

The long-awaited publication of Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions is now available in a hardback edition in three volumes by Angelico Press, prepared over many years by James Wetmore. This is the definitive edition of the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich. Angelico Press has completed their monumental, decade-long project of republishing Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions of the life of Jesus in a large-format, double-column trilogy of nearly 1,700 pages. Ten years in the making, it is unlike any other edition of her work ever published. Together, the three books incorporate all 350 of James Tissot's paintings of the life of Jesus, themselves largely inspired by his reading of the visions of Emmerich in the late 1800s, as well as new material, some translated for the first time from Clemens Brentano's original notes of the visions.

On the basis of comprehensive chronological and geographic studies by Fr. Helmut Fahsel and Dr. Robert Powell, the years of Jesus's ministry are presented as a day-by-day chronicle, and appendices supplied illustrating how this was achieved. Brief summaries offer a preview of most days of the ministry to prepare readers before they embark upon the more extensive version in the full text. A *Dramatis Personae* provides separate short articles—drawn from the visions and supplemented by translations from the recently published notebooks of Clemens Brentano—on the lives of the Apostles, of Lazarus and his friends, and of the Holy Women, as well as an account of the Enemies and Adversaries of Jesus. But this is not all. Fr. Fahsel had 42 detailed maps drawn especially for his work, *Der Wandel Jesu in der Welt* (1942), depicting in minute detail the daily movements of Jesus during his teaching journeys according to Anne Catherine's visions, which are here translated and updated. A gazetteer of places shown on the maps has also been included, as well as an extensive, cumulative index of proper names, places, and events referencing all three volumes, making this vast work more readily accessible for further study and research.

In addition to the paintings of James Tissot, Angelico selected from late 19th-century travelogues of the Holy Land more than 100 etchings and drawings. The Holy Land at that time had been so little altered by the march of history that these illustrations give the reader a real sense of “accompanying” Jesus during his travels. Over the years many have attested to the transformative power of these visions, and Anne Catherine was beatified on October 3, 2004 by Pope John Paul II. It is the editor's hope that these visions—so engaging as a historical narrative, so illustrative of the gospel stories, so replete with inspired spiritual insight—may open a gateway for the many who have in modern times fallen away from any connection with the life and teaching of Jesus, to the earthly garden where the Spirit bloomed, and blossoms still.

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Truth in Spiritual Revelation and Research

Robert Powell

In this issue of *Starlight* again we have “new” material from Anne Catherine Emmerich — “new” in that this material is published here for the first time in English translation...with many thanks to James Wetmore (and others associated therewith) for making this material available. The first question in connection with this material of Anne Catherine Emmerich, whose visions and associated messages were received by way of revelation, is: How trustworthy is it? In the following I shall endeavor to give an answer to this question from my perspective. And here I would like to mention in this connection that I was asked recently about the trustworthiness of the material—again received by way of revelation—associated with Maria Valtorta, who, like Anne Catherine Emmerich, was also focused primarily on the life of Jesus Christ. It is because I was asked about her that I refer to Maria Valtorta in the following, wherein my endeavor is to remain completely objective in my considerations concerning both of these extraordinary women.

What is not generally realized, but becomes apparent from a close study of the descriptions in the material associated with the German nun Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824), who bore the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, is that she beheld her visions *in full consciousness*. On a spiritual level, she was as if actually present—in historical time—witnessing and describing actual events, and what she described was conscientiously recorded by her scribe, the German poet Clemens Brentano (1778-1842).

By way of contrast, the Italian writer and poet Maria Valtorta (1897-1961), who was also a Franciscan tertiary, received the messages dictated to her, but she did not see or witness the historical unfolding of the events that she was describing, nor did she really know the source of the revelation that came into the world through her. Nevertheless, her twelve volumes of *Poem of the Man-God*—in the revised edition ten volumes¹—which were dictated to her between 1943 and 1951, are very impressive in terms of their detailed description of the lives of Jesus and the disciples and also of Mary. However, upon further scientific investigation into Maria Valtorta’s chronology of the life of Christ, my own investigation finds it to be clearly in error.² In this way, it can be stated with one hundred percent certainty, even if there are true elements in Maria Valtorta’s revelation, that something else was also playing into her revelation



Maria Valtorta

¹ Maria Valtorta, *Poem of the Man-God* (Create Space/Amazon, 2016), volume 1 and *The Gospel As Revealed To Me* (revised edition of *The Poem of the Man-God*), (Milan: Centro Editoriale, 2014), 10 volumes.

² This chronology is nowhere explicitly indicated by Maria Valtorta, but is derived from statements made in *Poem of the Man-God*. The chronology of the life of Jesus Christ, based on Maria Valtorta’s revelation, is implicit, not explicit. From her revelation it has been determined that the historical date of the crucifixion was Friday, April 23, AD 34—see the article of June 9, 2017 by E. Matricciani and Liberato de Caro, “Literary Fiction or Ancient Astronomical and Meteorological Observations in the Work of Maria Valtorta?” *Religions* (MDPI), pp. 1-23—<http://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/8/6/110/pdf> (MDPI is a pioneer in scholarly, open-access publishing.) However, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner, and as has been confirmed by many researchers employing astronomical chronology in the realm of Biblical chronology, the

that is not completely aligned with the truth. Moreover, despite the claim put forward by some that her books were received by way of Divine Revelation, they were in fact placed on the Vatican's *Index of Prohibited Books*, and the *Poem of the Man-God* was described in a Vatican publication as "a badly fictionalized life of Jesus."³

It has to be highlighted for readers of *Starlight* that in spiritual matters, as in earthly life, *only the truth counts*, and that spiritually there are two ways of arriving at truth: revelation and spiritual research. My scientific proof of the validity of at least the chronological aspect of Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions (see the section "Scientific probability proof..." below) is, I believe, of significance with regard to helping us determine the truth and error in the communications of other seers—such as, for example, Maria Valtorta—regarding the life of Jesus Christ.

At the present time, few people have truly grasped the importance of this aspect of *scientific proof* of the chronology of the life of Jesus Christ based on the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, which could be applied in any discussion pertaining to the life of Christ. For example, in line with Rudolf Steiner's statement about the length of the life of Jesus Christ from his birth to his resurrection being thirty-three-and-a-third years,⁴ through chronologically decoding the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, it can now be confirmed with certainty that Jesus Christ truly did

historical date of the crucifixion was Friday, April 3, AD 33. Given the error in the determination of the historical date of the crucifixion, it is evident that the chronology implicit in Maria Valtorta's revelation is in error by over one year. It is true that there are other chronologies of the life of Christ based on the revelation of Maria Valtorta, with varied results differing from the one quoted here that was published on June 9, 2017. The 2017 one quoted here is, as far as I know, the most recent and the most thorough in a scholarly sense, which is why this chronology is referred to here as having an almost definitive standing among other chronologies of the life of Jesus Christ based on Maria Valtorta's revelation.

³ Wikipedia "Maria Valtorta" — according to this article, between 1943 and 1951 Maria Valtorta wrote some 15,000 handwritten pages in 122 notebooks of material dictated to her. See also the article "A Badly Fictionalized Life of Jesus" (copyright: Vatican library) — <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8060>

⁴ Based on Anne Catherine Emmerich's description, Jesus was born at midnight on Saturday/Sunday, the twelfth day of Kislev. This date in the Hebrew calendar corresponds to Saturday/Sunday, December 6/7, 2 BC [for astronomers, this is the year "minus 1" since the year 1 BC in astronomy is defined as the "year zero"]. From this point in time until the resurrection on April 5, AD 33 is exactly thirty-three-and-a-third years (minus one-and-a-half days). The following indication by Rudolf Steiner confirms this period of thirty-three-and-a-third years: "In the historical process, everything arises after thirty-three years in a transformed state — arises from the grave through a power that has to do with the most holy redemption that humanity has received. Then, when such a seed that has been laid ripens, it works further. A 'thought seed' ripens through one generation of thirty-three years to become a 'deed seed.' Once ripened, it works further in the unfolding of history through sixty-six years. One can recognize the intensity of an impulse that someone implants into the historical process also in its effect through three generations, *through a whole century*" (Rudolf Steiner, *Mysterienwahrheiten und Weihnachtsimpulse*, "Mystery truths and the impulses of Christmas," lectures of December 23 & 26, 1917—Complete Works, vol. 180). A whole century of one hundred years equals three times thirty-three-and-a-third years. Here Rudolf Steiner's indication of thirty-three-and-a-third years is confirmed. In the lecture, for the sake of simplicity, he says simply "thirty-three" years—that this rhythm works further in the unfolding of history. The reader can imagine how encouraging it was to discover that the statement by the stigmatist and seer Anne Catherine Emmerich regarding Jesus' birth date was confirmed in this (indirect) way by Rudolf Steiner. In this way, I became certain with respect to the truth of this thirty-three-and-a-third-year rhythm and that one can follow the rhythm of thirty-three-and-a-third years throughout history, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner in the aforementioned cycle of lectures.

live on earth for thirty-three-and-a-third years, in Palestine, from December 6/7, 2 BC (birth) to April 5, AD 33 (resurrection), and during his 3½-year ministry accomplished what is described in the four Gospels. I have scientifically verified this information with almost one hundred percent certainty. In other words, using an authentic method of modern science, I have proved with well-nigh one hundred percent certainty that Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions are, by and large, completely true and authentic in their chronological aspect. Based on this, although I cannot vouch for every single statement that she made, I can in good conscience, as a mathematician and scientific researcher, vouch for the overall truth of her visions.

I would say the same for Rudolf Steiner's spiritual-scientific findings, though I cannot provide a scientific proof that they are well-nigh completely true and authentic. However, it has been possible for me to scientifically verify certain statements he made, such as the one referred to above, that the length of the life of Jesus Christ from his birth to his resurrection was thirty-three-and-a-third years. Nevertheless, based on more than forty-five years of study of the works of Rudolf Steiner, I can personally vouch for the intrinsic truth of what he brought forward as spiritual science. I say "personally vouch for," since it is a matter—as a mathematician and science historian—of having developed over many years a sure sense for truth. What is presented by Rudolf Steiner as spiritual science "rings true" to my scientifically-honed sense for truth. And in the words of Rudolf Steiner, referring to Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions, "Without a doubt, they contain exceptionally accurate material."⁵

In other words, during my lifelong quest for spiritual truth, what I have come to, in terms of exploring anything to do with the spiritual realm, is that we have *a secure and true* footing with the works of Anne Catherine Emmerich (representing *revelation*) and Rudolf Steiner (representing *spiritual research*). And these works can therefore be used in order to assess the truth and validity of the spiritual communications of others—such as Maria Valtorta, for example.

Scientific "probability proof" of the validity of Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions— a final word on the accuracy of the visions

A final word on the accuracy of the visions is the heading of the section at the end of Appendix 1 of Book III of the recently published *Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich*.⁶ In the year 2004, eleven years prior to the publication [in 2015] of this [Angelico Press] edition of her visions, Anne Catherine Emmerich was beatified by Pope John Paul II. The specific content of the books published in her name was set aside during the beatification process because it was no longer possible to distinguish clearly between Anne Catherine Emmerich's original words and the later published versions. However, with the publication in 2009 of Clemens Brentano's complete notebooks of his transcription of the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, it has become evident

⁵ Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 1996), p. 17.

⁶ *The Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich* (3 volumes; Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2015). The day-by-day unfolding of the life of Jesus Christ described in the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich is tabulated in this 3-volume work according to the chronology discovered by Robert Powell that is intrinsic to Anne Catherine Emmerich's visions. For the first time in the history of Christianity, the scientifically proven accurate chronology of the dates of events in Christ's ministry are presented in their true context.

that in fact he, and those who followed after him, followed his notes quite faithfully. This new edition, then, offers new and compelling evidence for the reliability of the visions in the form in which they have come down to us—that is, the inclusion of the chronology, along with the scientific procedure employed in establishing it.⁷

My own initial reading of Anne Catherine’s visions gave me an overpowering sense of their extraordinary internal consistency—and hence reliability—in regard to the many calendrical references found therein. However, as a scientist, I was not content simply with this sense of authenticity: I sought a way to know for sure whether or not the visions were true. To this end, I scrutinized the visions line by line and found that Anne Catherine Emmerich made references to days of the week and dates in the Hebrew calendar—dates (because the Hebrew calendar is a lunar calendar) implicitly indicating the phases of the moon. Without a background in astronomical chronology, one might not notice such details, but my own scientific background had given me precisely such knowledge.

On one occasion, for example, Anne Catherine said, “Jesus taught in the synagogue at Aionon That evening, after the close of the sabbath ... was the commencement of the Feast of Tabernacles.” Now, the Feast of Tabernacles commences on the fifteenth day of the month of Tishri in the Hebrew calendar, so that the fifteenth day—falling in the middle of a lunar month containing 29 or 30 days—coincides with the Full Moon.⁸ Moreover, since the Hebrew sabbath extends from dusk on Friday evening to dusk on Saturday evening, it must have been Saturday evening “after the close of the sabbath.” This event, then, must have happened on a Saturday evening at Full Moon in September or October (month of Tishri).

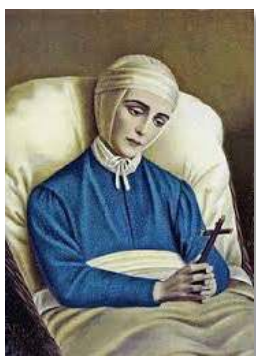
Using this method, I carefully collected all references of this kind and found to my astonishment that they tallied exactly with the actual Hebrew lunar calendar for the period from the year 29 [the year of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan] to the year 33 [the year of the crucifixion and resurrection]. As a former teacher of statistics and probability theory at university level,⁹ I thereby applied my knowledge in the field of probability theory to the results my studied inquiry had yielded, and found that the probability that the dates indicated by Anne Catherine were random was one in four hundred and thirty-five billion—that is, the dates of the life of Christ derived from Anne Catherine Emmerich’s descriptions are authentic with 99.999999999977% certainty! This finding was then further reviewed by two other mathematicians, who came to the same result.

It can be said, therefore, that through the extraordinary accuracy of the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, it has been proven possible for the first time in the history of Christianity to establish the true dates of the life of Christ, primarily from the baptism in the Jordan onward

⁷ The scientific validation of the dating based on Anne Catherine’s visions is presented at some length in the subsequent appendices in this book [published in 2015 by Angelico Press].

⁸ The month in the Hebrew calendar starts with the first appearance at dusk of the thin crescent of the New Moon.

⁹ Robert Powell, PhD, taught mathematics and statistics from 1969 to 1976 in the Department of Computing & Cybernetics at Brighton Polytechnic, now known as Brighton University, in the coastal town of Brighton, Southern England.



(but also from shortly before the baptism) up until the crucifixion and resurrection and shortly thereafter. And by extension, we can feel confident that when we read Anne Catherine's account of the life of Jesus Christ we are on a secure foundation. One cannot of course claim that every single word of her visions is the absolute truth; but from the extraordinary accuracy of her temporal indications (as also her geographical indications, as discussed in these three volumes of her visions), and from what my own research has established, the conclusion is inescapable that the dates in the life of Christ as indicated by Anne Catherine Emmerich through her visions—or rather, as has here been determined on the basis of her descriptions—are *the actual historical dates* of the life of Jesus Christ.

New Light on the Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich— a 12-volume Series

James Wetmore

A twelve-volume *New Light on the Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich* series is currently being published by Angelico Press—one volume at a time during the course of 2018. This series supplements two earlier Angelico publications: The trilogy *The Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich*, Deluxe Edition, Books I–III (1,700 pages in large format, with 600 illustrations and 42 maps) and the smaller format 4-volume, slightly abridged edition, *Life, Passion, Death, & Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (A Chronicle from the Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich), Books I–IV (1,770 pages with 150 illustrations and 43 maps). As described at more length in the Preface to each volume in the series, in 2009 Clemens Brentano's original notes of Anne Catherine's visions became readily available for reference. At that time the trilogy and 4-volume series just mentioned were already nearing completion. However, with the appearance of these notes, the editor resolved to pause, and to the extent possible research this vast body of notes to ascertain what further light they might shed on what had by then been prepared for publication. This proved to be a daunting prospect, and despite spending the better part of another decade on the task, much research remains to be done. But at some point one must call a halt, and so, after inserting relevant new translations into the two sets mentioned above and publishing them in 2015–2016, the present series was conceived as a means to present, in various contexts, such new material as had been selected from the notes and translated.

In general the content of each volume of this 12-volume series consists of (1) material selected by individual or theme from earlier translations—reviewed, supplemented, and revised where necessary, especially for consistency of usage; and (2) newly selected and translated material germane to the content of that volume. As regards both individuals and themes, the procedure was to extract every reference thus far located in the notes and in prior translations, and weave them together into a connected account. The reader can thus find in one place all, or most, of what Anne Catherine had to say about any given individual or theme.

Virtually *every* individual in the Biblical visions (approximately 250 in total) is referenced in the five *People of the New Testament* volumes. A separate volume, *Mary and Her Ancestry* is dedicated to the Virgin Mary; and another volume, *Scenes from the Lives of the Saints*, treats of 59 Saints (the three depictions contained in this issue of *Starlight*—on the lives of Saints Thekla, Augustine, and Perpetua and Felicity—are drawn from volume nine of the series). Separate volumes cover *First Beginnings* and *Mysteries of the Old Testament*. Two further volumes, covering a multitude of separate themes, are entitled *Inner Life and Worlds of Soul and Spirit* and *Spiritual Works and Journeys*. A final 2-volume set represents a condensed, edited, rearranged, supplemented, and re-typeset edition of Rev. Carl E. Schmöger’s exhaustive biography of Anne Catherine, first published in English in 1885. For clarity of organization, much of this biography in its original form has been redistributed among the other volumes of this series and enriched with newly-translated material.

In view of the sometimes extensive amount of material presented concerning certain individuals—especially major characters—a judicious essentializing of scenes was sometimes resorted to. In some cases—especially those of closely related apostles, disciples, or other individuals regularly treated together in the visions—rather than duplicating material, the expedient employed was to disentangle scenes to the extent possible so that the full story could be garnered gradually by reading the separate accounts of each. Nonetheless, since readers may jump around in their selection of individuals to read about, some repetition was unavoidable in order to provide enough context to keep the separate accounts sufficiently sequential and unified. Some individuals play so great a role in the visions that it would be impractical to include every mention in a chronological itinerary. In such cases (for example, John the Baptist, St. Joseph, Peter, Matthew, Judas, and the Virgin Mary) the emphasis had to be placed primarily on more general and *newly-translated* material. In such cases inquisitive readers can refer to the large-format, 3-volume *The Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich*, and utilize its index to further their research.

It must be well understood that all the editor could do was work with what Anne Catherine *actually said* as recorded in Brentano’s notes. Some little-known, or even totally unknown, individuals may enjoy longer accounts in these volumes than other very well-known figures from the Gospels! There can be no question of assigning relative importance to any individual based solely on how extensive Anne Catherine’s visions of the person may have been. Likewise, stories may have gaps or sometimes end abruptly. It is indeed unfortunate that (as Brentano repeatedly bemoans in his notes) so much was lost owing to Anne Catherine’s considerable suffering, household distractions, and the many obligations laid upon her—all of which interfered with her visions and her capacity to recall them. And yet withal, how much we have to be grateful for!

Prospects For The Future

As editor of this series I am only too aware of my limitations in face of the awe-inspiring magnitude of the task. My initial inspiration was solely the spiritual value of Anne Catherine’s visions as a means of helping seekers find their way back to a faithful connection with Jesus Christ; or, as is the case with so many in our time, find their way for the first time to a dawning awareness of what they

may thus far have failed to see. Further, there are great, singing depths in the visions, like choirs of symbolism. As time went along I could only go deeper, until finally I entered upon the work that has now led to completing this series. Along with providing spiritual benefits and guidance, my work with this material also was—and will ever remain—a thrilling journey of discovery. Now, with the original notes available (thanks to the efforts of Jozef De Raedemaeker), there are further “continents” to explore, as alas—despite so many years of work—the soil has only been surface-plowed. In the visions will be found fascinating indications and hints for archeologists, historians, linguists, theologians, comparative religionists, chronologists, specialists in symbolism, students of esotericism, astrology/astrosophy, and more. Over and above the primary element of spiritual inspiration that is to be gleaned from these visions, it is my hope that such specialists may in due course take up the visions (including the entire corpus of Brentano’s notes) and press further forward. How one would love to see a foundation, a university, a religious sodality, or some private individual or group sponsor so important and propitious a project! If the largely solitary results presented here serve to advance such future research, if hearts and souls are moved and enriched by the Anne Catherine Emmerich series as a whole, the effort will have achieved its purpose.

~ James Wetmore

Volumes in the New Light Series

1. *First Beginnings: From the Creation to the Mountain of the Prophets & From Adam and Eve to Job and the Patriarchs*
2. *Mysteries of the Old Testament: From Joseph and Asenath to the Prophet Malachi & The Ark of the Covenant and the Mystery of the Promise*
3. *People of the New Testament, Book I: Joseph, The Three Kings, John the Baptist, & Four Apostles (Andrew, Peter, James the Greater, and John)*
4. *People of the New Testament, Book II: Nine Apostles (Philip, Bartholomew, James the Less, Thomas, Judas Iscariot, Matthew [Levi], Judas Thaddeus, Simon the Zealot, & Matthias), Paul, and Lazarus & the Secret Disciples*
5. *People of the New Testament, Book III: Major Male Disciples & Other Followers and Friends*
6. *People of the New Testament, Book IV: Early Friends and Minor Disciples of Jesus, and Those Who Opposed Him*
7. *People of the New Testament, Book V: The Primary Holy Women, Major Female Disciples and Relations of Jesus, Minor Disciples & Others*
8. *The Virgin Mary & Her Ancestors: Anne & Joachim (Parents of Mary) & Their Essene Ancestors, Elizabeth & Zechariah (Parents of John the Baptist), & The Life of the Virgin Mary From Conception to Assumption, Also Her Mystical Nature*
9. *Scenes From the Lives of the Saints: And Three Others & Relics and Blessed Objects*
10. *The Inner Life and Worlds of Soul and Spirit: Prayer, Parables, Purgatory, The Heavenly Jerusalem, Revelations, Holy Places, Gospels, &c.*
11. *Glimpses of Christian Truths and Spiritual Works, BOOK II*
12. *The Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich (in Two Parts): Biographical Glimpses in Overview, Anne Catherine’s Life from 1774 to Her Death in 1824 (Being an Extensively Revised and Abridged English Edition of the Work of Rev. Carl E. Schmöger published in 1885).*

Anne Catherine Emmerich: Visions of Thekla, Augustine, Perpetua and Felicity



Most readers of the journal *Starlight* will already be familiar with the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774–1824), of which expanded and supplemented editions were published in 2015 and 2016 by Angelico Press. These editions benefitted from the publication in 2009 of much of the content of the original 38 notebooks of Clemens Brentano, who attended Anne Catherine for extended periods over a span of six years, till just prior to her death, keeping meticulous records of her visions and their conversations during that period. These notebooks, as first published, comprised over 8,000 pages, even with much of the content related to the connected life of Christ Jesus left out. A fuller edition is now being made available. In this issue of *Starlight* we are including Anne Catherine's visions of these saints: Thekla, Augustine, Perpetua and Felicity.

~ James Wetmore

Thekla

Anne Catherine beheld in its entirety the life of Paul's student Thekla, whom she was given to understand, as the first martyr of the blessed Virgin, had been accorded a place alongside the Fathers of the Church.

At a time when she was engaged to be married, Thekla came to hear Paul's teaching, by which she was greatly stirred, particularly on the subject of virginity. Indeed, Anne Catherine heard God praising her virginity. Thekla was then living at her parent's house in Iconium. She was of medium height, with brown hair. Her countenance was both attractive and earnest. Her coloring was not rosy, but of a more brownish cast. Her forehead and nose were quite closely connected in a sort of line or crease. She gave an impression of uncommon piety and gravity. Her long wool-white garment had many folds and tucks, and was cinched with a wide sash that narrowed toward the ends. The flaring sleeves were fastened with arm-bracelets ribbed in the middle and set along their edges with pearls. Her hair was parted in three and braided together with strips of a translucent, silvery-white fabric—or better said, coiled or looped around her hair on both sides and behind, forming a chignon.

First I saw her alone with her father and mother, then with her betrothed—a large, handsome, virtuous man—who was received most congenially by all. The house was of the older kind, built with columns surrounding a forecourt. Before the house was a walled courtyard, beyond which opened a terrace surrounded with a balustrade. The balustrade was of varying height, with here and there openings through which one might see and hear. Tapestries were spread above to moderate the sunlight. Paul was there with a disciple, but not Barnabas as far as I can recall. The place had a synagogue, but Paul preferred to teach in the open air at the homes of his friends. Just then he was teaching at a house opposite and at a somewhat higher elevation than Thekla's home. Many people, among them virgins, were in attendance. Paul was speaking on the subject of marriage.

He said: "One who marries commits no sin; but one who abstains from marriage has done better," and so forth. Thekla sat on her terrace, listening to Paul's words from her side of the street. She was very moved by Paul's teaching. After this teaching, Paul was thrown in prison.

Somewhat later I saw Thekla alone in her room. She held a scroll, about a finger thick, from which she was reading. It was one of Paul's writings, on the subject of marriage and virginity, and she was much affected by what she was reading. She folded her hands in prayer, then removed from her breast and laid aside a piece of jewelry her betrothed had given her. She then removed from her right shoulder—or perhaps her right ear—another piece of jewelry like a white stone with a small knob.

This latter she lay in a small box that contained various other gems and treasures. Toward evening I saw her with a dark-colored veil over her arm as she left the house for the city, where she sought out a man to whom she passed her valuables, after which she returned home. A short while later this man came to her home and presented her with a small, rectangular metal plate.

Now I saw how she dispossessed herself of all her jewels and finery, covered herself completely with cloth, and declared to her parents and betrothed alike that she had become a Christian and wished to remain a virgin.¹ Her mother took this news hard, and was beside herself. Later the mother took her daughter to the house of a friend, who it was hoped might be able to alter her mind on the matter.

Later, I saw Thekla slip into a dungeon under cover of darkness with a brown shawl over her head. She passed along stout walls and under arches. She came to a guard standing watch, but did not address him, continuing on till she encountered a man who seemed to be the head watchman, to whom she offered some gold. This man then took a lamp and led her further into the dungeon, till he drew to a halt before a door. It led to the cell where Paul was imprisoned.

Paul wore a long mantle. His cell was quite spacious, and he was not chained. Scrolls lay about him. I saw the two of them together. Thekla was most earnest and upright. She spoke with Paul about her situation and feelings, after which Paul explained many things to her. As she knelt before him, Paul baptized her with water from a flask he kept under his garments, by his heart, and a light shone down and around them both from above. The prison-master, who had listened also, later became a Christian. Thekla quit the prison then and returned home.

I saw Thekla's own mother denounce her before court as a Christian, where she was cross-examined by a magistrate—whose questions she answered fearlessly—and sentenced. She was taken to a prison for gentrified inmates, and then to a place of torture

¹ Elsewhere, Anne Catherine reports that as Thekla's wedding presents were being prepared, she saw an envoy from her betrothed arrive, whom she turned away. Then a servant she had commissioned to sell her jewelry accompanied her to the prison where Paul was being held.

where she was stripped almost naked, left only with a strip of cloth covering her lower body, and then led in a circle before her tormentor, who with rods scourged her flesh until she collapsed upon the ground.

She was then bound to a stake and lacerated with instruments like a grappling-iron. Her long hair hung in a tangle about her bloodied body. When she was unbound she leapt of her own volition upon a funeral pyre. But as she stood upon the pyre, her arms outspread, the flames were driven back, and there came so mighty a downpour that everything washed away and the fire was extinguished.² She could easily have fled, but did not, and so was taken back to the prison. Many present were converted.

That night, as she prayed in her prison cell, Paul, who at that time was no longer confined in the prison, came to her as an apparition and consoled her and healed her wounds. I understood that someone had written to Rome on Paul's account, and that is how he won his release.

Then Thekla was led from the prison to be interrogated again, and afterward to a circular combat arena. Again her clothes were stripped away. At one end of the arena was chained a bear, and at the other a lioness. Chains were clamped also to her arms and scantily-draped hips, and then the chains—four in all—were secured at their further ends to the two beasts.

The beasts tugged at the chains, and Thekla fell on her back. The lioness then broke the chains, without injuring Thekla in the least. The animal did so by first setting its paws on a chain, holding them fast, and then—after lowering its head beneath the links of chain between its paws—raising its powerful head. For its part, the bear was sitting grim and fearful at some remove when the lioness fell upon and throttled it so suddenly that it dashed like a cringing dog to Thekla—who had in the meanwhile cast off her chains—and licked her feet. Thekla caressed the poor creature, taking its head and maul in her hands, at which a great cry of wonder broke forth from the spectators. The magistrate declared he would leave off any further punishment, and was himself later converted.³

Others took hold of Thekla, however, and led her, covered only with a brown smock, to a watery place where was a brick cistern—the depth of three men—filled with slime and hideous snakes. The culprits grabbed Thekla, intending to cast her head-over-heels into the odious pit. But before they could do so, she tore herself loose, made the sign of the cross over the pit, and leapt in herself, whereupon the snakes backed away from her on all sides. Undeterred, the young men opened a sluice and began filling the cistern from a

² On another occasion, Anne Catherine says that after Thekla was sentenced, she she was brought to a tall stone with a stairway that led to a great pile of wood intended as her funeral pyre. But when it was lit, and the flames were mounting, a sudden rainfall extinguished it and drove the onlookers away, after which she also was led away.

³ Here again we have a further description of these events as follows: "Later, I saw Thekla stretched between four oxen, who were to tear her to pieces, but instead, the oxen turned around, tread on the ropes binding them to Thekla, and ripped them apart with their horns. Then again, I saw Thekla naked, but a cloud settled around her to protect her modesty. I saw a lioness lick her feet and then fall upon a bear that was threatening her, and how in the end the creatures killed each other. I saw how the acclaim of the people led to her release.

nearby river, but as the water in the cistern rose, Thekla—standing upright with outstretched arms—rose with it, as also the snakes, which as before were pressing against the walls. At this point no more water could be let in, as otherwise the snakes would have come so near the top that they could have sprung upon the bystanders. The virgin Thekla, still unharmed, commenced to praise God. She was drawn out of the cistern, and many were converted. Then Thekla was brought to the noblewoman Tryphena, who was converted also.

Many people, especially virgins, came flocking around Thekla, and on this account she was banished from the city. She made her way to a region of caves, where many women and virgins followed, remaining thereafter as a community. They wore brown, full-length habits that had hoods with extra folds of cloth to allow them to freely turn their heads. The caves where they resided were very well concealed.

At a later time I saw Thekla in Seleucia with Tryphena, where she wandered about begging for her worldly needs. She lived in a cave there as well. In this way she was able to teach without calling attention to herself, and I often saw her praying by the side of the sick, afterward healing them by a laying on of hands. All this she did without authority, or presumption, but merely as a pious woman with abundant gifts of grace.

Later I saw her in a hermitage with fifteen virgins. After that she journeyed once with Paul, and preached. On one occasion he tried to dismiss her, but to no effect. On another occasion he came to visit her. I also saw how in his destitution she had appeared to the Emperor Zeno, presaging his return.

Thekla traveled extensively, teaching and converting wherever she went. Anne Catherine could not remember all the details pertaining to Thekla's journeys, because she was so preoccupied at the time with other visions.

One day Anne Catherine discovered fragments of the bones of Eugenia, Paula, Theodora, and Thekla in her collection of relics and presented them to the Pilgrim. In vision she beheld each of them among the heavenly choirs, and was able to identify their relics, in her usual way. She beheld many scenes from their lives, but much of this is lost.

When I took hold of Thekla's relic around noon yesterday, I beheld the saint descending toward me from heaven. She was clothed in light and held a branch bearing blossoms of whitish-gold. She said to me: "That is a fragment of my bones." Thereafter, until the approach of evening, I beheld many more images of Thekla. This morning, over the span of an hour, I beheld the entire story of her martyrdom. (Unfortunately, owing to the usual disquiet in her surroundings, she could only relate small portions of what she had seen, and even this in a somewhat casual way.)

Last night I saw Thekla living together with about seven women and virgins in a well-ordered hermitage in Seleucia. Arranged next to each other in a half-circle of stone, several cells had been hewn neatly from its rocky face. At the middle of this half circle

stood a six- or eight-sided column that supported a canopied roof, covered with green sod, that extended from the cells over the surrounding area and was then supported upon some trees whose branches had been interwoven with it. The side facing the front was closed off with trees and stones, with narrow entries at either end. Light penetrated through the canopy from above through openings made therein. The whole structure was exceedingly elegant, stately, and charming. The anchorites wove blankets, and also wattling for their doors. The cells were hewn cleanly from the stone, which was veined with bright colors. In each cell was a stone bench covered with moss, upon which the women slept, and also a niche, carved into a corner, where a wooden crucifix was kept.⁴ On some of the crucifixes I saw an image of Christ cut from parchment; on others a puppet-like piece of needlework to serve the same purpose. [The drawing below bears the caption *Thekla's hermitage.*]



The niches were closed with a hinged door which, when opened and let down, served as a small table. The anchorites kept switches and ropes woven of hair with which to mortify themselves. Their small brown bowls looked to have been carved directly from earth. I saw no hearth, so surmised they ate fruits and raw vegetables only. A spring stood before the hermitage. The angular middle column was surrounded at its base by a prominence, rather like an altar, that was hung on all sides with tapestries on which were simple figures, such as apostles and Mary, knit from colorful yarns. Just above this prominence was what appeared to be a cabinet built into the column, but I cannot remember what was kept in it. The women would gather around this central column to pray.

I saw Thekla, who was seventeen years old at the time she was tortured, now forty years of age as she lay near death in her cell. Her fellow anchorites knelt around her as a man who appeared to be a hermit gave her the holy sacrament. He kept the host in a long tin box that was now open halfway, so that I could see it within, wrapped in a piece of cloth. The priest was bearded and wore a long brown robe with a cord knotted around his waist. Thekla did not immediately pass away, but lay there for a long while quite calm and quiet, just as the Virgin Mary had done.

⁴ Here was drawn a small "forked cross" (*Gabelkreuz*).


Later I saw some scenes from Thekla's funeral service. Her companions wrapped her body, as was the custom at that time, and she was then removed from the board on which she lay to another with pegs as handholds, so the body could be carried into a funereal cave and set down alongside the many other bodies interred there. I feel certain a chapel was later raised there."⁵

Augustine

Saint Augustine Appears to Anne Catherine—A Wondrous Healing

Just after Pentecost 1820, Anne Catherine said:

I saw St. Augustine in his episcopal robes, and he was so kind! What seemed strange to me was that I thought I saw his holy relics in a curiously twisted house, like a snail's shell, and indeed there was some singular creature therein. I could not imagine what it meant, when suddenly I saw the house under a more beautiful form. The creature was no longer present, and the house smooth like stone, and in a portion thereof I saw a relic, a bone, of the saint, and a sort of label, not in Latin, but in some angular characters, spelling out "Augustinus." It was a wonder to me that I could make out his name. In the blink of an eye the saint himself stood there before me clear as day, by his relic, and said to me, "This bone is of me." I was rejoiced to see him and I accused myself of never especially honoring him.⁶ He replied: "Still I know you. You are my child!" When I asked him to relieve my pain, he presented me a nosegay in which was a blue flower—and a feeling of strength and relief instantly pervaded my whole person. The saint said to me: "You will never be entirely well, for your way is that of suffering. But, when in need of help and consolation, think of me. I shall always give them to you. Now rise and say the *Te Deum* to thank the most holy Trinity for your cure." Then I arose and prayed. I was perfectly strong and my joy was very great.

Afterward I saw St. Augustine in his heavenly glory. First, I beheld the most holy Trinity and the blessed Virgin—I can hardly say how. I seemed to see an old man on a throne. From his forehead and breast streamed rays of light thus,  joining together before him then in the form of a cross from which, in turn, shot numerous other rays over the choirs and orders of angels and saints. At some distance, surrounded by blessed spirits, I saw Augustine's celestial glory. He was seated on a throne, receiving from the cross of the holy Trinity streams of light that he imparted to the surrounding choirs. Around him

⁵ This further reference to Thekla by Anne Catherine is found in Brentano's notes: "I recall once being present at her grave in a chapel, when the saint appeared and clothed me in a white garment with an especially beautiful white cowl of simple design that covered also my breast. Its delicate, finely-worked folds covered all but a small portion of my face. I don't remember why Thekla clothed me in this way, but I believe it was because I was to accomplish some task in the Nuptial House, and thus attired I would not be noticed. I came to the Nuptial House from Thekla's chapel through a rapid transposition, still wearing the garments in which Thekla had dressed me, and she herself—as it seemed to me—by my side. My task had to do with a new bishop. I don't recall of what we spoke, but he was quite shaken, scarcely believing what had befallen him. Neither do I remember what it was I did there in his regard."

⁶ Anne Catherine had lived as a nun in an Augustinian convent at Agnetenberg, in Dülmen, prior to its suppression.

were priests in various costumes, and on one side—rising like a mountain one above the other and floating like clouds in the sky—were numerous churches, all of which had emanated from the saint. This was a picture of his heavenly greatness. The light received from the Trinity symbolized his own personal illumination. The choirs around him were the different vessels, the different souls, that received light through him. They, in their turn, poured it upon others while receiving, also, rays directly from God. The sight of such things is unspeakably beautiful and consoling, and so natural—yes, more natural, more intelligible than the sight of a tree or flower upon earth.

In the choirs around the saint were all the priests and doctors, all the orders and communities that had emanated from him, inasmuch as they are blessed, inasmuch as they have become vessels of God, gushing fountains of living waters whose source is in him. After this I saw him in a heavenly garden, but this picture was a little lower down. The first was a vision of his glory, his place in the starry heaven of the most holy Trinity; the second was rather a picture of his actual influence upon earth, his assistance to the Church Militant, to living men. All pictures of the celestial gardens appear lower than those of the saints in God, in glory.

I beheld him then in a beautiful garden full of the most wonderful trees, shrubs, and flowers. There were many others with him, among whom I remember particularly Francis Xavier and Francis de Sales. They were not seated in order as for a feast, but going around, distributing the flowers and fruits of the garden, which represent the graces and good works of their life. I saw numbers of the living in the garden, many of whom I knew, and they were receiving gifts in manifold ways.⁷

I saw pictured where the main part of Augustine's body now lies, in a distant, sparsely populated land, stony and unfruitful, surrounded by forest. None there know of his remains, which I see interred in a stone sarcophagus under a vault. Only the ribs are fully intact, much else having been distributed at other times.

Scenes from the Life of Holy Augustine

I saw Augustine, a boy in his father's house, not far from a tolerably large city. It was built in the Roman style with a courtyard and colonnade, around it other buildings with gardens and fields; it looked to me like a villa. He had a broad forehead, pleasant soft eyes, expansive countenance, and long nose.

The father was a tall, vigorous man with something morose and severe about him. He must have had many orders to give, for I saw him speaking earnestly to people who

⁷ The apparition of the living is something very special, the counterpart, as it were, of the apparition of saints upon earth. They appear in the garden of the saints like spirits under certain, indeterminate forms, and receive all kinds of fruits and flowers. I see some who seem to be raised into this sphere of grace by prayer, and others who seem to receive such favors without conscious effort on their part; they are vessels of election. The same difference exists between these two classes as between one who takes the trouble to gather fruit in a garden, and another who sees it falling at his feet as he walks along, or to whom God deigns to send it by this or that saint.

looked like his inferiors. I saw others kneeling before him as if presenting petitions; they may have been servants or peasants.

In little Augustine's presence he was more affable and gracious toward Monica, his wife, as if he were fond of the boy; he did not seem to have much to do with him, however, for Augustine was generally with his mother and two men. Monica was a little woman already advanced in years, slightly stooped in her carriage, and of very dark complexion. She was exceedingly gentle and God-fearing and in constant dread and anxiety on Augustine's account. She followed him everywhere, for he was restless and mischievous. I saw him climbing perilous heights and scampering recklessly around on the very edge of the flat roof.

Of the two men, one seemed to be his preceptor, the other his servant; the former used to take him to a school in the neighboring city which many little boys attended, and bring him home again. Augustine was at all sorts of tricks when out of school. I saw him beating animals, throwing stones at them, quarreling with other boys, running into people's houses, ransacking cupboards, and eating the good things. Still, there was something very generous in him, for he always divided what he found with his companions; sometimes he even threw it away.

There lived also in his father's house a woman who was perhaps a nurse or servant of some kind. Later on I saw Augustine placed at school in a larger and more distant city, to which he went in a low chariot on small heavy wheels, drawn by two beasts. He was always accompanied by two persons.

Then I saw him in school with many other boys. He slept with several of them in a large hall, their beds separated by a reed, or light wooden, partition. The schoolroom was larger than the sleeping hall. It had stone benches all around the wall. On these the scholars sat holding little brown boards on their knees for writing, rolls of parchment and pencils in their hands. The master stood in a little pulpit raised about two steps, behind which was a larger board on which he drew numerous figures. He called his pupils, now this one, now that one, into the middle of the floor, where they stood facing each other and reading from their parchment rolls, gesticulating at the same time as if they were preaching, and again as if disputing.

In school Augustine was well-behaved and almost always stood first; but outdoors he carried on all sorts of pranks with the other boys, damaging and destroying whatever fell in his way. I saw him, out of pure mischief, beating and stoning to death certain long-necked birds, the domestic fowl of that country, and then carrying away the dead bodies with tears of pity. I saw him running and wrestling with other boys in the shady walks of a circular garden, and stealing, injuring, wasting many things.

I saw him return home from this school and give himself up to all kinds of mad pranks and disorders. One night I saw him robbing an orchard with companions like himself, and afterward throwing away a whole mantleful of the fruit. I saw Monica incessantly remonstrating with him, praying, and shedding many tears.

Then I saw him crossing a bridge over a broad river on his way to the great city in which Perpetua was martyred (Carthage). I soon recognized it. On one side arose rocks with walls and towers jutting out into the sea where lay many ships. A smaller city stood at no great distance from the large one. There were many great buildings as in ancient Rome, and also a large Christian church.

Theater Life in Carthage

I had numerous visions of Augustine's follies committed here with other young people. He dwelt alone in a house and held constant disputations with other young men. I used to see him going by himself to visit a certain woman; but he did not remain long in any one place, he was constantly on the go. I often saw him at public shows; in my eyes, truly diabolical. These shows were held in a great round building. On one side seats rose one above the other like steps, and below were numerous entrances opening on the stairways that led to the seats. The building had no roof, only a tent-like covering. The place was crowded, and opposite the spectators, on an elevated platform, were enacted abominable scenes. In the background were all sorts of pictures which, at certain times, suddenly disappeared, as if swallowed up by the earth. Once there unfolded a large beautiful place in a great city; and yet, the whole scene occupied in reality but a very small space. Then men and women appeared, two by two, talking together and behaving wantonly. It was all horrible to me! The actors had frightful, colored faces with huge mouths; they wore on their feet broad-soled socks with pointed toes, red, yellow, and other colors. Below these were whole troops, talking and singing alternately with those above. I saw boys, eight or twelve years old, who played on straight and twisted flutes and also upon stringed instruments. Once several of them precipitated themselves head foremost from on high with outspread limbs. They must certainly have been fastened to something, but it looked very frightful. Then again there was a wrestling match in which one of the combatants received two cuts across his face, which a surgeon came and bandaged. I cannot describe the horrors, the confusion of the scene. The women among the actors were men in disguise. Augustine himself used to appear in public, though not in such performances as these.

He entered with zest into all sorts of amusements, indulged in all sorts of sins. He was the leader everywhere, a distinction he seemed to seek out of pure ostentation, for it gave him no real satisfaction; he was always sad and discontented when alone. I saw also that the woman with whom he lived brought a child to his house, which circumstance, however, did not seem to disconcert him in the least. I most frequently beheld him in halls and public places, disputing with others, speaking or listening, unfolding and reading rolls of parchment, etc.

I saw his mother visit him in Carthage. She spoke to him earnestly and shed many tears, but she did not stay with him while in the city. I never saw in Monica's house either cross or holy picture. There were all kinds of pagan statues, but neither she nor her husband took any notice of them. I constantly saw her in some secluded corner of the house or garden, bent in two, praying and weeping; and yet with all this, I saw that she was not

without her own faults. While lamenting her son's thefts of sweetmeats, etc., she herself loved dainties; it was from her that he had inherited his inclination. Whenever she went to the cellar to draw wine for her husband, she used to sip a little herself from the cask and eat good things; but she greatly regretted this inclination and struggled against it. Then many of her pious customs were shown me: for instance, at certain seasons she used to take baskets of bread and other provisions to the cemetery, which was surrounded by strong walls. She laid the food on the tombstones with a pious intention; the poor afterward came and took it away.

I saw her once—her son having now attained the age of manhood—journeying on foot with a servant, who carried a small package. She was going to visit a bishop, who spoke to her a long time and encouraged her on the score of her son. She shed abundant tears, but he said something to her that calmed her.

Again, I saw Augustine returned from Carthage after his father's death, and teaching in the little city, where his life was as restless and disorderly as ever. I saw him at the bedside of a sick friend who, shortly before death, received baptism, at which Augustine hooted, although deeply afflicted at his friend's death. Then I saw him again at Carthage, living as before.

Augustine is Baptized

On the night of May 28–29, 1820, Anne Catherine saw in vision Augustine's baptism at the hand of Ambrose. Unfortunately she had been much beset during the night, and so quite exhausted, so that what follows is all she could remember.

I saw Augustine, his son, a friend, and his mother Monica. They were not in the city, but had traveled into the countryside. I saw Augustine and Ambrose praying before an altar; Monica was on her knees in another quarter of the church. It was quite early in the day, and many people were still present in the church. Augustine was wearing a long, sleeveless mantle, white, with cloud-like forms in red. The wide, white sleeves of his undergarment could be plainly seen beneath. The mantle was drawn close with a broad belt or girdle attached on two sides, was fastened in front with a clasp, and fell in wide folds below. Ambrose wore a mantle of similar color and design, but over the shoulders was an ample cloth in the form of open half-sleeves, and upon his head he wore a bishop's mitre. There was no baptismal font there; instead, there was in the middle of the church a quadrangular opening down which steps led to a small round spring. Over this opening lay a covering of two steps, in form rather like the approach to an altar, upon which one could also sit. The arrangement was like this:



This cover was moved aside when a baptism was to be performed; and so also on this occasion of Augustine's baptism it was removed, whereafter Augustine, Ambrose, and two other religious made their way to the spring at the bottom, which lay about half a man's height below floor level. The spring's water seemed as though quick with life. I saw that Augustine held a glowing light in his hand. He did not step into the spring itself, such as I had seen earlier on the occasion of other baptisms, but instead bowed his head over the water while Ambrose raised up water from the spring in a spoon. The two other religious, one of whom was quite old, were apparently the sponsors.

As Augustine was baptized, I saw the light of the Holy Spirit descend upon him, as also upon his son and friend when they were baptized in turn. In the vault or arch of the spring a dove was painted.

After the baptism, Augustine's mantle with the red, cloud-like designs was removed, and he stood only in his white undergarment. Then I saw him standing together again with Ambrose before the altar, singing a sort of call and response. It seemed to me to be the *Te Deum*.

On the eve of the Festival of the Most Holy Trinity, Anne Catherine said:

When I saw the bad preparation of so many persons who were going to confession, I renewed my petition to God to let me suffer something for their amendment; and then indeed my task began. It seemed as if I were being pierced incessantly by fine darts of pain shot at me like arrows, and in the night they became more intense than I had ever felt before. They began around my heart, which felt like a furnace of pain tightly bound in flames. Waves of fiery pains swept thence through all parts of my body, through the marrow of my bones, to the tips of my fingers, my nails, and my hair. It was like the regular flow of the tide from my heart to my hands, feet, and head and back again, my wounds being the principal centers.

My sufferings increased until midnight, when I awoke steeped in perspiration and unable to move. I had only one consolation—the indistinct idea of the cross formed by the principal centers of my pain, which seemed to be grinding me to powder. At midnight I could bear it no longer, for my stupor made me forget its cause; so I turned like a child to my father, St. Augustine. “Ah! dear father Augustine, you promised to help me whenever I invoked you! Ah! see my distress!”—and my prayer was instantly heard. The saint stood before me, telling me most kindly why I was suffering so, but that he could not take away my pains since I was to endure them in union with the Passion of Jesus Christ. He bade me be comforted although I was still to suffer three hours more. I was greatly consoled, though in intense agony, knowing that it was for the love of Christ's Passion and to satisfy Divine Justice for sinners.

I rejoiced to be of some use, and I threw my whole heart into my pains. I accepted the grace of expiatory suffering with loving confidence in the mercy of the heavenly Father. Augustine reminded me moreover that three years ago, on the morning of All-Saints, my Lord had appeared to me as I lay at the point of death. He had given me my choice

either to die and go to Purgatory or to live longer in suffering, and that I had replied: "Lord, in Purgatory my sufferings will be of no avail. If then it be not contrary to thy will, let me live and endure all possible torments if thereby I can aid but a single soul!" Then, although I had at first asked for death, my Savior now granted my second request by prolonging my life of suffering. When my holy father Augustine recalled this circumstance, I distinctly remembered it, and from that moment until the end of the three hours I calmly and thankfully endured the most cruel tortures. Pain forced from me the bitterest tears and the sweat of death.

I had another vision then of the most holy Trinity under the form of a resplendent old man seated on a throne. From his forehead streamed an indescribably clear, colorless light; from his mouth flowed a luminous stream slightly tinged with yellow, like fire; and from his breast near the heart, another stream of colored light. These streams formed in the air above the old man's breast a cross that sparkled like the rainbow; and it seemed to me that he laid his hands on its arms. Innumerable rays issued from it. They fell first on the heavenly choirs and then down upon the earth, filling and quickening all things.

A little below the holy Trinity and to the right, I saw Mary's throne. A ray darted to her from the old man, and another from her to the cross. All this is quite inexpressible. But in vision—although dazzling and swimming in light—it was perfectly intelligible: one and three, vivifying all, enlightening all, and most wonderfully sufficing for all.

Below the throne were the angels in a world of colorless light; above them the four-and-twenty ancients with silver hair, surrounding the most holy Trinity. All the rest of the boundless space was filled with saints who were themselves the luminous centers of shining choirs. At the right of the Trinity was Augustine surrounded by his choirs—but much lower than Mary—and all around lay gardens, shining palaces, and churches. I felt as if I were wandering among the starry heavens. These vessels of God are of every variety of form and appearance, but all are filled with Jesus Christ. The same law governs all, the same substance pervades all, though under a different form—and a straight line leads through each into the light of the Father through the cross of the Son.

On January 27, 1822, the Feast of St. Paul's Conversion, Anne Catherine suddenly fell into ecstasy, during which she prayed fervently. That evening she said to the Pilgrim:

There has been a thanksgiving feast in the spiritual church. It was filled with glory, and a magnificent throne stood in the middle of it. Paul, Augustine, and other converted saints figured conspicuously. It was a feast in the Church Triumphant, a thanksgiving for a great, though still future, grace—something like a future consecration. It referred to the conversion of a man whom I saw of slight figure and tolerably young, who was one day to be pope.

Perpetua and Felicity

On February 27, 1820, Anne Catherine related the following:

Last night, as I began to bemoan before God my pitiable state, I received this just reproach: "How can you complain, surrounded as you are by so rich a treasure of relics for which others had to journey so far. You have the privilege of living with these holy personages, of seeing all they did, of knowing all they were!" I felt then how wrong it was in me to repine, and I saw a whole troop of saints whose relics are here by me.

In the life of Perpetua I saw many scenes. Even as a child, she had visions of her future martyrdom. It reminded me of a dream I had had in my childhood in which I thought I was to have nothing but black bread and water. I thought this signified that I was to be a beggar; but now I think Walburga's black bread which I received explains the dream. I saw all the sufferings of Perpetua, Felicity, and others martyred with and after them in the same country. They were hunted by beasts and put to the sword.

At these words Anne Catherine took one of the relics, kissed it, laid it upon her heart, and said: "Perpetua is there by me!" Then, taking another little particle, she exclaimed:

This is very precious. It is the bone of a little boy who courageously suffered martyrdom with his father, mother, and two sisters. He was imprisoned with Perpetua and he suffered by fire. There were little eminences in an enclosed place, and on them stakes, or seats, on which the martyrs were placed, the fire being lighted all around them. The bone shines with wonderful brilliancy, a glory of the finest blue with golden rays, such as surrounded the child-martyr. The light is so wonderfully invigorating that no words can express it. I thought at first that Perpetua and Felicity were martyred in Rome, because I saw them executed in a building similar to the one in that city; but now I know that it was in a place far distant.

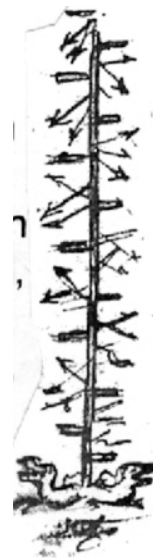
March 2:

I had Perpetua's relic and I saw many pictures of her captivity and martyrdom; but all will be more clear on her feast day. I saw the captive Christians in a round, subterranean prison under an old building. They were separated from one another by gratings through which they could talk, and even pass the hand. It was very dark, excepting around the captives, where I saw a faint light glimmering. The only egress was by a trapdoor in the roof, besides which there were four gratings to admit air. I saw four men imprisoned with Felicity and Perpetua, the latter of whom was suckling her child. Felicity, who had not yet given birth to hers, was in the adjoining cell.

Perpetua was tall, robust, well-proportioned, and very dignified in all her actions. Felicity was much shorter, more delicate, more beautiful; both had black hair. Perpetua's confident, energetic words kept up the courage of all her companions. At some distance were many other prisoners. The courageous little boy-martyr was with his father in one cell, and the mother with her two little girls in another. They were separated by a wall through which their friends conversed with them. Before the grating of Perpetua's cell I

saw a disconsolate old man tearing his hair and weeping bitterly. He was not a Christian. I think it was her father. There was a kind officer among the guards who often brought bread or other things to Perpetua, who divided the provisions among her companions. She kept carefully hidden by her a roll of parchment. All wore the long, narrow prison-costume; the women's of coarse white wool, the men's brown. The prison of the latter was near the entrance, that of the women further back. I saw a young man die here and his body taken and buried by his friends.

One evening I saw Perpetua conversing with a man. That night as she lay on her side asleep she had a wonderful vision. The whole prison was lighted up, and I saw all its inmates either asleep or in prayer. In this light I beheld a marvelous ladder reaching up to the sky, leading as it were into the heavenly gardens; at the foot of it lay, right and left, two dragons, with outstretched heads. The ladder was only a pole, far too slender, one would say, considering its great height. I wondered it did not snap. The rungs stood out on either side, long and short alternately. Where a short one jutted out to the left, to the right was a long one bristling with hatchets, spears, and other sharp instruments of torture, and so on all the way up. How any one could mount was perfectly incomprehensible; and yet, I saw a figure ascending on one side and descending on the other, as if to help someone up.



Then I saw Perpetua, who lay there asleep, stepping over the head of the dragon, which meekly bent its neck. She mounted the ladder, followed by others, and entered the garden where several blessed spirits awaited to encourage and strengthen them. Again, I saw by the sleeping Perpetua a vision of her little deceased brother. I saw a large, dark abode, and in it a boy seemingly very miserable; he was parching with thirst. He stood by a vessel of water from which, however, he could not drink, as it was beyond his reach.

When Perpetua had the vision of the ladder, I saw by the light that filled the prison that Felicity, her neighbor, had not yet been delivered. Suddenly I saw all the captives prostrating on the ground in prayer; and soon after I saw a little child lying on Felicity's lap. A woman in tears, in great trouble, took the child, which the young mother joyfully resigned to her.

And now I saw the martyrs led to death. They left the prison between two files of soldiers who cruelly pushed them from side to side on their way to the place of execution. This place consisted of several communicating enclosures, not exactly like that of Rome. Twice on the way did persons approach the procession and hold up Perpetua's child for her to see: first, at the gate where a halt was made and a contest arose between the soldiers and their prisoners about something that the latter refused to do; and secondly, at a crossroad where they ran to meet her. All the other Christian captives had been brought out merely to witness the martyrdom—for only Perpetua, Felicity, and three men suffered at this time. I cannot say how unspeakably noble these martyrs appeared! The two women looked perfectly glorious, while the men boldly exhorted the spectators. They were

forced to pass slowly between two files of executioners, who struck them on the back with whips. Then the two men were stationed opposite the cage of a wild beast that looked like an enormous spotted cat. It sprang forth furiously but did not harm them much; after this they were set upon by a bear. A wild boar was let loose upon the third; but it turned upon the executioner, whom I saw borne off covered with blood.

March 3:

Perpetua and Felicity came and gave me a drink, and then I had a vision of their youth. I saw them with other little girls playing in a circular garden enclosed by a wall. In it were numbers of slender trees higher than a man and so close together that their top branches interlaced. In the center stood a round summer house on the roof of which was a walk protected by a railing. In the center stood a white statue the size of a child, one hand raised, the other lowered, and holding something between the two. Nearby played a fountain that was surrounded by a railing stuck with sharp points to prevent the children from climbing it. By means of an opening they could make the water flow into a shallow stone basin like a shell, in which they played. Here they amused themselves with puppets on wires and little wooden animals. I often saw the two saints withdrawing from the other children and tenderly embracing each other, by which I knew that their love began in childhood. I was told that they had promised never to separate. They had often played that they were Christians and were being martyred; but even then they would not be separated. St. Monica (of whom I had a relic) told me that the city is called Carthage.

March 6:

I was until two o'clock with Perpetua and Felicity, and I saw successive pictures of their youth up to the time of their imprisonment. They did not reside in the place in which they were imprisoned and martyred, but about half a league distant, in the suburbs where the houses stood far apart. It was connected with the city by a road running between two low walls and several high archways. Perpetua's home stood by itself. It was tolerably large, and her parents seemed to be people of distinction. It had an enclosed court and inner colonnade, though not exactly like that of Agnes's house in Rome, and there were statues in the walks. In front was an open space, and behind, though at some distance, the circular garden I lately saw. Perpetua's mother was a Christian, but in secret, and she knew that her children were the same. The father alone was a pagan. I saw some young men in the house.

Felicity was younger than Perpetua. She was the child of very poor people who lived in another part of the city, in a miserable little house built in the city wall. The mother was a stout, active, dark-complexioned woman; the father was already old at the time of the martyrdom. I saw them as they carried fruit and vegetables to the market in baskets, and I often saw Perpetua going to visit them. As a little girl she was very much attached to Felicity, with whom she and her brothers and other little boys used to play together most innocently. I often saw them in the garden. In their childish games, Perpetua and Felicity were always Christians and martyrs; the former was wonderfully courageous even from

childhood, boldly promoting good and the Christian faith, on which account she often ran great risks. Felicity was pretty and delicate, and altogether more beautiful than Perpetua. The features of the latter were more strongly marked, her manners rather independent and masculine. Both were dark, like all the people of that country, and they had black hair. I saw Perpetua when a young girl often going to Felicity's home; and once I saw their future husbands—good, pious men, Christians in secret.

Perpetua had seen in vision that if she married she would attain martyrdom more speedily. In the same vision she had also seen her father's displeasure and the greater part of her own sufferings. After her own marriage she forwarded that of Felicity and assisted her in her poverty. Perpetua's husband seemed to me to be far beneath her in station; she accepted him only through respect for his virtue. When she left the house of her father—who was greatly dissatisfied with his daughter's marriage—her friends neglected her, and she lived a retired life with her husband. Felicity's husband was also a pious Christian, but very poor. I used to see them going by night to a distant, retired place, like a large underground cave, supported on square pillars. It lay beyond the walls under a ruined building. Here about thirty Christians met quietly, closed all the entrances, lighted torches, and ranged in groups. I saw no divine service, but only instructions.

March 7:

I saw two holy men approach my bed on one side, and three holy women on the other. They were the two husbands, and Perpetua, Felicity, and Perpetua's mother-in-law, a dark-complexioned old woman. Perpetua and Felicity took me up and laid me in a bed with blue curtains bound with red, and the mother-in-law moved a round table up to it, on which she laid all sorts of marvelous food. It seemed as if she did it in Perpetua's name. The table stood in the air near my bed without any support. Then the two holy women passed into another and larger apartment and, as I fancied that their silent departure betokened some trouble for me, I became sad. The mother-in-law followed them, and the two men likewise disappeared. Then I perceived that my hands and feet were bleeding. Suddenly several men rushed toward me, crying out: "Ah! Ah! she is eating!" and the alarm was soon spread. The saints returned. The mother-in-law told me that I should have had a cruel persecution to endure on account of the bleeding of my wounds, if the prayers of the saints had not averted or mitigated it; that the three children whom I had clothed for communion would by their prayers ward off many trials from me; and that, instead of a new persecution, I should endure a painful illness. It was in view of this that I had received the nourishment of fruits and flowers and fine bread on the golden plates with blue inscriptions.

The holy woman—the mother-in-law—stayed by me and told me many things. She was surrounded by a white aureola that dissolved into gray. She told me that she was the mother of Perpetua's husband and that she had lived near them. She had neither been imprisoned nor martyred with them, but she now enjoyed their companionship because, like so many others during the persecution, she had died of grief and want in her place of

concealment. This circumstance God rewarded as martyrdom. Perpetua and Felicity could have escaped very easily, but the former longed for martyrdom. She had openly declared herself a Christian when the persecution broke out. She told me also that Perpetua had married in consequence of a vision she had had, and also that she might more easily leave her father's house.

I saw the father, a short, stout old man; he was seldom at home. When I saw him, he was standing in the second story of his house, in an apartment next his wife's. He could see all she did, for there was only a light wicker partition between the rooms, at the upper part of which was an opening with a slide. Although he busied himself but little with her, yet he seemed to regard her with suspicion, as she was a Christian. I often saw her in this room. She was rather stout, not very active, and she generally sat or reclined in her oratory, doing some kind of coarse knitting with wooden needles. The walls of the room, like those of the houses in Rome, were colored, but not so delicately. When the father was at home, the whole house was silent and restrained; but when he was away the mother was bright and cheerful among her children.

Besides Perpetua, I saw two youths in the family. When the former was about seventeen, I saw her in a room nursing and bandaging a sick boy of seven years. He had a horrible ulcer in his face, and he was not very patient in his sickness. His parents came not near him. I saw him die in Perpetua's arms. She wrapped the body in linen and concealed it. The father and mother saw him no more.

Felicity was a servant in the same house as one of her fellow martyrs, but she often went to her parent's house to spend the night. Perpetua frequently carried thither at dusk something in a little basket or under her mantle, which they either used themselves, or took to the Christians in concealment. Many of the latter died of hunger. All these goings and comings went on before my eyes.

Perpetua was not beautiful in face. Her nose was rather short and flat; her cheek-bones high; her lips a little too full, like those of the people of her country; her long black hair was braided around her head. Her dress was in the Roman style, though not quite so simple, being scalloped round the neck and skirt, the upper garment laced. Her figure was tall and imposing; her whole air fearless and confident.

I saw in Perpetua's house the two husbands taking leave of their wives before their flight from persecution. When they had gone, I saw Perpetua and Felicity tenderly embracing each other as if they were now right joyful. Perpetua's home was plainer than that of her parents. It was only one story high, the yard enclosed by a wooden paling. At daybreak next morning the house was attacked by a troop of soldiers who had already taken two young men into custody. Perpetua and Felicity were led away full of joy; the mother-in-law had the child, and no one molested her. The four were now dragged with many cruel blows and much ill-usage, not by the ordinary way along the walls and under the arches, but by another route across the fields to a distant part of the city, where they entered a miserable old building that stood by itself, like a temporary fortress. Here they were to

stay until taken to the ordinary prison. I saw a young man rapping at the prison gate. The soldiers let him in and put him with the other captives. Perpetua's father followed her here, praying, beseeching, conjuring her to renounce her faith; he even struck her in the face, but she answered in a few earnest words and bore all patiently.

Then I saw the prisoners conducted through a section of the city and along many walls to an underground prison where there were already many captives. Here I again saw Perpetua's vision of the ladder. She ascended to the top, received strength, and then descended, in doing which she glanced to one side, caught her dress below the waist on one of the spears, and tore it. It was exactly the same spot that was afterward torn when she was tossed by the cow. I saw her lying on the ground, and then suddenly rising to arrange her dress. This was what the torn dress of the vision signified. I often saw her while in prison speaking undauntedly to the guards, defending her companions, and gaining for herself universal esteem. During her torture, when being tossed by the cow, she seemed to be in vision, utterly unconscious of pain. She was dragged horribly from side to side and hurled up into the air in a frightful manner; on falling she arranged her dress and seemed for an instant to have some consciousness of her position. As they were leading her across to another court, I heard her asking if she would soon be martyred now. She was in continual contemplation, conscious of nothing. In the middle of this second court were little seats to which the martyrs were dragged and their throats pierced. Perpetua's death was horrible to behold! She could not die! The executioner pierced her through the ribs and then through the right shoulder to the neck, she herself guiding his hand; and, when lying on the ground apparently dead, she still stretched forth one hand. She was the last to die and only after a long and hard agony. The two women had been stripped and put into a net and, owing to the tossing and scourging, their whole bodies were covered with blood. Their remains were taken away secretly and buried by the people of Carthage. I saw that many were converted by Perpetua's heroic behavior, and the prison was soon filled again.

March 8:

I had the relics of Perpetua and Felicity by me all night, but to my great surprise I saw nothing of the two saints! I had hoped for some pictures of their life, but I got not even a glance; therefore I see that such visions are very special; one cannot have them at pleasure.



Perpetua & Felicity

Understanding Pauline Initiation in the New Testament as Key to Meeting Christ in the Etheric

*A Lecture Delivered to the Anthroposophical Society at Cape Ann
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Bill Trusiewicz

One of the primary goals of spiritual science is to prepare humanity for the so-called second coming of Christ, which students of spiritual science generally refer to as the return of Christ in the etheric. It is the goal of this lecture to clarify, expand and deepen our understanding and awareness of this event so that people of good will who encounter this message can further participate in the Mystery of Christ's second coming and the much-needed impulse for renewal that it will bring to humanity.



The Conversion of Saul
William Blake

Spiritual science points to the fact that St. Paul's well-known conversion/initiation experience on the road to Damascus, recorded in the Bible, is the archetype or template for our own meeting with Christ at his second coming. Before beginning this examination of Initiation in the New Testament let us seek to clarify our understanding of the event of the second coming as it is referred to in scripture. This event, which Rudolf Steiner pointed to as beginning in the early twentieth century after the 5,000-year period known as the Dark Age which ended in 1899, marked the beginning of the long awaited "Age of Light." Spiritual science teaches that the second coming of Christ was to have begun in earnest around 1933 based on a lapse of 33 1/3 years, which was the length of the life of Jesus Christ, and a significant unit of time to gauge

the cyclical evolution of the Christ Impulse used by Rudolf Steiner, and subsequently by researchers in spiritual science in general.¹

The description of the event of the Second Coming given by spiritual science differs from that given by most Christian denominations in that the denominations, almost invariably, expect Christ's return to be a physical re-appearance, in which he will be transported "on a cloud," as presumed to be indicated by scripture, and with political implications such as what was hoped for by many Jewish Christians who lived at the time of Christ—to give the Jews freedom from Roman domination. The description given by spiritual science, in contrast, is based on the understanding of Christ's reappearance as a non-physical, progressive event, in which he appears spiritually (in the etheric) to more and more people over an extended period of time as they develop the necessary faculties to perceive Him. This reappearance will culminate in the middle of the sixth cultural epoch some 2,500 years from now, at which time the Maitreya will attain Buddhahood as the Bringer of the Good, proclaiming the message of Christ with a power of speech elevated far beyond what speech is today. These events will initiate a Sophianic Pentecost, a Pentecost of

¹ The 33 1/3 year cycle initially indicated by Rudolf Steiner is described by Robert Powell as the "rhythm of Christ's etheric body." *The Second Coming and the Approaching Trial of Humanity*, Robert Powell, Shoreline.

unparalleled Wisdom from the spiritual world, a wisdom celebrating the Christ impulse in fullness. This second Whitsun will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on a scale much larger than the Pentecost experienced by the disciples of Christ in the first century. It will mark a new period of ripeness of the Christ impulse on Earth among a large enough number of people to freely bring about a governing consensus brought to maturity by the growing influence of spiritual scientific knowledge, and in line with the long-awaited hope of esoteric, Johannine Christianity. Some believe that this second Whitsun will initiate a long period of healing on Earth, sometimes referred to as “the Millennium” – a thousand years – in which Christ will reign through his body, the Church, and peace will prevail.

As we examine the references to the second coming of Christ in the Bible, we will see that they clearly point to what we learn from spiritual science and point away from the materialistic interpretation that is most commonly held. Since the Bible indicates that Christ will come “with clouds” or “in the clouds,” let us briefly examine some biblical references to “clouds” in order to understand what spiritual science instead calls the “etheric” the “realm of life” in which Christ dwells, and out of which he appears.

The term “clouds” is used in the Bible without distinguishing between ordinary everyday clouds and specific spiritual manifestations, in which “clouds” have unusual, supersensible qualities. Rudolf Steiner, seeking to mitigate a common misunderstanding, has replaced the term “clouds,” when speaking of a supersensible phenomenon, with the more technical term “etheric.” There are numerous references to this supersensible sort of cloud in both the Old and New Testaments. Let us begin by reviewing a few of these references so we can have a firm basis for our study.

In the Old Testament

Exodus 13:21 [This refers to the Israelites’ flight from Egypt]: And the LORD went before them by day *in a pillar of cloud*, to lead them the way...

Exodus 14:19 [This refers to the Egyptian army chasing the Israelites]: And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them and *the pillar of the cloud went from before their face*, and stood behind them. [Exodus 14:20] ...it was a cloud and darkness to them, *but it gave light by night ...*

Exodus 16:11: ... and behold, the glory of *the LORD appeared in the cloud ...*

Exodus 19:9: ... the LORD said unto Moses “*Lo I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee ...*”

Deuteronomy 31:15: And *the Lord appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud*: and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

1 Kings 8:10 [This refers to the time just after the ark of the covenant was installed in the newly built temple of Solomon]: And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that *the cloud filled the house of the LORD so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud*: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

In the New Testament

Matthew 17:5 [This is at the Transfiguration]: While he [Jesus] was still speaking, *a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"*

Acts 1:9-11 [This took place at the Ascension]: And after He said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and *a cloud received Him out of their sight*. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way you have watched Him go into heaven."

As can be seen from these examples, the "clouds" referred to in scripture are no ordinary clouds: they led the children of Israel by day and glowed with fire by night; they declared the glory of the Lord above the ark of the covenant both in the tabernacle and in the Temple of Solomon; out of clouds came a voice that spoke from heaven numerous times in the New Testament; and a similar cloud received Jesus as he ascended.

If one reads the Bible superficially, it is easy to make many mistakes, mistakes that are quite unfortunate, which instead of leading one to the truth of a matter lead to serious errors. Such errors can take hold of the popular imagination as they have in this case with a very large segment of Christendom. Jesus himself foresaw this sort of error appealing to the materialistic imaginations of people who have not developed spiritual sight, who may consider themselves highly spiritual but insist on interpreting spiritual things in a way such as to match their everyday sensible experience. To such people, Jesus said in Matthew 24:23-28, (this was spoken to the inner circle of Jesus' disciples on the mount of Olives when they asked him to explain about his coming and the end times):

Then if anyone says to you, "Behold, here is the Christ," or "There He is," do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. So if they say to you, "Behold, He is in the wilderness," do not go out, or, "Behold, He is in the inner rooms," do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. [But] wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

Clearly, he is saying here: "Don't look for a physical manifestation. I won't be coming back in bodily form—not in the wilderness, and not in an inner chamber. Rather look for something more like a light phenomenon—like lightning flashing from east to west." In fact he refers to physical appearances of false Christs as "corpses," manifestations of something dead; and those who are fooled by them and gather around them he refers to as "vultures."

So we can see that spiritual science uses the word "etheric" instead of "cloud" for good reasons. Rudolf Steiner chose the term "etheric," which denotes the invisible realm of life forces surrounding and permeating the Earth, and which streams to and from the Sun and the other

stars—permeating the entire cosmos. It is what makes our universe a “living moral universe.” And it makes Life as we know it on Earth possible. When Jesus said that his coming would be “as lightning comes from the East and flashes to the west,” he was referring to a light phenomenon visible to the higher human senses, a supersensible light shining through the medium of the etheric sphere surrounding the earth—not through ordinary clouds.

Further evidence of the fact that Jesus Christ is not meant to return physically in the usual sense is found in the many references to his appearance to his disciples after his death and resurrection, in which he showed himself to be able to materialize and dematerialize freely—to enter through closed doors or to simply disappear.² All references to his appearance after the resurrection indicate that he could not be seen by anyone besides those “with eyes to see,” i.e., his disciples.

Since it is not our intention to fully explore the term “etheric,” but rather simply to clarify its meaning relative to its use in the Bible, let us conclude these preliminary thoughts and move on to a discussion of the phenomenon of “salvation” (or initiation), as it is approached in evangelical churches compared to the way it is approached in spiritual science. Finally, we will introduce St. Paul and his teaching in the New Testament—a teaching that mirrors the perennial wisdom of initiation, taught and practiced in mystery schools from antiquity forward.

As mentioned, spiritual science takes St. Paul’s conversion experience on the road to Damascus as a template for what occurs when one encounters Christ in the etheric—which itself may be regarded as an initiation. This would not be true if this experience did not echo initiation as it was practiced in earlier times in mystery centers. What we want to accomplish in making this comparison is to clarify what it means to meet Christ in the etheric, so that our own experience will be more luminous and fruitful with the hope also of providing some help to facilitate such a meeting.

Let us be clear that while the meeting with Christ in the etheric mirrors the path of initiation as practiced in mystery centers, there are very significant differences between these two initiatory experiences. The difference is due to the spiritual force of Christ acting as Hierophant to every Christian who is initiated as distinct from a merely human initiate acting as Hierophant prior to the coming of Christ. His presence as “the anointed one”³ in whom “the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily” (to use a Biblical expression), makes it possible to experience initiation without entering into an altered state of consciousness such as was required in the Ancient Egyptian “temple sleep,” in which a near-death experience was obligatory to enter the spiritual world. Mystery centers worldwide necessarily employed out-of-the-body states to produce the results they sought due to the nature of the human constitution before Christ entered the stream of Earthly evolution.

Recognizing a meeting with Christ in the etheric as a form of initiation may be problematic insofar as the outer form of this meeting may manifest in as many variations as there are unique individuals. Rudolf Steiner gave some examples of Christ appearing to individuals. He described how people who were deeply troubled or suffering profoundly were visited by a

² For examples of this see: John 20:19-23, 21:9-13; Luke 24:28-31, 36-43.

³ The word Christ translates as “the anointed one.”

being of light whose words or mere presence brought inexplicable comfort and healing to their souls. While these stories are undoubtedly true pictures of visitations by Christ, they are not the only form in which such visitations may occur. It is therefore important not to place too much emphasis on the outer manifestations of an encounter with Christ in the etheric, as doing so could create unrealistic expectations about the exact nature of the encounter.

The experience of Christ is preeminently a profound inward experience in which supersensible light penetrates through the sense world and touches our deepest nature. It often occurs that something in outer nature when illuminated by the etheric Christ, shines with a higher, supersensible light that pierces us to our very center, exciting and setting in motion lofty ideas and feelings of a sort of which we have never dreamed—ideas and feelings that surpass anything we have experienced previously. These experiences can occur in countless ways, under infinitely varied circumstances. Preconceived notions of how our own meeting with Christ will occur or may have occurred can be a serious hindrance to the approach of the Christ being.

The varied nature of initiatory experiences is a huge advantage on the one hand because each initiation is tailored to the predisposition and needs of the individual. On the other hand, the variations in individuals' experiences can be problematic insofar as, unlike the predictable nature of the initiation practices of the mystery centers (which were highly regulated outer rituals), individual Christian initiations may vary greatly from each other outwardly.

Nevertheless, initiation experiences follow immutable *inner* laws. Therefore, as we seek to identify how these experiences might manifest outwardly in particular cases, we will be aiming to clarify the *inner* archetypal laws which all such experiences have in common.

It is worth noting here that the highly formal aspect of initiation that was present in the mystery centers has been unwittingly carried over in certain respects into Christian religious practice in many denominations as a highly formulaic approach to bringing souls to salvation. These modern and ancient practices are similar insofar as both have an outer formal nature, while they differ greatly in that the modern practice is ultra-simplified and condensed to take place in minutes, in contrast to the rites of the mystery schools, which were preceded by years of preparation and days of ritual. Modern religious practice seeks to lead souls "to salvation" with little or no preparation, leaving them unprepared for the rigors of a spiritual life. While some souls are indeed prepared by the spiritual world for the experience of meeting Christ in the etheric, most of those approached by modern evangelical methods have not experienced this kind of preparation.

Here is an example of this formulaic approach to saving souls that shows how ultra-simple the fundamentalist model can be: A potential convert is presented with a combination of Bible verses that are used to identify the "path to salvation" (the Biblical word for initiation), one of which is called "the Romans Road," since it includes verses selected from St. Paul's letter to the Roman church. These Bible verses are presented with some explanation and perhaps some discussion, which is followed by a so-called "sinner's prayer," spoken aloud for the individual who is said to be saved after hearing the prayer. Generally a little counseling follows, with an invitation to come to church.

While we cannot completely discount the validity of this method, since by it countless individuals have had spiritual or quasi-spiritual encounters with Christ, we must nevertheless be aware that the method militates against the nuanced variations of a unique conversion/initiation, which works from within outward, instead of being outwardly controlled. Spiritual birth is a delicate and exact process that ought not to be treated roughly or tampered with; it should be held in the highest awe, respecting its unique nature and manner of unfolding. Tampering with the process can only lead to premature and still-births or deformities that inevitably distort and stunt the growth of the delicate spiritual flower and fruit that have been planted by the Logos—that is, by the Word. It is imperative, one learns, in the unfolding of etheric intelligence, to exchange formal logic for moral logic, and this can only be done by sacrificing intelligence to conscience.⁴ Strict adherence to outer formal logic slays the inscrutable work of the spirit in the human soul. This is true in respect to any methodology. Nevertheless, the path to “salvation” identified in denominational evangelical Christianity, which often forms the core of its fundamentalist methodology, provides a simplistic sketch of the path of initiation. Through tracing scripture references, we will be seeking to illuminate this popular path, alongside other esoteric paths.

While Rudolf Steiner frequently lectured and wrote books that do not address the Christ impulse per se, he also made it clear that one of the primary aims of Anthroposophical Spiritual Science was to prepare humanity for the coming of Christ in the etheric. We should note here, that aside from producing an unparalleled, comprehensive corpus of knowledge, which is often referred to as “initiation science,” Rudolf Steiner never presented a simple formula resembling the “Romans Road,” that might be used to induce an “experience of salvation” or initiation. Experience teaches that the typically induced “experience of salvation” has dubious effects, the shadow side of which can include the soul being drawn into an unholy relationship to authority—the authority of the particular denomination and its distinctive, often largely unenlightened interpretation of scripture. Tampering with the initiation process in this way can “initiate” a person into a questionable world of religious propaganda. While this occurrence might be expected in the religious traditions of our time, we would be remiss not to mention that the same problem exists in what we might call “popular Anthroposophy,” wherein Steiner’s own admonitions to make Anthroposophy a matter of knowledge and not of faith are not followed, and in which truth that has not been absorbed and enlivened becomes a form of what could be called Anthroposophical propaganda.

In any case, we can observe that when a comprehensive path of knowledge is presented which can lead to initiation, such as the path offered by spiritual science, individuals will freely choose to follow that path and advance deliberately, as far as they will, according to their capacity for spirit discipleship. This path will lead more surely to the goal than will following simplistic formulae, which typically leads a soul too far, too quickly, and produces questionable results in the process. Another method used by evangelicals is to present artfully persuasive sermons, staged in halls full of zealous religious people, calculated to stir up emotions and to compel newcomers to “make a decision for Christ.” This method, which seeks to lead souls to initiation

⁴ I have borrowed the terms “formal logic” and “moral logic” from Valentin Tomberg. See *Meditations on the Tarot*, Penguin Putnam Inc. New York, NY, p. 513.

using persuasion and which does not include the necessary preparation, accomplishes little more than to fill the pews of local churches with transients. While it is statistically impossible to determine with any accuracy, it is nevertheless evident that a large percentage of individuals who are “saved” using these methods do not persevere in the path, and either fall away (90-99% as determined by the churches themselves), or worse, they stay to perpetuate an outer *form* of Christianity that has little or no relationship to the spirit of Christ. This “quick and easy method” can also have the effect of an inoculation, giving a false impression of the path to Christ, and therefore potentially turning sincere souls away from that path.

Before we turn our attention to the teaching of St. Paul with regard to Christian initiation, let us recall a bit of history. St. Paul was converted from a zealous Jewish persecutor of Christians, in the early days that followed the Mystery of Golgotha—to the great Apostle to the Gentiles who was responsible for spreading the message of Jesus Christ throughout the Mediterranean region. I have addressed the well-known experience of St. Paul on the road to Damascus at some length in another article called “A Week of Reflections for Easter: St. Paul’s Initiation/Conversion in Light of the Easter Thought,” and will here address the teaching of Paul, especially what he wrote in his letter to the Church in Rome, around 58 AD, about 25 years after the events of Golgotha and almost as many years after his own dramatic conversion.

Paul had made three missionary journeys in Asia, the last of which reached as far as Corinth in Greece. It was from Corinth that Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in preparation for a journey he knew he would be making to Rome in the near future. This letter is considered by many to be the most powerful summary of the Christian message, and was named by Martin Luther “The chief book of the New Testament and the purest Gospel.” In it is some of the most profound, brilliant and beautiful thought-architecture that has ever come out of Christianity, in my humble opinion. It can be seen as a pure reflection of Paul’s own experience of meeting Christ in the etheric on the road to Damascus, and is no doubt one of the best ways to understand that experience.

This study, which seeks to unite several different initiation streams, calls upon us to work meditatively to synthesize diverse teachings and principles across a broad spectrum of religious, spiritual and human experience. If you don’t get all the connections immediately, you can review them later to digest them. If we do this exercise and absorb the content of this teaching, we will come to a truly cosmopolitan understanding of initiation science. As we know, one of the imperatives set forth in the school of the Archangel Michael in our time calls for cosmopolitanism—that is, a syncretism that can only be achieved by means of an understanding that pierces the separating veils of language to uncover what is a universally human experience. Through what we can call intellectual clairvoyance, different spiritual paths that appear outwardly to be at odds with others are revealed to be identical when illuminated by spiritual science.

By use of this chart, let us examine in an outline form the comprehensive path of initiation presented to students of mystery schools from antiquity forward to our time—illuminated and Christianized by St. Paul in the New Testament.

PATH TO INITIATION	STAGES ON THE PATH TO INITIATION		
	STAGE ONE	STAGE TWO	STAGE THREE
MYSTERY SCHOOLS (GREEK NAME)	Purification (Catharsis)	Illumination (Photismos)	Union with the Divine (Henosis)
ROSIKRUCIAN PATH (TRANSLATION)	Ex Deo nascimur (Out of God we are born)	In Christo morimur (In Christ we die)	Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus (In the Holy Spirit we are reborn)
PATH OF ALCHEMY (TRANSLATION)	Nigredo (The Blackness)	Albedo (The Whiteness)	Rubedo (The Redness)
BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN (BIBLICAL REFERENCES)	Human Sinfulness (Romans 3:23)	Baptism into Christ's death (Romans 6:11)	Salvation (Union) (Romans 8:38-39)
CHRISTIAN MYSTICAL	Washing the feet Scourging Crowning with thorns	Crucifixion	Mystic death Entombment Resurrection
ANTHROPOSOPHICAL	Preparation	Enlightenment	Initiation (Imagination, Inspiration, Intuition)

The process of initiation is always experienced inwardly in the same manner. In a nutshell, it unfolds in three stages that can be identified as Purification (Catharsis), Illumination (Photismos) and Union (Henosis). We should note that, as in all spiritual matters, the clear distinctions of process and timing that are made to aid our understanding will repeatedly be called into question when comparing them with actual spiritual events. Nevertheless, the three stages are a valid concrete representation of spiritual initiation experience. Purification, illumination and union may alternatively be called preparation, enlightenment and initiation. An identical template of transformation as expressed here can be seen in the alchemical art with its threefold



Alchemical phases

nigredo, *albedo* and *rubedo*⁵ phases—when taken to refer exclusively to soul/spiritual states, as expounded at length in the work of Carl Jung, for instance. These three cryptic sounding phases of alchemical transformation will be explained throughout this study. The same three phases are found again in the three Rosicrucian sayings: *Ex Deo nascimur*, *In Christo morimur* and *Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus*, which refer to the baptism of the soul into the trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These Latin words are roughly translated as: *Out of God we are born*; *In Christ we die*; and *In the Holy Spirit we are reborn*. In the Christian Mystical Path this threefold process is further broken down into seven stages that may be condensed into three. The first three processes represent stage one; the fourth process represents stage two; and the last three processes (5,6, and 7) represent stage three—where Preparation includes Washing the Feet, the Scourging, and Crowning with Thorns. The central stage of Illumination is Crucifixion, and Union with the Divine or initiation is comprised of Mystic Death, Entombment and Resurrection.

As we go forward with this study let us keep in mind the fact that intellectual knowledge alone can never replace direct spiritual knowledge based on one's own experience, so our goal will be to penetrate to that place of knowing within us that is the key to our own experience of meeting Christ in the etheric.

The First Step

The first of the three steps of initiation as mentioned above is preparation or purification. To understand this step let us begin by examining what is expressed in the Rosicrucian saying that corresponds to this first step: *Ex Deo nascimur*, Out of God we are born. This expression refers to our natural state, which comes to us out of the past; it is what we might call the "given." Supporting this statement is the first stanza of the Foundation Stone Meditation, given by Rudolf Steiner, where *Ex Deo nascimur* appears, and we are instructed to "practice spirit recollection," which is to say, recall something from the past. We are referring here to the creation—the world that we participate in as living physical beings. While from an enlightened point of view the creation, nature, can be seen as beyond extraordinary, even "miraculous," from the starry array that opens up to our sight on dark nights to the complex minutiae of what appears by day (which includes an enigmatic sub-atomic world), we are rightfully in awe of nature; no human being could ever dream of duplicating it. But as complex and beautiful as it might be, it is nevertheless flawed. Nature puts us here as incomplete and imperfect beings. St. Paul says that "the whole creation groans and travails in pain" awaiting redemption. Referring to this state of imperfection, 400 years before the time of Christ, the Buddha said, as the seed-thought of his Four Noble Truths, "Life is suffering." He said this from a profound awareness that the human being, along with nature, is in what we might call a "fallen" condition. Although Buddha did not refer to the Biblical fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, he described the human state of consciousness that is a result of what we in the West call "the Fall," which is the result of the threefold "curse" we see in Genesis resulting from Adam and Eve "eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," leading to suffering, labor and death.

⁵ *Rubedo* sometimes also includes an intermediate phase called *citrinitas*.

The first stage of initiation, preparation or purification, has its basis in a profound awareness of our fall from innocence and purity, from light into darkness. Rudolf Steiner often spoke of the powerful experience of shame experienced by those who have been touched by the Etheric Christ, shame that comes upon the soul with elemental force. Shame accompanies the experience of humiliation. Its appearance signifies a confrontation and acknowledgement of the darkness into which we have fallen. The stage of preparation we are indicating here was referred to by medieval alchemists as *nigredo*, “the blackness,” which they also called “the beginning of the work.” Shame comes with a recognition of this “blackness” working in us. The “Great Work begins” when our attention is drawn away from the outer world, when we no longer judge by outer sight or compare ourselves with others. It begins through introspective insight, coupled with Christ’s etheric presence, which allows us to see the deeper layers of ourselves and discover our fallen condition. Here we find the “black fertile earth,” another term used by Alchemists for the beginning of the work. Without this first phase of blackness, we cannot achieve initiation. We need the “black fertile earth” for “spirit sprouts” to grow and mature. Here we have a clue to Jesus’s words in the parable of the sower, which appears in the synoptic Gospels, when he speaks of some of the seed of the Word of God falling by the wayside and being eaten by birds, some of the seed springing up but having no deepness of root, and some seeds falling among thorns and being choked, while some, falling on *good ground*, were able to bring forth much fruit.⁶ The “good ground” is the “black fertile earth” of *nigredo*.

Taking a slightly different perspective, we can compare this parable and what it signifies with another saying of Jesus, which appears three times in the Gospels: “It is not the healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.”⁷ Here we see that the “good ground,” the “black fertile earth” is a profound recognition of our natural humble state.

To further illustrate this state of humility, we can recount St. Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus. A blinding light struck him so that he fell to the ground. He heard a voice out of the light that said: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” This question called for profound introspection by Saul. By all outward accounts, according to his “daylight consciousness,” Saul was a good person: zealous for the law, zealous for what most Jews considered the highest good. As far as he could see, he was engaged in good works; he was doing all the right things to promote the ideas of the greater spiritual community in which he played an important role. But something in Saul was opposed to the Christian message, and it comes to light when he falls to the earth; here he becomes “black fertile earth.”

Saul’s everyday reason led him to believe that the followers of Jesus were misguided revolutionaries who were a threat to the Jewish religion. When the Etheric Christ asked the question: “Why do you persecute me?” it helped Saul to know that there was something in him that was opposed — not just to a bunch of revolutionary followers of Jesus, but to the Anointed One of God himself. Like Saul, we must come to see clearly the part of us that is opposed to God, the part of us that wants to cling to our right to ourselves, to doing things our way in spite

⁶ Paraphrased from Matthew 13:3-8

⁷ Matthew 9:12, Mark 2:17, Luke 5:31

of the knocking of the “still small voice” of the spirit on the door of our heart. At this point the seeking soul senses Christ outside of itself as is expressed in chapter three of The Revelation of St. John: “Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

About 25 years later the Apostle Paul would write the following words to the young Roman Church:

There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away...all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God...⁸

He knew this from his own experience. Before he met Christ in the brilliant light that accosted him, he thought of himself as a righteous upholder of the law, as an exemplary human being. But inner reflection caused by the blinding light led him to universal knowledge of the human condition. With the help of spiritual science we understand that the so-called guardian of the threshold of the spiritual world, who is called “the adversary” and “the accuser” in the New Testament, makes this inner knowledge of our fallen nature crystal clear.⁹ A meeting with the guardian of the threshold is inevitable for the soul who is wholeheartedly seeking for truth and knowledge.

St. Paul’s teaching, addressed in his letter to the church in Rome, recounts his own experience of the speech of the guardian of the threshold, in the form of a teaching. As context for understanding Paul’s role in bringing forth this teaching, let us review the role of the Hierophant, the priest of the death mysteries in ancient Egypt.

In his role as the officiating priest of the initiation rite, Thoth-Hermes (or Hermes Trismegistes as he is sometimes called), the initiate who was the great inspirer of the spiritual life of Egypt, wore the headdress of Anubis the Jackal. He did this to signify his subsidiary role representing the god Anubis, the black-headed wolf-like scavenger god. The Egyptians saw the role of Anubis as an essential part of initiation. Anubis was allowed to test the candidate for initiation—attacking his “flesh” so to speak. It was a test to determine if the candidate’s heart was pure; in other words, if his or her preparation or purification had been adequate. If the person being initiated thought too much of him or herself, Anubis was there to attack the candidate’s “flesh,”¹⁰ acting the part of the adversary, the accuser. The one being initiated had to be able to withstand such an “attack.” What would this attack be like?

To answer this question let us jump forward in time to St. Paul’s role in the young church of the first century. In his teaching letter to the believers in Rome, St. Paul acts the part of the new Hierophant of the death mysteries. Much like Thoth-Hermes wearing the headdress of Anubis the Jackal god, whose role was to “attack the flesh” of the aspiring student of the death



⁸ Romans 3:10-12

⁹ For an extensive treatment of this subject refer to the author’s article entitled: *Anubis and the Speech of the Threshold as Key to Meeting Christ in the Etheric.*

¹⁰ Lecture GA 93a

mysteries, St. Paul spoke to the Romans. To illustrate, let us seek to penetrate to another layer of meaning within the text given.

While we have an account of Christ's words to Saul, which we quoted above, simultaneously another dialog occurred in accordance with the immutable laws of the spiritual world. Some variation of this dialog which is not recorded in the New Testament can nevertheless be read in the Akashic chronicle. It took place at the moment Saul fell to the earth "as preparation" for the words of the Risen Christ. (What follows is a paraphrase, a variation of Paul's speech to the Romans that I cited earlier, but this time it is spoken, not to the Romans, but to Saul, by the guardian of the threshold at the time of Paul's conversion/initiation.)

So you think you are a good person? Think you deserve favor with the gods? So you think you have understanding? So you think you are a seeker after God? I tell you: none is righteous or good, especially not you! No one has understanding! No one seeks God!

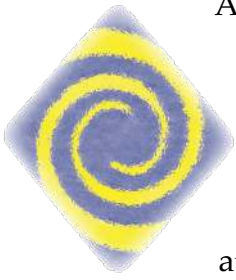
This is the new voice of Anubis, the adversary, the voice of the guardian of the threshold of the new initiation mysteries of Christ the high priest—the voice that prepares or tests the soil of our hearts to receive the seed of the Word of God. It is the voice that prepares the "black fertile earth" in us—the first stage of initiation.

While Paul expounds the results of initiation in the form of teaching, this is not to say that one need not have a personal encounter with one's double, the guardian of the threshold, at the time of one's meeting with Christ in the etheric to drive the message home. (I have devoted an entire article to this subject entitled "Anubis and the Speech of the Threshold as Key to Meeting Christ in the Etheric.")

The Second Step

In the second and central step of the three steps that describe the path of initiation in the writings of the initiated St. Paul, we approach what in the Greek mysteries was called *photismos* or illumination, which is also referred to in Anthroposophy as enlightenment. To begin we will follow the alchemist's point of view, as he or she seeks to transform the lead of the lower nature into gold. For the moment let us imagine this second step taking place in the alchemist's retort, hermetically sealed off so that the elements contained in it can ferment completely, independent of the outside world. Within the glass retort we can envision that the process of initiation is about us and nothing else, nothing but our individuality—fomenting over the flame of self-scrutiny. This is the meaning of the Hermetic Seal, the enclosed vessel of The Work. But in this stage that follows the *nigredo*, the blackness stage, suddenly something enters the process *from outside*, something unaccounted for appears—something *new* enters—as if through the glass. With this central step of transmutation, which is the second step of initiation, the alchemist observed a sort of miraculous appearance of *albedo*, "the whiteness." It shows up as if from the outside of the retort, suddenly appearing, unaccounted for. It is of a new nature; in terms of initiation, it is the seed of what St. Paul calls the "new man," the higher self. And this new man will, in the end, replace what St. Paul calls the "old man." We will get back to this later. But here, with what comes from the outside of the retort we are reminded of a statement of Rudolf Steiner: "A human being must be quite clear that the higher self is outside him."





A being external to us and different from us (the new element) enters the process at the central, pivotal point, by which we are spiritually eclipsed to allow a new spirit to incarnate. We can call this process of incarnation of the spirit *involution*, and it may be pictured as a descending spiral that ends at a central point just before another begins *spiraling* outward from the first, in evolution (see diagram). This incarnating being is the Light that St. Paul encountered, a light “greater than the sun at noonday” that enters the process of initiation. The Light that is injected into the “dark lead” of our fallen nature plants within us the luminous gold of the divine. In the process, the Light obliterates us, it kills us, destroying what would have been our life had we not entered the Light. The Christian Mystical Path calls this stage “crucifixion,” where the Biblical Christian path of the denominations calls it Baptism into Christ’s Death. By this crucifixion our nature changes from that of a base metal (returning to alchemical terminology) to Gold, by uniting us with the Divine. But we are getting ahead of ourselves here. The salient point in the second step of initiation is death as a means of transformation. St. Paul describes this situation to the Colossian church saying: “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Encountering this light is a real death, and if it is not a real death for us then we forestall the process of initiation. We recognize this second step in the second Rosicrucian saying: *In Christo morimur* —In Christ we die.

How are we to understand this death? We have pointed only rather abstractly to it. How do we avail ourselves of its hidden blessing, which manifests in the next and final phase of this process—*henosis* or union with the Divine? To reiterate, in step one we discussed the alchemical stage of *nigredo* or “blackness” and the fact that it refers to the knowledge that we are not righteous or pure—our faculties of judgment are impaired. Understanding the “lead” of our dark or fallen nature is crucial to achieving purification or catharsis. But we can remain in the purification stage without ever reaching illumination. With “the whiteness,” the *albedo* of Alchemy, we have begun to point beyond purification, or what Anthroposophy calls preparation, but how then is one illuminated?

Illumination comes when we recognize and acknowledge – not only our lower “fallen” nature, but what the *consequences* of our fallen nature are. A new world awaits us across the threshold, a world we cannot yet see, a world that radiates a light “greater than the sun at noonday” as initiates assert, and as St. Paul described the light that accosted him on the road to Damascus. A different kind of light must illuminate our world to see the kingdom of God. In order to see that etheric light, we must be able to look into the “light greater than the sun” without being destroyed by it. To be more precise, a destruction must occur that turns our attention to the hidden part of us that loves the light and not darkness—what St. John calls “the light that lights every man that comes into the world.” But what first confronts us in the light is actually death! What does this mean? It means that we must become aware of the fact that our spiritual constitution aside from meeting Christ in the etheric is doomed. We don’t have the moral strength to see through the darkness of our carnal nature. In other words, being incarnated in a physical body makes us susceptible to influences that prevent us from seeing the spiritual world; we love the darkness more than the light. We see this fact expressed in the Gospel of John, in reference to the incarnation of Christ: “... and the light shone in darkness but the darkness did not comprehend it.” This accounts for the necessity to meet death when

confronted by the light, and it is why in pre-Christian initiations one had to enter a death-like state, separated from the physical body to achieve *photismos* or illumination—the second step of initiation.

How then do we achieve this death-like state today so that we can see beyond the veils that conceal, across the threshold of the spiritual world? Seeing our deep need for purification to overcome the blindness of our flesh opens the door to a further purification that comes from death. We can experience death to our “old nature” once we receive the light. St. Paul explains this to the Romans like this: “Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.... For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ.”¹¹ To be in possession of eternal life is to be illuminated; it is what the Greek initiates called *photismos*.

Further evidence of illumination is found in the so-called “splitting of the personality” that Rudolf Steiner speaks of as part of the process of initiation. Our consciousness before we apprehended the light of Christ’s etheric presence was single; we were only dimly aware of the warfare that goes on in our soul. With the light of Christ we can see beneath the surface of things now; we are not condemned to a superficial view of the world. Once his light penetrates us, we are no longer a unitary being but a dual being. We are now able to observe our lower nature, our lower motivations and inclinations. Seeing our dark side, our “sinful nature” is a function of Christ’s light in us. This is what is necessary for illumination. Through the power of Christ, as the illuminating light in us, we can “count ourselves dead,” putting off the lower influences to “be alive to God in Christ Jesus” as Paul instructed the Romans. This can only be accomplished if we are able to recognize that two beings live in us, what St. Paul calls “the old man” and “the new man.” To resolve the conflict between the two, Paul encourages the Colossians to

...put off the old man with his deeds; and ...put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him...

But resolving the conflict is getting ahead of ourselves again; we will come back to it in Step Three.

To further clarify this process let us continue with our alchemical model. As we know, the second stage of the Great Work of Transmutation is called *albedo*, “the whiteness.” This whiteness corresponds precisely to the light that Saul encountered on the road to Damascus—the light of “illumination.” In the alchemical laboratory when “the blackness” of *nigredo* meets the “whiteness” of *albedo*, a splitting occurs. The substance in the vessel is divided into two opposing elements. The “whiteness” is also referred to as *ablutio* (meaning ablution or washing), which indicates a cleansing away of impurities. Paul recognized full-well this splitting in the process of initiation—the splitting of the human personality that occurs when one meets Christ, and he explained to the believers in Rome the psychological conflict that inevitably appears on the path to initiation:

¹¹ Romans 6:11, 23

I don't understand why I act the way I do. I don't do what I know is right. I do the things I hate. Although I don't do what I know is right, I agree that the Law [of the spirit] is good. So I am not the one doing these evil things. The sin that lives in me is what does them. I know that my selfish desires won't let me do anything that is good. Even when I want to do right, I cannot. Instead of doing what I know is right, I do wrong. And so, if I don't do what I know is right, I am no longer the one doing these evil things. The sin that lives in me is what does them. (Romans: 7:15-20)

Here we have a perfect explanation of what we refer to in spiritual science as "objectifying the lower nature," which occurs when the higher nature is born in us. The duality created by admitting the light of Christ into us makes us abundantly aware of an *old* and a *new* nature, the so-called "old man" and the "new man." Only through this knowledge can the death of our old self take place and eventually resolve into a unity, and only through this knowledge can the light of Christ make its way through us. We must become transparent to the Christ light, and that occurs through death. Not through a near-death experience as was necessary in the initiation practices of antiquity, but by appropriating what Christ accomplished through *His* death does the death of our old self take place. St. Paul speaks to the Galatians of this death of his old nature:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.¹²

Having Christ living in him was illumination; the Light of the World was living within him. Here we see how Christ turned all human wisdom upside-down. What generally was to be avoided at all costs – death – became the gateway into life; and so it is with us when we meet Christ in the etheric and are transformed. We understand that life comes only through death, and what does not die cannot partake in the resurrection. This is the paradox of the initiated life: through death we live. This is so not only in the moments when the light first dawns upon us; in every moment of our lives we must "count ourselves dead." So it is through appropriating Christ's crucifixion at the pivotal point in our initiation that our personal life is transformed, becoming transparent to the light of illumination or *photismos*.

Now let us step back a moment to reiterate: What was given by nature, *Ex Deo nascimur* (Out of God Mankind has Being), dies in Christ, *In Christo morimur*, which leads us to a new life of resurrection, *Per Spiritum Sanctum revivissimus*, by the Holy Spirit we are reborn—leading us to the third and final phase of initiation.

The Third Step

The third and final step that defines the initiation process is *henosis* or union with God, and it corresponds to the Rosicrucian saying just quoted: *Per Spiritum Sanctum revivissimus* (Through the Holy Spirit We Are Reborn).

¹² Galatians 2:20



We can use the alchemical model again to extract the significance of Union. In the *albedo* (whiteness) stage a split occurs introducing white into the blackness of *nigredo*, which manifests psychologically as the splitting of the personality we spoke of above. In the final stage of The Work, unity must be achieved in the now split personality through union with the Divine. Unity of opposites, the *coniunctio oppositorum* of alchemy, as it was called, is achieved through what alchemists referred to as the “chymical wedding” or *heiros gamos*—the sacred marriage. How does this union of opposites, this marriage, occur in initiation?

The uniting of opposites in us is accomplished when we unite our souls with God in unconditional surrender of our right to ourselves, at which point we are filled with the spirit. This is the ultimate death of our “old man.” Saint Paul told the Christians in Corinth, something that perfectly exemplifies *henosis* or union with the Divine, “... he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.”¹³ While such a saying inevitably appears abstract, let us seek to concretize it with the question: What are the marks of union with God?

Union with God (the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) does not occur simply by knowing or experiencing what we have discussed so far in our examination of the path of initiation; our participation in the process is not complete until we have taken the final step. The first two steps describe what we might refer to as the negative side of the proposition since we can call *catharsis* (purification) a subtractive process, while the death in *photismos* (illumination) also is subtractive. *Catharsis* and death both constitute what in Biblical terms we may call the “repentance” aspect. By repentance we refer to changing our way of thinking and changing our direction in life. To round out this process we need to discover the additive principle.

The final step in the process of initiation corresponds, as in St. Paul’s Damascus road experience, to *acting upon* the words that Christ spoke to him when he said:

Rise and stand.... I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and a witness of what you have seen and will see of me....

To rise and stand signifies a rising from the earthly in himself to the heavenly that now lives in him. Certainly, if Saul (later called Paul) had not responded to this entreaty by the Lord, he would be no Christian initiate. So Saul repented; he stood up and embarked on a completely new direction in his life.

If we follow the words of Christ to Saul carefully we will discover the secret of the way of initiation or the way to union with the Divine (*henosis*). The way to union is to initiate action based on revelation. Christ commissioned Saul to witness, which is to say *to act*, and especially *to speak* for Him in the world at large out of what he personally experienced in his meeting with the Risen One. Christ didn’t tell Saul to use his intelligence to teach religious principles or to join the church and learn about Christianity. No, he told him to act and speak according to his own personal experience of Christ. “I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and a witness—*of what*

¹³ I Corinthians 6:17

you have seen and will see of me." He didn't send him to be taught and guided by others. He trusted Saul to speak and act out of the primacy of revelation. Saul was equipped for his great mission to the Gentiles by the preeminence of his newborn spirit. The door to what spiritual science refers to as spirit-self was opened up to him, so he didn't need a teacher; the spirit of Christ in him became his teacher. This is the model we follow after meeting Christ in the etheric.

Let us go a step further in our examination of Christ's words. As mentioned, Paul was commissioned by Christ to be his witness—to *speak* out of his personal revelation of Christ. Speech is an activity that engages the whole human being—body, soul, and spirit. Standing or walking, for instance, doesn't necessarily reflect soul and spirit activity. It is possible to walk unconsciously, in one's sleep, or to act without thinking, but speaking requires more of us. That is not to say that speech cannot be an unconscious activity; one hears such speech daily. But to the initiate speech is a different matter, as it proceeds from spirit-revelation. Chinese wisdom traditions have an injunction that relates to this. They say that the wise speak not from the throat but "from the heels." It was out of an initiation understanding of conscious speech, some 25 or so years after his conversion, that St. Paul exhorted the Christians in Rome concerning this, saying:

The word is near you; it is even in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim); if you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God Raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹⁴

Paul wanted the Christians in Rome to be sure to follow through on Christ's commission, as he himself had, so they would be sure to *seal their union* with Him—through salvation, which is to say Christian initiation. The alchemists called this "sealing of union," "fixing the volatile," and depicted it with a crucified serpent on a cross or pole, a symbol that has come to represent healing. In any case it is only through such profession of faith, out of our personal knowledge of Christ, that our sacred marriage with God, our union (or *henosis*) is consummated and fixed.

While we are answering the question "What are the marks of *henosis* or union with God?" we should not fail to further examine the alchemists' point of view concerning the union of opposites or what they called *coniunctio oppositorum*. In alchemical terms, moving from *nigredo*, the blackness (stage one) to *albedo*, the whiteness (stage two) creates a division, which is only resolved in the third and final stage of the process of transformation, "the end of the work," which is called *rubedo* (the redness). Alchemists depicted the "end of the work," *rubedo*, in various ways: as a hermaphrodite (uniting male and female principles); as the marriage of the red king and the white queen; as the union of the sun and the moon; as the death of the old King with the new King risen; as a winged sun rising from a tomb; as the King and Queen exchanging a rose and a lily—to name a few. Alchemists recognized and maintained that the *rubedo*, found in the redness of blood or that of a rose, symbolized *life*, and it is life that characterizes the finished Work. The finished Work must have life, a life that overcomes death, which they represented with a phoenix. Initiation life is a life that has overcome death.

¹⁴ Romans 10:9-10

So we have come full-circle when we refer to this New Life, Life that “completes the Work,” the “Great Work” referred to in alchemy—for the significance of Christ’s coming “in the Etheric” is that the etheric *is* the realm of Life. The test of *henosis*, or union with the Divine—is Life. If we are truly united with Christ, if we, as St. Paul says, are his Bride and he is our Bridegroom, fulfilling the sacred marriage, we will have a certain “redness” about us – what we might call a Holy Passion or a life of pure devotion to the spirit, to the work of Christ in the Etheric sphere of the Earth, to supporting Christ in his second coming. This leads us to a deeper understanding of St. Paul’s statement to those who lived in Colossae: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Our passion and devotion will be like the redness of the rose—pure and noble, cleansed of lower instincts—and like the phoenix—risen from the dead.

While the further significance of the stage of *henosis* or initiation, beyond the union of opposites—is Life, as we have said—that Life is the life of union with the spiritual world and with God that we seek and can attain through Christian Initiation, through meeting Christ in the Etheric—a union that is guaranteed to those who seek with their whole heart. In the words of St. Paul to the Romans, we can find personal comfort and assurance concerning what the Greek mystery schools called *henosis*, union with God:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ: shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

With these words, I leave you to further ponder the mystery of initiation and the meeting with Christ in the etheric. My hope is that we have succeeded in some measure to clarify and illuminate this enigmatic subject so that the work of Christ can be known in the world for what it truly is, unencumbered by centuries of misunderstanding due to human frailty and the obscurations of materialistic thinking, and as it is known by the Masters of Wisdom who surround the Christ in the spiritual world.



Etheric Christ
Baron Arild Rosenkrantz

Abel and the Priestly Stream on Earth¹

Estelle Isaacson

O, Beloveds! This Earth is given to you to make into God's holy temple!

You are to be priests on Earth, to remember how to worship the God who created you and gave you life.

After the fall of Adam and Eve, two sons were born, Cain and Abel. And we know from ancient scripture that Abel was a shepherd, and Cain worked in the fields tilling the earth. And the two brothers presented their offerings to God: Cain offered the first fruits of his harvest while Abel presented the firstling of his flock, a little lamb. And we remember that Cain was jealous, for God accepted the sacrifice that Abel offered. Therefore Cain took Abel's life and Abel's blood spilled into the earth, and the Mother cried out and she withdrew into the heart of the Earth.



Cain Leadeth Abel to Death
James Tissot

Abel was the first priest. He brought into the world the priestly stream. The hierarchical beings who had fallen—who had left their holy priestly work to follow after the evil one—wished to thwart that priestly stream on earth in order to keep human beings from knowing God, from worshipping God. They wished to turn human beings' hearts away from God, to worship another master, to follow after Lucifer, as they also had followed. Their first act was to incite Cain with rage against his brother and tempt him to slay Abel. And so this priestly stream which Abel bore and which was his destiny to bring into the world in order to show the mercy of God (who was providing a way through Abel to reconnect to God after the Fall) could not be fulfilled at that time. We know that later Seth appeared. He came as a kind of replacement for Abel, to bring in the priestly work.²

Throughout time, God brought forth certain prophets who could act as priests, to give the sacred word to the people. So it was that later Abel's priestly stream would once again appear, and it was in the individuality of Joseph, the son of Jacob. We know this story as well. Jacob loved Joseph. The coat of many colors was not simply a beautiful gift, a gift of love and admiration, but in vision Jacob recognized that primal and pure priestly stream, the priesthood of Abel. And in reverence he created a kind of vestment, which was fashioned of the most beautiful colors that he could find. He gave Joseph permission to speak, to speak the images that were given to him by God.

But Joseph's brothers became jealous, as we know, and could not bear to hear the word of God coming from the lips of that simple shepherd boy. Joseph wanted to bring to his family the love of God, the Divine Love to which he was witness. He wanted to share it with them, but they

¹ Vision of May 21, 2017 at Sophia's Sanctuary, Sebastopol, CA.

² I was shown that Abel and Seth each has his own priestly streams. The Seth stream was able to continue, while the Abel stream had to wait for a future time.

could not receive it. So, as we know, his brothers plotted against him. They cast him into a deep pit, and sullied his vestments with blood, and delivered them to Jacob, who wept and mourned.

And Jacob could no longer fulfill his priestly work. The brothers' minds and hearts were darkened. They could not recall the words that Joseph had spoken. Nor could they feel the divine love in the words. Joseph was sold to some travelers from Gilead. Their cart was full of balsam, which they were taking to sell in Egypt. And balsam has a kind of healing quality—it is a fragrant balm. Thus they carried Joseph off to Egypt.³ The family of Jacob lost that young priest who had only wanted to serve. These are two examples of how pride and jealousy brought harm to the priestly stream, even threatening to extinguish it completely.

In Christ's first coming, He came to heal all that had transpired before Him, all that had come against the priests of the Earth because of the work of the evil one. He came in as High Priest to redeem the spilled blood of Abel, and re-establish the connection between human beings and the Father, which is established through the priestly work. In the life of Joseph, we see the type and foreshadowing of the work that Christ would do when He would come.

Christ came as our exemplar. He showed us how to act as priests under his direction. The seven holy sacraments were present in the things that He did for the people. Christ's first act was to receive baptism, that first holy sacrament. In every teaching and in every deed, there was a sacrament. Even as Abel offered to God his best lamb, so also did Christ offer *himself* as the Paschal Lamb. This was His ultimate act as high priest. He said these words:

If ye have love one to another then ye are my disciples and all shall know that ye are my disciples because you have love one to another.

This is the first and foremost attribute of a priest who serves Christ, that all are recognized as beloved of Christ and therefore we love all, that we may truly be His disciples. *Love is the first priestly work.* You are called to love one another as He loves you. If this is the only thing that you can do, you are a priest. For the Earth receives of your love and is sanctified by it, and the people around you receive of His love and are healed by it.

As we continue onward at this time of the Second Coming, Ahriman will strive to take over human thought so that love cannot be present in our thoughts. But the angels wish to think in us, and if we allow them to think in us, our minds cannot be taken over by the evil one. Angels think love into being through us. Through the angels, we can bring love into being, give it form.

Those who are on a true spiritual path during this time of the Second Coming shall become ever more aware of the thoughts of others, but we shall have to learn to discern the antichrist working in and through the thought life of those we encounter. There are myriad saints and angels prepared to help us in cleansing our minds of the thoughts of the antichrist.

The antichrist does not wish to appear like a demon. He does not wish to be known as the one who is causing chaos and war and horrific tribulations in the world. That is all a distraction to

³ I was shown the great symbolism in this: that Joseph would become the "balm of Gilead" to Egypt.

what he is really doing. He wishes to appear like a savior, a glorious, mighty savior. And there are many ways and means by which he hopes to accomplish this, and they are subtle. He will try to appear like Christ. If we are to remain valiant to Christ, to the truth, we must first and foremost be able to discern the subtle working of the antichrist *in us*.

Do not fear. Perfect love casteth out fear. Christ is the perfect Love. Love one another; then you have your protection and shall not fear. One of the greatest things which Christ did came after He ascended to the Father, and we may speak of this especially at this time. Before the Risen One left His beloved disciples, He appeared on the shore of the Galilee and gave his disciples the communion of fish. There are many mysteries to this communion, but a part will be shared now.

Remember how Peter had denied Christ three times? We can feel his pain, for we too have denied Christ. We have denied knowing the Christ in the other. Christ in His eternal mercy appeared on the shore to heal Peter of his denial. But not only this, He appeared to also heal the doubt that had taken over the hearts of all the disciples who were out in the boats. They had been fishing through the night, like we do. We go into our sleep and we “fish” in the night, in starry realms. The disciples were out under the stars, throwing their nets and pulling them in empty. Time after time, their nets came up empty, and within they started to doubt. And they doubted Peter, who had brought them to that part of the Sea of Galilee. *He has the keys to the kingdom. Why couldn't he bring us to the place where we could find fish?* They began to deny that Peter had the keys to the kingdom. And we likewise have refused to see that each one of us has a key that unlocks a great treasure within; the kingdom is within each one of us. So Christ appeared on the shore, a radiant loving being, and He invited the forlorn disciples to cast their net to the other side. He invites us to do the same. When we are full of doubt, when we doubt one another, we must cast our net to the other side to find the love in the depths.

The disciples obeyed the voice of the Spirit, which called out to them over the waters. And they drew up a great bounty of fish! They could hardly pull in the nets! Then Peter – he who had denied Christ – recognized his Master. He jumped out of the boat and waded to the shore. All denial faded away in that moment. He had crystal-clear knowledge that the Christ was standing before him. The other disciples came to the shore lugging their heavy nets. What abundance! So much abundance they could hardly manage it. But Christ, being the source of true abundance, was waiting for them with even more fish, which He had prepared in a mystical fire. This was the sacrament for the healing and strengthening of community.

Christ knew that He would soon be ascending to the Father and that when He left, the disciples would be devastated. They might lose the love He had brought to the Earth, and the community might dissipate and diminish! These individuals who had come together and shared Christ's love might fall away from one another. He felt this pain and wanted to give his disciples, as representatives of all true spiritual community, a sacrament that would strengthen them and bring them together, like a school of fish who could swim together, navigate the waters, think as one. Our angels can “think as one.” They can think one thought that is more powerful than all the little thoughts that we can muster in our own selves. Our angels desire oneness and unification.

Christ asked Peter three times: *Do you love me?* Peter's shame rose like a sickness in his soul, threatening to destroy him. Even in the presence of the Risen One, he could feel no love in that moment, just shame. Christ asked him three times: *Peter, do you love me?* What do you think would happen if we went to someone who had denied us and doubted us, who was feeling shame over having hurt us, and we asked them: *Do you love me?* It was Christ's invitation to return to him in love. *Peter, I love you no matter what you have done against me and I invite you to return to me in love.*

Schisms must be healed during this time when Christ is penetrating that divisive layer.⁴ Cain and Abel in us must be reconciled. Each one of us has a Cain and Abel. These two brothers must be reconciled within us if we are to see the schisms in the world resolved.

When Christ ascended to the Father, He ascended to each one of the hierarchies, those sacred rulers, heavenly priests. He appeared in each realm. But there is a sacrament He gave to us—one of his most important deeds *after* his ascension—when He sent to humanity the second comforter, the Holy Spirit, which we receive in the sacrament of *confirmation*. The Holy Spirit weaves and enlightens in spiritual community. The sacrament of the Fish Communion is for the strengthening of community such that all evil can be dispelled, such that the Holy Spirit may come to rest upon that community.

Christ is ever our High Priest. He is with us always through all the trials and all the joys we experience in our lives. *O beloved of Christ! He is here!*

Aumeyn.



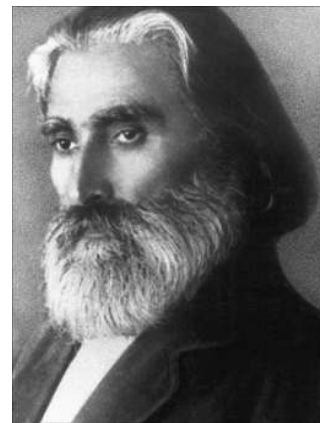
The Ascension
James Tissot

⁴ See Robert Powell, "The Descent of Christ: Opening the Path to Shambhala," *Journal for Star Wisdom* 2017 (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2016), pp. 31-59. In this article we find an overview of Christ's descent through the sub-earthly realms, passing through the Divisive Layer, also known as the Cain and Abel Layer, between 2016 and 2028—footnote by RP.

The Master Peter Deunov Among His Pupils

John O'Meara

In mid-October of 1898, at a time that corresponds almost strictly to the end of Kali Yuga, Peter Deunov, a Bulgarian, delivered an extraordinary lecture to a small charity society in Varna, Bulgaria, with the portentous title "A Call to My People." Speaking with the words of the Angel Elohil who had appeared to announce the future mission of the Slavic people, the Master Deunov, as he was later to be known, conveyed the message that the people he would be addressing in future, described as "the primary cell of the new humanity," would have first to be "saved" from "the dark past," and that the means to be saved had come in the form of "the truth of life of the heavenly home of eternal spiritual light" (*The Teacher*, xviii).¹ What added to the extraordinary nature of this announcement was the fact that at that time Bulgaria was still enjoying a period of significant prosperity, having virtually liberated itself from the Ottoman empire some twenty years earlier. In fact, ten years beyond the Master Deunov's announcement, in 1908, Bulgaria would triumphantly declare itself a fully independent kingdom, breaking at last from all formal ties that had remained with the Ottoman empire.²



In the meantime, however, the Master Deunov had continued to pursue his mission. In April of 1900 he formally instituted (what later came to be called) the Brotherhood, or Fellowship, of Light (originally, simply "The Chain") with only three other people participating except for the many other *invisible* members of this Brotherhood whom the Master said occupied all the other chairs in the hall. Then in 1903 he was, while still in Varna, visited by Christ Himself through whose words, as in the case of the angel Elohil, the Master repeated the announcement that a spiritual reformation was indeed now taking place, intended to bring Christ's chosen group of Bulgarians around to the future mission destined for them. In these three momentous "talks," Christ was addressing an already established, if still very small, group of followers who would appear to

¹ These phrases appear alternatively in *Prophet for Our Times* as respectively: "the seed of the new humanity", "turned away" from "the evil path", and "the truth of life which comes from the heavenly dwellings of eternal light" (21-22). For the full text of the Master's address, see: <http://en-petardanov.com/topic/900-a-call-to-my-people---bulgarian-sons-of-the-slavic-family/>. I am indebted to Emily Michael for this reference.

² One should probably not minimize, at the same time, the political tensions that continued to seethe menacingly beneath the general impression of peace in this period. There was, among other things, lingering resentment over the re-absorption of Macedonia, where many of Bulgarian descent lived, by the Austro-Hungarian Empire (according to the Treaty of Berlin agreed upon with Russia). Revolutionary movements, stemming from Macedonia, had been afoot for some time that eventually led Bulgaria to reclaim Macedonia for itself, with victory in the First Balkan War in 1912. Almost as soon as this War ended, however, disputes arose over Macedonia with Serbia and Greece, which led to a Second Balkan War. This war Bulgaria lost disastrously, having to give up not only Macedonia but also territories to the north and the south because of new invasions for which Bulgaria had not prepared, by Romania and once again the Ottomans. For a very short introduction to the economic and political situation of Bulgaria over this period see: <http://www.applet-magic.com/bulgaria.htm>.

have needed some significant encouragement and chiding as to their calling. This may well have had something to do with the fact that this small group had been called to work at a time when the greatest part of the nation they were to serve remained oblivious to the destiny projected for it. In the first of these addresses, it is clear that the group that has been called comprise a number of souls who have been prepared by Christ for their present task over several incarnations (cf. “A great effort was required;” “for a long time all my efforts have been to prepare you ...” — *The Teacher*, 1). We also hear that as a result of Christ’s efforts these souls themselves have been “saved from destruction.” They have reincarnated as Bulgarians “to harvest the fruits of [their] work” because at this time “this nation ... is not sufficiently developed spiritually,” and “God has many children in this nation” (2). There is, however, discouragement among the group:

You see a dark future, you are often hesitant, you are apprehensive about the trials that might come to you, and you often think that evil is incurable, and that God has stopped listening to you and comforting you (1).

But they are reassured:

*Do not be afraid. I have come to destroy evil and to remove sinfulness from people’s hearts (2).
I know all of your difficulties, trials and suffering (4).*

This chosen group is yet far from being able to take up all that Christ has to offer them by way of support and direction (“Your faith is so weak”). In the second address to the group, they are reprimanded for allowing themselves to be caught up in “things which are of little importance,” from an outdated preoccupation with “justice” (5), being “still under the law” (as opposed to partaking in the grace and truth of Christ). Consequently they are found saying “bad things” about their “brothers,” “arguing,” and “burden”-ing themselves “with human rules and obligations” to the detriment of their calling. In the third address, Christ bears down on them still further: “tempted” as they are “by the smallest contradictions in life,” he says of them “[y]ou have not yet learned how to serve God” (9). They have been asked to sacrifice everything to His service: “God wants ... the dedication of your entire lives” (10), and that has them doubting of themselves: “Your doubt causes you to sink” (11). First, there was their natural attachment to family life according to a standard more familiarly known, when the demand was on them now to envision family as literally God’s creation, His gift, and allowance (“It is your heavenly Father who creates the home, who creates family connections”). Failure to really see their way to God’s will in this sphere would lead them to “claim” the “desires of [their] flesh ... to be the promise of God, when actually they are the promise of your hearts” (13). Such “obstacles in your lives” (11), Christ points out, still need to be overcome; they are, what is more, compounded by the general “bonds of the flesh” (9), which have brought on for members of this group “times of darkness, spiritual downfall and sorrows” — the inevitable fate reserved for them now as the effects of their continued involvement in “the contemporary life of the flesh.” Added to these regressive tendencies was the temptation to pay heed to a more “normative” idea of the spiritual life, such as was offered to the group by the established Church of the day who already claimed authority from Christ, another contradiction which likewise could only throw these chosen few into confusion, as Christ explains:

You believe that I have spoken to others but you do not believe that I have spoken to you. You believe others but you do not believe me. These are the reasons that you lost your peace. These are the causes of your sorrows. (12).

Such tendencies are what have come between Christ and this group and prevented Him from working more powerfully through them:

Your weak faith stops the power of my Spirit What can I do to introduce you to the truth when your minds are dark (9-10)?

All this is a measure of the extent of the commitment that was being required of this group, which must have seemed to them, in the first stages at least, overwhelmingly challenging,



Christ Among the Apostles
Duccio di Buoninsegna

especially as it took them away from a life of peaceful, law-abiding normalcy that was otherwise characteristic of this time. Hand in hand with the commitment required was the depth and intensity of moral self-work that was being enjoined of them, which must have seemed to them likewise bafflingly severe and unreal. In fact, they had been called to be Christ's disciples in the absolute, complete way that the apostles had been called, as if the literal situation of that time were being repeated in their modern present, and this *must* have seemed to involve them in a very substantial contradiction. Such was the tenor and import of the Master Deunov's mission among

his pupils, who presented himself as indeed united with Christ ("Christ and I are one" —59), and this in no simple sense at all, for this Master saw himself as virtually on a par with Christ:

God speaks through Christ. God speaks through me ... That which Christ spoke and that which I say come from the same source (Prophet, 43).³

For a long time it would be difficult, even for some of the "more senior members of the Chain" (57), i.e., the Brotherhood, to accept that the commitment demanded of them *was* an absolute one. Eight full years after the last of the messages delivered by Christ spoken of above, Peter Deunov was still addressing the matter with some frustration: "Let me tell you, this work is serious;" "[y]ou have work to do with a Brotherhood that is not human" (*The Teacher*, 57-58). "[Q]uarrels" (57), "disputes" (60), "arguments among you" (61), "fighting" (60), "grievances" (59) continued, and it is not difficult to see that "disharmony" (57, 58) of this kind would erupt within the group from frustration by one member or another with their incomplete efforts to adapt to the strict conditions of the work. Another full year later, Deunov was still taking the matter up: "Some of you say, 'You have no sympathy for us'" (87), to which Deunov rejoined: "To offer you sympathetic words would be useless. Words are not important; it is actions that are important." Or again:

³ See also *The Wellspring* 220: "Someone asks me, 'Do you know Christ?' I know Him; I speak with Him. I have spoken with him many times."

You will say that I am a little severe. I am sorry, but I am not being severe. I am only telling you that your relationships as brothers and sisters are not of the quality required by God (107).

These last two addresses were spoken only a very short time after Bulgaria's shamefully swift defeat in the Second Balkan War, in July of 1913, which had taken away so many of the prized lands that the Bulgarian nation had acquired over several decades of political good fortune. Ever-conscious of the spiritual destiny that bound them all as a group, the Master would have to remind them that the spiritual challenge had now become more urgent than ever:

I tell you the changing borders of Bulgaria are not important for you; it is your souls that you must not lose, and it is now a dangerous time (87-88).

Suddenly with this defeat, the Bulgarian nation had been plunged into that very situation of dire distress and spiritual oppression from which, over a decade before when all *seemed* peace, the Master had announced they had all come to set the nation free. Over ten years of demanding work had been required to prepare this specially chosen group to contend with the spiritual crisis that had now openly come over this nation. This calamity had been brought on by what has been described as the nation's "war fever,"⁴ to which the Master himself makes reference at this time:

You wanted to fight, but now you see the consequences ... [F]ree yourselves from this slavery which you accept not because you want it but because you are bribed into it (84).

It is all to the point that the Master should make this group directly responsible for the Bulgarian calamity ("You wanted to fight," etc.), for it was this group that had been called precisely to save the Bulgarian nation from itself. With the calamity, what had been said many years before—that the Bulgarian nation would have to be "saved" from the consequences of its "dark past," now becomes clear to everyone. For as long as can be remembered the Bulgarian nation has been caught up in that "fighting fever" whose hold over it has now brought it to ruin. However, the Master's vision runs back much further than this and is of more universal scope, as becomes clear when, only one year later, the whole of Europe was plunged into war: "The causes of these events," he says, "have been building for thousands of years" (203n.17).⁵ It was a tendency in human culture as a whole, to a direction in life that had continued antithetical to the teaching and example of Christ, that had brought the world to this pass, and a new humanity would have to be created out of the inevitable destruction of the whole of this culture. Nothing less would be required now than that a new humanity would have to take up the teaching of Christ quite literally, beginning from the smallest things:



War (Destruction)
David Roberts

⁴ By the editors of *The Teacher*, p. 84.

⁵ More recently (dating back to the Middle Ages) it had been a case of the new monarchical madness, that "all kings think they are Christ"; now "the establishment of *divine* rights" was to begin (17 n.3).

I can say that all our present unhappiness and misfortunes, both general and private, are due to the despising of small things in the past (207).

There would have to be a complete moral overhaul of human nature, the Master's group being especially called to this task. A whole new, total meaning had thus been ascribed to the idea of how one was linked up to the world, in the spirit of "suffering encounter" as I put it in an earlier article⁶, and especially, one might say, from that time (in October 1915) when Bulgaria fatally joined this war (World War I), with still more disastrous consequences for itself in the long term. Nothing less than a total and immediate *re*-formation of human nature was being required to see the world out of its greatly misguided condition, a full embracing at last of the teaching and life of Christ in the literal spirit of his first apostles. The paradox of the Master's mission was that it would take a very long time even for his own chosen group to rise to this challenge, and as we shall see, he would have to continue to pursue his Christ-led mission relentlessly, for years to come.

* * *

No summary can do justice to the moral instruction the Master Deunov was offering his pupils, which was as deep as this nation's fate was overwhelming. What moral progress this group would make would be, at first and again later (at the time of the Second World War), inseparable from the horrible effects of war, which were bringing the consequences of western civilization's "dark past" to term so that a truly Christian life could at last emerge from the ruins. For the very possibility of moral progress in the Master's terms, these pupils would have to experience the active working of evil at first hand ("Evil is useful for people when it is active" —15; "Evil is necessary in the process of destruction" —34; "The present order must be destroyed and the forces which are now active must be rotted away" —17; "The Lord is coming to put things in order in a natural way" —86). The *cause* of destruction had been in the whole way humanity had been living which had accumulated over centuries, from the smallest indulged habits to now horrendous proportions. The Master traces such effects to the way human beings have unconsciously gone into league with "evil spirits" (277, 282, 284), the latter being only too ready to convert human thoughts and feelings into acts of destruction. It is what the Master Deunov meant when he spoke of human beings as having been "bribed:" "free yourselves from this slavery which you accept not because you want it but because you are bribed into it;" "Well, you have given yourselves to Lucifer" —86; "we were not careful, allowing ourselves to be hypnotized by bad spirits" —85; "For thirty years⁷ I have observed how proficient the fallen spirits are at greatly upsetting and disturbing our souls" —87).⁸ Some of the Master's language indicates that for years he has borne the effects of such misguided living in others in his own soul. From the very beginning he had approached the situation as a matter of the dawn of a whole new epoch that would be stretching out to a far distant future (preparing the way for the birth of what he calls "the sixth race"⁹—19 n.7). His moral teaching is supported by, and one

⁶ See the 2017 Advent issue of *Starlight*.

⁷ This would date the matter back to 1883, when Deunov was nineteen.

⁸ In the end, in spite of the devils' work, the Master lays the blame squarely on human beings: "And be sure of one thing: it is not devils but we human beings who obstruct the Lord's path" (130).

⁹ Corresponding, in anthroposophical terms, to the sixth post-Atlantean age but as this stretches out into the sixth Earth epoch beyond the War of All against All. See, e.g., p. 227 n.13; "The people of the sixth race will not die. When the time comes for them to leave the earth, they will simply dematerialize and become invisible. They will

could even say grounded in, the most far-reaching descriptions of spiritual realities. These descriptions reach back also to the far distant past and are otherwise throughout marked by penetrating indications as to the most intimate facts underlying humankind's cosmic destiny¹⁰. But for all that, it remained a matter for the Master, most fundamentally, of his pupils coming to terms with the moral demands life was making on them in the immediate present, down to the most intimate forms of thought and feeling they were entertaining. What they were allowing themselves to think and feel in every moment was being referred further to the full depth of suffering contemporary humanity was then experiencing. Awakening to the depth of this suffering was at the same time to experience, potentially, the full scope of the impact Christ's example was said to be exerting on them as guidance through this suffering. There was also the subtle range of their personal suffering to contend with, as experienced by his pupils in their individual lives and in their immediate social relations. All of these considerations combined, in the end, to make the fundamental goal of the Master's moral teaching what, by the time of his last year, he was calling "mindful suffering" (*The Wellspring of Good*, 47ff), which may be seen as the first primary concept he was trying to instill in his following.



I Am the Way
Elizabeth Wang

It had become, most essentially, a matter of learning to suffer for humanity: "Human beings have suffered for thousands of years," he says, "but they have yet to suffer for humanity itself ... Until now people have only suffered for themselves" (*The Teacher*, 235)¹¹. "From now on we need to be constantly connected to all the people on earth through our minds and hearts" (132); "[t]hose who do not want to participate in humanity's suffering will not gain anything" (127). Underlying this experience of humanity is the whole direction human destiny takes towards material incarnation: "Were we only

not need graves." Cf. Rudolf Steiner on "those who have overcome death" in the fifth age of this sixth Earth epoch (*The Apocalypse of St. John*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1985, 88 and 145-146): "all these will have the power to dissolve what they have within them as physical matter"; what's more, "[t]hrough the souls gradually refining matter from within, the substance of the earth will become more and more refined until it receives the power to dissolve." There is continual reference in the Master Deunov's teaching to this process of the gradual refining of matter, including the brain, which suffering accomplishes: see, for example, *The Wellspring* pp. 49,84, *inter alia*.

¹⁰ Consider among the Master's comprehensive teachings, randomly, the following: "The human soul existed deep within the Divine Consciousness for billions of years in a state that was not individualized ... Now, through its awakening, the soul comes to earth to learn the inner meaning of individual life, to obtain its own immortal life and become a citizen of heaven" (*The Teacher*, 264); "Angels were in the equivalent position to us human beings now on earth; we were in the same position in comparison with them as the animals are compared with us. We served the angels ... [t]hey therefore owe us a great deal" (208); "When Christ was on the earth, Satan was in the astral world. Now it is the other way around: Satan is on the earth and Christ is acting in the astral world" (25); "Archangel Michael is working now to establish the will of God on earth" (19); "Archangel Michael ... is connected to solar energies ... a solar culture is coming to earth" (19 n.7).

¹¹ Cf. Steiner on the Zarathustra-led Jesus: "he could not endure the thought of any spiritual treasure which could not be shared by all mankind but could only belong to a few at the cost of the rest" (from *The Fifth Gospel*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1985. p. 127).

to live in the spiritual world we would make no progress. We have to descend ... to uplift ourselves spiritually" (83)¹². Drawing on the simple (and often not so simple) analogical thinking that is so characteristic of his method, the Master asks: "'Why do branches grow up and roots grow down?' ... [I]t is necessary for growth to be both upwards and downwards" (115). Thus "[t]o suffer means to send down roots deep into the ground and to work" (*The Wellspring of Good*, 49). The whole mystery of resurrection lies behind this comment¹³, and the Master's pupils were expected to embrace human suffering precisely on account of this: "Expect much suffering, for you are going to be crucified and resurrected" (*The Teacher*, 42); "[t]o be able to go to your Heavenly Father in the otherworld, you first have to have conquered death, to have escaped the prison and become free. That is why Christ said, 'I am the door' ... Tell me, have you entered and exited through this door?" (*The Teacher*, 228-229) Indispensable to this direction in experience was coming to know and to observe the "laws" governing our spiritual evolution in this profoundest sense: "We need to learn the laws governing the process of obtaining life"; "[a] Christian who wants to obtain eternal life needs to know the foundation of this life and apply the laws by which it is obtained" (226-227).

This, as the Master insisted, it would be impossible to accomplish without our first fully "ordering" ourselves: "Have you set up order in yourself?" (145); "[b]ecome the ruler of your mind, your heart and your will" (145).¹⁴ On this score the Master stuck, with a more than usual strictness, by the regular teaching as to any indulgence of negative thoughts, false desires, and willfulness (which is why some of his pupils could complain about his severity). The gist of his teaching on this level consisted in 1) renouncing the ways of the world,¹⁵ 2) resisting false desires,¹⁶ 3) accepting suffering, and 4) abiding by the laws of nature. By "nature" he meant those laws laid down by "The Intelligent Powers of Nature" (*The Wellspring*, 302) for the cultivation of the spiritually healthy life, laws that in this sense could not be transgressed without destructive consequences (cf., above, "the laws governing the process of obtaining life"). Paradoxically it would be impossible to suffer properly for humanity while one left any part of one's personal life unmastered, let alone unaddressed, down to the smallest details of one's relationships with others and even the thoughts one was having with oneself.¹⁷ In this respect there could not be a single gap, however infinitesimally small, in the moral tenor of

¹² Cf. 131: "We have to live in this world to prepare ourselves for heaven. We cannot yet live in heaven ... the heavenly Father cannot take us directly from here and plant us in the garden of Paradise."

¹³ Cf. *The Teacher*, 39: "You are now in the roots. When you are resurrected you will be in the branches."

¹⁴ Cf. *The Teacher*, 270-271: "You need to find all the lost screws and bolts and all the lost parts of your tongue, mind, and heart and put everything in its proper place"; "[e]verything should be put in order."

¹⁵ See above, p. 51: "the contemporary life of the flesh." A running gloss in *The Teacher* on the meaning of "the ways of the world" is given *via* the famous phrases from John 1: 2: namely, "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life" (see, *inter alia*, 86n.14). In the meantime the Master had drawn a significant distinction between "the flesh" in the sense of concupiscence (as it was traditionally understood) and "flesh and blood:" "Our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against this century's rulers of darkness, against the cunning spirits" (116). See also 153-154: "People can seem bad, and indeed they can be bad, but they are not bad in their essences, because nothing bad can come out of God."

¹⁶ See above, p. 51: "the 'desires of the flesh,' the 'bonds of the flesh.'"

¹⁷ Cf. Matthew 5: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

one's life—for "[t]he karmic law is the starting point" (136). Where human beings fall short in this continuum, one must be ready to suffer: suffering is, in the Master's view, the principal means by which one is brought back to the ordering process. More than that, it is the ordering process itself. Moreover, in this ordering process, it is Christ Who is our guide, for

[w]hen Christ spoke about eternal life he was very careful. He filled all the gaps and connected all the worlds into a unified whole ... This is why Christ said: "I am the path from the truth to the life" (267-268).¹⁸

The Master clarifies precisely how this process works itself out; for him, all this was nothing other than a comprehensive "Divine Science", as he notes prominently throughout his work¹⁹:

- 1) "the path" is the movement of the Spirit in the spiritually wise application of the laws of nature;
- 2) "the life" is the harmonious organization of the elements, and the development of the forces, in the Divine Soul;
- 3) "the truth" is the manifestation of the one God, who creates the conditions in which the human spirit and the human soul can aspire to something better and brighter in this vast world (268).²⁰

As for the transition from the first to the second of these primal operations, something of the Master's severe approach with his group of pupils is conveyed in the following remark:

Each soul that is disconnected from the Spirit will be destroyed. Whoever wants to develop correctly will not permit anyone but the Lord to enter his or her heart and soul. If you want to protect your house from destruction, you have to have Christ with you (29).²¹

This was to take the long, in-depth view of the process. More immediately, the process could take a simple form: "On any day during which we do not keep Christ's commandment, disharmony will appear" (42 n.1); "[i]f you break God's law you will be bothered unceasingly" (188). Such disturbance is a consequence of the fact that, whether we will or no, the Spirit is at all times directing our lives, and we can have a direct feeling of this from day to day: "[t]he Spirit directly communes with our souls. We have an idea about its origin through the changes occurring in the realms of our souls" (151). All of our "mistakes" are in this way brought to our attention, so long as we *are* attending to the "movement" of the Spirit in us: "we need to turn to the spiritually wise Lord who is within us and who reminds us of our mistakes" (28 n.1).²² In

¹⁸ Cf. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John 14.

¹⁹ See, for example, *The Wellspring*, 160.

²⁰ For other formulations of the same principles, see pp. 224 and 265.

²¹ Cf p. 93 n.7, which quotes Matthew 7: "And Jesus said 'Every one which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock ...'"

²² Significant parallels can be drawn in this respect between the Master Deunov's teachings and the psychological expositions of Carl Jung whose work comes into prominence at just about the same time as the Balkan Wars, though this work would not take broader root in the modern consciousness until a few decades later. Take, for example, what the Master Deunov says, that "we need to turn to the spiritually wise Lord, who is within us and



The Laws of Nature
Marc Chagall

this process we are actively directed as to what we are to think and how we are to act in any given situation: “the Lord sends the Spirit to work on us ... so that we come to think in the correct way about things, and form a true understanding of them” (154); “[i]f the Spirit knocks on the door of your will, it has come to tell you what you consciously should do.” In this way, the Master maintains, “we are able to learn the programme that the Spirit has prepared for each of us each day” (156-157). It was a matter, in the end, of abiding by the psychological laws of nature as these embody our divinely ordained purpose, for “there is always a single, spiritually wise essence that is operating, a Spirit who creates laws” (151)—laws governing the comportment of our lives, and the Master adds that “[t]his wise power, which is manifested by God, is the source of all the natural laws.” It is how this Master himself lived, who literally embodied this spiritual process from moment to moment²³: “[w]e all had the feeling that he was communicating with the Intelligent World that was invisible to us For him, all things were fine instruments that would indicate which Law of Intelligent Nature was at work in any given moment” (*The Wellspring*, 89).

The Master was living this process out, moreover, in relation to those devastating world events of the moment that were being directly experienced by the Bulgarian nation. “Suffering” in this context was for them both the means and the matrix: the means to enlightenment (in the case of “the path”) and the matrix of transformation (in the case of “the life”). Moreover, it was because in his case we can speak of a full *identification* with Christ and His purposes, reaching down to

reminds us of our mistakes.” This “spiritually wise Lord within us” Jung himself identified as the “Self” which out of the unconscious governs the whole direction of our lives. This is how Jung would have interpreted the famous quotation from *Proverbs* 20 that, in the case of one of Deunov’s talks, is cited as an accompanying reference: “The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the innermost parts of the belly” (*The Teacher* 42 n.2). As with the Master Deunov, so too Jung makes everything of even the smallest reflections in our lives of what the unconscious Self (Deunov’s Lord) intends for us. In the context of Deunov’s talk, the quote from *Proverbs* is cited in support of his view that “The Spirit is the connecting line between the Great Spirit and the human soul” (42). In fact, there can be no room for escape in this regard for, as the Master puts it: “thoughts, feelings, and deeds that are not understood cause sorrows and difficulties” (45 n.3); “there are trials that cannot be avoided ... [i]f we run away from the smaller predetermined things they will come to us in a greater way” (186); “[t]his is why we need to be careful of those small things that might result in misfortunes” (185). When we do attend and respond to the inspirations of the Spirit (Jung’s Self) “it will change your life dramatically—it will show you how to live” (154). See also, the Master’s fable (146) about the man who could see but was lame and his associate, a man who could move but was blind. They conceive of working together to accomplish the act of theft they intend—the former placing himself atop the shoulders of the latter (this the Master calls their “crooked partnership”). This account falls in exactly with Jung’s presentation of how the conscious mind conspires with animal instinct to achieve its devious, regressive ends. For Jung, the capitulation to mere instinct (what Christ through the Master calls “the bonds of the flesh”) betrays the attempt on the part of the conscious mind to pre-empt the ever-deepening and ever-demanding call of the Self—i.e., the Master’s “Lord”.

²³ The testimony of Boyan Boev and Boris Nikolov (see the “Introduction” to *The Wellspring*, p. 13).

the very depths of human destiny as it was unfolding at this time, that the Master Deunov could fully transform the suffering of this time into “singing and playing”, death in the fullest historical sense into resurrection²⁴:

I see people carrying their crosses everywhere—in the churches and everywhere else—but I have not seen anybody “playing” his or her cross ... (215).

[T]une the strings (the mind, the heart, the soul and life itself) and start working the bow (the human will) as directed by the Spirit of the Great Conductor ...

*A person who is suffering is somebody who is singing and playing his or her violin in life, saving himself or herself (216-217). (*Note that Deunov was himself a trained violinist.)*

Now, when we have learnt this great law of “singing and playing” or “suffering” (these words have one and the same meaning to me), through suffering we will come to another great law, immortality.

Knowing these developments full well as he did, the Master could literally foresee the extraordinary form our future life will take:

One day ... you will ... notice that certain tones move through the whole universe ... and you will hear great music spreading from one end of the world to the other. Then you will understand the inner meaning of life ... This is the deep inner meaning of Christ’s resurrection ... (219-220).

In the meantime, the Great Conductor was already at work in the individual lives of his pupils from day to day:

You need to be ready for whatever the Conductor will direct you to play ... the Lord ... will stop you and teach you again and again, as many times as is necessary.

When you get up each morning ... tune ... [b]y praying ... your violin ... Then ... you will work well (221).²⁵



²⁴ The ultimate ground for this transformation was what Christ had accomplished for all time by His Death and Resurrection. It is significant that at this juncture of the lectures as edited in *The Teacher* (216 n.5-7) we find quotations from Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 3, and John 1: “Now this ‘He ascended’ what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above”; “put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit”; “learned ... by the things which he suffered ... having been made perfect.”

²⁵ The critical turning-point in the transformation of suffering into “singing” touches at bottom on our relation to the world’s evil, about which the Master’s comments are appropriately ambiguous. On the one hand, evil is evil and good is good, which leads to the Master’s comment that “we cannot transform evil into good ... the law of contrast into the law of similarity” (291). On the other hand, the Master also says “it does not matter how ferocious an animal is [or a human being], you can make a connection to it and bring it to love you” (299)—“Christ said ‘Love your enemies’.” Additionally, the Master offers the analogy of the making of a pearl from grains of sand (order and unity out of chaos and multiplicity): “The oyster cannot eject the sand, so it comes to the idea of making it precious. It says to the sand: ‘You are my enemy, but I will love you and make you precious’” (329ff). An intrinsic part of this process, furthermore, is the conversion of hate into love, also in ourselves, for “our passions, negative thoughts and desires ... are the conditions ... given to us from our Heavenly Father for us to conquer, to transform”

Such, then, was 1) the “way” (the path) and 2) the “life” for the Master and his pupils. As for 3) the “truth,” this was both the ultimate and the immediate *ground* of our being, in God the Father.²⁶ Life in the Father was, in the Master’s view, both our ultimate goal and the immediate circumstances in which we have our lives at present, which have been designed to best lead us to that goal from the point of development we have reached. We can only marvel in this respect at where the Master and his group were in *their* present circumstances: it was the case for him of a literal identification, for his pupils a near-literal identification, with where the world was in its spiritual development at that precise moment in historical-evolutionary time. (This included their experience right through World War II and, indeed for the Master’s pupils, beyond this, with the additional take-over of Bulgaria by the Communist party, which was to last for yet another 45 years.) Ultimately suffering would lead to God: “Suffering is the path of our ascension to God” (181). One worked for God (163), and came to “know” Him: first, in a certain relative sense, in the way one came to know Christ: “You want to see Him in form, but if he fills your hearts with the best feelings, what more can you ask for? Is that not He?” (*Prophet* 43)²⁷. However, one could also come to know God absolutely, as the ultimate goal of life along this path, as was the case with the Master himself. Indeed it might be said that in Western tradition nowhere since the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius do we find a more complete and untiring representation of the ubiquity and constant presence of God than in (especially) the (later) words of the Master Deunov (who indeed speaks here as “the Friend of God”²⁸):

People ask me if I have been to the World beyond. I do not visit the World beyond; I live in it. They ask, “Have you been to see God?” I have not been to see God; I abide in God, and I study God within everything ... (The Wellspring, 18).

I know Who moves the Universe ... (92).

I do not begin with the Science of the Angels. I do not begin with the Science of the saints. I begin at the summit with the Science that belongs to God (163).

*I speak and do only what God tells me ... (218).*²⁹

(116). Here is the basis for the Master also saying: “A person who cannot hate cannot love ... when hate and love are united they will provide you with what you need in life. Together they will give you the right direction. A saint is a person who has mastered the two principles” (346). It is a matter in the end of “suffering” and “conquering,” two actions that the Master associates respectively with Jesus and with Christ (346).

²⁶ These terms would be elaborated upon as a matter of seeking after “Divine Wisdom, Divine Love, Divine Truth,” which may be said to be the core, formulaic teaching of the Master: “All people are uplifted by these three principles: Love, Wisdom, and Truth. In this there is no exception. Throughout the entire history of Creation not one human being has lived who can say that he has uplifted himself in any other way” (*The Wellspring*, 127). See, also, *inter alia*, *The Wellspring* p. 22 and p. 348, and *Prophet for Our Times*, pp. 85-108.

²⁷ Cf. *The Wellspring*, 18: “Some people say they want to see God. Are you not seeing [in everything you experience of the world] the manifested Light of God?”

²⁸ One of the terms Rudolf Steiner used to designate the Master Jesus, i.e., the re-incarnated Zarathustra-Jesus. See *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School 1904-1914*, tr. John Wood, CW 264, Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2003, p. 225.

²⁹ As for pseudo-Dionysius, see, e.g., the chapter “The Divine Names” from *Pseudo-Dionysius. The Complete Works*, New York: Paulist Press, 1987.

There was, thus, what the Master describes as “the spiritually wise application of the laws of nature” or what he generally called “work;” *within* this experience, there was, also, the suffering that transformed into “singing” — both in a metaphorical and universally literal sense; and all this could lead, in turn, to a “visitation”³⁰ by God:

If we are prepared to devote our energy, life, health and everything else to God and are able to endure all hardships and suffering without ever doubting him, God will reveal Himself to us (76).

Finally, God reveals Himself to us as Love (for here was also “the Master of Love”³¹):

The moment in which we attain Love, we will be one with God. When I speak about Love you need to understand that I am speaking of the only way of coming to know God (147).

The valuable fruit that awakens the human soul, the human heart, is Love. All living beings, from the least to the greatest, move in God’s Love. This is the way in which the whole Universe moves (92).

Open your hearts to God for His Love, and then people will love you I, too, draw close to you through Him — through God ... (93).

Whatever your relationship with God is, such will be people’s relationship with you When people love you, it indicates that you love God When you love people, it indicates that God loves you

We see, then, what are in fact *two* currents in the great historical appearance (once again) of this Master to his pupils.³² On the one hand, there was, in the pupils, the movement from below upwards, for which this Master’s extensive moral teaching was, as we have seen, very explicitly designed. Here the early talks and lectures collected in *The Teacher* are representative, fittingly punctuated as these are at every turn (they appear throughout this collection as running footnotes) by elaborate quotations from the New Testament relating to the words and teachings of Jesus, to which the Master made continual reference. On the other hand, there was in the

³⁰ For Deunov the end-goal, achieved additionally by the power of “prayer” (see *The Wellspring* 81: “[p]rayer ... is a conversation with God”): thus, mindfulness (thinking), suffering (feeling), prayer (will); devotion, endurance, revelation: “thought, emotion, and will ... take part in prayer” (87).

³¹ “The Master of Love” or “the Master sent to teach Love” (Robert Powell’s formulations, communicated privately) is how it may be summarized. Rudolf Steiner (*From the History*, CW 264, p. 207) speaks of the Master Jesus as he who “influences most of all the heart forces.” Steiner spoke of the Master Deunov in almost exactly the same terms (see Emily Michael, 349): “Steiner told him [Boyan Boev — see the “Additional Note” below] ... [t]he Master [Deunov] would work with Love on the human heart, while he, Steiner, was working on the human brain.” These words are how Georgi Sabev reports the matter in his “Memories of Boyan Boev.” Sabev, another, younger disciple of the Master, knew Boev well through their common relationship to Georgi Kourtev, Sabev’s father-in-law.

³² See *The Wellspring*, 194: “Thousands of years ago, the Advanced Beings knew that we would go to the Seven Lakes in the Rila Mountains and they prepared them for us The oldest esoteric School is situated within the Rila Mountains The cultures of Egypt and India originated from the Rila Mountains” See also Christ’s words above: “for a long time all my efforts have been to prepare you” By India the Master would appear to have meant later India, as the origin of Buddhism (re: “the Himalayas”). When asked why he took up his mission in Bulgaria, among other things the Master said: “A mighty Divine current comes down from the Rila massif” (296). The Rila Mountains are situated in south western Bulgaria.



Master himself a movement from above downwards inasmuch as he was himself *literally* God-sent and moved, lived, and had his being immediately in God as the end goal of the whole ordering process he was laying out. The Master taught by his own God-abiding example³³. Here his many late commentaries as recorded in *The Wellspring of Good* are conclusive: they point with an overwhelming clarity to the *total* spiritual power of this Master, likewise at every turn. It is out of this power which he reserved, it would appear from the outset of his mission³⁴, that this Master could speak with such massive authority about virtually every aspect of “the World beyond” (including “the Science of Angels and of the saints,” but also very much more) as well as of the totally new spiritual conditions into which humanity itself was coming which were inaugurating the “New Culture” (57)—i.e., the culture of the sixth race or

sixth epoch, the “Culture of Cosmic Consciousness” (159) etc.³⁵ All this was to be accomplished by means of what the Master Deunov called “the Great Wave of Love” (119):

Tell all that the Omniscient Love which comes from above is now descending to Earth (179).

A new Wave is coming from out of the Cosmic Space, the Wave of Divine Love It is also called “Wave of Fire” ... (236).

Those who are ready to withstand the vibrations of this Wave and receive this Wave will become luminous. Yet for those who cannot bear them, it will be a Fire that will either consume them or will cause them to pass through great suffering

All human thoughts and desires will pass through this Fire and become purified

The great destruction that occurs today is due to this great Life, which is coming now....

[T]he modern culture will pass through Fire seven times, but in the end, it will be purified and renewed

All this is linked to the eradication of the karma of humankind ... (237).

It is because for thousands of years we have been under the influence of negative forces that these forces now turn against us

The present events indicate the paying off of old debt ... (238).

³³ Thus the Master’s comment: “Being one year around me will be enough to learn more than only listening to me” (*The Wellspring* 219).

³⁴ See above, p. 50: the means to be saved had come in the form of “the truth of life of the heavenly home of eternal spiritual light” (*The Teacher*, xviii).

³⁵ See n.9.

Emily Michael in her book *Sealed by the Sun*, relating Steiner to Deunov, quotes the former as saying “we stand before a new so-called spiral of existence” (439). As Michael explains: “the Old Spiral must end and the New Spiral begin,” and “the Mission of [the] Master Deunov is, namely, the “opening” of the New Spiral” (441).³⁶ Thus the far-reaching applications of what was happening in the time of this Master and his pupils. He and his pupils were meeting (again) in an event of great world-historical moment, an event that literally constituted the first and, in a certain sense, the one and only movement of ascent on the journey back to God:

There will be no other Wave such as this because in Nature there is no repetition of phenomena

Those who cannot be uplifted by this Wave will remain for the future

If you wait until the future, the conditions will be more difficult then (242).

In the end we can only wonder greatly at what this truly extraordinary stream of the spiritual life stands for, or indeed what it has to offer to us today, of which the Master himself said:

We have never been an outgrowth of any teaching. We are a wellspring that has come from God. Other streams have come out of us, but we have not come out of another stream ... (217).

Where, then, do the Anthroposophical Movement or our own Sophianic Movement stand in relation to this vast and profoundly earnest stream this Master came to re-establish? If we are to take the Master Deunov at his word, these Movements themselves constitute what are offshoots of this stream, designated by him as the stream of the “Universal Brotherhood of Light” (214) (the institutional representatives of this stream are known in the world today simply as the “Brotherhood” or the “White Brotherhood”).³⁷

From this point of view, one could suppose that both the



Peter Deunov's Paneurythmy Today

³⁶ Michael goes on to say that “[w]e all have to be prepared for a huge transformation, which will occur in the Cosmos, and on the Earth,” quoting Deunov on this: “[t]he time will soon come that it [the Earth] will come in contact with another Solar System which will have a massive effect on our Solar System” (443). Basing herself on Deunov, Michael notes further: “our Solar System is approaching the Universal Equator of Love” (443-444).

³⁷ Cf. *The Wellspring*, 214: “We are asked, ‘Who are you and how many are you?’ We are one Great Brotherhood, which the world has never seen before—a Brotherhood that has branches on Earth, in Heaven, and in the whole Universe. The one who is serving God is a citizen of this Great Universal Brotherhood, which we call the Brotherhood of Divine Love, of Divine Wisdom, of Divine Truth.” The “Brotherhood” or “White Brotherhood” continues as a designation for institutional members today although these, of course, include, and are spoken of, as sisters and brothers. Already in his day Deunov spoke of the absolute need for the liberation of women from what had hitherto been the domination of men: “the state of the present order, in all areas, is due to the humiliation of women. What should be the goal of contemporary society and government? To reinstate women to their original position The salvation of the world depends on the uplifting of women. Today’s woman is subjugated and humiliated by those in power. Unless this is corrected all efforts to put the world right will fail” (300n.12).

Anthroposophical Movement and our own Sophianic Movement might have their ultimate mission in some form of eventual union with the Brotherhood stream, and might even today be expected to be tapping into it. Everything (at least initially) would seem to be contained in it: namely, 1) full encounter with the terms of our human destiny as we know this in the present historical time; 2) the complete understanding of our ends (including full indications about what the Master called the “New Generation of Love” and the future mission, in this respect, of the Slavic people—see pp. 305-314); and 3) the transmutation of all this, in the last analysis, in love (see, for the elaboration of these terms—encounter, ends, love—my article in the 2017 Advent issue of *Starlight*). So also is the Sophia here, if not so fully talked about:

follow your Great Mother: Love (151)

When we are born of our Divine Mother, the Spirit to which we aspire, death will be swallowed up (The Teacher 49).

Say to your Mother: “For you who gave me birth into this world of God, I sacrifice everything. In your love I find the last support of my soul.” (286).

In the spiritual life, the position of the teacher to the disciple is like that of a mother to her child (305).

Love is only manifested in femininity. Wherever femininity is absent, love is also absent. (335n.18)³⁸

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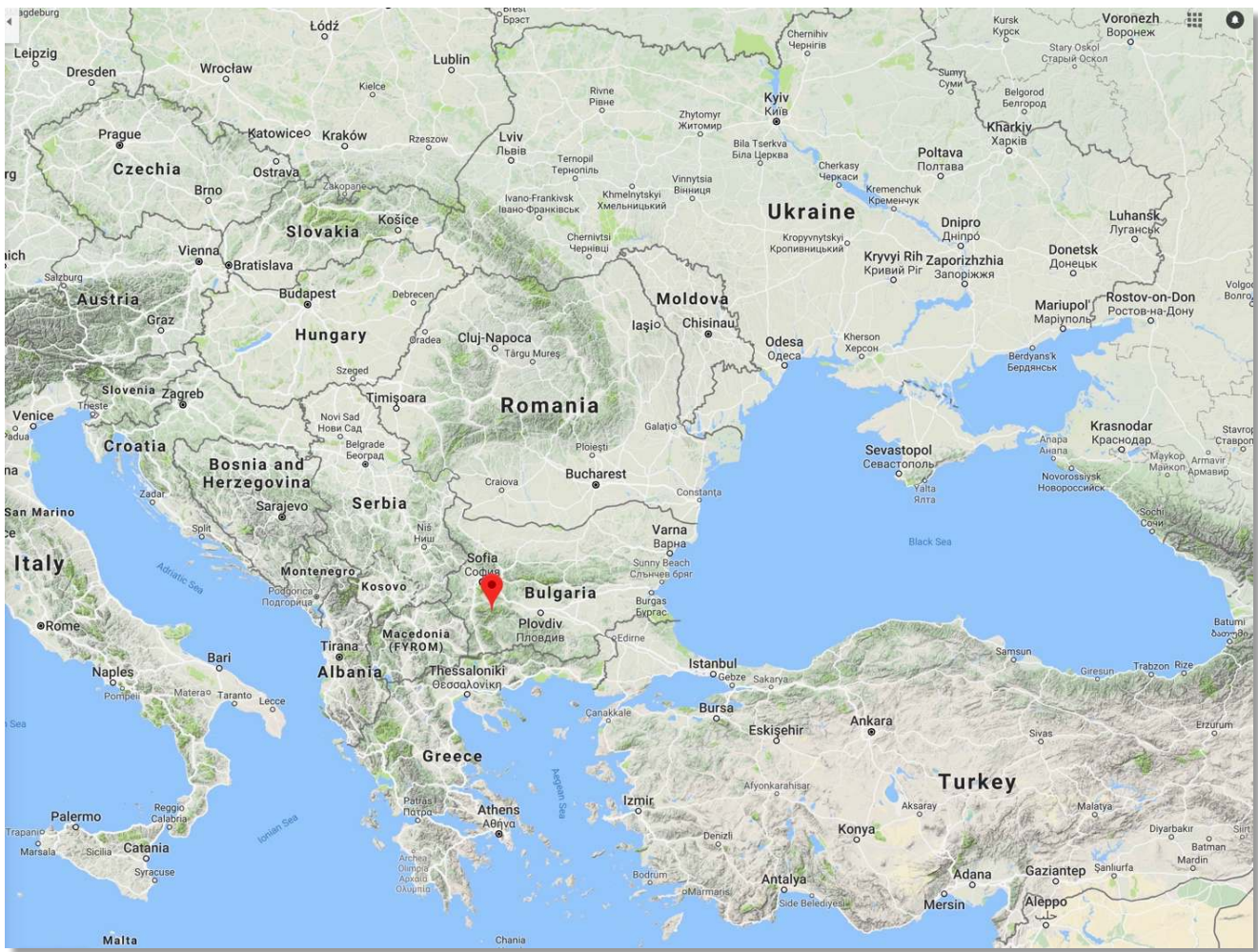
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³⁸ By “here” (in my last sentence) is meant the two large volumes principally referred to in this article. In fact, the Master was to speak at length, in other talks, of the central role women would have to play in the New Culture in relation to what he called “the New Eve” — this being especially the respect in which the Sophianic Movement, coming into this stream, could serve to fill it out. See the monograph published by Bialo Bratstvo: Sofia, 2010, entitled “Woman: The Source of Love and Life”: http://petardanov.info/WOMAN_LOTUS_OKON4ATELNO.pdf. I am indebted, once again, to Emily Michael for this reference. Among other descriptions that we find in this work are the following: “In order to have the Blessing of the Divine Mother, Christ was ready to endure all suffering,” and “Esoteric science comprehends the Divine Mother as the Essence of all living things in the world” (34-35). The key word in these passages is “all.”

Additional Note

The careful reader will have observed that in my article I have juxtaposed, subliminally and somewhat tendentiously, material that does seem very strongly to suggest that the Master Deunov was the Master Jesus. Much has been made in anthroposophical circles of the fact that Rudolf Steiner remarked in a private conversation (to Friedrich Rittelmeyer) that the Master Jesus was physically incarnated in their time and that he was working in the Carpathian mountains. Some have taken this to be a reference *to* the Master Deunov. Naturally the counter-view has been voiced that this could not be taken as a reference to Deunov since the Carpathian mountains are not in Bulgaria. It goes without saying that one must guard against the temptation to seize on any such reference by Steiner unthinkingly. However, there is as much need *not* to take this allusive manner of reference too literally. The *southern* Carpathian mountains lie just to the north and to the west of Bulgaria, in Romania and Serbia, and a glance at a topographical map will show that the Rila mountains in Bulgaria are virtually a continuation from the southern Carpathians (they form together a massive “C” shape, with a large cidella where the Master was actually working).



It's as if Steiner were saying “follow my finger, and if you continue along the southern Carpathians into Bulgaria, you will find where the Master Jesus is working.” Rudolf Steiner could not have said exactly where the Master was working (not even to Friedrich Rittelmeyer)

any more than he could have indicated where Christian Rosenkreutz was working (assuming that he was physically incarnated at that time). From this point of view, the reference to the Carpathian mountains was a generous allusion, considering that the whereabouts of any major Initiate was to be scrupulously guarded in accordance with severe mystery-ethics. A more fruitful concern of ours might rather be why Steiner, in the case of the Master Jesus, should have come even that close to saying where he was. Perhaps he did for what *we* might gather from this reference among our ranks today, now that we are beginning to know the Master Deunov better. (For many years, from the time of his death in 1944 until nearing the end of the 20th century, Deunov's teachings (his talks and works) were generally unavailable, and they have only begun to be translated into English since the early 90's.) At any rate, Steiner's reference was not one that anyone could have really acted on in his day inasmuch as the Carpathian mountains as a whole extend in the north as far west as western Slovakia (it was an impossibly large area to have to scout out). We also know that Boyan Boev, a Bulgarian who found his way to anthroposophical circles around Steiner, was told by Steiner that when he (Boev) returned to Bulgaria he would find his "teacher." This turned out to be the Master Deunov (see the Easter 2015 issue of *Starlight* which features an article on Deunov by Harrie Salman and a review of Emily Michael's book on Deunov and Steiner). To Boev, Steiner is reported to have said: "Young man, what are you looking for in me when the Great Master is in Bulgaria? Go to him and you will learn much more than with me" (Michael, 364-365). However, there was no thought in Boev of any further link to the Master Jesus: Boev was never exposed to what was said to Rittelmeyer only much later. In fact, there does not appear to be any known discussion of the Master Deunov's activities between Boev and the Anthroposophical Society after Boev's return to Bulgaria.³⁹ At the same time, it is to Boyan Boev that we owe the very survival of the Master Deunov's texts in the early years of the Communist regime when the Communist party sought to destroy them (this saving action was continued by others after Boev's death in 1953). It was thus, along the way, thanks very largely to Boyan Boev, Steiner's physical link to Deunov, that we have such access as we do to the lectures and works of the Master Deunov today.⁴⁰

³⁹ The only sign we have among Society members, over these years, of awareness of the Master's activities in Bulgaria was in Ita Wegman (though this does not mean that others were not also aware) that Bulgaria had "her own spiritual Teacher" (Michael 289). Wegman would appear to have learned this from Steiner. There was, in fact, talk about this with her Bulgarian hostess when Wegman visited Bulgaria in 1939, but no effort, in spite of this, was made by Wegman to visit this "Teacher" although Deunov was still very much active at this time. Wegman was in Bulgaria to retrace the itinerary of Alexander the Great through those territories generally.

⁴⁰ Boyan Boev turns out, in fact, to be the main subject of Emily Michael's recent books, which apart from *Sealed by the Sun* include *The Mission of Bogomilism in Connection with the Mission of Slavdom* (Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria: **Ab** Publisher Atelier, 2014). In the case of the latter book, Michael served as the supervisor of a translation of a text wholly written by Boev. This book was clearly meant to be complementary to Michael's own authored book (*Sealed by the Sun*) which is to a large extent about Boev, his few letters back to Steiner and his further decisive association with the work connected with Deunov (the book also contains many memories of Boev by several hands). *Sealed by the Sun* offers a much fuller account than Boev provides of the history of the Bogomil Movement, which, originating in the former Bulgaria, spread from there all over Europe, dating back to the early Middle Ages. Among other remarkable claims put forward in Michael's book is the view that it is Christian Rosenkreutz who inspired this Movement and that he was incarnated (over eight centuries) in the key figure behind it, namely Boyan the Magus (see p. 106, also p. 75ff). The work of Deunov in our time is seen as a further expression of the Bogomil stream, both a fulfilment of it and also an entirely new development, looking more portentously towards the future.

One Year Following in the Footsteps of Valentin Tomberg

Natalia Haarahiltunen

Inwardly we were—and continue to be—very much taken with Valentin Tomberg through our interest in him, which was awakened through studying his written works. There soon followed our exploration of his life and travels. Firstly, we were—and still are—amazed at his remarkable life's work. Then, in trying to share his life and work with others, we were struck by the fact that he is still so poorly understood. Now it is clear to us that his life and work will only slowly resurrect from the grave of oblivion.

Pilgrims

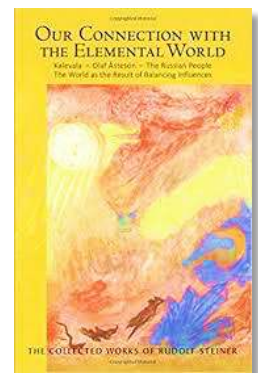
Allow me to say a few things on a personal level. We are a couple, Natalia and Markku, both originally from the Finnish Lapland, but now living in Helsinki, the capital of Finland, which is located on the same latitude as St. Petersburg, where Valentin Tomberg was born. I thought it could be of interest to readers if I were to share something of our travels connected to the places where Valentin Tomberg at different phases of his life lived and was active. He himself said that life was a constant pilgrimage. We were inwardly called to take up something of his life's pilgrimage. We were strongly drawn to certain places, which I will discuss below. Moreover, we often had an easy access to these places. I would go so far as to say that we were guided by Tomberg to follow in his footsteps. For us, visiting these places where Tomberg had been on his "life pilgrimage" brought moments of understanding, moments of honoring what he has given to us and to the world, and moments of feeling his destiny as a human being, which is still, on some level, sounding through and around those places. One could indeed call it a pilgrimage. Sometimes we also found that one needs a "push" to go to certain places, and we experienced also some of those "pushes" — perhaps from him?

Who was Valentin Tomberg?

This question is one of the great riddles that many of us Sophianically-orientated people ask at some point. To those readers who do not yet know much about him, but who know Robert Powell's work, one could say that Valentin Tomberg is to be found in the esoteric-spiritual background of many of Robert's works. Robert is, of course, the translator from French into English of the most well-known book by Valentin Tomberg, *Meditations on the Tarot: a Journey into Christian Hermeticism*. For those who are very much aware of Valentin Tomberg, I hope I can share something inspiring in connection with those countries and places that were relevant to his life. To many English-speaking persons it may not be so easy to read about his life, because the available biographies on him are almost all in German, and that is why I have also consulted my dear husband, Markku, who is fluent in German, for some details of Valentin Tomberg's life, which one can find only in the two extensive biographical volumes, each approximately six hundred pages long, by Liesel/Elisabeth Heckmann, *Valentin Tomberg—Leben: 1900-1944* and *Valentin Tomberg—Leben: 1944-1973*. The second volume is co-authored by publisher Michael Frensch, whose Novalis Verlag published these two volumes.

Geography and climate around the Baltic Sea

In a very general and “free-thinking” sense, one could almost say that the area around the Baltic Sea is the *westernmost part of Siberia* with a strong elemental world around everywhere, even in the bigger cities. The capitals of certain countries in Northern Europe are located around a latitude of 60 degrees north: Helsinki, Stockholm, Oslo, Tallinn, as is the second largest city of Russia, St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad). Steiner, who himself visited Helsinki twice (in 1912 and 1913), mentioned that spiritual work, and especially meditation, becomes difficult when one lives or travels above this 60th degree of latitude. Among other things, he talked about the Baltic Sea and the great elemental Being which influences people living around it. He said especially about the Finnish people that they have a strongly threefold soul life, where the “I” finds itself harmoniously in this threefoldness. This we find in the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* with its three heroes Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkäinen—representing the sentient soul, the intellectual soul, and the consciousness soul. This Baltic Sea elemental Being communicates its inspirations to people through these three levels of soul experiences. Each of the Baltic Sea’s three bays has its own head, and the Sea’s tail stretches even to the English Channel and all the way to the Northern Atlantic Ocean. (All of Steiner’s lectures concerning the mission of Finland and the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* were finally published last year for the first time in English in the book *Our Connection with the Elemental World—Kalevala—Olaf Åsteson—the Russian People: The World as the Result of Balancing Influences—Complete Works, volume 158 (CW 158)*).



At the head of one of these three bays, in St. Petersburg, Valentin Tomberg was born in the year 1900 to his Estonian parents who decided to speak Russian and not Estonian as their home language. He probably thought of himself as a Russian, but his Estonian family background still played a large part in his life. His parents were Lutheran, which is the main religion of all the Scandinavian countries and of Finland. St. Petersburg has, of course, mostly Russian Orthodox churches, but Valentin became a member of it only later, when he had left Russia to live in Tallinn, Estonia.

In his youth in St. Petersburg, Tomberg was associated, among others, with people studying Hermeticism and the Tarot. At the early age of fifteen, he must often have walked through the city to these gatherings assailed by the windy coastal weathers, and come back through the dark winter streets, pondering deep esoteric truths. At these geographical latitudes there are wide extremes in the climate, and these extremes have a powerful influence on one's soul. From mid-November to February it is almost constantly dark. Nightfall starts around three in the afternoon, and during daylight hours one hardly ever sees the sun, especially on the coast. Added to this fact, with the experience of much rain, snow, and cold, one gets drawn deeply within oneself, and on the first days of growing sunlight, beginning in late March, seeing more of the sun is a phenomenal experience of renewed hope in one's soul. Summer is blessed with the tender transparent light of the North, which lightens up part of the night too, but it hardly ever gets hot during the day in the summer. Warmth has to be created inwardly, or else one soon gets terribly cold and depressed!

Adulthood and Estonia

In 1918, not long after the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in October/November 1917, Valentin Tomberg and his father and brother had to flee Russia to Estonia; Valentin was only eighteen years old. His mother was murdered by the Bolsheviks, also known as the *Reds*, and he experienced the great tragedy of finding her corpse after she had been killed. Having fled Bolshevik/communist Russia, he then went on to live in Tallinn, a beautiful seaside town with old Hanseatic trading routes—a town that is nowadays much loved by tourists.

Markku and I took the boat over the bay and walked the streets of Tallinn, stepping at one point through massive doors into an old music hall where Valentin held his public lectures. He was employed in a post office in the town, and had only a meager salary. In fact, he was so impoverished that occasionally he suffered hunger. He who spoke and wrote so beautifully about the Beatitudes—for example, about hungering and thirsting after righteousness—was sometimes dizzy while delivering his lectures because he did not have enough to eat! He spent some twenty years in Tallinn. From there, he visited Finland and Helsinki—but only once, in 1931—where he heard, for the first time, all of Rudolf Steiner’s esoteric *Lessons of the First Class* read by Marie Steiner. At that same summer conference he was the second lecturer, speaking about the Foundation Stone Meditation. He also regularly visited some friends and anthroposophical study circles in two other Baltic countries, Lithuania and Latvia.



Tallinn lecture hall

One finds many churches in the old town of Tallinn. The Orthodox, Catholic, and Lutheran churches are almost next to each other, and we can imagine that Valentin visited them more than once. He learned to speak Estonian, which is the language closest to Finnish. However, some Estonian words, while sounding similar to corresponding Finnish words, have a different meaning. In fact, Finnish and Estonian are two of the oldest languages in Europe, and there are certain very special elements to the pronunciation of these languages. Under the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet regime, the Estonians were secretly tuning their televisions to Finnish channels to be able to see genuine news broadcasts. Because of this, many Estonians still speak fluent Finnish!

Estonia is now a country which belongs to those who freed themselves peacefully from the Soviet reign in 1991. Something that contributed to this peaceful freeing from Soviet communism was the so-called “singing revolution,” because it was the tradition of the Estonian singing festivals that provided a way for people to come together and sing in their own language. In the end, it was also enough to break free from the yoke of Soviet communism. Indeed, the Estonians tend naturally to be good singers. Unfortunately, because the archives of the Estonian Anthroposophical Society were destroyed, Valentin Tomberg is hardly known in this little country with only 1.3 million inhabitants.

Finns and Russians

In 1931, in one of his early articles titled “The Finnish Impulse in Russian Spiritual Life” (published in the book *Russian Spirituality and Other Essays*), Valentin Tomberg writes about the connections between the Finnish people and the Russians. Before the Russian folk was properly formed, it was mostly Finnish tribes who lived in the west Ural area of today’s Russia. Tomberg

describes how these two peoples met peacefully—how, for the most part, the Finnish folk intermingled with the Russians. The young and subjectively-feeling Russian soul found these Finns strange: the Finns could look objectively at the world outside themselves. At the same time, the Russian folk were very interested in the magical way the Finns used their words.

Harrie Salman, a Dutch scholar and researcher who has contributed several articles to *Starlight*, is a good friend of ours. After travelling two years in Finland and researching it and its connections to Russians, he said that he sees a continuing bond between Finland and Russia in future times. The Finnish people, with their strong connection to nature, could and should prepare the elemental ground of the still wild areas of Russia, so that there can be a more suitable platform for the coming sixth cultural epoch in Slavic Russia. More than just the Finnish people are needed for such a task, so all volunteers, get ready! Yes, most of Russia is Siberia! The question is: how aware of their spiritual mission are the Finnish people? Steiner mentions how the Finnish people are unconsciously ashamed of themselves, because they cannot use words magically anymore. Those forces are more or less sleeping in the unconsciousness of their souls. Finland just celebrated one hundred years of independence last year, and some of us are worried about its strong orientation towards materialistic goals. It makes one wonder how long such a small nation can exist if it fails to fulfill its spiritually orientated mission.

Steiner mentions that Finland is the *historical conscience* of the European East, so there are many tasks to be fulfilled. Harrie Salman sees the Finns as possibly bringing logistics and organizational help to Russia. Steiner says that there is a kind of a spiritual-cultural bridge from the West to the East which goes through the North. Perhaps he means a bridging by some of the Finnish qualities which are compatible with Western thinking and will-oriented qualities on the one hand, and with deeply feeling Eastern soul-and-heart qualities on the other. Harrie has also come to a vision in which he sees not just one bridge, but three bridges which are connected with three great teachers of the last century, whose works and countries he has also thoroughly researched for decades. In his view, Valentin Tomberg was giving impulses especially to the northern part of Europe and Russia, while Rudolf Steiner was preparing Middle Europe, in particular the philosophically-oriented nation of Germany. And then there is Peter Deunov (Beinsa Douno) from Bulgaria, who directly prepared the heart forces and spoke to the souls of Slavic peoples. And of course we are seeing these three, over and beyond their particular language-bound, cultural missions, working at the same time as world teachers. I deeply recommend Peter Deunov's books, which have beautiful teachings in them about the reality and future culture of Love! In studying these three teachers, we may come to a picture of what is involved in preparing the Sophianic culture of sister- / brother-hood, for which the three teachers built three bridges between West and East.

Tartu

Next we took a bus from Tallinn through the Estonian countryside to Tartu. Tartu is an old university town by the Emajoki River. Valentin Tomberg studied law here in the early 1920's. He had to stop these studies because of lack of money. There was something of a sleepy summer mood



Tartu University
botanical garden

as we walked through the lovely old streets and squares of Tartu. The university building in which Valentin Tomberg studied was later destroyed by fire and was subsequently completely rebuilt.

Holland



After travelling with us in France to St. Guilhem and Chartres, our friend Harrie Salman invited us to his home country, Holland, where he lives in Noordwijk by the sea. That area is a famous part of Holland, because it is here where the tulips grow. It was the high season for tulips when we arrived, and we saw them in various places — such a beautiful vista! — during our ten-day visit there. We dived into the lively and friendly atmosphere of the Dutch people and also met the Dutch translator of the book *Meditations on the Tarot*, who was just finishing the translation of the first part of the book. A few days later we met the anthroposophical publisher who will publish the Dutch translation of the book. We had many talks about Valentin Tomberg, and of course we were very interested to see the places where he lived while he was in Holland.

Amsterdam

Valentin Tomberg came to Holland with his wife Marie and his son Alex in 1938, mostly because the anthroposophical life in Estonia had started to become harder and harder for him due to the growing difficulties with Marie Steiner who had strong support among the majority of the Estonian anthroposophists. Valentin Tomberg lived in Holland until the year 1944. He held lectures both in Amsterdam and Rotterdam during those years. During the Second World War, although no longer able to give lectures, he continued to work esoterically in Amsterdam, holding a course there for about ten people on a weekly basis at his home in Amsterdam. The course was on *The Lord's Prayer*, and it was an extremely deep esoteric course. In week thirty of that course Tomberg says things about Holland, including that the

Dutch Archangel works through the light reflected in the moisture of the air: the rainbow, which is always there, not in its entirety but in part across the whole country, and all this light reflected in the air's moisture forms a unity; it connects.

He goes on to say:

It is now the task of Holland to unite polarities: for example, knowledge – revelation, freedom – authority, tradition – progress. To connect all these – not mixing them – is the task of the Dutch people.

My personal experience of my Dutch friends shows that they can appreciate these different aspects of experience mentioned above quite naturally!

The Chapel of the Lady of All Nations

It was a beautiful Palm Sunday as we went to this lovely chapel dedicated to the *Lady of All Nations* (“who once was Mary,” as it is stated in the prayer of the *Lady of All Peoples* revealed by her on February 11, 1951). It is by this title that she wants to be called. There was a series of visions and messages given by her through a Dutch seer in the years between 1945 and 1959. As already indicated,



it was in 1951 when the special prayer — and the images accompanying it — were given by Mary through the seer to the people, to all the peoples of the world, as a prayer of peace. What a sweet, Sophianic mood was to be felt in that chapel in Amsterdam! It was as though Mary had just poured out goodness into that chapel — and thence to the whole world — to say that another kind of time will be coming on earth! This sense of innocence and joy only increased as the nuns led us in song and prayer. I could not keep my tears from flowing! Valentin Tomberg had also visited that place, in 1958. I am deeply grateful that Robert Powell has spread this prayer in his books and workshops all around the world. The *Lady of All Nations* had expressed her wish that this prayer should be spread abroad and made available to all people. Another immensely important prayer was given in Amsterdam on the 6th of January, 1940 through Valentin Tomberg: the *Our Mother* prayer, to reconnect us with the Mother in the realm of Shambhala in the heart of the earth.

Mallorca

After a very rainy summer in Finland, we thought *why not go on to Mallorca?* Just before we left, there had been a severe terrorist attack in Barcelona, Spain, just 245 kilometers (152 miles) from the Balearian “paradise island” of Mallorca. This island became a popular holiday resort in the late 1960’s. On the day we arrived, over 100,000 people arrived or departed through the airport, mostly English and German people. We stayed in Paquera, a “German village” in the southwest part of Mallorca, right next to Santa Ponsa, an “English village” where the Templar knights together with the Spanish king of Aragon, *Jaime el Conquistador* (James I the Conqueror) had landed in 1229 to re-conquer the island from the Saracens. Valentin Tomberg spent his holidays in the northern part of the island, in C'an Picafort. By this time Valentin and Marie had lived in England for almost twenty-five years. This final vacation of theirs was made together with their long-standing dear friends, Ernst and Gertrud von Hippel.

We took a half-hour bus ride to the capital of the island, Palma de Mallorca, which is a fairly large old city. It has the second largest cathedral in Europe, very close to the Mediterranean Sea and partly decorated by the famous Spanish artist and architect, Antonio Gaudi.



From this beautiful light-filled space we continued to the very different atmosphere of a former convent of a famous saint of Mallorca, Ramon Lull (Latin: *Raimundus Lullus*), who was a venerated medieval universal genius and scholar. We were able to do the *Our Father* chakra prayer in front of the chapel where Tomberg’s earthly remains are kept. There was somewhat of a mysterious mood around there, as if time had stopped. In general I find there is a kind of Scorpio-Taurus configuration of polarities to be felt in Spain —mysteries of death and mysteries of the earth. Both Markku and I had very strong dreams every night in Mallorca, including dreams about Valentin Tomberg.

One evening, while walking to a concert to be conducted by the marvelous Jordi Savall, we were suddenly struck by the aura of the Red Cross hospital on the way to the concert hall. This is the building where Valentin Tomberg departed from the earth on the 24th of February in 1973, after having been on the island of Mallorca from the 3rd of January. One could feel the special quality of this place in the middle of the busy street! We were deeply moved. Valentin Tomberg had

suffered a stroke on the 13th of February, and spent twelve days in that hospital before passing away. The hospital building had quite peculiar signs: by the front door, probably marking the year the hospital was built, it said 1933, with one sign of the zodiac, Libra the Scales, and another, that of Aquarius the Waterman, on opposite sides of the door. Above the door there is a figure of a saint or an apostle (perhaps the Evangelist Luke, who was also a doctor) holding a scroll in his hand. For both of us, these two zodiacal signs are like landmarks of the twentieth century in relation to this disciple of Christ, who was born and died in the sidereal sign of Aquarius and who started to teach about Christ's second coming especially from the year 1933 onwards in Tallinn, Estonia. His earthly destiny led him from the shores of the Gulf of Finland to the coastline of the North Sea, from the British Isles to this Mediterranean island. His body was finally buried in the main cemetery of Palma de Mallorca.

As a footnote, I would like to mention that on February 25th, 2018, while we were watching a documentary celebrating the 100th anniversary of Estonia, Markku and I realized that the previous day had been the 45th anniversary of Valentin Tomberg's death. The official independence day of Estonia is the 24th of February, 1918. The Estonian war for independence was the only war in which Valentin Tomberg fought. He served for one month as a volunteer, around the time of his first moon node return, during the last period of the war.

Graphing the Mission of the Masters

John O'Meara

Among the spiritual teachers who appeared on earth in the twentieth century, three in particular have become the object of special devotion in our circles: namely, Rudolf Steiner, Valentin Tomberg, and most recently Peter Deunov. The third (Deunov) has yet to receive the degree of attention that the other two have had, but only because of the relative unavailability of his work until recently. This was due in large part to the difficult circumstances suffered by Bulgaria over that century, whence Deunov's work originated and where it had to be kept hidden.¹ However, in this matter as in many others, Robert Powell has been our pioneer in calling our attention to the critical importance of Deunov, as in *Cultivating Inner Radiance*². Also, small articles on Deunov have now begun to appear in these *Starlight* pages. In fact, more and more of Deunov's voluminous work is being made available today, and arrangements I know have been made for the continued translation of this work into English for years to come.

In what follows I offer, for heuristic purposes, an extensive breakdown of how the three Masters together fulfill a mission that could not be conceived without one or the other of them. In doing so I begin from a set of terms that Robert Powell once shared with me, which had me thinking out their

¹ The circumstances in question have to do with the Communist takeover of Bulgaria around 1945, which continued to 1990. Over this period Deunov's work had to be secretly guarded by loyal disciples who risked much by committing to this action. Only from the 1990's has Deunov's work been translated into English, the very largest part of his work having yet to see the light of day in the English-speaking world.

² See *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*. Great Barrington MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2012.

many permutations and how these serve to awaken a sense of the whole created among the three Masters, which makes all three finally inseparable. It is no doubt of significance that Steiner and Deunov appeared first, almost contemporaneously (Steiner was only three years older than Deunov). One can assume from this that these two had their own functions to perform before Tomberg could himself come upon the scene, as it were to round out the picture. We need to bear in mind at the same time that if we *can* conceive today of the three Masters working together, this is because of the devoted work of Robert Powell who has faced no little opposition in our time in coming to Tomberg's defence and in further bringing Deunov to our consciousness more lately.

Powell has called our attention to yet another crucial influence in our time stemming from the additional contributions of the spirit of Novalis who is working into our world in this very period (Powell's special focus has been from the first on Steiner, Tomberg, and Novalis, as in *The Most Holy Trinosophia*³). The significance of Novalis's input into the scene created by the three Masters would seem to lie in a further harmonization of the three functions already performed by these Masters. Such an effect, of still greater harmonization, is manifesting today in the elaborate forms of meditative thought, magical liturgy, and sacred dance movement and song that especially characterize work in our Sophianic circles, and of which Powell's *Cultivating Inner Radiance* is a central record.⁴ (Still more advanced forms of dance movement are made available in the more esoteric spheres of this work, as for example in the Choreocosmic practice, and more recently, more and more, in the newer practice of the Grail Knights.⁵) In what follows, then, the breakdown into three should be overlit by an awareness that a still greater experience of harmonization awaits us than what the three Masters together have created among themselves. This greater harmonization is achieved by what *we* are now being asked to bring to the whole scene, under Novalis's influence, from our own recreation of this scene among our groups. Thus a *fourth* spirit of still greater unifying power should be seen as hovering over the three sets of categories that are herein enumerated. It goes without saying that in associating each of the Masters especially with one of these categories there is no attempt to suggest that each was not working in all three categories, or that they were not additionally aware of the still greater harmonizing influence of the fourth who was to come. Also, although Deunov's work is only now coming into prominence and only now (more decisively) into our consciousness, I have opted to graph the contributions of the three Masters according to the timeline of their historical appearance, on the assumption that that is the actual process by which our redemption in time, which the three were sent for, has been achieved. However, such a graph should not blind us to another line of development that runs centrally through Tomberg, from Steiner, to the reincarnated Novalis and Robert Powell's own work, as pictured below.

³ See *The Most Holy Trinosophia*. Great Barrington MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2000.

⁴ "Magical liturgy" is my term for the specific set of ordained liturgies celebrated under the auspices of "The Sophia Grail Circle," a name also denoting any group gathering that is officially given over to these liturgies. The materials for these liturgies are not actually touched on in Powell's book, but some are invoked (with additional (now outdated) website references), on p. 240. For an up-to-date list of such liturgies and celebrations, see <https://sophiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GFT-Flyer-2018-v2.pdf>.

⁵ The practice of the Grail Knights enacting the Path to Shambhala, while Choreocosmic practice would bring us into an experience of the alignment of Earth and the Cosmic Heavens (i.e., the stars).

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)	Peter Deunov (1864-1944)	Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973)
<i>Christianization of</i>		
Theosophy	Orphism ⁶	Hermeticism
Revelation	Will	Magic
Redemption of Thinking	Redemption of the Will	Sanctification of Feeling
Star-Wisdom	Earth-Wisdom	Sacred Magic
Concepts	Habits	Feelings
Thinking	Willing	Feeling
Astral	Physical	Etheric
Obedience	Poverty	Chastity
The True Self (substance)	World-Existence (creation)	The Higher Wisdom of the World ⁷ (inspiration)
Wisdom	Love ⁸ (Robert Powell's terms)	Morality
Hallowed Be Thy Name	Thy Will Be Done	Thy Kingdom Come
The Beatitudes ⁹	Last Things	The Stages of the Passion
The Glory	The Kingdom	The Power
The Amen ¹⁰ as the Risen One	The Amen who bears the World-Word as the Kingdom	The Amen who wields the Power in the miracles and the stages of the Passion

⁶ For more on this stream see Boyan Boev, *The Mission of Bogomilism in connection with the Mission of Slavdom*. Ed. Emily Michael. Veliko Tarnova, Bulgaria: **Ab** Publisher Atelier, 2014, p. 44ff and especially pp. 49-50. In this book, Orphism, which emerged in the geographical area of Bulgaria with the appearance of Orpheus in the 8th century B.C., is regarded as the forerunner of Bogomilism, itself an all-encompassing esoteric Movement originating likewise in Bulgaria and spreading wide in the Middle Ages, and forming the more immediate background to Peter Deunov's work.

⁷ See Robert Powell's account of the three highest spheres of our afterlife journey, in *Elijah Come Again* (Great Barrington MA: SteinerBooks, 2014, pp. 166-168).

⁸ Love as God's will—the heart, in this sense, made perfect in willing. “God is Love” was Peter Deunov's chief mantrum. See *The Wellspring of Good*. Ed. and tr. Antoaneta Krushevska. Walnut Creek CA: Evera Books, 2015.

⁹ The Beatitudes (3x3) extend themselves over the three categories.

¹⁰ From the Amen meditation in *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*, pp. 39-40.

¹¹“We unite with
the universe”
(Universal History
as Science)

Occult Science

“We unite with the
All in Love”
(The Future is Now)

The Wellspring of Good

“We seek ourselves
in Christ”
(The Application with Christ)

Meditations on the Tarot

Novalis

(1774- 1798)¹²

Incorporation and Further Harmonization of the Three Categories
(Thinking, Feeling, Willing)

We have yet another way of seeing the appearance of the Masters in our time, when we consider that the Master Jesus was also incarnated in the 20th century, as some have come to see, in the Master Peter Deunov. Steiner has been identified in our time as the re-incarnated Moses¹³, and we have also heard of the re-incarnated Novalis who was Elijah.¹⁴ We have also learned of the Archangel Jesus¹⁵ through whom at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha the sister soul of Adam was able to incarnate and to work as the Nathan-Jesus, thereby providing the Christ with the material body in which He could incorporate at the Baptism. There is also the Zarathustra-Jesus (the future Master Jesus) who for eighteen years worked directly in the Nathan-Jesus as his residing Ego until such time as this Zarathustra-Jesus undergoes his own Assumption at the Baptism.¹⁶ It is Valentin Tomberg especially who in our time provides a description of the Archangel Jesus at work in the Nathan Jesus.¹⁷ What’s more, Tomberg himself has been directly associated with, if he is not in some extraordinary sense membered into, this Archangel Jesus¹⁸.

Thus do we have, in the composite effect of the appearance of the four Masters in our time, a new expression of the situation of the moment of Christ’s Transfiguration, most notably captured in the painting on that subject by Raphael. Is it any wonder that Robert Powell in his landmark book *Elijah Come Again* should finally settle on this painting, on bringing his argument in that book to a close, seeing as this painting gives us a picture of all the principal

¹¹ From the Hallelulia Prayer: see “The Prayer Sequence in Sacred Dance”, Palo Alto CA: Sophia Foundation of North America, 2007.

¹² As for this dating, see Powell’s *Elijah Come Again*, pp. 194-195.

¹³ See the article “The Transition” by Robert Powell and Keith Harris in the *Starlight Journal* of the Sophia Foundation, Volume 14, no.1, Easter 2014, p. 28ff. This identification, as well as those related to Tomberg and to the Novalis-individuality, were already hinted at in *The Most Holy Trinosophia*, Great Barrington MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2000. See p. 105ff.

¹⁴ Predicted by Steiner in his “Last Address” and taken up again in our time as the main theme of Robert Powell’s book, *Elijah Come Again*.

¹⁵ In *Christ and Sophia*. Great Barrington MA: SteinerBooks, 2006.

¹⁶ For the full details see Rudolf Steiner, *The Fifth Gospel*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1998.

¹⁷ See *Christ and Sophia*, p. 426.

¹⁸ Tomberg is described as “bearing” the Archangel Jesus in himself as “the Bodhisattva who is in process of becoming the Maitreya Buddha” (44-45), by Claudia Lainson in *The Circle of Twelve and the Legacy of Valentin Tomberg*, Second Edition, Boulder CO: WindRose Academy Press, 2015 (see also pp. 276-277 and pp. 283-284).

Masters who have been at work in our time: Moses to the right of Christ Jesus, Elijah to His left, the Nathan-Jesus of course being the material body in which this Transfiguration takes place, this body having been fully prepared formerly by the Zarathustra-Jesus whom we imagine to be also present at this scene in his assumed state in the spiritual world? Here, from the point of view of all of these associations, is what can only be described as the true picture of our time, not least also in its indication of the chaotic depths of life on earth that more and more we are in the process of dealing with as time proceeds, and that are figuratively suggested in the bottom half of Raphael's painting.

The Zarathustra-Individuality
(*Master Jesus*)

CHRIST

Archangel Jesus

Moses
(*Steiner*)

(*Cf. Tomberg*)

Elijah
(*Novalis*)

Nathan-Jesus



The Transfiguration
Raphael

The triple configuration represented in the Transfiguration moment brings out especially clearly the line of influence in our time that is highlighted when we move from Steiner through Tomberg to Novalis-John. This line of influence has been characterized as moving from thinking, through feeling, to willing—or gnosis, mysticism, and sacred magic in the language of Christian Hermeticism.¹⁹ Adding to this already full picture the still further influence of the Master Jesus, we may intuit a still greater power of will than is already provided by the Novalis-influence today, one that works still more powerfully out of the future. Such an idea would seem to be especially well supported if we are ready to acknowledge, as I have proposed in my article above (see p. 50), that the Master Jesus indeed appeared in our time in the person of the Master Peter Deunov. Certainly in the case of the Master Deunov, one notes a form of will that, working still more fully into the future, is by this very definition working from forces originating from still higher up in the spiritual world, already evoking with its immediate grasp of the sixth post-Atlantean

age the greater work of the Maitreya Bodhisattva who is to appear more openly in that future time. The effect of such power of vision in the Master Deunov may explain why an attempt has actually been made in our time (which I do not endorse) to identify him *as* the Maitreya Bodhisattva about whom there has been so much, sometimes pointed, controversy.

¹⁹ See Claudia Lainson, *The Circle of Twelve and the Legacy of Valentin Tomberg*, p. 174.

St. Guilhem, Sigune, and the Holy Spirit: a Salamander's Perspective: Musings from two "Search for the Holy Grail" Seminars

Ingrid Mary Fraser

The birds swirled and swooped on the sound waves of our AUMs, sung in Peter Deunov's tonal arrangement. We were a small group of lingering workshop participants bidding farewell to Robert, Lacquanna, and Estelle following our week together in Saint Guilhem le Desert. When the jubilating creatures settled once again in the shelter of trees, Estelle confided that she had seen Peter Deunov looking down upon us from above.

This Bulgarian master of the last century emerged during Robert's talks as a leading teacher for the coming new cultural age of brotherhood and sisterhood. Peter Deunov is a master of the school of love. In his incarnation as the Solomon Jesus he offered his life and ego forces for the Nathan Jesus, that the Nathan Jesus might be baptized by the Holy Spirit and fulfill his resurrection from death at Golgotha. This makes Peter Deunov, known as the Master Jesus, a true guardian of the Holy Grail mysteries.

Above the scene of our departure from St. Guilhem extended the pinnacle of rose-gold rock crowned by the jagged ruins of St. Guilhem's hunting lodge. Four days earlier, the meandering group of workshop pilgrims climbed the stone-paved path in order to clamber into the edifice's remnants. Clustered together as in a beehive, we offered the *Our Father* chakra prayer in our various languages: English, German, French, (Latin), Portuguese, Greek, Dutch, Finnish, Norwegian. From our great human bell we sounded the AUM over the valleys to the rocky peaks that sculpt the surrounding landscape. As indicated by Rudolf Steiner, AUM is a sound which dispels evil. Evidence of chemtrails overhead and satellite towers perched on the surrounding hills reminded us of the battle between good and evil being waged in the atmosphere. Jesus Christ, the light of the world coming in the clouds, casts the shadows for our viewing and transforming.

From this site, St. Guilhem gazed into the starry heavens. After the year 801 he had decided to lay down his arms and to take up the cross of Christ. He had battled on behalf of Charlemagne to ward off the Saracens from the south. Upon his request, he received from Charlemagne a small piece of the original cross. This sacred relic now lies embedded in a silver cross, guarded in the monastery of St. Sauveur founded by St. Guilhem, nestled in the valley below us. This place became a place of penance for other knights seeking atonement for their more harmful deeds.

In a local French dialect, Guilhem is pronounced similarly to the word "Kyot." This helps to affirm his identity as the muse who inspired Wolfram von Eschenbach to write the story of Parzival. Kyot had been a friend to the original Grail family. In Parzival's quest for the Holy Grail, he was guided by nature during the day, and by the stars at night. We can understand this to be a picture representing the ways of the exoteric and the esoteric churches – one more outward and the other more inward. In the Holy Grail, all streams of humanity come together. We experienced this meeting between the exoteric and the esoteric in the village of our workshop, making it truly a modern mystery place. On one evening at a service in the cathedral, the Gospel reading on the raising from the dead of the youth of Nain was the central reading.

We learn from Rudolf Steiner that the youth of Nain reincarnated as the Parzival individual who became the Grail king. The priest of the church was also touching on the Grail mystery. At another morning service, the good priest held the holy relic within the silver cross before us so that we could approach one by one for a blessing. Light seemed to fill the space of our worship. Hearts opened in spontaneous weeping. Participants were deeply touched and experienced healing. Estelle became enfolded in vision. Later she recounted that after experiencing the Passion, she had been able to call upon Christ for the healing of the 86 departed souls who on July 14th had been deliberately run over by a militant Islamist truck driver in Nice, in the South of France. Shortly after that, on July 26, while celebrating mass in his church in a suburb of Rouen in Normandy, an 85-year old priest had been killed by two “Islamic State” militants. If I remember Estelle’s words correctly, this priest’s death was a sacrifice whereby he could help the other souls who had perished in the terrorist attack in Nice twelve days earlier. Following this service, it seemed that we were connected as a spiritual family in an invisible weaving fire of love. This sense remained with me back in Norway in the weeks that followed.

Back now to Kyot’s lookout: As we scrambled down from his mountain retreat, white wisps of cloud appeared out of the vast blueness. Above in the sky, I noted the shape of a great sword as rosy hues. These were the beginnings of a deluge that would follow the next day after weeks of heat and dryness in the region. The following morning we awoke to a crashing response from the heavens. Lightning bolts flashed, before rumblings shook us from our beds. Our pilgrim chambers vibrated with the flood which washed down over every roof and gushed in little rivers through the narrow stone streets of the village. A pause in the storm allowed us to take our daily walk from the dining and living area to the Chapel of St. Laurent for our morning eurythmy and talk. However, more warnings led our organizer to postpone our excursion into the marvelous Clamouse caves of Mother Earth until the next day.



Another calm in the storm after lunch gave me the occasion to accompany a newly arrived participant up to Kyot’s mountain lookout once again. As we approached a bend in the snaking trail, I was moved to a standstill at the sight of a white dove waiting patiently on the cobbled stones. The partner dove rustled and then emerged from the shrub; they stood quietly. What was the message? We beheld the birds with some awe until my continuing movement stimulated their flight over the abyss alongside us. How lightly and effortlessly they flew over

what were for us perilous depths! Continuing the climb we entered the ruins somewhat exhilarated. We spoke some prayers until raindrops and a groaning sky sent us quickly back. As I followed the ruins of an overgrown trail through the wet bushes, a little creature stopped me in my tracks. A shiny, coal black salamander with bright yellow zigzags on its back was just as startled as I was by our encounter. It was drying itself out on the stone path. After a moment of wonder, I made an inward Scorpio gesture to steady both of us before gingerly stepping on.



As I reflected, later, on both of these unusual animal encounters, the zodiacal sign of Scorpio did indeed arise. The more earthly, instinctual aspect of Scorpio governing our reproductive organs and human conception can be represented by the salamander. The more spiritual, conceptual aspect of Scorpio governing our thought life can be represented by the dove. On this occasion we met the lofty dove below and the earthly salamander above. In the plant, the organs of reproduction and seed-forming open up to the cosmos above. The sun is the great fructifier. The brainy nerve, like the root system of the plant, reaches into the substance of Mother Earth. The plant, especially the flower, gives us an imagination of the purified astral body.

Sophia represents the purified astral body. She stands on the instinctual forces of the moon, clothed with the sun. She crushes the head of the serpent under her feet. She is now coming as the bride of the Lamb adorned for her husband. We are invited to their sacred wedding feast wherein burns the creative fire of transformation. The harmonious union of the feminine and masculine principles belongs to the Grail mystery. This union is reflected in the symbols of the chalice and the lance or sword. The most fundamental formative forces of life are concealed in their forms: the curve in the chalice and the line in the sword. In the fullness of their manifestation they uphold the mystery of the communion of bread and wine. In the grape we find the round, curving, fluid element, and in the sun-dried shaft of wheat we find the ray-like line element. May we also think of the Holy Soul and the Holy Spirit as bearers of these two principles? In eurythmy, the line and the curve form the basis of all movements. The line expresses thinking, and the curve expresses willing. In the interplay of both line and curve, feeling is expressed in eurythmy. The caduceus, known as the Staff of Mercury, also embodies these elements.

In gazing at the pure black salamander with its luminous yellow stripes, I was reminded of the “Staff of Mercury” meditation exercise by Rudolf Steiner described in Chapter 5 of Robert’s book *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*: a black and a white snake curve, down and up around a yellow axis emerging out of the darkness. The white one represents the purified and transformed astral body which results when one practices this exercise. This practice helps to purify the astral body and to ward off unhelpful Ahrimanic influences from our consciousness. Traditionally, at the head of the Mercury staff, representing the third eye, are two wings. They symbolize the power of insight or clairvoyance which results when the forces of desire are mastered and lifted up to the spirit. I liken them to the wings of the eagle given to the woman clothed with the sun, Sophia, for her flight from the serpent into the embrace of the wilderness. The Eagle is traditionally known to be a symbol for the higher aspect of the Scorpion.

Now I will take a leap in imagination to Sigune’s hut near the Goetheanum, which we visited on August 4, 2017, during the “Search for the Holy Grail” seminar in Le Hohwald, near Mount Sainte-Odile in Alsace, France. Sigune was the daughter of Kyot and Schoysiane who was a priestess of the Grail and sister to Herzeloide, mother of Parzival. She lost her betrothed Schionatulander to death in a knightly battle before they had consummated their love for one another. She then gave her life to prayer and supplication in solitude by her embalmed beloved at the above-mentioned site. As the group explored the location, I withdrew for a quiet moment of contemplation to the side of the reconstructed building. At that moment, a small creature crept upon a rock below the area of my feet to contemplate as well. It was a small, greenish salamander, which remained still as long as I

did. It seemed to affirm that this was indeed a mystery place. This new elemental gem wove a link between Kyot's place of penance and Sigune's place of penance. The inward path of self-knowledge and transformation is essential on our journey to the Grail.

Throughout the workshops, Robert brought to light the karmic relationships and previous incarnations of individuals within the Grail stream. For example, we considered the indication by Rudolf Steiner that at the time of the Grail, he and Ita Wegman had been incarnated as the personalities of Schionatulander and Sigune. Rudolf Steiner said that Anthroposophy is the science of the Grail. The Foundation Stone Meditation of Love is an etheric vessel for the inspiring force of the Grail in our time. Its mantric verses sound to our listening souls. "May human beings hear it!" The inspiration of Christ and Sophia in the etheric works to transform our feeling life that we may ever more deeply develop human love. This is the brotherly and sisterly love which will reunite us as a spiritual human family in the time to come.

I experienced this truth ever more during our cosmic dancing at Le Hohwald. Robert led our three circles in the planetary moods corresponding to Hayden's musical contemplations of Jesus Christ's last sayings from the cross. The deep power of love in these words transforms the sub-earthly spheres. It opened up the gates of compassion in our hearts and souls. We were dancing for the earth and for each other and for our departed friends. Robert reminded us that the eurythmy gestures are the language of the Logos and are familiar to the angels. When we remember them, they remember us. I thank Robert for his noble guidance in leading us into a sacred, magical, and healing space.

Looking Forward to Working with the Healing Grail Impulse in Our Time

Moved and quickened by seeds of fire, friends of the Sophia Foundation living in Scandinavia and Finland, with respect to the countries of the Baltic region, are seeking a Sophia association here. Geographically, this area serves as a natural bridge between Europe and the Slavic countries and Russia, where the coming Rose of the World culture is promised to blossom in the future. We plan a seminar entitled "Working with the Healing Grail Impulse in our Time," to take place between July 30th/31st to August 4th in mid-south Sweden.

The location of the "Healing Grail" seminar is near the nature sanctuary of Omberg Park on the shore of the great lake Vättern, the location of many ancient and modern cultural sights. Nearby we find the beautiful ruins of Alvastra Cistercian Monastery founded in 1143. It was here that St. Birgitta of Sweden began to receive her well-known revelations from Christ and Mary and the saints in the 1340s. At some time she also received the 15 prayers from the Crucified One, which are contemplations on the seven sayings from the cross. Eventually she founded an order for both nuns and monks based on communications from Christ, and she became a patron saint for Europe.



St. Birgitta

Our special guest Harrie Salman will take us on an imaginative journey to the land of Hyperborea. Harrie says:

Our point of departure is the mystery center at Odilienberg with its Celtic background and connection to the Grail.... We will travel from there, by way of Britain, Ireland, Iceland, Scandinavia, and Finland to the land of Holy Sophia in Russia where a new culture is being born.... These areas are part of a spiritual region in the north of Europe which the Greeks called Hyperborea. From here, healing forces pour forth that come from a very early age of humanity when the earth was still connected to the sun. In the age of Atlantis this arc between Greenland and Siberia was the source of mystery traditions, and in our post-Atlantean times the etheric space of the healing north provides forces of purification, healing, and rejuvenation to a suffering humanity.

Our new friend Christine Maria Hölzer, whom I call a modern Grail knight and mystic, receives revelations from angels. She witnessed the Grail chalice in the hands of the four archangels upon the crown of the mountain Omberg. Insights about this sighting are contained in her book, *Social Art*, which tells how all things are created out of the heart of social life. Christine's work is about transforming evil into good, and in my experience this is truly in the spirit of the Grail stream led by the Mani/Parzival individuality.



In coming together in the spirit of Christ and Sophia next summer with the Holy Grail Impulse in mind, we may hold the questions: What are our tasks? What spiritual resources are longing to be re-kindled for future work? How can the folk souls and angels assist us? What are the questions which heal us? All this can happen in the creative alchemy of community. For further details contact me at ingridfraser1@gmail.com.

Pax et Bonum

May the Holiness of Thy Name Shine Anew in Our Remembering¹— Prayer for the Protection of Mother Earth²

The author of this article is a devout person, known to me [RP], who had not intended this article for publication, but kindly assented to its publication at my request.

Within the Introductory Prayers and Concluding Prayers of the Inner Radiance Sequence in the book *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality* by Robert Powell is the “Prayer for the Protection of Mother Earth and her Creatures.” The text accompanying the prayer

¹ Valentin Tomberg, *Our Mother*. The text of this prayer is published in: Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell, *The Prayer Sequence in Sacred Dance* (2005) — available as *Meditational Study Material* from the Sophia Foundation: <https://sophiafoundation.org/product/prayer-sequence-in-sacred-dance/> *May the holiness of Thy name shine anew in our remembering* is the second petition of the *Our Mother* prayer and corresponds to the second petition of the *Our Father* prayer: *Hallowed be thy name*.

² Robert Powell, *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2012), pp. 64-65.



St. Faustina

describes how this prayer bears a strength intended to align our thoughts with the seventh petition of the Lord's Prayer, *Deliver us from evil*. The first half of this prayer originated through Robert Powell, and the second half is an adaptation of the Divine Mercy prayer, received by St. Faustina in 1935.³

Over time, in working with this prayer, it is possible through intense inner concentration to experience a clear, inward beholding of the descent and ascent of Light working between the Father and the Mother. This Light, which we can participate in activating through our calling upon it, descends first in a powerful force of Light from the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy, a Light both severe and annihilating. We actively engage this Light by first addressing our Heavenly Father and then performing a downward eurythmic "U" gesture with the words, *May destructive modern technology be stopped*. With this gesture we are carving through the darkness a pathway from above to below. It can be experienced inwardly that the ground beneath us opens, the solidity of the boulders and soil shift and move, and a cavernous channel descends to the heart of the Earth where the Mother can be found at this time. This channel, filled with the Light of the Father, opens at the foot of the cross, and simultaneously within us.

As we pull our hands up and slightly back to begin the eurythmic "M" gesture with the words, *May the assault on Mother Earth and her creatures be halted*, we draw upwards the stream of dense, golden Light of the Mother from the deep fissure, and we disperse it forward and backward horizontally, crossing the Light from heaven. By activating this opening of the Earth, the Tree of Life receives the Air and Light streaming from the cosmos and begins to awaken and grow toward this bestowal, while simultaneously a corresponding inward movement takes place within the human being who is participating in this deed.

With the words, *In the name of Jesus Christ*, He is called before our vision and stands within the Light of the Father, beckoning to this growing tree, a tree of living light. He calls it forth, His face deeply somber, with the eurythmic "I" gesture. When we speak the words, *For the sake of His sorrowful passion, in atonement for our transgressions*, we stretch our arms in the eurythmic Universal Love gesture and He then is the Tree of Life, His branches and leaves of Light expanding outward over the whole surface of the earth. Then we ask for mercy for ourselves and all of humanity with the eurythmic Veneration gesture, gently touching into the aura of the Earth.

Through a regular practice of this prayer over time, the necessity of continually calling upon the heavenly Light is revealed. This engagement and willingness to act as a connection between heaven and earth incapacitates the sub-earthly beings whose sole purpose of existence is to draw together the edges of this opening, as soon as our attention is turned elsewhere. The Light of the Father is omnipresent, but the realm of human activity has been left free; we are choosing what happens now. If the Light of the Father is to be activated in connection with the Light of

³ Maria Faustina Kowolska, *Diary: Divine Mercy in my Soul* (Stockbridge, MA: Marian Press, 2005).

the Mother, and the re-growth of the Tree of Life facilitated (both on the Earth and within ourselves), we are called to the “tending” of the Tree of Life through our repeated efforts. If we neglect this tending, the sub-earthly beings will reclose the opening our efforts have created, as they are purely mechanical beings who never tire of this obscuring and enclosing activity, within the Earth and within human beings.

Contained within this prayer we are given a spiritual weapon we can make use of in the continuing battle with the evil forces arrayed against us at this time. It is a matter of taking to heart the seventh petition of the Lord’s Prayer: *Deliver us from evil*, which can be interpreted in our time as *Deliver us from the evil one*—the evil one being the Antichrist. According to Judith von Halle in her book on *The Lord’s Prayer*,⁴ Christ’s words spoken to his disciples regarding praying the Lord’s Prayer are:

My human brothers, speak these words until they once again receive their vitality through you! When, a long time hence, they live in you, through you as they do now through me, then the kingdom of the Father will come to you, and you to it. Live with these words, make yourself ready through them to dispel their magic power through the force of your spirit knowledge!

If we consider carefully Christ’s instruction, *Speak these words until they once again receive their vitality through you!*, we can understand that the coming of the Father’s kingdom relies on our continued vitalization of the Lord’s Prayer. Taking this prayer into contemplation over time will help to reveal its mysteries, one of which is that it lives comprehensively in other prayers such as the *Prayer for Protection of Mother Earth*. It is possible, with grace, to behold the two prayers side by side and experience their relationship, which then continues to reveal itself through the practice of the accompanying eurythmic gestures.

Our Father, who art in heaven	Heavenly Father
Hallowed be Thy name	Hear our Prayer
Thy kingdom come	May destructive modern technology be stopped
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven	May the assault on Mother Earth and her creatures be halted
Give us this day our daily bread	In the name of Jesus Christ
Forgive us our trespasses	For the sake of His sorrowful passion,
as we forgive those who have trespassed against us	In atonement for our transgressions
Lead us not into temptation	Have mercy on us
But deliver us from the evil one	And on the whole world,
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory	Now,
For ever and ever	And forever

AUMEYN

⁴ Judith von Halle, *The Lord’s Prayer: The Living Word of God* (West Hoathly, United Kingdom: Clairview Books, 2007).

Choreocosmos
School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance
2018 Schedule of Workshops
with Robert Powell

August 5-11, 2018: The fourth annual Grail conference will take place in southern Germany, exploring the Grail connections there. Central to this exploration is Rudolf Steiner's indication:

Southern Germany should have become the new Grail castle of the new spiritual knights and [thereby] the cradle of future events. The personalities whom we know as Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Herder, and so on, had prepared the spiritual space well. Kaspar Hauser should have gathered around him all those who lived in this well-prepared spiritual space.

As Kaspar Hauser indicated in a spiritual communication to Estelle Isaacson on July 2, 2009:

You have great spiritual protection because of the childlike forces which are streaming into you. Spiritually, children have an added measure of spiritual protection. When people are baptized in a proper way they are given extra spiritual protection because a part of them is truly being made new; they have the opportunity to connect to their childlike forces and become as a little child who *deserves* the kingdom of God. And I, the being who was Kaspar Hauser, am an inspiration for the sacrament of baptism. I am the one who escorts the childlike forces—forces which belong to each soul who receives true baptism. This is my work, for my heart is with the being of each soul who has not fallen, and I care for this aspect of the soul. I work to maintain the purity and innocence of those forces when they are called up to enter into the soul of any human being, such as you have experienced. And so I assist you in keeping this childlike part of you innocent and pure and safe and protected.

This indication can be seen in relation to Rudolf Steiner's statement about Parsifal, the Grail king, representing the pure "I."

As well as entering into the deep and profound Grail mysteries connected with Kaspar Hauser, we shall also make excursions to Grail sites located in the area. The week of this fourth Grail conference with Estelle Isaacson (health permitting) and Robert Powell will begin with arrival on the afternoon of Sunday, August 5, 2018 in time for dinner at 6:00 pm, followed by a concert with a piano trio playing music by Beethoven and Schubert. The workshop will end with departure after breakfast on Saturday, August 11, 2018. This Grail conference will take place in the Sophia Hall ("Sphiensaal"), Herzogstrasse 5a, 86981 Kinsau, Germany. The focus in cosmic dance will be the Journey of the Soul into Incarnation, with musical accompaniment by Italian pianist Fabio Berellini. A flyer giving further details of this Grail conference will be posted on the website of the Sophia Foundation sophiafoundation.org. Accommodation is limited, so early registration for this conference is recommended. Contact: Doris Wolf, Badestrasse 23, 20148 Hamburg, Germany. Tel: +49-172-6613437. Email: doxewo@gmail.com. Italian participants contact : Uberta Sebregondi, Via della Fonte di Fauno 20, 00153 Roma, Italia. Tel: +39-06-86904627 / Mobile: +39-335-6749935. Email: usebregondi@gmail.com.

August 12-19, 2018: “The Hebrew Alphabet & the Tree of Life—The 10 Sephiroth and the 22 Paths of Wisdom corresponding to the 22 Major Arcana of the Tarot—the School of Sophia.” One-week workshop with the Shambhala Path (Sacred Dance) and Overview of Stars & Planets in 2018. Central to the Shambhala Path is working with the Lord’s Prayer in relation to the Tree of Life. Estelle Isaacson is planning to attend this workshop. She will present contributions to the theme when appropriate. Musical accompaniment by violinist Vitale Cotofana. Location: Casa di Spiritualità Oasi Sacro Cuore (House of Spirituality: Sacred Heart Oasis) in Assisi, Italy— oasisacrocuoreassisi.com. Arrival on August 12 for dinner at 7:00 pm; departure on August 19 after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / Mobile: +39-335-6749935. Email: usebregondi@gmail.com.

August 19-24, 2018: “Attuning to the Stars: Star Gazing as a Spiritual Path.” 4½-day workshop with Choreocosmos and Star Mysteries—As above, so below.” This year the workshop will be focused on “The Great Teachers of Humanity.” English/German with Italian translation. Musical accompaniment by violinist Vitale Cotofana. Location: same as previous week—Casa di Spiritualità Oasi Sacro Cuore (House of Spirituality: Sacred Heart Oasis) in Assisi, Italy—oasisacrocuoreassisi.com. Accommodation and full board at Casa di Spiritualità Oasi Sacro Cuore retreat center. Arrival on August 19 for dinner at 7:00 pm; departure on August 24 after breakfast. Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / Mobile: +39-335-6749935. Email: usebregondi@gmail.com.

August 25-31, 2018: “Choreocosmos: International Week” in the spa hotel Casa di Salute—Raphael in Roncegno near Trient/Trento, Italy. “The Journey of the Soul into Incarnation,” with Italian concert pianist Fabio Berellini. Seventeenth graduation of the Choreocosmos School for Cosmic & Sacred Dance. Arrival on August 25 for dinner at 7:00 PM; departure on August 31 after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / Mobile: +39-3482-106251. Email: sally.ellis.jones@gmail.com.

August 31- September 2, 2018: “Choreocosmos Graduates Meeting” in the spa hotel Casa di Salute—Raphael in Roncegno near Trient/Trento, Italy. “Foundations of Choreocosmos: A Spiritual Path Arising from Eurythmy—The School of Christ & Sophia.” English/German with Italian translation. The focus in cosmic dance will be on a new way of working with the Foundation Stone Meditation. Musical accompaniment by Italian concert pianist Fabio Berellini (Cosmic and Sacred Dance). Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / Mobile: +39-3482-106251. Email: sally.ellis.jones@gmail.com.

Further Information in English: sophiafoundation.org. lists the workshops and events taking place in the United States under the auspices of the Sophia Foundation, as well as Robert Powell’s workshops in Europe indicated above. Sophia Foundation Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org.

Für weitere Informationen in deutscher Sprache: www.choreocosmos.info.
Email: katherine@choreocosmos.info.

A New Editor for Starlight
Proposed Themes for Upcoming Issues

Welcoming John O'Meara as the New Editor for *Starlight*



We are pleased to announce that beginning with the Advent/Christmas 2018 issue, John O'Meara will be the new Editor of *Starlight*. Robert Powell will be Consultant Editor, and Sandra Weil will continue as Assistant Editor, responsible for layout design.

We are very happy to welcome author John O'Meara to our editorial team. John is the author of books on Shakespeare, Rilke, and Novalis, and has contributed many articles to *Starlight*. His most recent book is *Anthroposophic Mantric Meditations: An Approach to Our Life and Destiny in the Cosmos*, which includes a final section on Valentin Tomberg and Robert Powell—see:

<https://www.amazon.com/Anthroposophic-Mantric-Meditations-Approach-Destiny/dp/0992097118>.

Proposed Themes for Upcoming Issues of *Starlight*

John has proposed several possible themes for submissions to upcoming issues of Starlight:

Advent/Christmas 2018 issue. (Contributions for this issue should be sent by **October 1, 2018**.)

The Spirit (Self) and Nature / The Heart of Nature / Divine Creation
Sophia in Her Three Members

Easter/Pentecost 2019 issue. (Contributions for this issue should be sent by **March 1, 2019**.)

The Holy Grail / Sigune and Schionatulander / Steiner and Kyot
Sacrificing Ourselves for and with Christ

All contributions are welcome, regardless of the specific themes proposed.

Please address contributions to John at:

starlightjournal27@gmail.com

Duet With Brother Francis

written by Valentin Tomberg

(trsl. James R. Wetmore)

Brother Francis, in your earthly days you did praise and thank
Sun, water, fire, and death as seemed fitting
To your wakeful eyes and heart.

Will you then this day join your voice to mine
That together we might choir a chant of gratitude
For all and everything in this our grand and glorious world?
I shall make a start, and do you then chime in:

We thank thee, eternal giver of all gifts
For the wondrous all-encompassing bestowal
That comprises, yea, enables, all other gifts.
We thank thee for the gift of existence.

We thank thee, lamp full bright
For the wondrous gift of keen awareness
That with clarity, certainty, and purity illumines us.
We thank thee for the gift of consciousness.

We thank thee, founder of all to be fathomed
For the wondrous gift of pure conception,
That crystal-clear doth course us through,
In threads of silver (or pearls of glass),
Entwining yesterday and the morrow, above and below.
We thank thee for the gift of thinking.

We thank thee, ardent heart of the world
For the wondrous gift of warm sensibility
Whose inexpressible melodies fill us,
And upon our heart's throne doth seat queen beauty.
We thank thee for the gift of feeling.

We thank thee, dazzling source of will to dare
For the wondrous gift of fervent aspiration
That hath thy world with hero, master, and adept adorned.
We thank thee for the gift of willing.



We thank thee, esteemer and conserver
Of both the greatest and the least,
For the wondrous gift of recollection,
Which weaves the color-sheen-tone tapestry
Wherewith we bedeck the colonnade of time.
We thank thee for the gift of remembering.

We thank thee, herald and pledge
Of shrines beyond-saying sainted,
For the wondrous gift of uttered word,
Whereby we brother sister siblings all
So close in kenning come
That in giving and receiving,
We do celebrate all-as-one.
We thank thee for the gift of speaking.

We thank thee, shaper of the ever-shifting,
For the wondrous gift of body,
Which lends us visage, senses most marvelous,
And arms and legs wherewith to work and wander.
We thank thee for the gift of corporeality.

We thank thee, final ground of firm surety,
For the wondrous gift of solid fundament
That, tried and true beneath our feet,
Tenders tillage, dwelling, and rambling way.
We thank thee for the gift of earth.

We thank thee, wellspring of all that lives,
For the wondrous gift of this our world,
Which in earth, water, and air—
Rich in stone, plant, fish, animal, bird—
In close embrace doth enfold us.
We thank thee for the gift of nature.

We thank thee, sentinel of eternity,
For the wondrous gift of sky celestial,
Whence flows through our life
Sun-gold, moon-silver, and starry-king.
We thank thee for the gift of heaven.

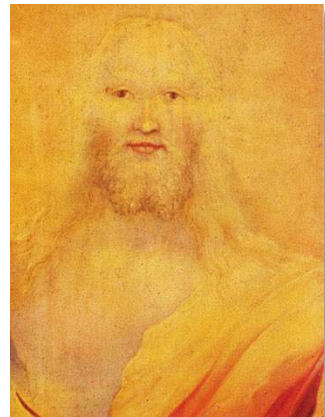
We thank thee, gracious heavenly father,
For the wondrous gift of civility,
In whose temples, sisters science, art, religion
By day and night to thee their offerings bring.
We thank thee for the gift of culture.

We thank thee, spirit-breath, endowing fullness,
For the wondrous gift of enthusiasm,
Whence arise prayer, song, poem, image,
And temple—whether wrought in stone or thought.
We thank thee for the gift of Inspiration.

We thank thee, Master of metamorphing beings,
For the wondrous gift of conversion,
Through which arise the just, prophets, saints, sages—thy servants all,
Who like stars sparkle in the heaven of essence eternal.
We thank thee for the gift of transformation.

We thank thee, primal prince of personality,
For the wondrous gift of thy image,
In which doth human countenance gleam,
Angel radiate, archangel flash,
Principality thunder, power shape,
Virtue hold sway, dominion exalt,
Throne quake, cherub manifest, and seraph establish.
We thank thee for the gift of thy likeness.

And we thank thee, eternal keeper of what is yet to be,
For hallowèd conferral of hopeful expectancy,
Which in faith, hope, and love doth prick us
Vigilant to what the future to us newly brings—
A preparing prod for tidings still to come.
We thank thee for the faculty of hopeful expectation.



Detail from *Resurrection*
Isenheim Altarpiece
Matthias Grünewald

Pentecost



Pentecost by El Greco (1541-1614). The flames of the Holy Spirit descend on Mary and the twelve apostles. El Greco made this painting as part of an altarpiece for the church of the monastery Lady Mary of Aragon in Madrid.

prophets but specifically apostles. There is a great spiritual difference between prophecy and the mission of the apostles; a prophet proclaims spiritual revelation impersonally, whereas an apostle reveals the Holy Spirit within the soul. This was possible only because the spiritual revelation of the Pentecost could become soul through the Virgin Mary and be transmitted by her as soul to the disciples.

What took form in the earthly human sphere became a means to express what took place in the spiritual world. A great event occurred in the spiritual world at the hour of Pentecost; the Sophia's silence ended, and she regained her ability to reveal herself through speech. Moreover, she could reveal herself in such a way that not only could certain initiates rise to her sphere and receive her inspirations, but she herself could also descend and pour her influence into the ordinary day consciousness of earthly human beings. It was not that the Sophia had been reached by a certain group of human beings (which had happened before); the point now was that for the first time, on her side, she could reach down to a group of earthly human beings.

Valentin Tomberg, *Christ and Sophia: Anthroposophic Meditations on the Old Testament, New Testament, and Apocalypse* (SteinerBooks, 2006), pp. 306-307.

Starlight, the journal of the Sophia Foundation, appears twice a year, around Easter/Pentecost and Advent/Christmas. If you are intending to send a contribution to the next issue, please email it to John O'Meara at starlightjournal27@gmail.com by October 1, 2018.

