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Glimpses of Esoteric Christianity

We write this paper without any malicious intention of offending anyone or making any provoking statements. The opinions and teachings in this paper are offered solely for the reader's consideration--not acceptance. We write out of our own level of understanding of the subject, and may be faulty as human mortals may be. It is our hope that this paper would provide some food for thought to seekers of the Light.

Esotericism

There is more to Truth and Reality than what elementary minds would want to pursue and consider. It often seems more comfortable to sit in the dark where we see nothing than to face the blinding light. Is the blindness the same in both cases? The former is blissful ignorance, the latter an initial shock--but one that eventually offers solace to the soul. It is the courageous individual that seeks Truth no matter how painful or shocking it may be. In this paper we do not pretend to represent Truth, we simply give directions to it. Because there are those that seek Truth, humankind may be categorized into two distinct groups :

- 1) "The Many," the believers, those who are devoted and satisfied with the dogmas of their creed and resistant to any teachings that contradicts and upsets their beliefs and faith, including the higher revelations of the Paraclete, or the Holy Spirit.
- 2) "The Few," the seekers, those who are jaded with irrational faiths and creeds that do not satisfy the intellect nor the growing conscience of the inner self, and who seek spiritual knowledge and experience to fill the empty heart of spiritual yearning. St. Martin, the co-founder of Martinism, calls this second group, "Men of Desire."

Realizing this division within humankind ever since the spring of existence, the higher intelligences that oversees the evolution of man instituted religions with dual sections that catered to the two types of men. It has been acknowledged by the spiritual guardians, the "Minor Spirits" of Martinism that the masses of man are as yet too puerile to participate in their own salvation and the unfoldment of their divinity. Only the few had the capacity of doing so. Religion, therefore, has its mysteries, an esoteric side to its nature, established for the nurture and nourishment of those few who were qualified to receive the higher teachings that would stimulate the awakening and unfoldment of their divine consciousness, their seed potential of Christhood, or Buddhahood, and establish them firmly on the path of discipleship, that they may become initiates of the Holy Spirit.

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." (1Co:2:7)

Religion, to be of value, should reach the hearts of men standing at various grades of the evolutionary ladder, as depicted in the symbolism of Jacob's dream. Its doctrines and precepts should include both elementary and advanced teachings of Cosmic laws that would assist man in fulfilling the ancient threefold injunction: "Know thyself, know thyself as God, and know thy enemy." Teachings suitable

for the few are called "esoteric." St. Paul called such manna "meat," in contradistinction to the "milk" suitable for the many--or the "babes"--those whose soul-experience, personal evolution, and consciousness are still on the elementary level. Origen, one of the early Fathers of Christianity, taught that only when the members of the church's congregation ceased to do evil would the esoteric side, or secret mysteries be revealed. Sinners were told not to sin, but notwithstanding the simplicity of this precept, the early Christian following found it difficult to put this teachings into practice, and sincere seekers, as a result, became scarce. Gradually, the portal of the "strait and narrow gate" was closed and withdrawn from the Christian institution and its existence forgotten by lay members and priesthood alike. The "keys" to the Kingdom of Heaven were no longer in the hands of the Apostle Peter's successors--the very nature of these "keys" are unknown to most religious representatives of God, even more so to the lay follower. The latter is unconscious of its existence.

Nowadays, blind leaders mislead their equally blind followers with a salvation based on a false interpretation of the scriptures. But this condition has actually always existed in the past in the temples of religious instruction. The Master Jesus was very vocal regarding these mis-leaders of the Spiritual Law.

Religion in its original intent, was meant to convey to the minds and hearts of man at a certain point of his mental and spiritual development the Secret Wisdom of the Ages. Humankind is expected to be responsible for their own salvation and freedom from the bondage of matter. Since man is evolving and progressing toward the Light, revelation would need to be continuous to satisfy man's constant inquiry, growing awareness and comprehension of the Nature of Being, the ontology of his Soul. Resistance to further revelations of the "Comforter," is an act of fanaticism and causes the evolutionary impulse of the resisting one to stall and prolong the sleep of consciousness in the tomb of matter. It was the opposition of gnosis, the Ancient Wisdom, and progressive revelation that caused the esoteric side of religions, particularly Christianity, to withdraw formally from the outer, exoteric work and form themselves into secret societies and Orders, preserving the secret teachings in their archives. It is the esoteric side of religion that infuses life into the institution as a whole. Religion without the mystical aspect, becomes a farce, a sham, and a fertile field for corruption. Dogmas and foundationless beliefs and faiths simply insult human intelligence, and the rebellion of the human soul struggling for enlightenment occurs as a natural result.

Prophets and sages, exponents of gnosis, founded religions and societies with the intention of leading the masses several steps forward in their ascension towards the Light. They even gave hints of an advanced method that would accelerate the spiritual development of those who would tread such a path. The Master Jesus offered the "*strait and narrow gate*." Jeremiah acting as Omneity's scribe and mouth-piece, suggested that humankind ". . . *ask for the ancient paths*. (Jer 6:16)" Many stories to be found in the scriptures are representative of manuals of practical spiritual techniques of development. For instance we have, Jacob's Ladder; Elijah's mount experience; the various stages of Moses' encounters with Divinity; the Merkabah or sky-chariot of Ezekiel; Jesus's 40-day fast on the Mount with Satan; the events in Jesus's life, etc.

Many of the precepts, rites, tenets, and principles of Christianity originated from old religions and Mystery Schools. This fact may be discerned should a study of comparative religions be undertaken. For instance, the doctrine of heaven and hell, the last judgment, the mediation of the Logos on behalf of humanity's salvation, and the Eucharist--all have their counterpart in the cult of Mithras, Zoroastrianism and the Essenes. It is also in the field of probability that the illumined minds of the founders of religion were enlightened with the same illumination of the Spirit concerning Cosmic laws of the universe that directs every spark of God. This would account for the many similarities between various religions. Truth is eternal and immutable, as it is One. The manner Truth is conveyed may vary from culture to culture, from age to age, but its essential nature is forever the same. Founders of

religions were, and are, extraordinary beings from the perspective of an unenlightened humanity. However, each and every enlightened-one teach of the possibility of man attaining the very same state of divine godhood by unfolding his spiritual potential and emulating the great ones who incarnate to show the Way, to *Moksha*, to Freedom.

Part of the Ancient Wisdom or the gnosis of the Bodhisattvas, were recorded in ancient scriptures such as the *Avesta*, the *Vedas*, the *Tao Teh Ching*, the *Book of Dzan*, *Psalms*, *Ecclesiastes*, and many other books considered apocryphal. Certain aspects of the Ancient Wisdom was conveyed orally from Master to chela, such as the Qabalah of Judaism, for instance.

Esoteric Christianity, as a practical collective-stream corresponding to *bhakti*, *raja*, *jnana*, *kundalini*, *laya*, and *karma* yoga, is the gnosis taught by Master Jesus to an inner circle of students. Its precepts and doctrines are based on the Ancient Wisdom. Jesus, however, revealed more advanced aspects of the gnosis for the disciples of the new dispensation, the Piscean and the Aquarian Age. And yet, even to his most foremost disciples he declared that there were higher teachings which they were not as yet qualified to receive :

"I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12)

Here Jesus hints at the continuity of revelation, and the promise that higher teachings shall be given at the appropriate time. We may well ask, "are the present votaries of Christianity receiving these teachings in this present age?" Is the nature of these teachings known?

There was a traditional belief in the early days of the Church's inception that Jesus remained with his disciples for a considerable period after his ascension, for the purpose of instructing them further on the gnosis. A gnostic work titled "Pistis Sophia" declares that Jesus was with his disciples for eleven years after the resurrection. St. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, concurred with this belief, even though he attacked most, if not all, of the other gnostic ideas. In his book "Against Heresies," he wrote that the Apostles themselves testified that Jesus lived to an old age. In connection with this, one wonders at the report of Jesus' grave being in Srinagar, India, as pointed out by local natives living in the area.

According to a modern school of Esoteric Christianity, the gnosis transmitted from Initiator to candidate were divided into two parts:

- 1) The Purifying Mysteries--for the sinner who wishes to be cleansed of karmic tendencies and stains.
- 2) The Illuminating Mysteries--for those who wish to probe and comprehend reality and Maya; the microcosm and the macrocosm, etc.

Initiators of the spiritual gnosis are the mythic Peters that guards the pearly gates of Heaven. They hold the keys of illumination, knowledge and the principles that would assist the candidate to enter Heaven, the Kingdom of God within his consciousness--exactly where Jesus pointed out where it would be--within oneself and not in the afterlife or in some physical location on earth. His parables are enough to convince one of this.

The existence of esoteric teachings within early Christianity were mentioned by certain Church Fathers such as Origen, Clement of Alexandria and Ignatius. They praised the mystical teachings highly and would have proclaimed them from rooftops had it not been for the opposition of the dull minds of worldly men, some of whom were appareled in priests' habit. This in fact was done by Origen, and he

was anathemized centuries later by the Emperor Justinian who presided over the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553 AD. Many of Origen's works were put to the flames. We had previously mentioned how the gnosis was withdrawn from public awareness. The various church councils convened throughout the centuries, later supplanted the gnosis with impious creeds and dogmas which no longer reflected the original teachings of Jesus.

Among students of esotericism there are those who consider Joseph of Arimathea to have been the guardian of the esoteric church of Christianity, just as "Peter" was considered to be the leader of the temporal church. The esoteric church was called the "Secret Church of the Holy Grail." As the story goes, Joseph, a secret disciple of Jesus, journeyed to Glastonbury, England, taking along with him certain relics said to be filled with divine virtue. Among these relics was the grail, the chalice used by Jesus during the "Last Supper;" and the spear that wounded him while he was hanging on the cross. Because of corruption within the church in subsequent years, the Grail disappeared from the physical plane. The Order of the Knights of the Round Table was established by King Arthur and Merlin for the quest of the Grail. In truth, the search probably occurred within the Soul, for the Grail, from one point of view, symbolizes a spiritual principle in man's being. It is said that only the pure may see God. Sir Galahad, the young Knight who found the Grail, according to one version of the Grail legend, represented the purified nature of man. Only in such a purified state is it possible for man to "see" God--and live--to live, but no longer as an ordinary mortal, for the lower aspects of his being would have "perished" in God's consuming, transmuting flame.

Gnosticism

The Order of the Grail was not the only branch of Esoteric Christianity. Gnostics claim that they too, were bequeathed the secret teachings of Jesus, with a "Doctrine of the Heart," transmitted to them via lesser known apostles such as Thomas and Mark. In the mind of Gnostics, Peter always represented the exoteric side of Christianity. Some Gnostics affirm that Simon Magus was the founder of Gnosticism. Nothing much is known about this mysterious personality except that in Acts in the New Testament he clashed with Peter in a psychic battle and was vanquished. Many believe that this story was fabricated by the priests of exoteric Christianity to discredit Gnosticism as a whole.

Gnosis, from which the word Gnosticism is derived, comes from the Greek word "Gnostikos," which means one who has knowledge. It is defined by Bishop John Bricaud in his book *Esoteric Christian Doctrine* as,

"The supreme religious science, that is the true knowledge of the three worlds, divine, spiritual, material, as well as their relationships."

Gnosticism presents to students secret methods of inquiry and entry into the soul's inner depth. Beliefs and mere faith were not advocated in the teachings of the Gnostic Masters.

St. Irenaeus, as mentioned earlier, attacked Gnostics for their mystical notions. He declared their spiritual literary works, their gospels, as being full of blasphemy. It is easy to discern why Irenaeus was opposed to their doctrines. Gnosticism offered seekers direct access to Omneity, and this very condition undermined the position of the priesthood as the supposed intermediaries, as the only so-called valid way for seekers to approach God. Gnostics on their side, opposed the three-fold system established within orthodox Christianity: doctrine, ritual, and the church hierarchy. The ancient Gnostics were individuals who sought knowledge and wisdom, pragmatically, through personal experience. From their standpoint, the doctrines taught by Jesus were more important than the man himself. The historical reality of Jesus was not a matter of any great import. The mystical and mythical Christ were their sole concern, their only guides and ideal. The laws of God, our relation to Truth and

Reality--to Gnostics were more important than the personality of the exponent of those revelations. To them, the second coming of Christ takes place mystically, within the consciousness of one's being. Basilides, Valentinus, Marcus, and Marcion were some of the eminent Gnostics that shaped Gnostic thought.

Gnosticism, like many other cults and societies, ended in many schisms, caused by differences in the interpretation of Truth. Absolute Truth is inapprehensible by human intellect. Relative truths have this strange characteristic of presenting various facets of Absolute Truth that from one perspective appear true, from another appear false, and yet from another, makes no difference at all.

In 1945, in Egypt, at Nag Hamaddi, certain gnostic manuscripts were discovered, among which was the Gospel of Thomas. This work consists of a collection of sayings of Jesus, and is regarded by some scholars as the primary source of Jesus' sayings to be found in the four canonical gospels. We will discuss briefly some of the sayings to be found in the Gospel.

"Blessed is the lion which a man eats so that the lion becomes a man. But cursed is the man whom a lion eats so that the man becomes a lion." (Gospel of Thomas Saying No.7)

The meaning of this saying is similar to saying No.116 :

"Cursed is the flesh that depends on the soul, and cursed is the soul that depends on the flesh!" (Ibid. Saying No.116)

The carnal self, or the bestial nature within man is often portrayed as a lion. Alchemical writers of the past made use of this symbolism profusely. To consume a lion is the process of transmuting and sublimating man's lower impulses. This is in accord with the evolutionary urge which is prompted by the higher impulses of man's spiritual nature. Conversely, to allow animal instincts to rule and tyrannize the higher aspects of our being is to figuratively, be consumed by the lion by allowing its persona to be superimposed upon our Real Self. This in a sense is worshipping an idol, a false god, that misleads man's senses and consciousness within the labyrinth of Maya. Man should identify himself with his Atma, his spiritual nature, and not conclude that his lower principles with their desires are his Reality. Attachment to the flesh results in suffering and sorrow, and man is cursed by such conditions that binds his soul to the wheel of birth and rebirth, as graciously pointed out to us by Gautama, the Buddha. This divine messenger of God gave us the eight-fold path as a way of escape from the turmoil within the soul. The Christ gave us the prime commandment to love, which if lived and applied within our thoughts and feelings, would yoke the Fragment to the Whole.

"Blessed is the man who has laboured; he has found life!" (Ibid. Saying No.63)

Man's objective consciousness is in a state of death--spiritual death. He moves, and thinks within God's being like a zombie. Blind to spiritual realities and verities, and to his divine potential, man relies excessively upon an irreligious science and an unscientific religion that dulls as well as stimulate his mind and emotions with an artificial, mechanized living that degrades the soul. Life is Reality, and those who seek the greater life must labour in the vineyard of the soul to awaken the consciousness of the Kingdom of God. All that is temporal, transient, is unreal. Nothing in this three-dimensional world is Real in the absolute sense of the word, for everything is in a state of fluctuation, of becoming. The Real does not change. The dependency on conditions, relations, and objects in this unreal world for one's mental and emotional well-being and security eventually upsets the equilibrium of body, mind, and soul, and results in inharmony, in sickness, and in suffering. Illness is an absence of the bountiful force of Life. God is Life, and Life in the physical vehicle of man is to be found in the blood. The

denial of God's existence within and without us is to deny the very foundation of our existence, the very life-force within our being. According to one school of thought, disintegration occurs on a spiritual level to all the principles or components comprising man should this denial be a constant state incarnation after incarnation. The closest proximity that such an unfortunate being could get to the life-essence, hence God, to survive spiritually, is by blood-shed. This explains the acts of depravity of those who indulge in blood-sacrifices, vampirism, and murder.

Matter provides a great challenge to the Ego. It offers resistance to its etherealization, the accomplishment and mastery of which awards man with the unfoldment of his Christhood. No other being can accomplish this for us by proxy. We precipitated this condition for ourselves by our demand of free-will in the higher states of existence. It is the mission and prerogative of man to save his soul and thus acquire a greater life, a greater consciousness, a greater state of being, and to secure for himself a permanent place in the Kingdom of God as a pillar of perfection.

"He who is near me is near the fire, and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom."
(Ibid. Saying No.86)

The fire referred to here is the spark of God within man's heart. This spark is the divine aspect of man entombed within matter. It corresponds to the sun in the solar system and is the source of life within the body. Hindu mystics describe this flame as a divine being meditating in the heart of the *anahata chakra*. They call this divine spark "Dahara," which means "minuscule," with "overtones of radiance." (Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga, by Georg Feuerstein)

He who attunes with the harmony of the Cosmos, with Tao, with the Divine I AM, feeds and expands the flame--like the Colombes tending the sacred fire in Vesta's temple--which results in a greater manifestation of God, the Shekinah, in man's expression in the world of *Malkuth--Assiah*, God's footstool. Glorified by the divinity of his God-presence, man manifests his full divine potential with the fruits of the Tree of Life in full development with the aspects of will/power, love/wisdom, intelligence/activity in equilibrium and in total unfoldment.

Heaven, or the Kingdom of God, is an inner state, a condition within the consciousness where peace, harmony, bliss, love, compassion, wisdom, and power rules supreme. Divine union with the source of our being effects the transcendence of man's awareness and transports him into the corona of the greater Flame, into the kingdom of Life. This is the unio mystica and the ascension sought by Christian mystics and saints ever since the resurrection of the Master Jesus.

The Essenes

There was a pre-Christian sect called "the Essenes" that was influential in the moulding of Christianity, and it behooves us to look at them briefly.

According to tradition, the Essenes are said to have originated centuries before the advent of the embodiment of Love and Purity, represented by Jesus and John--the Harbinger. This unique segment of the Great White Brotherhood is said to have originated in Egypt, and is related with the Theraputae, a sect that specialized in healing, to be found among the nations surrounding the Mediterranean. Some esoteric historians trace their roots to the school of prophets established by Samuel--the Prophet, who

anointed Saul as King of Israel. The brethren of this mysterious sect were sometimes referred to as "the Mysterious Ones," "the Secret Ones," and "the Silent Ones," on account of their mystical practices, disciplines, behaviour, and the expression and habits of their normal secular life. A community of Essenes once resided along the shores of Lake Moeris, in Egypt. Some of the members were celibates, those that married probably practiced specific spiritual exercises that permitted lofty souls to incarnate. Like the Christ initiate, the Essenes abhorred animal-sacrifices. It is probable that the former adopted this attitude from the latter. The Essenes had no slaves nor servants, and lived communally, sharing worldly goods; and cooperating harmoniously with every venture that they undertook. They were healers, and made much use of herbs, minerals, the "laying of hands," and invocation of the healing angels. Members of the community were considered holy and pious by outsiders of their group.

Nothing is mentioned concerning the Essenes in the New Testament except for a hint or two regarding the mysterious men in white who often appeared to the disciples of the Nazarene Master to offer words of advise. The white woolen robes that they wore, which suggests pre-Islamic Sufism, apparently signifies their status symbol as higher degree members. From the dietary aspect of their way of life, the Essenes were known to be vegetarians; they are also believed to be "God-eaters," a term indicating the ability to nourish the physical body with the life-giving qualities to be found in the pranic ethers. This and the harmonious attunement with other Cosmic forces may account for their unusually long life span ranging from a hundred to a hundred and twenty years.

Roman historians such as Pliny, referred to the Essenes in their writings in a somewhat sketchy manner, due to the private and isolated lives that the Essenes led. The absence of any concrete references to the Essenes in the Bible is a fact worth considering. While the other influential sects upon Judaic's social milieu were mentioned, such as, the Sadducees and the Nazarites, the compilers and writers of the gospels for some reason thought it necessary to leave the Essenes out of their texts; or could it be that references regarding their existence and activities were deliberately expunged from the gospels for political reasons by Church Fathers? It is noteworthy that while Jesus criticized some of the other sects for their iniquities, he did not attack or condemn the Essenes. Was there a good reason for this? Certainly he must have known about them, being a son or initiate of the Mysteries.

It is believed by some esotericists that the parents of Jesus, Joseph and Mary, were Essenes. Jesus himself is said to have had his early spiritual training among the brotherhood. What Jesus taught in later years, in his ministry, resembled the precepts, doctrines, practices, and disciplines taught by the Essenes, such as the practice of baptism; invocation of higher forces and intelligences; the blessing of meals; the practice of prophecy and healing; teachings concerning the Kingdom of God; and angelology, or the science of energy-forces of Nature personified by those beings.

The Essenes appeared suddenly upon the world scene, and vanished with hardly a trace of their existence. It is often inquired by scholars regarding the purpose of the brotherhood's establishment. It is conjectured by some, and supported by tradition, that the prime purpose of the institution of the Essene community was the preparation for the coming of the Messiah and his ministry here on Earth. When the Master Jesus disappeared from public view, so did the Essenes shortly after. Whether they chose to disband, or to operate in a clandestine manner, it is believed that a good deal of their doctrines found their way to other esoteric schools in later centuries such as Masonry, the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, the Knights Templar, and many others. Extensive manuscripts discovered in a cave at the Wadi Qumran along the shores of the Dead Sea in the latter half of this century is expected to shed more light on the Essene belief and lifestyle when the manuscripts are wholly made public. Nowadays there is a revival of the Essenes and that which may be regarded as Essenic thought among spiritual occultists.

The Esoteric Life of Jesus

Much of the hidden esoteric life of Jesus is unknown to followers of Orthodox Christianity. From their point of view, all important events that occurred in Jesus' life were recorded in the canonical gospels and further inquiry into the matter is undesirable and of no importance; however, several questions are raised by scholars, the most notable are the lack of information of Jesus' spiritual, mystical and secular training; and the non-chronicling of the activities of Jesus between the time of his debate with the Doctors of the Law in the Temple at age twelve and his sudden appearance at the River Jordan awaiting to be baptized by John in the prime of his manhood. What occurred in the interim? Though exoteric Christianity is silent on the subject, the esoteric side with its psychic investigations sheds some light upon the subject. One may well ask the validity of the information regarding the esoteric side of Jesus' life--we can only suggest that it is as much valid as the canonical gospels--and there is more to this statement of ours than what a cursory apprehension can tell.

Much of what we are about to relate is derived from the book "The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus," a manuscript scribed from what was witnessed in the *akashic records* by Levi, an American pastor of the 19th century. The events and account of Jesus' life mention therein are supported by the investigations of other psychics and scholars. We will summarize the contents below and correlate them with other information:

Born to parents who were Essenes, Jesus was a normal child in every way except for being exceptionally bright and precocious. The three magi who visited the newly-born babe, are believed by students of esotericism to be the past incarnations of spiritual Masters familiar to Theosophists: El Morya, Kuthumi, and Dwal Kul. The Star of Bethlehem, witnessed by the magi, was, esoterically speaking, the highly developed causal body of the Initiate Jesus. The Star has a higher significance; however. A poet once wrote about the "trailing clouds of glory" that follows the birth of every child. The cloud that trailed behind the babe destined to be the Christ was exceptionally radiant. Incidentally, there was a prophecy among the magi that Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, declared to his followers that he would return again with his angels to lead them. Apparently, it would seem that the magi believed Jesus to be the reincarnated Zoroaster.

A holy figure keeps appearing in the pre-natal and early life of Jesus. He is known among the parents of Jesus and John--the Harbinger, as "Gabriel." Judging from the interest that the Essenes had in the child Jesus and the characteristical nature of their higher ranking members, it is probable that Gabriel was one of their holy brethren who was an adept in the art of bilocation, or psychic projection. One of their members could also have been overshadowed by this lofty archangel. No matter how Gabriel manifested himself, he certainly was instrumental in conveying important matters and protecting the Holy Family from the attacks of negative forces.

Later, after receiving the news of a babe having been born and destined to be "King of Israel," Herod ordered his soldiers to massacre every child in the kingdom. Joseph and Mary, the parents of Jesus, fled to Egypt taking the promised child with them. Thus far, the events mentioned are in accord with the canonical gospels; however, the accounts of Luke, Mark, Matthew and John fails to relate further developments which were essential to the spiritual upbringing of Jesus.

In Zoan, Egypt, Mary and her cousin were trained in the workings of Cosmic Law and were taught the spiritual doctrines by the Masters of the Egyptian Brotherhood. These various teachings were given to them to be later passed on to Jesus and his forerunner, John--the Harbinger, at the appropriate time. After a few years of educational activities, word was given to the mothers to return to Israel.

As a child, Jesus loved to read, and he enjoyed perusing the holy scriptures of the world such as the Avesta and the Vedas. He especially loved the Psalms of David, and committed most of the things he read to memory.

The Embodiment of Love revealed his nature for the first time in the narrative by subsequent events. A birthday feast was given by the grandparents of Jesus in his honour. When requested by the host as to the gift desired by Jesus, the child pleaded on behalf of the starving children to be found in the area. Permission was granted for the child to invite the famished ones to join the feast, and this filled the heart of the young Jesus with joy.

Even at an early age Jesus criticized animal-sacrifices practiced by the Jewish priesthood. Hillel, the head of the Sanhedrin, was unable to offer any solace to the grieving heart of Jesus regarding the blood-ceremony when the lad sought his assistance. Hillel, humbled by the sincerity and wisdom of Jesus offered to train the child concerning the exoteric law of the Jews. The early esoteric training of Jesus was with the Essene Brotherhood.

Once he complained to his mother of the narrow-mindedness of the Jews and voiced his desire to meet his "other brothers" in other nations to study of their ways. This opportunity came quickly when an Indian Raja visited the land, invited and offered to sponsor Jesus' mystico-religious education in India.

It would be proper at this time to digress for a moment to point out the various ways with which the mystical and spiritual training of Jesus were effected. The following were his main modes of study and the acquisition of knowledge :

- 1) Attunement with the Cosmic Mind, with God's Omniscience.
- 2) Recollection of knowledge and training from former life-times.
- 3) Personal observation of people, their beliefs, and way of life.
- 4) Personal research and study of ancient, secret manuscripts.
- 5) Tutorship under various Masters of Wisdom.

Back to our summary: In India, Jesus taught and studied; it was in India that he learnt the mystic art of healing. Here, among the Arya-Hindus, he made friends, and he made enemies. He spoke against the caste system which angered the Brahmins. The situation became so perilous that he was advised by a friend to flee. Circumstances being as it was, the young avatara decided to visit Nepal to carry on his ministry there. Prior to Jesus' leave from India, he received news of his father's death and wrote to his mother to console her. In Nepal he discovered from an Indian Master the existence of secret teachings in Tibet. He decided to read the texts himself and commenced his journey to the monastery in Tibet where they were kept. In the land of Lamaism, he is received warmly by Meng-Tse, a Chinese sage, who assisted him with his spiritual researches.

Certain manuscripts are said to have existed in one of the monasteries concerning Jesus' sojourn in India and Tibet. Among the witnesses said to have seen or known about these manuscripts was the famous Russian painter, Nicholas Roerich.

After a brief stay in Tibet, the young avatara headed for Nazareth, his homeland, stopping in Persia and Assyria. In Persia he was received by the magi that visited him in Bethlehem when he was just a babe. Together, with several others, he meditated in silence upon the spiritual needs of mankind. His other activities in Persia, and later Assyria, included healing and preaching. Among the Persians he instructed the "few" a meditational process of mystical development. In Babylon, Assyria, he visited some ruins in the company of Ashbina, a mystic Master of the Land. Shortly after, he is homeward bound. Following his reunion with mother, family, and friends, he sets on the trail again, this time for Greece and Egypt.

It was in Egypt that he applied for initiation into the Mysteries of the Egyptian branch of the Great White Brotherhood--like his western predecessors before him--Plato and Pythagoras. After passing

several tests with honors, the hierophants of the Brotherhood initiates the Nazarene into the deepest secrets of Man, Nature, and God. This culminates in his graduation with the title "Christ."

Before leaving for Nazareth, the crowned Jesus, with an important mission entrusted to him by the Karmic Lords and Cosmic decrees, is blessed by the Seven Sages of that particular world-period, and convened to discuss upon the spiritual requirements of man living in the new dispensation of the Piscean Age. The Seven Sages, making out a "Council of Seven," were representatives of the exoteric rays that radiates from the Great Central Sun. They are somewhat related to the "Seven Chohans of the Rays," known in New Age spirituality.

It is believed by mystics that the mission of Jesus consisted of 7 goals :

- 1) To instruct the masses concerning the immortality of the Soul and a salvation from physical bondage by personal effort.
- 2) To embody and replace the imagery of wrath surrounding God with that of Love.
- 3) To demonstrate the birth and perfection of the Christ within, followed by the spiritualization of the physical form.
- 4) To anchor a certain spiritual force into the physical plane and planet.
- 5) To live out a parable of the Soul.
- 6) To fulfill the various prophecies concerning the Messiah in the Holy Scriptures.
- 7) To demonstrate the divine potentiality, the occult talents and powers of Man.

Through exoteric and esoteric sources, we know that the Nazarene Master fulfilled his spiritual mission successfully. Unfortunately, throughout the centuries the Church had misrepresented and misinterpreted the teachings of the Avatar. The scriptures, the gospels, were altered by the Councils of Nicea and Trent for political and personal purposes. Wine, when poisoned, is undrinkable whether in new skins or old.

The nature of blessings is interesting enough to comment: All blessings are derived from a spiritual source. It is God that blesses through man. Man can only be the tool with which God's blessings and grace flows. Love is the principle that prompts the heart of man to bestow a blessing; and Love, as all mystics are aware, is an aspect of the triune nature of God. Blessings cannot be revoked, as illustrated in the narrative of Isaac and his sons, Esau and Jacob, for the simple reason that the divine intelligence does not create errors. Love functions impersonally according to Law--to the Law of Karma, the Law of Grace, the Law of Giving and Forgiving. It is a joy to bless rather than to curse. The latter is an egoistic expression, the former a divine flow. Power flows through the hands--whether the operator is conscious of it or not--thus, the hands in its many mudras, or mystic gestures, are often used to implement the blessings upon another. When blessing the Nazarene, the seven Masters placed their hands, the tools of their will, upon the crown chakra of Jesus. As in many rites in Esoteric Christianity, especially in transmitting a divine influence upon another, invocation is often made upon God or the angelic hierarchy.

Divine power through the hands, divine words uttered from the purified throat chakra, and divine love flowing from the radiant anahata chakra, all of which unify in one tremendous force that uplifts the consciousness of the recipient of the blessing. It is man's prerogative and responsibility to bless all lesser life, for the greater life has blessed man with individuality, self-consciousness, and potential immortality; however, blessings should be given wisely and discriminately, in accordance with the need of the individual. It is not simply the recipient that is blessed by the grace of God, by the grace of the giver--the instrument of God's blessings is likewise graced by the spiritual transmission. Eventhough the blessings that we are referring to here is of a psycho-spiritual nature, it could even take on a material form. The effects of blessings are creative, constructive, curative; curses are inherently

destructive--even to the one cursing. Our modern society seems to have lost the urge and instinct to bless. In contrast, curses have become a pseudo art-form, a warped-sense of pleasure to those destroying the nobility of man's fine sensitivity to Nature's manifold expressions. The Kali- Yuga is a pot under extreme heat and pressure. All dross eventually and inevitably rises to the surface at the personal and global level to be dealt with by Man; for Man is the originator of most of the dark effluvia, the misqualified energies that each Divine Fragment of God should transmute and purify.

After the appearance of Jesus at the River Jordan to be baptized by John--the Harbinger, the narrative follows along similar lines to the canonical gospels. It is unnecessary to recapitulate this, we will instead discuss some of the arcane doctrines of Christian esotericism.

Esoteric Doctrines

Throughout the centuries following the ascension of the Nazarene, various esoteric schools were established to perpetuate the secret teachings of Jesus, under the decree of the Great White brotherhood. Most of them operated in a clandestine manner for fear of being persecuted by Church and State. In an Age of superstition, fear and ignorance, it was only appropriate for these Mystery Schools to guard the treasures of the Spirit for the elect, the "chosen few." Not casting pearls before swine was an oath deeply held by the brethren of mystical circles. Cathars, Rosicrucians, Templars, Alchemists, Christian Qabalists, Gnostics, and Martinists, were just some of the brotherhoods and traditions that taught the inner meaning and mystical sense of the Holy Scriptures and the esotericism of religion. The doctrines and precepts of these prestigious Orders had teachings in common, with slight variations as to detail and methods with which the spiritual goal, the "Holy Grail" may be attained : The quest for the Chalice in the Grail stories required a warrior's will, discipline, and determination; the purity of a maiden capable of enchanting a unicorn; and the simple faith of a child in attunement with Nature--all of these were embodied by Sir Galahad, the only knight successful enough to attain the Chalice in the Grail Mysteries without any problems. At this time we wish to discuss briefly upon the following esoteric topics :

- 1) Man's Fall
- 2) Reincarnation
- 3) Karma
- 4) Light
- 5) Man's Divinity
- 6) Perfection
- 7) Salvation
- 8) The Esoteric Concept of God

Man's Fall

There are several versions and interpretations concerning *Man's Fall* to be found in the Western Tradition. This particular doctrine can be said to be the foundation from which all other doctrines and tenets of esotericism are built upon; for without a "fall," why would there be a "salvation"? Why should there be a striving towards perfection, wholeness and unity? Man in his present state of being finds himself isolated, alone, and fragmented. Man subconsciously feels a certain loss of being, a sense of disorientation towards Life, Nature, and his fellowmen. He seeks, not knowing what he is seeking. He pursues earthly goals, and when attained, it leaves him dissatisfied and unfulfilled. Gradually, the realization dawns upon him that his energies are being misdirected, misspent towards ephemeral goals with no absolute value. He then commences his search and journey towards higher goals and spiritual endeavours. But how shall one tread the Path of Return? To know the Way of Ascension, one has to discover how man's descent occurred, how he originally lost his divine estate. What brought about

Man's Fall? After studying the various traditions perpetuated by the Bard's of humanity, each student would arrive at his own interpretation and conclusion as to what actually occurred in the beginning of Time. Although personal opinions, speculations, assumptions and convictions may not be facts, and should not be treated as such, they do give us a working knowledge to commence our mystical work--in an experimental manner, especially when inner or spiritual guidance is lacking. We will present the doctrine of Man's Fall according to our level of understanding :

Universes, like any other organism, or aggregate, come and go. They are created by the Shakti, or power of God, sustained for a period, a cycle, called "Manvantara," and then dissolved, destroyed, or absorbed back again into the Source, to be recreated or re-emanated once again in a "New Day." It is appropriate here to say that Esoteric Christianity is essentially emanationistic in its cosmo-conception, its cosmology. This means that God, or Omneity, emanated beings and spiritual worlds from ITS own Womb. However, the emanations do not possess independent existence; all is an expression, or active manifestation of Omneity or "Allah." All, in fact, is Omneity; and yet Omneity is definitely more. This is the immanence and transcendence of God. Separation is an illusion, a play of the senses. The process of Activity and Rest, or *Manvantara* and *Pralaya*, is eternal; and its purpose is incomprehensible to man. We will not speak more on this as it would only cause confusion.

During one of the active cycles, Humankind, called "Adam Kadmon," or "Anthropos," was emanated by that great expression of Omneity called "Logos." Adam Kadmon is the collective name of the Fragments composing its being. Sometimes Adam Kadmon is identified by scholars as the Creative and the Solar Logos. This is questionable, as some mystics have differentiated the three; perhaps it is analogous to our physical body which is constituted of cells, each of which is a being, a unit of Life. Now, although the physical body is not our Self, it does have an elemental consciousness all of its own. Adam Kadmon's relationship to the Solar Logos is somewhat similar: the Solar Logos, is the Self; the Creative Logos, or collective Elohim--the elemental consciousness of the physical body; and the cells are the Fragments, the Monads of Man, or collectively, *Adam Kadmon*. The Fragments of Adam were individualized in previous cycles and were ready to resume their evolution towards a Divine Self-Consciousness.

There is another Logos to consider--the Redemptory Logos. This being or principle is not one and the same as the previous Logoi mentioned above. Within man, the microcosm, this Logos is the "Atma-Buddhi-Higher Mental," collectively called "the Holy Christ Self."

Prior to Adam Kadmon's emanation, the Godhead emanated "Perverse Beings," as called by Martinez Pasquales. Certain Gnostics call them as a collectivity, "Sacla," "Samael," and "Iladabaoth." These beings were the laggards of previous cycles that did not quite make the grade and were mercifully given another chance to live harmoniously with the Cosmic Laws, which are the laws of their existence, the laws of their being, and evolve accordingly. It is taught in a certain occult philosophy that the disobedience of such laws would eventually cancel the core-identity of their being, the fiery-essence of their identity on "Judgment Day," at the end of the present cycle should their conversion to holiness (wholeness) not be forthcoming. This is the "second death" and is an expression of Divine Mercy, for to allow these beings continued existence as spirits would cause them needless anguish, pain, and suffering--all of which are of their own making. Though newly re-emanated, Sacla did not repent, and the evil way of thinking which almost became second-nature to him, resumed. Because of pride and ignorance, he willfully denied the existence of his source and believed himself the creator of the Universe. The desire to be worshipped and to act as the Supreme Being, in creating other beings, eventually caused the downfall of Sacla. John Bricaud in his work "Esoteric Christian Doctrine," has this to say about the Fall :

" . . . certain heads of the angelic hierarchy refused to obey the laws which govern the pleroma; that they wanted to go over to degrees higher than their class without fulfilling the required condition, which caused great disorder in the pleroma."

This state of spiritual denial and opposition caused anarchy and pandemonium. Most of the angels fell as a result. At the head of the rebellion was a being, traditionally known as "Lucifer," "Athamas," and "Orphiomorphos."

To coerce these fallen angels to obedience would have been a violation of the Law of Free Will that Omneity had established. Therefore, to contain their perversity, their evil thoughts, the lower spiritual planes were emanated by Omneity to circumscribe and contain the activities of these rebels of the spirit; to limit the power of their influence upon the pleroma and higher heavens. The principles or component parts of these beings were automatically densified or crystallized according to natural laws as a result of egoic-focus.

In reality, Cosmic Laws in their totality is the expression of Omneity--is Omneity. Disharmony with one's spiritual nature naturally densifies one's being and restricts the mobility of one's soul and spirit. This was what occurred to Sacla. He rebelled against the law of his being and degraded, and circumscribed his expression as a consequence. Evil limits the extension of itself by the nature of its own low vibrations. This is the reason why evil in any form cannot exist in the celestial worlds. It was not Omneity who punished directly, but a natural response of the Law of Cause and Effect. To oppose the Will of God is in effect the opposition of the laws of one's existence. It is incorrect to say that Omneity punished the fallen angels, for this would imply that Omneity is directly concerned with, and recognizes states of duality, which in fact means that God is aware of something other than ITS own existence. This is illogical from the Absolute view-point, as taught in philosophies of a non-dual conception of Reality, such as *Advaita Vedanta*. There is only God--all else are illusions. All mystics agree with this.

After the Fall of the rebel angels, Adam Kadmon was re-emanated to resume his journey towards Godhood, and to be the warden of the perverse beings; or in other words, to be the director of their evolution. Adam was in an intermediate state. He was attuned with the Cosmic Mind and at the same time felt the evil thoughts of the perverse beings. Although emanated after the perverse beings, he was somewhat "loftier" in spiritual status, by virtue of his being pure--and innocent, for his mental being was as yet germinal--this was the state of Adam's paradisaical bliss--a blissful ignorance, for he had not yet tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; he had an unawakened mental nature.

Now, Adam as warden, was supposed to induce purity into the perverse beings with his spiritual nature; he, however, was influenced by their telepathic suggestions of rebellion towards the tasks at hand. More than that, Sacla made Adam believe that he would, and could resemble God by consuming the forbidden fruit--and create like Omneity. And so, with his autonomous free will, Adam attempted to create but ended-up bungling the job. He created the physical plane of dense matter which he called "Eve." He then populated the plane with shadowy beings unfit for the Spirit to dwell.

That a creator other than Omneity (God) created the physical plane was a strong belief among the ancient Gnostics. This imperfect creator, called the "Demiurge," created an imperfect hylic world. However, this very condition gave the Fragments a greater opportunity for accelerated growth. Exoterically, "The Great Architect of the Universe," the Demiurge, or P'an Ku, as the Chinese philosophers call him, was a contributing cause of the bondage of his constituent parts, in the same manner that we at times make the cells of our body a slave to ill health by our inharmonious thoughts and feelings. Esoterically, however, T.G.A.O.T.U is a mastermind of Cosmic evolution. For matter,

with all of its resistance to control by interacting intelligences, offer spiritual discipline to juvenile spirits.

Adam was so enchanted by his creation that it gradually entrapped him. This condition is illustrated in the Greek Mysteries by the allegory of Narcissus, who was so absorbed and fascinated by his own reflection in a pond that he fell into it and perished--spiritually speaking. Adam forgot his true identity as he identified himself with his caricature. All previous powers that he possessed were lost in the mist of Self-forgetfulness. It was the misuse of free will that caused his *Fall*, and it was his ignorance, his Self-forgetfulness that constituted the "original sin." His "punishment" was more severe than the rebels of the angelic hierarchies for he carried-out his wayward intentions to completion, something with which the rebel angels did not have the opportunity to consummate. The Fall of Man is dramatized in various ancient Mystery Schools, in the myth of the hero-god slained, and the kidnapping and rape of Persephone. The mythos of the crucified Christ is just a perpetuation of the Cosmic event which occurred before time.

Adam, before his fall, was not aware of his Source. Being ignorant he considered himself as the highest being, just like Sacla before him. Pride, desire and ignorance were the major causes contributing to his entrapment within the tomb of matter. This unfortunate state of mind, this level of consciousness, is to be found among the masses today. Many are ignorant of the divine potential of man, the Cosmic verities, the existence of an Absolute Supreme *Being*, higher intelligences, and the spiritual worlds; and this sorry state misdirects their energy-forces into thoughts and actions that are detrimental to their spiritual well-being. From one point of view, Man has never really left his Edenic state. The apple he consumed has produced the delusion of separation from his Source. His consciousness is blinded by what we personally call "Maya-grams," or "forms of unreality" by our definition--and these Mayagrams man considers absolutely real. Absolute Reality is that which is eternal; Mayagrams are ephemeral, the stuff of which dreams are made. Man relegates his Edenic-Reality to the background of his consciousness and hypnotizes himself with fleeting things; he thus finds himself apparently denuded of divine qualities and faculties. The serpent that tempted Man, as recorded in the allegorical book of Genesis, to consume the apple--the apple of forgetfulness--as seen from one perspective, represents the Law of Evolution, the creative impulse of the pulsating Center of All. This is represented in the Mystery Schools by a snake coiling an egg. The principle of this symbol is the evolutionary urge inherent within Life, within Man's being that prompted him to descent into matter, to unfold his divinity, and to ascent to his God-estate.

The perverse beings later joined man on the physical plane, and they are with us today. Their characteristic wickedness as we are all familiar, have their strong influence in the political, economic, social, scientific and religious fields. We see that humankind, therefore, are divided roughly and symbolically into two lineages: the perverse beings, the "descendants of Cain," and the Fragments of Adam Kadmon, the "posterity of Seth." One way of classifying man according to Esoteric Christianity is the threefold division :

- 1) Hyllic, the individual who lives solely according to his carnal nature, "the dead," as designated by Jesus.
- 2) Pneumatic, the individual who lives in accord with his spiritual being, the type of personality called by Jesus, "the quick."
- 3) Psychic, the individual who lives in an intermediary state, or what Jesus called "luke-warm."

The above are the basic three natures of man. Man, however, does not represent solely of the human race. There are angels, fallen angels, titans, and other beings incarnated in the shadowy form of Adam

Kadmon. The "sons of God" did cohabit with human spirits to produce hybrids as told in Genesis and the Books of Enoch.

The whole drama of Man's Fall corresponds with the four worlds or stages of development in the Qabalah :

- 1) Atziluth, the World of Archetypes, corresponds with the impetus and commencement of a new Manvantara.
- 2) Briah, the World of Creation, corresponds with the emanations of beings; the period of the rebellion of the angels.
- 3) Yetzirah, the World of Formation, corresponds with the creation of the lower spiritual realms and the actual fall of the rebel angels.
- 4) Assiah, the World of Activity, corresponds with the creation of the physical plane and the Fall of Man.

Reincarnation

Everything in this universe is in motion. Movement produces change, or transformation. This is an eternal constant, a Law of the Cosmos, and it is immutable. The process of transformation occurs in stages, phases, and cycles. Every unit of life unfolds its consciousness in accord with the Law of Activity and Rest. The cycle of activity begins with birth, youth, maturity; it declines with old age and ends with so-called death, which is the period of Rest. The cycle continues repeatedly until the goal for that life-unit is achieved. Reincarnation is an expression of the Law of Activity and Rest as applied to human evolution. It is what Jewish mystics call "Gilgul," and was a doctrine taught by the Greek Philosophers, Plato, Pythagoras and Plotinus. Most of the holy scriptures of the world contain references to the law, though some are veiled.

Once man found himself entombed within Matter, it became expedient for him to liberate himself. According to our observation, mankind as a whole, however, is not pursuing this goal, for he is unconscious of the purpose of his existence. The promptings of the Inner Self are misinterpreted for the selfish ambitions of the personal ego. Possessing a physical body, in a sense, is actually a great privilege, for it offers a rapid method for spiritual unfoldment. But to prolong our sojourn in the world of matter is foolhardy. This plane of consciousness is simply a phase, a stepping stone leading towards our spiritual destiny. Greater work, greater tasks awaits us elsewhere in the infinite reaches of the cosmos. We should realize that the physical world is not our true home. We are spiritual beings with a spiritual heritage. Ignorance and egoistic desire are the twin negative causes of our bondage to the wheel of birth and rebirth. Mastery of these causes offer spiritual freedom as the personal will and consciousness becomes united with the Divine Will and Mind of our True SELF.

We are bound to this wheel of reincarnation by causes. There are two sides to everything. We have already mentioned the negative causes. The positive causes are our aspiration for perfection and the balancing of karma. The former of this positive cause is the willful intent of the Soul, as human perfection may be accelerated while interacting and overcoming masterfully the resistance of matter. Karma binds us to the wheel until its misqualified energy has been spent, balanced, compensated, or the Law of Grace precipitated to over-ride the karmic condition as a result of spiritually understanding the required lesson that the Law expected one to learn.

Reincarnation is a common term for the concept of a human soul being born cyclically into the physical world. There are other terms, though, each referring to reincarnation, each with a slight variation as to meaning and implication. These terms are: rebirth, reimbodiment, transmigration, and metempsychosis. The term transmigration often brings to mind the element of retrogression, of man

re-embodiment as an animal. This is a spiritual impossibility, for once individualized, the human spirit can never revert to an undividualized animal soul. The animal vehicle in itself would not be able to sustain the great radiations and magnetism of the human individualized Spirit. This concept of retrogression, of transmigration of the human soul into an animal form is a corruption of a doctrine that teaches the similitude of human characteristics to animal nature, which are retained embodiment after embodiment until the energies underlying the bestial nature are transmuted. The astral form is also highly impressionable and mouldable by thoughts and feelings. They tend to reflect the nature of the soul. Should the human soul be beastly in nature, the astral body would reflect the animal form. From a different perspective, the lower components of the soul, the astral and etheric bodies, when discarded by the human spirit, may gravitate to surroundings and objects of a similar nature. Thus we may have the possibility of these ethereal cadavers attaching themselves to animals--this probably started the concept that humans beings incarnate as animals.

If reincarnation is a Cosmic law, a doctrine of Truth, why is it not taught in the churches by the priesthood? This is a common query among the members of the exoteric churches. Unbeknown to them, this doctrine was a basic tenet of the early Church, and references to this law filled the scriptures and the gospels abundantly. St. Augustine, St. Clement, and Origen expressed a belief and an understanding in the doctrine of reincarnation. So did Bishop of Synesius (370--430 AD) of Ptolemais. St. Gregory of Nyssa (257--333 AD.) believed strongly in the law; he wrote :

"It is absolutely necessary that the soul be healed and purified, and if this does not take place during its life on earth it must be accomplished in future lives."

Origen expounded the law in his literary works. He wrote extensively on the Law of Reembodiment. In later centuries, however, the mystical teachings of Origen were anathemized in the Council convened in Constantinople in 553 AD, and many references concerning reincarnation in the gospels were expunged. This Council, in which the Emperor Justinian presided, and which the reigning Pope refused to attend, was but a travesty of the Council of Sages that assemble periodically under the auspices of the Great White Brotherhood. The attending bishops of this Council assented to the dogmas drawn-up by Justinian and his co-conspirators--most of them acquiesced out of fear of the Emperor. The Doctrine of Reincarnation was rejected because it clashed with the dogmas that the Emperor and his cohorts among the bishopric circle wished to promote--that of eternal damnation, the vicarious atonement, the resurrection, and the uniqueness of Jesus as a "sole" son of God. Reincarnation was denounced at this Council by the conspirators so that greater political power might be had to manipulate the minds of men.

No cross-bearers of the Master Jesus were the assenting bishops. Their fear was greater than their love for him. This lack of courage and action on their part commenced and perpetrated an untruth which is misleading the flock of Christ to this very day. This untruth produces an attitude of spiritual slothfulness and fear in which dependency upon another for salvation is hoped and relied upon and not on one's own mystical resources. Reincarnation was one of the issues that the Gnostics and the exoteric Church quarreled upon. The original, holy scriptures and gospels before being translated and edited by persons influenced by the newly invented creeds and dogmas, contained positive references to the Law of Reincarnation as taught by the Nazarene Master. The translated, corrupted works, however, still contain certain material relating to reincarnation. Some biblical students, though, are unable or unwilling to perceive the implied law in these passages, due to bigotry, prejudice, and the limitation that they impose upon their consciousness. This causes a lack of spiritual discernment and comprehension necessary to intuitively read between the lines and extract the essential meaning. We will quote these interesting passages a little later. It is important here to realize that not all of the teachings of Jesus were recorded in the canonical gospels. The bulk of his secret teachings were passed on to posterity by word of mouth, and some of these oral teachings found their way into modern

mystical societies and fraternities. We should also not overlook the existence of hundreds of other scriptures, not considered "canonical," which were arbitrarily labeled "apocryphal" or even "works of the devil," that were not included in the Bible because it conflicted with the dogmas that the priesthood wished to promote. Some of these literary works contain sparkling gems of the *Gupta Vidya*, or the Ancient Wisdom.

How is the truth of reincarnation determined? By personal experience. This requires a mystical development with a certain degree of advancement along the path of evolution, along the *Path of Initiation*. Some individuals professing a belief in the reality of reincarnation are over-anxious to know their past identity. This is unreasonable, for their present identity remains yet to be discovered, realized, and known. Why waste a considerable amount of time and force on something that will occur naturally in the course of time, when more important matters such as Self-Realization awaits one's attention? It is a dangerous matter to probe into the psyche prematurely with the intention of recalling past lives with tools such as hypnotic regression, drugs, and others of a similar nature. Certainly nature has designed the human psychosomatic system and circuitry in such a manner that man would forget his past lives for an important reason--that of maintaining mental poise and balance. Man drinks the Waters of Lethe at each embodiment to forget painful experiences that occurred in the past history of the soul. To awaken these memories prematurely would simply upset the psychological equilibrium and sanity of the individual--aside from boosting the egoistic expressions of vanity, pride and a false sense of superiority. Nature does not, and will not withhold the knowledge and information that man should possess when he reaches a certain stage of development and maturity. Man will, without force, without tampering unnaturally with his psyche, recall past lives without becoming a psychiatric case. Those giving psychic readings and hypnotic-regression sessions to individuals should realize the possible grave consequences of their actions, as these would flood the psyche of their subjects with buried data that their consciousness may not yet be ready and equipped to handle.

It is true, however, that without personal experiences, man will always have doubts concerning the Law of Reincarnation, especially when one has not come to terms with life after so-called death. Reincarnation from that standpoint would seem to be a mere fancy. Fortunately, there are ways of strengthening one's belief and faith in the law--as lame as beliefs may be. The truth is not only out there--it is to be found within as well. The truth seeker will investigate in a sane manner with less perilous methods than hypnosis to determine the accuracies of spiritual laws as revealed unto man by higher intelligences. The student's main research and method of inquiry would probably be along the lines of reason, objectivity, a study of scriptural revelation; the study under those having spiritual experiences and understanding--those with spiritual authority; and the study of the phenomenon of spontaneous recollections.

Along the lines of reason, we may begin our search by inquiring into the manifold inequalities, complexities and differences among the sons of man: why are some born rich, and others poor? why are some born sound in mind and body while others are handicapped with bodily disadvantages or mental retardation? how can we explain the phenomenon of child prodigies? how do we resolve the problem of the mental capacities that differ from person to person--also the multifarious moral, cultural standards and spiritual attainment that each individual expresses? Education, environment and genes are minor factors that do not explain fully life's situation as we see it. Why does God seem to have favourites? Jacob over Esau, for instance.

The law of reincarnation fills a gap, the missing link that unites the fragmentary parts of our understanding concerning the inequalities between individuals. The different types of man and their point of evolution is the manifestation of the laws of karma and reincarnation. One apparently comes into this world to live a short span of existence, and then to pass out of it without fulfilling one's goals. What is the purpose of this? If one's goals are unattainable in one life time then our existence here

would be meaningless and futile. By carrying on our reasoning a little further we would perceive the mercy and grace of God in action within our lives; and that reincarnation is the manifestation of that mercy and grace.

As mentioned before, the gospels and Jewish scriptures are replete with references concerning the law of reincarnation. Below are just a few examples, a few verses often quoted by students and researchers on the law:

"I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out." (Rev 3:12)

This verse implies and signifies that the person who liberates himself from the bondage of matter participates in active work in the spiritual realms, directing the forces and powers of Nature in accord with the Grand Design, with God's Plan and Will. The attainment of liberation or salvation, guarantees personal freedom from the wheel of birth and rebirth, from samsara. Such a liberated being is no longer compelled to reincarnate, he goes "no more out," unless it is to assist lesser evolved beings.

"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (Malachi 4:5)

The advent of Elijah occurred through reincarnation in his embodiment as John the Baptist. Jesus had this to say about the true identity of John:

". . . Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist . . . all the prophets and the law prophesied unto John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who was to come . . . " (Matt 11:7-15)

Some biblical students are of the opinion that the reincarnation of Elijah was an exception and not a law of Nature; however, the general concept, or law was not repudiated by the Nazarene Master. In some passages of the gospels he discusses it freely with his disciples :

"whom do man say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But whom do you say I am?'" Simon Peter replied: 'You are the Christ, the son of the Living God.' And Jesus answered to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter. And on this rock I will build my church; and the powers of death shall not prevail against it . . . '" (Matt 16:13--20)

Though Jesus taught reincarnation, he did not put much emphasis on it; we believe he intended to stress the possibility of man attaining Christhood in a single life time, and thus attain salvation, freed from the necessity of reimpodiment. In the above verse he reveals to Simon his past identity as Peter. There is a double meaning involved in the expression "on this rock." "Peter" means "rock," but the rock that "death shall not prevail" is the law of reincarnation that Jesus was referring to, and this was supposed to become one of the tenets, the foundation in his Church.

Another verse, this time from Exodus, shows the relationship between reincarnation and karma:

". . . Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the

children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."
(Exodus 34:7)

If interpreted literally, this verse presents Jehovah as lacking real mercy; for why should an innocent offspring pay for the sins of its progenitor? The karmic retribution meted out to the children, and the children's children of the above verse refers to the karmic compensation that the reincarnating "Ego" has to pay in subsequent embodiments.

Karma

Karma is the Law of Cause and Effect; it is sometimes described as the "law of consequence," the "law of equilibrium." In the scriptures it is the law "As ye sow, so shall ye reap," inculcated by Jesus and Paul to the masses. Jesus declares :

"With what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again." (Matt 7:2)

Jesus is actually implying that we should be responsible for the burden of our sins.

We are also told in Galatians that,

". . . every man shall bear his own burden." (Gal 6:5)

Every man has to face the consequences of his own deeds, in thought, words, and action. The dogma that one simply has to have faith or believe in Jesus to save oneself from sin is contradicted by the Master's own words. The true teachings of Jesus appeals to us to mature in a spiritual manner and not to be dependent upon another.

In the Book of Jubilees, a work considered apocryphal, it is mentioned how the higher law deals with man :

"With the instrument with which a man killeth his neighbour with the same shall he be killed; after the manner that he wounded him, in like manner shall they deal with him."

Karma is the expression of divine justice and mercy. It is one of the constants of the omniverse that applies and is readily seen working in the world of physics--aside from being a contributing factor of a person's evolution. The law is impersonal, impartial, and does not punish as some people believe--instead it teaches, educates. It makes an individual realize the errors of his deeds and the beneficence of his positive works. It shows an individual the relationship between actions and their consequences. Negative actions being the result of negative effects, positive actions in positive effects. Karma is the tool of God's balancing-out the disturbances in the harmony of the Tao. The Law declares in seemingly harsh terms:

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay . . . " (Romans 12:19)

Each individual in his daily thoughts, speech, and actions creates karma. No being lives without making karma, for no being lives without putting forces into motion in his daily life. To simply breathe

is in one sense karmic--for every breath has its influence, its consequential result in the physical body. Karma is a person's self-created fate. A Christian of esotericism has a firm conviction in the existence of the law, for he perceives its workings manifesting daily in his life. To such an individual the dogma "remission of sins" as taught by orthodox Christianity is incompatible with the law of Karma and is seen as a principle invented by the Church to control the minds of the masses. The only prevention of reaping negative results is to avoid putting negative causes into motion. "Ahimsa," or harmlessness, should be a constant expression of the devout--"to turn the other cheek."

Karma binds one to the wheel of birth and rebirth--even the positive causes are no exception, unless one is unattached to one's actions; "vairagya" or detachment is a requisite virtue often advised by Gurus to their chelas to acquire. Being detached from one's actions is the whole theory and practice of Karma Yoga, as taught by the avatara Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Karma may best be understood through Eastern teachings.

There are basically three types of Karma. Hindu philosophy classify them as follows :

1. Sattvika Karman, where the results of one's actions are not desired, where one is unattached to them.
2. Rajasa Karman, where acts are performed sensuously for the desire of their fruits and rewards.
3. Tamasa Karman, where forces are put into motion out of ignorance, confusion, and delusion, without any real care and concern for the consequences of one's deeds.

The comprehension of Karma as revealed to the masses by Jesus is an improvement of the old interpretation and understanding of the principle of a previous dispensation of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," as given to the Israelites by Moses. To illustrate this, the law does not cause blindness as a punishment to an individual if he had blinded someone in the past. It does, however, make him aware, in some manner, of the wrongness of his actions--even if it does take blinding him if other means fail to make him realise his error. Should the individual realize his mistake, sincerely repents and compensate, then the lesson would have been learnt; he would be putting new forces into motion which offset the original negative impulse. Karma is not punitive. Negative karma is neutralized to some degree by implementing positive causes--these are the laws of grace and mercy at work. In contrast, even if it happens that balancing of karma should occur, and that the individual does not learn, repent and compensate for his wrong deeds, he might repeat it again or the "punishment" might just occur again and again, lifetime after lifetime, depending on the proportion and momentum of the original force, until all of its misqualified energy is spent. Also, undigested and unassimilated experiences are undergone repeatedly until the inherent principle which the experience is intended to teach is absorbed.

Every entity or group of entities create karma; hence, we have such collectives as "group karma," "racial karma," and "national karma." Karma functions under cyclic law and in accord with esoteric astrological configurations. Its effects are dependent upon the ratio of the forces put into motion and the situation with which the deeds were committed. Some effects are immediate, while others requires a passage of time for the force to return full circle, even deferring until a later lifetime. Karma, therefore, is conditioned in its full expression and is divided into two groups:

- 1) Ripe Karma, where the effects of deeds and actions occur in the same lifetime.
- 2) Unripe Karma, where effects of deeds and actions are postponed to a future embodiment.

According to one modern school of Esoteric Christianity, a dispensation had been given in our century by the Cosmic Directors of Karma for the spiritual aspirant to transmute his karmic sins and tendencies. This dispensation takes the form of an invocation (actually Hindus and Buddhist have been using similar techniques for centuries) to that aspect of the Holy Spirit called the "violet flame." This is the "consuming fire" of God mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. The violet flame when active in one's energy-field, transmutes the cause, effect, record, and memory of sin and karma until one becomes immaculate :

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
(Isa:1:18)

The effects of the violet fire brings us that much closer to our perfection and ascension into our God-Presence. When freed from personal karma, the disciple is ready to take on a higher burden of transmuting world karma to some degree, to assist suffering humanity to march onwards towards the light. This was what the Master Jesus did. He transmuted part of world karma--esoterically "saved the world." Much still has to be done and the individual is still responsible for his sins and karma--the quality, nature, and status of his own energy-field, his soul-record--this was not cleansed by the death of the "saviour." The Master Jesus "died" for the awakening of the collective consciousness of Man, not for the saving of any individual.

The overcoming of karma in one's life requires an understanding of the situations that one finds himself facing, and a constant vigil and check of all inharmonious expressions or our being. Moderation in all sensual activities assists greatly in reducing negative fruit, such as pain and suffering. Below we give some guidelines to negate karmic influences :

- 1) Invoke the violet flame on a regular basis.
- 2) Control of the mind and emotions.
- 3) Act, think, and speak beneficially.
- 4) Offer oneself to selfless service to humankind.
- 5) Be unattached to the fruits of actions.
- 6) Steer the mind away from sensuality by focusing on one's divinity.
- 7) Seek the spiritual wisdom and teaching in one's life-experiences.

Light

Light manifests in the mind of man as illumination, enlightenment, and an expansion of consciousness. Light, as Truth, is the illuminating mystery given to candidates of the Christian Mysteries who had previously undergone the required perfection, the period of spiritual cleansing. Those who were free from the stain of sin were offered the secrets of the Light for further advancement along the path of the ascension, for sinlessness alone were inadequate to lift man to the portals of the Kingdom of God and thus unite him with his "I AM Presence." In the gnostic work, *Pistis Sophia*, Jesus has this to say about the illuminating mysteries :

"But amen, amen, I say unto you: even if a righteous man hath committed no sin at all, he cannot possibly be brought into the light-kingdom, because the sign of the kingdom of the mysteries is not with him. In a word, it is impossible to bring souls into the light without the mysteries of the light kingdom."

In the same gnostic work the Christ initiate also reveals one of the main purposes of the Mysteries of Light which man should seek, rather than the baubles of this impermanent world :

"For this cause have I said unto you aforetime: 'Seek, that you may find.' I have therefore, said unto you: 'You are to seek after the mysteries of this light which purifies the body of matter and make it into a refined light exceedingly purified.'"

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1Co:15:53)

The above verses refers to the etherealization of the physical component of man. It is a standard practice among the practitioners of Esoteric Christianity to surround themselves with light in their visualizations and meditations for alchemical and spiritual transmutation. Besides having the effect of healing and purifying the aura, the precipitation of light particles within one's being also accelerates the vibratory rate of our various sheaths, or bodies of the Soul and Spirit. The light that purifies and illumines should be constantly invoked by the spiritual aspirant. To purify and spiritualize the atomic particles composing one's being by applying divine fire is only part of the spiritual transformational process; however, the other part is the work of refraining from assimilating additional coarse matter. Jesus advises us to :

". . . renounce the whole world and all of its association, that ye may not amass additional matter to the rest of your matter in you . . . "

This renunciation is not the actual giving or selling away of one's earthly goods and to live somewhere in poverty as an anchorite or as a vagabond. The rich man that Jesus advised to sell his goods and to follow him has a different connotation. "To be in this world but not of it" is the clarification of the precept above--in other words, detachment, earthly desirelessness, harmlessness, the living of soul-purposes, etc. One may be wealthy or poor, known or unknown--it makes no difference. It is how we live our lives that counts.

The Pistis Sophia, like the aphorisms of Patanjali, advises us to renounce various vices such as slander, pride and haughtiness, love of the world, cursing wrath, pitilessness, avarice, and sloth. To renounce vices and to acquire virtues, man should contemplate the holiness and sacredness of God, Nature, Life, and the intrinsic essence of all sentient beings. His attention should be reoriented from a materialistic three-dimensional perspective and habitual pattern to a spiritual outlook and way of life. By constant living from the spiritual standpoint, man acquires that state of harmony, that freedom from the chaotic mentality and emotionalism that characterizes the worldly man. Harmony is organization--organized thought, speech, action, living, and movement. The light of the trinity of the godhead stands at the door of the waking consciousness and knocks--and waits. Harmony within the four-lower bodies which reflects the harmony within the Tao, in conjunction with certain spiritual practices opens the etheric valves which allows greater influx of spiritual forces, magnetizing the lower sheaths of man's energy-structure with an abundance of power, love, and wisdom. Divine forces enter man's being via the *sutratma*, *antahkarana*, and the *sahasrara chakra*.

Once illumined by the Light of God, man becomes a living flame. He lives as a focus of Omneity's divine presence. Radiance, magnetism, and power of his Divine Self fills his aura till his "cup runneth over," and his very presence affects all with whom he comes into contact. It is the nature and desire of God to make men "his ministers a Flame of Fire" (Heb 1:7). Each enlightened person, as a Flame of Fire, ignites fellow souls slumbering in the mayagrammic world. This stimulation occurs by magnetic, and telepathic induction on all levels of being. We may allow the "dead" to bury the dead; but it is our personal task as torch-bearers to revive those that needs awakening and resurrection.

Light from a cosmological point of view, is the essence of all matter. It is the primal energy which manifests in substances that composes our universe. Matter is densified light. Between matter and the

pure Light of Omneity are manifestations of God-radiance in varying intensities. Light was the first emanation of Omneity, it is the manifestation of the Supreme Godhead's first spoken creative impulse-- "Let there be Light." (Gen 1:3). This fiat was not the creation of the sun and its radiating energies but something more subtle and lofty.

Light is often identified with the Word, the Pranava "OM," which is in a continuous reverberation throughout the cosmos. Hindu mystics call the Sound, "Sabda Brahma." The Sufis are acquainted with the existence of this Word-Light; they refer to it as the "Kalam-I-Aadim," meaning, "the Ancient Sound." Christian mystics, on the other hand, figuratively call it "the Rush of a Mighty Wind," and "the Sound of the Trumpet." Gnostics, Hindu and Buddhist Tantric mystics, and High-degree Sufis initiate candidates to the gnosis or *marifat* where the Divine Light and Sound emanating from one's very essential being, the very essence of God, are experientially seen and heard. Blind faith and beliefs are replaced with knowledge, experience, and conviction. One perceives God's radiant countenance face to face and is transformed thereby; no longer is the on-looker a mortal or lives as one but spiritually immortal as he "sees" his very SELF as "Sat-Chit-Ananda," or "Existence-Consciousness-Bliss."

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. (Matt 5:8)

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:26)

"And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." (Ex: 33:20)

"And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." (Ex 33:11)

Indeed, after perceiving one's essential SELF, one's "I AM PRESENCE" one is never the same; one no longer lives as a man or as a mere mortal. One becomes the anointed, a Christ, an immortal god--the hope of Job and the Pure. Is this not what was requested of us :

". . . I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

Or in other words,

"I AM the true model and I represent the true way of attaining that Divine State of Sonship. Become as I AM."

This possibility is the essence of the gospel--this is the good news--this is the kingdom come--this is the Resurrection--this is the Second Coming. This is the promised Kingdom of God that is at hand and not located in some astral realm or to be entered into in the afterlife or during the Apocalypse in the last days. It is NOW that the kingdom of God is to be attained by one and all--no matter what your religious affiliation. May all heed this and live a purposeful life.

Man's Divinity

Man's true nature and reality was a hushed subject that the Christ Initiate taught to the inner circle of his followers. Some of his statements concerning man are to be found in the gospels. His enigmatic sayings about his relationship to his father were statements of truth that applies to humankind

collectively, and was never meant to indicate to the masses of any exceptionality on his part as a sole "son of God." As a result of this misunderstanding, perhaps deliberately, of the words of the Master, modern Christians worship the son in the form of Jesus and not in the light of the Christ divinity within. Throughout the centuries, the precepts of man's divinity have been overlooked, misinterpreted, and misrepresented. The human, mortal, sinful side has been unduly stressed and emphasized to a morbid degree. The Light shone in the darkness, but the darkness took no trouble to understand its nature and source. There are those that fear Light in the form of truth, for its nature reveals the true state of things--things which are uncomfortable to those who resent movements in an upward spiral by personal effort. Jesus and other prophets before him declared that men were gods,

"I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." (Psalms 82:6)

"Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together." (Isa 41:23)

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John:10:34)

That we are more than mortals is echoed in the "Thou art That" proclamation of certain Hindu philosophies. This divine precept of man's divinity is shun by the followers of orthodox Christianity as a teaching of the devil and not acknowledged to be true because of their erroneous comprehension of the scriptures and the faith that they have upon the dogmas and creeds arbitrarily created by corrupted theologians. People are indoctrinated to believe in things that do not reflect reality, things that mostly cannot be verified by personal experience. Where there is a lack of intuitive understanding, where ignorance and fanaticism holds sway, the mind and emotions will cause the *jiva* or soul to stagnate in a bog of their own construction. This imposes self-limitation, self-restriction that is well depicted in Plato's Cave allegory.

Man believes what he wants to believe, and until he replaces beliefs and fancies with experiential knowledge of his divinity he will continue to experience the torments of "hell"--the pain, suffering, fear, and anguish. Herein lies evil, for evil opposes all activities that frees the soul from bondage to matter, from advancing on the path of evolution; and man unconsciously swims against the currents that would lead him to the other shore.

Man is considered by atheistic scientists as a being of matter; religionists sees man as a creation, a creature fabricated by the Source for glorifying and worshipping Itself by making Its creatures sing hymns of praise eternally, for the benefit of who knows whom--for that which is egoless requires no recognition of its SELF-existence, as It is in a state of completeness, of oneness with the hidden nature of its illusory elements as perceived by man. Prayers and worship are never for God's benefit but for the beings engaged in the revered adoration.

It is from the sages of the world that we learn of their personal experiences of what man truly is, and by following in their footsteps we come to know ourselves. The sages present methods with which the gnosis, the Truth may be known. By applying their methods we in turn gradually recognize the accuracies of their statements concerning man--some uttered while in transcendental states. The rationale of the statement of Jesus mentioned before--"I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" may be understood clearly through the intuitive sense.

Most people focus their consciousness, their attention excessively upon externals, upon a world of illusions, to the detriment of their spiritual unfoldment. This overconcern with earthly baubles drains the mind, body and soul of the energies that would call forth the treasures laid-up in heaven by man's obedience to the laws of the *Voice of Silence*. Christ is the cosmic nature within each individual; the

so-called second coming of Christ occurs within the psyche where man experiences and manifests his internal reality in the world of form, in the sphere of Malkuth. To focus constantly within, as in meditation, and in certain forms of yoga, one retains the required amount of force to awaken and stimulate the Shekinah, the flickering fire of God's manifestation within man, residing in his heart chakra as the threefold flame of Love, Wisdom, and Power.

Man emerged out of the fiery core of the Great Central Sun, or "Parabrahm" in Hindu Philosophy, as a spark. The essential nature of this spark, this "unit" of Brahman, is divine. It is a manifestation of God-in-becoming. Out of this monadic spark the Divine Ego, or Atma, was formed and individualized as Self-consciousness. Its nature is threefold: it consists of the divine spirit, the life spirit, and the human spirit. The higher aspect of the Divine Ego is the Christ in man, which is the way to oneness with the Father in heaven, the Monad focused in celestial planes. This Monad is *Ishvara* in the Samkhya philosophy of Hinduism. The Divine Ego is the progenitor of the personality, the jiva, the manifestation of man in the lower worlds of matter. A portion of Egoic consciousness lies buried in the etheric heart awaiting the outer consciousness to acknowledge its existence and to manifests its essential qualities and nature in the physical plane. Its growth is dependent upon the personality offering it freedom of expression in its sphere of activity.

"God is Man, and Man is God." This is a metaphysical truism which should be mystically understood. If interpreted literally, this spiritual truth would seem blasphemous. God is eternal and infinite, so is man, for man as the microcosmos reflects the spiritual structure of the greater cosmos. God is acknowledged by enlightened individuals to be ineffable, indescribable. When contemplating man's true nature, one finds oneself in a similar position : Man transcends words, it is impossible to describe that which is actually beyond and void of physical, feeling, and mental structures.

Depreciation of the true Ego and the exaltation of the false ego are expressions of egoism. Indulgence of such mental states prevents spiritual awakening. Man wrongly identifies himself with the components of his manifestations in the realms of matter. For instance, he believes that he is the body, the feelings, the mind, etc. This misidentification stalls the unfoldment of the faculties and powers of his divinity which grows within man at the objective consciousness level as he acquires a greater perspective of his true being and expands his consciousness to encompass higher states. Egoism is an idol that man unknowingly places on the altar of his consciousness--and he worships this monstrosity; and each time that he thinks, speaks, and acts imperfectly, negatively, unculturedly, and destructively, he exalts the deceiver of men, the beast whose number is 666.

Perfection

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt 5:48)

The Nazarene Master uttered the above verse to the masses, who for centuries have overlooked the significance and importance of the mandate. Even the priesthood do not seem to stress this commandment, teaching instead the erroneous concept of the original sinful nature of man, and his redemption by an external saviour. Supposedly we were born in sin, live in sin, and die in sin; and that there is no way that we will be saved from eternal damnation in hell unless we develop a blind faith in the divinity and the sole sonship of God of a certain individual. This belief contradicts various esoteric precepts of Jesus, including the statement in Genesis, that God created man--gods, in fact, according to Psalms--and saw that his creation was good. Why do we see something as bad when God saw it as good? Certainly, we see imperfectly--cause we see only the form, not the spirit.

It is apparent to the progressive mind that the quotation above hints at the law of evolution, and to one's effort in accelerating one's spiritual development. Perfection is the destiny and purpose of life

within the form of each life-unit. "Father" in the opening verse of this chapter represents the archetype of man, the *Adam Kadmon*, the spiritual image in which each human consciousness is to grow into. Man came forth as a spark of God, with a blueprint of perfection as his spiritual identity. Man is to manifest that perfection in the world of form by reflecting the identity and qualities of the macrocosm within his lower being. Because of the impossibility of attaining perfection in a single embodiment, Nature has designed a system whereby the opportunity to mature into perfection can take place. This system is the cycle of reincarnation. Since we have already dealt with certain fundamentals of reincarnation in a previous topic, we will not repeat them here.

We have all heard the cliché that "nobody's perfect." Every lie that contains a little truth is readily accepted by the unthinking mind, and this cliché constitutes a lie which was wrought by the serpentine mind of the fallen angels, the adversary of mankind--to stall, to retard, and to prevent man's reintegration with his Source; to immobilize his spiritual movement upward in the evolutionary spiral. The reiteration of such "heinous" words acts as a suggestion to the subconscious levels of the minds of men compelling them to believe that such a goal whose mark was set by Life, by God, is unattainable by man. We should free ourselves from such a false notion; for to believe in it, is to cease to think, to act, and to speak righteously and divinely. Human perfection, in the sense of manifesting divine qualities, is attainable, and there are men and women who have secured this exalted state. They are the masters of destiny; and the fundamental difference between them--the masters and immature human souls, is their personal vibratory rate, their soul-frequency--the frequency of consciousness and its manifestations.

Though perfection be relative, man may attain human perfection--this is godhood; and on the scale of divinity, this is but an imperfect state of godliness.

Perfection is attained gradually by personal labour, by ego-effacement and SELF-placement. The attainment of perfection in stages rather than on a particular day of resurrection at the last trumpet call was one of the profound teachings of Origen. Another writer on Christian principles, Thomas a Kempis, declared in his literary work, "the Imitation of Christ" that,

"If every year we rooted out one vice, we should soon become perfect man."

Perfection is Christhood, the universal destiny of all children of the light. True Christians are those who manifest Christ in their daily lives--this is true worship. This state of being is the "Second-Coming" of the Gnostics, of those who interpret the precepts of the Nazarene Master in an esoteric manner. The Christ saviour is man's reality, man's Real Self, man's cosmic blueprint with which he will ultimately outpicture in his waking consciousness, not in some future time in heavenly worlds, but right here and now. Everything that is expected to be attained in Heaven in the afterlife is to be attained now. St. Paul understood this teaching, and he conveyed it to others who were ready and prepared to receive it. He said that the Christ within is our "hope and glory" (Col 1:27), and that we should form this Son of God within us (Gal 4:19).

Jesus, the man, became the Christ and therefore showed us the way, the method to which Christhood is to be attained. "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6), exclaimed Jesus, thus indicating to us his role as an exemplar, a model with which we should emulate in attaining our own Christhood, our own Sonship of the Godhead. It is, therefore, evident that we attain salvation not by believing, in depending on another being to save us from our own human faults, weaknesses, and sins, but by replacing the human-ness of our being with the virtues of our own Christ Reality through our own personal effort in manifesting Christ in our daily consciousness, by eliminating the sense of a false ego, "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (Rev 17:11,18). There is much necessary repetition in this work--our paper is designed to awaken the slumbering soul.

The false ego and ignorance, as the roots of all vices veils the individual from his divinity. Spirituality is the state of identification and manifestation of the true Self of man; this also entails the non-identification of the Self with the flesh, emotions, and mind. This is one of the first and, paradoxically, last vital step that the aspirant has to undertake along the Path of Ascension. It is imperative that the heart be awakened, that bodhicitta, or compassion and the awareness of the true nature of things be developed. It is said that Love is blind. This is an erroneous notion. Lust is blind, Love is supersight. Be being possessed by Love man's consciousness and senses expand to encompass the other expressions of Nature. The lower self should be effaced and decentralized. By non-clinging to the false-ego, the greater life is attained. The man who lives for sensual pleasures alone is a man who is in a state of death. St. Paul puts it this way :

" . . . to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."
(Romans 8:6)

No matter what religion, sect, or belief system we follow or do not follow, our task is clearly before us, the task of attaining perfection. Reintegrating with the Father in an imperfect state benefits not the Omniversal Collective. We initially emerged in such a state--we should courageously return being something more. If the concept were true, that one is "saved" by merely having faith in a saviour, then imperfect men would find their way to Heaven--these men would soon turn Paradise into a living Hell because of their vices and negative expressions. Death does not transform an individual into an angel of Light, nor does mere beliefs or faith. Our own level of consciousness determines where we will be in the cosmic scheme of things.

Liberation from mortal limitations and finitude is acquired when one's will is aligned with God-will, when one's consciousness is one with God-consciousness. This mystical condition was the consciousness-level acquired by Saints and Sages of all ages. For instance, there was Enoch, who walked with God, and then lost his identity in the Light of his divinity, his ego was "not," being displaced by the expression of his true spiritual SELF (Gen 5:24). What one man has done, another man can do; all that is required is sincerity, perseverance, effort, discipline and practice--"practice makes perfect."

The union of our soul with the Godhead is preceded by our living the Christ life. The virtues of Christ should be our daily expression. They are like beads that we strand with the string of love and adorn ourselves with. The only beings privileged to be denizens of God's kingdom are beings who have acquired perfection. To reiterate our message above, imagine, if you will, those who are spiritually immature allowed entry into the "Kingdom of God," they would turn the place upside down--pandemonium is the result. There is order in the universe--especially so in the celestial spheres; even the primeval chaos is order when seen from divine perspectives. That only perfection exists in the kingdom of God ought to spur us to reconsider the message of Jesus: did he in any way tell us to worship him, or did he tell us to imitate his life, his way of living, and thus become perfect? The answer should be clear enough when considered in the light of natural laws and cross-referenced with other religions.

By acquiring a virtue at a time, we are most certain to reach the goal of human life. The slothful ones await for their salvation by another, the wise ones are captain of their souls, and they take command of the helm of life by giving their Christ presence full control of their ship sailing through the turbulent, and sometimes calm sea of life. The events which occurred to Jesus's life is the story of each soul sojourning in the physical world. Each person will sooner or later undergo the birth of Christ within the consciousness and struggle against the temptations of the carnal mind at the mountain top; each will experience the transfiguration, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension--all of which are related to certain initiations conferred by Life.

To be spiritual, to be holy, one has to constantly focus on one's inherent divinity. Our thinking, acting, and speaking should be spiritually oriented. In the Gospel of Thomas, the Piscean avatar declares that,

"If you will not fast from the world, you will not find the kingdom."

From another literary source, the *Pistis Sophia*, we find this same precept expressed a little differently :

". . . renounce the world and the whole matter therein."

To be more exact, we should live in the world and not be a part of it; to live as a renunciate amidst the turmoils of life; or in other words, to live as a karma yogi. It is by living the Christ life that we honour and worship the Great One, call it Tao, Allah, Parabrahm, the Absolute, I AM Presence, or what you will; terminology will not change Truth, for Truth is immutable; it may, however, cause schisms and bigotry in the minds of immature souls who are unable to see beyond the form, beyond the letter of the law, and into the Spirit. Unity within apparent diversity should be discerned, for Oneness is Reality, diversity is but an illusion.

Life is leading us to perfection. It offers us opportunities to develop, to unfold, and to manifest the blueprint of our reality, the God-Image that we were so lovingly endowed with. Let us not think that human perfection is the highest goal, for even though a being be humanly perfect, he is still but an imperfect god. There are always higher peaks to be climbed. The subsequent struggle and strivings to be a perfect god is just another step, another cosmic phase of work that would eventually let us rule over even greater things that the mind of man is as yet unable to comprehend. Evolution is the law underlying man's progress, and it is a wise individual who goes with the current and not against it. Please note that when we speak of evolution we refer to the soul or consciousness aspect of the microcosm and not to the physical form itself.

Conquering the resistance of matter, and the carnal mind, is not without its pain, nor paradoxically, its pleasure; however, the sincere alchemist who wishes to transmute his being into God's glorious expression will soon discern the so-called sacrifices that he makes from a spiritual viewpoint. He will consider sacrifices as sacraments offered to the Godhead, and he will offer them with divine reverence and love. Earthly voices will no longer deter him from his obedience to his Holy Christ Self. Such an individual who is close and united with God and his higher spiritual aspects are often regarded as mad by his fellow men. Mass-consciousness will never be able to comprehend the mystical attainment and the sacredness of the spiritual initiate--the little ones of the kingdom. They would stone such a person.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."
(Matt18:10)

Life is short and uncertain. It is a pity to pass out of this physical octave without knowing the meaning of life, or to know one's real identity. Going to the beyond through the change of death does not transform us into something that we are not, it does not expand our consciousness, nor does it naturally unfold the light within us; it is a fallacy of orthodox Christianity to maintain that by going to churches or temples, or by professing one's faith to this or that saviour, or dogma, that one would earn a place in the celestial realms, that one would automatically be perfect on the day of reckoning; and this philosophy is preached with a strong fanaticism that blinds its followers of the existence of spiritual beautitides and eternal truths to be found in other mystico-religions. This is Churchianity at its worst--the expression of primitive reasoning and maudlin emotionalism as regards to the false sense of superiority of their beliefs. Orthodox Christianity is not the only religion with such an attitude, however, it is to be found among the followers of most religious system. As said before, perfection

requires labour, it needs our personal participation. Leave the work to others and we will be indoctrinated to believe that the world is flat and that it was created in 4004 BC; we would be mobilized and coerced to kill and torture in the name of Religion, Love and God. There is enough evidence of this in profane history. The writer's soul still feel the pangs of these past historical occurrences.

Salvation

The avoidance of entry into a fiery furnace called "Hell" for all eternity is a hopeful goal for exoteric Christians--this they call "salvation." For some it would be better to be in Hell with God than to be in Heaven without His presence. From the esoteric point of view, this belief in Hell as a place created by God is an absurdity. Hell, like heaven, is a state of mind, a state of consciousness, a disposition, and an attitude. Every aggregate, every expression of matter, every phenomenon, is in a state of becoming. There is no permanency in Nature, therefore, such a place as a "lake of fire" to exist eternally is an impossibility. The merciful Father would not be so cruel as to create such a thing and to exile his children therein "forever and ever." God does not punish, but consumes that which is lowly within man so that he would be acceptable in the Spirit's sight.

Creations are transient; emanations of God are eternal in a sense, although they exist according to the cycles of Activity and Rest. To think that a God of Love would create Hell to punish wrong-doers for all eternity is blasphemy. The devil-mind portrays God as one to be feared, one full of wrath, and one who eagerly casts sinful men into a burning ring for His own divine amusement. The devil-mind does not wish the children of Light to approach the Divine Throne and be united with the Supreme Being. This they will stop at all costs.

A false theology is responsible for the perpetration of the concept that man in his inherent nature is a sinful being. To attain the condition called salvation we are indoctrinated to believe that the instrument of spiritual survival is through having faith in another, in a man whom they consider to be the sole son of God--which is really a mask for what they really want us to believe. The truth, as we analyze it, is that the priesthood, with their egoistic nature desire the poor man on the street to consider them and their institution, rather than on self-reliance, as the tool of salvation, and as intermediaries of God. This belief is misleading. It misleads man to byways that go nowhere, but leave him stranded in a labyrinth of delusion. Man, himself, should learn to become his own High Priest without any one to mediate between him and God. This is how Nature would have it; it is what God, and the higher intelligences, the celestial hierarchies would want man to realize. The "sole" son of God is the Christ within, the secret mystery inculcated to disciples by the Gurus of the Esoteric Christian tradition. In Christian mysticism, the growth of the Christ child within is effected by exercises pertaining to the invoked presence and development of divinity. Some of these are given as follows :

- Constantly dwelling on the awareness of the presence of God, within and without.
- Constantly contemplating the nature of God and God's attributes.
- Visualizing and feeding daily God's threefold flame within the heart.
- Manifesting in daily life the qualities and nature of God.
- Invoking God's concentrated presence (the Shekinah) in one's consciousness
- Constantly listening to the "still, small voice," the "Voice of Silence," the reverberating Word of the Supreme.
- Increasing the Light quotient in the lower force-field of the microcosm through visualization, prayers, and invocations.
- Focusing upon the spiritual star of initiation till it grows within one's being and forms a protective halo around one's head.

- Attunement sessions with the Higher Christ Self.
- Conservation, sublimation, and the transmutation of force.
- Meditation and mystical recitations.

The exoteric Church teaches that those who believe in the man Jesus would eventuate in the physical resurrection of their decaying flesh or bones at the day of reckoning. We would all inherit or rather enter into God's kingdom, if we would obey and give credence to the dogmas invented by the priesthood. It is a pity that man would believe in such fanciful ideas, especially when St. Paul himself declares that,

"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." (I Cor 15:50)

With the above verse as representative of Truth, one wonders at the firm belief of Tertullian (circa 190 AD), an early church leader, that anyone who denies the resurrection of the flesh is a heretic. Evidently, even in those early days of Christianity, falsehoods and deceptions, which the Christ Master (of whom we should all honour and pay due respect) repudiated and opposed as satanic principles, crept into the portals of the Church. The real secret of resurrection, of the etherealization of the physical form, was transmitted secretly, and silently to those few who were worthy, those who could "bear" the sacred science.

Salvation, from an esoteric point of view, is similar to what Hindu philosophy call "moksha," "mukti," "kaivalya," or the familiar occidental term, "Liberation"-- liberation from the wheel of birth and rebirth, or reincarnation, and ignorance. Buddhists view salvation as the attainment of Nirvana, the "blowing-out" of the false ego, which results in freedom from one's sojourn in the lower spheres. He who attains such a state is an Arhat, or a "Child of God."

The Piscean avatara declared that Truth will set us free. What is this freedom? We are all familiar with the social and political freedoms : the freedom of speech, the freedom of worship, the freedom to assemble, and the freedom of the press. There are esoteric freedoms that our devotions to, and the application of Truth would manifest to us, such as :

- Freedom from past karma; from ignorance and carnal desires which create new karma.
- Freedom from pain, suffering, decay, and death.
- Freedom from the constrains of the five senses.
- Freedom from physical limitation.
- Freedom from mortal expressions.
- Freedom from Self-ignorance, fear, and superstition.
- Freedom to acquire knowledge and wisdom directly from God.
- Freedom to worship the Almighty directly in our own way.

Freedom is the gift of God to man. It is man's prerogative to claim it. The essence of true freedom may be expressed as the power to reflect God's image, just as we were so created.

Masonry symbolizes mortal limitations in their rites with the Cable Tow. The severance of the Cable frees man to earn Master's wages in the higher realms. Freedom, in a spiritual sense, implies man's capability of receiving holy communion from the Monad, his "Father in Heaven." This is illustrated in the allegory of the three personages in Genesis: Lot, Abraham, and Melchizedek. Lots represents the personal consciousness who is held captive, according to one section of the narrative, by wicked kings representing carnal thoughts and lower impulses of the animal instincts. Abraham, or the Higher Self comes to the rescue, and as a mediator between the higher and lower, offers tithes in the form of

spiritual nourishment--transmuted energies--to Melchizedek, who personifies the Monad, the Divine Spark within man. Melchizedek, in turn, offers to Abraham his spiritual force and substance represented by bread and wine. Succinctly, this is the esoteric reality of the Holy communion, the Eucharist, that occurs in the microcosm.

Let us end this topic with a simple quote from the New Testament which reflects our theme of salvation by personal effort throughout these pages:

" . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil 2:12)

The Esoteric Concept of God

Certain branches of Orthodox Christianity have unusual concepts regarding God--*he* is regarded as having human form (because God created man in his image) with a threefold personality, and with a strong male preponderance; Christians regard him as being in heaven or even in the clouds somewhere. Aside from being the son, Jesus is also regarded as of being one and the same as the ultimate God, even in the face of his own admission that he is not the Absolute :

" . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. (John:5:19)

" . . . My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark15:34)

Regarding the nature of God, the Old Testament, when taken literally, is quite shocking to spiritual sensibilities :

- God is a liar for he told Adam and Eve that they would die after eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge which did not subsequently occur after their indigestion of the fruit: *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (Gen:2:17)
- God is a deceiver for he told Moses that his name Jehovah was not known to Abraham and yet the Patriarch called a certain place Jehovah-jireh to honour Him: *"And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." (Ex 6:3) "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen." (Gen 22:14)*
- God has human frailties and failings. He is portrayed as a tyrant that punishes those that hate him; he is supposed to be a jealous God and a megalomaniac that requires our adoration so that his ego may be pleased: *"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." (Ex 20:5) "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." (Ex 34:14)*
- God is confused at times and not omniscient or all-knowing: *"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do." (Gen18:17) "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Gen 3:9) "And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" (Gen:3:11) "And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" (Gen:4:9).*
- God is also susceptible to fits of anger and wrath: *"And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day." (Deu:29:28) "Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great*

wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal." (2 Kings 23:26)

- God is also partial and given to favoritism: "*. . .saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.*" (Mal1:2,3)

There are many more abhorrent portrayals of God--the above should be enough to get one thinking. It is, however, pleasing to know that these descriptions of God are not to be taken literally and have a deeper, symbolical meaning attached to them. At least one Rabbi said that the more inconsistencies we find in the Torah and Talmud, the more profound and symbolical their meaning.

The true esoteric concept of God is not to be found written blatantly in the scriptures. Jehovah or Yahweh is not the God recognized by Jesus as the Absolute God, and certainly not as his "Father." The true teachings regarding this matter may be found in the Qabalah, in the secret, mystical oral tradition of the Rabbis.

Esoteric Christians know that God is Light, Life and Love; that God is immanent in his manifestations, as well as transcendent. Those with the gnosis are aware that God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, and that there is nothing that can limit or restrict the Source. The Supreme Being is the Unborn, the Uncreated, the Unformed. God is not anywhere, but "everywhere" is within the unlimitless being of the One. Philosophically, this is the circle whose circumference is everywhere but whose center is nowhere; or whose center is everywhere but whose circumference is nowhere. Infinite and Eternal, ever-existent, ever-conscious, ever-blissful--this is the Almighty that no words can appropriately describe or the mind totally comprehend.

Conclusion

There are lots of mysteries in the Bible, and even more mysteries in life not discussed in Holy Scriptures. When one acquires a spiritual consciousness more of the true content of the Bible stand revealed--this is the esoteric side that the child of God would grasp in his consciousness and make them as jewels in the Kingdom of God within his own consciousness. May all who read this paper strive to acquire this mystical consciousness and probe the deeper meanings that are meant for the few--the few are not chosen, they choose to be chosen.

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