

LIBER 21

GNOSTIC LECTURE #73

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

We have been given the admonition; “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.” So now you know your goal, your destiny! But modern man has lost sight of that light which flowed from all the sanctuaries of Antiquity to teach men that they were sons of God ...and so they are in the grip of slavery ...the worst possible form of slavery. When Jesus came and revealed the tremendous truth to the multitudes he was crucified; it had always been concealed from the masses up to then, for fear that once they realized their own dignity they would no longer submit to the rules and regulations imposed by the Sadducees and Pharisees. Jesus Christ was the most revolutionary of all God’s messengers. He flouted all the old laws and was made to pay on the cross for his boldness in telling the people they were all children of the same Father.

The Old Testament had already declared: “Ye are gods”, but this had been deliberately ignored, and still is, to this day. And yet the key to men’s salvation and reintegration is in their recognition of the fact that they are all children of the same Father: God, and of the same Mother: Nature or the Universal Soul. Until they realize this they will never know their true nature, they will be out of touch with the essential core of their own reality and, naturally, they will continue to suffer. Whether they refuse to acknowledge the divine origin of mankind or whether they simply neglect to seek out the divine spark within themselves, they will all suffer, for it is impossible to find happiness if one rejects the basic reality of man’s divine essence.

Yes, God has planted in the heart of man a spark, a seed, a model of perfection and splendor and has enjoined him to correspond more closely to that model until he becomes one with it. This was what Jesus was saying when he told his disciples: “Be ye therefore perfect as your Father who is in Heaven perfect.” But how can we be as perfect as our Heavenly Father if we have never seen Him and do not know what He is like? The fact is: it is not necessary to see Him! In each of us there slumbers, like a seed, that image of our Heavenly Father’s perfection, so all we need to do is nourish and water that seed and breathe life into it and, gradually, we shall come closer and closer to perfection. Deep in each man’s heart lies this seed engraved with the indestructible image of divine perfection, but it needs something to nourish it and strengthen it, something to stimulate its growth ... and that something is a high ideal: a lofty ideal is the essential catalyst if that seed is to grow into a healthy plant. It is because of this that one can say that everyone comes into the world with a mission ... but be sure you understand the word “mission” correctly. A great many, very ordinary people delude themselves with the idea that they have a mission: they have no special gifts or talents but they have got it in their heads that they have been sent by Heaven to put the world to rights ...and when one sees how puny and powerless they are, one can only laugh! Of course we do have a mission, all of us, but we must be sure we know what it is. *Our mission is to bring all the talents and virtues Heaven has sown in us to their full flowering.* It is perfectly possible that, from time to time, Heaven should choose a very special being for a very special mission ... but the mission of all men is to grow and develop until they reach perfection. Even if their talents are not outstanding, even if they seem not much better than animals, this is their mission: TO IMPROVE THEMSELVES AND TO WORK AT THEIR OWN EVOLUTION. Unfortunately, there are always plenty of “takers” for false missions ... people who think that, like Joan of Arc, they are going to save France, or somewhere else ... but their veritable mission does not interest them and that is a pity.

First and foremost we must fulfill the mission God has entrusted to each of us: to become perfect, as He is perfect. And if we cannot complete our task in one short incarnation, we shall come back and go on with it in another. For when Jesus told us to be as perfect as our Heavenly Father, reincarnation was obviously implicit in the command. Otherwise, how could he, who was so wise

and enlightened, possibly have asked human beings to become perfect in only one life? Is it possible that he did not fully realize the weakness of men or the immense majesty of God? No, if he had not considered reincarnation, this precept of becoming perfect would have been nonsense ... but in the light of reincarnation it makes perfect sense. And if Jesus demanded perfection of us, it was because he knew that perfection was the law of the entire universe.

God is perfect and man is not. But man can become perfect, for the Book of Genesis tells us that man was made in the image of God: “And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea ...” And a few lines further on, it says: “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.” The word “image” is repeated in the second verse ... but not the word “likeness” ... and one may ask, “Why?” and “What is the difference between image and likeness?” It means that God intended to create man in His own image and likeness but He did not do so. He created him only in His image, in other words He gave man all the faculties He himself possessed but He did not give him the full fruition of those faculties: the likeness.

It might help you to understand better if we take the example of an acorn: this tiny nut is in the image of its parent, the oak tree, by which I mean that it possesses potentially all the oak’s characteristics and qualities ... but it does not seem to be in the least like its parent-tree. Just look at the difference between them! The acorn can only become an oak if it is planted. Man is in the image of God, which means that he possesses the same attributes: wisdom, love, power and so on, but to an infinitely lesser degree. When, in the course of time, he attains his full stature he will be like God because he will possess the divine attributes in all their fullness.

So you see that the evolutionary process ... the passage from “image” to “likeness” implies reincarnation. God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,” *but He did not bring the likeness to completion!* “God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.” By leaving out the word “likeness” and repeating the word “image” Moses secretly implied the idea of reincarnation.

“But,” you might object, “there’s no mention of reincarnation in the Gospels.” Well, that is where you are mistaken. True, the word is not mentioned explicitly, but it is there, as plain as day, for anyone who can read.

Let’s have a look at some of the questions Jesus or his disciples asked, and the answers they received. One day Jesus asked, “Whom do men say that I am?” and we may well wonder what this question really means. Haven’t you often heard people asking a question like that? And now, look at the answer he got from his disciples: “Some say that you are John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” How can you say that someone is quite another person, especially if that other person has been dead for a long time ... unless, of course, you accept reincarnation?

On another occasion Jesus and his disciples met a man who was born blind, and his disciples asked: “Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” This man could not have sinned in his mother’s womb before he was born! So, either the question makes no sense ... or we have to recognize that Jesus and his disciples took it for granted that the blind man had lived on earth before. The disciples asked if it was his parents who had sinned because they knew from Jewish law that although every infirmity is a result of having broken the law, it does not necessarily mean that the one who pays the debt is the one who sinned, for it quite often happens that someone is allowed to sacrifice himself for another.

This was a generally accepted belief amongst the Jews of that time and the disciple’s question, therefore, implied that they knew the blind man was paying a debt incurred through a breach of the law, for no man is born blind by chance or because it had pleased God to afflict him in that way ... as

Christians imagine! And Jesus answered: “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be manifest in him.”

Men suffer for two reasons:

- (1) Because they have sinned and have to be punished, or
- (2) Because they are sinless themselves, they take on someone else’s karma and sacrifice themselves in order to hasten their own evolution.

But there is also a third category: **THOSE WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR OWN EVOLUTION AND ARE COMPLETELY FREE; THEY HAVE NO NEED TO RETURN TO EARTH.** And yet, very often, they do so because they are willing to suffer every imaginable disease, pain or infirmity, even martyrdom, in order to help other human beings. That blind man comes into this third category.

Let us consider a few more points: One day Jesus was told that John the Baptist had been put in prison and the Gospel story simply says: “Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed for Galilee.” Shortly after that, Herod ordered the execution of John the Baptist and his head was cut off. After the Transfiguration the disciples asked Jesus, “Why then do the scribes say that Elias must first come?” Jesus answered: “Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say to you, Elias has come already and they knew him not, but they have done unto him whatever they listed.” And the Gospel adds: “Then the disciples understood that he spoke to them of John the Baptist.” It is obvious, therefore, that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias. But there is another text, too, that tells us the same thing: when an angel appeared to Zacharias to tell him that his wife, Elizabeth, would bear a son, he said, “And he shall go before God in the spirit and power of Elias.”

Now, let us look at the story of Elias and see what he had done to deserve being beheaded when he came back as John the Baptist. It is a very interesting story. Elias lived at the time of King Ahab whose Queen, Jezebel, was the daughter of the King of Sidon and, because of Jezebel, Ahab and his people worshipped Baal. One day Elias came before King Ahab and reproached him for being unfaithful to the God of Israel, saying, “There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.” Then, instructed by God, Elias went and hid in the mountains so that the King could not find him. At the end of three years the country was ravaged by drought, the people were starving and God sent Elias to King Ahab once again. When Ahab saw Elias he reproached him bitterly for having caused the drought, but Elias replied: “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal ... Now therefore send and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal ,,, four hundred and fifty.” When they were all assembled, Elias told them they would now see who was the real God. “I, even I only, remain a Prophet of the Lord, but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them give us two bullocks and let them choose one bullock for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock and lay it on wood and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the god that answereth by fire, let him be God.”

The prophets did as he said and all morning long they invoked the name of Baal, “O Baal, hear us!” But there was no voice, nor any that answered ...and Elias mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or per adventure he sleepeth and must be awakened!” The prophets cried all the louder and even slashed their own bodies with knives, for, being magicians, they hoped that the blood would attract ghosts and specters who would set fire to their offering. But nothing happened. So when evening came and there was still no answer from Baal, Elias decided that was enough, and taking 12 stones he built an altar with a trench all around. Then he put wood on the altar, cut the bullock in pieces and laid the pieces on the wood and poured water all over the altar and the sacrificial bullock until it filled the trench. When everything

was ready Elias called on God: “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.” Then the fire of the Lord fell from Heaven with such power that everything was consumed; nothing was left, neither victim, nor wood, nor stones, nor water and the terrified people recognized that the God of Elias was the true God. But Elias, who no doubt was a little too pleased with himself, ordered that the four hundred and fifty priests be taken down to a nearby brook and massacred.

This is why, as was to be expected, he too had his throat cut. For there is a law, which Jesus referred to in the Garden of Gethsemane when Peter lunged at the high priest’s servant and cut off his ear. He said: “Put up again thy sword into its place for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Now the truth of these words is not always demonstrated in the space of one lifetime. Elias, for instance, did not die by the sword. Not only was he not massacred, but a fiery chariot was sent to take him straight to Heaven. It was only later, when he returned to earth as John the Baptist that he received his punishment. *Jesus knew who he was but could do nothing to save him, justice had to take it’s course.*

The Christians accepted reincarnation until the fourth century, as did the Jews, Egyptians, Indians, Tibetans, etc. ... But as we have learned previously, this doctrine was eliminated for policy reasons whereby the priests could exercise a tighter control over the lives of the faithful. No doubt some of the Church Fathers also thought that with the people believing in reincarnation ... it would give them too much time ... and they would improve too slowly, whereas if the people were told they had only one life ... they would improve more quickly. But with the elimination of the doctrine of reincarnation (and other mystical principles and practices) from the exegetics, the Church gradually invented more and more dreadful things to frighten people into obedience; ... by the Middle Ages, all they believed in was devils, Hell and eternal damnation. And not only did the people fail to improve through fear and dread ... they became worse ... and ignorant to boot! And this is why it is essential for the Christian religion to recover and restore this teaching, for nothing is true and nothing in life makes sense without it. When there is no knowledge of reincarnation it makes the God whom Jesus presented as our Father be seen as capricious and whimsical and a monster of cruelty.

If you want further proof, go and ask a priest or a pastor why such and such a person was born into an affluent family where he has every opportunity, whereas another is born in a slum and deprived of even a basic education. Why is one person good-looking, intelligent, healthy and succeeds easily and another is ugly, deformed, sickly, poor and plagued with “bad luck” and a lack of brains. He will reply that it is the will of God. Perhaps he will speak of predestination and grace, but you will not be any the wiser for it.

If such an answer is true, we are left to conclude that God is so fickle and erratic that He does whatever He fancies, that He favors some and hates others; gives to this one and not to the other arbitrarily. Well, for the sake of argument, let’s accept that this is so ... after all God is God and if it is His will ... so be it ... all we can do is bow our heads and accept whatever is our lot. But in that case how can you possibly explain why He should be furious and outraged if people who have never had a chance to learn any better behave badly, or become atheistic, unscrupulous and vicious. If it is really He who has given them that mentality, and sent them into the world with so little intelligence and such evil in their hearts, why should He then punish them? Simply because He is all-powerful? Couldn’t he have made them honest, kind, intelligent and wise? Not only is it supposed to be His fault if they commit crimes ... but in addition He punishes them for their wrong-doings too! Something is very wrong here! Why isn’t God more consistent, more logical and just? He could at least leave people alone. But no ... He has to torment them by banishing them in Hell for all Eternity!

And there, again, something is terribly wrong. How long have they been sinning for? Thirty, forty, maybe fifty years? Well, all right, let them stay in Hell for the same number of years, but no more. Not forever ... that would be unbelievably cruel.

Now, when the truth of reincarnation is accepted, everything looks quite different: It can be seen that God is really and truly Master of the universe, the noblest, most sublime and most just ... and we can understand that whatever station or position we find ourself in life ... it is because we have earned it. If we are poor, unintelligent and unhappy it is our own fault because we have not made use of all the wealth He gave us at the beginning. We wanted to try all kinds of costly experiments and He is so immensely generous and tolerant that He let us misuse our freedom.

Please write this in your notebooks in a prominent position:

WE ARE NOT PUNISHED FOR OUR SINS ... WE ARE PUNISHED BY OUR SINS!

I hope you can now see more clearly the meaning of Jesus' words: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." This precept has been rejected as being too difficult to fulfill, whereas, in fact, the point is not so much whether you are going to succeed or fail in it, but to take it seriously as an ideal to be aimed at. Shall we achieve our ideal? And if so, when? That is not for any man to say and we should not even bother our heads about it. Just remember that it is our duty to attain the likeness of God. Perhaps no human being has ever achieved it; divine perfection is so infinitely beyond us. But we must still desire and long for it, for it is this aspiration, which sparks the qualities and virtues dormant in us into life, which makes it possible for us to benefit from their existence. It is this aspiration which sets them in motion so that we can actually feel their help and support. The Creator has planted untold possibilities in us, but a high ideal is the fuse, which is needed to make them active and effective. A high ideal is what sets everything in motion.

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PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR DUES/CONTRIBUTIONS IN TIME
AND THEREBY MAINTAIN YOUR ACTIVE STATUS!

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R+C LECTURE #74

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

As was said in Liber Twenty — we are responding in these last lectures of Phase Two, to information requested by fellow members. By far the majority of questions asked have to do with reincarnation and karma, so we are having something of a blitz on these particular topics.

We read in Galatians 6:7 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” In this simple scriptural passage is summed up one of the most penetrating, exacting and far-reaching laws of a cosmic nature that have come within the scope of human knowledge — the inescapable and immutable Law of Karma. This Law is also known as the Law of Cause & Effect; or Law of Compensation.

This Law has been mentioned often in previous lectures, for reincarnation and the Law of Compensation can hardly be considered apart from each other. It is a law in both the spiritual and material worlds. It operates in and through the minutest details of life affairs, as the governor to an engine, ensuring that the ordering of our daily lives and the exercise of our free will shall only be in strict accord with the rate and measure of progress to which we are entitled as the result of merit and demerit in this life, as well as that brought over from our previous mortal expressions.

The term “Karma” is Sanskrit, and although it is a comparatively recent interpolation into the English language, it has already found extensive acceptance and a more or less general understanding. It is defined; briefly, as “the effect of any act, religious Or otherwise; the law of ethical causation regulating the future life; inevitable retribution; an idea of Brahmanic origin but developed by Buddhists.”

Among the ancients, some cults sought to develop the truth of Reincarnation into the doctrine of TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS; that is, offering punishment to those who misused their immediate mortal expressions, by having their souls incarnated in the bodies of lower animals in the next life expression. Those who used their mortal lives advantageously, were rewarded by having their souls incarnated in still better human expressions next time.

The idea of transmigration of souls was a mistaken concept, (we have already noted in Liber 20 that there is no retrogression of the soul into lower forms) ... but it is evidence of the effort to recognize the action of cause & effect, and an attempt to “make the punishment fit the crime”, or to apply retributive justice to all evil effects resulting from causes which had their origin in error, ethical or physical.

Karma is inextricably interwoven with the truth of Reincarnation and the intermediate states of consciousness between death and rebirth and also between birth and death.

The “Man from Missouri” wants to be “shown”. He wants proofs Christianity teaches the existence of Heaven and Hell. But the Christian Church cannot prove it by any laboratory method, ... or any method for that matter, acceptable to “doubting Thomases” or scientists. We shall not discuss Heaven & Hell at present, but we will say with all the positivity at our command, that the existence of that other world in some form, has been and is being proven conclusively, with as much positivity as science would require in any department of its domain, by strictly laboratory methods, through physical research. In other words, those who will “put themselves into a proper position” or condition to receive it, may possess the knowledge of actual certainty.

Just as those who require proof of the existence of “life beyond,” or the “other world,” can have it by “putting themselves in the proper position to receive it,” so also, proof of the action of Karma (both

“good” and “bad”) can be had by a similar receptive attitude of mind and far simpler, for this law does not require special development of the higher senses to make it manifest; it is observable to all who simply study carefully the operation of cause & effect not only in the natural world, but also in the ethical world of humanity⁴

Then, by the application of the laws of analogy and correspondence we shall find that karma is equally operative in both the physical world and the spiritual, world.

Mortal life is not only a day in the cosmic school of experience, but a period of great opportunity. Therein we have two duties to perform: first, to gather experience; second, to exercise our free will in the measure to which we are individually entitled, in attempting constructive work ... primarily for the world we inhabit, secondarily (and as a result there from) for ourselves and our individual progress.

Many conditions through which we pass in mortal life, the reason therefore being at the time inexplicable, may be safely accorded to Karma. For Karma is both good & evil, or rather: beneficent and punitive. Karma rewards and punishes. Therefore, when we personally experience conditions of pleasure or advantage, help, aid, assistance in time of need, favor shown us unexpectedly, ... or witness the same conditions applying in the lives of others ... we may be sure that it is due to Karmic conditions either sown in this life, or brought over from a previous existence, and which we, or others, are just now reaping the reward.

Similarly, when we experience unpleasant, disastrous, or evil conditions, for which in our limited sense of justice we can find no adequate reason, or witness the same operative in the lives of others, we may be equally sure that it is punishment for Karmic conditions, either sown in this life, or brought over from a past life expression.

We see about us on every hand, those whom life seems to favor beyond all sense of proportion to observable personal merit. Those who are thus favored have earned it for previous merit accumulated. If we see one visited with misfortune for no observable reason, we may believe it is punishment merited ... for DIVINE LAW DOES NOT ERR. The strict law of Divine Justice, unlike our human tribunals, permits no erring human to escape. NOR DOES IT FAIL TO REWARD WITH EQUALLY STRICT JUSTICE AND IN EXACT PROPORTION.

DIVINE JUSTICE HAS NO I-~'AV0LJRITES, IS NOT BIASED, IS NOT CAPRICIOUS NOR WHIMSICAL.

Mortal life is an opportunity to gather experience. Therefore, the spiritual life intervening between death ~and rebirth is another opportunity, that of digestion and assimilation of the experience gained. Otherwise, we should be judged for a period in which no opportunity for reflection and introspection was provided and even our limited human judgment will see at a glance that this could hardly be considered as an evidence of divine wisdom or justice. We gain or accumulate experience in mortal life. *We digest, assimilate and make a part of our personality and individuality ... the essence of that experience during our purely spiritual term of expression.* Can't you see the correspondence? During our physical life we consume food & drink and breathe in air. We extract from these elements the vital nutrients we need and discard the unwanted portion as waste. Similarly ... we originate causes in the mortal world ... we study their effects in the spiritual world ...and like taking an inventory, we determine the Karmic accumulation of merit or demerit, as the case may be.

We have already seen in a previous Liber¹ why we do not ‘remember’ past existences on earth, but there is also another obvious and benevolent reason as well. Can you think what that reason could be?

¹ Lecture #14, paragraph 4

DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS (keep to the point)

Now right here a note of warning must be sounded. Too much should not be taken for granted. Many people who become acquainted with the Law of Karma ascribe almost everything under sun to its action. Nothing of the sort. Karma is not so easily discerned as that.

No human being is exempt from Karma. All are subject to this law. The administration of the Law of Karma rests with the same divine intelligence that directs all the movements of the orbs of the universe and the forms of life thereon. Divine justice will mete to every one his or its just punishment and rewards, so we need not fear that the culprit who escapes human justice through corrupt courts and political, social and financial influence, can ever escape the full measure of his wrong. THE PROCESS OF KARMA, IN ITS "GOOD" AND "BAD" ASPECTS, IS DIRECTED BY THE SAME DIVINE INTELLIGENCE THAT NOTES EVEN THE SPARROW'S FALL.

If the Law of Karma did not operate, the scriptures of the religions of the world would be proven wrong, for they all teach this Universal Law. And, if it were not for this Law of Karma, well might we become discouraged, for all about us we see the evil doers not only escaping from the immediate consequences of their acts, ... but often we see them exalted in the community as successful, clever, able and "good business men." As W. J. Bryan once said, "There are three kinds of larceny: if one steals a loaf of bread, that is petty larceny and he is sent to prison for a term of years. If he robs a bank, that is grand larceny and he gets several months. If he steals a railroad, that is GLORIOUS LARCENY and he becomes a pillar of the community."

Often we are asked, in regard to some unfortunate condition relating to a fellow man, "Do you think it is his Karma?" In our limited judgment and fallibility only a higher Intelligence can tell for certain if it is Karma, or a condition resulting from some erroneous free will act committed possibly in good faith.

Understanding the Law of Karma shows us how we are responsible for the lives of others; how we are in fact: our brother's keepers. For every thought, word and deed that originates with each of us, affects in some measure several, perhaps many, other human beings. No one can live unto himself. We are all interdependent. If we were responsible only for ourselves, and if we were rewarded or punished only for our merits and demerits as they relate singularly and individually to ourselves, the Karma would be a comparatively simple law and we could regulate our lives accordingly without too much trouble.

The fact is, however, that our every thought, word and deed influences one or a multitude of other human beings ... *and we are responsible, not only for the results of such thoughts, words and deeds as they relate to ourselves, but also as they relate to or affect and influence the resulting thoughts, words and deeds of others.*

If through a hateful expression from one human being regarding another, a third human being is inspired to go forth and do a violence to the second being, the primary responsibility will Karmically rest upon the one who first inspired it. Thus it will be seen that our entire human lives form a complex network of interlaced influences, affecting multitudes of other human beings whom we have never seen, or of whom we may never have heard, yet in some measure, we are responsible for much of their individual activities and results.

"Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." This is the Law of Karma or Causation ..and it follows us

from mortality to beyond the grave into the spiritual world. It follows us from the spiritual world through rebirth into the physical world. There is no escape. But it is not to be dreaded! On the contrary ... it is something for which we should be thankful, for it gives us the “new chance” so many cry for. By right living, right thinking and right feeling, we can unconsciously “work off” little by little our accumulation of “bad” Karma, and if we know the law, we can consciously endeavor each day to create our future the way we want it to be. In the parlance of the day it means having to “watch our step” at every turn ... and soon we shall find our lives regulated in such a manner that we shall instinctively rebel at any sort of thought, word or deed of a retrogressive nature.

In bringing this discourse to an end, let us not be under the false impression that asking for and receiving “forgiveness means having our bad debts miraculously dissolved. A child who loses his temper and breaks his father’s stereo set may well ask to be forgiven and receive it ... but in the act of forgiveness the damage is not miraculously repaired. Now here is a question for you to ponder: You can go to the bank and withdraw money from your account only as long as you have money on the account. Can you ask for — and — receive God’s Grace ... if you have no “Karmic credit” in the Spiritual Bank? Also: Does God intervene, of His own accord, in the lives of men?? We would appreciate having your views on this when you write us.

“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” If we begin with the thoughts, in the heart, our outward actions and words will soon be shaped accordingly; in other words, let us begin our corrective measures right at the source, ... which is mental. According to the Hermetic maxim: “as within, so without,” ... if our inner thoughts and ideas are right, our outer manifestations will naturally be in accord therewith. Furthermore, by deliberate acts and words of an intentionally constructive nature, without any selfish or personal motive attached thereto, we can set in operation forces which will act powerfully for good as they spread out in every direction. Like the ever-widening circles of ripples caused by throwing a stone into a clear pool, they will reach an extent unknown to us individually, but nevertheless surely ... and the energy developed by them will do much toward the annihilation of destructive forces previously instituted by us ... and help us to swell the balance on the credit side of our individual Karmic accounts.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom.

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1. What is “Karma”?
2. How can we gain proof of the action of this law?
3. Why did Jesus not try to save John the Baptist?
4. Why did God create man in His image, but not in His likeness?
5. What is the warning given in regard to Karma?
6. What special responsibility does Karma impose upon us?
7. Where should we begin to develop “good” Karma?
8. What is the value of having a high ideal?

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In 1906, the magazine I.N.R.I. was published in England. The Honorary Director was Papus and the Editor was Teder. It said of itself: “I.N.R.I. is in the British Common wealth, like the “INITIATION” on the Continent, the only official organ of the following centres: Independent Group of Esoteric Studies; Martinist Order; Kabbalistic Order of the Rose+Cross; High School of Hermetic Sciences; Universal Idealist Union; F.T.L.; Sovereign Sanctuary of the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry; Rite of Swendenborg.”

We give below a short paragraph written by J. J. Casanova, who was born at Venice in 1725, INRI Vol 2, and on page 18 we reproduce an article on the Martinist Order from INRI, Vol. 1, April/May issue, 1906.

THE SECRETS OF INITIATION

The Secrets of Initiation are, by their very essence, inviolable; for the man who knows them can only have discovered them himself. He has found them while frequenting well-instructed lodges, by observing, comparing and judging doctrines and symbols. Rest assured, then, that once he has arrived at this result, he will guard it with the utmost care, and will not communicate it even to those of his brethren in whom he has confidence; for, since they have been unable to discover the secrets for themselves, they would be equally unable to grasp the real meaning if they received them only by word of mouth.

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LECTURE #75

The following piece of Architecture was presented at a conventicle of Lodge Benevolence by one of the brethren:



Most I:: and V::: Grand Master, Brothers & Sisters:

My address to you tonight is on the subject of spirituality. I have been prompted to present this paper on this particular subject because one day, not so long ago, I overheard someone asking another exactly what was meant by 'spirituality'. I thought, therefore, that this would be an interesting topic to explore with you, since this subject will certainly be of interest to all Martinists.

Let me begin right at the point. From my own position, I do not consider spirituality and religion to be synonymous. Let us be clear on this: the ultimate purpose of religion is to unfold spirituality ... but spirituality and religion is not the same.

Spirituality is, essentially, a state of human consciousness, a certain way of thinking and willing, which profoundly effects one's way and style of living _and therefore their being. For example: what you are _and what you will become.

There is that well known injunction: "seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven." What does this mean? This is referring to the acquisition of a new level of spiritual consciousness. The question you will now wish to ask yourself is: "How can I alter and expand my human consciousness so as to achieve at least some vivid flashes of this new state of consciousness to guide me and inspire me on my Quest?"

The first step on this Path is *to turn to yourself, or into yourself, for your personal growth and development*. Remember the old saying of Angelus Silesius: "If that which thou seekest thou findest not within thyself _thou wilt surely not find it without." Yes, Brothers & Sisters! There is the jewel so few ever find _ those who spend their whole life reading books and joining this and that organization in a relentless search for truth. They will never find it! And you will never find it either if you persist in looking on the outside for that which is inside!

You must acquire first: systematic self-knowledge, then self-mastery and finally, self-realization. There is simply no substitute for these simple fundamentals and they must be acquired, however painfully and slowly.

In the past, self-knowledge, self-mastery and self-realization (which is psychospiritual work aimed at discovering one's spiritual Self and aligning one's consciousness with It) ... were high and distant goals reserved for the few who were set apart from the rest of humanity and who were especially trained for this purpose through rigorous and very demanding disciplines. Today, these great fundamental aims of human nature are open to all who truly search for and desire them. They can be realized through methodologies designed to get down to the essentials of the work, cutting out all the unnecessary ideological and semantical adornments and encumbrances with which they were clothed in the past.

The Quest and its essentials remains the same but its cultural vehicles and expressions must be adapted to present times and needs. And it is to these basic essentials, which our Martinist Work addresses itself. Once again the Great Work of the Traditional Esoteric Brotherhood is reappearing on the contemporary scene ... but it is clothed and masked in modern dress and is being carried out through a modern approach which is answering to the needs, ideals and consciousness of our age. The fundamental Truth, of course, remains the same ... because, as you know, there is only ONE Truth.

There are certain very simple, universal and unchanging elements, which can be summarized as follows:

- (1) A spiritual discipline aiming at consciously altering, transforming and expanding human consciousness so as to give birth to a new and qualitatively different type of consciousness ... that is: SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS.
- (2) A philosophy of life and an ethic by which to organize and structure one's entire daily life so as to progressively incarnate and live what is revealed in this higher state of consciousness.

I submit to you that this transformation and expansion of one's consciousness can effectively be brought about through:

- (a) The mystical use of our regalia.
- (b) The sensitizing of that aspect of ourselves we call our conscience ... and, as a result, living what we feel.
- (c) Persistent practice of the exercises and principles being given via the ICOM's Libers.

The spiritual discipline and Way of Life are grounded in the two axes of all the Genuine Traditions:

The love of God, and

The love of Man.

In the Western Spiritual Tradition, the specific formulation of these two main axes is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind," and, secondly: "Thou shalt love thy fellow man as thyself."

Underpinning the love of God is WORSHIP ... climbing the sacred mountain wherein the Divine dwells and can be encountered in other words: within yourself.

Underpinning the love of Man is SERVICE ... helping one's fellow men to unfold their being and actualize their potentialities to the highest extent so that life may express through them as consciously and fully as possible.

The science or knowledge, and art or practice of effective worship ... and the science or art of effective service ... constitute the very center of spiritual life, which was, and is, the aim of the sacred traditions. Moreover, worship must precede service, for in order to have the means to truly help one's fellow man, one must be illuminated, vitalized and guided by the Light of the Spirit.

The synthesis and culmination of worship and service is union with God (with one's Spiritual Self), which has ever been the final and supreme goal of all the sacred traditions.

In concluding my talk with you tonight, I cannot help but share with you an observation of mine: I notice that there are so many people who can freely quote from the scripture, chapter and verse; there are others whose heads are filled with great intellectual concepts ... and yet when you look at their lives, their attitudes, their behavior, their deeds ... their fruit ... there is nothing!

I cannot help but stress, Brothers and Sisters, that which you are constantly reminded about: Teachers can only point the way! It is it to YOU to put into practice, to manifest in your life ... the concepts and ideals you hold in your mind!

I adjure you, beloved brethren, to let your Light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.

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(A lively discussion followed this address at which the brethren present voiced their appreciation of the discourse. The importance of having goals, and striving to realize them was echoed and emphasized.)

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**ALCHEMIC/HERMETIC
LECTURE #76 (A)**

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

In Matthew 13:11 we read "It is given unto YOU to KNOW the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." This assurance, from the Gospel writer known as Matthew is a most appropriate corollary to the mantram we have been recalling in the lectures of the Hermetic series: "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." It will be especially applicable in a very personal sense when we begin the Alchemical Instructions in due time.

Many students of the Hermetic Doctrine upon reaching this stage of their studies, often experience a certain sense of hopelessness as to their ability to go farther in the Mysteries, saying within themselves, "what are these mysteries, and when shall I ever be able to even recognize them, let alone understand them?"

It is on this account that the subject of the present Instruction was chosen. Each student is requested to read and study carefully the Parable of the Sower, at the very beginning of the 13th Chapter of Matthew. This may, in fact should be done once every day during the interim between this and the next Liber. Let the entire Parable be a subject of meditation and concentration.

For the present, however, we shall note the words of the Disciples, who came to Jesus and asked: "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He answered: "Because it is given to YOU to know the

mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because they seeing, see not and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.”

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”

Hermetic students must remember that in all the great world religions the original revelations were given in the form of parable for two principle reasons:

FIRST: because the language of the ancients both in the schools of the prophets and the Temple Hierarchies, was “Hieratic;” it had an exoteric meaning for the people, and an esoteric meaning for the Priests and Initiates ... and parable formed the easiest mode of conveying a specific truth.

SECOND: because, having a spiritual or esoteric meaning, it required individual mental activity on a spiritual plane, in order to understand the inner or real meaning. Spiritual things are to be spiritually discerned. (I Cor. 2:14)

Let us consider for a moment the character of the disciples who asked this question: “Why do you speak to them in parables?”

Twelve men, far below the average in learning or intellectual attainment and with the exception of Luke, the Greek physician, chosen from lowly and menial forms of employment, unembarrassed by any social prestige, practically unknown, and surely less adequately equipped to understand the fundamental truths of life, that we of today of whom it might be truthfully be said as in Matthew 13, 17th verse: “that many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which WE see, have not seen them ... and to hear those things which WE hear, and have not heard them.

Yet with those 12 uncouth men, after the brief ministry of three years the Master Initiate gave to mankind a revelation through parable that became’ the basis of a world religion that has been the all-powerful, dominant factor for nearly 20 centuries.

This is our example. From it we may learn that not in the universities or schools of this world are we to gain the higher wisdom for again it is written in the great book: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man ... the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” (I Cor.2:9)

And right in keeping with the former statements regarding the hieratic and parable we find that the way in which we are to KNOW the mysteries by spiritually discerning them, is also given us in the great book, in the very next verse to the one just quoted: “But God has REVEALED THEM unto US by His SPIRIT; for the Spirit searcheth ALL things, yea, the deep things of God.” (I Car. 2:10).

Every teacher of the mysteries is called upon frequently to recommend certain books, wherein the student can “read up” and get ahead in the Divine Science. The careful teacher will hesitate to respond as desired, solely because that would defeat the very purpose of occult study, which, is to help the student towards at-one-ment by personal, individual effort.

The fallibility of books and human concepts is shown in the continuation of our quotation: “For what man knows the things of a man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? Even so the things of God know NO Man, but the Spirit of God.”

Therefore, to those who ARE in very truth desirous of KNOWING the Mysteries, and willing to apply themselves actively, — not as listeners only, — but by personal endeavor to discern spiritually, let the next verse come as a revelation: “Now WE have received, not the Spirit of the World, but the SPIRIT WHICH IS OF GOD; that WE might KNOW the things that are FREELY

GIVEN TO US OF GOD. (I Cor. 2:12). Which things also we speak NOT IN THE WORDS WHICH MAN'S WISDOM TEACHETH, But which the HOLY SPIRIT teacheth; COMPARING SPIRITUAL THINGS WITH SPIRITUAL."

Let all R+CH recall the words once spoken to each, that the OBJECT of the Art is the perfecting and improvement of Man, his transformation from a STATE OF NATURE, TO A STATE OF GRACE (or Spiritual understanding). With this in mind, consider the next verse, (I Cor. 2:14): "But the NATURAL MAN receiveth NOT the things of the Spirit of God, far they are foolishness to him; neither can he KNOW them because they are spiritually discerned."

Now the power of the Mind of Christ in us, is not an exterior principle acting upon us from without according to orthodox theological postulates. *It is the actu21, living mind of the Christos, which, after indrawing into Mother Earth after its exit from the Corpus of Jesus on Golgotha, became the Indwelling Spirit of Mother Earth, and hence IS, ACTUALLY PRESENT 2W EVERY LIVING BEING WHICH HAS DRAWN BREATH SINCE THAT GREAT EPOCHAL EVENT.*

The student may enquire: why was it not possible far the Prophets who foresaw the mysteries ... to be able to understand them ...they undoubtedly having been spiritually minded men?

We find the answer in the second chapter, verse seven, which also explains the necessity for the so-called crucifixion: "But WE speak the Wisdom of God in MYSTERY ... EVEN THE HIDDEN WISDOM, which God ordained before the World unto our glory. (8) WHICH NONE OF THE PRINCES OF THIS WORLD KNEW: FOR HAD THEY KNOWN IT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CRUCIFIED THE LORD." ...and had they not crucified the Lard, the Christ Spirit or Sun Initiate would not have been able to use the out flowing blood and water as the vehicles through which it could have entered the earth ... and not being able to become the Indwelling Spirit thereof, it would not have been able to penetrate with its life all the subsequent living forms.

WHILE THE CHRISTOS DWELT OUTSIDE THE EARTH, HUMANITY HAD PROPHECY AND REVELATION. SINCE THE CHRISTOS HAS INDRAWN, HUMANITY HAS HAD FULFILLMENT WITH THE CONSEQUENT RAPID DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION, INTELLECTUAL ATTAINMENT ... AND WITH THE INDRAWN SPIRIT ... SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

So then, to every student and to every class, the Teacher who is conscious of his personal responsibility will say in the words of the writer of Corinthians (2:4) "And my speech and my preaching WAS NOT WITH ENTICING WORDS OF MAN'S WISDOM BUT IN DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT AND POWER. (5) That YOUR faith should NOT stand in the WISDOM OF MEN, but in the Power of God. "Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, not of the princes of this world (intellectual or scientific princes as well as political) that are COME TO NOUGHT."

The whole process of spiritual discernment is that of becoming AT-ONE with the Indwelling Spirit, knowing as we do, that from the standpoint of logical scientific reasoning, it dwells within us, and we in it, as summed up in the words of the prayer which reads ... "that WE MAY DWELL IN HIM, AND HE IN US." We shall be able to realize this great truth more fully if instead of trying to visualize an exterior Deity, we comprehend somewhat of the conditions under and through which Deity functions and operates.

We DO, literally and logically, DWELL IN HIM, and His Spirit pervades ALL. He literally and logically DOES DWELL IN US. "In Him we Live, and Move, and have our Being."

Our individual consciousness is the sum total of the consciousness of the individual cells within us. The God consciousness is the sum total of the consciousness of all the Human Cells composing the

organs of the God-body. The Cosmic consciousness is the sum total of the Consciousness of all the Gods or Creative Logoi merged into the Supreme Being, hence back to the Absolute.

Thus, All is ONE, and that ONE is ALL, and so each of us HAS within himself the God or Spiritual consciousness through which we can discern spiritual things if we MAKE THE EFFORT TO AWAKEN THIS SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS INTO ACTIVITY.

“Be ye doers, not hearers only” is the admonition. This Spiritual Consciousness is not a matter of specific developmental process like the awakening and functioning of spiritual or physical powers; it is easily awakened and brought into activity simply by the keen, unselfish, GENUINE DESIRE THEREFORE.

It is perfectly possible for us to KNOW THE MYSTERIES if we put ourselves into the proper position to know them. It is not possible for us to know them simply by attending lectures and classes, or going to church, or by reading books about them. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN US, and we must look within, not without or on the pages of any book ... to discern the Mysteries ... for do we not learn in the Chg. of Sand. that “THE UNIVERSAL ORB OF THE WORLD CONTAINS NOT SO GREAT MYSTERIES AS A LITTLE MAN, made in the Image of God?”

THE MYSTERIES ARE WITHIN ... AND LECTURES AND SERMONS AND BOOKS ARE BUT ATTEMPTS ON THE PART OF SOME TO INTERPRET THEM EXOTERICALLY.

God is One, said Pythagoras, who summed up the whole doctrine in his teaching that GOD WAS ONE, a single substance, whose continuous parts extend throughout all the Universe, without separation, difference or inequality, like the diffusion of the soul throughout the Human Body. The World or Universe was compared to Man: The Principle of Life that moves it ... to that which moves Man; the Soul of the Universe ... to that of Man. Therefore, Pythagoras called Man a Microcosm or little world, as possessing in miniature all the qualities found on a great scale in the Universe ... by this reason an INTELLIGENCE partaking of the Divine Nature. Thus, he made the Universe a Great Intelligent Being, like Man ... an Immense Deity, having in itself what man has in himself: movement, Life and Intelligence and besides: a perpetuity of existence, which man has not; and as having in itself perpetuity of movement and Life ... therefore the Supreme Cause of All.

And because we are a part of God manifest, and each one of us micro-cosmically a God manifest, dwelling in the greater, and the greater dwelling in and through us, the lesser, so we DO HAVE THE SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS TO DISCERN SPIRITUALLY THE SPIRITUAL THINGS, IF WE HAVE THE DESIRE TO DISCERN THEM.

In the child is concealed the future man. In the man is concealed the future God. The child properly cultivated can be brought to a state of intellectual attainment and maturity long before the neglected urchin of the streets. The man, properly cultivated for the awakening of the God qualities can be brought to a state of spiritual attainment, power and comprehension long before the dry-as-dusts of the universities and creed—bound systems of orthodoxy. Such systems are necessary for those who are as yet unable to do their own thinking. And doing one’s own thinking does not mean ultra radicalism, anarchy or rebellion against the duly constituted order of things. It means to understand that order thoroughly ... and to use it as the basis of advancement. One does not climb by knocking away one’s support from under him before he has begun to climb. One does not advance spiritually by throwing away those fundamentals upon which great men and women have climbed to lofty heights of power before they knew a better way.

The Apostle saith, “Are ALL Apostles? Are ALL Prophets? Are ALL Teachers? Are ALL workers of miracles? Have ALL the Gifts of Healing? Do ALL speak with Tongues? Do ALL Interpret? But COVET EARNESTLY THE BEST GIFTS and yet I show you a more excellent way.” (I Cor. 12:29-31).

That “more excellent way” is the way of at-one-ment with the All-consciousness, whereby we CAN easily discern the things of the Spirit of which all the manifestations just named are but incidental revealments of the omnipotence of real Spiritual Power. All these things will be added unto him who seeks FIRST of all the Kingdom ... and seeks it within himself ... *not by listening to another, but by working it out in your own personal experience*. Men and women in the busiest departments of everyday life ARE doing it ... and proving it ... to their own satisfaction and lasting joy, and the benefit of those with whom they came to as messengers, in contact.

NOW, SOME QUESTIONS!

1. How are the Mysteries revealed to the student?
2. What is meant by Man’s “State of Nature?”
3. What is meant by Man’s “State of Grace?”
4. What guidance had Humanity prior to the Crucifixion?
5. What specific result has obtained since the Indrawing of the Christos?



THIRD COLLEGE EXAM

- (1) WRITE A SHORT ESSAY AND STATE BRIEFLY AND CONCISELY JUST WHAT YOUR CONCEPT OF THE “MYSTERIES” IS; WHAT THEY MEAN TO YOU AND HOW FAR YOU FEEL YOU HAVE PROGRESSED TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEM.
- (2) ALSO ANSWER THIS QUESTION FULLY: WHAT IS THE VERY PURPOSE OF OCCULT STUDY?

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF
BEING A MARTINIST.

While there are disadvantages in any organization, it is conceded that the benefits are greater than the evils. Of the Martinist Order we can truly say the advantages are so many and so great that we see no evil whatever. In the first place, it is one of the few Orders that demand no adherence to creed or belief. Whatever the belief of the candidate, he does not need to change it or take up a new one. He is expected however to live up to his highest conception of it to the best of his ability.

He has no need to fear there may be some selfish motive in the Order, for each new member only increases the work of some delegate, who could go on with his own development without any one else. There are no fees and dues, and the instructions which are sent out from time to time, are free. The suspicious man of the world asks: "What can be the motive for increasing the membership?"

A true Martinist does not work for his personal interest, but to bring man back to his pristine powers. The time has passed when men can say they are doing the work of God and humanity, and live like the world and love the things of the world, and serve self like the rest of the world. Men have ceased to be influenced by this kind of christian work and the day has come that the standard is changing until men who claim to be Apostles of Christ, must live his life and be able to prove by their works that they have some of the gifts mentioned in the later part of the Gospel of Mark.

The Martinist Order stands for this, and for the equality of the sexes as to ability to develop the higher and Divine gifts.

Its centre is in France, where it first organized, but its members are found in every part of the globe. The founder was Louis Claude de Saint Martin. His writings are unlike any others and would change the entire world if they were only translated into the different languages, but in the British Empire there are but few copies of two of his books, and these are in the large libraries that prize them so highly that they will not permit them to be taken out. All the other works of this illumined man are in his native tongue, and we hope in the near future we shall be able to have them translated and published. His teachings are the foundation of all that is taught in the Order. Whatever may be the knowledge attained on other lines, it cannot usurp the place of this.

Martinism does not only show the way to illumination, but holds the light on the path that leads to it. It stands for the most generous, and liberal and Christ like teachings that are given in any organization, without restrictions as to belief on lines of reading, it insists on the daily living in communion with the Logos or *Word*.

As the little leaven will leaven the whole measure of meal, so this Order should change the whole world till those who see the sick, either in body or mind, healed, will say: "They must belong to the Order of Louis Claude de Saint Martin."

Another benefit of belonging to this Order is the advantage it gives of help and counsel from the wise men who (both in the body and out of it) are ever ready to send by the finer farces of nature, the strength or help needed. Many do not believe the words of Saint Paul: "We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses" but no one can be a Martinist long without proving the truth of his words.

