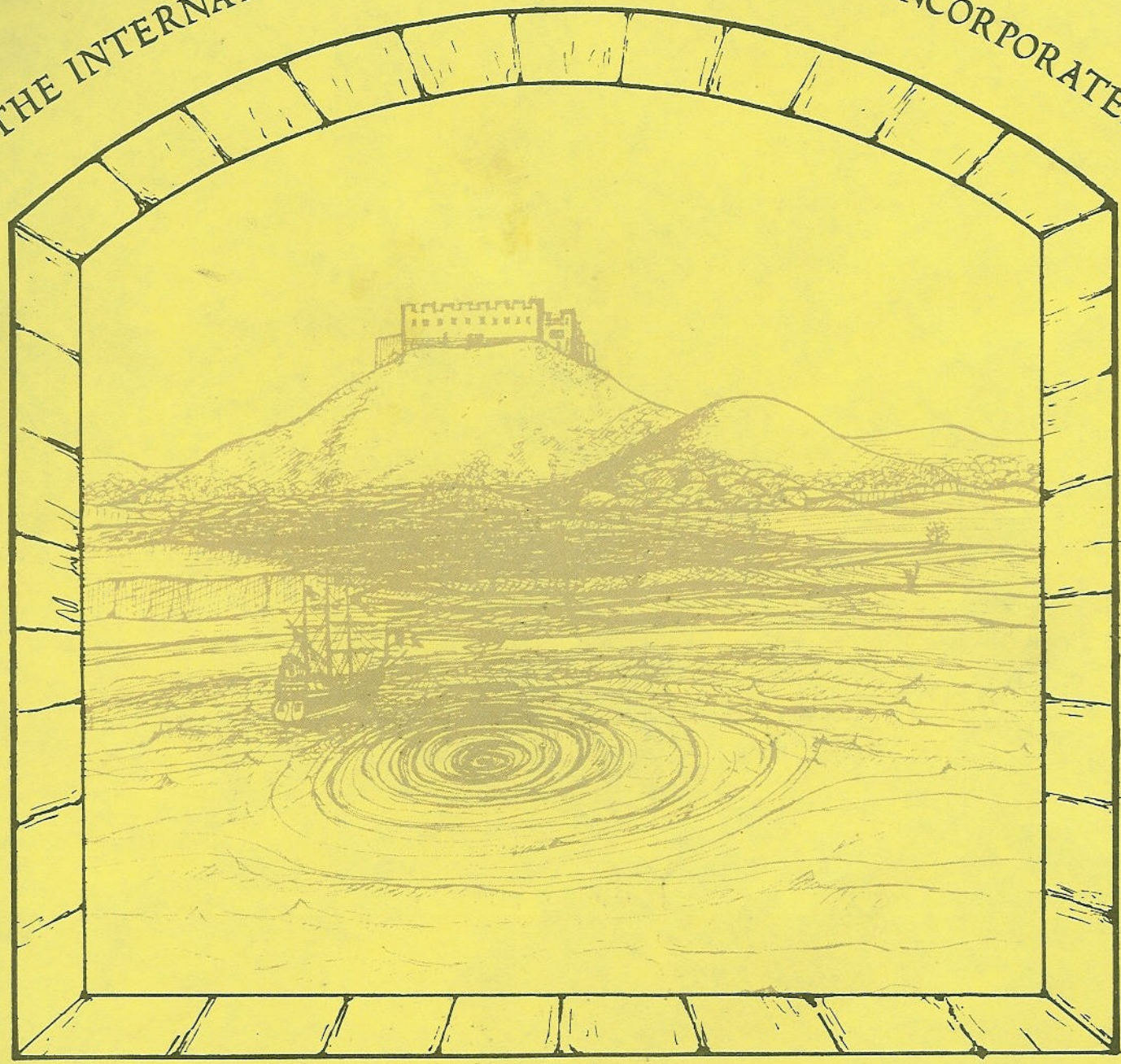


THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF MARTINISTS INCORPORATED

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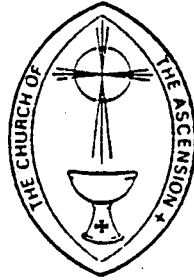
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DEVOTED TO THE ADVANCEMENT AND MYSTICAL ENLIGHTENMENT OF MAN

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Essene - Gnostic "Chrestian Ekklesia"



#234

PART 1

THE MASTER TEACHER

An enquiry into the true identity of "Jesus Christ"

Many students of esoteric subjects as well as orthodox Christians are so used to considering the spiritual revelation of Jesus Christ in an historical context that it is no wonder that there is so much contradictory information available concerning his true identity. A great deal of time may be spent in considering the conflicting theories of the many authors who have written on this subject. In your local public library you may well find a copy of a book which came up a few years ago in which the author claims to prove that the Jesus of the New Testament Gospels was really a man called Onias The Just. Along side it you may find another book which may convince you that Jesus was really Apollonius of Tyana. Another may claim that Jesus was really Jesus ben Pandira, a person mentioned in The Talmud who actually lived and died exactly as The Old Testament predicted. If you pick up a book of Islamic legends you may come across the story of Jesus being revived with medicines after the Crucifixion and afterwards living to a ripe old age in India.

In occult circles there are many legends about the so-called unknown period of Jesus's life. According to one of them the years of Jesus's life from the age of twelve to the beginning of his ministry around the age of thirty were spent in study in The Mystery Schools of Egypt. This legend relates to claims that his mother Mary and her consort Joseph were both students of The Mystery Schools and that the dangers for their prophesied child could be reduced to a minimum by spending this period in Egypt. Other legends claim that Jesus visited some to the schools in the Himalayas.

During the last few years some people in the theological world have been astonished by claims that Jesus studied in Japan and, after his brother took his place on the cross of Golgotha, he returned to Japan, married and had lots of children. According to an old French legend, Jesus married Mary Magdalene and had children by her. The Merovingian Kings of France are said to have been descendants of Jesus and Mary.

One learned archaeologist concludes from his discoveries that Jesus had a wealthy uncle, a tin maker by trade, who sent him to Europe to study. During his travels, Jesus is said to have visited Stonehenge and Glastonbury.

One person has managed to "prove" that the name "Jesus Christ" was never mentioned at all by the early Church Fathers but was an agreement to join together the names of the Druid Sun God, Hesus, and the Hindu saviour Krishna. This was done, apparently, at a council convened some time around the fourth century A.D. Another has claimed to have located Jesus alive and well on the planet Venus and through his mediumship Jesus is able to continue speaking directly to his many followers on Earth.

Of course, there have been thinkers who have denied that Jesus ever existed and have regarded him as a mythical figure. Although this view is not supported by the majority of responsible scholars, there is much conflict of opinion about what can be reasonably be accepted as historical fact about the person and the myth of Jesus. It will be well to emphasize here that there are historical facts to be accounted for and one of the objectives of the remainder of this talk is to try and put these facts into their proper perspective.

Some of the earliest information we have about the historical Jesus is to be found in a work called "The Annales of Tacitus". This work shows the modern reader what an educated and distinguished Roman historian knew and thought about Christianity some eighty years after its birth.

Historically, the most certain fact that we know about Jesus is that he was crucified for sedition against the Roman government in Judea. The Roman Governor who ordered his execution was Pontius Pilate, who held the office of Governor of Judea from 26 to 36 A.D. This execution is recorded not only by Tacitus but also by the authors of the four New Testament Gospels. These authors might have wished to suppress such damaging evidence because, if Jesus had been crucified for sedition it would have been an embarrassing fact for them. For Jesus's followers it would have meant that their leader had been condemned as a rebel against Rome and they were likely to be incriminated as well.

According to Tacitus, Nero was suspected of burning Rome in 64 A.D. To free himself from suspicion, "the Emperor fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their vices whom the people called Christians. Christus, from whom the name derived, suffered the extreme penalty under the reign of Tiberius on the order of the procurator, Pontius Pilate. Their pernicious superstition, suppressed for the moment, broke out again, not only in Judea, the source of the evil, but in Rome itself. Accordingly, acknowledged members of the sect were first arrested, then, upon their evidence, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much for the crime of firing the city, as of hatred for mankind."

This passage from "The Annales" indicates the Tacitus thought that:

- a) early Christianity was a dangerous and subversive movement;
- b) its founder had been executed for sedition by the Roman Governor of Judea;

- c) the execution had only temporarily checked the movement, and it had spread from Judea to the underworld of Rome; and
- d) the people of the time believed that Christians hated mankind.

This made it easy for Nero to make them the scapegoats for the firing of Rome.

This work by Tacitus is a most important historical document regarding early Christianity as it is the earliest non-Christian source of information, all other information comes from Christian writings that were inspired by theological rather than historical interest. The Christian Gospels purport to give factual accounts of the life of Jesus and these writings are based on the assumption that Jesus was not just a man but that he was the Son of God sent into the world to save mankind. This assumption involves some complex theology, it has nothing to do with historical fact. However, these theological ideas are historically important because they formed the basis of Christianity, and the birth of Christianity is one of the most important milestones in religious history. We must, therefore, consider how these ideas originated and trace how they developed into the religion we know today as Christianity. We must also explain who Jesus was and what he taught and did as an historical person.

The authors of the New Testament Gospels could hardly have suppressed the fact of Jesus's execution. It was too well known an event for anyone to conceal. Instead, they tried to show that Jesus was really innocent of sedition. The Gospel of Mark, the earliest of the four New Testament Gospels, sets the theme for the others by trying to show that the death of Jesus had been plotted by Jewish leaders who hated him. The Sanhedrin lacked the authority to execute Jesus and so it handed him over to Pilate. Charged with sedition, Jesus stood his trial. The Gospels relate that Pilate was not convinced of Jesus's guilt and sought to have him set free, but the Jewish leaders stirred up the mob until Pilate was forced to accede and order the execution. So, Christian evidence admits that Jesus was executed for sedition, but it also maintains that he was innocent.

The situation for the Jewish people at that time was extremely dangerous. It became even more so for the Christians of Rome about 71 A.D. Mark's Gospel deals with this. Mark's attempt to turn Pilate into a witness to the innocence of Jesus breaks down in a critical analysis bringing a startling picture into focus. The Romans crucified Jesus as a rebel because they considered him to be one. There is much evidence from various sources attesting to this piece of history.

Jesus is said to have been a native of Nazareth in Galilee and was first associated with John The Baptist who announced, in the manner characteristic of Hebrew prophecy, the imminence of The Kingdom of God and sought to prepare the Jews for this event by a baptism of repentance. After the arrest of John by Herod Antipas, Jesus carried on the mission alone. After some success in Galilee, he encountered opposition from the Jewish authorities. Jesus soon became convinced

that these authorities were delaying Israel's preparation for The Kingdom of God. The priestly aristocracy, headed by The High Priest, controlled The Temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem, and their position gave them a rich income as well as great authority. Seeing them as the chief obstacle to Israel's conversion, Jesus challenged their control of The Temple. With his disciples and followers, he staged a Messianic entry into Jerusalem at The Feast of The Passover. Gathering support, he attacked the trading activities of the Temple which were a profitable source of revenue for the priestly aristocrats.

After the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus stayed on in Jerusalem until the night of The Passover Feast, which he ate with his disciples in the city. Between the time of the cleansing of the Temple and that of the Feast, he withdrew from the city each night, as he seems to have been uncertain of his next move. By the time of the Passover Feast he probably realized that his attempt to challenge the authorities had failed and it would be wiser to withdraw to Galilee. In Gethsemane that night he experienced an agony of indecision. The initiative passed from him to his enemies. One of his apostles, Judas Iscariot, had defected and betrayed his rendezvous to the Jewish leaders.

It is difficult for many people to evaluate the events which occurred after the crucifixion of Jesus. There is a story of his being buried in a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, that he resurrected and appeared to some of his disciples, although nobody outside their circle recorded a similar sighting. Although the physical presence of Jesus is stressed, nothing is said about him resuming his life on earth. Instead, he is said to have ascended to heaven.

The transformation of Christianity from a strictly Jewish Messianic cult to a universal salvation religion centred on Jesus was due to Paul of Tarsus. Paul had not been an original disciple, in fact he had at first rejected Jewish Christianity because it preached a crucified Messiah (quite unacceptable to a pious Jew) and he helped to persecute members of the movement. On one memorable occasion, however, Paul had a profound spiritual experience on the road to Damascus. He attributed this to the intervention of God. Paul became convinced that God had chosen him to reveal Jesus to the Gentiles in a completely different guise than the one presented by the Jewish Christians.

It is an indisputable historical fact that Paul's new conception of Jesus drew its inspiration from Greek ideas rather than from Judaism. The philosophy of the Gnostics, which was widely followed in Syria, Alexandria and farther east, held that all mankind was enslaved by demonic powers and taught how Self-Knowledge (Gnosis) could save man from subjection to their rulership, and that God had sent Jesus into the world for the salvation of mankind. The Greco-Roman society of the time could understand and appreciate Paul's ideas derived from the esoteric doctrines of the Gnostics. Jesus was presented by Paul as a saviour-God who had died and risen again. Through the sacrament of baptism, Christians were ritually identified with Jesus in his death and resurrection. As a consequence, they were born into a new, risen life in Christ.

The Jewish Christians were quick to repudiate Paul's new "Gospel". They also rejected his claim to be an apostle and sent out emissaries to his converts to present their own "Gospel" as the true and original form of Christianity. In 70 A.D. the Mother Church of Christianity at Jerusalem perished when the city was destroyed by the Romans. Christianity was thereby freed from its primitive involvement in Jerusalem, and Paul's version of Christianity survived and set the pattern for the entire faith.

In Romans 1:14, Paul refers to the sources of his doctrines in the following words: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise".

Freed from its early Jewish influences, Christianity was quickly adapted to the spiritual needs of Greco-Roman society and eventually survived the downfall of the Roman Empire.

Having noted the distinction between the image of Jesus the rebel crucified for sedition by the Romans at the behest of the Jewish leaders, and Paul's "Jesus Christ" derived from the esoteric doctrine of the Gnostics, we can now turn our attention to the true identity of "Jesus Christ" as The Master Teacher. The two apparently disparate histories of Jesus (the seditionist and the Messiah) have become fused in folk memory as an archetypal symbol. To the Gnostics, the words of Jesus referred to an archetypal Master Teacher or an archetypal system of thought and practice. "Archetype" comes from the Greek meaning, "molded first, as a model, exemplary, an inherited idea or mode of thought derived from the experience of the race and present in the unconscious of the individual." As far as the ancient Gnostics were concerned, the idea of Jesus Christ being placed on earth by God is an archetype, the heritage of every man. The search for the meaning and understanding of this reality has been present throughout history and is probably the major factor in the purpose of man's existence. Through the archetypal symbol of The Master Teacher, "Jesus Christ" is seen to be not a man who lived in a certain place at a certain time, but a process of doing or overcoming.

This being so, it doesn't matter at all whether a man called Jesus lived two thousand years ago in the Holy Land or not. Conflicting historical evidence concerning this question has already sidetracked far too many people. It has undoubtedly been a major stumbling block to sincere metaphysical students who have been misled by uninformed teachers. What needs to be grasped is the principle for which Jesus stands; the concept of Jesus as a visibility who personifies the absolute truth of being. The principle and the transcendental experience which the portrayal of Jesus represents is natural and verifiable, and is every man's birthright.

Continued.....

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Essene - Gnostic "Chrestian Ekklesia"



#235

PART 2

THE MASTER TEACHER

An enquiry into the true identity of "Jesus Christ"

If we accept that all the stories in the Bible are allegorical (Paul himself says they are in Galatians 4:24) then the complete history from Abram onwards must be an allegory. Therefore, the New Testament books which give the genealogy of "Jesus" from "Adam" can have nothing to do with an actual living person. In the light of all this, all names of supposed living persons mentioned in the Bible must conceal some other meaning than that of actual personalities. Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Peter and John and all the apostles must contain hidden spiritual meanings instead. For many centuries now, the allegories teaching a spiritual Christ within have been carnalised into the belief in a man who actually appeared within the world of time and space, and that this man was able to cancel out the "sins" of those who believed in him.

Paul's Epistles contain many references to The Cosmic Christ. The true mystical teachings that may be discovered in the Bible agree with the highest teachings contained in the books of the Eastern religions and indicates that a traditional knowledge regarding God and Man has been known to initiates throughout the world for many thousands of years. In his Epistles, Paul admonishes his students to follow the true Gnosis which can be discovered only within the area of mind. The "Jesus" of the Gospels, in this context, is taken to be a pattern of experiences had by everyone who follows the Path to Ascension.

In contrast to orthodox Christians who believe in an historical Christ, the Gnostics' interpretation of scripture was purely spiritual. To them, the Resurrection was an already established fact of Spiritual Truth. To live the life of a "resurrected one" means that one will eventually experience the Spiritual reality in this life here and now, not in some mythical afterlife or after another five hundred incarnations. God-realisation is the goal and destiny of every man. As the Gospel of John expresses it, "The Light that lighteth every man who comes into the world". This Light is the natural reality of one's being, immanent and transcendental, and veiled by the ignorance of earthly ideas and supposition.

We have already mentioned that Paul's conception of Jesus Christ was derived from the philosophy of the Gnostics. "The Gospel of Philip"

is a second century Gnostic document of Syrian origin. This work contains one of the clearest explanations of the meanings of the words "Jesus" and "Christ" ever set down on paper. Here are the passages which include these explanations:

"'Jesus' is a hidden name, 'Christ' is a revealed name. For this reason, 'Jesus' does not exist in any other language, but his name is always 'Jesus' as he is called. 'Christ' is also his name: in Syriac, it is 'Messiah', in Greek it is 'Christ'. Certainly all the others have it according to their own language. 'Nazarene' is he who reveals what is hidden. Christ has everything in himself, whether man or angel or mystery, and the Father.

"The apostles who were before us had these names for him 'Jesus', the Nazarene, Messiah, that is 'Jesus, the Nazarene, the Christ'. The last name is 'Christ', the first name is 'Jesus', that in the middle is the 'Nazarene'. 'Messiah' has two meanings, both 'the Christ' and 'the measured'. 'Jesus' in Hebrew is 'the redemption'. 'Nazara' is 'the Truth'. 'Christ' has been measured. 'The Nazarene' and Jesus are 'they who have been measured'".

From these passages, we have three definitions, as follows:

- a) "Christ" - the measured or annointed, the Messiah
- b) "Nazarene" - the Truth
- c) "Jesus" - redemption, or the way to redemption.

Therefore "Jesus, the Nazarene, the Christ" indicates that one following the way to redemption, or the arcane discipline, reveals the Truth, the Christ in his experience, in the secret or hidden name of Jesus. This teaching coincides exactly with the hidden meanings given for his name in The Acts of John in The Apocryphal New Testament.

What connection does this information have with the historical events recorded by Tacitus which we mentioned earlier? Who was the individual who aroused the opposition of the Jewish authorities? Many interesting clues may be found in G R S Mead's book, "Did Jesus live 105 BC?" It is Mead's contention that the prototype of the 'Jesus of Nazareth' referred to in the New Testament Gospels was a man named Jeshu ben Pandira. He was born in 105 BC and sometime between then and 79 BC he was initiated and raised to the Degree of Hierophant of The Mysteries of Serapis and Christos in Egypt. On returning to Jerusalem he conferred the same initiation upon twelve of his followers with The Right of Succession. Jeshu ben Pandira's philosophy was not new, it was the continuation of The Gnostic Philosophy. It was Pythagoras of Crotona in the fifth century BC who named his philosophical system "The Gnosis". His system continued through Plato and thereafter through the Platonic philosophers until Jeshu established his own mysteries in Galilee in 79 BC. During the first four hundred years of the so-called Christian era the Gnostic

Ekklesia was known as The Church of Serapis and Christos up to the reign of Emperor Hadrian. According to Roman records dating from the time of Hadrian the Gnostics were known as "Bishops of Serapis and Christos" and they had been in existence since about 355 BC. Pharaoh Ptolemy of Egypt, who knew these mysteries as those of Osiris and Isis, was present at the commencement of the Serapean line of Succession. Many members of Serapis went to Antioch in Syria and spread into Galilee later.

When Pharaoh Ptolemy Philadelphus invited the sages of Judaism to come to Alexandria to establish their College of Rabbis there was friction between them and the Greek teachers. The followers of Jeshu ben Pandira also became dangerous rivals of the Rabbis of The Temple of Jerusalem. In 71 BC Jeshu ben Pandira was murdered by The High Priest of The Temple of Jerusalem. This fact is confirmed by evidence in The Dead Sea Scrolls wherein it is claimed that the "Teacher of Righteousness" was killed by The High Priest.

It may have occurred to you that the information which we are presenting here suggests that the "historical" Jesus, or Jeshu, lived approximately one hundred years before the orthodox churches claim that he did. This may be explained by the fact that there is a hundred year difference between the Julian and Gregorian calendars, therefore, we must push back the calendar a hundred years in order to arrive at the correct date when the Gnostic system of Self-Realisation instituted by Jeshu ben Pandira first began. Both Helena Blavatsky and Gerald Massey brought forth evidence that Jesus lived a century before the Gospel dates, and the Jewish Talmud itself identifies Jeshu ben Pandira as the individual connected with the events we have mentioned.

Another significant fact about Paul of Tarsus may be mentioned here. When in Rome he initiated a wealthy ship-owner named Marcion into The Mysteries of Serapis and Christos. A consideration of Marcion's Gospel would be outside the scope of this talk but we may mention that, in many respects, it may be considered to be based substantially on the contents of the Pauline Epistles. As far as Marcion was concerned, Paul was the disciple. As Marcion was the Roman Patriarch in the true Line of Succession, Christianity, in its original Roman form, was thus derived from him and not from either Peter or Linus.

The Gnostics of the early centuries of the so-called Christian era were firstly initiates of The Mysteries of Serapis and Christos but, on becoming Hierophants, they began to teach their own version of the True Religion according to their own mystical experience. The Ante-Nicene Fathers of the "Christian" church were so astounded by the mystical feats performed by the Gnostics that they feared and persecuted them. The Christians who believed in only an historical saviour resented the fact that the Gnostics could accomplish greater miracles than those recorded of their saviour by tradition alone. In 325 AD Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea and there ordered the formulation of a creed based upon a history of a saviour personified by Jesus of Nazareth as the only Son of God. Later, when

Constantine's orders had been carried out, he proceeded to destroy the Gnostics. The reason for this was that the Gnostics held that every man was a Son of God and that Jeshu, their leader, was a "Just Man" who demonstrated the innate power of God within every human being.

In spite of seventeen hundred years of propaganda and misinformation, Christ is not, and never was a person. The Christ drama is not connected with events played out on earth in time and space sequences, but occurs within man at every moment. If using the Christ drama as a pattern applicable to man's own spiritual unfoldment, it becomes clear that three definite stages are played out within man himself. The first and preparatory stage is that of Purification. The aspirant is encouraged to build into himself the qualifications of control of the mind, body and the sense, discrimination between the real and the unreal, endurance, faith, tolerance, emotional and mental equilibrium and the desire for liberation. These qualities were ever demanded of an aspirant before he could be allowed the presence of his own Master to be known. The second stage was Illumination. Here, the Higher Self, which the Gnostics called the "Christos", succeeds in conquering the elements of the Lower Self thereby allowing a transaction to take place between the mortal and its immortal Self within the human body. The Gnostics called the Lower Self the "Chrestes". The disciple unfolding toward spiritual maturity may also be referred to as the "Jesus Soul". The third and last stage is Union. Here the aspirant is able to gain admission into the Inner Sanctum of the Gnosis and achieve the Cosmic Awareness of his own Essential Nature. The Chrestes is encouraged to make the flight of the Jesus soul from the third dimensional nature of the human body into that of the fourth dimensional nature of the Christos. Thus, one becomes a conscious embodiment of the Universal Self.

When the initiates of these Mysteries had gained proficiency in their new-found powers they became Hierophants. They then had the right to initiate others. By becoming a Mystae or an Illumined Adept of Life, they granted to themselves the power to relive the past, understand the present and foresee events which were to come. They were given the honoured title of Christos, he who becomes the Ever-Becoming One, a Master among men.

By way of a postscript to this talk. I will conclude with two brief quotations. The first is from the writings of William Kingsland; it summarises some of the more important points we have covered.

"Within the Christian Scriptures there lies a deep spiritual truth, a real Gnosis of man's origin, nature and destiny which has simply been materialised by the Church in the traditional interpretation of those Scriptures based upon their literal acceptance. Gradually, however, as the 'Christian' doctrine became hardened and more and more dogmatic, the government of the

Church fell into the hands of prelates ambitious for worldly power. This knowledge became a heresy. What records are left of it are mainly the misrepresentations of the bitter opponents among the Church Fathers.

"Now the innermost core (of the true Church) is the in-teaching of the ancient Gnosis, the Real Self, the eternal, immortal, divine Self, which is one with the Universal Self, commonly called God. Thus the root teaching of this Wisdom at all times has been the divine nature of man, and what was taught in the inner schools of the Mysteries was the method of achieving this supreme knowledge in a practical manner, that is to say the attainment of god-like characters and powers. Every man is potentially a god, however feeble may be his powers at the present time. At root he is God. Gnosis is Power. The supreme knowledge confers upon its possessor the possibility which is not even dreamed of by the ordinary individual - or the ordinary Christian for that matter, notwithstanding the repeated assertions of that possibility in the Christian Writ."

The second piece is a remarkable quotation from Edward Carpenter. It is often difficult to define Consciousness as it pertains to the True Self, especially as many people consider Consciousness to be an attribute of mind. Any member in the Higher Degrees who has attained Cosmic Consciousness, which is nothing more or less than Consciousness of the True Self, will find this an eloquent description of the experience.

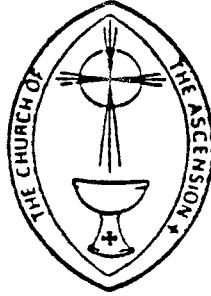
"Of all the hard facts of science, I know of none more solid and fundamental than the fact that if you inhibit thought and persevere you come at length to a region of consciousness below or behind thought, and a realisation of an altogether vaster self than that to which we are accustomed. And since the ordinary consciousness, with which we are concerned in ordinary life, is before all things founded on the little local self, and is in fact self-consciousness in the little, local sense, it follows that to pass out of that is to die to the ordinary self and the world.

"It is to die in the ordinary sense, but in another sense, it is to wake up and find that the I, one's real, most intimate self, pervades the universe and all other beings.

"So great, so splendid is this experience, that it may be said that all minor questions and doubts fall away in the face of it, and certain it is that in thousands and thousands of cases the fact of its having come even once to a man has completely revolutionised his subsequent life and outlook on the world.

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Essene - Gnostic "Chrestian Ekklesia"



#236

Continued from #156.

THE MEANING OF GNOSTICISM - con't

Most of the works about Gnosticism have been written from an orthodox christian's point of view and even the reviews of the collection of Gnostic texts discovered in Egypt in 1946, (known as the Nag Hammadi Library) have been the work of orthodox christians. But the N.H.L. manuscripts contain an amount of Gnostic teaching, *written in the familiar cryptic language* which seeks to convey an inner spiritual meaning and does not relate to any actual "historical" incident of the people and places concerned.

Orthodox christians are used to looking at Jesus and his teachings in an objective or factual way but the Gospel of Philip, one of the Nag Hammadi Codices, says that "Jesus" means "redemption" or the way to redemption. Apparently, to the ancient Gnostics, all Scriptural names and places represented the cryptic language of the Mysteries and did not necessarily refer to actual persons or real geographical locations.

The name Jesus, his associates and his journeyings, from the Gnostic perspective, refer particularly to spiritual processes actually taking place in the life of him who walks Jesus-like or Christ-like, in his/her life, here and now.

On the question of "resurrection" -- to the Gnostic, resurrection is an already established spiritual fact. The Gnostic "heaven" is a reality here and now, so that whereas resurrection to the orthodox christian is believed to be the man Jesus resurrecting from an actual rock tomb, to the Gnostic Christians, as revealed in the Nag Hammadi Codices, resurrection means leading an entirely new and enlightened life, and to live the life of a 'resurrected one' means that one will eventually experience this Spiritual Reality in his life, here and now.

To live according to the true Gnosis of God one has to follow a path of Purity, Honesty and of Consecration to Truth, and the Nag Hammadi Library proves that those who followed the teachings contained therein, tried to live by standards which many present-day christians would find very difficult to follow.

In the first part of this explanation of Gnosticism we stated that the Gnostics had a vocabulary all their own, at the end of this second part we will give some of this vocabulary. It is essential to understand that any attempt to try to interpret the Gnostic Scripts from a materialistic point of view will only make nonsense of them. The strange allegories and seemingly "historical" happenings are never intended, in Gnostic language, to be physical realities. The average orthodox christian finds it most difficult to divorce the spiritual myth from its seemingly disorganized appearance -- and as long as one looks for rationality and history -- he will never break the code of the Gnostic Cryptic Language. In like manner as the Greek myths reveal inner truths, so too do the Gnostic stories reveal the Gnosis of the Soul.

Since the publication of the "Nag Hammadi Library" and the Essene Qumrum Scrolls, much interest has been directed to the study of the early Gnostics. The present-day "organized christian church" was brought into being at the Council of Nicaea, circa 325 A.D. and this latter set about a systematic persecution of the Gnostics, inventing false propaganda against them. This led to a situation wherein that which is termed "Gnosticism" was labelled "heresy" (whatever that means) and sincere seekers were turned away believing that this teaching was something to be avoided -- when in fact it is nearer to primitive Christianity -- and may contain the very answers to life they have been seeking!

Admittedly, the Gnostic texts are difficult to understand and their system of symbology is recondite and heavy. We have presented this information because it has been requested; but also because there are valuable insights to be gleaned by Seekers on the Path. At all times however, our members are free to take what they can use and leave the rest. It is left to each student, here, to do the same.

At this point we return to the Disciplina Arcani:

Disciplina Arcani

Dear Friend

In the fields of wholistic medicine we come to realise that in the case of physical disease, bodily ailments can be brought about by certain personality traits and mental attitudes to people and environment. It is useful therefore to have a basic understanding of psychosomatic medicine.

The ancient Patriarchs understood that most, if not all, of human suffering bodily and circumstantial, were the outcome of living in ignorance. It was proven by the fact that by changing one's philosophy of life healthy bodies and more harmonious living conditions were the result. Suffering was not, and still is not, the heritage of the Children of God.

Gnostic symbology might seem rather complicated or even obscure but understanding that the human phase of mind uses imagery to present its problems we, as helpers to the summit, use the same method through mythology to help the person to spiritual freedom. It is in perception of the principles presented in the myth and in applying them to daily living that we benefit and learn control of our destiny.

Sincerely yours in the Light,

Part 2

In our last Lesson we showed you some of the background of what is known as Gnosticism and how it is your story and nobody else's.

We will now give a list of the cast of the characters who will make their appearance on the scene of each act, and as the drama moves on they will appear again under some new guise and character, but always try to remember that there is one STAR PART in this drama and that is MAN himself.

Some of the characters mentioned are:-

The Unknown Principle (Abraxas):

The Treasury of the Boundless, limitless Life wherein all being is, the incomprehensible and Unknowable Self of every human being, which we call the Great Naught which is the All.

The Logos:

From the Unknown Principle emanated a Ray of Light into the Boundless Virgin Space forming the Manifested Logos, commonly called "God". It will be seen that there are two Gods, which are the two aspects of the Unknown Principle - one unmanifested and the other manifested. We call them respectively - the God-Man and the Man-God.

The Trinity:

From the Unmanifested Logos was emanated the Divine Thought within the primordial Element, Sophia Achamoth, the Matrix of the Universe. From Achamoth emerged the Christos - the Son; the results of the Celestial Marriage of Christos and Sophia Achamoth were born the Christos-Sophia and Sophia-Christos forming the Holy Spirit, these four manifesting as Jehovah-Ildabaoth, the Creative Logos, called by the Jews - ALHIM JEHOVAH, who has become the Ultimate God of the Christians. The Father of Jesus was the Unknown Principle and not Jehovah.

The Archangels:

From the two pairs of opposites were born the Eight, the Seven Creators or Jehovah-Ildabaoth and his Six Sons, and then the sons became the Fashioners of the Universe and the Eight the Sophia-Achamoth - the World Soul.

Jehovah-Ildabaoth:

The Creator of the World and God of the Jews and Christians, becoming boastful before the Unknown Logos formed a soulless creature after his own image. The creator and his Six Sons, seeing that their creation was a soulless creature, brought their creation to their Father who called forth to the Divine Thought and, taking pity upon animal-man, Sophia-Achamoth was sent to vivify the creature. The Creator began to fashion the seven Regions of Light, and gave to his sons the rulership of each one of the regions, in order to imprison their creation and make his a slave to their wishes.

Sophia

The Creators, after clothing Sophia with their Robes of Light, sought to imprison Sophia by the matters of every region. Upon reaching the Abyss of Matter or the Valley of Death, she became afraid because of the cruelty of the Creators to her and she cried out to the Divine Mind for salvation. Sophia in this sequence represents the formation of the Divine Soul of Man on its downward descent into the lower regions.

Jesus:

It was when the Sparks (Sophia) fell through the regions and reached the valley that they were formed into Jesus - the human Soul. At that time nascent man was a soulless, mindless creature, and with the help of Sophia, the daughter of Achamoth did battle against the Creators. Sophia Achamoth, his mother, seeing that all was not well with her daughter Sophia and her son Jesus, cried out against her Father - Ildabaoth, and appealed to the Unknown Principle for help. He sent his son the Christos to descend to man.

The Christos:

The First Mystery, seeing that man was in chains to the Creators and was subject to the Rulers of the Regions, sent Christos to rescue Sophia and her son Jesus. He descended from the Treasury of Light and entered into the man Jesus, giving him both a Soul and Mind, thus granting to man the power to conquer the Rulers of the Regions. This is the same story as Horus, Attis, Adonis, Bacchus, Prometheus, etc.

The Cursing of Man:

Ildabaoth seeing that his creation was more powerful and beautiful than himself, became very angry and tried to prevent nascent man from knowing his real nature. Ildabaoth imprisoned the Man-Jesus within the boundaries of the four regions of Force-Matter (Eden) to keep him innocent. But man, yielding to the Serpent of the Divine Thought through Sophia, did seek to know his heritage, he did eat or experience sentient matter and his eyes were opened to the true nature of Ildabaoth and he began to experience the pangs of desire for Good and Evil - life and form - spirit and matter. Ildabaoth seeing that he had no more power over his creation, banished man to the nether regions or the valley of the shadow of death, to live in physical bodies, but the Christos descended to save man from Ildabaoth and his Hosts and gave unto man power and knowledge to return back to the Treasury of God, the Pleromic Regions.

The Christos-Soul

The Christos being a Ray of His Father, the Unknown Principle becomes the Champion of Man against the tyranny of Ildabaoth, he entered into Sophia - the Divine Soul, and received the power and intelligence to conquer the Rulers of the Regions.

The Birth:

Mary or Maria, being overshadowed by Sophia gives birth to the Soul in Jesus. The Three Kings represent the three races wherein man had to struggle against the forces of Ildabaoth, and once becoming a Soul, he

is filled with the Power of the Unknown Principle whose nature becomes manifested in the human Soul of Man.

Baptism:

The awakened Soul becomes aware of his Holy and Divine Heritage and re-enters the stream of the Life of the Logos, and baptised by Light, he beholds his Father recognising Him, Jesus-Christ begins the work of breaking the power of Ildabaoth over man, working through man's images of menace. Ildabaoth seeks to tempt Jesus from the path of rectitude, he fails and retires, Jesus then begins to proclaim the Father of All and he ignores Ildabaoth. In this, we see how the Church has twisted the original drama of the Christ and makes it a history instead.

The Transfiguration:

Jesus, now representing the awakened man, now finishes the purificatory stage and is lifted up into his Divine soul wherein he sees the Father and his human Self (two disciples) within the Mount of his True Self, his three vestures now tremble before their Divine Lord, but man must return to the valley of living death to do battle once again against Ildabaoth who had now taken control of the three vestures of Jesus the Man.

Crucifixion:

Ildabaoth with his images of menace makes a final attempt to bring man under his dominion, he stirs up the images of menace within Jesus to betray him. Judas, the symbol of the images and that part of Jesus which still has to be redeemed, seeks to betray his Inner Lord. So Christos on his descent into the regions of the Man-Church caused the Rulers to be troubled and Ildabaoth sought to stir up the Rulers (images) against Christos-Jesus and they sought to take him and bound him again to the Cross of the Body with the help of the Titans - the Rulers of the Mind, Emotions and the Body. He gave up the earthly body on the cross and went to the Valley of Death where he released the slaves of Ildabaoth. The Christos took the human Soul-Jesus back to his own region of Light and the moral tabernacle of Jesus suffered on the Cross in the Valley of Death (earthly conditions).

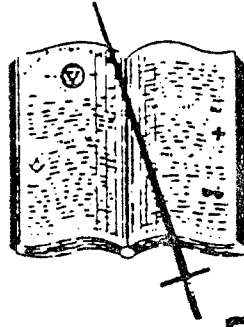
Burial and Ascension:

The Soul of Jesus-Man rejoiced in his reunion with his mother Sophia, the Divine Soul and the Mystic Marriage was consummated in the Fourth Region of Light. Ildabaoth, still hoping to conquer Jesus-Man, sought to bind Jesus to the Tomb of Matter in the Valley once more, but the Jesus-Sophia-Christos conquered Ildabaoth and his Six Sons and finally ascended to the Treasury of Light to be on the right hand of the Unknown Principle - the Father or Great Naught of All.

Ministry:

Jesus the Divine Master, taking pity upon those who are still prisoners of Ildabaoth descended again through the Regions of Light in His Robes of Glory and confounded the Rulers. He descended to the emotional or Sixth Region of Light and showed Himself to His disciples and there remained with them for about Eleven years, revealing to them the Gnosis of the Soul and the Mysteries of the Treasury of Light.

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THE GREAT WHITE BROTHERHOOD AND BRETHREN OF THE ROSY CROSS



THE name "Great White Brotherhood," a purely fanciful invention of the human imagination, has been the theme of many books, the bait and lure of many forms of charlatanism. From the experiences of credible initiates who have been able to dissociate from the physical vehicle and "travel in foreign countries" comes an agreement as to an association of spiritual beings who exercise considerable influence in several departments of human activity. The descriptions offered in booklets and propaganda literature, if such can be dignified by this name, whose authors or sponsors claim individual descent, or

direct and exclusive connection with the Great White Brotherhood, are confessions, each and all, of absolute imposture.

2 No visible, humanly contrived organization, whatsoever its claims, can legitimately call itself the exclusive representative of the Great White Brotherhood. Let it be understood that that Brotherhood may even look with tolerant amusement upon the very name that has been given to it. In the hands or mouths of legitimate spiritual bodies who do possess a reasonable comprehension of its nature, the name is not a misnomer. As the seven prismatic colors of the spectrum constitute a pure white light, so the composition of the celestial rays which compose the nucleolus of this Brotherhood also constitute a centre of dazzling white, whence comes the united agreement amongst true initiates.

3 Among the serious attempts to define the so-called Great White Brotherhood, we read that it is a group composed of Adepts, or those who by proper self-development have fitted themselves to assist in the "ruling of the world." In just what way they rule we are not informed but the idea seems to be the persistence of human ambition for super-exaltation. The activities of these Adepts are said to be multifarious, as they are concerned with practically all the functions of the rest of humanity. They are said to possess powers that transcend any of those of their fellow beings and it is claimed for them that they live according to their choice either in the mortal or the spiritual worlds and are able to prolong their lives in any expression for centuries. In this we see the persistence of the story of the Wandering Jew and of Christ's saying to his Apostle, John XXI:23, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" The earthly exponents of the Great White Brotherhood are also claimed to be known as "Rishis," "Arhats" or "Mahatmas" and are invariably domiciled in the Himalayan or Tibetan Mountains, the inaccessibility of which, the proponents of such allegations well know, prevents either proof or disproof.

4 All the usual and well known descriptions of the Great White Brotherhood, which we will for the purpose of this lecture continue to call by this name, will be found to be according to the wishes or the desire for personal aggrandizement of the describer. There is almost always the intimation of an exclusive personal

connection, contact or acquaintance with this exalted group and some of the claims are absurdly blatant. Therefore, if we are to seek a fairly clear conception of what the Great Brotherhood really is, it will be necessary to lay aside the cult claims and individual descriptions which fail utterly to describe truthfully, and turn to it from a different angle.

5 The first Chapter of Genesis shows a plural status amongst a celestial hierarchy. "Let US make man in our own image." Genesis was written by a scribe who recorded the wisdom of Moses which in turn derived from the ancient Egyptian, plus the contributions from Chaldean, Babylonian, Sumerian and Akkadian sources. Scripture tells us also of Seven Spirits before the Throne.

6 To the Egyptians, these were known as the "Seven Sons of Light," named from the planets of which they were the Regents or as we now say, the Indwelling Spirits, giving each respective planet its Planetary Intelligence. These planets were Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Venus, Sun and Moon. Note that Earth or Terra is not included. It had not at that time acquired its Planetary Regent and that is why the long line of Avatars, Messiahs or Messengers visited it at periodic intervals, culminating with the Christos who finally entered into his Kingdom.

7 According to the Gnostics Thoth or Hermes was the chief of the Seven Sons of Light. Origen, an early Church Father, gives the names of the others as Adonai, genius of the Sun; Tao, of the Moon; Elohi of Jupiter; Sabaoth of Mars; Oria, of Venus; Astaphai, of Mercury and Ildabaoth (Jehovah), of Saturn. These names immediately lead us to note a strong inspiration for the later definitions of the Great Brotherhood in the Kabbalah and the so-called Greater Holy Assembly which, in some respects, furnishes a model for late misconceptions.

8 Like the Christos, these Seven Sons of Light have had incarnate experience although not necessarily as we understand incarnate life upon the earth. They had it according to the nature and character of the planet of which they were the supreme initiates. They had passed through all the rounds, chains and periods peculiar to each. Having completed their initiation, they have become true Adepts, but not the sort that are used to advance pseudo-occult societies. They are what might be better termed Superlative Adepts in the highest spiritual sense. For they have passed to liberation and in being "Spirits before the Throne," they inhere in the fourth sub-region of the first sphere or cosmic world plane, the World of God. As this World interpenetrates all of our corner of cosmos, this does not prevent them from occupying their individual thrones planetarily. This is what is meant by the term "Thrones" in the New Testament, the word having a definite objective as well as the words "Dominions," "Principalities," etc. All these terms refer to specific grades of celestial hierarchies.

9 To say that the first sphere, or World of God is a region of light is far from adequate. It is pure white light but of a peculiar vitality. The only way in which it can be truthfully described is by saying that it is LIVING LIGHT and it is difficult to understand such a term. Light is a form of radiant energy. Under a powerful microscope a frog's web can be spread so that the observer can see the flow of the living tissue called blood, the river of life. In the same way, but only to the eye of those who live therein, celestial light is living, pulsating, flowing, radiating and life-giving. In fact, it is from this phase of energy that those whose abode is in such a World region derive their strength. They do not sleep as we understand sleep, but they do enjoy rest periods wherein they recharge themselves with this living light. As we are beginning to understand somewhat of the therapeutic properties of pure sunlight, we may be able to formulate some idea individual to ourselves of how this living light would appear to us.

10 It is this intensity of living white light, the information regarding which is transmitted down through intermediate contacts to the higher astral regions, that true initiates can reach at times, that has given the abode of the Great Ones the name of the Great White Brotherhood, a human designation, but—truthful when understood.

11 The core or centrum we have described constitutes the "fixed heart" of Master-Initiates. They operate in a way that is difficult to describe. It is through a series of septenary groups that extend from the First World Region down to the Angels or Humanity of the Moon Period of our earth and to corresponding groups on other planets according to their united physical and spiritual evolutionary status. From this point, Messengers and Avatars, whose work on a given planet is still incomplete, take up the power and purpose and direct it to particular application on the planetary sphere. The original purpose is formulated in the Central Group and then subjected to such modifications as may be required to work through or evolve into the planes intermediate and below it. This is analogous to the law that an entity must have a vehicle of the substance of the world in which it is functioning at any given time.

12 Strangely enough, Roman Catholic theology witnesses to this truth. It has a curious reference to the "Seventy planets that preside over the destinies of the nations of our planet." The word "planet" is a misnomer, of course. For instance, in the Bible we read:—"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." This is the Protestant version. But the Septuagint has it:—"According to the number of the Angels," meaning planetary Angels. This is the source from which occultists have derived the names of Planetary Spirits, Governors, Ambassadors, Angels, etc.

13 Now we also recall that the Bible informs us that we are Temples of the Living God. So, if *human beings* are Temples of the Living God, then the higher entities are also greater Temples of a more advanced aspect of that same Living God. In the ultimate, the number becomes smaller and smaller and God becomes the ALL, hermetically, in tangible localized expression as a centrum, without dissociating Himself however, from his substantive diffusion in an auric pervasion of his Creation.

14 If we go into a great power house we do not observe dynamos turning out current of different kinds. Some installations require more power than others, but it is all the same type of electricity that is being generated. That is a crude way of explaining a notable feature of the Centrum of Great Ones. They differentiate according to the characteristics of the Paths by which they have arrived in previous manvantaras or days of manifestation. The fact of their arriving enables each one to adapt his particular talents, if such they may be called, to the one central purpose of the group. Therefore, in an indescribable manner there is absolute unity of thought and purpose amongst them and the thought-form on a plane infinitely higher than anything we can realize, assumes a tremendous power, intended as it is, to shape the destinies not only of one but of all the planets in our solar system.

15 It is this thought-form, which even the ethers must obey implicitly, that is passed down through the intermediate collaborators, who may not even know that they ARE collaborators and finally focusses on the appointed purpose or plan. In this way we can see that the Great White Brotherhood has for its principal purpose the carrying out of the Divine Plan which is entrusted to it. Some might ask "Why then, does not God carry it out Himself?" The reply, crudely contrived, would be to point to the analogy of a man who starts out with an idea, let us say a motor engine. He builds a small one. Perfects his plan and destroys the original model and builds a better one or ones. Next we find him in a small building working on an enlarged scale. Years afterwards, we find a huge factory or many of them covering acres and giving employment or living to thousands. Let us assume that it is somewhat this way with God. He started out with a plan in His Divine Mind. He chose out a place in cosmos in which to create. He developed a central physical body—our Sun. Ages after ages that sun has expanded into a solar family, giving life to untold billions and occupying a position in space expressed in staggering figures. As processes increase, like the manufacturer, additional agents of expression are required. Hence the necessity for what we call the several and various celestial hierarchies, not simply glittering but uselessly ornamental and abnormal beings, but graduates in God's School of Natural Evolution and workers through whom His constantly expanding field of operations is directed and managed.

16 Now I will try to explain one of the most important of the responsibilities of the Great White Brotherhood. It is to MAINTAIN THE STREAM OF DIVINE CONSCIOUSNESS which more and more is expressing AS HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS. We speak of *our* consciousness, *your* consciousness, *my* consciousness. In point of fact, none of us have consciousness of our own. We are conscious individually only as long as we are IN THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS. This is hard to understand. It is equally hard to explain. It is one of the principles that can be sensed, felt, understood, but for which words are inadequate. Let us go a step further.

17 It is well known to most occult students and to students of ontology, that the human foetus, in the process of its nine months gestation, undergoes a recapitulation and summarization of all the evolutionary processes below the human. It is successively fish, reptile, bird, and animal; invertebrate and finally vertebrate. Many phenomena accompany this process. Why is it necessary? It is nature's way of establishing conformity to type. A foetus of a human organism from the moment of the protoplasmic formation, if it did not undergo this recapitulation, would develop unrestrictedly and, in due course, being unrestrained, into a totally new form having no antecedent and therefore a monstrosity and that is one of the reasons for certain types of human monstrosities as it is.

18 Retention of consciousness is somewhat analogous. Certain features of the past processes of unfolding consciousness in all the lower kingdoms are undergone as the young human organism strives toward maturity. We have all recognized this in youngsters. But there is something more vital back of this. When the youngster enters the stream of human consciousness, he must also be equipped with those factors that will enable him to *cope* with human consciousness in its larger expression in the great world outside of his home. This phase is what is now beginning to be known as the *super-consciousness*. We think we recover knowledge of our past evolution through our science. Well, how do we get our science except we have something in the background that makes us aware of the methods we must follow in order to extend our consciousness back into the past? We call it deductive or inductive reasoning as the case may be. But that is merely another way of exercising our consciousness.

19 The law is that THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE HUMAN KINGDOM AND THE KINGDOMS BELOW IT MUST NEVER BREAK. That is the basic force on which the plans of the Divine Architect are building His Cosmic Empire. It is what maintains conformity to the Great Plan and this is a prime responsibility of the Great White Brotherhood, through its septenary contacts right down and into our own world region. In this way the stream of Divine Consciousness in the World of God is maintained as an hermetic whole right down to its expression as *human* Consciousness in the World of Man. In this manner the consciousness man strove so hard to develop in prehistoric ages on continents now existing only as matters of mythos is still preserved to him, affording him the present use of the best, as well as unfortunately of the worst of the qualities of cunning, cleverness, ingenuity now so highly developed and many other qualities that will be quickly apparent. Have you ever stopped to think of the fact that Man alone, out of all forms of life, knows that there are forms of life both below and above him, from whence he came and to which he is travelling? How would we *know* there IS an animal kingdom had we not come through it and functioned the consciousness of it? The retention of important elements in that stream of consciousness gives us our control over the animal kingdom, our ability to train it to useful work, to breed it to better examples. The same holds true of our conquest of the vegetable kingdom. The mineral and metal world would still be meaningless to man unless he was able to select out of the stream of consciousness some factor of the important properties of that kingdom because he himself once had the trance-like consciousness of the mineral.

20 It is something of this sort to which Blavatsky refers in her statement that "the wisdom imparted by the Divine (or Great Ones)—born through the Krya-shaktic powers of the Third Race before its Fall and separation into sexes—to the

early Adepts of the Fourth Race, has remained in all its pristine purity in a certain Brotherhood." She ascribes the locus of that School or Fraternity to a "certain unnamed island in an inland sea," a vague statement of no practical worth to the progressive intelligence of the age. The main statement of the preservation of the ancient wisdom, not book-learning but the stream of divine consciousness is absolutely true.

21 The modus by which the Great White Brotherhood operates is through the form of definite rays, both of light and of akashic power, capable of penetrating the substance or matter from the most rarefied of the inner worlds, to the most palpable of the outer. These rays are not momentary effects, but of a period of duration covering sometimes even centuries of our time. On these rays are impressed the plans, purpose and consciously inspirational effects it is desired to bring into manifestation in the world of humanity and also intermediate worlds, for the Brotherhood exercises care for other than our visible and physical plane. It is infinitely more far-reaching in its scope than the pictures that have been given us by highly gifted imaginations. It is cosmic to our solar system, and in contact with the Great Intelligences of other solar systems, just as our Logos is in contact with the Logoi or Gods of other systems also.

22 Having seen how that great Centrum of spiritual power and intelligence actuates in the higher planes through various grades of celestial hierarchies we now come to a "cross roads" as it were.

23 The rays, through and upon which the Great White Brotherhood operates, penetrate as stated direct through all spheres and world-regions to their ultimate focal points in the Physical World. We have spoken of certain modifications of the Picture of the Great Plan projected via these rays, somewhat as an operator projects a picture upon rays of light to a focal screen through a stereopticon.

24 Now, even in this illustration, we all know that the picture or image to be reproduced must be modified by proper focussing, roughly at first, then to a mathematical nicety, else it would appear upon the screen only as a blurred, inchoate mass of color, possessing but obscuring and concealing the real picture in its accuracy.

25 So too, the Great Picture of the various transformations and transmutations of life. The Great Plan, undergoes definite modifications or focussing processes ere it reaches the world or region of tangible, palpable or visible matter.

26 This focussing begins in the higher divisions of the 5th sphere or World of Thought, the Mental Plane, and region of Abstract Thought. In this sphere, the rays are taken up by another group or servants of the Great White Brotherhood. This particular group is composed of Advanced Masters, i.e., those who have not only arrived at complete Liberation but who have also finished with all voluntary incarnations as well and who come no more to this mundane or 7th sphere, except on special occasions to its borderline.

27 These Masters of the Upper 5th sphere region give the Idea or picture enshrined in each ray its germinal concept of FORM, animate it with the germinal concept of ultimate individual life and endow it with desire-emotion as the stimulus out of latency into ultimate self-expression and activity.

28 Having accomplished their work, the next and sub-ordinate Group of Masters who have also completed their liberation but who, from time to time, at rare intervals, visit the Physical World though not incarnate, in order to direct the focussing ray and to see that its work is in the hands of those whose intelligence best qualifies them to co-operate with as much of the Great Plan as may be entrusted to them.

29 This Group of Masters, Superior and Inferior, constitute the Hierarchy of what we call the Rosy Cross, and their work is to reduce the Divine Plan to a Concrete form or expression. They invest it with archetypal qualities, so that it becomes a matrix wherein, after further modifications, impalpable matter can take on definite shape of a permanent nature, i.e., so that it may ultimately cohere sufficiently to express in the Physical World.

30 Here it is that the elements of the Great Picture are sorted out much as we would cut a picture apart to prepare it for a puzzle contest. This is difficult for us to understand but it explains the reason why our aboriginal ancestors possessed so much remarkable knowledge that we have never had and why we possess so much that it would have seemed more natural for them to have had first. Each part of the Great Picture thus isolated becomes perfect in itself as to its appointments, just as some biological organism when divided becomes in each separate part new but complete individuals. This perfecting process is in order that each detail of the Great Picture will become thoroughly effective, whether its ultimate purpose be aerial, oceanic, continental or individual. It is in this way that seas and continents are rearranged by what seem to us to be cataclysmic phenomena, and better cultures and civilizations made to supersede those that have become obsolete.

31 Each of these details of the Great Picture are arranged in a sequential order and often require vast periods in which to become "ripe" or arrive at maturity. That is why on this Physical Plane, the 7th sphere, a given culture or civilization may obtain for several millenia. Time begins only as each comes into self-expression or manifestation.

32 Until the moment for each detail in the Great Picture to express itself arrives, that detail lies in the womb of *Materia Remota*, in the 6th sphere, or what is sometimes called the Astral World.

33 In this 6th sphere the work performed by the Greater and Lesser or Superior and Inferior Masters is taken up by still another Group, two more degrees removed from direct contact with the Great White Brotherhood Itself. This Group we shall call, for convenience's sake,—Adepts, or those who have perfected themselves in liberation and initiate service. They are capable of being entrusted with the functioning, under guidance and direction of the Masters, of the vast forces of nature-so-called. These Adepts maintain the activities of the 6th sphere, an extremely important one.

34 The isolated details of the Great Picture which we have spoken of as lying in the womb of *Materia Remota*, or unmanifest matter, are taken up by the Adepts and "impregnated." This is a curious term to use, but it is difficult always to find terms in our limited human vocabularies to express that which is almost inexpressible. Let us try an illustration. As everyone knows there are what is known as "infertile" or "virgin" eggs. These are perfectly good eggs, rich in nourishment and in considerable demand in hospitals for certain types of patients. But they do not possess the power to gestate and maturize into chickens. They are excellent in themselves but they lack the virility to go on in evolutionary process to the destiny of the normal egg.

35 Somewhat similarly, we find here in the 6th sphere the details of the Great Picture, incapable however, of going on, as yet, to self-expression of and by themselves. A vital essence is lacking to enable them to break through the veil into *Materia Proxima*, or present, manifest matter.

36 That which is lacking is soul. Soul is developed individually by the conscious organism of the human individuals, but it has to have that from which it can grow. Soul therefore is implanted seed-wise in each detail of the Great Picture in order that each detail may grow into the Physical World or expression. Thereafter, the conscious organisms develop the negative polarity of soul in order that they may grow individually back into the invisible worlds consciously.

37 Here, therefore, in the higher divisions of the 6th sphere, the Adepts imbue the details of the Great Picture, first with Soul Power, then with Soul-Light and next with Soul-Life. Thus equipped and endowed each detail then begins a process of definite growth. In the 4th sub-division of the 6th sphere, each detail is "magnetized" by the Adepts, so that it will exert an *interest* or *feeling*, by virtue of which palpable matter will be both positively and negatively attracted to it and the individual life. Thus the opposing forces of polarity and the harmonizing forces of rhythm may be said to be inaugurated.

38 In the 5th sphere, each detail received its individual Tone in consonance with which its individual activity would ultimately mature. In the 6th sphere details take on the characteristic color which stamp its relationship to other details

of the same Great Picture and in chemical conformity to which it will eventually function. Finally the Adept endows it with those qualities which will shape its individual activities to its ultimate destiny. In this 6th sphere each detail, while in the womb of *Materia Remota*, really undergoes a process of gestation consisting of seven grades or initiatory degrees, preliminary to the two final initiations or grades which take place in the 7th or Physical sphere, wherein each detail becomes adapted to express through the four divisions of the Ethers, Reflecting, Light, Life and Chemical. Thus finally emerging through combinations of gas, liquid or solid into manifestation in *Materia Proxima*.

39 The work in the 7th sphere is undertaken and guided by the Group immediately next to and forming the lower body of the Adepts, and known as the Brethren of the Rosy Cross.

40 Here, then, we have a direct lineage from the borderline of life, beginning with the Brethren of the Rosy Cross, through the Adepts of the same, on through the Greater and Lesser Masters who are far removed from any localizing designation, through the various grades of celestial hierarchies to the Great White Brotherhood, whose incomparable centrum are the Spirits directly before the Throne.

41 It must be kept in mind always that the names used to designate these grades of Beings are of human invention and not at all to be taken as the actual names of Beings who are so far removed and advanced as to be really nameless. There is a point in evolution where names which serve only in the illusive world of time, are non-existent. However, leaving aside modern fanciful and imaginative appellations we may truthfully say that in the earliest stages of the dawn of consciousness, when mankind was much closer to the divine than now in consciousness, and to the divine rather than the mundane side of life, certain designations were "brought over" by him. Curiously enough they have persisted in their identities through several of the great world-religions, ages before what we now call "occult science" was even born, much less thought of. So we are justified in lieu of better, in retaining these terms for a more convenient understanding, even though we may question the authenticity of them.

42 It is in this manner that the Divine Ideas come down into manifestation in our mundane sphere. The movement and rearrangement of great masses of matter, the rearrangement of oceans, continents, the upheaval of mountain chains, the raising of ocean beds are still in the hands of the Masters, Adepts, and Brethren on the hinterland. But man undergoes a curious process. As a detail of the Great Picture, he went through seven grades of gestation in the 6th sphere and two grades in the seventh sphere. Nine in all. So he recapitulates all evolutionary process by nine months of gestation, not in the world of *Materia Remota* but in the womb of his mother, in *Materia Proxima*. His subsequent rise through various cultures and the attainment of definite statuses of civilization are compelled to be the work of HIS OWN HANDS, as he becomes more and more able to attune his cerebral apparatus to the stream of consciousness we have already described.

43 And as he demonstrates his ability to rise to the occasion more and more of the rearrangement of the masses of his continental abode will be and are being entrusted to him. For instance, man now considers it quite a simple matter of engineering to remove a mountain or two in order to lay a railroad, or to bore a tunnel through them. He digs canals that connect oceans and hemispheres; he drains and diverts rivers and lakes for irrigation purposes and he creates vast inland seas by dams, for the same purpose. Verily, man IS taking up the reins of creative activity formerly held only by his Creator.

44 So man, originally a picture or detail in the Divine Mind, emanated, vitalized by a Spark from the Logos Itself, verily a "divine Fragment" has come, in company with other details of the Great Picture, down through millions of millenia to Physical Matter. As he has crystallized his attention to his environment of matter he has unconsciously and unintentionally allowed himself to be crystallized BY matter.

45 But as in every school and College, there are honor students who are in advance of their class or grade, so, amongst humanity collectively, there are honor men and women who stand out according to individual talents as leaders or monitors to their fellow pilgrims. These there have been in all ages, who have wit-

nessed the crystallization process and sought, not only to escape it themselves but also to retard it in others. By their efforts and their individual response to inner guidance they have attuned themselves to rapport with the Invisible Brethren of the Rosy Cross and have worked assiduously for the alleviation and liberation of humanity from the suffering and discord caused by the too complete crystallization into which it has fallen unwittingly.

46 These advanced ones and others who by serious intent and unselfish devotion to the principle involved have been adopted by and associated with the Brethren of the Rosy Cross as what are known as "Lay Brothers" of the Rosy Cross, functioning on the visible and mundane side of life. From time to time, these Lay Brothers have associated themselves together first in the Greater and Lesser Mysteries of Antiquity and more recently, in what are known as "societies" or "Brotherhoods" of the Rosy Cross. Not ALL true Rosicrucians are thus associated. Many of them are doing their work in the channels that have opened up to them. Many are TRUE Rosicrucians who have never thought themselves to be such and who, perhaps, have never even heard of the term. Many CLAIM to be Rosicrucians who have not the slightest idea what the term means. Today, REAL Rosicrucians are, in effect, Christian Mystics, for they endeavor to realize in a practical manner the inner truth of the teachings of the last Great Master to appear visibly, Jesus, The Christ.

47 Rosicrucians do not use the term Christian in the limited and narrow sense of sectarian implication. Anciently, the word meant, simply "the good one." In the Rosicrucian sense EVERY good man or woman is a true Christian, whether he or she be Jew or Gentile, Mohammedan or Hindu.

48 In order to put themselves in rapport with their marvelous lineage, those who recognize each other as Rosicrucians organize together for the simple reason that an organization provides a far more efficient vehicle or instrument for the modern dissemination of knowledge, especially of the spiritual type, than would the unsupported individual efforts. In their organization, they strive to maintain a visible expression of the archetypal structure in their formal gatherings or colleges. Therefore, we have seen how each detail of the Great Picture undergoes an initiatory or instructive gestation of nine grades before it reaches the outer periphery of *Materia Proxima*, and the further nine months' gestation in the womb of *Materia Proxima*. Similarly the Rosicrucian System operates through a series of nine grades of initiation or instruction, in which all former processes are recapitulated.

49 This is to prepare the individual consciousness not only for its destiny here, but also for its illuminated progress on the "way back" as Jacob Boehme termed it, in the inner worlds.

50 The Lay Brethren of the Rosy Cross associate themselves in what has been called by our Fathers in the Art, as their "Honorable Society." The name "Order" is a modern misnomer. The Lay Brethren of the Rosy Cross do not assume or claim themselves to be the sole or exclusive channels through which the Great White Brotherhood operates. That would be sheerest imposture and blasphemy. They DO BELIEVE and KNOW themselves to be *one* of the *several* legitimate outlets or instruments through which the Great White Brotherhood brings to a focus its carefully planned and projected purposes, which, in turn, it received direct from the Logos or God of our Solar System.

51 However, it is obvious that like Jacob's Ladder, there is a direct and continuous sequence of units of communication between man and God. It is the scheme wrought by the old Kabbalists in the Sephirothic Tree of Life. The Nine Sephiroth, through the several worlds, begins with the Tenth Sephira,—God—Kether, or Ipsissimus, the Crown, from which all other manifestations emerge, extending finally to Malkuth or Kingdom. In this the Lay Brothers of the Rosy Cross see the whole body of man, the whole body of humanity, the whole body of conscious existence visible and invisible as the effective result of the Divine Idea projected from Kether or God through the Great White Brotherhood and its graded subordinate hierarchies. It is from the status of Malkuth that the return journey, through evolution, back to Kether is made.

52 The Rays, at first of purest white, LIVING Light, on which the Great White Brotherhood impresses the Divine Plan received from the Logos, become differentiated through the several modifications received in the various spheres. Each now separate color becomes a vehicle of expression for some definite Form, Color or Tone, a fact of which all true artists and musicians are vividly aware. Color and tone, their affinities, combinations and relationships known and assumed, and the possibilities to be derived from them, are creating a new culture and developing a new science, to which many of our best minds are now being devoted. This too is simply a part or a detail of the Great Picture now coming to ripe expression in Time and Relativity.

53 If those "best minds" could only realize the lineage of the so-called "Natural forces" with which they are working and strive to become en rapport with the spiritual essence enshrined in each, then what wonderful results could and would ensue.

54 That is a part of the mission now being undertaken by the Lay Brothers of the Rosy Cross, who form the lowest step in the ladder from earth to heaven; First, the Lay Brothers of the Rosy Cross; second, the Brothers of the Rosy Cross; third, the Adepts of the Rosy Cross; fourth, the Lesser Masters; fifth, the Greater or Superior Masters; sixth, the Powers; seventh, the Principalities; eighth, the Dominions; ninth, the Thrones and the Great White Brotherhood of the Shining Ones.—ALL maintaining the sequential flow of the Divine, Universal Consciousness unbroken, from the Timeless One, to the Prisoners of Time.

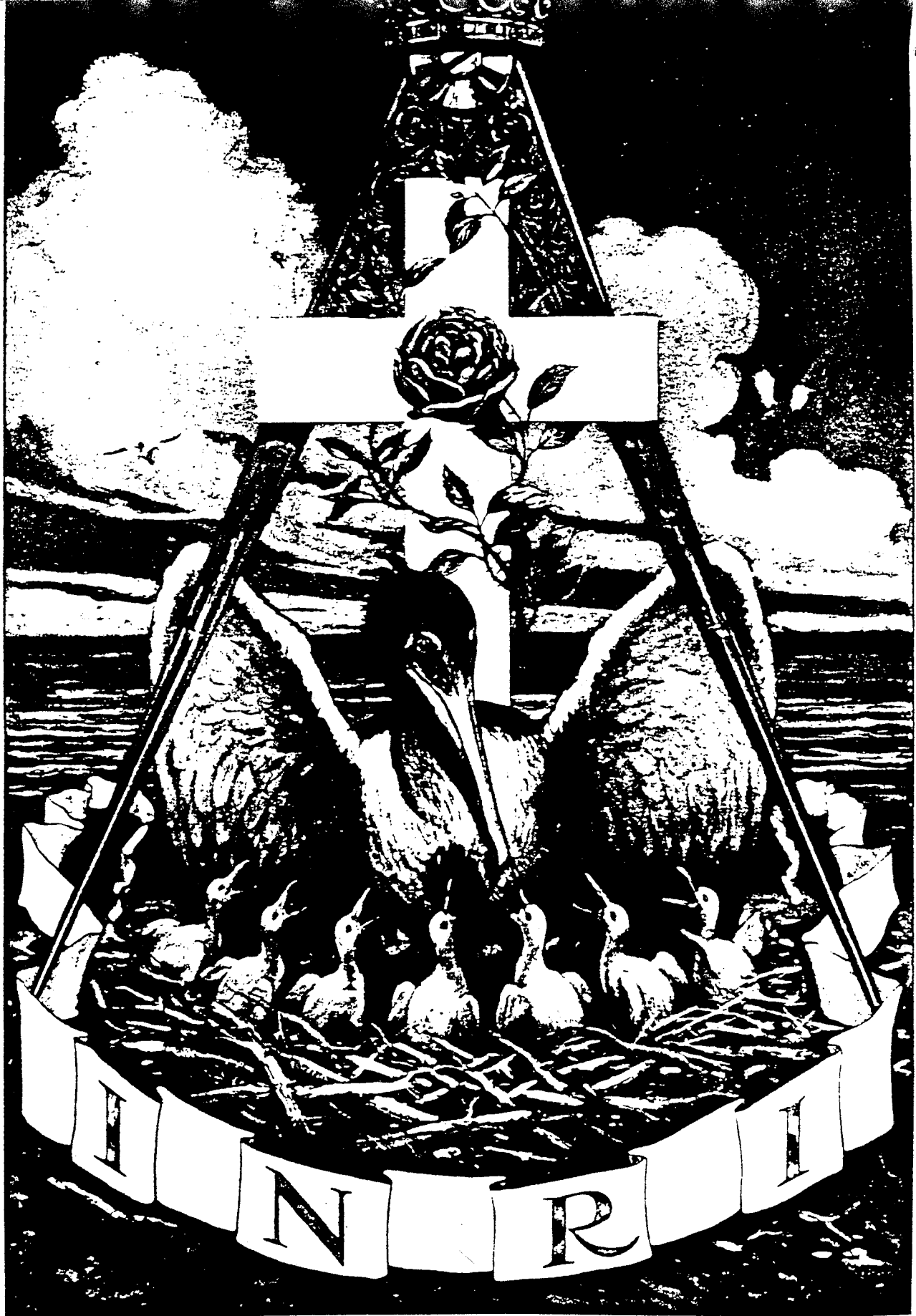
55 It is the function of the Lay Brothers of the Rosy Cross to do yeoman service in the visible world for their Preceptors, the Brethren, Adepts and Masters in the Invisible World. The Lay and Full Brethren of the Rosy Cross have no "Masters" as the world commonly uses the term. They acknowledge but one, overruling Master—Christ, whom they regard as the Indwelling Spirit of our planet, which planet has now become his throne, in this way interpreting the statements that after the event on Golgotha, "he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

56 But to lay and Accepted Brethren of the Rosy Cross it seems just to accord to those who, by their honored advance in evolution have become *masters of themselves* this title in its lesser and understood implication. By so doing, these individual masters have become the conscious and direct servants of the One Great Master—the Christos. They know him and are intimately associated with him and are permitted to join their humble efforts to his. That is what the Bible means by "reigning with Christ." In this sense the Bible statements are invested with a new meaning and literalness that brings us much closer to the ultimate details of the picture of human destiny than the imaginative and allegorical concepts of a general resurrection and an universal weeding-out process in an indefinite and hazy eternal continuum. It brings to us the picture of conscious, happy, absorbing activity instead of an oppressive picture of endless and meaningless praise and somewhat dubious hymnology.

57 With the Great White Brotherhood composed of the Shining Ones at the positive extreme and the Brethren and Lay Brethren of the Rosy Cross at the negative extreme, we have a perfect instrument for the furtherance of the Divine Idea in manifestation. This is not to be understood as an assertion that the Brethren, Lay or Professed of the Rosy Cross are the exclusive holders of this position of unusual dignity. All legitimate organizations not created for personal fame or profit, all Churches, Schools, Colleges and Universities, all human organizations and whatsoever exist for human betterment, are, in some way, the instruments to a greater or lesser degree of the Great White Brotherhood, but to use this name for purposes of advertising, publicity or a lure to membership campaigns is not far from blasphemy to say nothing of presumptuous impudence. The Bible tells us that "all things work together for good" and the Great White Brotherhood DOES use all possible vehicles accordingly. Many of them do not know that they are being so used.

58 In the incomparable Company of the Shining Ones, each unit works along the ray by virtue of which he himself has progressed to his exalted status, helping those still on that particular pathway because he knows its route and its conditions. Therefore, the Great White Brotherhood works impartially for Catholic or Protestant, Christian or Zoroastrian. The only ideal fixed by the Shining Ones is ultimate evolution into the clear Light of Truth and rapid individual unfoldment on the way thereto. All worthy methods are fostered by them and many methods are inspired by them and they work through no single method alone nor for any one cultus alone.

59 In this short paper no attempt has been made to give details of which "no man knoweth." We have sought only to give such consensus of testimony as has been made available by those who have had some indubitable contact with inner and therefore more intimate sources of information. It is hoped that this attempt will have the effect of inspiring a new and wholesome respect for this incomparable Group so close to our Logos and God.



THE JEWEL OF THE ROSE CROIX.

63 28

The pelican feeding its young from a self-inflicted wound in its own breast is accepted as an appropriate symbol of both sacrifice and resurrection. To the Christian mystic the pelican signifies Christ, who saved humanity (the baby birds) through the sacrifice of His own blood. The pelican may also be considered as representative of the sun, whose rays (blood) are the life of the seven philosophical planets depicted as the pelican's brood. In the Mysteries the pelican represents the resurrection of the candidate from the dead. The mother bird signifies those divine institutions which possess the secret doctrine which is the spiritual life of man. It was an ancient belief that three days after the father pelican had killed his own young, the mother resurrected them by wounding herself and permitting her blood to pour over their bodies. In Masonic symbolism the blood of the pelican stands for the Secret Work by which man is "raised" from the slavery of ignorance to the condition of freedom conferred by wisdom. As the Rose Croix degree is based upon Rosicrucian and Hermetic symbolism, it follows that the pelican represents one of the vessels in which the experiments of alchemy are performed and its blood that mysterious tincture by which the base metals (the seven baby birds) are transmuted into spiritual gold. Both the rose and the pelican signify the highest expression of human and divine affection. The love of the mother bird for her young typifies the emotion of the Creator for those creatures which He fashioned during the Seven Sacred Days. The word "Rose" is a simple anagram, for from the rearrangement of its letters is derived the word "Eros"—the name of the Greek god of love. The phoenix is often substituted for the pelican, as can readily be discerned from an examination of its bill.