise, if I were committing sin, then I would also be committing sin against Christ Himself. And in this powerful moment wherein I felt the all-embracing love of Christ, I could no longer bear to cause Him pain. Therefore, I could no longer bear to cause pain to my family. I could no longer bear to cause pain to others.

As I lay in bed with the interior fire still burning I shouted out interiorly to the Lord. "Forgive me, Jesus, for opening your wounds with my sins. Please help me to heal Your wounds by helping me in loving my family and all of humanity . . . for the rest of my life.'

"The traveler fell into the arms of Jesus, and disappeared into eternity. For a moment, he finally understood the master plan, the great atonement. What did Jesus *really* do for all of us? It was not some hypothetical or mythical imagination, it was an act that far surpassed any in human history. And so few understood its true importance.

Whether the possibility of reconciling with the lover on earth still remained to the traveler was not relevant. It was the path of restoration that contained all relevance. If such a thing could be restored on this earth, God would do so. But that which was being restored was wholly within himself. And that wholeness would give him peace regardless of any earthly outcome.

God had restored the traveler's wholeness; reconciling within him his past with his present, his fall with his rising, his damnation with his redemption. What a good God have we?

Amidst the pleasure of His true Beloved, the traveler finally understood what had gone wrong.

With God, there is no easy road to redemption. We must give ourselves, wholly as God also gave Himself. As Christ has given Himself wholly to us, we must give ourselves wholly to Him. And in doing so, the irony remains that our only freedom lies within that chosen bondage.

The reality is that the Royal Question can only be answered in one way. "Yes, Lord, let it be done to me according to Thy will."

We become a member of God's Royal Family by saying "Yes" to whatever He sends to us, and carrying our joys and burdens with Him and no other. We accept that highest and holiest path with peace . . . and we walk forward from selfishness to selflessness. In this lies the only true happiness in this world and the next, to "love one another as I have loved you."

Jesus loves with a total giving of self, He leaves nothing behind . . . he renders Himself empty in order to fill us. And that is the answer to the Royal Question . . . to empty ourselves so that God may love others through us, so that our very being emanates only Him."

"INVOCATION OF JESUS AND MARY.

Saviour of the world, O Love of souls, O Lord most lovely of all beings! Thou by Thy Passion didst come to win to Thyself our hearts, by showing us the immense love that Thou didst bear to us in accomplishing a redemption which has brought to us

a sea of benedictions, and which cost Thee a sea of pains and ignominies. It was principally for this end that Thou didst institute the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, in order that we might have a perpetual memorial of Thy Passion: "That we might have forever a perpetual memorial of so great a benefit," says St. Thomas, "He gives his body to be the food of the faithful," which St. Paul had already said. As often as you shall eat this bread y you shall show the death of the Lord? Oh, how many holy souls hast Thou persuaded by these prodigies of love, consumed by the flames of Thy love, to renounce all earthly goods, in order to dedicate themselves entirely to loving Thee alone, O most amiable Saviour ! O my Jesus ! I pray Thee make me always remember Thy Passion; and grant that I also, a miserable sinner, overcome at last by so many loving devices, may return to love Thee, and to show Thee, by my poor love, some mark of gratitude for the excessive love which Thou, my God and my Saviour, hast borne to me. Remember, my Jesus, that lam one of those sheep of Thine, to save which Thou didst come down on the earth and didst sacrifice Thy divine life. I know that, after having redeemed me by Thy death, Thou hast not ceased to love me, and that Thou dost still bear to me the same love that Thou hadst for me when Thou didst die for my sake. Oh, permit me no longer to lead a life of ingratitude towards Thee, my God, who dost so much deserve to be loved, and hast done so much to be loved by me !

And thou, O most holy Virgin Mary, who didst take so great a part in the Passion of thy Son, obtain for me, I beseech thee, through the merits of thy sorrows,

the grace to experience a taste of that compassion which thou didst so sensibly feel at the death of Jesus, and obtain for me also a spark of that love which wrought all the martyrdom of thy afflicted heart. Amen.

" Let my mind, O Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech Thee, be absorbed in the fiery and honeyed sweetness of Thy love, that I may die for love of the love of Thee, who wert pleased to die for love of the love of me." — Prayer of St. Francis Assisi.

INTRODUCTION.

HOW USEFUL IT IS TO MEDITATE ON THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

The lover of souls, our most loving Redeemer, declared that he had no other motive in coming down upon earth to become man than to enkindle in the hearts of men the fire of his holy love: I am come to cast fire on earth; and what will I but that it be kindled? And, oh, what beautiful flames of love has he not enkindled in so many souls, especially by the pains that he chose to suffer in his death, in order to prove to us the immeasurable love which he still bears to us!

Oh, how many souls, happy in the wounds of Jesus, as in burning furnaces of love, have been so inflamed with his love that they have not refused to consecrate to him their goods, their lives, and their whole selves, surmounting with great courage all the difficulties which they had to encounter in the observance of the

divine law, for the love of that Lord who, being God, chose to suffer so much for the love of them ! This was just the counsel that the Apostle gave us, in order that we might not fail, but make great advances in the way of salvation : Think diligently upon Him who endureth such opposition from sinners against Himself, that you be not scared, fainting in your minds?

Wherefore St. Augustine, all inflamed with love at the sight of Jesus nailed on the cross, prayed thus sweetly:

" Imprint, O Lord, Thy wounds in my heart, that I may read therein suffering and love: suffering, that I may endure for Thee all suffering; love, that I may despise for Thee all love. I Write, he said, my most loving Saviour, write on my heart Thy wounds, in order that I may always behold therein Thy sufferings and Thy love. Yes, because, having before my eyes the great sufferings that Thou, my God, didst endure formed, I may bear in silence all the sufferings that it may fall to my lot to endure; and at the sight of the love which Thou didst exhibit for me on the cross, I may never love or be able to love any other than Thee. And from what source did the saints draw courage and strength to suffer torments, martyrdom, and death, if not from the sufferings of Jesus crucified? St. Joseph of Leonessa, a Capuchin, on seeing that they were going to bind him with cords, for a painful incision that the surgeon was to make in his body, took into his hands his crucifix and said, " Why these cords ? why these cords ? Behold, these are my chains – my Saviour nailed to the cross for love of me. He,

through his sufferings, constrains me to bear every trial for his sake." And thus he suffered the amputation without a complaint; looking upon Jesus, who, as a lamb before his shearers, was dumb, and did not open His mouth.

Who, then, can ever complain that he suffers wrongfully, when he considers Jesus, who was bruised for our sins? Who can refuse to obey, on account of some inconvenience, when Jesus became obedient unto death ? I Who can refuse ignominies, when they behold Jesus treated as a fool, as a mock king, as a disorderly person; struck, spit upon on his face, and suspended upon an infamous gibbet ?

Who could love any other object besides Jesus when they see him dying in the midst of so many sufferings and insults, in order to captivate our love? A certain devout solitary prayed to God to teach him what he could do in order to love him perfectly. Our Lord revealed to him that there was no more efficient way to arrive at the perfect love of him than to meditate constantly on his Passion. St. Teresa lamented and complained of certain books which had taught her to leave

off meditating on the Passion of Jesus Christ, because this might be an impediment to the contemplation of his divinity; and the saint exclaimed, " O Lord of my soul, O my Jesus crucified, my treasure ! I never remember this opinion without thinking that I have been guilty of great treachery. And is it possible that Thou, my Lord, couldst be an obstacle to me in the way of a greater good ? Whence, then, do all good tidings come to me, but from Thee ?" And she then

added, " I have seen that, in order to please God, and to induce him to grant us great graces, he wills that they should all pass through the hands of this most sacred humanity, in which his divine majesty declared that he took pleasure." '

For this reason, Father Balthasar Alvarez said that ignorance of the treasures that we possess in Jesus was the ruin of Christians ; and therefore his most favorite and usual meditation was on the Passion of Jesus Christ. He meditated especially on three of the sufferings of Jesus, — his poverty, contempt, and pain; and he exhorted his penitents to meditate frequently on the Passion of our Redeemer, telling them that they should not consider that they had done anything at all, until they had arrived at retaining Jesus crucified continually present in their hearts.

"He who desires," says St. Bonaventure, " to go on advancing from virtue to virtue, from grace to grace, should meditate continually on the Passion of Jesus. " And he adds that " there is no practice more profitable for the entire sanctification of the soul than the frequent meditation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ."

St. Augustine also said that a single tear shed at the remembrance of the Passion of Jesus is worth more than a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or a year of fasting on bread and water. Yes, because it was for this end that our Saviour suffered so much, in order that we should think of his sufferings; because if we think on them, it is impossible not to be inflamed with divine love: The charity of Christ presseth us, says St. Paul.

Jesus is loved by few, because few consider the pains he has suffered for -us; but he that frequently considers them cannot live without loving Jesus. "The charity of Christ presseth us." He will feel himself so constrained by his love that he will not find it possible to refrain from loving a God so full of love, who has suffered so much to make us love him.

Therefore the Apostle said that he desired to know nothing but Jesus, and Jesus crucified; that is, the love that he has shown us on the cross: I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? And, in truth, from what books can we better learn the science of the saints — that is, the science of loving God — than from Jesus crucified ? That great servant of God, Brother Bernard of Codione, the Capuchin, not being able to read, his brother religious wanted to teach him, upon which he went to consult his crucifix; but Jesus answered him from the cross, "What is reading ? what are books ? Behold, I am the book wherein thou mayest continually read the love I have borne thee." O great subject to be considered during our whole life and during all eternity ! A God dead for the love of us ! A God dead for the love of us ! O wonderful subject !

St. Thomas Aquinas was one day paying a visit to St. Bonaventure, and asked him from what book he had drawn all the beautiful lessons he had written. St. Bonaventure showed him the image of the Crucified, which was completely blackened by all the kisses that he had given it, and said, "This is my book whence I receive everything that I write; and it has taught me whatever little I know."

In short, all the saints have learned the art of loving God from the study of the crucifix. Brother John of Alvernia, every time that he beheld Jesus wounded, could not restrain his tears. Brother James of Tuderto, when he heard the Passion of our Redeemer read, not only wept bitterly, but broke out into loud sobs, overcome with the love with which he was inflamed toward his beloved Lord.

It was this sweet study of the crucifix which made St. Francis become a great seraph. He wept so continually in meditating on the sufferings of Jesus Christ, that he almost entirely lost his sight. On one occasion, being found crying out and weeping, he was asked what was the matter with him. "What ails me?" answered the saint. "I weep over the sorrows and insults inflicted on my Lord; and my sorrow is increased when I think of those ungrateful men who do not love him, but live without any thought of him." Every time that he heard the bleating of a lamb, he felt himself touched with compassion at the thought of the death of Jesus, the Immaculate Lamb, drained of every drop of blood upon the cross for the sins of the world. And therefore this loving saint could find no subject on which he exhorted his brethren with greater eagerness than the constant remembrance of the Passion of Jesus.

This, then, is the book — Jesus crucified — which, if we constantly read it, will teach us, on the one hand, to have a lively fear of sin, and, on the other hand, will inflame us with love for a God so full of love for us; while we read in these wounds the great malice of

sin, which reduced a God to suffer so bitter a death in order to satisfy the divine justice, and the love which our Saviour has shown us in choosing to suffer so much in order to prove to us how much he loved us.

Let us beseech the divine Mother Mary to obtain for us from her Son the grace that we also may enter into these furnaces of love, in which so many loving hearts are consumed, in order that, our earthly affections being there burned away, we also may burn with those blessed flames, which render souls holy on earth and blessed in heaven. Amen.

REFLECTIONS AND AFFECTIONS ON THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST

CHAPTER I.

THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST IN BEING WILLING TO SATISFY THE DIVINE JUSTICE FOR OUR SINS.

I.

We read in history of a proof of love so prodigious that it will be the admiration of all ages.

There was once a king, lord of many kingdoms, who had one only son, so beautiful, so holy, so amiable, that he was the delight of his father, who loved him as much as himself.

This young prince had a great affection for one of his slaves; so much so that, the slave having committed a

crime for which he had been condemned to death, the prince offered himself to die for the slave; the father, being jealous of justice, was satisfied to condemn his beloved son to death, in order that the slave might remain free from the punishment that he deserved : and thus the son died a malefactor's death, and the slave was freed from punishment.

This fact, the like of which has never happened in this world, and never will happen, is related in the Gospels, where we read that the Son of God, the Lord of the universe, seeing that man was condemned to eternal death in punishment of his sins, chose to take upon himself human flesh, and thus to pay by his death the penalty due to man : He was offered because it was His own will} And his Eternal Father caused him to die upon the cross to save us miserable sinners: He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all} What dost thou think, O devout soul, of this love of the Son and of the Father ?

Thou didst, then, O my beloved Redeemer, choose by Thy death to sacrifice Thyself in order to obtain the pardon of my sins. And what return of gratitude shall I then make to Thee ? Thou hast done too much to oblige me to love Thee; I should indeed be most ungrateful to Thee if I did not love Thee with my whole heart. Thou hast given for me Thy divine life; I, miserable sinner that I am, give Thee my own life. Yes, I will at least spend that period of life that remains to me only in loving Thee, obeying Thee, and pleasing Thee.

O men, men ! Let us love this our Redeemer, who, being God, has not disdained to take upon himself our sins, in order to satisfy by his sufferings for the chastisement which we have deserved: Surely He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows.

St. Augustine says that our Lord in creating us formed us by virtue of his power, but in redeeming us he has saved us from death by means of his sufferings: " He created us in his strength ; he sought us back in his weakness."

How much do I not owe Thee, O Jesus my Saviour. Oh, if I were to give my blood a thousand times over, — if I were to spend a thousand lives for Thee, — it would yet be nothing. Oh, how could anyone that meditated much on the love which Thou hast shown him in Thy Passion, love anything else but Thee ? Through the love with which Thou didst love us on the cross, grant me the grace to love Thee with my whole heart. I love Thee, infinite Goodness ; I love Thee above every other good ; and I ask nothing more of Thee but Thy holy love.

"But how is this?" continues St. Augustine. How is it possible, O Saviour of the world, that Thy love has arrived at such a height that when I had committed the crime, Thou shouldst have to pay the penalty ? " Whither has Thy love reached ? I have sinned ; Thou art punished."

And what could it then signify to Thee, adds St. Bernard, that we should lose ourselves and be

chastised, as we well deserved to be ; that Thou shouldst choose to satisfy with Thy innocent flesh for our sins, and to die in order to deliver us from death ! " O good Jesus, what doest Thou ? We ought to have died, and it is Thou who diest. We have sinned and Thou sufferest. A deed without precedent, grace without merit, charity without measure." O deed which never has had and never will have its match ! O grace which we could never merit ! O love which can never be understood !

III.

Isaias had already foretold that our blessed Redeemer should be condemned to death, and as an innocent lamb brought to the sacrifice : He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter' What a cause of wonder it must have been to the angels, O my God, to behold their innocent Lord led as a victim to be sacrificed on the altar of the cross for the love of man ! And what a cause of horror to heaven and to hell, the sight of a God extended as an infamous criminal on a shameful gibbet for the sins of his creatures !

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us {for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree): that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ " He was made a curse upon the cross," says St. Ambrose, "that thou mightest be blessed in the kingdom of God." :

O my dearest Saviour ! Thou wert, then, content, in order to obtain for me the blessing of God, to embrace

the dishonor of appearing upon the cross accursed in the sight of the whole world, and even forsaken in Thy sufferings by Thy Eternal Father, — a suffering which made Thee cry out with a loud voice, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? Yes, observes Simon of Cassia, it was for this end that Jesus was abandoned in his Passion in order that we might not remain abandoned in sins which we have committed: "Therefore Christ was abandoned in his sufferings that we might not be abandoned in our guilt." O prodigy of compassion ! O excess of love of God towards men ! And how can there be a soul who believes this, O my Jesus, and yet loves

Thee not ?

IV.

He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood Behold, O men, how far the love of Jesus for us has carried him, in order to cleanse us from the filthiness of our sins. He has even shed every drop of his blood that he might prepare for us in this his own blood a bath of salvation : "He offers his own blood," says a learned writer, "speaking better than the blood of Abel: for that cried for justice ; the blood of Christ for mercy."

Whereupon St. Bonaventure exclaims, O good Jesus, what hast Thou done ?" O my Saviour, what indeed hast Thou done ? How far hath Thy love carried Thee? What hast Thou seen in me which hath made Thee love me so much? "Wherefore hast Thou loved me so much ? Why, Lord, why ? What am I ?" Wherefore didst Thou choose to suffer so much for

me ? Who am I that Thou wouldst win to Thyself my love at so dear a price? Oh, it was entirely the work of Thy infinite love ! Be Thou eternally praised and blessed for it.

All ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to My sorrow. The same seraphic Doctor, considering these words of Jeremias as spoken of our blessed Redeemer while he was hanging on the cross dying for the love of us, says, "Yes, Lord. I will attend and see if there be any love like unto Thy love." ' By which he means, I do indeed see and understand, O my most loving Redeemer, how much Thou didst suffer upon that infamous tree; but what most constrains me to love Thee is the thought of the affection which Thou hast shown me in suffering so much, in order that I might love Thee.

V.

That which most inflamed St. Paul with the love of Jesus was the thought that he chose to die, not only for all men, but for him in particular : He loved me, and delivered Himself up for me Yes, he has loved me, said he, and for my sake he gave himself up to die. And thus ought every one of us to say ; for St. John Chrysostom asserts that God has loved every individual man with the same love with which he has loved the world : " He loves each man separately with the same measure of charity with which he loves the whole world." So that each one of us is under as great obligation to Jesus Christ for having suffered for every one, as if he had suffered him alone.

For supposing, my brother, Jesus Christ had died to save you alone, leaving all others to their original ruin, what a debt of gratitude you would owe to him? But you ought to feel that you owe him a greater obligation still for having died for the salvation of all. For if he had died for you alone, what sorrow would it not have caused you to think that your neighbors, parents, brothers, and friends would be damned, and that you would, when this life was over, be forever separated from them ? If you and your family had been slaves, and someone came to rescue you alone, how would you not entreat of him to save your parents and brothers together with yourself ! And how much would you thank him if he did this to please you ! Say, therefore, to Jesus :

O my sweetest Redeemer! Thou hast done this for me without my having asked Thee ; Thou hast not only saved me from death at the price of Thy blood, but also my parents and friends, so that I may have a good hope that we may all together enjoy Thy presence forever in paradise. O Lord! I thank Thee, and I love Thee, and I hope to thank Thee for it, and to love Thee forever in that blessed country.

VI.

Who could ever, says St. Laurence Justinian, explain the love which the divine Word bears to each one of us, since it surpasses the love of every son towards his mother, and of every mother for her son? " The intense charity of the Word of God surpasses all maternal and filial love ; neither can human words express how great his love is to each one of us !" So

much so, that our Lord revealed to St. Gertrude that he would be ready to die as many times as there were souls damned, if they were yet capable of redemption: " I would die as many deaths as there are souls in hell."

Jesus, O treasure more worthy of love than all others! Why is it that men love Thee so little? Oh! Do Thou make known what Thou hast suffered for each of them, the love that Thou bearest them, the desire Thou hast to be loved by them, and how worthy Thou art of being loved. Make Thyself known, O my Jesus, make Thyself loved.

VII.

Said our Redeemer ; the good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. But, O my Lord, where are there in the world shepherds like unto Thee? Other shepherds will slay their sheep in order to preserve their own life. Thou, O too loving Shepherd, didst give Thy divine life in order to save the life of Thy beloved sheep. And of these sheep, I, O most amiable Shepherd, have the happiness to be one. What obligation, then, am I not under to love Thee, and to spend my life for Thee, since Thou hast died for the love of me in particular ! And what confidence ought I not to have in Thy blood, knowing that it has been shed to pay the debt of my sins ! And thou shalt say in that day, I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord. Behold, God is ? My Saviour; I will deal confidently, and will not fear? And how can I any longer mistrust Thy mercy, O my Lord, when I behold Thy wounds? Come, then, O sinners, and let us have recourse to Jesus, who hangs upon that cross as it were upon a

throne of mercy. He has appeased the divine justice, which we had insulted. If we have offended God, he has done penance for us ; all that is required for us is contrition for our sins. O my dearest Saviour, to what have Thy pity and love for me reduced Thee ? The slave sins, and Thou, Lord, payest the penalty for him. If, therefore, I think of my sins, the thought of the punishment I deserve must make me tremble ; but when I think of Thy death, I find I have more reason to hope than to fear. O blood of Jesus! thou art all my hope.

VIII.

But this blood, as it inspires us with confidence, also obliges us to give ourselves entirely to our Blessed Redeemer. The Apostle exclaims, Know you not that you are not your own ? For you are bought with a great price?

Therefore, O my Jesus, I cannot any longer, without injustice, dispose of myself, or of my own concerns, since Thou hast made me Thine by purchasing me through Thy death. My body, my soul, my life are no longer mine; they are Thine, and entirely Thine. In Thee alone, therefore, will I hope. O my God, crucified and dead for me, I have nothing else to offer Thee but this soul, which Thou hast bought with Thy blood; to Thee do I offer it. Accept of my love, for I desire nothing but Thee, my Saviour, my God, my love, my all. Hitherto I have shown much gratitude towards men; to Thee alone have I, alas, been most ungrateful. But now I love Thee, and I have no greater cause of sorrow than my having offended Thee. O my

Jesus, give me confidence in Thy Passion; root out of my heart every affection that belongs not to Thee. I will love Thee alone, who dost deserve all my love, and who hast given me so much reason to love Thee. And who, indeed, could refuse to love Thee, when they see Thee, who art the beloved of the Eternal Father, dying so bitter and cruel a death for our sake ? O Mary, O Mother of fair love, I pray thee, through the merits of thy burning heart, obtain for me the grace to live only in order to love thy Son, who, being in himself worthy of an infinite love, has chosen at so great a cost to acquire to himself the love of a miserable sinner like me. O love of souls, O my Jesus! I love Thee, I love Thee, I love Thee; but still I love Thee too little. Oh, give me more love, give me flames that may make me live always burning with Thy love! I do not myself deserve it; but Thou dost well deserve it, O infinite Goodness. Amen. This I hope, so may it be. (The Passion and the Death of Jesus Christ, By St. Alphonsus Liguori)

“CONCERNING THE GLORY OF KINGS

THE interpretation and explanation of the Three Hundred and Eighteen Orthodox [Fathers] concerning splendour, and greatness, and dignity, and how God gave them to the children of Adam, and especially concerning the greatness and splendour of Zion, the Tabernacle (*tâbôt*) of the Law of God, of which He Himself is the Maker and Fashioner, in the fortress of His holiness before all created things, [both] angels and men. For the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit with good fellowship and right good will and cordial agreement together made the Heavenly Zion to be the place of habitation of their Glory. And then the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit said, "Let Us make man in Our similitude and likeness," and with ready agreement and good will They were all of this opinion. And the Son said, "I will put on the body of Adam," and the Holy Spirit said, "I will dwell in the heart[s] of the Prophets and the Righteous"; and this common agreement and covenant was [fulfilled] in Zion, the City of their Glory.

And David said, "Remember Thine agreement which Thou didst make of old for salvation, the rod of Thine inheritance, in Mount Zion wherein Thou dost dwell."

And He made Adam in His own image and likeness, so that He might remove Satan because of his pride, together with his host, and might establish Adam—His own plant—together with the righteous, His children, for His praises. For the plan of God was

decided upon and decreed in that He said, "I will become man, and I will be in everything which I have created, I will abide in flesh." And in the days that came after, by His good pleasure there was born in the flesh of the Second Zion the second Adam, Who was our Saviour Christ. This is our glory and our faith, our hope and our life, the Second Zion." (The Kebra Nagast, By E.A. Wallis Budge)

ADDENDUM

"THE OFFICE OF THE PASSION.

Although the early biographies of St. Francis are silent as to this opuscule, its authenticity is guaranteed by the Legend of St. Clare written by Thomas of Celano toward the end of his life. In reference to the holy abbess' devotion to the Passion we are told by Celano that she "learned and frequently recited with attachment the Office of the Cross which Francis, the lover of the Cross, had instituted." This passage was rightly understood by Wadding as referring to the Office of the Passion which many early MSS. attribute to St. Francis, and the character of which altogether squares with the Saint's writings. Composed, as it is, of a simple and devout combination of Scriptural texts, this document is at once a witness to St. Francis' ardent devotion to the Crucified and a precious example of his method of prayer. It comprises five parts:

1. For the three last days of Holy Week and for week-days throughout the year.
2. For the Paschal season.
3. For Sundays and feast-days throughout the year.
4. For Advent.
5. For Christmas and the days following, to the close of the Epiphany octave.

OFFICE OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD.

Here begin the Psalms which our most blessed Father Francis arranged to reverence and recall and praise the Passion of the Lord. And they begin from Compline on Maundy Thursday because on that night our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed and taken captive. And note that the Blessed Francis was wont to say this office thus: First he said the Prayer which the Lord and Master taught us: *Our Father most holy*, with the Praises, to wit, *Holy, Holy, Holy*. When he had finished the Praises with the Prayer he began this antiphon, namely: *Holy Mary*. First he said the Psalms of the holy Virgin; besides he said other Psalms which he had selected, and at the end of all the Psalms which he said, he said the Psalms of the Passion, the Psalm being finished he said the antiphon, namely, *Holy Virgin Mary*. When this antiphon was finished, the office was completed.

I. – AT COMPLINE.

Ant. Holy Virgin Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 55: 9. O God, I have declared to Thee my life; Thou hast set my tears in Thy sight.

Ps. 40: 8. All my enemies devised evils against me.

Ps. 70: 10. They have consulted together.

Ps. 108: 5. And they have repaid me evil for good and hatred for my love.

Ps. 108: 4. Instead of making me a return of love they detracted me; but I gave myself to prayer.

Ps. 21: 12. My holy Father, King of heaven and earth, depart not from me; for tribulation is near and there is none to help.

Ps. 55: 10. When I cry unto Thee, then shall mine enemies be turned back; behold I know that thou art my God.

Ps. 37: 12. My friends and my neighbors have drawn near and stood against me; and they that were near me stood afar off.

Ps. 87: 9. Thou hast put away my acquaintance far from me; they have set me an abomination to them; I was delivered up and came not forth.

Ps. 21: 20. Holy Father, remove not Thy help far from me: My God, look toward my help.

Ps. 37: 23. Attend unto my help, O Lord, the God of my salvation,—Glory be. Holy Virgin Mary, there is none like unto Thee born in the world among women, daughter and handmaid of the most high King, the heavenly Father! Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Ghost; pray for us, with St. Michael Archangel, and all the Virtues of heaven, and all the Saints, to thy most holy, beloved Son, our Lord and Master. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Note that the foregoing antiphon is said at all the Hours and it is said for antiphon, chapter, hymn, versicle, and prayer, and at Matins and at all the Hours likewise. He said nothing else in them except this antiphon with its Psalms. At the completion of the office Blessed Francis always said: Let us bless the Lord God living and true; let us refer praise, glory, honor, blessing and all praise to Him, always. Amen. Amen. Fiat. Fiat.

AT MATINS.

Ant. Holy Virgin Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 87: 2. O Lord, the God of my salvation, I have cried in the day and night before Thee.

Ps. 87: 3. Let my prayer come in before Thee; incline Thy ear to my petition.

Ps. 68: 19. Attend to my soul and deliver it: save me because of my enemies.

Ps. 21: 10. For Thou art He that hast drawn me out of the womb; my hope from the breasts of my mother;

Ps. 21: 11. I was cast upon Thee from the womb. From my mother's womb Thou art my God;

Ps. 21: 12. Depart not from me.

Ps. 68: 20. Thou knowest my reproach and my confusion and my shame.

Ps. 68: 21. In Thy sight are all they that afflict me: my heart hath expected reproach and misery. And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none, and for one that would comfort me and I found none.

Ps. 85: 14. O God, the wicked are risen up against me and the assembly of the mighty have sought my soul; and they have not set Thee before their eyes.

Ps. 87: 5. I am counted among them that go down to the pit; I am become as a man without help,

Ps. 87: 6. free among the dead. Thou art my Father, most holy, my king and my God.

Ps. 37: 23. Attend unto my help, O Lord God of my salvation.

AT PRIME.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 56: 1. Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; for my soul trusteth in Thee.

Ps. 56: 2. And in the shadow of Thy wings will I hope, until iniquity pass away.

Ps. 56: 3. I will cry to my most holy Father, the Most High: to God, who hath done good to me;

Ps. 56: 4. He hath sent from heaven and delivered me; He hath made them a reproach that trod upon me. God hath sent His power and His truth.

Ps. 17: 18. He delivered me from my strongest enemies and from them that hated me; for they were too strong for me.

Ps. 56: 7. They prepared a snare for my feet; and they bowed down my soul; they dug a pit before my face; and they are fallen into it.

Ps. 56: 8. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready; I will sing, and rehearse a psalm.

Ps. 56: 9. Arise, O my glory, arise psaltery and harp; I will arise early.

Ps. 56: 10. I will give praise to Thee, O Lord, among the people; I will sing a psalm to Thee among the nations;

Ps. 56: 11. For Thy mercy is magnified even to the heavens; and Thy truth unto the clouds.

Ps. 56: 12. Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and Thy glory above all the earth.

AT TIERCE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 55: 2. Have mercy on me, O God, for man hath trodden me under foot; all the day long he hath afflicted me, fighting against me.

Ps. 55: 3. My enemies have trodden on me all the day long; for they are many that make war against me.

Ps. 40: 8. All my enemies devised evil against me;

Ps. 70: Jo. They have taken counsel together.

Ps. 40: 7. They went out and spoke to the same purpose.

Ps. 21: 8. All they that saw me have laughed me to scorn; they have spoken with the lips and wagged the head.

Ps. 21: 7. But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and outcast of the people.

Ps. 30: 12. I am become a reproach among all my enemies and very much to my neighbors; and a fear to my acquaintance.

Ps. 21: 20. Holy Father, remove not Thy help far from me; my God, look toward my defense.

Ps. 37: 23. Attend unto my help, O Lord God of my salvation. Glory be, etc.

AT SEXT.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 141: 2. I cried to the Lord, with my voice; with my voice I made my supplication to the Lord.

Ps. 141: 3. I pour out my prayer in His sight; and before Him I declare my trouble.

Ps. 141: 4. When my spirit failed me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I walked, they have hidden a snare for me.

Ps. 141: 5. I looked on my right-hand, and beheld, and there was no one that would know me. Flight hath failed me; and there is no one that hath regard to my soul.

Ps. 68: 8. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

Ps. 68: 9. I am become a stranger to my brethren; and an alien to the sons of my mother.

Ps. 68: 10. Holy Father, the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me.

Ps. 34: 15. And they rejoiced against me and gathered together; scourges were gathered together upon me and I knew not.

Ps. 68: 5. They are multiplied above the hairs of my head who hate me without cause; My enemies are grown strong who have wrongfully persecuted me; then did pay I that which I took not away.

Ps. 34: 11. Unjust witnesses rising up, have asked me things I knew not.

Ps. 34: 12. They repaid me evil for good and

Ps. 37: 21. detracted me; because I followed goodness. Thou art my Father, most holy; my King and my God.

Ps. 37: 23. Attend unto my help, O Lord God of my salvation.

AT NONES.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Lam. 1: 12. O all ye that pass by, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow.

Ps. 21: 17. For many dogs have encompassed me; the council of the malignant hath besieged me.

Ps. 21: 18. They looked and stared upon me;

Ps. 21: 19. they parted my garments among them and upon my vesture cast lots.

Ps. 21: 17. They have dug my hands and my feet;

Ps. 21: 18. they numbered all my bones.

Ps. 21: 14. They have opened their mouth against me: as a lion ravening and roaring.

Ps. 21: 15. I am poured out like water and all my bones are scattered. And my heart is become like melting wax in the midst of my bowels.

Ps. 21: 16. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws.

Ps. 68: 22. And they gave me gall for my food: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Ps. 21: 16. And Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;

Ps. 68: 27. and they have added to the grief of my wounds. I slept and rose again; and my most holy Father received me with glory.

Ps. 72: 24. Holy Father, Thou hast held my right hand; and by Thy will Thou hast conducted me and hast received me with glory.

Ps. 72: 25. For what have I in heaven; and besides Thee what do I desire upon earth?

Ps. 45: 11. Be still and see that I am God, saith the Lord; I will be exalted among the nations and I will be exalted in the earth. Blessed is the Lord God of Israel,

Ps. 33: 23. who has redeemed the souls of His servants with His own most holy Blood; and none of them that trust in Him shall offend.

Ps. 95: 13. And we know that He cometh; for He will come to judge justice.

AT VESPERS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 46: 2. O clap your hands, all ye nations, shout unto God with the voice of joy.

Ps. 46: 3. For the Lord is high, terrible: He is a great king over all the earth. For the most holy Father of heaven, our King, before ages sent His beloved Son from on high:

Ps. 73: 12. and hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Ps. 95: 11. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad, let the sea be moved and the fullness thereof:

Ps. 95: 12. the fields and all that are in them shall be joyful.

Ps. 95: 1. Sing unto Him a new canticle; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Ps. 95: 4. For the Lord is great and exceedingly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.

Ps. 95: 7. Bring to the Lord, O ye kindreds of the gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honor.

Ps. 95: 8. Bring to the Lord glory unto His Name. Bring your own bodies and bear His holy cross; and follow His most holy precepts even unto the end.

Ps. 95: 9. Let all the earth be moved at His presence;

Ps. 95: 10. say among the gentiles that the Lord hath reigned.

It is said up to this place daily from Good Friday until the feast of the Ascension. On the feast of the Ascension, however, these versicles are added over and above:

And He ascended unto heaven; and sitteth on the right-hand of the most Holy Father in heaven.

Ps. 56: 12. Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and Thy glory above all the earth.

Ps. 95: 13. And we know that He cometh: for He will come to judge justice.

And note that from the Ascension until the Advent of the Lord this Psalm is said daily in the same manner, namely: "O clap your hands," with the foregoing versicles, "Glory be to the Father" being said where the Psalm ends, namely, "for He will come to judge with justice."

Note that the foregoing Psalms are said from Good Friday until Easter Sunday: they are said in the same manner from the octave of Whitsunday until the Advent of the Lord and from the octave of the Epiphany until Maundy Thursday, except on Sundays, and the principal feasts, on which they are not said: on the other days however they are said daily.

HOLY SATURDAY AT COMPLINE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 69: 2. O God, *etc.* (Ps. 69), *as in the Psalter.*

It is said daily at Compline until the octave of Pentecost.

EASTER SUNDAY AT MATINS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 97: 1. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: for He hath done wonderful things. His right hand hath sanctified His Son; and His arm is holy.

Ps. 97: 2. The Lord hath made known His salvation; He hath revealed His justice in the sight of the gentiles.

Ps. 41: 9. In the day time the Lord hath commanded His mercy: and a canticle to Him in the night.

Ps. 117: 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Ps. 117: 26. Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Ps. 117: 27. The Lord is God and He hath shone upon us.

Ps. 95: 11. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad: let the sea be moved and the fulness thereof.

Ps. 95: 12. The fields shall rejoice and all that are in them.

Ps. 95: 7. Bring to the Lord, O ye kindreds of the gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honor:

Ps. 95: 8. bring to the Lord glory unto His Name.

It is said up to this place daily from Easter Sunday to the feast of the Ascension at all the Hours except at Vespers and Compline and Prime. On the night of the Ascension these verses are added:—

Ps. 67: 33. Sing ye to God, ye kingdoms of the earth: sing ye to the Lord: sing ye to God,

Ps. 67: 34. who mounteth above the heaven of heavens to the east. Behold He will give to His voice the voice of power:

Ps. 67: 35. give ye glory to God for Israel: His magnificence and His power is in the clouds.

Ps. 67: 36. God is wonderful in His saints: the God of Israel is He who will give power and strength to His people. Blessed be God.

And note that this Psalm is said daily from the Ascension of the Lord until the octave of Whitsunday with the foregoing versicles at Matins and Tierce and Sext and Nones: "Glory be to the Father," being said where "Blessed be God" is said, and not elsewhere. Also note that it is said in the same manner only at Matins on Sundays and the principal feasts, from the octave of Whitsunday until Maundy Thursday because on that day the Lord ate the Pasch with His disciples, or the other Psalm may be said at Matins or at Vespers when one wishes, to wit, "I will extol Thee, O Lord," as it is in the Psalter, and this from Easter Sunday to the feast of the Ascension and not longer.

AT PRIME.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. Have mercy on me, etc. — *as above.*

AT TIERCE, SEXT AND NONES.

Psalm. Sing ye to the Lord, etc. — *as above.*

AT VESPERS.

Psalm. O clap your hands, etc.—as above.

Here begin the other psalms which our most blessed Father Francis likewise arranged which are to be said in place of the foregoing psalms of the Passion of the Lord on Sunday and the principal festivities from the octave of Whitsunday until Advent and from the octave of the Epiphany until Maundy Thursday.

AT COMPLINE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. O God, etc. (Ps. 69),—as it is in the Psalter.

AT MATINS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. Sing ye to the Lord, etc.,—as above.

AT PRIME.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. Have mercy on me, etc.,—as above.

AT TIERCE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 65: 1. Shout with joy to God, all the earth.

Ps. 65: 2. Sing ye a Psalm to His name: give glory to His praise.

Ps. 65: 3. Say unto God, How terrible are Thy works, O Lord: in the multitude of Thy strength Thy enemies shall lie to Thee.

Ps. 65: 4. Let all the earth adore Thee and sing to Thee: let it sing a psalm to Thy Name.

Ps. 65: 16. Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what great things He hath done for my soul.

Ps. 65: 17. I cried to Him with my mouth: and I extolled Him with my tongue.

Ps. 17: 7. And He heard my voice from His holy temple: and my cry came before Him.

Ps. 65: 8. O bless our God, ye gentiles: and make the voice of His praise to be heard.

Ps. 71: 17. And in him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed: all nations shall magnify Him.

Ps. 71: 18. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doth wonderful things.

Ps. 71: 19. And blessed be the Name of His majesty forever: and the whole earth shall be filled with His majesty. Amen. Amen.

AT SEXT.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 19: 2. May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation: may the Name of the God of Jacob protect thee: may He

Ps. 19: 3. send thee help from the sanctuary and defend thee out of Sion:

Ps. 19: 4. be mindful of all thy sacrifices, and may thy whole burnt-offering be made fat;

Ps. 19: 5. Give thee according to thy own heart, and confirm all thy counsels.

Ps. 19: 6. We will rejoice in thy salvation; and in the Name of our God we shall be exalted.

Ps. 19: 7. The Lord fulfill all thy petitions: now I know that the Lord hath sent Jesus Christ His Son,

Ps. 9: 9. and will judge the people with justice.

Ps. 9: 10. And the Lord is become a refuge for the poor: a helper in due time of tribulation.

Ps. 9: 11. And let them trust in Thee who know Thy Name.

Ps. 143: 1. Blessed be the Lord my God:

Ps. 58: 17. for Thou art become my support and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Ps. 58: 18. Unto Thee, O my helper, will I sing: for God is my defense, my God, my mercy.

AT NONES.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 70: 1. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be put to confusion.

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Ps. 70: 2. Deliver me in Thy justice and rescue me: incline Thine ear unto and save me.

Ps. 70: 3. Be Thou unto me, O God, a protector and a place of strength: that Thou mayest make me safe.

Ps. 70: 5. For Thou art my patience, O Lord; my hope, O Lord, from my youth.

Ps. 70: 6. By Thee have I been confirmed from the womb, from my mother's womb Thou art my protector: of Thee I shall continually sing.

Ps. 70: 8. Let my mouth be filled with praise, that I may sing Thy glory; Thy greatness all the day long.

Ps. 68: 17. Hear me, O Lord, for Thy mercy is kind; look upon me according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies.

Ps. 68: 18. And turn not away Thy face from Thy servant; for I am in trouble, hear me speedily.

Ps. 143: 1. Blessed be the Lord my God.

Ps. 58: 17. For Thou art become my support and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Ps. 58: 18. Unto Thee, O my helper, will I sing; for God is my defense, my God, my mercy.

AT VESPERS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. O clap your hands. . . *as above.*

Here begin other Psalms which our most blessed Father Francis likewise arranged; which are to be said in place of the foregoing Psalms of the Passion of the Lord from the Advent of the Lord until Christmas eve and not longer.

AT COMPLINE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. How long, O Lord (Ps. 12), *as it is found in the Psalter.*

AT MATINS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 85: 12. I will praise Thee, O Lord, most Holy Father, King of heaven and earth; because

Ps. 85: 17. Thou hast comforted me.

Ps. 24: 5. Thou art God my Saviour.

Ps. 11: 6. I will deal confidently and will not fear.

Ps. 117: 14. The Lord is my strength and my praise; and is become my salvation.

Exod. 15: 6. Thy right hand, O Lord, is magnified in strength;

Thy right hand, O Lord, hath slain the enemy:

Exod. 15: 7. And in the multitude of Thy glory Thou hast put down Thy adversaries.

Ps. 68: 33. Let the poor see and rejoice: seek ye God and your soul shall live.

Ps. 68: 35. Let the heavens and the earth praise Him: the sea and everything that creepeth therein.

Ps. 68: 36. For God will save Sion and the cities of Judah shall be built up. And they shall dwell there: and acquire it by inheritance.

Ps. 68: 37. And the seed of His servants shall possess it: and they that love His Name shall dwell therein.

AT PRIME.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. Have mercy on me, etc. — *as above.*

AT TIERCE.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. Shout with joy, etc. — *as above.*

AT SEXT.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. May the Lord hear thee in the day, etc. — *as above.*

AT NONES.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped—*as above.*

AT VESPERS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm. O clap your hands, etc.—*as above.*

Also note that the whole Psalm is not said but up to the verse, "Let all the earth be moved"; understand however that the whole verse "Bring your own bodies" must be said. At the end of this verse "Glory be to the Father" is said. And thus it is said daily at Vespers from Advent until Christmas eve.

CHRISTMAS DAY AT VESPERS.

Ant. Holy Mary.

Psalm.

Ps. 80: 2. Rejoice to God our helper.

Ps. 46: 2. Shout unto God, living and true, with the voice of triumph.

Ps. 46: 3. For the Lord is high, terrible: a great king over all the earth. For the most holy Father of heaven, our king, before ages sent His Beloved Son from on high and He was born of the Blessed Virgin, holy Mary.

Ps. 88: 27. He shall cry out to me: Thou art my Father;

Ps. 88: 28. And I will make Him My Firstborn, high above the kings of the earth.

Ps. 41: 9. In the day time the Lord hath commanded His mercy: and a canticle to Him in the night.

Ps. 117: 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it. For the beloved and most holy Child has been given to us and born for us by the wayside.

Luke 2: 7. And laid in a manger because He had no room in the inn.

Luke 2: 14. Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will.

Ps. 95: 11. Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, and let the sea be moved and the fullness thereof.

Ps. 95:12. The fields shall rejoice and all that are in them.

Ps. 95: 1. Sing to Him a new canticle; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Ps. 95: 4. For the Lord is great and exceedingly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods.

Ps. 95: 7. Bring to the Lord, O ye kindreds of the gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honor.

Ps. 95: 8. Bring to the Lord glory unto His Name.
Bring your own bodies and bear His holy cross and
follow His most holy precepts even unto the end.

**And note that this Psalm is said from Christmas
until the octave of the Epiphany at all the Hours.**



(The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi, tr. by Paschal Robinson)

The Royal Question

By Marilynn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

<http://outofbodytravel.org>

Author, Marilynn Hughes

THE ROYAL QUESTION - What is the Royal Question if not the final and most important question we must all ask about our lives here upon the earth? In the third and final book of 'The Mystical Captive' Series, we have traveled from the primordial Garden of Eden to the now fallen world of our mothers, our fathers, ourselves. Now that we understand that which we have lost, is it possible for it to be restored, renewed? How can such a thing be done in a fallen world? Through the great sacrifice of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

But yet, this, too, is much too simplistic. You must understand the question. You must then understand the mechanism. You must then understand the renewal. Whence the Royal Question is answered properly by the soul, they are now fit to enter into the Royal Family of God shared by the Prophets, Mystics, Sages, Seers and Ascetics of all ages and of all religions. Hope remains despite the fall of man, but we must seek it.

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