

LIBER 7 Hermeticism

INTRODUCTION

My Brothers & Sisters:

With our knowledge of the meaning of the Number Seven, what better time could there be to speak to you about this important point, than at Liber Seven 7.

What makes a person truly great? Is it “academic education”? If you analyze the lives of outstanding people you will notice their ability to stand tall in times of tribulation, you will be struck by their perception to know truth from error, if you knew them you would be disarmed by their humility. You will find they have a natural propensity to know what needs to be done, and the capacity to do it.

These are spiritual rather than academic qualities. And these abilities come from tapping the Fount of Wisdom with lies within us. It is this art that mystics have developed, and which must be one of the goals of every Martinist.

The technique of this art is simple. Let us be sure we understand this. So many people believe that for something to have any value it must be terribly complicated and difficult, and this has lead aspirants to reading endless volumes on “metaphysics” and “new thought” and such like. What usually happens here is that the aspirant ends up with a great amount of intellectual knowledge about things, but they are unable to utilize it. It is because theory and practice are two poles that must be harmonized. Reading all the books about music does not make one a musician!

Our instruction is designed to give just sufficient theoretical knowledge to make the point understandable, and then suggest the practical steps in order to benefit from it. The practical application and the development of your abilities must match and balance your intellectualizations. Never forget this!

Yours in the Work,

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LIBER OVERVIEW

In this Liber, we bring you four Lectures dealing with Hermetic Sciences (“*Hermetic*” refers to the legendary *Hermes Trismegistus*). You will learn about Concentration and Meditation, and you will be introduced to the principles of Duality and Polarity. We also offer three Essays for your enlightenment and inspiration. By the way, that is seven articles in Liber Seven!

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LECTURE Concentration

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

I should like to say at the very beginning that there are several types of concentration and meditation and we will consider just one aspect on this occasion.

The type of concentration that we will consider on this occasion is concentration on some mundane desire, physical object or yearning, for the purpose of “materializing” it, usually for our own comfort or success.

A second type of concentration, and the more difficult, is on a mental or spiritual aspiration, devoid of any aspects of selfishness. It is a concentration on spiritual, rather than on sensual things. This form of concentration operates on a vastly higher plane than the first and leaves no feeling of fatigue of any sort, which concentration on sensual things may do. It gradually awakens the dormant spiritual organs in Man.

Now, it is not for me to tell you what your desire should be, other than to point out that it should be legitimate and reasonable. As you have already learned, the mind, like fertile land, will “grow” whatever seed is implanted in it. We all have a certain latitude allowed us by our “free will” and depending on how we use it, we will enjoy the reward of good works, or reap the weeds of our misdeeds.

That person who entertains a specific desire based upon *unworthy or improper* motives, principles or ideals can succeed in realizing them, just the same as if the motive was noble, useful and exalted, but in the case of the former *he works damnation to his own spiritual and mental qualities and destruction to himself for he is following which is called in occultism, the “Left-hand path”, that of “black magic”, and he shall not come out thence “until he has paid the uttermost farthing” of Karmic debt.*

Now regarding the two types of concentration (mundane and spiritual), *the underlying principles are the same; but the results differ.* The results in the first case are mundane; the second spiritual.

Choose something that you wish to acquire or accomplish. If the desire or the ideal you have decided to hold above all others for realization is worthy, based upon lofty principles and ideals and calculated to ensure the good of others as well as yourself, then *fix that idea in mind from now on, unchangeably.*

If you really desire to succeed, you must develop the power of concentration to the point where you can fix your attention on one subject, undisturbed by any extraneous thoughts or impressions. (If you have been sincerely practicing the exercises already given you will be well on the way to mastering this ability.)

First you will fix the detail or desire in your mind so that it becomes of paramount importance to you in your waking hours; in doing this you unconsciously visualize it by the power of imagination, that is, you will have a perfect picture of it before your consciousness at all times.

Now note this academic definition of imagination, study it carefully and you will begin to realize something of the inherent and latent power you have: “Imagination is the act, process or power of

imagining thought, the *creative or constructive power* of the mind.” This dictionary definition gives a large amount of information on the subject which you are advised to read and study carefully. The imagination exalts, moves, creates and focuses all the units of a given group of facts or experiences into one.

Let us get to the point: with a power for constructive effort and activity like this, which you have within you, there is no reason under the sun why you should not be able to realize your ideal in human experience, if the power is *applied*. Most of us are prone to let it lay dormant, functioning only in poesy, fancy, dreams and impractical aspirations. The reason we usually fail to utilize it is, that ordinarily we do not know enough about it to put it to work.

The human imagination is exactly like a camera ground glass. The lens focuses the units of the landscape upon it in one concrete picture, but unless a sensitized film is inserted, the picture is not retained or preserved. Similarly, our consciousness, operating as the lens, focuses all the units of sense perception into an image received by our imagination, but unless the mind, *sensitized and quickened by concentration*, receives the image or visualization for a sufficient length of time to make the impression, no permanent picture is retained. We are all woefully conscious of this. How much we would like to recall in many ways, of many things that we cannot We cannot simply because, lacking concentration at the time, the mind was not sensitized or quickened to receive a sufficient impress of the image.

Psychology has tested this out in many ways. In a crowded city we pass thousands of faces each day, but how many of them can we remember? How many steps has the office building you enter daily? How many windows are there in the building in front of the bus stop you stand at every ‘morning? You have seen them every day but you can’t answer this question. WHY?

Because none of these things have interested you.

That is the secret of success. There must be *an interest, a paramount interest, in the subject* in order to give you a sustaining incentive to concentrate upon it.

How does the image of your desire become operative? The key is given in the SONG CELESTIAL, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 13: “The elements, the conscious life, the mind, the unseen vital force, the nine strange gates of the body, and the five domains of sense: desire, dislike, pleasure, pain and thought, these are all wrought on matter by the Soul.”

The principal factor in this quotation is: that all the effects noted are wrought on Matter which, on the mundane plane, is the medium through which largely we have to work. The five domains of sense are apparent. The “nine strange gates” are the nine orifices of the body: two nostrils, two ears, mouth, two mammary or breast orifices, the urethral and the anal orifices. These are the avenues of ingress and egress to and from the body.

As matter is the medium through which our mortal expressions are manifest, and as all the elements of what is called mortal life are “wrought on matter” by a force which we know to be *mental*, then our course is clear and obvious.

First we must have the definitely chosen object, subject and goal. Second, sufficient interest in it. Third, the power of concentration to hold it fixed in the mind and the imagination. Fourth, the power of imagination itself, developed and quickened into a constructive force.

The sort of concentration required for our present purpose, must be the vigorous, active, constructive kind that will be operative anywhere and under any conditions. So retire to your Oratory or place where you can be free from interruption. See that neither clothing, furniture or distraction causes you the least annoyance, fatigue or irritation. Having relaxed, close your eyes so

as to shut out the consciousness of the immediate environment and the thoughts it inevitably causes. Wait until the body is in a state of relative calmness and the brain fairly quiet. Then form as complete a picture in your mind as possible, of your desire. Begin your concentration, not simply contemplating the picture in a *passive* manner, but by developing every detail of the picture. It makes no difference whether your desire be an abstract theorem or a physical need, ***develop the picture of it.***

Develop the picture as clearly as possible bringing out by your fixed concentration every detail, angle of vision and possibility. When you feel that you have visualized as clearly as it can be made to appear, ***fix it*** by holding that visualization in your imagination for the next ten or fifteen minutes, extending the time each day until your entire period of silence approximates from twenty minutes to half an hour.

Do this ***twice*** each day. Bring up the picture so obtained the first thing each morning on awakening; first, however, holding the thought of harmony with the world, harmony with God and Nature. Repeat the process at night when retiring.

This process will make the picture a part of your subconsciousness so that it will be ever present, ***working on matter*** in the mundane world to ultimately accomplish the materialization of your desire.

You must not conceive the idea that the process outlined here neglects the spiritual aspect. That will be discussed soon. To be of value in mortal life, the spiritual qualities must become active for constructive good; in some instances the processes of effecting that activity are identical.

By the act and process of concentration I have outlined here, you will commence a line of causation that will gradually bring about the conditions created by the details of your visualization in the imagination. This is because your mental and spiritual powers attain a vibratory status that brings all your environment into rapport and harmony with their own, and ultimately creates the very conditions you desire to bring about.

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

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LECTURE Meditation

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Meditation is one of the most important essentials and a fundamental of all spiritual progress. In a preceding lecture you were taught how to shape your desire into a definite visualization. If you have performed this work your desire will now have become ***a definite, concrete thought form.***

Your thought form is not a lifeless image or picture but an ***organic growth*** in the invisible world, a living growth. The original desire was the seed. Concentration shaped it upon the ground glass of the imagination which we compared to a camera.

Meditation supplies the ***power*** for growth. It quietly and gently, yet continuously, emanates from its source a stream of energy, that is absorbed by the growing thought-form organism, amplifying and expanding it to greater proportions.

The original idea or desire has been termed: the “seed”. *Everything grows from its seed whether in the visible or invisible worlds.* Concentration shapes the thought organism growing forth from that seed, in the soils of the etheric and astral planes. (About which more will be said at the proper time.)

Meditation is really and essentially a function of the subconscious mentalism, and by it we can solve many problems with which the conscious mind (with its many inhibitions due to the excess of environmental impressions) cannot grapple in an isolated manner.

We read: “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.” (1.Tim 4:15) The importance of this advice is apparent: “meditate upon these things” (for instance, your subject, desire or ideal) *“Give thyself wholly to them,* that thy profiting (the working out in actual manifestation of your desire or ideal) may appear to all.”

The Apostolic writer is here, of course, treating of spiritual things, but a reading of the entire chapter quoted will reveal to what extent mundane matters really *are* spiritual as to their essential basis, and the application, if true in one instance.. is equally true in all matters pertaining to human welfare.

Those of you who read metaphysical literature will not have to do very much outside reading to discover that it is an accepted Canon that *everything in the physical or visible world is a counterpart of an archetype in the spiritual or invisible world.* The mundane presentment may be, and usually is, only a rough materialization of the archetype.

All the important inventions known to us have had their origin in crude materializations of an original thought-form developed by the human mind from the invisible archetype in the invisible worlds, where developments of civilizations yet to come have been and are being perfected by those who have human evolution in charge.

These thoughts, when understood, will show you why it is so important to develop the specific thought-form of your constructive desire, which, if worthy, should redound not only to your own advantage, but also to that of all your fellow men. And it is true in a far greater sense, that just in the proportion to the unselfishness of your ideal or desire will be the success attending your efforts, since the beings previously referred to as having in charge the progress of human evolution, delight to assist those who delight in assisting others. Human cooperation is but a reflection of the higher and more potent spiritual cooperation.

You were given the four essentials in the process of attainment or progress toward illumination. Can any Brother or Sister recall these? (1st: the definitely chosen object; 2nd: Sufficient interest; 3rd: the power of concentration to hold it fixed in the mind and the imagination; 4th: the power of imagination itself, developed and quickened into a constructive force.) *Meditation* makes the *fifth essential step or factor*, and adds to the constructive work already underway, the capacity and actuality of growth.

It is meditation that you will now engage in while “in the silence” already referred to. And for practical results, you will soon meditate, not only in the silence, but out of it as well, for you will note that ere long, with no apparent effort of your own, thoughts definitely related to the subject of your serious meditation, will present themselves, even during the hours of occupation when the conscious mind is normally focused upon the ordinary details of everyday activity.

This is because the subconscious mentalism has taken hold of the subject and seeks to bring or force its development to the surface at every opportunity. Therefore strange experiences will be

noted wherein thoughts will flit through the consciousness relating to serious spiritual subjects, even intruding on ordinary business affairs of the day. These thoughts will be found precious. They will develop instantly and ***must be recorded immediately for they will never recur in the same form again. It is a rule in occult science to record, either verbally or by writing, every thought that comes to an aspirant in this manner.*** If you wait until a convenient time, grope and search and ponder as you may, you will be unable to recall the specific thought in its original form and clarity. Put it down on a scrap of paper, memo pad or other convenience, or speak it aloud. The physical effort to speak it, or write it, will impress it on your memory. But if you fail to record it in some way, it will be lost to you forever. You may later on get other thoughts relating to the same subject but never again the original inspiration for that is what it really is.

There is an ethical factor involved in your progressional work which I must not fail to point out to you. There is what is known, especially in Hermetic science, as the Law of Polarity. Now while you are undergoing a specific cultural process toward the realization of a given desire or ideal, there is a certain amount of danger of becoming polarized toward all else. This is as fatal to true development as are the many abnormal practices enjoined upon students by alleged “occult societies”, “Secret Orders” and cults whose name is legion. Those who do become polarized in this manner are known to the world as “Monomaniacs” or persons of one idea, fad, habit or penchant. Such persons are to be pitied, for ere long, the world about them soon discredits even what they actually may know of real value.

This can be avoided by one simple procedure: Seek and cultivate close association with successful and balanced people. This does not mean to shun the unfortunate or less successful people. Your duty to them and to all others remains the same. But you can not help them, unless you are up to normalcy and the best attainable degree of efficiency.

The explanation of this advice is simple: Successful people, in any department of life’s activities, are those who in one way or another, have lived constructively. There may be much to criticize in a given individual’s career as known to you or others; nevertheless, the elements of constructive energy are prominently active in the aura of that person, and by association, without ever allowing the purpose or your intent to become known to them, your own aura will receive according to the law of opposites, that which it may lack, or of which it may be depleted for a time.

On first thought, this advice may appear to you as an encouragement toward selfishness. Selfishness consists in concentrating solely on one’s own desires to the exclusion of all else and regardless of the rights, comforts, needs, or happiness of others. But if your desire is worthy and it includes the essential element of thoughtfulness for others, and will result in placing you in a condition and position to be useful and helpful to others, then it is perfectly legitimate for you to use every possible means that will aid you in ATTAINING. But mark well: when you HAVE attained your desire and even while you are attaining it, do not ignore the claims of those who, like yourself, may be struggling along the Path and need what you can do for them, as much as you need what others can do for you.

In other words: we have brought the whole matter to the great requisite of all spiritual development and progress: ***Service***. There is no higher phase of spiritual development or culture than ***Personal Service***. Jesus said: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” (John 5:17) and all the teachings of the Master were based on the fundamental of ***service*** and none of us are greater than our Master nor can we expect to perform the works that he did, in accordance with the assurance from him of our power to do so, unless we are willing to and DO conform to the provisions he made and the rules of life by which he was guided.

The “Master” of your Lodge is the Master-servant, and the Grand Master of our Order is the Grand Master-servant, all work is service of some sort and all work is noble. The two words, ***“Work”***

and “*Service*” must be the keywords of every aspirant to progress on the Path.

Meditation is truly the factor that will make for the growth of your thought-form. Concentration and imagination have sown the seed and developed the picture. Meditation will reveal the details of the picture and cause the thought-form to grow. Take any picture you please, a photograph or a color print. Look at it. The first impression gives you an idea of the whole picture. It may be pleasant or otherwise. Concentrate upon it and it will impress a permanent image upon your memory that may be recalled at any time. It will give you a visualization that the imagination can dwell upon at any time you desire.

Now meditate upon it. Patanjali defines meditation as “an unbroken flow of knowledge on a particular object”. Little by little details are revealed that escaped even your most searching glance or scrutiny. Ideas of perspective, distance, dimension, utility and other values will stand out as your meditation continues. The subconscious mentalism will react upon it giving you ideas which the ordinary concentration would never have evoked.

Meditation is a process known and practiced by the ancients and valued by them to the point of making it a ritualistic custom. Indeed certain church rituals and those used in ceremonial magic precipitate one form of meditation because everything done in a magical ceremonial is intended to emphasize the central idea, or seed-thought, of the ritual. Concentration collects, at a center or focus, units of power. Thus, the ritual assists the Operator to focus his attention and concentrate the units of mental force, just as a convex lens will focus the rays of the sun and concentrate them to a point where they will kindle a piece of wood or paper (which does not occur when the rays pass through a pane of glass).

In Genesis 24:63, we find that Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide. This is a very appropriate time for meditation, when the mentalism is not disturbed by the activities of the day and the Patriarch well knew the value of isolation, for he went into the fields where presumably he could, and would, be alone. There he lifted up his eyes.

For the same reason, it has ever been an accepted practice for those who adopt the monastic life; and definite hours of the day, especially after sundown, are set apart and devoted to it. The result is that some of the finest revelations of illuminism have come down to us from those who have adopted the meditative life. But what the world needs now is not so much devotees of seclusion, as devotees of active service, *in* and *for* the world that needs them so badly.

Every aspirant can have as much seclusion as he desires without adopting any abnormal means of attaining or securing it. Your Oratory is the perfect place for those who have the opportunity to set one up. Jesus, when in the midst of his work, went apart into the “mountain” to pray. Geographically, there was no mountain existent in some of the places mentioned. He went into the mountain by *retiring within himself*. That is, he drew a “cloak” around himself and withdrew from the consciousness of the outer world wherever he might happen to be, and functioned mentally in the quiet and seclusion of the inner mental and spiritual world.

Every aspirant can do likewise and with a little experiment, he will find that it is possible to do so even in the busy office, or other place of industry, without attracting attention or causing comment. This is what is meant, in one sense, by being *in* the world but not *of* it. And just to the extent that we avail ourselves of this possibility of withdrawing from the outer world, will we find it possible to obtain a clearer view of our problems and solve many difficulties that otherwise seem insuperable. Study the last lecture in Liber 5 in conjunction with this one and begin the practical work. You will then be prepared for the further instruction to be presented in Libers 7 & 8.

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LECTURE The Principle of Duality

My Brothers & Sisters: Greetings!

In the porch of King Solomon's Temple, there stood two Pillars. You can read about them in I Kings, Chap. 7. The Pillar on the right was called **Jachin**, (pronounced Yah-kin) while the one on the left was called **Boaz**. Together they symbolized Strength & Weakness, the two fundamental opposite qualities.

These two Pillars constituted a monumental illustration of the antimony, or opposites, upon which depends the great **Law of Creation**. While these Pillars have become almost wholly associated with King Solomon's Temple, they are in fact much older. Their real significance is symbolic and it is in this symbolic sense that they have a very great importance in Martinism.

You have probably heard that in the Temples of esoteric Orders, these two Pillars are depicted and they are generally of two different colors. Usually they are either black & white, taking this symbolism from night & day, or they may be black & red, depicting the opposites: activity and passivity. The important point is that while they may be of **two different colors**, they are both made from the **same material or substance**.

The two Columns, then, known as Jachin & Boaz, represent the Universal Duality of Creation. Their opposite colors point to the great **Law Of Duality**, the law which supports the creation and without which creation could not exist. While they may be of different colors, they are made of the same material. They are identical, but they **appear** to be different.

All created things, and this means all things that we can perceive and conceive, are **dual in character**. By this is meant that each force or principle, presents itself to the mind of the observer as two different and distinct things which are in absolute opposition.

So strongly marked is this duality of **appearance** that most people accept each of the two aspects as being two separate and independent things.

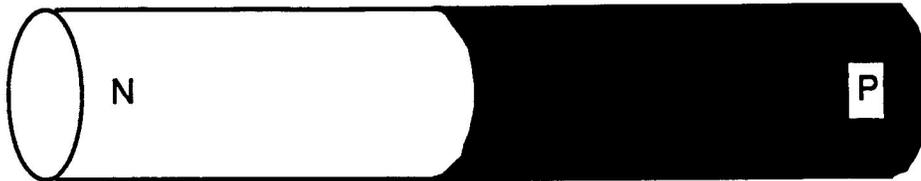
The first concern of the man who seeks reintegration and reconciliation with the First Cause, is to see through the illusion of these oppositions and not only understand the inherent unity of each pair of opposites, but also to apply this knowledge and this understanding in order to master the duality of his emotions and of his personality. Like Nature, Man is made of a number of apparently opposed instincts and qualities. The Martinist, however, is pursuing Self-knowledge. This can only come from **self-inquiry** and must lead to Unification. The qualified Associate of our Order has always been known as a **Philosopher of Unity** for he remembers the fruitful symbol of the three luminaries, separate lights from one Light. To have any practical value, the principles we study as Martinists must become tools with which to work on ourselves.

Remember that in the created world, duality exists. No condition is separate or independent or existing alone. "Drought" and "Flood" are not two disconnected events, they are the two opposite aspects of **rainfall**. Another example: "heavy" and "light" are two opposite conditions of **weight**. There could be no such condition as "heavy" if there were not one known as "light". We must learn to harmonize extremes by finding the third or middle term.

When speaking about the Oppositions that are manifest in life and in the whole of Nature, it must be

kept clearly in mind that, like the Pillars that flank the entrance of the porch, which are identical in substance and composition, but appear to be different because of their color, *all oppositions are only apparent* and are in fact different aspects of the same thing, or shall we say, opposed polarities of the same thing.

Let us turn to the method of analogy to illustrate this.

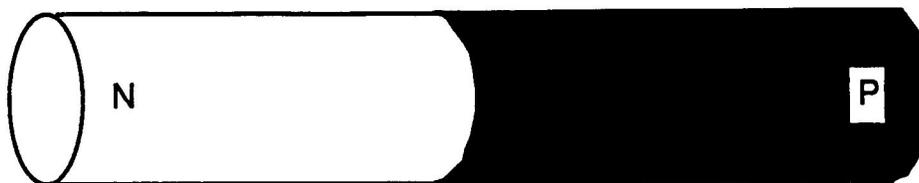


Let us think of a straight magnet. It is a bar of metal through which circulates a force called magnetism. *One* force, magnetism, permeates this bar of metal. According to which extremity we test, however, we find that this force manifests in *two* distinctive ways. This is the phenomenon of *Polarity* and the *two* aspects of this *one* force are classified as 'positive' and 'negative'.

Now let us apply this image to any pair of opposites, for this example let us use the pair Beauty & Ugliness. These antitheses could be said to be the two extremities of one principle called *Endowment*. (For the sake of this argument we will ignore the debatable and relative character of Beauty as we generally understand it). We can say that on one hand we have things endowed with absolute beauty; and on the other, things utterly lacking this quality and therefore absolutely ugly.

We can draw from this example the understanding that the antitheses of life are the two opposite poles of integral forces, laws or principles.

We will now examine our next all-important point: *the relativity of all polarities*. Let us return to our magnetized bar of iron.



We say that one extremity is 'positive' and on our diagram we have shaded this side. The other side is designated 'negative' and has been left white. Now if we were to cut off from, say, the positive end, a piece of metal about one inch long, we would immediately create a new magnet. The face of the first magnet, the longer one, is positive. The face of the smaller magnet just cut off, would become the negative pole of the magnet one inch long. Now the smaller magnet was cut off from the end of the larger magnet which was designated 'positive'. The question is: Where did the negative aspect of the smaller magnet come from?

PONDER THIS BEFORE PROCEEDING TO READ FURTHER!!!

Prior to the sawing operation, the point where the bar was to be cut had, within itself, a latent negative aspect existing in the positive end. At the point of the cut there was a positive excess of polarity, that is, a strong positive polarity that was dwarfing a minute negative polarity.

The lesson to be learned from this example is that the forces that manifest as antitheses are made of a mixture of these opposite tendencies varying between the abstract conceptions of absolute positive and absolute negative character.

Brethren, you must give your total attention to this point: ***In the created world, nothing is absolutely one thing or the other.*** Nothing is absolutely beautiful or absolutely ugly. Nothing is absolutely hot or absolutely cold. No one is absolutely good or absolutely bad; or absolutely wise or absolutely foolish, etc. etc. ***The absolute condition exists only in God. In the created world, relativity is very much in the picture.*** Let us think of temperature, for instance, where on the thermometer does cold end and hot begin? Likewise, where is the demarcation between long and short, between fast and slow?

Summarizing the above discussion, we see:

- 1)
 - In the created world, everything is relative.
 - The Absolute condition does not exist in the created world.
 - The Absolute condition exists only in God.
- 2) We should not take an extreme position. To do this places us in an unbalanced position. We should seek the “middle path” that passes between the two extremes, thus reconciling them.
- 3) Polarity is manifested by the Number 2, Two aspects of One Force.
- 4) We should be balancing opposites: We are referring here principally to inner resolutions, personal actions what is right & wrong; fortunate & unfortunate; etc. These are subjective decisions which each person must make for himself.

Brothers & Sisters: Our Martinist Order is not the only school to use the symbolism of the Columns. They have been, and still are, widely used in other schools and Orders. They are sometimes made to support an arch which symbolizes the uniting element. In some Martinist Temples that use the symbolism of the arch, the arch bears a golden Lyre to emphasize that the unity of the structure can only be realized by harmonizing the opposites.

To us however, the two Columns represent more particularly the 2 Qabalistic Pillars of Mercy and Severity. The Pillar of Mercy has as its head the Sefirah Chokmah, which means ***absolute Wisdom***. (Please refer to the Tree of Life diagram in the last lecture. Chokmah is Sefirah #2). The Pillar of Severity has as its head Binah, Sefirah #3, which means ***absolute Understanding***. (Notice these are in the Upper World, before the “days of creation”.) At the top of the central Pillar, the Pillar of Equilibrium, stands Kether, the ***absolute equilibrant*** or Crown. These three Sephiroth together are sometimes known as the Deity. They correspond to the Martinist World of God. More will be said on this at the proper time. In the meanwhile, think on these things, Brethren. ***THINK ON THESE THINGS.***

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LECTURE **The Principle of Polarity**

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Let us continue to develop our understanding of the great law of polarity. In 2 Cor. 4:8, we read: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed we are perplexed, but not in despair.” There is a

peculiar appropriateness in this particular statement of the Apostle Paul, for it applies with equal vigor to the many problems confronting the sincere student at the present day, even as it has to those students in intervening ages.

These problems relate for the most part to the apparent inconsistencies and incongruities between the seemingly visible facts presented by Nature, and the ethical teachings of philosophy and science. I hope to be able to show you in my address tonight, that these incongruities and inconsistencies are, after all, only *apparent*, in other words, not real, and that paradoxes may be reconciled through understanding that what usually seem so at variance with each other, are simply *opposite polarities of the same thing*.

Likes repel and unlikes attract. This is a law of electricity and magnetism that applies throughout all of Nature's domain. Because of it we have the phenomenon of cohesion, without which there would be no combination of ions and electrons into atoms, and atoms into molecules and masses. Therefore, the existence of two qualities, apparently unlike in any given state of Matter, and in Spirit as well, is absolutely necessary in order to make possible any form of tangible expression whatsoever. The principle of polarity gives us two fundamental and most important Laws, which may be applied with equal logic to every phase of manifest existence in all the four divisions of the Life Stream, and in worlds visible and invisible:

Everything manifest has two sides, phases, aspects, or extremities.

These phases will be found to be identical in nature, differing only in degree.

Thus, we speak of Attraction & Repulsion, Hot & Cold, Love & Hate, Hard & Soft, Weak & Strong, Magnetic & un-Magnetic, etc.

Yet the mercury in the thermometer tube registers all degrees within the same tube. As it drops from what we call "hot" to cooler, it merely registers degrees of less heat; as it rises, it merely registers degrees of less cold. Again, as it rises it indicates more heat, and as it drops it indicates just as unfailingly more cold. But nothing indicates just where heat or cold begins.

This illustration can be applied with equal clarity to any of the comparisons that might be offered. The difference between extremes or what are commonly called "both sides" to a matter, is a difference only of degrees of one extreme or side, more than the other, and both will be found on analysis to be identical in nature.

This fact proves the truth of the duality of all things manifest, and (so far as we can logically conceive) unmanifest. "Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pairs of opposites; and like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled", says the Hermetic teaching.

In other words, the Hermetic teaching is that a seeming difference between things apparently diametrically opposed to each other, is a difference in degree only. Thesis and antithesis are identical in nature but different in degree, and this Principle of Polarity effects the "universal reconciliation of opposites."

We have met this truth before in our studies, but perhaps we have never before realized the Law underlying it. Thus we have often spoken of Spirit and Matter as though they were two completely different things, when in fact matter is crystallized Spirit and/or Spirit is sublimated or etherealized matter. In the same way I hope you can now see that the One and the Many are identical, differing only in the degree of manifestation.

In the illustration of the thermometer given earlier, in the range of degrees between the extreme hot and the extreme cold, we note such points as “warm, temperate, freezing and zero.” These are simply descriptive names, or gauges, or indicators. So too in Love & Hate, there is no absolute line of demarcation and it is difficult to tell where one phase merges into the other. There too, we find gauges or indicators in terms such as “like, favor, dislike.”

But while extremes of a given state are identical in nature, they can never change their nature or class. Thus red, of the spectrum scale, can never become east; nor heat become the note C of the musical scale.

These extremes and comparisons give us a clue to transmutation. It is easily within our scope of comprehension, in fact everyday knowledge, that dull things can be made sharp, cold things hot, weak and fearsome things strong and courageous, timid bold, etc.

This transmutation is simply a process of raising or lowering the vibrations. Thus: the hot substance becomes cooled or even cold, by lowering the vibrations, and a red hot metal attains the violet hues of incandescence by raising the vibrations. These illustrations are all on the physical plane; you may well ask: “Why is it then, that if given extremes cannot change their natures, that it is possible to transmute baser metals of the mineral kingdom, such as lead, into silver or gold?”

Such a question is perfectly logical. The answer is that transmutations in the instance given have all related to the physical plane alone, with the transmutative processes accomplished *on* the physical plane. But base metals have been raised to higher, the operation requiring not only processes on the physical plane, but elsewhere, and that elsewhere is the *Mental Plane*.

On the *Physical Plane* we can deal easily with the mass and the molecule, with more difficulty with the atom, and with great difficulty with the electron and the ion. But on the *Mental Plane* we can deal easily with the ion and the electron, but more difficultly with the molecule and mass. We know that Matter and Spirit are the same in essential nature and that all substance is homogeneous, and we know vastly more today about the nature of the omnipresent electric energy than formerly, but we still have much to learn.

The point is, that in knowing these essentials, both on the physical plane and the mental plane, we must attain to one thing more: The Key to all knowledge, and the ability to understand Omneity, for in studying to know Omneity, we are studying, incidentally, *ourselves!* Until we *know ourselves*, as we are repeatedly admonished in the Old Charges to do, *we shall never find what we seek outside of us. The knowledge of the true nature of Omneity lies within us.* This is something personal to each aspirant, and something which, when he finds it, he will not reveal it, because it is impossible to do so. Such sublime knowledge is impossible to verbalize.

It is important that we keep in mind the relative correspondences between extremities or poles. Action is *positive* to Inaction; Courage is *positive* to Timidity or Fear; Love is *positive* to Hate; Hot is *positive* to Cold. In effecting the process of transmutation, the first step is *polarization*.

Here is an example: in the pair of opposites Love & Hate, the student is instructed to cultivate dispassion, i.e. neither love nor hatred. Neither active nor inactive, but passive. When the student has truly attained a reasonable degree of genuine dispassion, he will then be able to begin the second stage of the transmutative process, that of raising the vibrations in a given instance to the requisite degree. And it should be noted, the process will *always* be one of *raising* vibrations rather than lowering them, which can be done with far greater facility. One makes for progress; the other is retrogression.

And while we may be able by careful study of physical aspects, to employ proper methods for

procedure on the physical plane, a correct knowledge of the manipulations of mass and molecule; we shall, by attainment of dispassion, be able to operate on the mental plane, which is far more important and powerful.

The Initiate who has learned how to become an operator on the mental plane, will also acquire the power to induce similar vibrations in the mental forces of another human soul, and is thus armed with a power that no man-made law can control, but which is safely vested only in those who know how to use it rightly by virtue of the struggle to attain it.

We are told in Matt. 19:26 that with God all things are possible. True occult science teaches that **every Ego is a God in-the-making**. Paul, the Initiate, say: “know ye not that ye are Gods??” and again (Cor. 3:16) “know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.” Still further we are told (I Cor.4: 19) “What? Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

It was the knowledge of the tremendous power and potency of the forces operative on the mental plane that made the apostolic writer say (I Cor. 2:7) “But we speak the Wisdom of God **in a mystery**, even the **hidden wisdom**, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.” (11-12) “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the **spirit** of man which is in him. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given us of God.”

All students of genuine esoteric mystical Orders are instructed that, in his inquiries and reachings into the deep things of Nature, he should learn first to know what things he has **within himself**, ‘before seeking into foreign matters **outside of himself**.* We have already a quotation on this subject in a previous lecture from our V::: M::: Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin. It is by the **Divine Power within yourself** to first heal yourself, and **transmute your own soul** that you may go on prosperously and seek with good success the mysteries and wonders of God in all natural things.

To do this, first take account of your personal stock, as it were. Make a list of all your personal attributes, temperament, inclinations, desires, ambitions, tastes, et cetera. Against each item write Positive or Negative according to the character of your response to the item in question.

Then begin the process of equilibration of all individual characteristics, by polarizing, or reversing the poles or extremities of each item. This is a process that may be collective in its application, inasmuch as several attributes may be grouped under one classification.

This is the first step toward finding what things you have within yourself, and having found them, the necessary further efforts will be apparent. When the process of polarization is well under way to accomplishment, then begin to raise the personal vibrations higher in each case as may be required, learning to respond to the higher vibrations called for, by the highest or ultimate aspect of any given attribute under consideration.

This is the process of healing one’s own soul, or transmuting one’s own soul, for by this process and the consequent mental attitude involved, one soon begins to develop the god-power within to a hitherto unrealized degree. No instant miracle will be accomplished, but intense satisfaction will ensue from the gradual realization of greater power, greater ability, greater vision, and the dawn of illumination.

Each of us **has** this power within. It may have lain dormant through your life thus far, but the least

* i.e. in the external or “outer world.

stimulus will awaken it into activity and begin your inner regeneration. This is the practice which each of you should begin at once. It is preparatory to the more detailed, scientific and individualized requirements of personal development of the higher psychical centers in our esoteric work. Your progress is in your own hands. I can only remind you of something you have been told many times: teachers can only point the way. The rest is up to you.

It is by the projection of the higher mental vibrations that we polarize the lower ones in a friend who has the “blues” or who for some reason is downcast. We may not realize the operation involved, but from long, common practice, we make it oftentimes effective. The same operation on more carefully planned lines is used, first inwardly on ourselves, then outwardly on others, to the welfare and assistance of those who need our ministrations.

Brothers and Sisters: In this lecture you have been given both scientific and philosophical facts. These constitute clues to a far more important consideration. That consideration is the spiritual aspect. Your work and your duty in connection with the information given you tonight, is to take the facts presented and meditate upon them from the purely spiritual standpoint. To the extent that you can develop them as spiritual factors will this lecture take on specific importance for you.

It may be interesting to apply these truths and facts to objectively material conditions and incidents, but that will constitute merely a psycho-intellectual development. The truly spiritual development is the real objective. The association of the ideas to be gained from this lecture with purely spiritual factors and concepts, especially of a personal nature, will mean true progress.

Concentrate upon the facts presented until you can interpret them in terms of spiritual values and ‘you will have accomplished a most important task and one that will mark your actual progress on the Path to Attainment. When you can so interpret them, apply them to yourself personally and you will come to a realization of your personal values and learn where you fall short of measuring up to the requisite spiritual assets to enable you to make greater progress in the future.

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

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ESSAY

Three Steps in Finding Yourself

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

What would be life’s most wonderful experience to you? What is the most exciting and satisfying experience that you can imagine for yourself? Getting a new house in the country? Perhaps a new job? Having a wonderful vacation? Perhaps being married or divorced? Whatever your answer, isn’t it that these things have prominence on the horizon of your thoughts because you believe that their achievement will help you to find yourself? What is it that compels people to sail in little ships across oceans, to scale high mountain peaks or to set out into far off outer space to the moon? Essentially, it is man’s ceaseless longing to know himself, to find that which makes life take on meaning. Of course, the average person like you and me doesn’t do the spectacular in this respect, but we do devote a great deal of our lives to finding the right job, to find the right soul-mate, to find the right environment, to get our chance or lucky break. But we find that none of these things satisfy or even continue for the individual, because our chief goal is to find ourselves. And when we find ourselves, the world comes looking for us, right opportunities come our way, and things begin to work for our good. When we find ourselves, we find that spark that enables us to turn to good

account everything that comes into our lives. In a time when the greatest problems that beset man are caused by people who are lost in the maze of their own negative thinking, we see that we can never create the better world that we all want until we promote the ideal of individual self-discovery.

I would like to talk to you tonight about three important steps that may be taken in finding yourself. This is an age of specialization, and in our highly advanced civilization it would seem that we don't have the time or the means to do all the things that should be done. So, the news of the day is digested for us by commentators, books are abridged and summarized for us so we hardly have to think for ourselves. We can simply subscribe to opinions already thought out. And in the field of religion, spiritual philosophies come in conveniently packaged form so that we can join a church accept our convictions custom made, and even pay the clergyman to settle up with God for us. ***The First Step, then, in finding ourselves, is to think for ourselves.*** The most profound Truth in all the facts concerning mankind consists of the fact that God gave man complete, unchallengeable right and prerogative over one thing, ***our own mind.*** By the simple process of exercising this prerogative over your own mind, you may lift yourself to great heights of achievement. Exercise of this prerogative is perhaps the only approach to the status known as genius. After all, a genius is simply one who has taken full possession of his mind and directed it to objectives of his own choosing, without permitting outside influences to discourage or mislead him. Thomas Edison learned to think his own thoughts. In his exercise of this privilege he uncovered and revealed to mankind more useful inventions than have been revealed during the entire period of civilization up to his time. He accomplished the things he did because he refused to accept the edict of a teacher who said he had an addled mind and couldn't take schooling. He took complete possession of that mind. Napoleon Hill once said, "When the ties that bind the human-mind are broken and a man is introduced to himself, the real self that has no limitations, I fancy the gates of Hell will shake with fear and the bells of Heaven ring with joy." And I say Amen to that.

Secondly, I suggest you work to create for yourself. Man is a creative creature, created in the image and likeness of the great Creative Genius that has brought forth all the wonders of the Universe. Man has instincts that long to create, that must create. And, again, in our age of specialization there is little necessity to create. In an interesting book of a few years ago, *The Amazing Crusoes of Lonesome Lake*, the hardy and lovable pioneer said of himself, "In that desolate and wild region we had nothing in the way of conveniences or equipment. All we had was a lot of sheer necessity." This is what we lack, sheer necessity. That is why we should never judge by appearances and say, "Oh, what a pity" when a child has to grow up in seeming poverty and hard times, and is forced to do a lot of things that most children do not do. Because faced with the overwhelming necessity, he may release his creative talents and thus be blessed with great inward peace and outward achievement Hal Boyle recently wrote, "It is better to write one poor poem than to memorize Shakespeare. It is better to play a musical saw yourself than merely be able to identify every melody in Beethoven. To own the smallest talent is greater than to be a cultural hanger-on." In a time when retirement at ever earlier ages is the growing trend, some of the greatest problems that have ever faced man lie before us in adjusting ourselves to leisure time.

I remember Grandma Moses started painting, without instruction, at age 78, and ultimately went on to become an American legend. A man who allows his work to become automatic and does not supplement it with some creative occupation or hobby or field of service, is a man who is walking on dangerous ground. Not only does he deny himself a means of joy and fulfillment when he is working, but he is walking into a terrible void beyond return. You can go a long way toward the happy experience of finding yourself through creative things. Don't frustrate your creative impulse. Don't let yourself be satisfied merely to appreciate the creative work of others. Resolve to sing, or play, or paint, or build, or carve, or sew for yourself.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly as a step in finding yourself, seek truth for yourself. Man's heart is ever restless until it finds repose in God. It is this that leads a man to seek out a religious philosophy, to pray, to take part in spiritual organizations. The trouble is, most people do not go far enough in finding God. Most people have fallen victim to the subtle religious

propaganda that joining a church is finding God, or giving intellectual assent to a particular creed is finding God, or the emotional acceptance of Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour is finding God. In fact, *we never find God until we find ourselves*. And we never find ourselves until we search out our inmost self, dig within the mind and heart, and plumb the depths of the richest mine in the world. Our problem is that we just have not dug deeply enough. We have become discouraged and thus have sold ourselves out. We have allowed ourselves to get into positions where our entire spiritual life is in the hands of so-called “professionals.” In this relationship we have little or no access to God ourselves. The clergy intercedes for us, the church becomes the worshiping medium and provides the way for our “salvation”. And (you may be shocked about this) in what I call the hideous dogma of the vicarious atonement. Jesus Christ, in the popular propaganda atones for all our sins, and we are denied the joyous privilege, and it is a joy because overcoming is the greatest source of satisfaction in life, we are denied the joyous privilege of working out our own salvation.

In the futile rationalizations of day to day existence, man not only tends to lose himself, but he loses the means of finding his true personality, his true relationship to God. William Butler Yeats said “we have turned the table of values upside down and believe that the root of reality is not in the center, but somewhere in the whirling circumference.” The “whirling circumference” refers to the material world of creature comforts. No one will deny that these things are important, but when things and creature comforts become the end, instead of the means to the end of finding ourselves in God, then we lose our freedom. So when Jesus said, “Enter into the inner chamber and close the door and pray to the Father in secret,” he understood the tendency of circumference living. He .knew we must get into the center of our being, become God-centered, integrated, to become aware of the depth of us. We need to take the time occasionally to go apart. It is fine to pray in church, it is fine to sit in a worship service, this is a marvelous atmosphere. But take this atmosphere with you and go alone somewhere and be still and plumb the depths of your inmost self because you can only touch reality or touch God alone. And it is in this inward search for yourself that you will begin to make the most wonderful discovery, and to have life’s most wonderful experience, that of really knowing yourself.

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ESSAY Facing the New Frontier

“Man, know thyself.” These simple but profound words were the first of seven wise sayings inscribed on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Man has always been an inquisitive being, but his inquisitiveness has pertained mostly to things rather than to himself. Man has climbed the highest mountains, crossed the plains of the wilderness, risen out of the earth’s atmosphere, and explored the frontiers of electronics, philosophy, astronomy, biochemistry, and so many other areas. I sometimes wonder whether the explorers and men of research are impelled entirely by inquisitiveness, or whether there might be a certain degree of escapism in the effort. It was said of old, “The heart is ever restless until it find repose in God.” Failing to conquer the world within, to a great extent man s drive across the plains has been a restless drive, a kind of attempt to find in the world what one can only find in himself.

There is a new frontier: the world within every person. How long can we put off facing this frontier: the charting of the wilderness of our own mind, the conquest of self, the discovery of the soul, the hidden powers of the indwelling Spirit? What tremendous untapped resources lie within each one of us? What revelations lie ahead for those who truly seek to know themselves as spiritual beings?

The ancient command, "Know thyself," is an eternal call of the soul of man. It is a sad thing that most people wait until they are ancient themselves before they really take it seriously. When we recognize the Importance of the frontier of the mind and the soul, we are conscious of an inner potential that is greater than that revealed by all previous experience. In J. M. Barrie's interesting play, *The Admirable Crichton*, we have portrayed for us a man who served as a butler and was proud of his place, as such. He had never had much or done much in the world about him, but he had pushed back the unconquered frontiers of the world within, and thus was receptive to hidden reserves of inspiration and strength. So, when thrown on a desert island, with the well-being of his master's family dependent on his ingenuity and leadership, the butler became the master of the situation and took complete charge of the group. When put to the test, those who had everything in the worldly sense had nothing in the inner sense. And he who had little of worldly worth, but had attained a consciousness of his inner depth, became the leader of all.

How easy it is to become lost in the wilderness of despair and despondency when one has not previously charted the inner resources of one's mind. Faced by tragedy, loss, hardship, or injustice, we are so easily bogged down in the miry marshes of self-pity and helplessness. In Charles Fillmore's interesting *Metaphysical Dictionary* the word "wilderness" means "a multitude of undisciplined thoughts." Moses, in leading the children of Israel (man's spiritual nature) out of bondage to the intellect, into the "promised land" of spiritual consciousness, goes in circles for forty years in the wilderness, during which time all errant thoughts are being brought into captivity through a knowledge of Divine law. So, the wanderings of the children of Israel and the leadership of Moses have a metaphysical counterpart in terms of our own experience.

In the first chapter of Mark, we are told that even Jesus had this inner frontier to cross. It is said, "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where for forty days He was tempted." Now, we might ask, "Led by the Spirit into temptation?" No. He was led into the wilderness of mind to gain the victory.

Many are the times when we go on to outward attainment and success, while allowing a large wilderness area of undisciplined thoughts to remain within. Of course, this always spells trouble in the long run. A man of considerable means who, retired, is living in frustration and despondency, sits on the veranda on a sunny afternoon as the gentle and refreshing breezes stir the leaves. He says, "See the way the shadows chase themselves around under those trees? That is one of the few things which gives me comfort. They did it just like that under those same trees when I was a boy, and when I had a good time living." The trouble with this man is that shadows are chasing themselves around in his mind. He has become lost in the wilderness of his own undeveloped inner life. His need is to face this frontier, to launch forth to spend his time in that wilderness and to put the satanic influence of negative thoughts in their place. To probe the depths of himself means inner prayer and meditation.

It is unfortunate, but true, that a simple acceptance of religion or the joining of a church does not necessarily launch us across the new frontier into the conquest of our inner wilderness. This is a confusion that is sometimes foisted on us by the propaganda of religious institutions. I love this thought by Manly P. Hall in his book, *The Mystical Christ*: "We have been given a beautiful teaching, to which the better parts of our natures instinctively aspire. As never before, we need to live and to understand the original Christian code. We must cleanse our minds of the tendency to associate Jesus teachings with the false concepts that have circulated in His name." He then goes on to tell the story of a man who came to him seeking spiritual help, a man who was the picture of piety. He had convinced himself that he was a paragon of Christian virtue, and at the same time he was devoured by hate. He loved everyone in general and hated everyone in particular. He suffered, and retaliated by making others suffer. And yet, he would have been highly insulted if anyone had suggested that he was not a fine Christian gentleman. He is typical of the incredible inconsistency of much of our Christianity. He constantly complained about an unprincipled world and yet he was without any real principle himself.

Crossing the frontier within ourselves, one important task we have is to find the Divinity of our own innate person, to find the Christ in ourselves. Christianity is a vital influence in our lives, but only to the degree that we find our way through the maze of our own negative thinking to the source of our abundant living, the Divinity within us. Of course, “finding” the Christ is a erroneous idea because the Christ isn’t lost; the Christ *is our greater self*. Actually, it is we in *human thought* who are lost.

Paul tells of this inner perfection within the outer form. He refers to “the mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations; but now hath it been manifested to His saints, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” This is probably the greatest statement in the Bible, which we need very much to understand: “Christ in *you*, the hope of glory.” “*Christ*” refers to the *Divine dimension of yourself*. “The hope of glory” is the hope of righteousness, the hope of overcoming, the Hope of finding any kind of meaning or purpose or effectiveness in life.

In II Corinthians, the thirteenth chapter, Paul says: “Examine yourself, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” Now, he is using this “Jesus Christ” in a rather interesting way, because he is not speaking of Jesus as being in you, but what he calls, “the Jesus Christ consciousness,” a level of awareness which he simply identifies as that being *revealed* by Jesus. He tells us to examine our inner selves to cross the inner frontiers, and to see if we can’t find within ourselves this Divine level, this pattern of Divine sonship. And he unequivocally states that this Christ, or Divinity, is *in us*, “except ye be reprobates.” The word “reprobate” means, among other things, “to disapprove with strong dislike; to refuse to sanction; to reject; to abandon as helplessly wicked.” In other words, as long as man disapproves of his own inner self, as long as he has a strong dislike for the depth of himself and refuses to recognize its omnipresence and guidance, then his own man-made reprobate state of mind will remain the one and only barrier that keeps the Divine level of himself in a state of inertia.

So, the challenge is to launch into this wilderness of mind, to conquer this reprobate state of consciousness, that we may come to know and to experience the inner power of the Christ

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ESSAY The Upward Fall of Man

Every philosophy has a key idea, a fundamental concept from which all others evolve. In what we call this new insight in Truth, there is a need for a brief glimpse at the stories of the Creation and the Garden of Eden, found in Genesis.

A child could relate the stories simply: God created the world in seven days, then He created man and woman, who sinned by eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. God thereupon drove the pair out of the Garden, condemning them to live perpetually by pain and the sweat of their brows because of their original sin. Once a youngster in Sunday school drew a picture of a large limousine with a young couple in the back seat being driven by a man with a long, white beard. When asked to interpret it, the child said it was God driving Adam and Eve out of the Garden. This explanation makes just about as much sense as the story usually does, to many.

The first three chapters of the book of Genesis relate not one but two Creations, or two versions of the Creation. The confusion has arisen from telling it as one continuous story, leading to the doctrine of the Fall of Man and the need or Redemption, on which Judaism and Christianity are based. In this tradition, because Adam and Eve were said to have sinned in succumbing to the suggestion of the Serpent in the Garden to eat an apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the process of sexual reproduction was to be held evil for all time. Thus are all men born in sin, and according to the Christian tradition, they are redeemed only by the saving grace of Jesus Christ. It is an interesting and seemingly logical concept, but it is one that has left mankind writhing in a constancy of guilt and sin and unworthiness. The story is in error, and its tradition has led to all sorts of false and damaging conclusions.

To reiterate, there are two stories of Creation. The first chapter of Genesis represents the *involution* of the Creation of Man. The second chapter represents the *evolution*, or the unfoldment of *hidden* inner potential. Before a thing can evolve there must be something *involved*. “First the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear.” The entire, fullsome result exists within the seed right from the beginning; it is involved, as the pattern from which the growth evolves. Man is created out of the dust of the ground, according to Genesis. This simply refers to the evolution of life from its most elemental form. The creation of Eve out of Adam’s rib represents the awakening of the feeling nature — the essential aspect of the spiritual unfoldment. The Garden of Eden represents the concentration in man of all the ideas of God concerned in the process of unfolding man’s soul and body.

At the center of the Garden grows the Tree of Life, the innermost perception of Spirit. The second description of the Tree, in which the fruit was forbidden, is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Serpent represents the life-principle in man in its most humble state of evolution. It is not evil in itself, but it must be uplifted and disciplined. Man’s first awakening to consciousness is symbolized by the eating of the forbidden fruit; it is man’s first discovery of cause and effect. The outcome appears to be evil: man suddenly sees himself by appearances, guilty and ashamed; he covers himself and eventually hides from God. But this is not a *fall* as much as it is an *emergence* from the ideal into the practical unfoldment of innate potentiality.

The philosopher Hegel refers to the Fall of Man as “the fall upward.” Going back to Genesis I, after each stage of creation, the constant refrain is found, “And God saw that it was good.” After the whole of Creation was finished, the phrase is again repeated: “God saw that all He had made was very, very good.” God created man in His image (“In the image of God created He him”), and God blessed the man and saw that all He had made was very good. This is the *ideal* state, the involutionary state in man. This is what man was and is “in the beginning,” which in the Bible was originally stated in Latin: “*in principio*,” meaning “in principle.”

This is the key idea of the new insight in Truth. This principle is involved and evolved in man, no matter what or where he may be! Man is a spiritual being, a whole creature. In the Biblical allegory, Adam and Eve were in hiding, and ultimately were driven from the Garden. But this was not because of any vindictiveness of God; it was because of the function of law. Adam and Eve had acquired a sense of unworthiness, and this is where they found themselves in consciousness. Consequently the entire Bible allegorically depicts man’s quest for Truth, for a sense of wholeness, of meaning, of worth. Because we have assumed that it was God who judged and condemned Adam and Eve to live ever after in pain and hard work, and drove them from the Garden, we have attempted to placate God. All the many rituals of faith developed from a fearful worshiping of an angry God, with sacrifices of appeasement and pleas of mercy — all derived from misunderstanding. All the Garden of Eden allegory implies is that man emerged into consciousness and discovered the law of mind-action, which states: Where you are in experience is a certain and quite dependable reflection of all you happen to be in consciousness.

Wherever you are right now, whatever you are experiencing, you are in your rightful place. Perhaps it is not your *true* place, which is where you can be by reason of the God-man involved in you: perfect health, harmony, prosperity. But your *right* place is where you happen to be at a particular time, whether it is pleasing and acceptable or not. You are always in your right place, you are always in the place that corresponds to your mentality at the moment. It can be a place of growth in which there are great blessings. This was the discovery of Job. He wondered why he was where he was, but in time he realized that it was his right place, the only place where he could do the growing he needed to do to get into the experience that was his true place.

The Fall of Man was a fall in consciousness from a state which is absolute and ever-present within. In a sense it was a fall out into the world of experience, which then becomes the *upward* trail of growth through trial and error. The eternal dilemma of man was, is, and always will be that man does not know where he is. So, he is not quite certain of what his problem is. He circles around searching for a solution to his problem, whereas actually he is trying to find his problem — to discover it, to grasp its essence. When Job eventually found his problem, he discovered that he himself was it, and that as he changed his attitude toward himself, he changed everything. This was the lesson that God was trying to teach Adam. But Adam could not see himself as he really was, so he was hiding. In that consciousness, he would always project his faulty self-image, and thus would deal with people and situations from the lowest rung of the ladder of experience.

The rest of the world always accepts you at the level of your own self-evaluation. No matter where you are, you can find redemption through realizing your own indwelling potential, your own God-self. You can ask yourself, as God is asking you: “Where are you? What are you? How are you thinking? How are you viewing yourself? How are you identifying yourself? How are you ‘evaluating yourself? How are you accepting yourself in relation to life and its experiences?”

God did not create two worlds, one good and the other evil. He made only one Creation - perfect and good. God did not thrust man out into a trying world because of his evil nature. Man has simply moved out in consciousness. And at any time, by coming to himself, with logic and spirit answering the question “What are you?” by knowing his own true nature, man can experience the state of health and prosperity.

What are you? You have a choice of affirming: “I am a perfect child of God; within me is the potential to be all that I want to be; and I will be, knowing who I am and that I AM.”

OUTLINE OF LIBER 7 Hermeticism

PAGE	TYPE	TITLE
1	INTRODUCTION	
1	OVERVIEW	
2	LECTURE	Concentration
4	LECTURE	Meditation
8	LECTURE	The Principle of Duality
10	LECTURE	The Principle of Polarity
14	ESSAY	Three Steps in Finding Yourself
16	ESSAY	Facing the New Frontier
18	ESSAY	The Upward Fall of Man