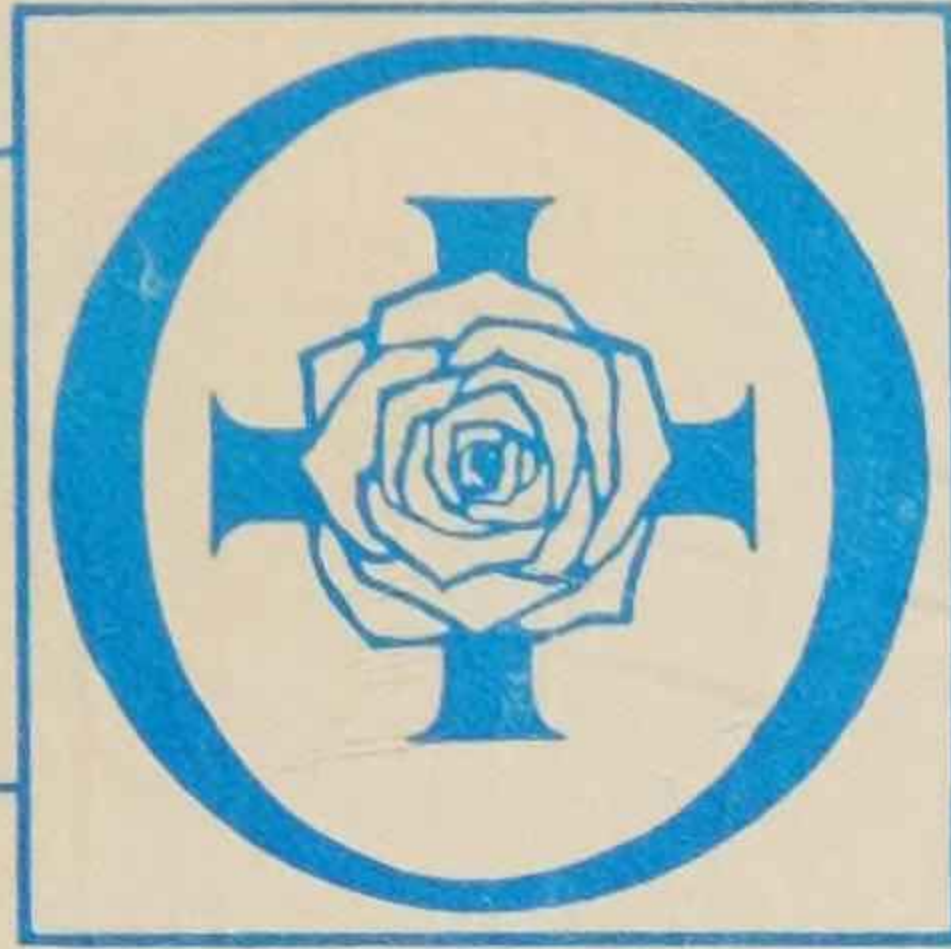


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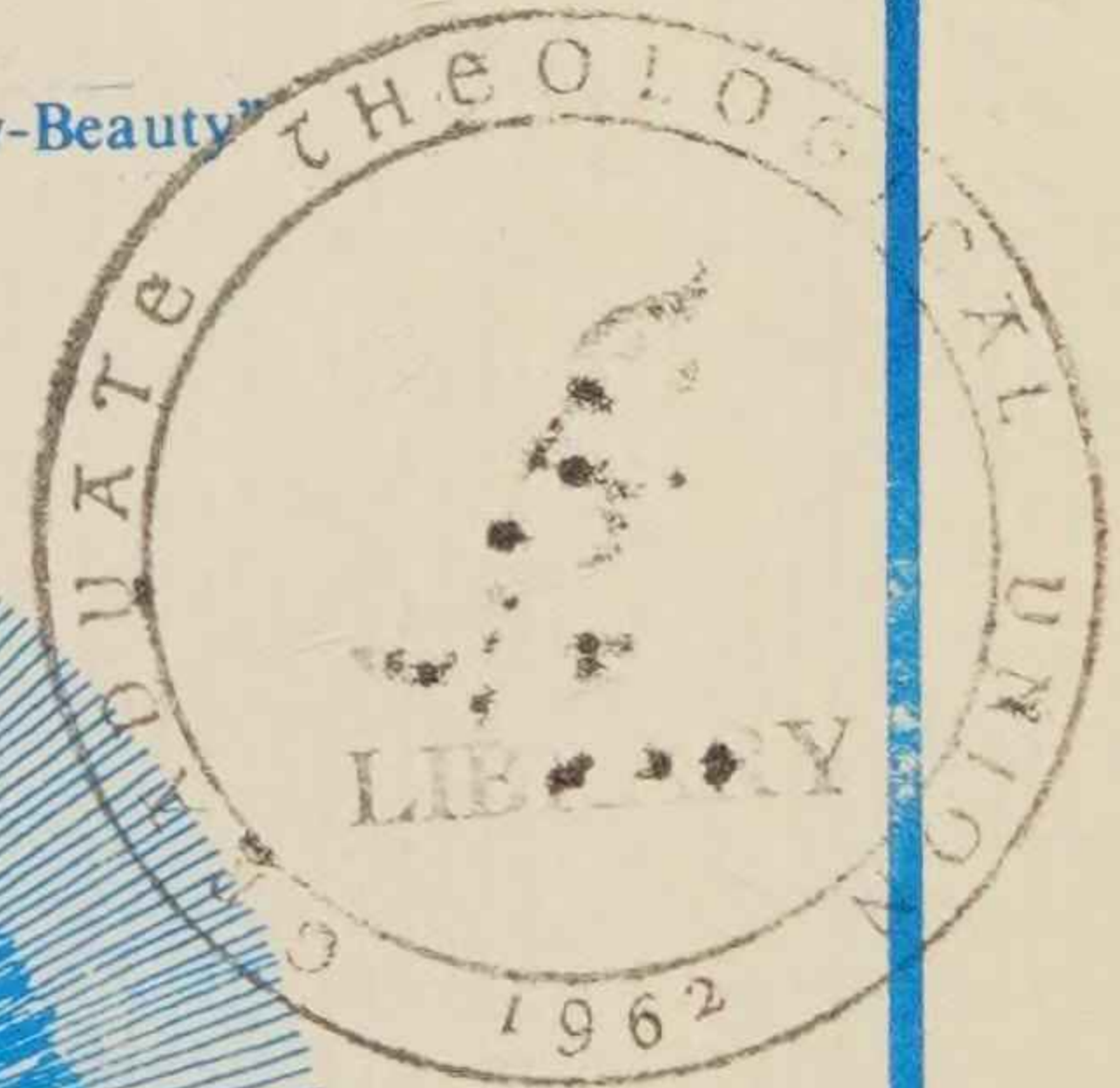
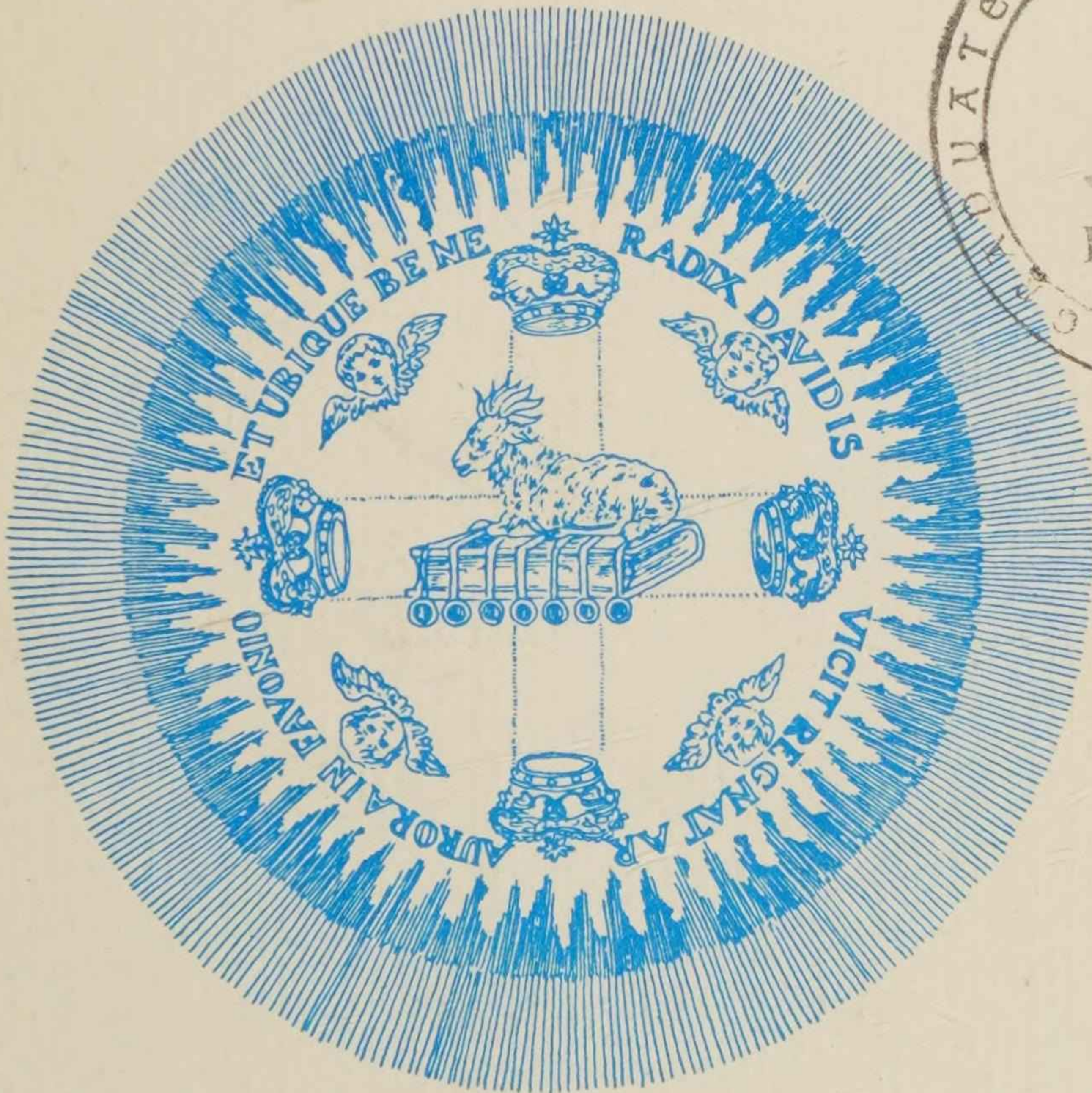
A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ESQTERICA, GNOSIS, CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND PHILOSOPHY

Tree of Life as Image of God

Ministry of Women in the Early Church

Wandering Bishops (Part I)

Leaves of Healing from the Tree of Life: "Splendor-Victory-Beauty"



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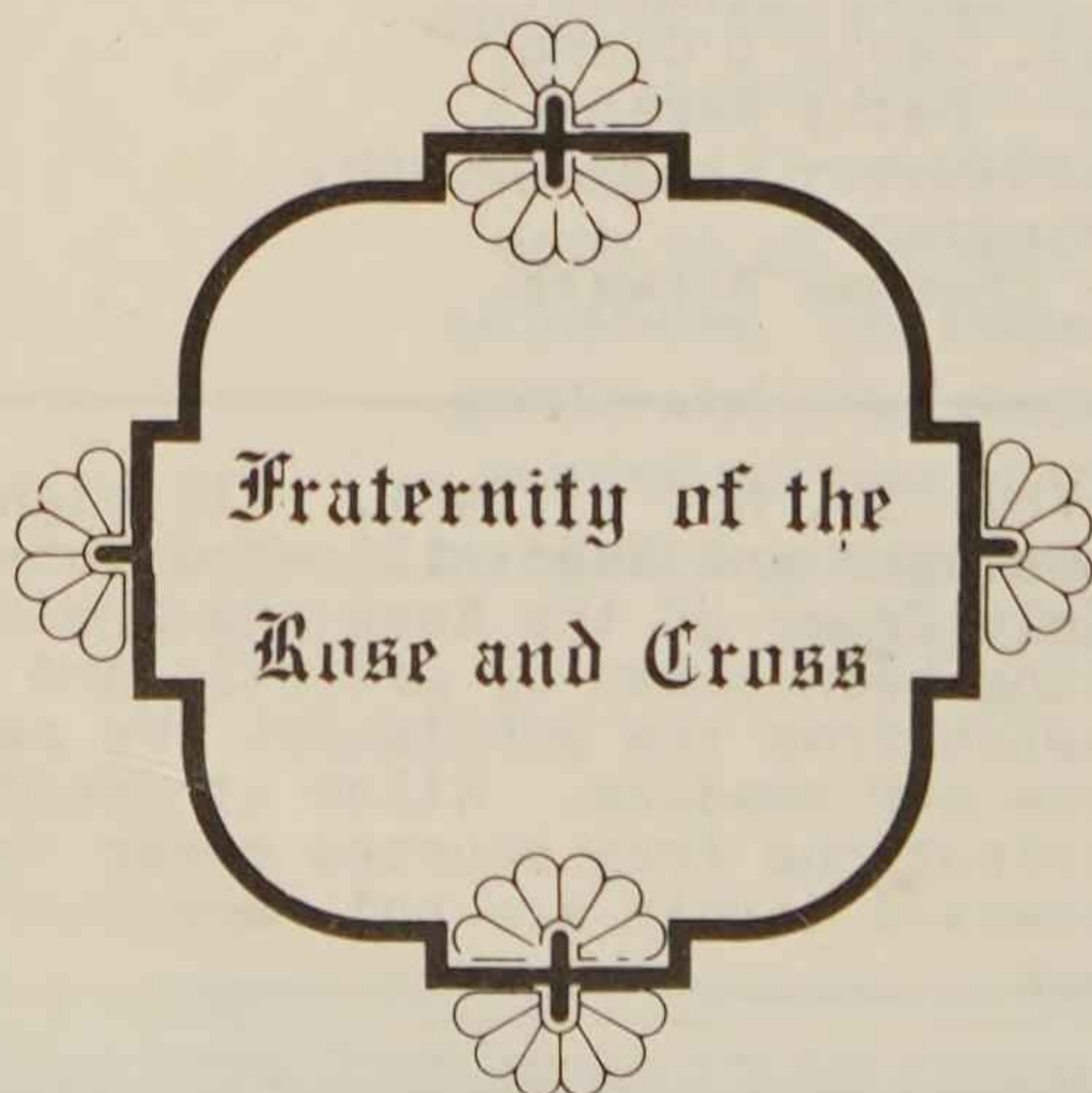
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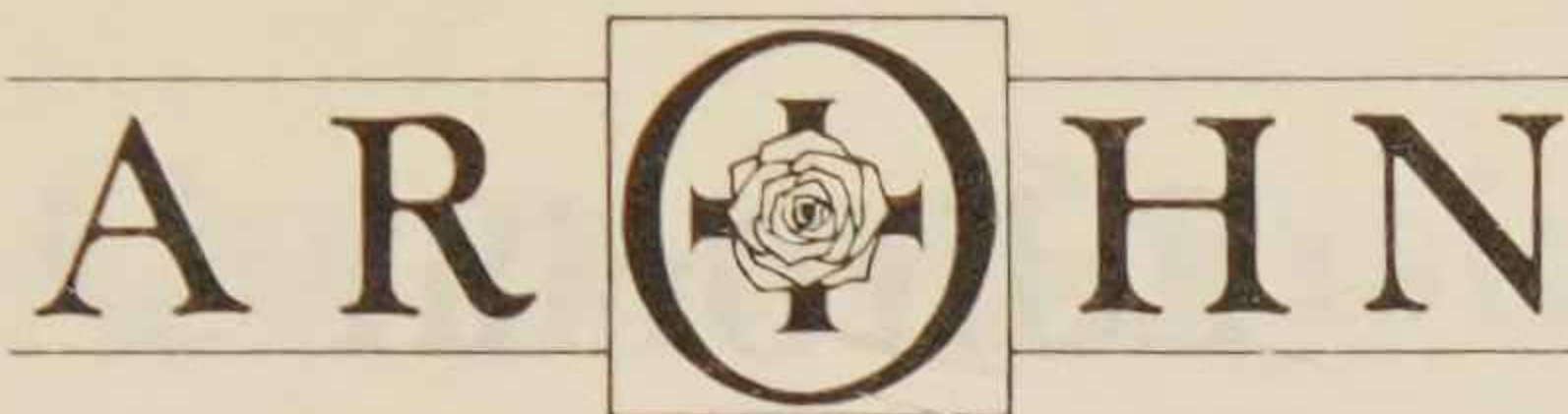
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Editorial

To feel a natural warmth and affection for all our brothers and sisters as Children of God is to be drawn within the encircling love of the Divine Family. Within this Divine Family we encounter the Father, the Son, the Heavenly Spouse of Our Lady Mary (the World Mother), and the Holy Spirit. It is our Mother Mary that unites us to the Heavenly Family through her son, Christ Jesus, and at the same time unites us to the Earthly family, for her flesh is our flesh. Within this earthly family we find her earthly spouse, St. Joseph, who acts as a model and guide for all of us and is simultaneously a patron of the Universal Church.

The Scriptures speak of this bond of universal brotherhood and assures us that we are all the sons and daughters of God. They also inform us that God can assist us in every circumstance, and that what is often needed is a fuller understanding of God to reach to the core or center of every discord with a Divine Healing solution.

To many Christians the divisions and sects within Christendom are a scandal to the Christian faith itself. Certainly the discord and hatred that sometimes manifests itself within God's family, the Church is in need of a healing solution for it is truly a spiritual sickness. But difference of opinion, honest differences need not result in hatred. Such differences have existed within the Church even before Christ's Ascension, and certainly within the New Testament period as recorded in the Book of Acts.

With the recent addition of the Directory to the AROHN, it is sincerely hoped that a first step toward expressing the closeness of God's family among Independent Catholics has been found without the need of compromise on the part of sincere Christians who disagree with each other in a number

in a manner that brings about happy relationships, and an honest affection of all humankind, and a deeper love for God.

There are, of course, areas of agreement among Independent Catholics, i.e., the Mass or Holy Eucharist, the Apostolic Succession, and so on, but there are areas of disagreement as well and we need not go into them since most are quite well known. Some of the Independent Catholic Churches listed in the Directory do not endorse esoteric concepts, or agree with much that is printed in the AROHN (this is basically an assumption since we have not had any adverse statements from any of the Churches, Missions, or Organizations listed which, I might add, speaks quite well of those listed since there are bound to be strong differences of opinion!) but then again neither the Managing Editor or the Editor-in-Chief agree with everything published in the AROHN! After all, the AROHN is a forum and must by its very nature grant and allow for such divergence of opinion if it is to remain a true forum. If our beliefs are true then they can withstand examination and comparison with other beliefs, so we need not fear. More important, we may gain a perspective of what the "other" believes and why.

The area of the AROHN is clear. . . . Gnosis, esoterica, Christian mysticism and philosophy. Whatever comes under the heading can be considered AROHN domain and suitable for our consideration. And perhaps such consideration on our part can help us apply the advice of the Prophet, "Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, saith Yahweh. (Zechariah 8:17)

Yours in the Great Work,
+ Bn. Edward Sullivan

A Quote to Consider



The Message of Heede¹

"Men did not listen to My Most Holy Mother when She appeared to them at Fatima and admonished them to do penance. Now I Myself am coming at the Last hour to warn and admonish mankind! "I will come with My peace. With a few faithful, I will build My Kingdom. As a flash of lightning this Kingdom will come . . . much faster than mankind will realize. I will give them a special light. For some this light will be a blessing; for others, darkness. The Light will come like the Star that showed the way to the wise men. Mankind will experience My love and My power. I will show them My justice and My mercy. "My dearly beloved children, the hour comes closer and closer. Pray without ceasing!"

¹(On Nov. 1, 1937, the Lord Christ appeared to Greta Gansforth, a child who lived at Heede, a small town in northern Germany).

The Ministry of Women in the Early Church

by Dorothy Irvin

There are basically two types of sources for the study of the ordination of women in the early church. The first, most commonly used, is written material - texts. The second is archaeological material, such as inscriptions, frescoes, and mosaics. Each type of material has advantages and disadvantages. Texts, being more verbose, appear to give us more information than pictures and short tombstone or votive inscriptions. But the latter do have one significant advantage over the manuscripts, and that is that they reflect the actual practice of the early Christian community. Unlike the Talmud, the New Testament, or the writings of the early Christian theologians, they do not contain instruction, they are not arguments for or against, they contain no ideology, do not justify or condemn any particular practice, do not give reasons, or call on God to insure conformity. They simply tell what was being done. A further value is that they are not subject to alteration in the course of being handed on (as are the texts).¹ It is the witness of these sources which will be examined here.

Inscriptions attesting to the titles of women as leaders in church or synagogue begin in the last pre-Christian centuries. Whether the inscriptions originate in a Jewish or Christian community is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to decide as the transition was not in itself abrupt, or hostile. The term "synagogue" in this period can refer equally well to a Jewish or Christian gathering; it is not subject to later distinctions.

It is generally acknowledged that women did not have the same access to study and to synagogue leadership as did men. Synagogue leaders were known by the titles in Greek of *presbyteros*, *pater synagoges*, or *archisynagosos*. A number of inscrip-

tions from East to West refer to women who bore these titles.

ARCHISYNAGOGOS

A tomb inscription in Smyrna, dating from the third century or later, tells us who built a certain tomb and who may be buried there. "Rufina, the Jewish woman, *archisynagogos*, built this tomb for her freed slaves and the slaves raised in her household. No one else may bury there. . . ." The inscription goes on to tell what the fine is for any unauthorized person who buries there, and to say that a copy of this inscription has been deposited in the public records office.²

A stele from the sixth century was found at Myndos in the Aegean, in the excavated ruins of a building which started out as a synagogue and later became a church. The inscription had been set up, just like plaques in churches today, to record the names of those who contributed to the construction or expansion or repair of the building. The Myndos stele attests the donation of "Theopempta, *archisynagogos*, and her son Eusebius." The name Theopempta is a woman's name, and the pronoun "her" likewise shows that it is a woman who bears here the title of "leader of the synagogue."³

Historians commenting on finding the titles of synagogue leader or *presbytera* given to women explain that the title cannot really refer to the women whose name it appears with, since women were not permitted to occupy such positions of leadership.⁴ Such a circular argument would be inadmissible in discussions of other questions, but seems to have been generally accepted here. This is an important argument to consider, since it will reappear when the specifically Christian title of bishop is seen to be applied to women.



The main point in favor of this contention is that Roman women did sometimes take the title of their husbands' civic office. The title, however, was not merely honorary, since their power to make decisions and use his seal during his absence or other emergency was acknowledged.

Against this explanation as the only possible meaning for the inscriptions described above the following points are important:

1) Since these inscriptions date from a period before the use of family surnames as we know them today, men mentioned in the inscriptions are identified as "son of" and women by, in addition to a first name, the name of a male relative, for example "daughter of," "wife of," or sometimes "mother of." It is not a matter of indiffer-



ence which it is. An unmarried woman is identified as "daughter of." A married woman, for a number of economic and social reasons, belongs nearly always to the household of her husband rather than father, and her "surname" is given as "wife of." A widow is no longer "wife of." She may be identified as "mother of" or may have some other descriptive phrase after her first name to set her apart from others having the same first name. Glancing back quickly at the inscriptions listed above, we see that the form of the women's names is not the form of the "surname" for a married women; on the contrary, the form of the name is such that we can see that they do not have a living husband. This is supported by another bit of internal evidence, as follows.

2) A woman, in the Graeco-Roman world, would not ordinarily have had, at her own disposal, the means to make a donation to the expansion of a synagogue, or to build a tomb for her slaves. She would not have owned slaves. Women ordinarily did not inherit, as family property was passed on from father to son. This does not mean that women could not inherit, only that they ordinarily did not. A man could, in his will, leave money and property to his wife or daughter, if he wished, and in such a case, a woman did have at her own disposal property to administer or donate to their synagogue.⁵ In an inscription from Phocaea in Ionia, Tation built a synagogue *ek ton idion*, "out of her own money," and the grateful community rewarded her with a crown of gold and the right of *proedria*, that is, the right of sitting up front in a place of honor during services.

Turning over a sum of money for such a large construction project as a synagogue or family tomb was a legal act of considerable financial significance, and the inscription furnishes an attestation of what was going on. In cases in which a woman had her own money to administer, she was acting as a legal person when she turned it over to another proprietor (such as the synagogue), or when she built with it. Any title attached to her name in such a context is her title because it serves to identify her as the one who is performing a legal act. This is why a copy of Rufina's tomb inscription has been

put on record in the public archives. Rufina the *archisynagogos* is the one who is authorized to bury in the tomb.

We will see further examples of how this legal principle operated in early Christian inscriptions. Let us also keep in mind that religious leadership for women is sometimes connected with their financial support of a religious community, as in the case of the *archisynagogos* Theopempta and her contribution to her synagogue, Tation with her right of *proedria*, or the women owners and donors of the early Christian house churches.

PATER SYNAGOGES:

Veturia Paucla, according to her Roman tombstone, died at the age of 86 and a half. She had been a proselyte for 16 years, continues the inscription, and under the name of Sara was the "mater" of two synagogues, that of *Campus* (Field of Mars) and that of *Volumnius*.⁶

PRESBYTERA

Two Greek-language tombstones cited by Frey run as follows: "The tomb of Veronica (or approximately that name) the presbyter (feminine genitive) and daughter of Joses."⁷ "The tomb of Faustina the presbyter (feminine genitive). Shalom."⁸

The foregoing are among the clearest of the inscriptions attesting to women as bearing these titles in Judaism, Jewish Christianity, or early Christianity. There are other examples, less explicit and sometimes much more interesting.

Before going on to other materials, a final question might be asked: If these women bear their titles in their own right, how are the wives of men with such titles referred to when they (the wives) are buried? Here we must glance back at the discussion of the "surnames" commonly used for women; married women are identified by the name of the husband, the *sumbios* of, the *aune* of, the *coniux* of. An example of a husband with title is the Jaffa tomb inscription of "Rebecca, wife of Rufinus, the messenger." Here the title is attached to the name of the husband, not given to the wife as an "honorary" title. This is very

clear in the original Greek because "messenger" is in the masculine genitive, and agrees with Rufinus.⁹

These epigraphical traditions in the Mediterranean world remain standard for centuries. A late example is the easily seen mosaic of "Theodora Episcopa" above the east doorway of the Zeno chapel in the Basilica of St. Praxedis in Rome. The mosaic portrays four female heads; the three on the right are the Virgin Mary between St. Pudentiana and St. Praxedis, daughters of a Roman family who endowed the first church on this site. The figure on the left, wearing the square halo, is a person whom we might not otherwise know, so she has been identified by a mosaic title. The name running down the side is "Theodora" with the last two letters broken away at some time in the past. The title across the top is *episcopa*, the grammatically feminine form of bishop. She has been honored with a square halo, showing that she was still alive at the time the mosaic was made. Although the inscription consists only of her name and title, her appearance with the two saints named above, as well as the fact that there is not much variation in the function of such synagogue and church inscriptions throughout the ancient world for many centuries, make it clear that she is shown here as one whose contributions went to repair or expand the church which had originally been founded by St. Praxedis. This is borne out in all probability by the *Liber Pontificalis*, which attributes the reconstruction of this church to Pope Paschal I, the son of Episcopa Theodora, in the ninth century.¹⁰

As in the case of the inscriptions naming a woman as *archisynagogos*, the Christian title *episcopa* has been explained as meaning "bishop's wife." The reason for this is not that we know that these early Christian women had husbands who were bishops, for there is not nearly so much supporting interpretive material attached to the brief inscriptional references, but that historians do not wish to think that women in the early church held this office. In the case of the Episcopa Theodora, this explanation is even less convincing than usual, for the coil of her habit makes it clear that she is not married.



Theodora is not the only *episcopa* known from the inscriptions. Joan Morris gives several examples, including (in case anyone should have a doubt about what sex the bishop was) the tomb inscription of an "(honorabilis femina episcopa," an "(honorabile woman bishop."¹¹

To pass from women as bearing the titles of ordained ministers to women performing the duties of ordained ministers, let us take up the question of the Eucharist, around which post-Tridentine theology has centered as being the defining feature of the priesthood.

The catacombs of Rome furnish much interesting material on this point, but only part of it will be examined here. The eucharistic frescoes of the late first and second centuries will be considered, but not the "agape" frescoes of the fourth century, as the theological place of the latter does not seem easy to ascertain; in addition they are different from the early ones, and not relevant here.

That the scenes identified as eucharistic by the discoverer, Josef Wilpert,¹² at the turn of the century, are truly eucharistic, has never, as far as I know, been in doubt. Their distinguishing feature is the seven baskets lined up to the right and to the left of the central scene. These bread baskets, reminding us of the miracle of the loaves and the fishes, are the eucharistic symbol of the early church.

And of the women in the Priscilla fresco "Fractio Panis" who recline with right hands outstretched over the eucharistic elements, no one has yet suggested that their husbands are the true celebrants.

The controversy here - and there has been very little - has centered about whether the figures represent women. In this red-background fresco, similar to those in Pompeii of the same period, it is beyond cavil that most of the figures are female. One wears a veil, and they are all characterized by up-swept hair, slender neck with sloping shoulders, and a hint of earrings. The arrangement of the hair, in fact, in comparison with datable coins depicting emperors' wives, has been an important factor in dating this fresco to the end of the first century AD, that is, to a time when the New Test-

ament had not yet been completed. This particular scene is of immense value as an extremely early testimony to the eucharist, or rather, to one type of eucharist. This piece of catacomb religious art does not show us the community *agape*, but rather another usage, the eucharistic vigil. It is depicted in the catacombs because that is where this vigil was held on the anniversary of the death of a Christian. It seems to have included passing the night in the burial place, and celebrating the eucharist there in memory of the deceased. It was a eucharist only, not a full meal, and that is why there is no other food on the table.

Wilpert named this fresco the "Fractio Panis" because it seemed clear that the figure at the left end of the elbow cushion who is shown sitting up rather than reclining like the other six people, has both hands outstretched and has been painted at the very moment of the breaking of the bread, while several others have the right hand outstretched over the eucharistic elements on the table in what should probably be understood as the significant gesture of concelebration.

This end figure, then, has been understood to be the principal celebrant, and Wilpert believed that it had a beard.¹³ This is a difficult point to be sure of, as can be imagined after reading Wilpert's description of his work in cleaning the encrusted mud and even stalactites from the surface of these ancient and fragile paintings. There is no beard there now. The arrangement of the hair seems to be the same as that of the other definitely female figures, but it is the skirt length that is determinative. Skirt length for men at this period, as can be seen by comparison with other catacomb and Pompeian frescoes, was, for a working man, knee length or slightly shorter - top of kneecap - while "white collar" length was below the knee, to the top of the calf. Women's skirts were ankle length; on a standing figure they came to within an inch or two of the ground. The skirt of the left end person can be clearly seen, in the best photographs, to cover the calf, whose outline through the cloth is indicated, and to gather in a fold around the



St. Margaret



St. Mary Magdalene



St. Dorothy



St. Catharine

ankle.¹⁴ Thus the artist intended to paint here a woman.

No figure in this scene is clearly masculine, yet most are unmistakably feminine. Do we have here a mixed group? I believe not. There are, as mentioned above, several similar eucharistic scenes from this early period. In the other scenes the participants, always seven in number, are all men. These eucharistic scenes show us that all-night cemetery vigils were held by small groups in which all the members

were of the same sex (undoubtedly the friends of the deceased of the same sex) and that they should all be of the same sex is easy to understand in view of what we know about the early Christian concern with moral standards, and particularly the seemly conduct of their religious gatherings in the eyes of unbelievers. Thus in the "Fractio Panis" fresco, all the participants, including the principal and other celebrants, must be women.

The final objection made against the use of archaeological (and textual) material which witnesses to the ordained ministry of women in the early church is that all these women must be heretical because the Montanists are known to have ordained women. This is a logical fallacy. But aside from that, I have not been able to find archaeological material that shows evidence of stemming from heretical groups, although of course those of us who many centuries later study this question are in the superior position of knowing which groups were heretical - something that contemporaries could not always be quite so sure of. Still, on the question of the ordination of women, it has not been suggested that *Episcopa Theodora*, mother of Pope Paschal I in the ninth century, was a heretic of any sort, and the "Fractio Panis" fresco is quite orthodox, that catacomb still being a place of pilgrimage today. For the inscriptions, one would have to decide, on other grounds, on the orthodoxy of each one individually; I think it unlikely that every one, or even a substantial proportion of them, could be discounted on that basis.

This paper has not handled the sources usually appealed to in discussing the question of the ministry of women in the early church. There has been no reference to the activities of the women who followed Jesus, the women who announced the resurrection, to the apostle Junia in Romans 16:7¹⁵ or to the women mentioned in Acts and the

epistles as having worked so hard to spread Christianity. There has been no mention of deaconesses in East or West. Of the archaeological material available and relevant to the question, only a fraction has been presented. There has also been no reference here to the patristic texts commonly reviewed in this discussion,¹⁰ or to the canons of early Councils which, taken in conjunction with the archaeological material, shed much light on the ordained ministry of women in the early church.

For later periods, the findings of J. Schäfer concerning the canonesses, women clerics attached to European cathedrals in the middle ages, have not been utilized here or elsewhere. Other important information for the middle ages is given by J. Morris in her careful study of the manuscripts and other material relating to abbesses and to Pope Joan. I. Raming's thorough work on the history of canon law prohibition of the ordination of women, like the two previous works, helps to document women's gradual exclusion from ordained ministry, and like the other works, has not been accorded the attention that such careful study of original sources for this question should have.

It is to be hoped that in the continuing discussion of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate, "Tradition" will be given the weight so often claimed for it within Catholicism.

[Editor's note: This article first appeared in the Duke Divinity School Review 45:1980, and is reprinted with permission of the author and publisher.]



1. Manuscript changes which diminished women's participation in church life are noted by Raming, (in English) 9, and Morris, "Pope Joan."
2. Frey, II, no. 741. S. Reinach, "Inscription grecque de Smyrne. La juive Rufina." *Revue des etudes juives* 7, 1883, 161-166.
3. Frey, II, no. 756. T. Reinach, "La pierre de Myndos," *Revue des etudes juives* 42, 1901, 1-6.
4. For example, Frey and E. Schurer. *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*. 3 vols. Leipzig, 1901. Reprinted Hildesheim, New York: George Olms Verlag, 1970. II, 511-12. III, 88. Followed by L. Swidler, *Women in Judaism: The Status of Women in Formative Judaism*, Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1976. 92-93
5. Frey II, no. 740. Also nos. 762 and 763, ek tes idias proichos, "out of her own dowry." No. 766, ek ton idion kai ton sunkatathemenon chremasin, "out of their own means and out of the contributions." Lk 8:3 ek ton huparchonton autais, "out of their (f.) own means."
6. Frey I, no. 523. Apparently a variant of this title is no. 606, "alexan(d)ra pateressa."
7. Frey I, no. 581.
8. Frey I, no. 597.
9. Frey II, no. 949.
10. Guidebook to the Basilica of St. Praxed's. If we ask why Pope Paschal I picked this church to restore, it seems to make good sense for him to help his mother restore the church where she was bishop, St. Praxedis being a titular church.
11. Morris, 6-7.
12. Wilpert, Plates, Part 1, pl. 15, 1,2. 41, 1.
13. Although I have compared as many photographs as I can find, both early and recent, black-and-white and colored, I cannot see a beard. On the contrary, the chin area, if anything, is lighter in color than its surroundings, as if it had been scraped. Joan Morris, who has seen the original, describes the head as having the appearance of having been "sandpapered down."
14. I have experimented to see whether a skirt of below-the-knee or top-of-calf length falls in a fold around the ankles when the person sits down. Of course not. Joan Morris said (p. 8) on the basis of skirt length that this person was a woman.
15. Brooten, "Junia."
16. A recent survey is the not very careful one of R. Gryson, *Le ministere des femmes dans l'ancien eglise*. Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1972. In English, *The Ministry of Women in the Early Church*, Washington: Liturgical Press, 1976.

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The Tree of Life as Image of God

by Gareth Knight



The Tree of Life (Figure 1) is the ground plan upon which a great deal of occult knowledge is based. Knowledge not only of the world about us but of the inner worlds. The world that we see with our physical senses is simply an outer shell of a very complex series of inner dynamics, and occultists have made a point of making a study of these psychic forms and forces.

However, when the Tree of Life of the Qabalah was first conceived it had little to do with many of these ideas. There are different approaches to the Tree but broadly speaking we find that most Qabalistic textbooks say that up in Kether is God, and down in Malkuth is the physical world, and all between are the inner worlds between God and the earth.

Well that is fair enough. That is a way of looking at it, and a valid way of looking at it. But it was not the way the Jews conceived it. It was not the way either, that as late as the 17th century occultists such as Robert Fludd conceived it. In fact the modern conception is a relatively recent one.

It is worth considering a remark of Professor Gerhart Scholem, who is perhaps the world's leading authority on mysticism and the Qabalah, who in the first chapter of his book on trends in Jewish Mysticism dismisses modern occult exegesis of the Tree of Life as "highly coloured nonsense" having nothing to do with real Jewish mysticism or the Qabalah.

There is obviously a communication gap here and the least we can do is to see what the basis is for Professor Scholem's remarks. Let us examine what it was that the original Jewish Qabalists started off with, because we can fall into some very serious errors if we do not keep this in mind.

As far as the Jewish Qabalah is concerned the Tree of Life is an image of God.

Modern occult textbooks on the Tree of Life teach that behind Kether, which is the highest spiritual point that one can conceive, are the Three Veils of what is called Negative Existence. From this state appears the first emanation of creation, coming out of nothingness in three stages, Ain, Ain Soph, Ain Soph Aur, which means nothingness, the Limitless, and Limitless Light.

This agrees broadly with the original Jewish conception but it has been rather unfortunately influenced by 18th and 19th century rationalism. To the Jewish Mystics who formulated the Qabalah it is not so much Nothingness in an abstract philosophical sense. To them before the worlds were created, before there was any creation at all, there was God. All and everywhere.

So when God decided to create worlds and creatures and so on, what could he do? He himself filled up everything, so first he had to create a vacuum. This is the Qabalistic doctrine known as the tsim-tsum, which means making a void within himself.

There are various ways in which we would visualise this. We could imagine God creating the worlds within the void of his cupped hands; or perhaps making a crystal ball which becomes the sphere within which all the worlds, space and time form. In the traditional Tree of Life symbolism the void he makes is symbolised by the Three Veils - Nothingness, the Limitless, and Limitless Light. The Three Veils, should thus go all the way round the Tree of Life.

God then makes himself present within this Void and manifests himself in ten different ways. These ten different ways are described in the attributions of the Spheres of the Tree of Life as the God Names and titles, that signify Wisdom, Understanding, Mercy, Justice, Beauty, Victory, Splendour, Glory, the Foundation, and last of all, in Malkuth, the Shekinah.

The modern Qabalist talks of Malkuth, the lowest Sephirah, as the physical world, but it is not so to the Jewish Qabalist. To the Jewish Qabalist it is the Shekinah, or Presence of God, and if you read the Old Testament you will see references to this. It is the presence of God over the tribes of Israel which guides them and appears to them as smoke or vapour coming out of the tabernacle, or as a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night which guides them. The Presence of God to his chosen is Malkuth.

It also follows that if the Tree of Life represents God, all the Sephiroth or spheres are equal, and this perhaps is better seen in alternative diagrammatic representation. We are all used to seeing the Tree of Life spread out in

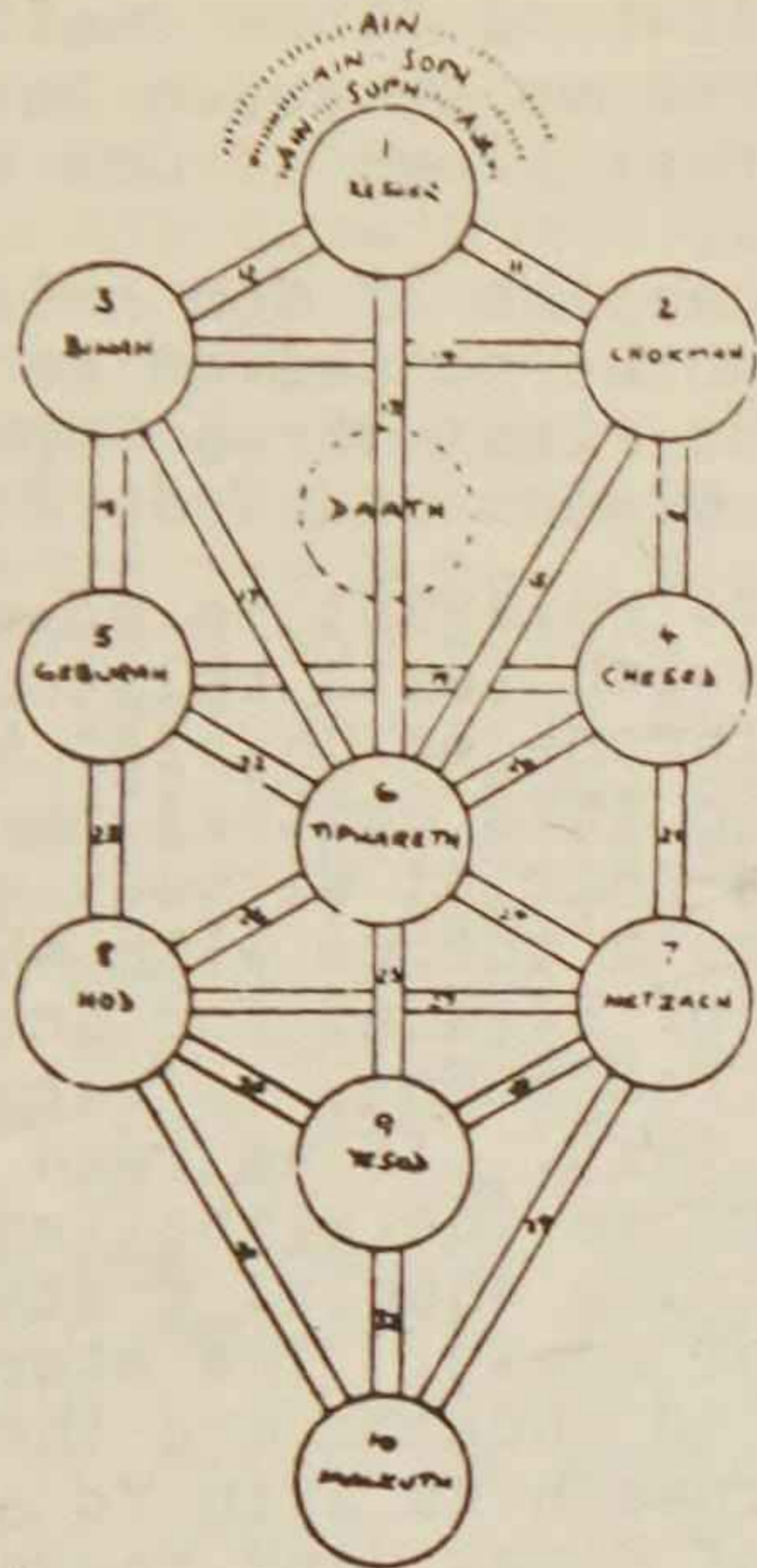


Figure 1 THE TREE OF LIFE
The Ten Sefirot and the Twenty Two Paths

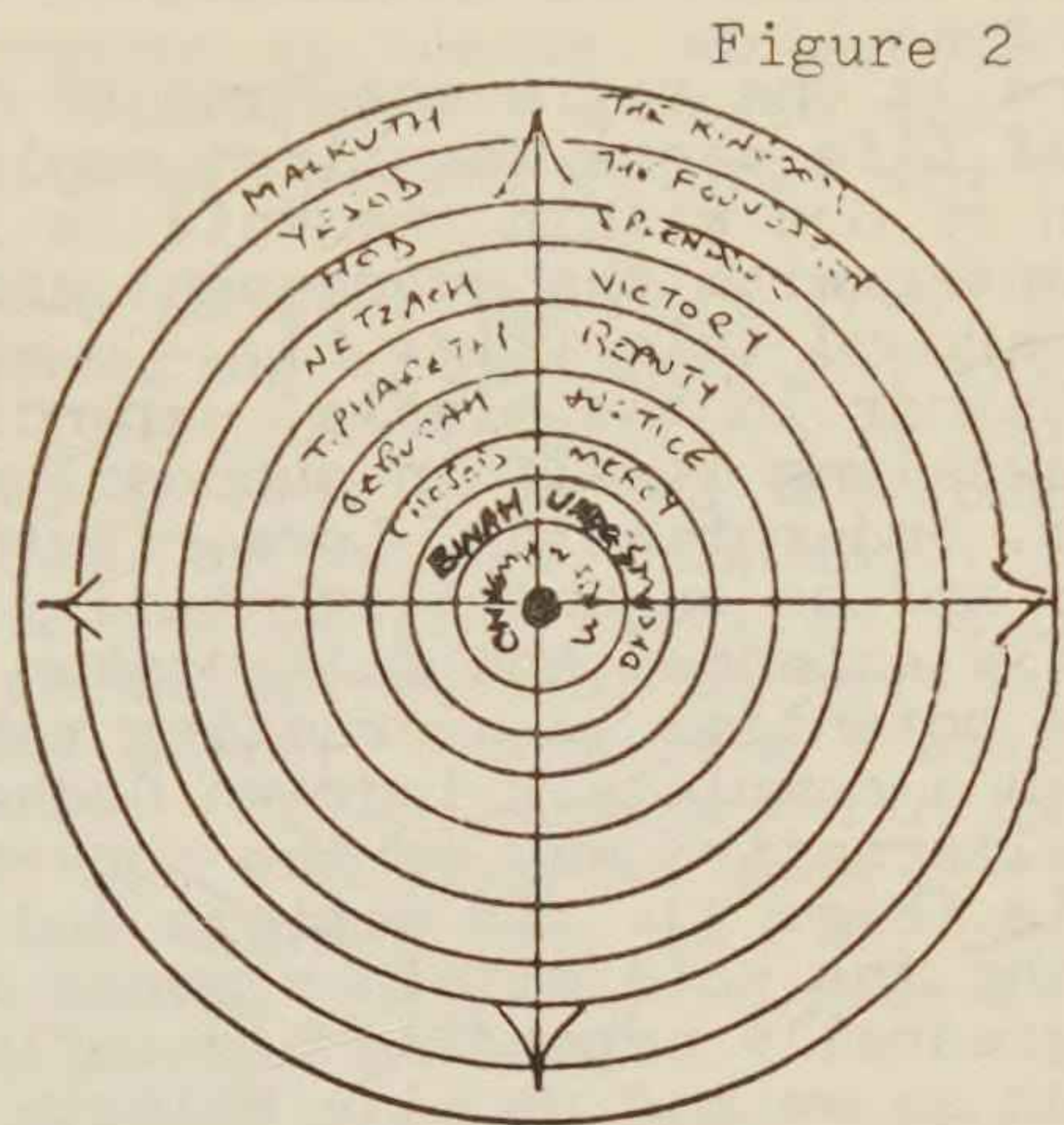


Figure 2

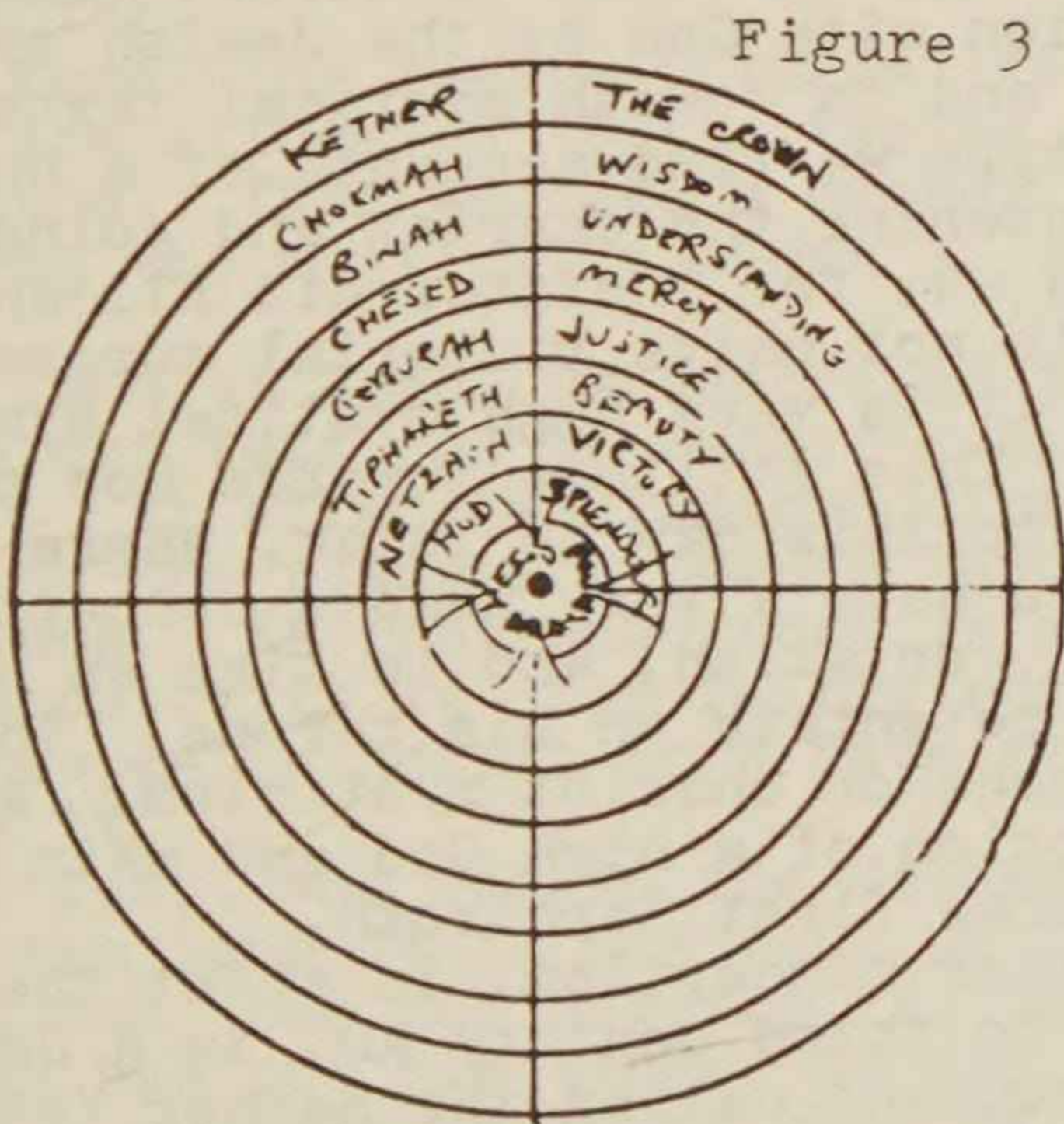


Figure 3

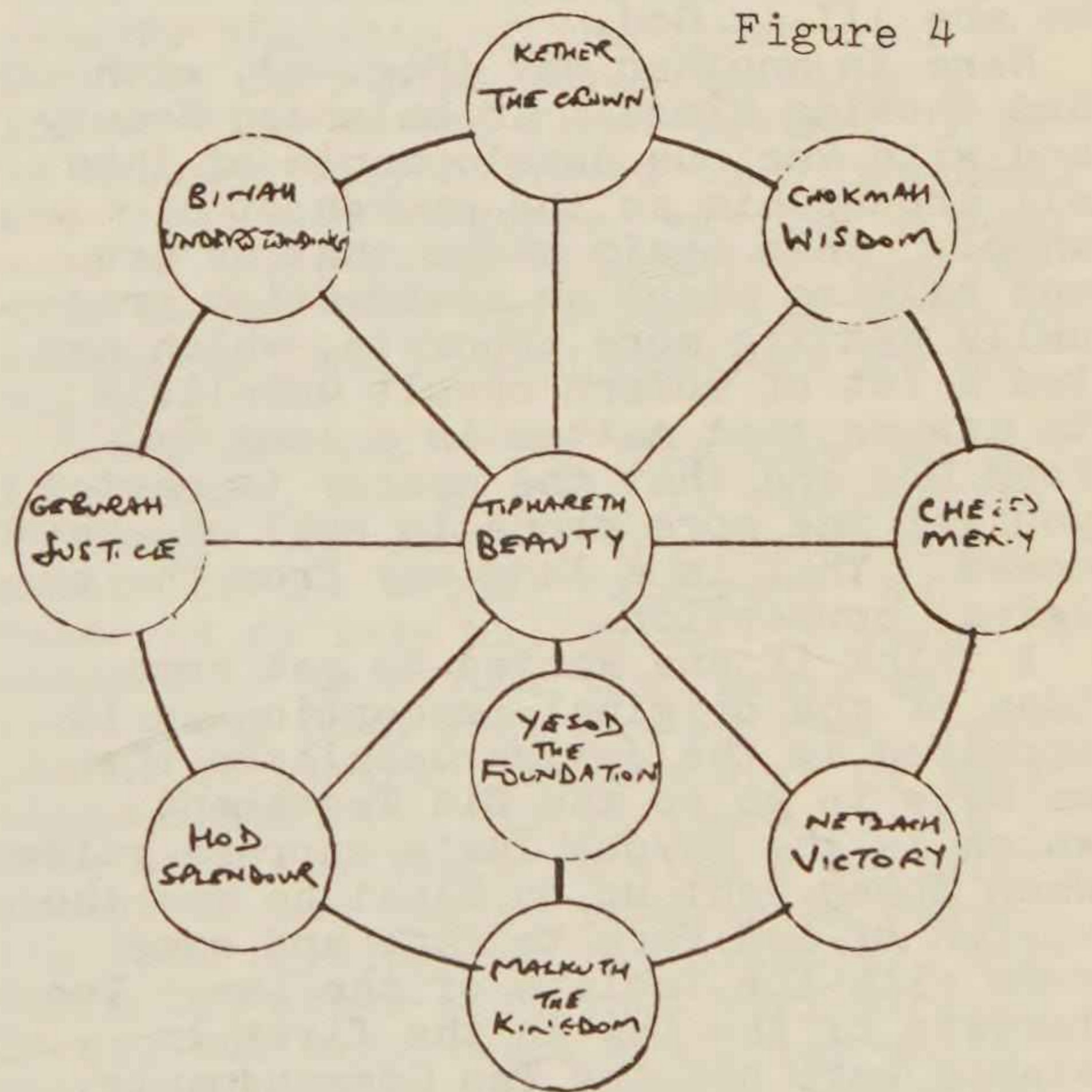


Figure 4

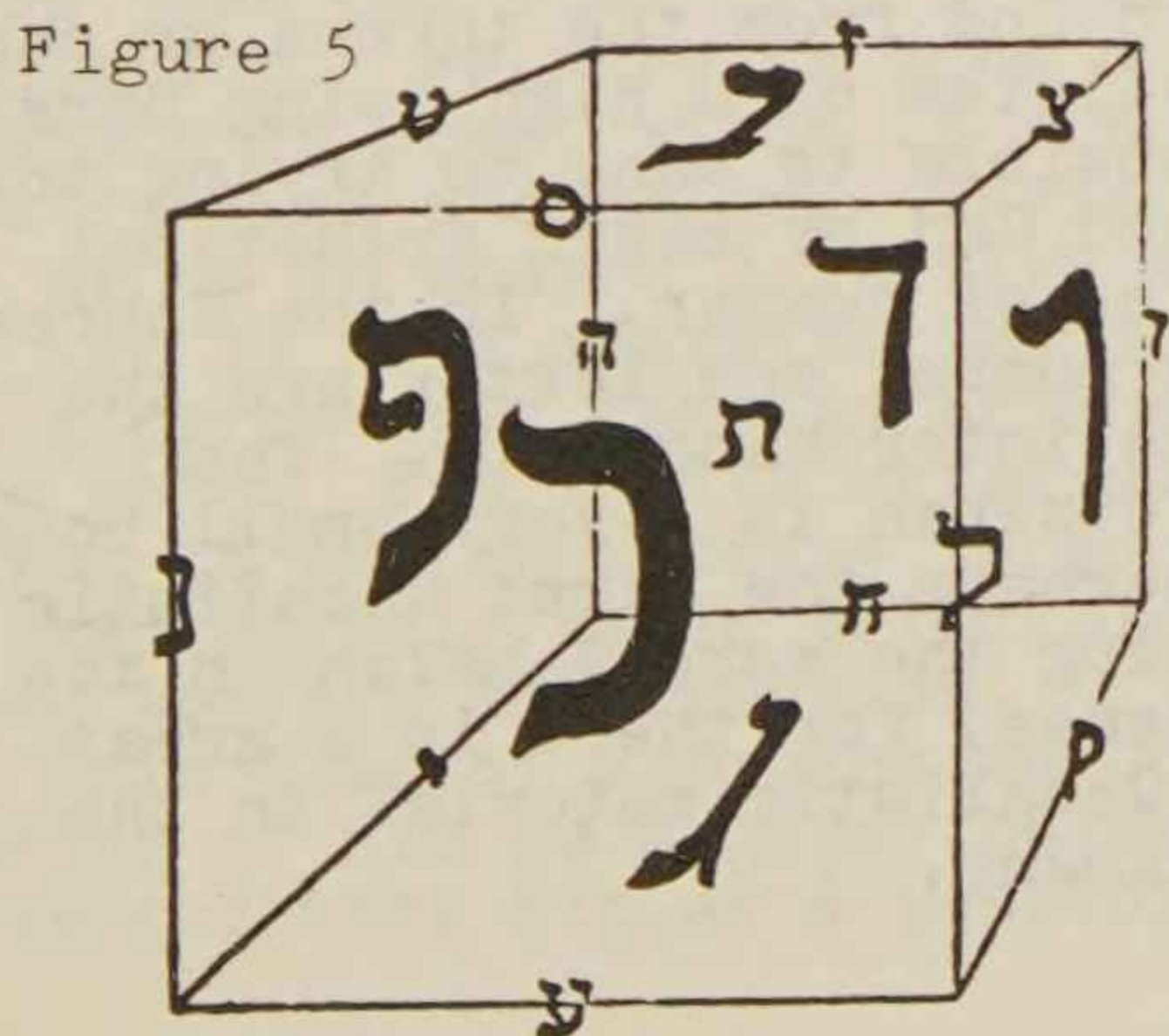


Figure 5

triadic form but there are other ways of looking at it.

There is one representation of the Tree of Life where the first manifestation of God within the Void is in the center with the subsequent emanations around this (Fig. 2). So we have Kether in the middle, expanding and revealing itself in succession as Wisdom, Understanding, Love, Justice, Beauty and so on until eventually God is fully expanded and fully taken up in his potential as a creating rather than as a completely indrawn Godhead.

An alternative way is the converse of this (Fig. 3). It depicts God creating the void within himself and then gradually expanding his influence inwards so we end up with Malkuth in the center. This emphasizes that, as part of his creation, we are completely surrounded by the Shekinah, or Presence of God, then God as Foundation, Splendour, Victory, Beauty and so on. We are all in God.

Here is another way (Fig. 4), with God showing himself in balanced Beauty and with various developments of this all around him as the spokes of a wheel. This again shows that we are not talking about an abstraction gradually getting more concrete, which has led a lot of modern occult Qabalists to assume that matter is a long way from God and that the nearer to matter you get the more prone to evil one becomes. That is a long way from the original conception.

I think if one wanted to get some idea of the original conception as it appeared to the Jewish Qabalists then we have to go to the Old Testament, which is the devout Jew's supreme guide. When Moses went up on Sinai he saw the vision of God face to face and came down with the Tablets of the Law. The Tablets of the Law in the first instance were not the Ten Commandments. When Moses came down from the mountain he saw his people reverting to their old Egyptian worship of the golden calf. In horror he dropped the tablets and they broke. The Ten Commandments, the "thou shalt nots" is a system of morality which replaced the original law of creation. It is a system made necessary by the Fall or Primal Sin of man, which the Jews were acting out again in spite of themselves. The original vision of Moses and the Law

was not a list of "Thou shalt nots". It was summed up by Jesus later as a two-fold love: love of God and love of fellow men.

This conception of God's law for his creation can be conceived as the sum total of the first three Sephiroth, of the Crown, Wisdom and Understanding.

It is also relevant to some early esoteric Jewish texts related to what is called Throne or Chariot Mysticism. (A throne in this context may be conceived as a chariot without wheels; or a chariot as a throne with wheels). The Vision of Ezekiel for instance, in the Old Testament, is very much a Qabalistic text. If we read through it we recognise the symbolism of pillars, revolving wheels, a starry canopy, a sea of coals. The starry canopy is similar to Chokmah and the sea of coals underneath is akin to Ashim, the Souls of Fire. And there is a great figure riding in this mighty symbolic chariot.

This was one view of direct communication with God by the Jewish mystics, and in Jewish mystical texts of this type we find accounts of a holy man entering the chariot and going up to God as, for instance did Elijah. This is not naive pictorial superstition, it is very high mystical symbolism. This attitude towards God pertains to this day in Islam, where they tend to have a very remote conception of God, or Allah, who is like an oriental potentate on his throne. That is throne or chariot mysticism. A conception of a high God and akin to the three first Sephiroth.

A later conception, in about the first to third century AD, is a Jewish document called the Sepher Yetzirah, or Book of Formations. This, as it were, moves us down in our approach to God from the throne or chariot mysticism of a high being barely comprehensible to man, to trying to understand God by basic archetypal principles of number. In the Hebrew language number and letter are the same, are interchangeable. The Sepher Yetzirah is a very small book and is perhaps the first Qabalistic text, using the word Qabalah in the narrow sense, for there is a great deal of Qabalistic material in the Old Testament.

It describes the Cube of Space, which is simply a cube on which are the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, (which are also numbers), split up into three main divisions (Fig. 5). First are the three "mother" letters, which are outside the system. These are Shin, which is the highest spirit, which is above the Cube; Mem, Water, which represents the waters of creation or the possibilities of creation below the Cube; the Aleph, which surrounds the Cube. Aleph is traditionally the Element of Air and is a consonant that has no sound. (It is rather like the tiny pause represented by the hyphen in a word like 're-open'.) In relation to the Cube of Space it is the space where creation can happen, where God can manifest, midway between the principle of Archetypal spirit, (Shin) and principle of archetypal water or matter (Mem).

Then there are seven "double" letters and each one belongs symbolically to one of the six faces of the cube and its center.

The remaining twelve "single" letters, are allocated to the twelve edges to a cube. Thus we have a symbol based on the mystical numbers 3, 7 and 12.

The Cube of Space is described in the Sepher Yetzirah in rather a bald manner. It allocates various directions to the planetary powers through this Cube. If published work is a valid indicator it is only fairly recently that people in occult work have started to use it.

Paul Case, who was in the Golden Dawn, mentions it in his book on the Tarot, but does not develop it. W. G. Gray has put his finger on its importance when emphasising that if one is going to investigate the inner worlds then one must have a means of orientation. We have to know which is up, which is down, which is front, which is back and so on. Therefore some of us in modern occultism at any rate use it as a starting point rather like a gyroscopic compass or inner-space ship. But in its original conception it was an attempt to show how God used certain basic principles of number to form the creation.

In this kind of approach to God, not thinking of him as a great potentate, but approaching him as a benevolent

ruler, as holder of the balance and thus creator of beauty, we get to the idea of God behind the three middle Sephiroth of Chesed, Geburah and Tiphareth.

Then we pass to the next great literary outpouring of the Qabalah, which was in 1305 when a Spanish Jew known as Moses de Leon produced the Zohar. The Zohar, or book of Splendour, is what our own Gentile Qabalism is based on, even though most of us have not read the Zohar. There is a translation available. It is perhaps worth having a crack at it if only to show how different our conception, as 20th century occult minded gentiles, is from 14th century mystical Jews.

Again, they are very much concerned with God, largely through an analysis of God's world, and what it really meant. Much of the first volume is just concerned with the first sentence in Genesis, and commences with a lengthy analysis of the first word in Genesis; Bereshith, even spending a lot of time on the first letter. This is because they believed that language, and their own language, was the actual word of God, quite literally. And for this reason they exploited all kinds of coding to find hidden meanings in the Bible.

Moses de Leon wrote this huge thing, in Aramaic, for he said it was written by Simeon ben Jochai, the traditional author of the Sepher Yetzirah. We need not go into all this. It seems reasonable to assume that Moses de Leon wrote down what was an oral tradition; it plainly has the work of many minds behind it. In it there is the Tree of Life, there is also a certain amount of low magic, (character reading from physiognomy for example), and there is, above all, this very strange to us, but very valid mysticism which can lead to some interesting insights.

Let us take the first word of the first sentence of Genesis, which is by no means so cut and dried as to meaning as the English translation might suggest. In the original Hebrew, for instance, it is difficult to sort out what is object and what is subject. It refers to God as Elohim, which is a feminine stem on a masculine plural ending. Literally one could say it means "the gods who created the world" and that they were male and female.

Figure 6

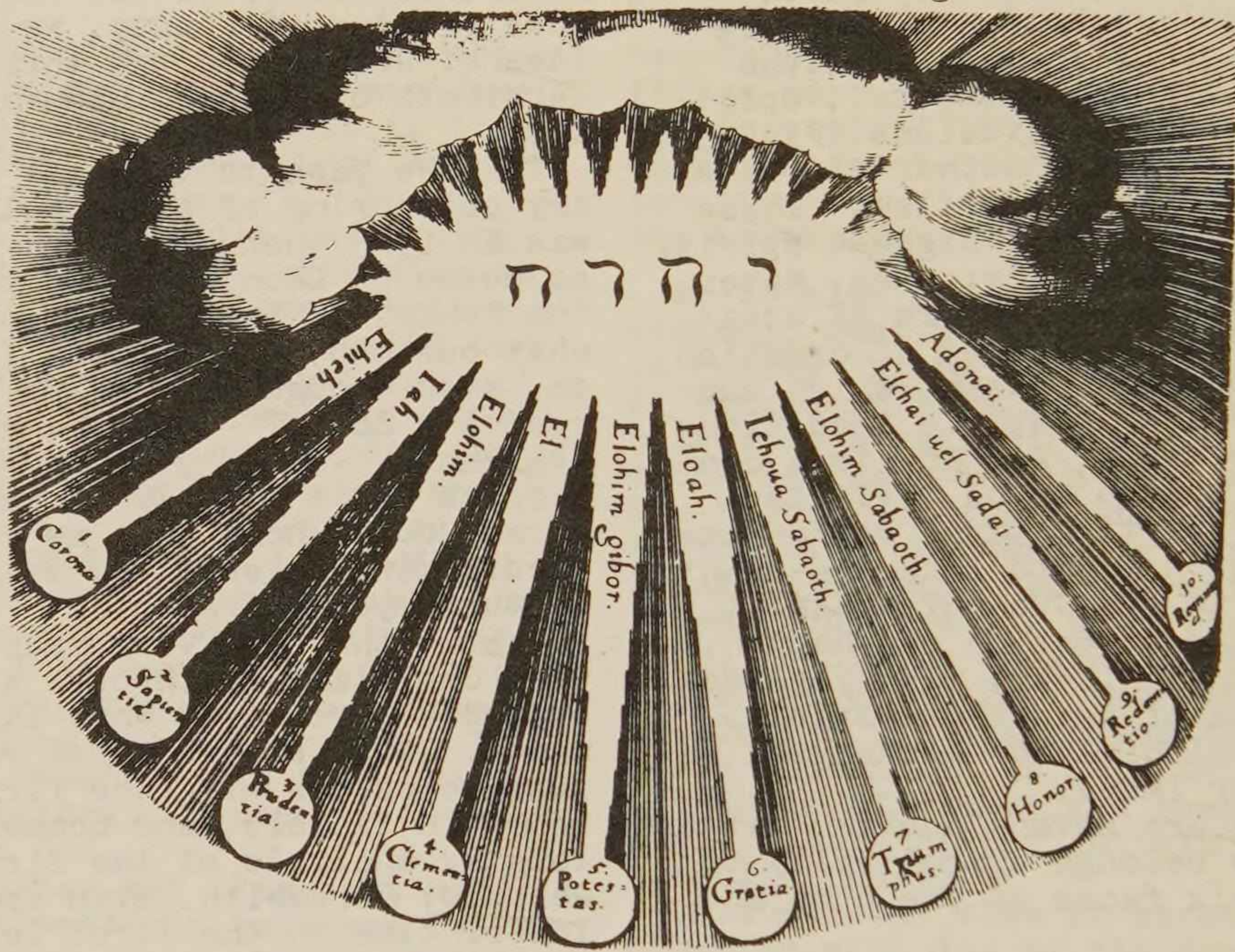
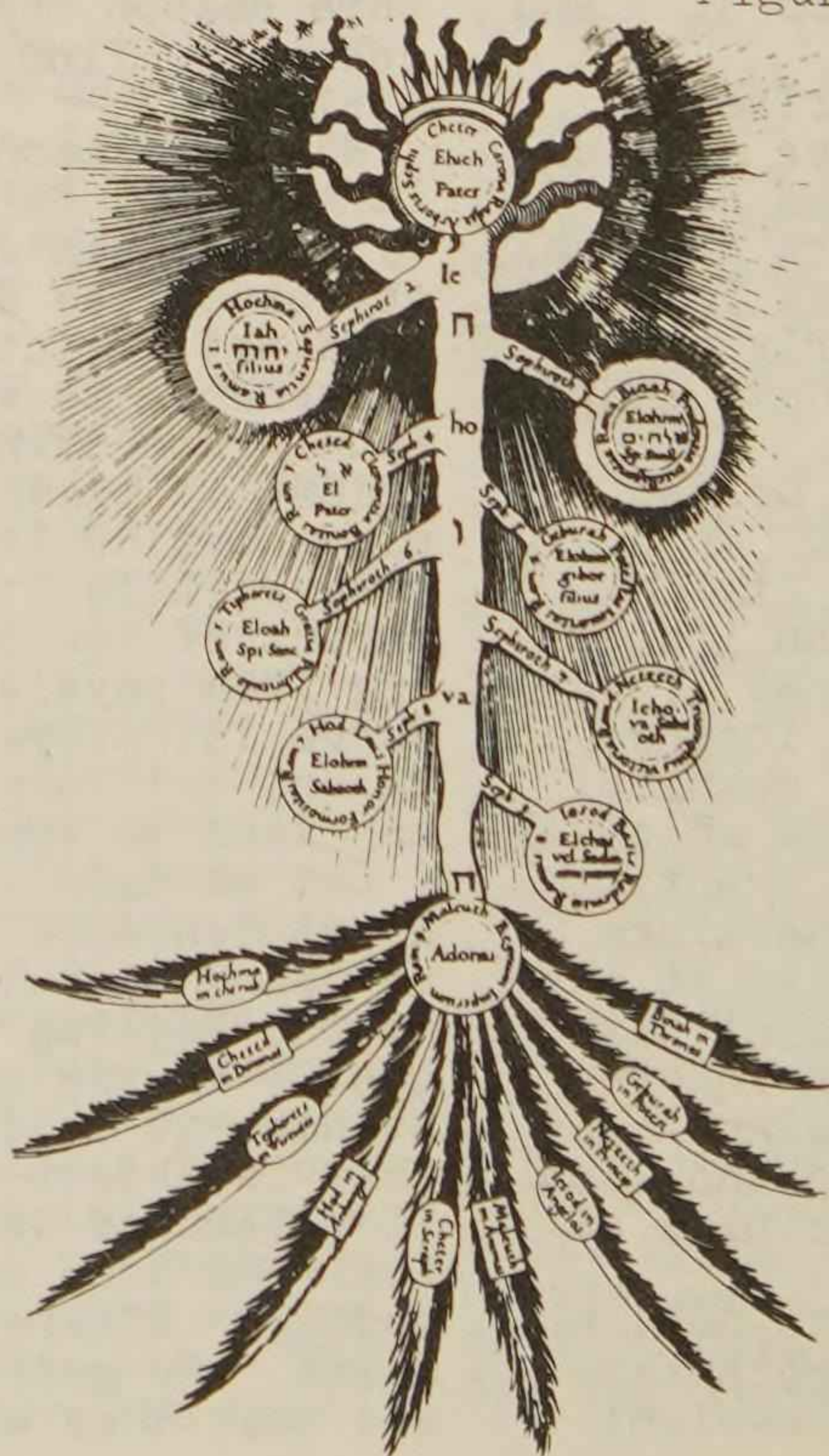


Figure 7



However that is not quite correct because the real creativity implied is that in the beginning "the un-namable" created "the gods". Now who or what are the gods that were created? If we were to coin modern terms, perhaps the archetypes of the unconscious? But that is limiting them. They could be called devas, angels, spirits.

All this kind of Qabalistic speculation is more "down to earth" than the Cube of Space. It is how God actually works through creatures of the inner worlds or of the outer worlds; how he manifests his glory; how he obtains his victory at the last trump when creation is called back again into himself. It is how he, like Atlas, holds up the whole world; how his is the foundation of the world, of the laws of science. All this pertains to the lower Sephiroth of Netzach, Hod and Yesod.

It is with Malkuth that we get more to modern times, with our gentile misinterpretation, which does, however have its own validity. It has been called highly coloured nonsense. To a Jewish mystic it might well seem highly coloured nonsense just as, to a rather blinkered modern occultist, Jewish mysticism may sound nonsense. But it is, to either party, a great loss if they cannot understand the other's point of view, because what we have in fact is God creating a universe which has an outer aspect and an inner aspect. Thus we can investigate three things. We can be scientists, material scientists, or artists or technologists, who concern ourselves entirely with the outer creation. Or we can be inner scientists, or inner artists or technologists who concern ourselves with the inside of creation. And one can do that without any reference to God at all, at any rate up to a certain point. Just as an outer scientist can be completely godless so an inner scientist can be completely godless, although experience suggests that they either see the light sooner or later, or they manifest some rather unfortunate results in their lives, usually in the form of a gross inflation of the personality. And the other thing is God. One could concern oneself with God, as a complete mystic, renouncing the world in a total concern with God.

Most of us do not go to those lengths. We live life in the world and come to terms with God as best we may, as

everyone has to. There are certain of us who are principally interested in the inner worlds and we also have to take God into account. At first we may not have to, but the more we get into the inner worlds the more important this becomes. Otherwise one may be fishing with one's little rod and line and will get a fish on the end of it that will be rather bigger than one bargained for. It might well prove to be of God. It could also be demonic.

An interesting watershed occurs in the 17th century. Let us examine a diagram Robert Fludd conceived. (Fig. 6) We see that he is concerned with Jewish Qabalah, and it is still very much to do with God. There is God, JHVH, coming out of a cloud, and there in the Sephiroth are all the ways he manifests himself - all at once. The Crown of Wisdom, Prudence, Mercy, Power, Grace, Triumph, Honour, Redemption, the Kingdom. This cloud formation is a favourite convention of his and also of the Rosicrucians. They are very fond of the phrase, "Under the shadow of thy wings, Jehovah" and this is what Fludd is showing here.

Jehovah is the most holy name of God. No Jew is allowed to pronounce that name. In fact that is how we have got the name Jehovah. Those four consonants really have no consonantal sound at all. They are aspirant consonants, as can be judged when modern scholars refer to Jehovah as Yahweh - that Ee-ah-oo-ay is rather like the Eastern words Au-uu-mm. It is a name structured out of vowels. From this perhaps we get the idea behind "the letters killeth but the spirit giveth life". The consonants are the letters and consonants are unpronounceable unless we put vowels in-between them. This is another symbolic way of showing God acting through the creation. The creation is represented by the consonants and the spirit of God by the vowels. The spirit, and the breath, were originally synonymous words.

A devout Jew reading his Bible, when he came to JHVH would say "Adonai", which means Lord. In the original Hebrew text there were just consonants. Points to indicate the vowels were added later, after a few centuries, to help people. And although JHVH remain consonants on the page, the vowel pointings used were the pointings for Adonai. The translators into English did not

Figure 8

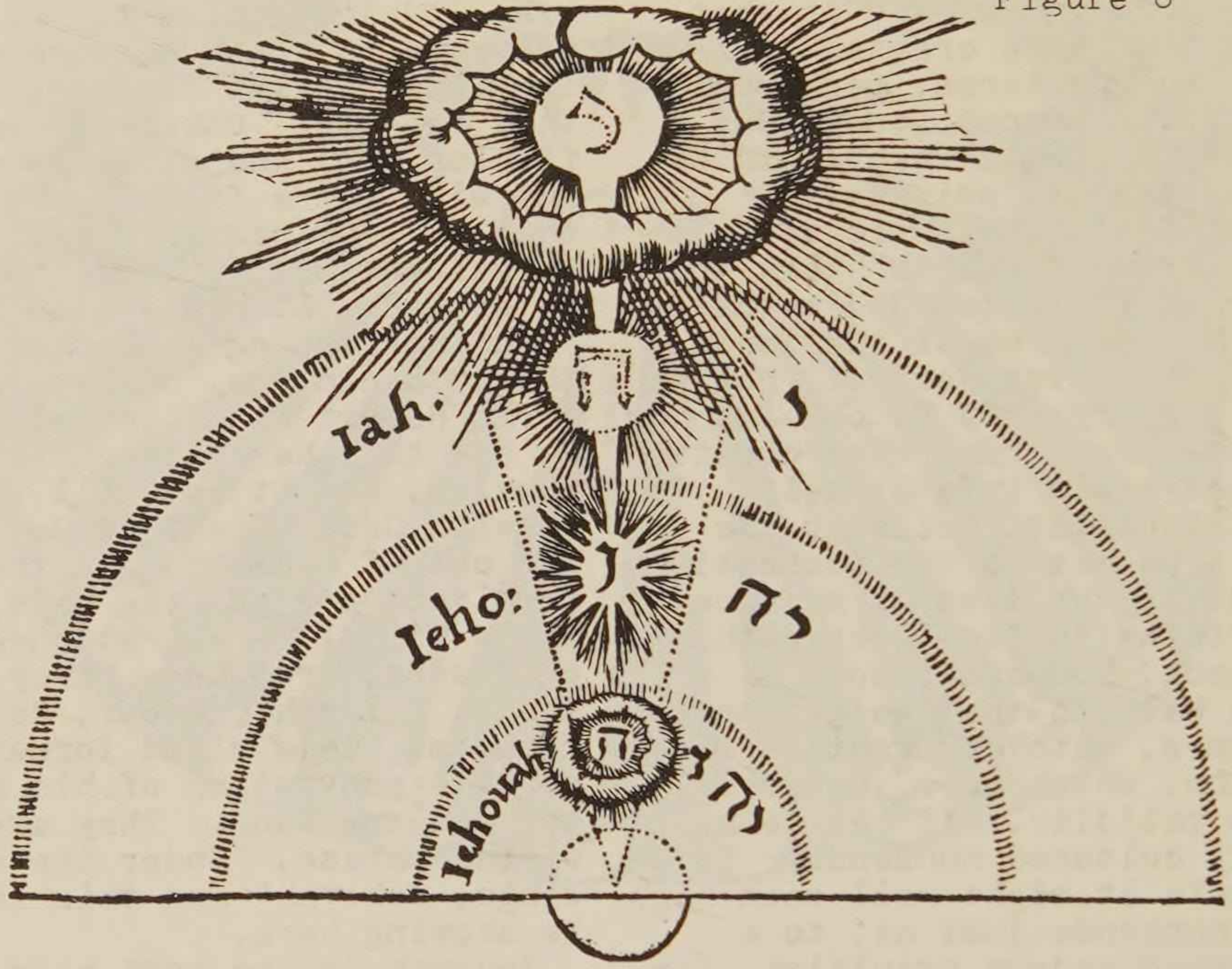
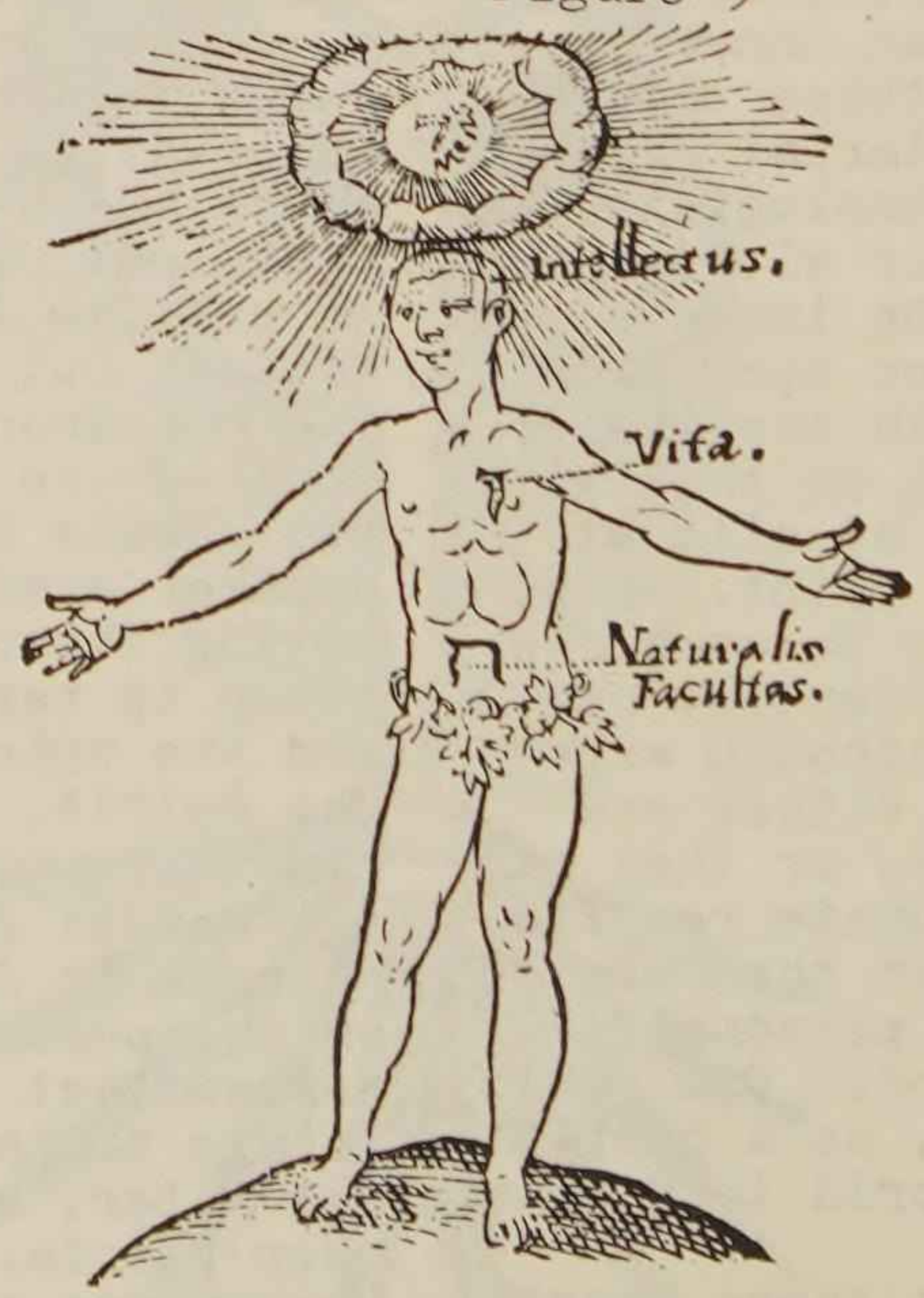


Figure 9



realize this and so they used consonants with the wrong vowel pointing, which gave them the name Jehovah.

Another version of the Tree of Life by Fludd is rather more like a tree (Fig. 7). It has some interesting aspects. The roots are in God himself, and God emerges like a blossoming tree from his own root. To represent the creation, at the lowest level, are feathers and are emblematic of the choirs of angels. So we are a long way from the Earth when talking about Malkuth here. We are talking about God as creator and ruler and director of all the choirs of angels. The Cherubim, the Dominations, the Virtues, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Thrones Each with their own function, as guides of individuals, or guides of groups, or guides of nations, or guardians of intellectual and moral principles. And here we see Fludd again very much with the conception that the Qabalah is entirely a description of God - and not of his creation.

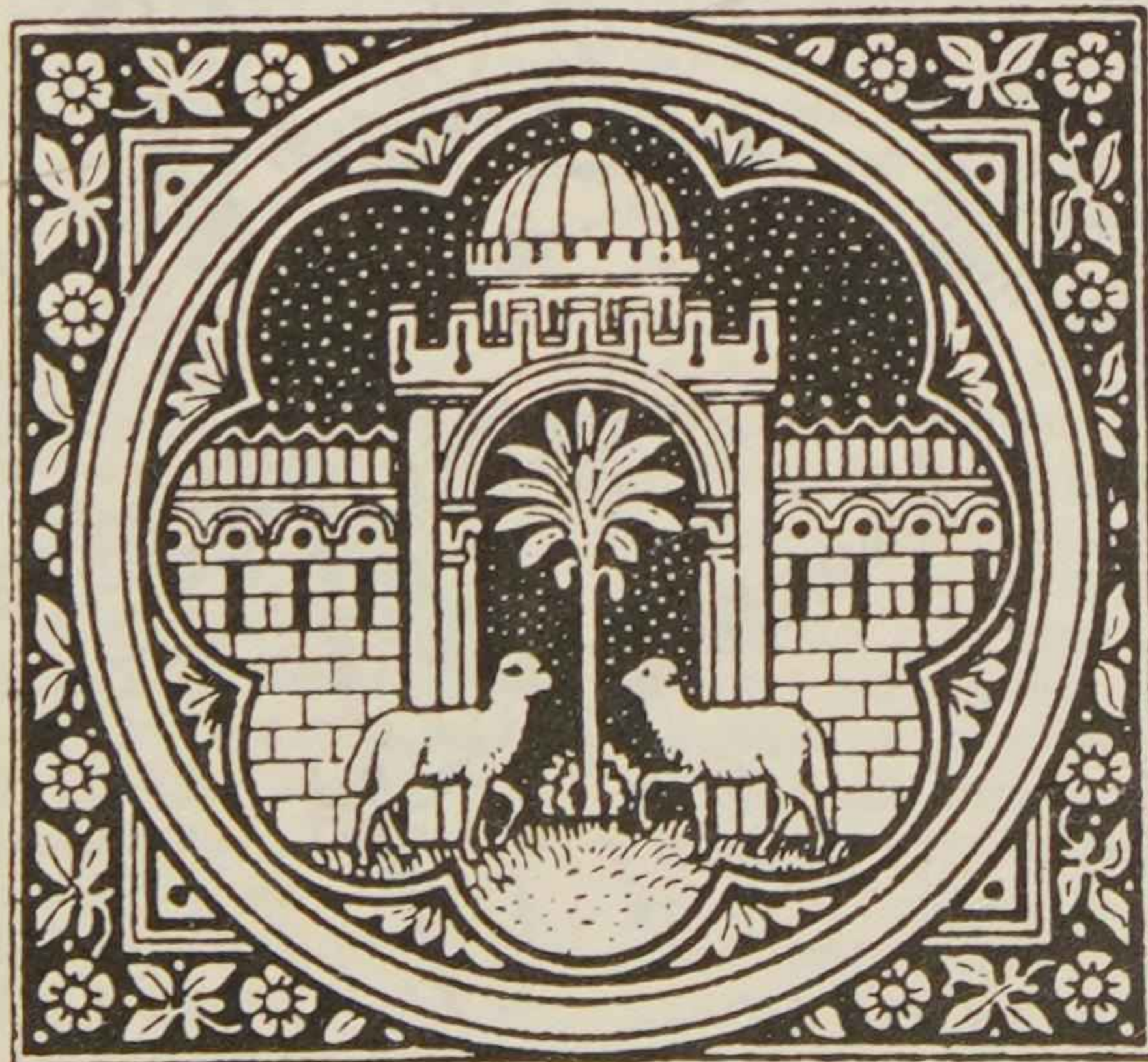
One further diagram does however give an interesting link between the Tree of Life as image of God, and as image of the creation (Fig. 8).

This is a development of the Holy Name, but this time showing how God concerns himself with more detailed aspects of the creation. This one is rather like a half circle of the full circle of Figure 3 where God is completely surrounding the creation and coming in to hold everything within himself. Here we have first of all the Yod, the first

seed of God, dynamic power, and then a concreting down into Ya, Yehoh, Yehovah. And associated with it, (Fig. 9) an interesting diagram of a man, that develops the Biblical text that God created man in his own image. It shows on the one hand, and on the other, man with his spirit, the focus of which is above his head; his intellect; his vita, vital spark, and his natural faculties or physical perceptions. It was by this mode of thought that the gentile Qabalists of the Renaissance, through to our own time, saw a relation between God and his creation through man, as God's image.

What has happened in our rather materialistic age is that most people who are interested in inner science, or the occult, have become divorced from, or out of communication with, informed theological thought. Thus God has tended to be forgotten about, and we arrive at an analysis of the inner dynamics of creation with God either ignored, or else reduced to a kind of tenuous interstellar gas: The Primal Nothingness. We refer to him in very bleak abstractions. He is physical but very very simple and diffuse, almost like inter-stellar hydrogen. We have made God into hydrogen.

Of course hydrogen may blow us up in the end - which could serve us right. An ironic twist of karma there if one likes to think of it. We reduce our conception of God to that of inter-stellar hydrogen, and then blow ourselves up with hydrogen bombs!



Conversations:
Bishop Herman Adrian Spruit
Patriarch Archbishop – Church of Antioch



“There has never been a single time in my life when God was not a solid and unquestioned fact in my life.”

Bishop Herman A. Spruit will be found by our readers to be a man of diverse experience and opinion. This is not news to those who are familiar with his long career in the sacramental and religious worlds. A very young 70, Bishop Herman possesses vitality and enthusiasm which infect all who come in contact with this most dynamic and thoughtful man. At present, Bishop Herman directs the affairs of the Church of Antioch from Church Central which is located in Mountain View, California. Truly, one might say that Bishop Herman is a man with his sight set on high, for his vision encompasses that which is above and that which is below. The editors of the AROHN are greatly pleased to be able to present to our readers this conversation with one of the most interesting and thought provoking individuals it has been our pleasure to meet and talk with.

AROHN: Would you give us a brief history of your life and what led you to be a Methodist Minister?

HAS: Let's back into that question. I became a Methodist Minister simply because I sensed it early in life that was where God wanted me to be. There has never been a single time in my life when God was not a solid and unquestioned fact in my life. To use my life in whatever service that was most useful to God was an early and obvious conclusion.

My father, who was an Old Catholic in his youth in the Netherlands, converted to Methodism in search of a faith that was free of dogma and sterile theology. Spiritual dynamics was what counted with him. To experience God in all the issues of life is what he taught his sons. Early on I learned to love Jesus, not only the Jesus of the Bible, but also the Christos concept of more ancient faiths. Christian universalism was our thing.

AROHN: Don't forget that short history of your life. Is that next?

HAS: Indeed it is. But it is a long and convoluted tale. If we are normal, I suppose, we find life to be a long and circuitous path, a winding stairway of many and uneven steps. Sometimes I think a good life is like a meandering river giving us many scenes and many unusual and sometimes conflicting exposures. How to sort out and arrange these exposures into a pattern of symmetry and harmony is where we need institutions and organizations, such as the Church and such that go even deeper into bedrock fundamentals like the HORC.

Really I am not disposed to give a lot of facts and experiences. That kind of recital is as exciting as a friend's home movies. I'd rather share a few fundamental axioms and then dress them up with some reminiscences.

Very early in this game I call "Me", I learned a few rules. Just about the first rule was this: "Distrust Authority, and Question the Status Quo." Someone once said that "Status Quo" is Latin for "the mess we're in."

Because someone questioned authority, he discovered the wheel. And because someone else did, humankind entered the Space Age.

Many long years ago I knocked at the door of the Methodist Church and asked for admission into the ministry of that mammoth Church. The Bishop who opened the door took one long look at me. He listened to my accent, by which I had come honestly in seventeen years in Holland, Germany, Poland, and Belgium, and gave me his response. "Young fellow," he said, you are too much of a European. You'll never make it in our ministry. Keep on painting houses. God needs good laymen, too."

I did as I was told. But I went to school, too, back into the tenth grade at age nineteen. To pay the tuition I became the campus painter.

Then, some years later, with as smooth a pulpit delivery as a Dutchman could possibly attain, I went back to the bishop and repeated my question. This time he made his reply to 300 clergy seated in solemn convocation. I had just come from my canonical examinations with a grade of just a hair below the one hundred mark, and he apologized to all the clergy for having almost kept this young man out of a ministry.

Then I learned to qualify the future course of the episcopate: It is always a good idea to discount by 50 percent what that bishop thinks he knows. Degrees and recognition have their place and value. I have drawers full of them. But whether we are Priests or Bishops, our fellows will always have reason to remember that we are human beings first and last. And in the sight of God we are sinners saved by grace. Except for Him, we might not even count on any score.

Put commas and question marks at the end of your creeds. I did. Never follow a creed with a period or an exclamation point. Creeds are never an index of our basic convictions they may contain the sum of one's beliefs but in no way is Christianity a system of beliefs. It is a gnostic and dynamic system. At best, creeds and dogmas are station stops we passed long ago. Question authority! I did this with all the presumptions of ecclesiology. Much of what we consider to be convictions of ultimate Truth are but idle assumptions. Challenge them. Force them to yield up their truth, if there be any in them, until they have established themselves in terms of your own enlightened wisdom and experience.

When God calls us to the Ministry, He first calls us to Himself. And then He opens doors for us into fruitful educational opportunities. But always be mindful that the first, foremost, and final Teacher is always He, the only genuine and reliable authority.

Some view this as a contrary path. So it is, unless a life is maneuvered close to the central stream of Light. The nay-sayers, the timid, the doubters, the fearful, and the detractors can have no place in our final decisions. Every major advance in my Ministry was made over the serious objections of those who had never challenged authority and replaced its flaws with a better course. It's bitter medicine, but the lesson I got from Albert Einstein provides the secret of which leadership is distilled. "Great Spirits," Einstein said, "have always encountered violent opposition from little minds." Do what at the innermost you know is true. That stands up to the test of these times.

This course was the secret that opened fifteen years of radiant, successful, fulfilling, and joyous service

in Methodism. It gave me two fine sons, the greatest blessing of these years. Busy were those Methodist Years, college, graduate school, municipal politics, administrative posts in diocesan concerns, leadership in the work of the Church with children, psychotherapist, rapidly growing churches with three services each Sunday.

And then came five more years in Religious Science from simple practitioner to executive of a world-wide association of churches and vice president of a university dedicated to self-directed studies. Hard years they were as, with God's help, new consciousness was dug into the Methodist grooves of the years gone by, years that replaced simple foundations with sturdier ones to support the building of a more glorious temple for a foundation strong enough to support the Church of Antioch.

“In no way is Christianity a system of beliefs. It is a gnostic and dynamic system.”

AROHN: What are the deepest thoughts and dedication that have motivated you and determined the character of your Apostolate?

HAS: There are not many, just a few of them. But let me say that it is the quality of his fundamental dedication and commitment that determine the nature of a bishop's life and work.

Every soul that is truly alive has a garden to which no other person holds the key. The genuine Christian disciple is a man or woman who feels at home in this garden of the soul. It is a garden which I think of as being a place of private and personal communion with God. In this garden of communion the noises of the world and the sometimes nasty contentings of the Church are never heard. The sounds of petty controversy do not penetrate this enclosed sanctuary. No rivalries can live within its peace, for there the Twelve



no longer clamor for the highest place in the Kingdom.

The supreme test of a fully orbed and completely balanced Christian character is found in the attitude toward the secret garden of the soul's delight. When crisis finds us unprepared and inadequate to its demands, it is largely because, while we jostled our brothers and sisters on the heady road of religious activity and kept ourselves busy in the house of organized effort, we neglected the garden.

There is an Altar in Man . . . a deep majestic place where the soul transacts with God and Life. Where self is cleansed and kindled with an unearthly flame. Those who light their Altar Fires in rare and decisive moments achieve much. But an occasional lighting is not sufficient. The Holy Flame that sets the world on fire is one that is tended day and night.

St. Thomas a' Kempis said: "Follow the Lord to the breaking of bread and refuse not to drink of the blood of His passion." Here is the secret of our prevailing strength as bishops and priests. That inner altar is the place of high dedication to holy tasks. Those who keep the altar fires alive

in their hearts are dowered with rare and brilliant inner beauty and crowned with ineffable joy.

I could not possibly look back on my life and fail to recognize that it has brought delirious joys, an abundance of brilliant and coveted honors, and superb contacts with some of the noblest souls of our time. Mine has been a beautiful and sublimely privileged life. There is nothing further to cherish or gain, except it be establish more loving relationships with my friends, and to put added content into that circle of personal love.

At a time when most people are deep into their retirement, I keep going on. Why? Because in my challenge of authority even the Bible is no exception. Moses is presumed to have told us in one of the Psalms that our lives, if they were good, would still be limited to the three score and ten. If Moses wrote this, it is a sure and certain fact that he himself did not really believe this to be true. He went on to 120 and did not commence his real life's work until he was 80. At that pace I still have 10 more introductory years before the real show begins. The bishops of Antioch are a hardy lot. Two of our active ones are 80 plus.

AROHN: Could you tell us how a Methodist Minister first became a Religious Science Executive, then a Catholic, and then an Archbishop Patriarch?

HAS: It could fill a book, because much of what took place touches the humanity of religion, but I will give the chapter headings with no more than a synopsis for each chapter.

Methodism - A fine church, geared to patterns of integrity, deep concerns for the evolution of the human race best of all, it was and is a basically non-theological Church. Its priorities continue to be the work of the Holy Spirit, personal experience in Christian living rather than finely spun theories of the mind. Its basic slogan seems to be: If you can't prove it in daily life by an improved quality of living, chuck it, forget it.

Like most Churches, it is afflicted with a syndrome of fatal pathologies, that of worshipping the past. It seeks to recover a lost glory by a process of regurgitating John Wesley. Catholicism does it by a recurring emphasis

on Ecumenical Councils which, at best are museum pieces, and not really interesting ones at that. The documents of the Seven Councils might be viable if, like the U.S. Constitution, they were subject to a process of amendments . . . Liberal Catholics hark back to Bishop Leadbeater . . . Christian Scientists keep warming over Mary Baker Eddy, etc., etc.

I left Methodism because common sense told me that backing into the future makes for slow progress. A Charles Wesley poem made sense to me in 1950, and it still makes sense today:

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to free,
And fit it for the age.

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master's will.

It was a verse in Leviticus 8:35 that inspired that poem-motto. It might be fun to try and select it as a text for a sermon.

I left Methodism at the pinnacle of success, like Abraham, not knowing wither I was bound, except that God was my Guide.

Religious Science - The morning after I left the Methodist Church I found myself at the front door of the Religious Science Institute in Los Angeles. I gained the friendship of Ernest Holmes, a true prophet of the new day, as well as many on his remarkable staff, with Maude Lathem, without doubt, the finest. It wasn't long before I taught Homiletics on their seminary program. Soon I was asked to take charge of their worldwide Church Association. I had arrived, so I thought. And then Ernest Holmes burst my bubble of certitude.

"Religious Science is a passing phenomenon," he said. "It is a revolving door to catch those who come out of the denominations. Before long the world will reach beyond the superficialities of positive thinking into the bedrock of deeper and more abiding truth," he pointed out. "The whole of metaphysics or so-called Truth Teaching will capture the main stream of standard Christianity. Only the churches that teach it will survive, but it will be this metaphysics that will reach the hidden levels of being, thinking, and living.

I don't know where your real place of service will be, but it will not be Religious Science. You'll find it," he said, "And when you find it, you will know it."

Six years later I found it. I had been digging into Neo-Platonism which Bishop Charles Hampton recommended to me as a distinguished exponent of this aspect of insight and understanding. I searched for him with a determination unlike any I had ever known. With a dear friend we searched every backroad of the town of Ojai. He had been banished and banned by his Church and was living in a miserable hovel on the other side of the tracks. In the days of long ago when people disagreed with a spiritual leader they made short shrift and took his life. That was merciful. Now we take their living, and that is torture and slow death. (A parenthesis has a place in this tale. A Superior Court Judge in Los Angeles reinstated Bishop Hampton to his full rights in his Church. But the decision was not handed down until after the good Bishop's transition.)

Since I was seeking the priesthood, he undertook to train me. A weekly trip from southern California to Ojai gave me my seminary experience with Bishop Hampton the professor.

The first ordination from Baptism through Confirmation and on through the Diaconate all in one morning, came on an October Day in 1955, at Walton Chapel in Ojai. Remembering that a Roman Catholic author once remarked in a book that Bishop Hampton was noted for his ritualistic exactness will suggest that this was a long, long service. And since Bishop Hampton enforced fasting prior to ordination, that experience stands out in mind as a rigorous discipline.

The Priesthood came on April 5, 1956, Low Sunday, at Bishop Wadle's Church in Laguna Beach, California, with Bishops Wadle and Marshall assisting. My Canonical obedience was given to the Federation of the Independent Catholic and Orthodox Bishops, of which Bishops Hampton and Wadle were founders.

For edification of present-day seminarians this sidelight of my own experience may serve as a bit of enlightenment. Since Bishop Hampton's frugal lifestyle limited available amenities, there was no space even for an altar.

The mantle of the fireplace had to do for altar practice. And if, to some, my ritualistic proficiency is less than might be hoped for, I do well only if I have a fireplace mantle shelf for an altar.

A small parish was begun in Downey, California, a successful venture. The episcopate came on June 22, 1957. Bishop Hampton was again assisted by Bishops Wadle and Marshall, canonical obedience again given to the Federation of Bishops, and faculties given to a Church to be named "The Church Universal." With a touch of irony Bishop Hampton gave me the title of First Bishop of the Church Universal, an appellation also held by another well known bishop.

Developing along original and creative lines, the Church soon felt called upon to develop an independent course, and it was deemed advisable that this bishop should be distinguished from other bishops by being given the Archbishopate. On June 26, 1960, at the Downey Church Archbishop Paulos Aphostratus, Auxiliary to Patriarch Joseph Antonius Aneed and Bishop Michael Strange, Auxiliary to Archbishop Wadle, conferred the Office of Archbishop. Bishop Paulos, being of an Orthodox Confession, imposed hands on me, thus conferring on me sub-conditione, a fully Orthodox Episcopate. As a confirmation of that act, many years later, I received Bishop Aneed's Crown Mitre. At this service of elevation, Bishop Paulos also anointed my hands and head, sub-conditione. This was done so that thereafter there never would be doubt of my status as a fully consecrated Orthodox Bishop.

With Bishop Aneed's passing I fell heir to the American Catholic Byzantine Orthodox Church of America, by that time no more than a charter and a few artifacts. Bishop Aneed instructed his heirs that I should succeed to the leadership of his Byzantine Church, as well as to the title of Patriarch, which had been given to him by the Bishops of the Federation. Inasmuch as the importance of our Church was not such as to warrant the use of that title, it was held "in pectore." In recent years, as our Church began to expand in all directions, it was deemed appropriate to use that term to designate my position as "Primus inter Pares."

The dictionary offers eight definitions for the term "Patriarch," from which we have formed a compound of meanings: (1) Father in Christ, which implies a relationship of love, (2) A venerable Person made so by reason of his position of Founder of a religious order or corporate entity, which implies a sacred guardianship of vital truths; and (3) it may well be that in future the Head of this Church may be known as the Patriarch of the West, particularly if this Church continues its present growth in numbers, influence, and strength, and most particularly, if it continues to nourish its life of faith and understanding of the Christian impulse as deriving from such sources as the Cabalah, and the Rosicrucian Mysteries, and this implies a vision of the Church as the proclaimer of Universality, or true Catholicism.

Enter Bishop Raleigh, the man who had consecrated Bishop Wadle! A change in ecclesiastical circumstances and relationships made it necessary for this bishop to redefine his position. Aware of my desire to establish a proper ecclesiastical domicile, he invited me to establish with him a Church of Antioch.

Since this is the most proper historic designation of our Church, and since the American Catholic Church, in reality, was an American branch of the original Church of Antioch, I agreed to Bishop Raleigh's proposal. We imposed hands on each other to exchange our orders to symbolize our fellowship in Christ. Our respective articles of incorporation were amended to reflect our new direction, but each of the amendments reflected some variants from the other to assure that neither would be beholden to the other. Thereupon Bishop Raleigh autographed a picture, still on the wall in my study, in which he designated me as his Coadjutor, thus placing me in direct line as successor to him and Bishop Vilatte.

The rest of this story is current history.

HAS: Would this be a good spot to call attention to how the Church Universal became the Church of Antioch?

AROHN: It probably would, go right ahead.

HAS: The name Church Universal put us into competition with a number of com-

munions, particularly some spiritualistic groups. While we are aware of the validity of much of psychism, we did not care to be known as a Church of Psychics particularly since this is far from being our most fundamental conviction.

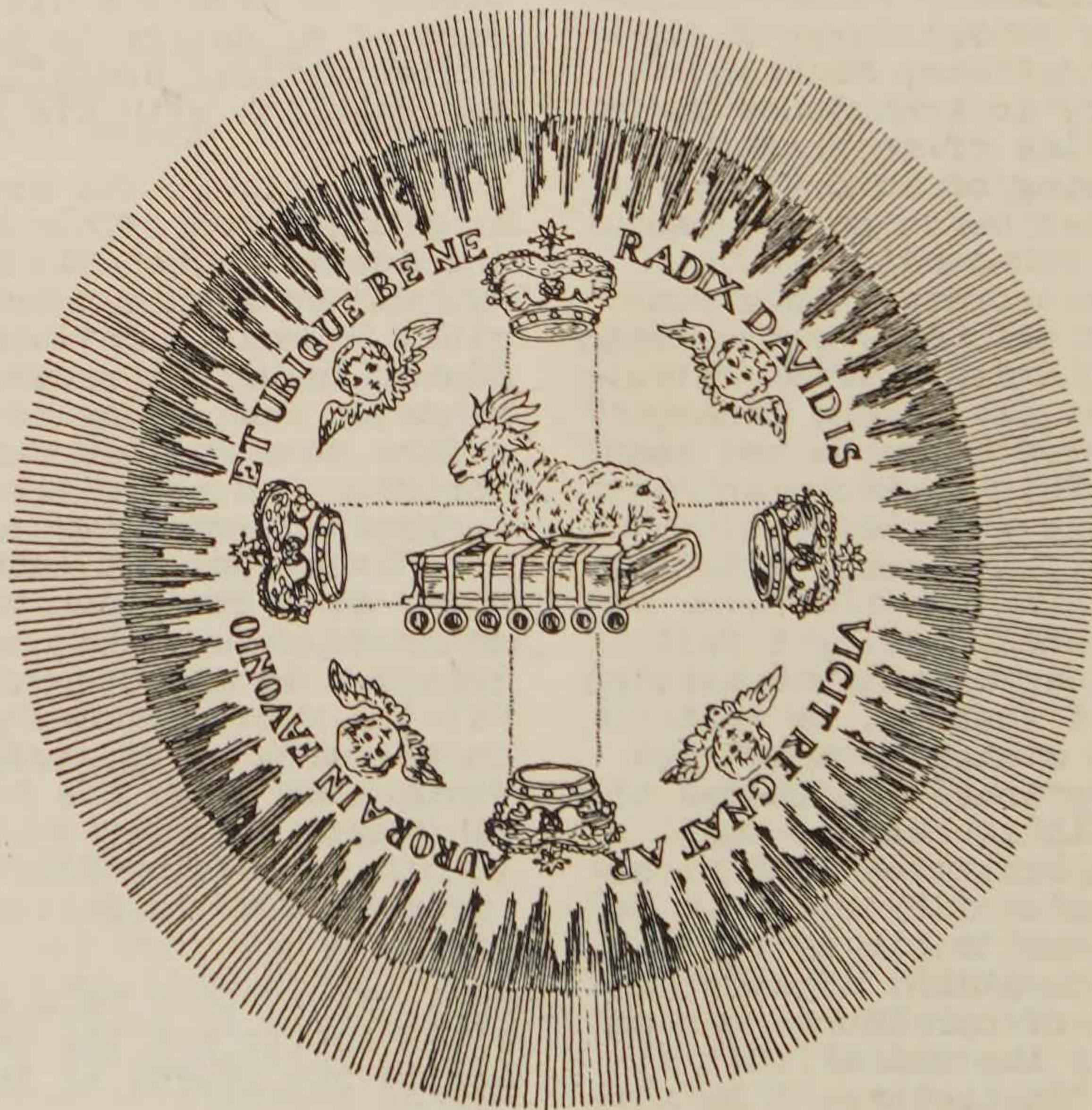
The natural thing seemed to be for me to work through one of the communions represented by one of my consecrators.

For a while I served in that branch of the Liberal Catholic Church of which Bishop Francis Erwin was the Presiding Bishop. I was received with open arms and loving cordiality, fully characteristic of this fine and noble bishop. Likewise, Bishop Sheehan of Ojai was

as true a brother as one could find. But my own liberalism and my response to the impingements of a new age put me beyond the liberalism of the Liberal Catholic Church. I could envision that not too far down the road, I might become a problem. As a priest my job is understood to be to solve problems and not make them, so I withdrew quietly and with love in my heart for my brothers and sisters.

The American Catholic Church, Bishop Wadle's, was not available to me, since it required of its Bishops that they be celibate and vegetarian; neither position suited my lifestyle or squared with my Christian convictions.

TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE OF AROHN



Wandering Bishops

by Lewis S. Keizer



Introduction

THE EPISCOPI VAGANTES

S ometime during the A.D. 90's Saint Clement of Rome wrote an epistle to the quarreling church factions at Corinth. Apparently one faction was attempting to replace the bishops of Corinth with some of the popular leaders among the congregation. Clement reminded them that the Apostles had appointed and consecrated the bishops of Corinth as their valid successors, and that it would be against God's will to replace them.

This and other sub-apostolic records show clearly that from earliest times the Christian churches were understood to be under the divine authority of the Apostles and their chosen successors. The bishop (episkopos) stood in place of the founding Apostle. By the laying on of hands he was heir to the fullness of apostolic authority, and was free to delegate special functions (healing, teaching, forgiveness of sins) to specific ministers under his jurisdiction. Although the charisms of the Spirit were to be found freely distributed among Christians, it became a bishop's duty to recognize or discern them for the upbuilding of church order. By the second century there were ranks and orders of healers, teachers and liturgical functionaries developing in all traditions under the auspices of apostolic bishops.

Only a bishop could transmit the fullness of the Apostolic Succession by means of consecration. Elders, deacons, exorcists and other functionaries received ecclesiastical authority (as opposed to spiritual authority or charismatic gifts) directly from their bishops, as an extension of his commission. They could not ordain others into their own rank.

For this reason when trusted evangelists were sent as missionaries to establish church order in a new jurisdiction, they were consecrated bishops. They carried full apostolic authority with them. Since this was before the age of church dogma and uniform order, they were free to adapt their theological and liturgical forms to suit the native environment (as Saint Basil did in Cappadocia). These were the first

"Wandering Bishops" with authority to function independently, just as the original Apostles had done.

Although they had each been taught by Jesus, the Apostles had been far from uniform in thought and personality. They had many differences of opinion. Peter and Paul disagreed in Antioch about eating with Gentiles. James the Righteous, brother of Jesus, did not try to stop Peter and the others from preaching outside of Israel, but he felt the first commitment was to Jerusalem and the Temple worship. Others of the Apostles were strongly ascetic, such as Thomas, Bartholomew, Andrew, Simon and Jude. They wandered far from Jerusalem, even to India, and made renunciation of marriage a basic part of their gospel. Their traditions are preserved in early romances like the Acts of Thomas, Acts of Andrew, Apostolic History of Pseudo-Abkias. It is likely that an authentic form of early ascetic Christian Gnosis found in the Gospel of Thomas had close relations to the historic message of the Apostle Thomas, who is presented as the least comprehending of the disciples by the anti-gnostic writer of the Fourth Gospel.

Because of the great diversity of thought among the early Apostles, it was inevitable that the churches which grew out of their separate missionary journeys would differ widely. For three centuries the diverse Christian traditions of India, Persia, Syria, Ethiopia, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Western Celtic regions developed in native freedom. As the rivalry for preeminence grew between the sees of Alexandria, Antioch and Rome, however, the influence of these specific cultures began to assert itself.

First came the quest for uniformity of scripture, with the desire to record and codify ecclesiastical history. Episcopal representatives as well as wealthy laypersons made the pilgrimage to Palestine and Jerusalem. Information was shared and liturgical practice compared. Soon issues of Christian philosophy, christology and theology were discovered. The traditional thought of one church would try to dominate another. The larger and more powerful that church's city, the more influential her theology would become.

When Constantine came to power it was his dream to unify the Christian churches. In a few years he had brought Christianity from one of many small, impotent sects to the status of official religion. It was now patronized by the wealthy class of citizens under his protection. Colossal places of worship were constructed, and Constantine convened the first ecumenical or "world-wide" council to settle matters of faith and order. This Council of Nicaea, in attempting to legislate Christian unity, succeeded rather in starting a trend which, in the long run, would alienate the smaller less influential churches from the mainstream of "orthodoxy" or "correct opinion." This orthodoxy was to be defined by an appalling collusion of political and ecclesiastical expediciencies which quite often had nothing to do with the counsel of the wise. If there was to be a political territory annexed, or a political alliance to be formed, church doctrine was sure to come into play.

Many of the more sincerely religious yearned for a truer form of piety than the religion of the Empire could provide. They felt that the Church (for now it was the Church, and no longer the churches) had sold its birthright for gold, and they migrated to the deserts of Egypt with Saint Anthony. Others turned inward to their particular traditions in a quest for the mysteries which had been originally transmitted by the Apostles and founders. This independence of thought erupted in a rash of so-called "heretical" movements, many of them generated in that traditional hot-bed of heretics, Asia Minor, and seeping West to Rome.

Once again the forces of history began to produce Wandering Bishops, but this time they were opposed by the Church, denounced as heretics and forced into exile. Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, incurred the enmity of Cyril, an Alexandrian divine commissioned to denounce him. After much political persecution he was driven from his see into Upper Egypt, where he died. His followers were further persecuted and left the Empire. They migrated East, finally coming to rest in the Christian community of India.

This was to be the style from now

on. If a bishop were found to hold unorthodox opinions, he might be excommunicated from the rest of the Church and driven into exile. In just this way the Western and Eastern Churches were parted by the Great Schism. Out of neglect the other "Third World" churches outside the Roman Empire and jurisdiction of the Church of Rome were to be allowed to exist on their own, but only so long as the Roman Church did not know of their existence. Once it was known, legates were sure to be sent demanding submission to the See of Rome.

Thus from earliest times valid lines of Apostolic Succession were maintained outside of the Roman jurisdiction, and to this day many churches have retained their unique traditions and theological independence. It is largely through their lines of succession that the contemporary Wandering Bishops have arisen still anathematized as heretics, but respected as possessing valid Apostolic orders. These Episcopi Vagantes are the subject of this book.

Chapter One

THE STOLEN BLESSING

Over the centuries there have been many schisms among the churches, the greatest of which separated the Roman Catholic from the Greek Orthodox communion. Other non-Roman churches flourished anonymously until they were discovered through political expansion of the Empire. When found, attempts were soon made to bring them under the jurisdiction of Rome and the Pope.

Such had been the case with the ancient Celtic or Anglican churches of the British Isles. They had been established by missionaries of the late second or early third century. These founding fathers came from Rome or Gaul and undoubtedly possessed full apostolic authority as missionary bishops, since a Celtic church ministry was established and perpetuated some two hundred years until the arrival of Augustine of Kent in A.D. 596. However a Celtic monk named Pelagius had been promulgating the alien idea that human beings should take responsibility for their own actions (Karl Barth, Deitrich Bonhoeffer) as children of



God in the pattern of Christ, and that wasn't "orthodox."

The Imitatio Christi was later tolerated among monks such as Saint Francis, but only under the control of the Pope. This is why Francis submitted, and the Roman Catholic Church can now claim him as one of its saints. But Pelagius had gone too far as a preacher, and Celtic forms of Christian thought were pervading Rome. An orthodox bishop was needed, and Augustine of Kent was the choice.

Roman religion never really succeeded in England, and it was only through force of arms in the Norman Conquest that Celtic practices were controlled. Monks who persisted in saying the old Celtic prayers at the traditional times were mercilessly murdered by archers while huddled in prayer. Rome prevailed, but the seeds of the coming protestant revolution were sown in English soil. The Church of England would again break free.

Although the Roman Catholic hierarchy has been slow to admit the validity of Anglican orders, there is no reason to doubt the existence of the historic Apostolic Succession in England. The

original churches were established by apostolic missionaries. Later, during the Reformation, Anglican bishops were careful to follow every protocol in continuing the Seccession independent of Rome.

The objections to protocol which have been made by some Catholic theologians are based on canon laws enacted to create ultimate apostolic power for the Pope alone. These laws, however, are binding only upon those under the jurisdiction of Rome. Furthermore, the premises of Roman canon law, which are based upon Rome's claim to an Apostolic line of succession, validate any other ancient church ministry. There is biblical evidence for the Apostle Peter in Antioch, but only a weak tradition about Peter in Rome. The Church of Antioch therefore, by the rules of Rome, has a better claim to Apostolic primacy than Rome. The historical fact, however, is that the politics of Rome made it the world's Babylon, and thus the center of secular power. The true basis for the Roman Catholic claim to primacy has been simple economics, rather than Apostolic tradition.

From earliest times one bishop could consecrate another bishop. The tradition of using three co-consecrators was a safeguard for orthodoxy, and not a condition for validity. One bishop may excommunicate another from his jurisdiction, but he cannot revoke or in any way invalidate Holy Orders. From the beginning the Apostles and bishops have been collegiate rather than monarchical, each with independence and personality - like all the peoples and cultures of the earth. One is consecrated "forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Once a bishop, always a bishop, regardless of doctrine. He must stand by himself to render an account before Christ.

Although the Anglican church always possessed a valid Apostolic ministry, it was so intimidated by Rome's claim to supremacy that special pains were taken to re-establish its native succession of the ministry. Still that wasn't good enough for Rome. Roman Catholic theologians who have grudgingly begun to accept the validity of Anglican orders do so on the basis that valid Greek Orthodox or other Third-World ministries recognized by the Roman church (such as that of India) have crept into the Anglican ministry like leaven in a loaf. This has occurred through centuries of English colonialism and intercommunion with other churches.

Third-World Orthodoxies

Because of the basis for its own line of Apostolic Succession, which the Roman Catholic Church used to bolster its claim to be the only "true" Church, it has been forced to recognize the validity of other minor churches throughout the world. These churches possess the same Apostolic authority that Rome claims, but independent of the so-called Mother Church of Rome.

The existence of such Third-World churches has always been somewhat known to Western Christendom, but never viewed with alarm. After all, these bishops and congregations were far away and lacked political power. They could be approached with demands to submit whenever political contact made it expedient. In the meantime a certain amount of visitation could be allowed, as long as no doctrinal threat emerged.

If there was no political reason, recent times found another reason for submission to Rome. This was the Ecumenical movement. Under the guise of toleration and collegiality, Rome might ask one of the Third-World churches to enter into full communion by becoming a "uniat" church. This is a kind of ecclesiastical protectorate-territory retaining native ministry and tradition for a longer-range period of time, but ultimately destined to be absorbed into the "true" Church of Rome.

The Syrian-Antiochene succession descends from several roots. The earliest, of course, is the ancient See of Antioch, founded by Peter and other Apostles. It was here that the Followers of the Way were first called "Christians." In A.D. 451 the Council of Chalcedon declared the Antiochene Christology to be false, and Bishop Jacob Baradaeus of Edessa to be a heretic. The Bishop disguised himself as a beggar to avoid arrest, and wandered about for the rest of his life as one of the Episcopi Vagantes, teaching and preaching from Egypt to Persia. He was such a holy man that his preaching started a whole series of conversions and new church foundings.

Orthodoxy had rejected him, probably for political expediency. However, the histories of Church dogma will say that he was a Monophysite, or one of those who claimed that Christ had a single rather than a double nature (one human, one divine). That is to say, the poor but inspired man was a prophet of the contemporary repugnance toward that very destructive vestige of Greek philosophy, the Mind-Body Dualism! This, I assume, was only a tiny part of his preaching, and one which he probably considered rather minor. But to the dogmatists, of course, his name is preserved as the founder of that hideous "wrong opinion" that Christ has a single nature.

Like any other saint, Bishop Baradaeus started a whole revival of Christian religion from the Nile to the Euphrates. He transmitted the Apostolic ministry to those who were worthy, and the Jacobite or Monophysite churches were established as a perpetual bone in the craw of Western orthodoxy. They have survived the Moslem invasions of Egypt, and the later attempts of the medieval Roman church to take over its juris-

diction in Syria. The Patriarch of Antioch still maintains his authority, and the Liturgy of Saint James (Jacob) is still used. As a symbol of Christ's unity, but perhaps more as a fraternal badge of courage in resisting imperialistic orthodoxy, the Jacobite Christians still make the sign of the Cross with one finger, not two.

Another line of succession was brought into the Syrian church in 1783, when a Roman Catholic Bishop, Mar Michael Garweh, was appointed to the See of Aleppo. There has undoubtedly been a co-mingling of Roman and Jacobite lines of succession since the same jurisdiction has been claimed by two churches for many centuries. In addition, Syrian-Antiochene bishops have established ecumenical relations with other Third-World churches, such as the Malabar Christians of India, and co-consecration has strengthened both successions.

The Syrian-Malabar succession traditionally descends from the missionary preaching of the Apostles Thomas and Bartholomew in India. Although the historical accuracy of this claim cannot be fully verified, recent evidence points to an ancient community of Indian Christians previous to the second missionary sweep of the Nestorians. Cosmas Indicopleustes, an Alexandrian merchant of the sixth century who had no particular axe to grind, says that he found Christians in India about A.D. 550. This is too early for a settled community of Nestorians, in my opinion.

The persecution of Bishop Nestorius and his followers led to another religious revival along Monophysite lines which produced monasteries and missionaries. In the sixth and seventh centuries Nestorian Christians began to flourish in Egypt, Persia (supplanting Zoroastrianism) and finally into China. Coming by way of the sea, Nestorians landed in Madras and joined existing Christian communities of South India. In A.D. 1490 they received new bishops from the Patriarch of Bagdad, and a continuous contact with Syrian Christianity was maintained from the advent of Nestorianism. However, during the later period the orthodox-leaning Nestorians were assimilated into the Malankarese Uniat Church, while still using the Liturgy of Addai and Mari. The Jacobites survived, and have devel-

oped a rapprochement with the Church of England, due to 19th-century colonial expediency.

Similar stories could be told about many other Third-World church traditions with valid lines of Apostolic Succession. They all involve a formative period of apostolic founding, a later period of conflict during which one or several native bishops were excommunicated or denounced by a Roman-dominated synod, and a separated church history much like that of the Greek Orthodox communion. In more recent history all or some of their community has been brought into communion with Rome, some as uniats, some retaining full native authority.

The Syro-Chaldaean succession is derived through the Nestorian communities which survived in Turkey and Persia as part of the same missionary wandering that brought Christianity to India. In 1830 the Chaldean-Uniat church was established by Pope Pius VIII under the Patriarch of Babylon. Syriac remains their liturgical language, but most of the Roman Rite has been assimilated by their clergy. Both Syro-Chaldaean and Chaldean-Uniat successions exist.

After the Council of Chalcedon with its denunciation of Monophysitism (the single nature of Christ), the entire Egyptian see became separated from the Roman-dominated orthodoxy. Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, was condemned and an orthodox Melchite group formed in his jurisdiction. However the rise of deep Egyptian monastic piety and the Desert Fathers and Mothers catapulted the Monophysite view into prominence. It was, after all, the more contemplative Christology of those seeking the monastic *Imitatio Christi*. The Egyptian church, using ancient Coptic (the last form of the Egyptian language), survived the Arab invasions and exists today. There is even a Coptic outpost in Eastern Canada. In 1741 a small Coptic-Uniat church was also formed when the Bishop of Jerusalem joined the Roman Catholic Church. This body, however, has remained quite small, and the Coptic Orthodox Church represents the main body of tradition.

The Armenian was the first national church to come into existence. It was founded by Saint Gregory the Illuminator, a Wandering Bishop commissioned by the Metropolitan of Caesaria (Cappadocia).

Gregory converted and baptized King Tiridates and established the Catholicos or Archbishopric at Etchmiadzin near Mount Ararat, the traditional site of Noah's Ark. Armenian church history has been a series of terrible persecutions by Romans, Persians and Arabs - most recently the Turkish-supported genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire early in this century.

A small Armenian-Uniat communion was formed but with little success, and the church, which later began to assume doctrinal positions much like the Monophysites, has resisted attempts at union with either Roman or Monophysite sectors. There are Armenian communities in several European and American locations. They remain under the Patriarchate of Etchmiadzin, the Catholicate of Sis, and the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople. There are two classes of priests - married (parish priests) and unmarried vardapets or doctors, from whom bishops are chosen. Unleavened bread in the shape of a large Latin host is used in the Eucharist, and the wine is not mixed with water. The ancient Liturgy of Saint Basil is used. This was the liturgy idealized by Gurdjieff as transmitting pre-Christian wisdom, since it was designed by the Wandering Bishop Basil to incorporate Christianity into native Armenian religious symbology.

In addition to these native church traditions with Apostolic successions, there are several new lines which have emerged recently through the actions of Episcopi Vagantes.

Perhaps best known is the Old Roman Catholic succession, which resulted when three Dutch bishops connected with the See of Utrecht separated from Rome in refusal to accept the dogma of indulgences (Unigenitas). This apostolic line has been the starting-point for other new lines as well. The succession was given in sympathy by the French Jansenists, from whom other secret lines may have come.

The German, Austrian and Swiss Old Catholic Churches separated over the issue of Papal Infallibility during the following century, and in the early 20th-century the National Polish Church was formed by Kowalski, who was consecrated in 1909 by an Old Catholic bishop. This started the Mariavite line of succession.

In addition are the Russian Orthodox and Russo-Syrian Orthodox successions, with secret lines transmitted during times of communist persecution. Also the Ruthenian churches, or Slavic uniat bodies, still survive in many parts of the world, including South America.

It cannot be known what secret lines of succession have been brought into Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism or other occult societies, but the successions initiated by Mathew and Vilatte deserve special mention in the following sections. Finally the Free Protestant Church of England was founded with an Apostolic line through Bishop Leon Chechemian of the Armenian communion, and still exists.

TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE OF AROHN

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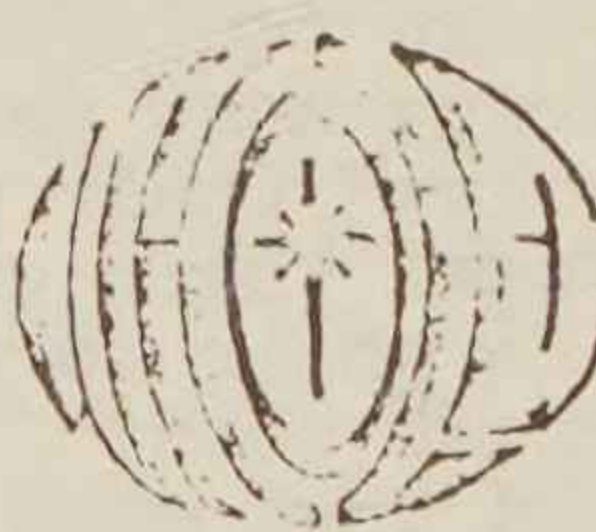
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Leaves of Healing from the Tree of Life

by The Most Rev. John Joseph Rankin



“Splendor – Victory – Beauty”

Carl Jung once confessed that in psychotherapy most people do not really "solve" their problems; they simply expand their consciousness to a point where their former problems no longer interest them!

It may be said that much healing – spiritual, mental, and physical – takes part in a similar process. A nineteenth century American preacher called it "the expulsive power of a new affection." Meditation on, and assimilation of, the content of the Tree of Life can so redirect the energies of the individual as to liberate that individual from the former negative preoccupations, and further endow him

with a new capacity for service to others.

This is what is meant by the metaphysical cliché, "rising in consciousness." The analog is that of mountain-climbing, whereby what had formerly been all-engrossing is seen from a perspective in which it appears relatively (or utterly) insignificant.

In the portion of the Tree of Life presently contemplated, consciousness is being called to the Sphere of the Sun, known as Beauty. While this is a realm of magnificent balance and proportion, it is also a realm of sacrifice. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins." (Hebrews 9:22) That is, without

sacrificing what seems most essential to one at present, there is no redemption and no release, no healing or restoration.

We dealt in the last article with the significance of one's Treasure House of Images in relation to healing. One can rise directly from that foundational sphere into the beauty of the Sun of God, through total commitment and one-pointed concentration. Yet for most, it is possible to move toward the Beauty of Sun-ship only when two supporting tracks of conscious endeavor have been repaired or straightened separately, to unite at last in the Beauty of Holiness or the Beauty of Wholeness.

These two tracks are those of thinking and desiring; i.e., one's logical self and one's emotive self. Both tracks are so cluttered or broken in the average individual that even when healing power is received, he is hard put to find a vessel sound enough to retain it.

In scaling the Tree of Life, the next step after the cleansing of the Foundation is entry into the Temple of Mercury, to examine the use one is making of the Glory of Pure Reason. The hardest work in this sphere is to locate, question and correct one's premises. The premise of the total depravity of man leads to conclusions vastly different from the premise of the sovereignty of the image of God in man. The premise of "Time is short" and the premise that "I have all eternity to grow and unfold" each lead to quite different methodologies! These are but examples of a host of more or less unconscious premises that may help or hinder the healing process.

It is vital that one learn not only spiritually correct premises of life, but that one also learn to reason correctly from those premises. The logical processes of deduction, induction, and analogy all have a part to play in this. The fact that spiritual reasoning is the only method of healing employed by Christian Scientists should not divert us from recognizing its legitimate role in healing.

Isaiah declares, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace (*shalom*, meaning also wellness, prosperity, harmony

and balance!) whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isaiah 26:3). St. Paul counsels, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2). Both prophet and apostle strongly imply that without some fundamental adjustment of the mind, there is not basis for transformation or healing of the life. Some degree of mental control is required then. This includes the capacity to turn the energy of mind from the undesirable to the desirable at will. This, in turn implies the ability to stop thought; not the formation of a blank, but the voluntary choice of an alternative focus!

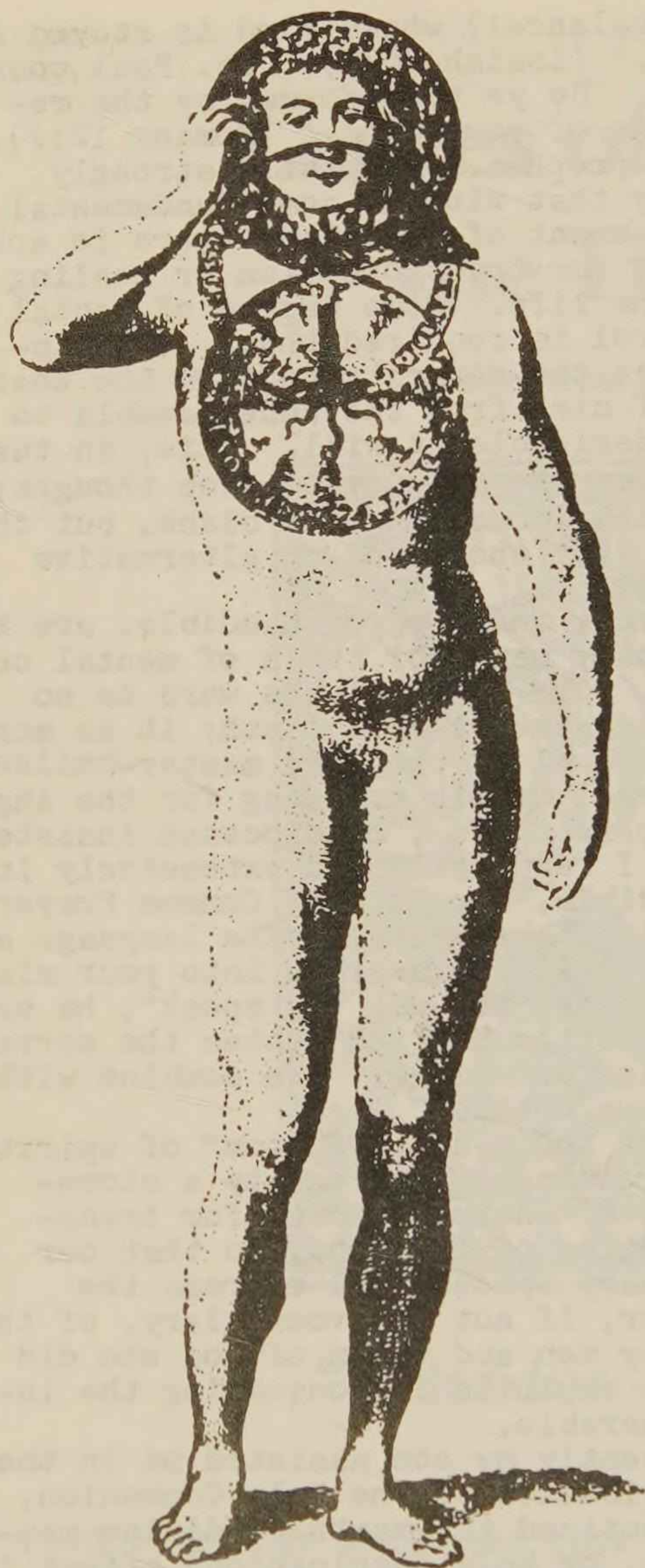
Words, audible or inaudible, are the ordinary means or tools of mental control. The power of the word is no mere dreamer's shibboleth; it is mortar and trowel of the wise master-builder.

When I was in training for the Anglican priesthood, my diocesan insisted that I read daily and extensively in the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and in Shakespeare. "The language and style will be absorbed into your mind, and change the way you speak", he said. Emma Curtis Hopkins states the corresponding principle: "We combine with what we notice!"

Thus the "quaint custom" of spiritual reading is in reality a storehouse of enormous power for transformation of the mind, so that our ordinary speech will express the flavor, if not the vocabulary, of the mighty men and women of God who did great exploits in conquering the unconquerable.

Recently my son assisted me in the distribution of the Holy Communion, and noticed the mantric (divine mesmeric, or holy fascination) effect in the constant reiteration by the priest of the words, "The Body and Blood of our Lord Christ," as the people received at the altar rail. We hardly need go eastward for effective mantra; our Catholic heritage is replete with them. Now if we will use them, we will find that they are both SWORD (cutting of undesired mentation) and SEED (initiators of new states of wholesome consciousness).

The mind is a movable mirror. Mirror. Mirrors can be dust collectors or light reflectors. In the Confiteor used in some of our healing services



From Law's *Figures* of Jakob Böhme.

THE DIVINE TREE IN MAN (obverse)

we pray that we may "Become the unspotted mirror of thy power." This is an attunement to the eighth sephiroth of the Tree of Life: the realm of the Splendor of the Mind-Mirror turned toward God alone, and reflecting only that which He is.

There are certain other signs or symbols traditionally associated with this Sphere of Splendor: the Names, the Versicles, and Apron. Each of these signifies an instrument or mo-

dality for lifting the potency of the mind to healing practice. The "Names" are the words and signs of the Divine Presence, embodied in or expressed by a human individual. The many names of God given in Scripture each have a specific connotation, and affect specific attunements in consciousness.

In the Liberal Catholic healing service, this sphere is invoked through appeal to the "Name which is above every name, in the power of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and the invocation of "the Holy Archangel Raphael and our Lord Christ," as well as the repeated Signs of the Cross.

The "Versicles" are mantric repetitions of spiritual concepts; when used audibly they quell the yammerings of the lower mind, and provide a channel through which the transcendental flows forth with directed intensity. In the Healing Service of the Servant Catholic Church, the congregation participates through the whole time that the clergy are laying on hands by repeating the prayer:

"Lord God, we are Your People.

Loose the healing power of Jesus amongst us.

Fire us with the Holy Spirit that we might

Become the Servants of Christ."

As this invocation percolates through the ecclesia, through an extended period of time, the atmosphere becomes electrically charged with the realization of the Holy Spirit's presence and activity. Such repetition always seems boring to the novelty seeker; but is deepening and expansive to the dedicated server.

The symbolism of the "Apron" refers to the veiling of the Force, or the concealment of the Creative Center. The Incarnation itself is such a veiling; and as we study to body forth that momentous mystery in healing service, we will find that we can and must temper the power received to suit the receptivity of the applicant for healing.

The next sphere to be balanced and attuned is traditionally called Victory. In human consciousness it relates to our desire-life; since every victory is the fruit of some longing in the heart. The victory of Jesus, indeed the Eucharist itself,

is the fruit of the intense desire He expressed: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you." (Luke 22:15)

The healing process and healing practice are intricately involved with desire-adjustment. The desire for life, freedom and peace is at the root of all other and more specific desires; and this root is holy. But disease is the consequence of a twisting or misinterpreted desire. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in a recent interview, said that illness and disease always serve a function. In other words, even protracted pain is the result of some legitimate desire being so sought in some devious way.

It is well for the healer to take note of what desires are being fulfilled by the disorder, then grant its present legitimacy, but then prayerfully command that it shall take purer form.

Esoteric mentors are heard to implore: "Kill out desire!" In practice this has usually been interpreted in two ways. First, it has been interpreted to mean that the desires of the self must be suppressed. Oppositely, it has been interpreted to mean that one should intensely fulfill one's desires, for with fulfillment the painful yearning of desire is indeed killed. This writer (and others, to be sure!) offers a third interpretation: Death being the release of energy from one form of life to another, killing out desire is found in releasing the energy of one's desire from one form of expression to another. For example, the patient who finds his love-needs met in the kindly attention of family and friends, and who finds satisfaction in a position of dependency, must be drawn into a larger consciousness of love, and a higher focus of dependency, so that he will no longer require bodily malfunction in order to fulfill his desires.

Yet there is a spiritual practice which evokes that great peace upon which healthy living is based. It is found in the opening words of the beloved Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." The practice of clearing the consciousness of all desire - good, bad, or indifferent - for even five minutes at a time rends the veil which hitherto conceal-

ed the Secret Portal of Tranquility. At this stage of evolution we cannot live literally desireless at all times; but to practice this emptying of the boiling pot of libido periodically allows one to get to the base of his own being, and to draw a straighter line from the point of God's desire-for-him to the point of his-desire-for-himself. Not wanting anything for a little while clears the picture for the sublime gnosis: "The Lord is my shepherd."

The traditional major symbols of this Sphere of Victory are the lamp, the girdle, and the rose.

The Qabalah is sometimes defined as "the esoteric interpretation of the scriptures." This fact opens the door to a highly evocative process of word-substitution, which leads to interior illumination. For example, assume that every word in this list is fully convertible to any other word on the list: Victory, desire, lamp, girdle, rose. Then go to Scripture and begin making the substitutions: viz., "Thy word is a lamp (desire, victory, girdle, rose!) unto my feet." (Psalm 119: 105) Or: "This is the victory (desire, lamp, girdle, rose!) that overcomes the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4) It is not that the words are literally equivalent, but that the correspondences in meaning evoke insight, and insight leads us to worship and adore.

In the healing process itself, the lamp signals the need for illumination of the true essence of one's desire for life. The girdle or cincture is a restraint; restraint of the healing force intensifies its ultimate release (promiscuous and indiscriminate laying-on-of-hands vitiates the effectiveness of the healer). And the rose depicts the unfoldment of desire fulfilled, amid the thorns.

It is by degrees that we "ascend unto the hill of the Lord," and find the fulness of His healing power. And to the degree that we accept the Holy Spirit's aid in rectifying our premises and our desires, we are made ready to enter into the sixth sphere of the Holy Tree of Life: Beauty! This is known as the sphere of the Sun, and of the Divine Son. This is the sphere in which we confess not by rote but by right: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!" And He responds, "Flesh and

blood (human effort) have not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven."

It is in this sphere that healer and patient are not two but one in Christ, each discerning the Lord's embodiment in each other, in themselves, and beyond themselves. It is here that the prodigal within comes home and forgets that he ever left. It is here that the great white Stone of Union of the Father and the Son becomes personal experience.

It is here that Christ Jesus, King of Angels, directs their creative action in a constant radiation of Son-Light, dissipating the traumas that have gone before and constructing new form and new function for embodiment, so that each son of God manifests himself in the Father's glory.

Thus the paramount classic symbol of the Sphere of Beauty is the Calvary Cross, the cross of sacrifice. For in this consciousness, "my" goodness, "my" deserving or undeserving, are all dissolved, and the Divine Goodness

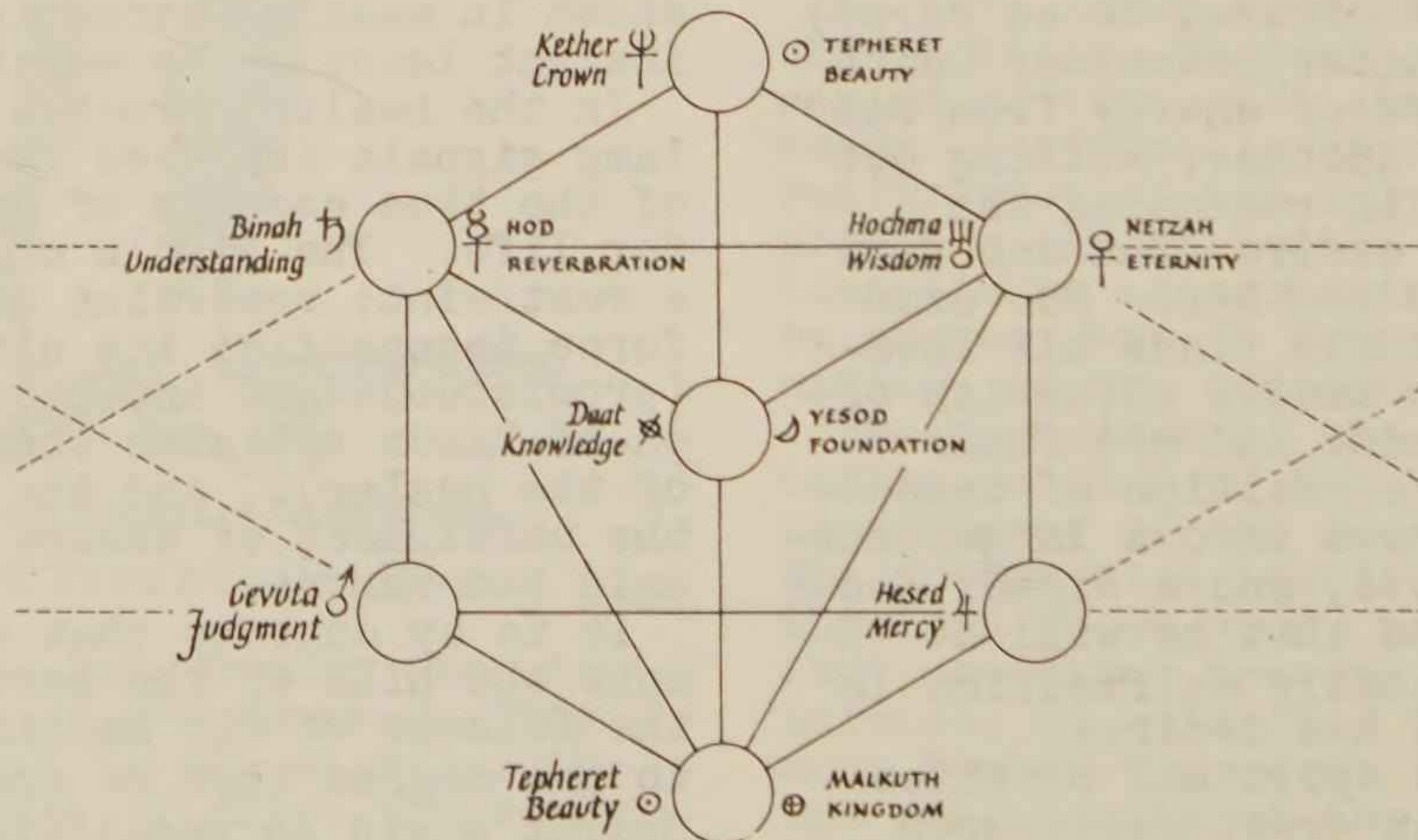
initiates, sustains, and consummates its pure intention in man.

Surrender and sacrifice are the only means of transportation into this sublimely healing sphere. This is expressed in the Confiteor normally used at the Eucharist in our diocese: "Here is my mind; I spread it out before Thee. . . Here is my heart; it is Thine only . . . Here is my body; I cast it down before Thee!"

When folded up, a correctly proportioned Cross becomes a Cube, another traditional symbol of this Sphere. Biblically, the cube is the form of the Holy of Holies and the Heavenly City of the Apocalypse. One wonders: when Jesus said, "Take up thy cross and follow me," was He implying, "Fold up thy cross and thou wilt have the equilibrium of Heaven, thou wilt enter the holy of Holies, and thy feet shall tread upon the serpent, as have Mine!"

Next Issue:

"BALANCING MERCY AND SEVERITY"



World Events Cast Their Shadow on Time

The Fatima Secret

Recently, an ex-monk of the Roman Catholic Church hijacked an Irish airline passenger jet. He demanded that the Roman Pontiff, Pope John Paul II, release the "Fatima Secret" to the world. The Pope did not respond to this request, but the hijacker was captured without there being any injury to anyone involved. Our concern lies not with the sorry spectacle of terrorist activities, no matter how exalted the motivation might be, but rather with the demand for the revelation of the famous Fatima Secret. This "Secret" is contained in the message Our Lady Mary gave to three children in 1917 in the parish of Fatima, Portugal.

It was on July 13th, 1917, during what is now called the "third apparition", that the Blessed Lady confided to the children a secret message, forbidding them to tell anyone. The "secret" consists of three parts, according to the remaining survivor of the three children, Sister Lucy, who is now a Roman Catholic nun. The first two parts were concerned with Hell and Devotion to Our Lady.

Apparitions of Our Lady are certainly not new. Gregory the Wonderworker (213-270 A.D.) a bishop, was the first recorded individual to experience an apparition of Our Lady. Modern apparitions of Our Lady (the last one occurred at Garabandal, Spain, in 1961) have centered on prophecy and their message has been both consistent and clear: we are near the hour of Divine Judgement. Christ's Kingdom is very near at hand. Possibly it was this fact that motivated the misguided monk to commit his desperate action.

Why did he demand that the Pope release the secret? Because it was to the Popes that the secret had been entrusted.

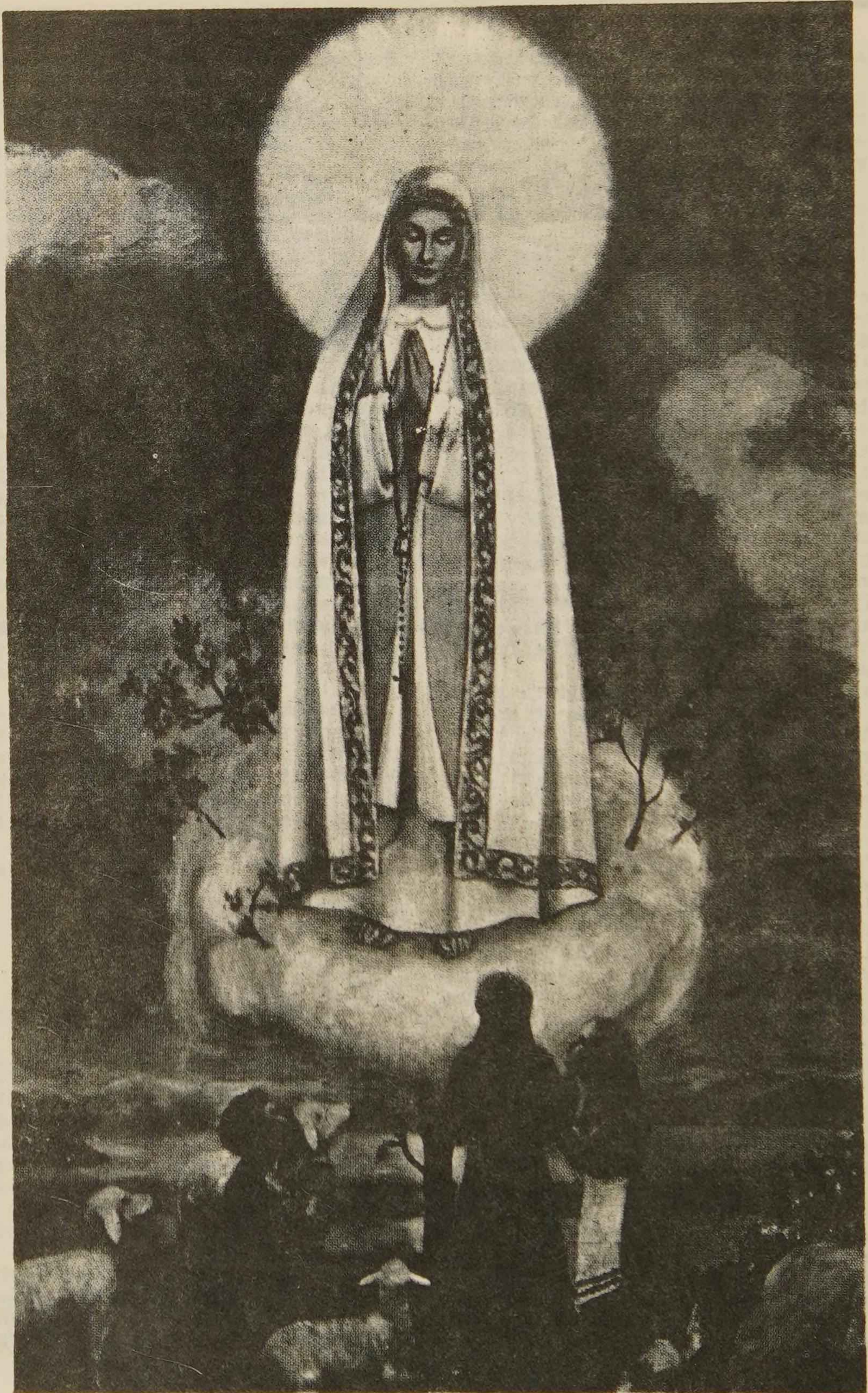
It was at Fatima, on October 13, 1917, that what is now called the "greatest modern miracle" took place. While 70,000 persons watched in utter shock, the sun, whirling like a huge fire-wheel, appeared

to plunge toward the earth. This terrifying vision, which sent thousands to their knees begging for mercy and deliverance, and inspired a modern-day motion picture of the event, was the culmination of a series of messages and "miracles". Our Lady, in her messages, predicted World War II, the rise and danger of Communism, and our present world wide chaos! But most important of all she predicted another war, a war so terrifying that the popes who have been entrusted with the "secret" portions of the messages refused to release it to the world. Hence the urgent need that drove the ex-monk to his act of desperation wherein he attempted to blackmail the Pontiff into revealing the secret!

No doubt the ex-monk was not aware of the fact that the "secret" had been published by German and French newspapers over twenty years ago. The German newspaper "Neues Europa" published the first extract from the message of Fatima on Oct. 15, 1960. The French paper, Le Monde et la Vie shortly thereafter published the following:

A WARNING TO THE WORLD

Our readers know that, at the specific request of Lucia, the young visionary, one part of this secret was not to be revealed until 1960, John XXIII, contrary to expectations, THOUGHT IT ADVISABLE NOT TO REVEAL IT TO THE WORLD. Why? At the moment, at any rate, it was impossible to answer this question. On the 15th of October, however, the newspaper "Neues Europa", of Stuttgart, Germany, published a survey which we the Le Monde et la Vie of Paris, reproduce hereunder in its entirety. The Paris newspaper reasonably wondered whether the official sources on which German "Neues Europa" depends to guarantee the authenticity of the Secret of Fatima



are reliable. The answer to this question may be yes, for the following reasons:

1. "Neues Europa" is a serious-minded newspaper which values its good reputation and its influence. Its readers would not have tolerated the director's misleading them on such a serious matter.
2. Before directly implicating the Vatican Secretariat, had the director of "Neues Europa" been assured that the Secretariat would not issue a denial? In any event, NO SUCH DENIAL HAS BEEN ISSUED.

THE TEXT OF "NEUES EUROPA"

In "Neues Europa" of 1st October, 1963, we had already announced to our readers the publication of the following survey: Our Louis Emrich has been able to obtain information of the greatest interest about the third part of the 1960 Message of Fatima. We are in a position to inform our readers of the contents of the third Message of Fatima in extract form, namely, in which it was presented to the diplomats of Washington, London and Moscow.

The "Neues Europa" Version: What "Neues Europa" had already foretold in 1956-58, namely that during the years 1963-65, treaties of world-wide importance would be concluded between the Anglo-Saxon countries and the Soviet Union. This treaty has become a reality with the Agreement of 6th August, 1963 at Moscow, to cease all further atomic experiments in the air, on land, or under water. On that day, more than ninety governments signed the Agreement. The Message impressed diplomatic circles in Moscow.

What is less known is the fact that the Moscow Agreement was a happy result not only of world diplomacy, but of Vatican diplomacy. This was in fact, the first time in the recent history of mankind that, when concluding a political agreement of world importance, essential factors arising from religious matters were taken into account. Pope Paul VI allowed not only Kennedy, but also Khrushchev to read certain parts of the Third Message of Fatima which the Mother of God had revealed on on the 13th of October, 1917, to the little Portuguese visionary, Lucia.

This message is so vital that it deeply impressed the parties concerned in concluding the Moscow Agreement.

Louis Emrich did all he could to lay hands on the original text of the Third Message of Fatima but his efforts were in vain. The Vatican has taken steps to insure that, until further notice the full document will remain a papal secret.

On the other hand, today we are able to give readers of "NEUES EUROPA" in all countries the exact words of the content of the Third Message of Fatima in the form presented to the diplomatic service in Washington, London and Moscow.

The extract from the Third Message of Fatima was also sent personally to President Kennedy, Prime Minister MacMillan and Party Chairman Khrushchev, so as to let them study it in private. THIS FATIMA TEXT PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE SIGNING OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN-RUSSIAN MOSCOW AGREEMENT. The directors of the two blocs of world policy were overwhelmed by its content, just as Pope Pius XII, Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI had previously been. According to gossip filtering from diplomatic circles, the signing of the Agreement PREVENTING ALL FURTHER ATOMIC BOMB TESTS was to a great extent the result of the deep impression created by the extract from the Third Secret Message of Fatima on the diplomatic circles concerned in Washington, London and Moscow. Although this document is NOT THE EXACT ORIGINAL TEXT of the Message of Fatima, as revealed on the 13th of October, 1917, by the Mother of God to the little visionary, Lucia, it contains the ESSENTIAL POINTS of the original. It says:

THE FATIMA SECRET WORDS FROM HEAVEN

"It was the 13th of October, 1917. On that day, the Holy Virgin appeared for the last time to the little visionaries Jacinta, Francisco and Lucia at the end of a series of, in all, six apparitions. After the manifestation of the miracle of the sun at Fatima, the Mother of God revealed a special secret message to Lucia, in which She particularly stated:

THE BLESSED MOTHER'S EXACT WORDS

"Don't worry, dear child, I am the

Mother of God speaking to you and begging you to PROCLAIM IN MY NAME THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO THE ENTIRE WORLD

"In doing this, you will meet with great hostility. But be steadfast in the faith and you will overcome this hostility. Listen, and remember well what I say to you: MEN MUST BECOME BETTER. They must implore the remission of the sins which they have committed and will continue to commit. You ask me for a MIRACULOUS SIGN so that all may understand the words in which, through you, I address mankind. This miracle you have just seen WAS THE GREAT MIRACLE OF THE SUN! Everyone has seen it - believers, and unbelievers, country and city dwellers, scholars and journalists, laymen and priests. And now, in My name, it is proclaimed:

"A GREAT PUNISHMENT SHALL COME TO ALL MANKIND, not as yet today, nor even tomorrow, but IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. What I have already made known at La Salette through the children Melanie and Maximin, I repeat today before you. Mankind has not developed as God expected. Mankind has been sacrilegious and has trampled underfoot the gifts which were given it.

"There is no order in anything. Even in the highest positions, it is Satan who governs and decides how affairs are to be conducted. He will even know how to find his way to the highest positions in the Church. He will succeed in sowing confusion in the minds of the great scholars who INVENT ARMS WITH WHICH HALF MANKIND CAN BE DESTROYED IN A FEW MINUTES. He will bring the mighty ones under his thumb and make them manufacture armament in bulk. If mankind does not refrain, I SHALL BE FORCED TO LET FALL MY SON'S ARM. If those at the top in the world and in the Church do not oppose these acts, it is I who shall do so, and I shall pray God My Father to VISIT HIS JUSTICE ON MEN.

"Then it is that God will punish men, more harshly and more severely THAN HE PUNISHED THEM BY THE FLOOD, and the great and powerful shall perish thereby as well as the small and weak.

"There will also come a time of the hardest trials for the Church. Cardinals will be against Cardinals, and bish-

ops against bishops. Satan will put himself in their midst. In Rome, also, there will be big changes. What is rotten will fall, and what will fall must not be maintained. The Church will be darkened and the world plunged into confusion.

"THE BIG, BIG WAR WILL HAPPEN IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. Then fire and smoke will fall from the sky and the waters of the oceans will be turned to steam - hurling their foam toward the sky; and all that is standing will be overthrown. Millions and more millions of men will lose their lives from one hour to the next; and those who remain living at that moment will envy those who are dead. There will be tribulation wherever the eye can see and misery over all the earth and desolation in all countries.

"The time is continually approaching, the abyss is growing wider, and there is no end. The good will die with the wicked, the big with the small, the Princes of the Church with their faithful, and the sovereigns of the world with their subjects. SATAN'S HENCHMEN WILL THEN BE THE ONLY SOVEREIGNS ON EARTH.

"This will be a time which neither king nor emperor, cardinal nor bishop is expecting, but it will come, nevertheless, in accordance with My Father's Plan, to punish and avenge. Later, however, when those who survive all things are still alive, God and His glory will once more be invoked and will once more be served as He was not so long ago, when the world had not yet been corrupted.

"I call on all true imitators of My Son Jesus Christ; all true Christians and latter day Apostles. THE TIME OF TIMES IS COMING AND THE END OF ALL ENDS, if mankind is not converted and if this conversion does not come from above, from the directors of the world and the directors of the Church. But woe, woe if this conversion does not come about and if all remains as it is, nay, if all becomes even worse.

"Go, my child, and proclaim it! I shall remain always by your side, to help you."

Once more I state that this is not the complete text of the original Message as the Mother of God revealed it on the 13th of October, 1917 to the then small visionary, Lucia, now a

Carmelite; but it is an extract from the Third Message of Fatima as it is being circulated at present in diplomatic circles. I am assured that the real text of the Message is HARSHER AND MORE OVERWHELMING than the extract quoted here. However, there is a possibility of escaping from its conclu-

sions, because IT PLACES THE CONVERSION OF MANKIND BEFORE ITS DOWNFALL. How shall mankind decide? This question remains, before as after, open . . .

Louis Emrich



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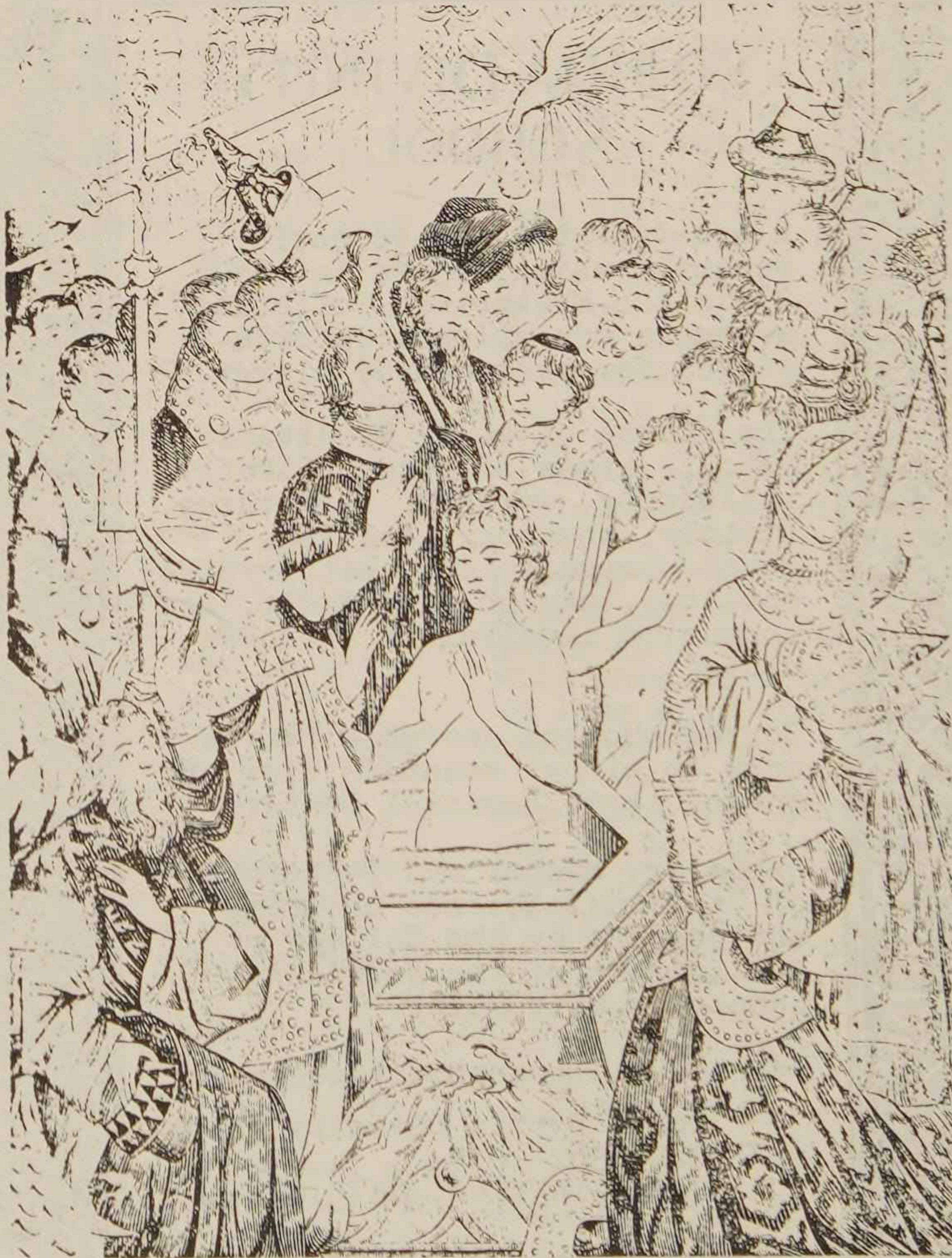
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In the Footsteps of the Master
St. Seraphim of Sarov
Heiromonk of Illumination

by Susan Stoner, HORC



The life of St. Seraphim of Sarov is closely interlinked in the richly tangled history of the Russian Orthodox Church, Hesychaism and Aceticism. We should also note the influence which Western Mysticism exerted on Russia and the Church, for its introduction into the culture played an important part in the life of the Orthodox Saint. All of the above factors must be examined if we are to truly appreciate the peculiar environment surrounding Seraphim's life and times.

The basic acceptance of Christianity under Prince Vladimir (973 - 1015) did much to foster the growth of the religion in a land which at the time was virtually a heathen culture. The male citizenry of Kiev were baptized en masse in 988 A.D. This established Kiev quite early as a special center for the soon to be ruling religious view. During the Vladimir epoch, the Russian and its Greek Mother Church began to define their relations. The Russian Church was established as a special metropolitan See. Futile attempts were made, of course, by Roman Catholic scholars to have the Russian Patriarch become subject to the Pope and many problems later stemmed from the Roman See's continual attempts to meddle in the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. Be this as it may, most of the early religious authorities who dominated the early Russian Orthodox Church were Greeks although two notable Russian born Metropolitans were Hilarion (1051) and Clement (1147).

The Metropolitan was expected to exercise his position as elder, counsellor and spiritual guide to his bishops. Their authority was by no means limited to these roles, however. The Patriarch was the supreme teacher and guardian of the faith and even more importantly, he was the guide in civil affairs. The Patriarch lived in close proximity to the Grand Prince. This became more important as time passed, for the Church's influence played a major role in maintaining the unity of what had previously been little more than a nation of vassal fiefdoms. It thus became part of the interest of the ruler, no matter who that may be, to insure that the Church was protected. Therefore, we find that the relationship between the Church and State remained intimate and the Russian Church

never experienced troubles that the Western Church encountered between the ecclesiastical and secular powers.

It was during the episcopate of St. Hilarion that a general religious trend developed with a great emphasis being placed on asceticism. Kiev, as the established cradle of Russian Christianity and having a large and fast growing number of attached ascetic communities, served as the chief center for the growing piety and spiritual depth of Russian Orthodoxy. Wonderful tales of monastic life, where the spirit ruled over flesh, exploits of visionaries, miracles and the extension of supernatural help in battles against the opposer abounded. The Russian populace flocked to enter the romanticized sacred monasteries, forcing the Church to turn away many. Religious communities became the very center of Russian culture, serving as spiritual havens, educational centers and charitable institutions. Through the educational system (until the 11th century Mongul invasion) much progress was made away from Heathenism.

The aftermath of the Mongul invasion led to a split in the Russian province. (This was acknowledged at the Bishops Council of 1459). With this split, came the creation of a second Metropolitanship at Moscow. The monastery of Sarov was located in this Episcopal See and it, along with the rest of this ecclesiastical district, enjoyed an accelerated growth both materially and spiritually under the protection of the Orthodox government.

Russian monasticism, during the 15th and 16th centuries, began to manifest itself in two very distinct schools or tendencies. One was quite practical and at the same time very politically oriented. It involved itself in the protection and holding of landed properties which were owned by the various monasteries. The other was more critical and ascetic and was led by Nilus Sorskil (1508), who was named after the cell which he founded on the River Sora. This latter group refused any and all communion with the world. Though the former school won official episcopal sanction, the latter permeated a goodly portion of many a communal setting.

The effect of the Sorskil movement can be observed in the life of the great Russian Saint from Sarov. Hes-

ychaism was grafted into both schools as it was the foundation and served as the means whereby the Christian aim could be realized, namely, as St. Seraphim so succinctly said, ". . . the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. . . ." St. Maximus the Confessor (662) confirms this position in his description of the deification sought by every Christian, and especially by every Hesychast: "Man becomes God by deification thereby he experiences a complete abandonment of all that belongs to him by nature . . . because the grace of the spirit triumphs in him and because God alone, manifesting, acts in him." 1

Approaching the 17th century, we find that mysticism has taken a more noticeable shape in the Russian Church. Some scholars may find this statement strange at first glance and might even venture to say that it is at variance with historical facts. Russian Theologian, Dr. Karl Grass, attempts to clarify the existing conflicts. He comments that the Russian cast of mind with its predominantly emotional bent could not but provide a most excellent soil for mysticism. Moreover, the religious spirit of the Russian people is certainly in great measure of a mystical character, while the mystagogical worship of God in the dimly lit Russian Churches is adapted to foster mystical feeling. 2 Still, the dogmatic theologians confirm that there is no straight forward doctrine in the form of a mystical theory. Dr. Grass continues his analysis, making the following points: There is no longer any understanding the mystagogical theory of sacred mind. Devotion literature is ascetic rather than mystically inclined. Theological works continue along traditional Orthodox lines (though there is a noticeable growth in chrysmatic apologists) with ecclesiastical censorship taking precautions to safeguard against foreign views. All this would lead one to wonder if: 1) Mysticism can be part of the Orthodox Church and 2) if the mystical approach tends toward heresy (sects that are branded mystical such as Khlejsti and the Skoptsi (the self-mutilators) are not really mystical from a traditional point of view, for their goal was not toward mystical union with God but rather to use nerve stimulation to bring the Spirit of God down upon them. 3

In reply, let us initially address the first point. One could as easily ponder how a great Christian theologian like St. Augustine could be called a mystic. After all, he was a doctor and authority in a very dogmatic early church. Yet his *Confessions* are professed to be very mystical, which indicates that he had to gain the core of his religion from first-hand experience. A similar case could be argued for Aristotle and most certainly for the experiences of St. Seraphim.

The second point should be addressed from the standpoint of the inherent inabilities arising within the Russian Church itself. Neither mystical sects, religious brotherhoods nor sanctioned theologians have been able to formulate a sufficient theory that would make comprehensible and could correspond to the highly developed religious emotions of the people. Also there is the stark fact that due to the relatively low level of intellectual development, the Church was left unable to engender a theory intelligible for themselves. Still many scholars will defend the Hesychast movement within Russian Monasticism as being the way of Orthodox religious. The argument goes back and forth.

At this point we may also wish to observe what influences there were that injected mystagogy into Russian life, though none had any direct influence or effect on Seraphim. Western culture began to permeate the circles of Russian elite in the 17th century and it was during this period that Western mysticism was ushered into the Slavonic-Mongol regions of the North. Most documentable sources pinpoint the predominate channels of influence on Russian mystico-pietism as being the British Foreign Bible Society, Masonry, and in particular the Order of the Rosey Cross. The Church, through the clergy who were involved in the education systems, was very much imbued with the mystico-philosophies held by the aforementioned groups. Still the Church did not canonize any particular form or method of mystical devotion, but merely sanctioned the holiness of those who spiritually made known the presence of God throughout its history. Not only by their words and abilities but

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also by their becoming living examples of God's power.⁴

As the Russian Church recognized, the true agents of the manifested presence of God are its holy men and saints, and thus much veneration was given to them. As of the middle of the 20th century, only 21 universally canonized saints were venerated by the Russian Church. The process of canonization within the Russian Orthodox Church differs from the rest of the Eastern Church in that a severe inquiry is performed by commission of the Holy Synod which must give the ultimate approval. In the rest of the Eastern Churches this process and decision is made by local bishops. This should give the reader further cause for admiring the greatest Russian Saint and Mystic, Seraphim of Sarov.

Seraphim was born near Kursk, in central Russia in July of 1759. The stories surrounding his life serve as an exemplar of the Russian monastic movement's history. Tales abound of the monk's early life, but the most legitimate sources establish Seraphim (whose worldly name was Prochor Moshnin) as the first known *staretz* or spiritual guide to laymen. Thus Seraphim initiated, unknowingly, a new class or religious within the Russian Church. Hailed as a prophet, seer, mystico-healer, Seraphim, after a childhood illness, found himself drawn toward the religious life and was especially devoted toward the Virgin Mother Mary. This devotion was easily explainable when one realizes that over the course of several illnesses in the saint's life, the Virgin Mary appeared to him and helped to expedite his healing and to confirm that his struggles were not in vain. In these visitations, Mary was generally accompanied by St. Peter and St. John the Divine and she announced on repeated occasions: "He (Seraphim) is one of our family. . . ."

Seraphim entered the Monastery at Sarov shortly after visiting a number of monasteries in the area of Kiev and seeing the relics of a number of saints, at the age of 19. He then served in the various trades required of the monks; maintained his classical studies, including a deep involvement with the *Philokalia* and the practice of the Rule of St. Pachomius, along with following the observation of the

liturgical hours. During his early years in the monastery, he was allowed to seclude himself; and over a 15 year period he proceeded through Holy Orders.

It was during this period that he also experienced angelic visions with ever increasing regularity. These ultimately peaked with Seraphim being engulfed at the Glory of the Son of Man. Soon after this period, he was granted increasing distance from the Monastery. His reclusive nature found human intercourse distracting to his spiritual progress. He took refuge in the woods where he could commune with nature.

The middle and latter portion of Seraphim's life were involved in his gradual withdrawal from much of the common life of the monastery, due to his frail health. Periods of silence adding up to years, a severe ascetic environment, and visions of the Tender Virgin and other angelic forces, continued to manifest and became the focus of his life. The silence was broken in the saint's 66th year when he began to act as the elder to those many people who came to him for guidance and aid in their struggles.

Seraphim's life during this period was characterized by the gift of healing which extended not only to people's spiritual natures but their physical well-being also. It was also during this period that he had a conversation with Nicholas Motovilov "concerning the aim of a Christian life". Author Franklin Jones (Bubba Free John), in his work *The Spiritual Instructions of St. Seraphim of Sarov*⁵ said in describing this portion of St. Seraphim's life, that the holy man ". . . was himself a living prayer" and went on to marvel at Seraphim's ability to infuse the spiritual upon all visitors to his cell. It was this gift of healing that ultimately led to Seraphim leaving his silence.

The following excerpts highlighting Seraphim's abilities are taken from the above mentioned work by Franklin Jones.

"The sickness of M.V. Manturo was complicated beyond the resources of contemporary medicine, but in 1823 Seraphim healed him. The treated man threw himself at the feet of the recluse, but Seraphim restrained him: 'Is it Seraphim's work to kill and to make alive, to bring down to hell and

to raise up again? Nay, son it is the work of the one Lord who does the will of them that fear Him and hears their prayer. To the Almighty Lord and His spotless Mother give the thanks. In 1829 the boy Korsakov went to him almost blind. The saint breathed on the boy and signed him with the sign of the cross. 'Thou wilt be well.' he said. . . . In 1831 Seraphim cured the pious landowner, Nicholas Motovilov, of rheumatism and sores. 'Do you believe', he asked, 'that the Lord Jesus Christ is God and Man, and that His spotless Mother is ever Virgin? Then you are well already.' Seizing Motovilov by the shoulders, he slowly and firmly made him walk; then stopped him. 'That is enough,' he said. The scalded and suffering child, Natalia Evgrafora, dreamed of Seraphim and after her recovery was taken to visit him. 'Aha! the child has come!' he exclaimed; then with surprise he heard of the cure. . . . In May, 1829, the wife of A.G. Voroshilov lay dying and her husband hastened to the elder. The reply was that she must die. Overcome by grief, Voroshilov threw himself at the elder's feet and besought his prayers. Seraphim became lost in mental prayer; then at last opened his eyes and said; 'Come, my joy, the Lord will give thy partner life; go home in peace.' From that moment on the sick woman recovered."

No one was trained by Seraphim formally and so it is difficult to begin to piece together the methods used by the saint to accomplish his elevated state of grace and mystical consciousness. What is written down primarily involves the practice of prayer and in particular the Jesus Prayer (*Lord Jesus Christ. Son of God, be merciful to me a sinner*). Due to its simplicity and uncomplicated nature, the Prayer of Jesus became a very popular devotion. Its use was widespread amongst both monks and secular laity. Many spiritual writers have remarked on the link between the Jesus Prayer, Christian mysticism and the sacramental life of the Christian community. Authors such as St. Symeon the New Theologian and Nicholas Cabasilas should be noted in this vein, as well as the monk of Athos, St. Gregory Palamas. These writers and many others have recommended this prayer as a

starting point for the achievement of the highest mystical states. Even the exoteric advantages of keeping one's mind from distraction have attracted many from everyday life to its practice.

St. Seraphim was noted for having achieved the highest states associated with the practice of the Jesus Prayer. He had even been able, it is reported, to repeat the prayer continuously on a subconscious level. In other words, he had attained what is called in mystical literature, the Prayer of the Heart, a state wherein the prayer is continuously repeated, in sleep as in the waking state and even unto death.

The last portion of Seraphim's life we wish to consider concerns his talk with Nicholas Motovilov, who recorded one of the few documentable conversations of the monk's life. This conversation lent a special humanness to the saint's life and contributed in great measure to the canonization of Seraphim. In his usual fashion, Seraphim drew out Motovilov on those topics which had plagued him in regard to Christianity. The gist of their conversation centered on the indispensable need for each individual to find their own path to salvation either through fasting, prayer, meditation, alms giving, etc.; whatever was expedient in the sight of God. But all of these means were to be directed toward achieving only one end ". . . to acquire the Holy Spirit of God."⁶ Seraphim did much to point out the efficacy of prayer as a sure means for obtaining the Spirit and he instructs his friend:

"Of course, every virtuous act done for Christ's sake gives us the grace of the Holy Spirit, but most of all this is given through prayer; for prayer is somehow always in our hands as an instrument for acquiring the grace of the Spirit. . . ."⁷

Seraphim continues in the conversation to explain how the Holy Spirit is the "fire of grace" which is sealed in Holy Baptism. Still, after a long interchange, the student is unsure and asks St. Seraphim how he can be sure when "he is in the grace of the Holy Spirit. . . .", and how he can recognize his true manifestation. Dramatically, Seraphim takes him firmly

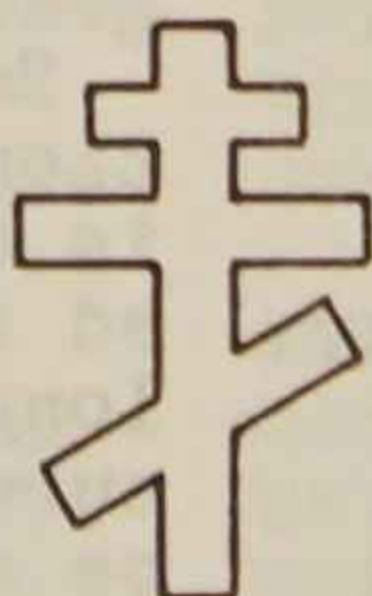
by the shoulders and allows his protegee to experience his divine illumination - which was likened by Motovilov to the center of the sun in its dazzling brilliance.⁸ This type of illumination and the description of the experience of Motovilov is indeed Hesychast in form and in many ways can be likened to similar experiences chronicled by students of Yogic masters. The Spiritual Master can allow the student glimpses of the true illumination through an exercise of his own will. This grace can be given by a guru to their chela; and so Seraphim bestowed this grace on his spiritual child Motovilov. In essence he (Motovilov) was given an opportunity to experience and penetrate into what has been called the Light of Heaven. This light and its acquisition is also to be found in Rosicrucian tradition, as may be noted in works the likes of the *Fama Fraternitatis* wherein can be found a description of the crypt of Father Christian Rosenkreutz which was said to be bathed in a light which issued from a source undetectable to the eyes of man.

Unfortunately, most of Saint Seraphim's life was recorded only in bits

and pieces. His writings are few and some have even suggested that they may have been altered by the Church in order to protect the saint. Still, it is the saints of the Church, from St. Paul who was "raised to the third heaven" down to and including St. Seraphim of Sarov, whose face was illuminated by divine light, who have given us witness to the new life granted to the community of "Just men made perfect". Those who have been so transformed serve as a living and vital link as well as serving as clear examples for all of us to follow on the Path toward reconciliation.

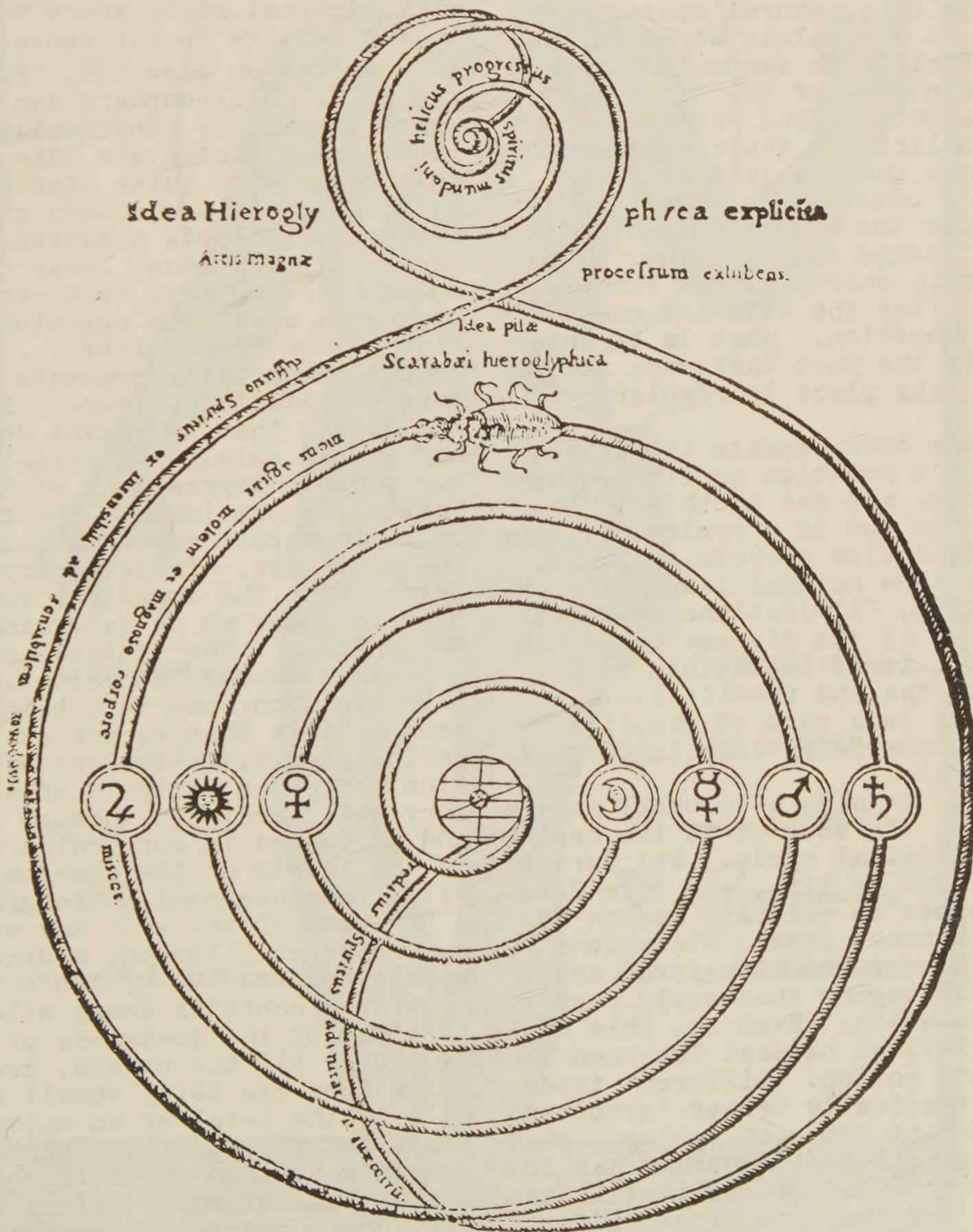
The special task of Eastern Orthodox spirituality is to make known to us the presence of God and to make that knowledge a living reality for all who seek it. The monk from Sarov is but one of a long list of exemplars of the spiritual life; for, ". . . the heart of him in whom flow tears of tenderness is lit by rays from the Sun of Righteousness. . . ." ⁹ Seraphim of Sarov died on January 2, 1833 and was canonized 70 years thereafter.

1. Ambigua, P.G., 91:1076 on St. Maximus. See P. Sherwood, *The Early Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Rome, 1955.
2. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, James Hastings, ed., Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1951, Vol. 6, p. 103.
3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 103-8.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 103-8.
5. *The Spiritual Instructions of Saint Seraphim of Sarov*, Franklin Jones, ed., The Dawn Horse Press; Los Angeles, Calif., 1973, p. 15-16.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 51, 52.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 24.



The Unified Theory of Chiropractic Cycles

by The Most Rev. Dr. Edward C. Sullivan, HORC



Cycles are an easily understandable and significant method of measuring time, progress and natural manifestations.

Those who believe that death is but a transition into life see but another cycle; namely, birth, or life, death and then life again. It is a fundamental law of nature that matter is indestructible. Matter is in constant change. It can change only its form, or nature of manifestation. Thus we have another fundamental law and another example of a natural cycle.

What causes the Palolo worms in the Southwest Pacific to swarm in huge numbers on the nights of the third quarters of the October and November moons in order to liberate their reproductive elements into the sea just as dawn breaks; what causes the grunion to reproduce after the highest tides of the month have passed and to appear along the California shores almost exactly 15 minutes after the tide has crested is not the question. What is of interest to us is the fact that such natural occurrences take place in regular cycles.

Just as the moon repeats its cycle, as the earth's rotation on its own axis is a cycle, and the earth's movement about the sun is a cycle, so, too, does disease follow a cycle. Disease and death follow natural laws. The chiropractic term, "Limitations of Matter" tells us that if the disease cycle has gone too far, it is impossible to interfere with the end result; i.e., death. Death is a part of the life cycle and, conversely, life is part of the death cycle.

Death comes to all, of course; as already stated. To some it is the beginning of a spiritual cycle. But during that brief span of life, the life-force within attempts to maintain health according to natural laws. Violations of these laws hinder the life-force and a disease cycle begins that could result in premature death. Even so, this disease cycle follows natural law when once set into motion. Different types of disease (medically termed 'symptoms') follow different types of cycles - that is why the practice of medicine has followed the particular course that it has.

One might say that the major difference between medicine and chiropractic is that chiropractic studies the cycle

of health and life, and medicine, the cycles of disease and death. Chiropractic deals with a major cycle - not the cycles of disease which are of a minor nature.

The very concept of a cycle disturbs many philosophers since it suggests a closed system which does not allow man to be a free agent. This applies not only on a universal scale, where we find the tide returning without our approval, but, as Wolfgang von Buddenbrock argues in his text *The Senses*, on a personal scale where we find ourselves captive to our senses.

He writes on page 156, "Freedom of the will. Philosophers deal with Man, whose complexity continually poses new questions. Biologists like to deal occasionally with quite simple forms of life, which in most cases give a simple answer to a simple question. In almost every instance, lower forms of animal life respond to a certain stimulus with a certain reaction, a compulsive action if you like . . ."

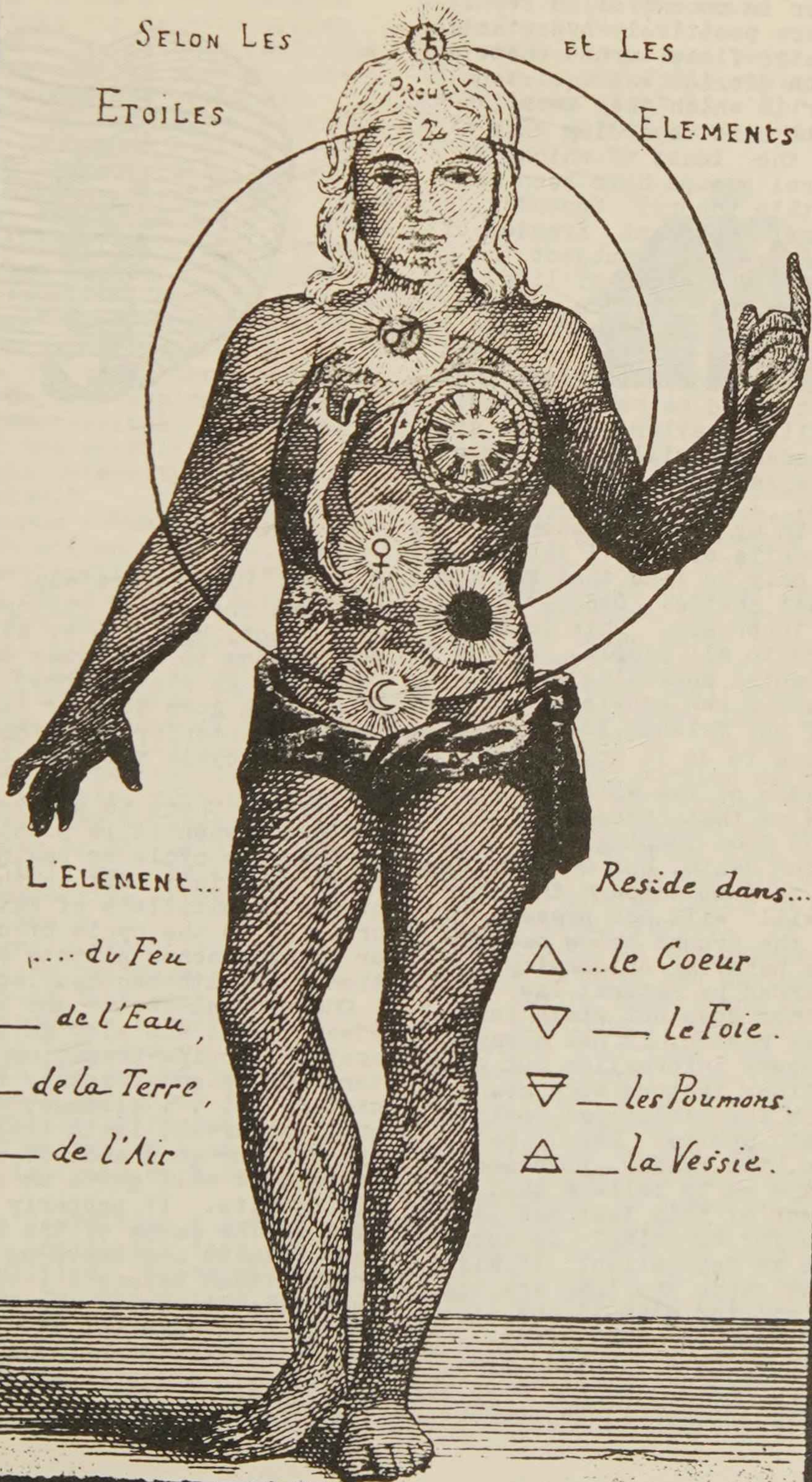
"The human being presents an even more complicated picture. In most of the things that we humans do, we are not guided solely, as animals are, by our sensory impressions of the moment. Various memory images, the sensory stimuli of past moments, pop up before the mind's eye. These memory images together with the immediate sensory impressions act as co-determinants of our actions . . . The outcome of all these processes is our 'decision'. How does this decision come into being? We humans believe that we are at liberty to decide freely, in mastery of the situation, after an analysis of all the sensory data perceived through our senses and processed in our brains . . . This is the thesis of the freedom of the will, pet theory of philosophers.

"Freedom of the will may well turn out to be an illusion, a deceitful mirage conjured up by man's vanity . . ."

"If the conflict among stimuli is resolved by the dominance of one stimulus over all the others, proud Man falls from the lofty summit of free will to the level of an animal which is compelled to react to a certain stimulus in a certain way. If you place a bucket full of water before a group of men, under ordinary circumstances nothing will happen. But if those men have been tormented by thirst for days,

L'HOMME TERRESTRE NATUREL TENEBREUX.

SELON LES ETOILES et LES ELEMENTS



L'ELEMENT...

... du Feu

— de l'Eau,

— de la Terre,

— de l'Air

Reside dans...

△ ...le Coeur

▽ — le Foie.

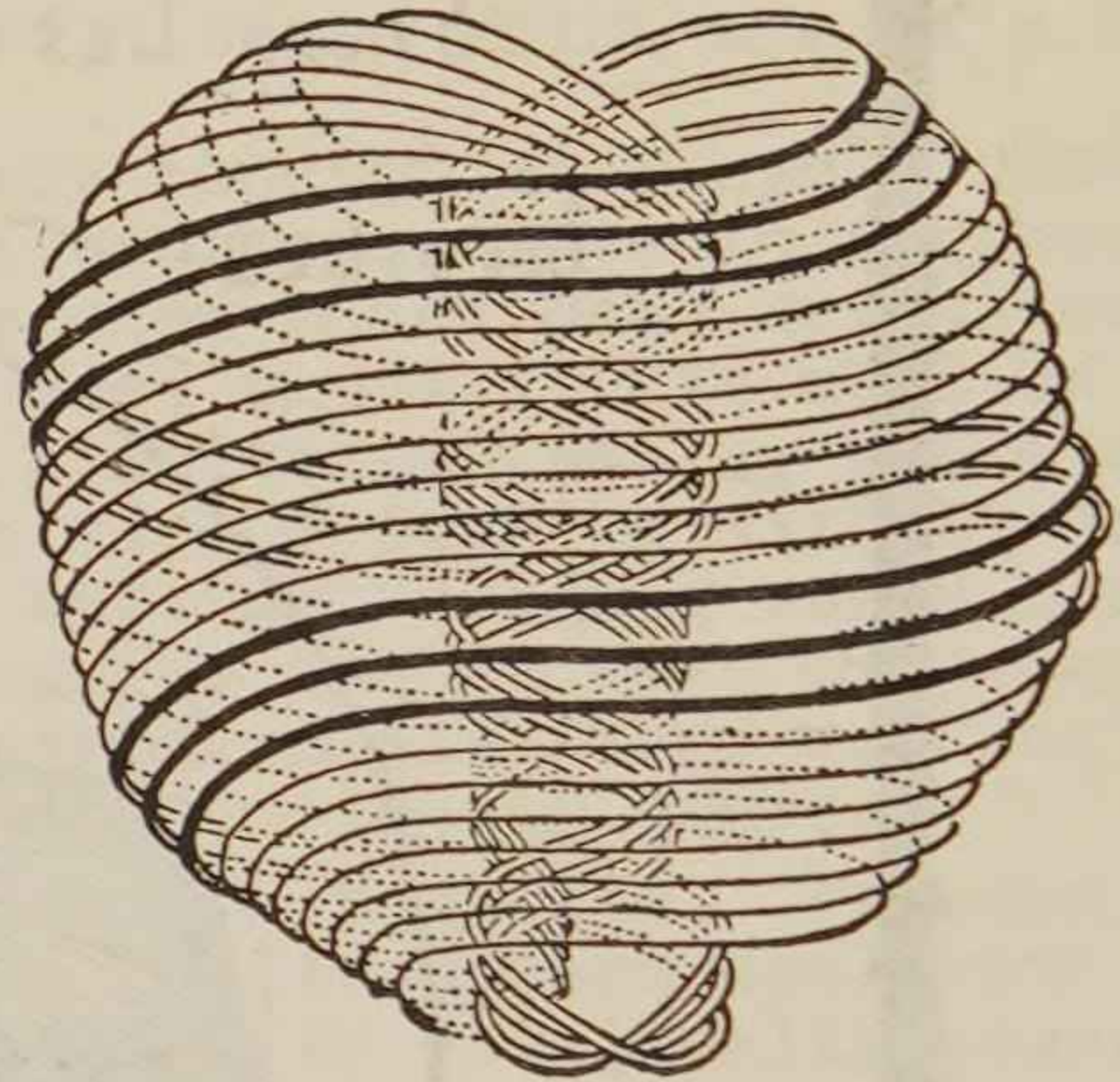
▽ — les Poumons.

△ — la Vessie.

so that their tongues cling to their parched palates, they will race for the bucket of water in uncontrolled frenzy - they will turn positively hydrotactic, even as our water fleas turned phototactic when carbon dioxide was squirted into the water in which they swam."

Much could be said regarding this argument, not the least of which is: how many control groups have been tested to prove this theory? Secondly, and perhaps most important, freedom of will is a relative thing subject to universal laws. The cycle of life, guided by Innate Intelligence, drives men to the water. Life itself would not exist if it were not for universal forces set into motion. The fact that the experiment could be repeated indicates the cyclic behavior, not the absence of "freedom of will". As far as the sensory impressions resulting in our decisions, I can think of numerous examples in my own life when I chose the opposite of what I thought was correct, only to find that my hunch was the correct choice. Other times my hunch was incorrect. This is a common experience to all people. How often have we wanted something so bad that, despite our own knowledge and the advice of our friends to the contrary, we chose to do it anyway? Is this not freedom of the will?

Logic tells us that "freedom of will" may prevent us from jumping off a high building to our death, but once falling (if we chose to jump through the air) "freedom of will" will not prevent us from hitting the ground below because of the cyclic behavior of gravity which is governed by natural law. What the above author does not state is that behavior, like reason, is not always guided by sensory information but often affected by other factors such as, emotion. What is the biological basis of hope? Chance? Desire? Love? Faith? What made you, the reader, purchase this book? Are we to believe that every purchaser of this text had identical reasons for so doing? Is curiosity the same as dedication? It might be argued that those who jump are the victims of distorted stimuli and did not choose to jump in actual fact. And we might agree since a diseased mind, like a diseased organ, is victim to the disease cycle. Yet can it be proven



that all jumpers are such victims? We may have freedom of choice to jump or we may not, but once we have jumped the freedom to stop goes beyond our control. As stated above, if the disease cycle goes too far it is impossible to interfere with the end result since the cycle responds to universal law.

However, there is always a moment in any cycle when it is possible to either reverse the cycle or begin another, and it is this fact that is the foundation of the "Limitations of Matter". A body or organ in the cycle of disease sooner or later reaches a state where restoration to health becomes impossible.

One medical doctor and bacteriologist, Edward Bach, who also gave up his "lucrative vaccine-preparing work" to lecture, write and practice research, once stated, ". . . disease, though apparently so cruel, is in itself beneficent and for our good and, if rightly interpreted, it will guide us to our essential faults. If properly treated it will be the cause of the removal of those faults and leave us better and greater than before . . . let it also be known that in those who understand and are able to read the significance of premonitory symptoms disease may be prevented before its onset or aborted in its earlier stages" (*Heal Thy-*

self, page 8)

It is interesting to the student of chiropractic philosophy that science now tells us that the nervous system follows rhythmic cycles. In fact, the term "reverberatory" is used to describe this neurological mechanism. *The Penguin Dictionary of English* describes "reverberate" as, "send back, re-echo; resound; throw back, reflect; rebound." Another term used is "oscillate". This is defined as, "swing or cause to swing to and fro; vibrate; waver; hesitate; vary between two states". Electronic technicians are often heard to say that AC current oscillates at 60 cycles.

In *Guyton's Textbook of Medical Physiology*, figure 533 shows the "oscillatory output from the respiratory center, showing that progressively increasing stimulation of the carotid body increases both the intensity and frequency of oscillation."

Note what *Guyton's Physiology* has to say on this subject on page 674, "Obviously, a reverberating circuit that never fatigues could also be a source of continual impulses"

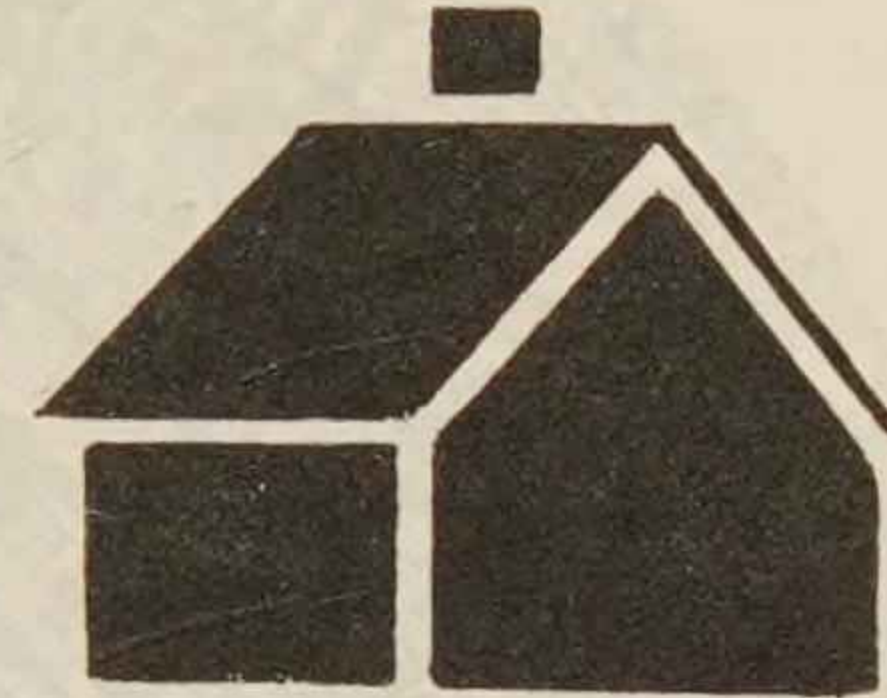
"Many neuronal circuits emit rhythmic output signals - for instance, the rhythmic respiratory signal originating in the reticular substance of the medulla and pons. This repetitive rhythmic signal continues throughout life, while other rhythmic signals, such as those that cause scratching movements by the hind leg of a dog or the walking movements in an animal, require input stimuli into the respective circuits to initiate the signals.

"Rhythmic signals probably result from reverberating pathways. One can readily understand that each time a signal passes around a reverberatory loop, collateral impulses could be transmitted into the output pathway."

It really should not shock the student of chiropractic philosophy to discover that what occurs on a universal or grand scale is found on a smaller scale.

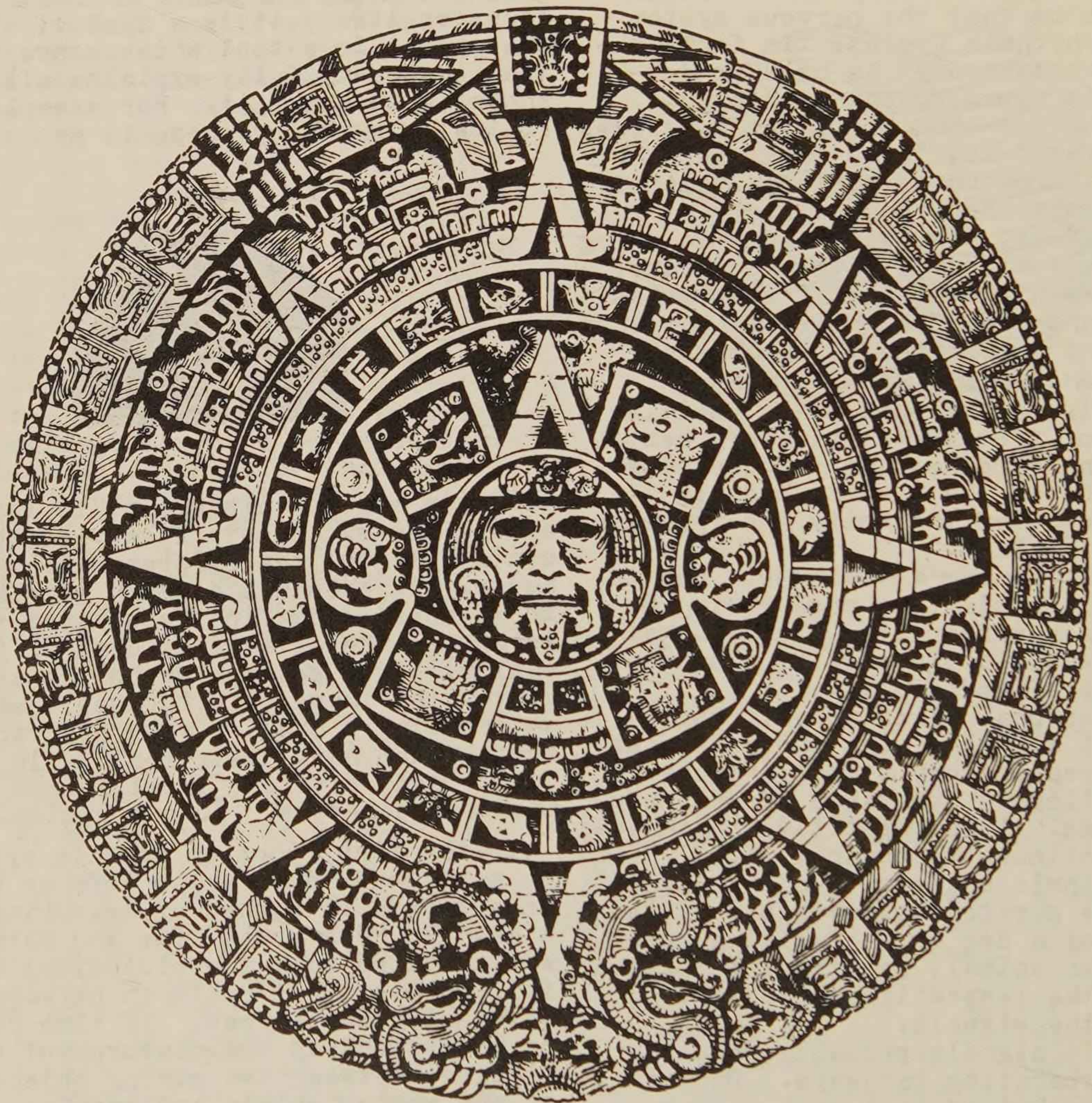
Previously we dealt with B.J.'s "safety pin cycle". Admittedly this cycle is greatly simplified. Certainly it does not include "reverberating circuits", nor does it fully indicate every aspect of the neurological cycle. The importance of the safety pin cycle stems from its ability to relate to an innate truth; it is symbolic of an abstract

truth at that. We are dealing in abstract images, not solid items. After all, matter is the means of communication for life - it is a symbol. That the symbol is a tool which conveys an idea in no way fully explains all the known facts about it. For example, the following symbol represents my house:



Do you expect this symbol to look exactly like my house? I say it represents a truth, the existence of my house. It even has a vague similarity to my house. But in the diagram there is an absence of a great deal of information. Even so, the symbol is able to convey the image of my house. Remember, we are always dealing with abstract truths that have their reality in life. Innate and Universal Intelligence are abstract concepts. So are cycles.

In the first portion of this article we mentioned that cycles form an easily understandable method of measuring time. In "Universal Time and Harmony" we indicated that the biological clock follows a natural cycle in harmony with universal forces. If time could be understood as the measurement of distance between two moving objects, or one moving object and another, moving or stationary, then one is able to understand that time like cycles is an abstract concept. Yet, time does exist, does it not? So do cycles. To some people time exists only in the mind of men. That is to say, only the mind can understand abstract things. But this argument is based on the premise that because something is abstract it is imaginary. To say that God is an abstract concept in this sense is to argue that God does not exist. This argument is similar to the often repeated question: Does a falling object make a sound when there is no one present to hear it? Sound is appreciated only by those capable of hearing it. Sound



waves, on the other hand, are factual (though at one time they were merely an abstract concept!) and present at the point of impact between the falling object and the ground. God, time, Innate Intelligence, and cycles are factual, even though abstract, and our minds allow us to appreciate them as our ears and minds allow us to appreciate the sound waves.

Some cycles that the student should be familiar with are the Blood Cycle, the Serous Cycle, the Nutrition Cycle,

the Respiration Cycle, the Heat Cycle, and of course the Nerve Cycle. If all the steps of a cycle are orderly and normal we have a Normal Cycle. A Compound Cycle is composed of two cycles which are dependent upon each other and work together. A Complex Cycle is two or more cycles combined, also working together and in harmony with each other. An Abnormal Cycle is a cycle that no longer behaves in a normal harmonious relationship with the other cycles of the body.

Cyclic action is an integrated relationship of all life forms and natural phenomena. We see this in many forms, never realizing that we are viewing such action. Our concepts are always self-limiting and our scope of vision very narrow. For example, the Cycle of Respiration is only a portion of a larger cycle of nature. This cycle involves not only man, but other forms of life, including plants and vegetation. Consider also how plant life as well as

man and other forms of life, are in turn dependent on the cyclic behavior of the seasons and you begin to increase your scope of vision.

Man is a part of nature, and his reckless war against it is folly indeed. His reckless attitude toward his environment, the use of pesticides, in fact, the very balance of nature is in danger because of his actions and abuses.



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DOUBLEDAY

Questions and Answers

Question: What does the Order mean when it says, "Christians are not under the Law"? Doesn't it imply that Christians can break God's commandments and sin?

Answer: Ephesians 2:4-6 reads: "God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ - it is through grace that you have been saved and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus."

"We were dead through our sins." This does not mean that we were no longer dead in sins but that we were dead in sins! God's grace (grace means "undeserved kindness") and love extends to all, as they presently are, not what they were, or used to be, or what they will become, or should be - but what they now are. As the Lord Jesus says, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (St. Matthew 5:45)

The "Law" refers to the Law of Moses, which is the name given to the 613 commandments that the Prophet Moses gave to the nation of Israel to obey. This law contains what is also known as the Ten Commandments. The law included moral and ethical precepts as well as ceremonial and sacrificial laws and commandments and even dietary and hygienic regulations.

The Law of Moses was given to Israel and not to anyone else; particularly, it was not given to the Christians. Because Jesus was a Jew he came under the Law of Moses and he obeyed it. And because he obeyed the Law, many Christians incorrectly assume they too must obey and follow the Law. We say incorrectly because there were very important reasons why Christ obeyed the Law, one of which was to

be able to extend salvation to non-Hebrews, who were not under the Law, and the other was to satisfy the Law. The Law promised that anyone who obeyed it completely with no violations whatsoever would have eternal life (Deut. 12:8-12). Since all men are imperfect no one could obey the Law, except one, the Lord Jesus. Thus he attained to the promise of eternal life.

St. Paul argues that just as imperfection and death entered in the world through one man, so could perfection and life enter into the world; and thus Jesus becomes the second Adam.¹ This is also why St. Paul says that Christians are "no longer under the Law!"² The Christian is under God's grace or undeserved kindness; "Undeserved" since by no merit does the Christian deserve God's kindness, rather it proceeds from God because God is Divine Love. Many people, burdened with guilt and self awareness of their imperfections, are unaware of this love or grace. They feel unworthy to approach God or to turn to Him for assistance. Yet all the while God is calling them to Him through the Lord Christ, the very evidence that He is Saving Love.

It is really not a matter of our deciding we are "good enough" to come to Yahweh God. He has already "called" us to Him and claimed us as His own through Christ. Of course, this doesn't mean that we have nothing to do on our part, no changes to make. We should respond to God's call and act on it. We must open our hearts to Divine Love's saving grace and thereby become one with Christ.

Those Christians who insist on the Law instead of God's kindness or grace should accept all the Law, not just the convenient ones or the ones they

like. That means that if they are going to use Leviticus 18:22 to condemn homosexuals, they then are also required to bring all slaughtered animals to Church (Lev. 17:3-4), forbidden to get a haircut (Lev. 19-27), and must put adulterers to death (Lev. 10:10)!!

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Any man who thirsts may come to me and drink"³ and we must not forget that this means "ANY MAN"!

Yahweh's Divine Love condemns and destroys sin or imperfection and evil, not the person, so that the good in us can be saved, purified and thus unfold. No matter how often we slip and fall, God's Love and grace can and will lift us up. This is the true path of spirituality and eternal life and happiness. If we turn to the Lord Yahweh and listen for that inner voice of good, we will surely hear it. We

will also understand that the Love within must unfold and enfold us. It must grow. If we love in Christ, we will cause no harm for we will do all things in and because of Love. We will not need the Law or any laws, but Divine Love to guide us. In this way, we will be God's new creation, making mature and wise decisions and choices. Thus the Order does not imply that Christians can break "God's Commandments and sin". Rather it says that Christians are not under the Law, but God's Love, and must make decisions and actions accordingly. It makes life a little more complicated, and sometimes there aren't easy answers, and it requires Christians to be responsible for their actions. After all, that's the way freedom is; and remember, to a Christian, where the spirit of Christ is there is freedom, not Law!

1. 1 Cor. 15:45.
2. Romans 6:14; 7:1-25.
3. John 7:37.

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The Gnosis and the Orthodox Church



The Blessing Christ (mosaic of the twelfth century)

Clement of Alexandria gives us an interesting derivation of the word *episteme*. 'If we are to consider the etymology of *episteme*,' he observes, 'we will see that it derives from *stasis* (standing or posture), because it enables the soul to stand in the things.' (Stromatesis 1,5) He is implying that a mystical contact is established between the knowing subject and that which is known or cognized. This doctrine of Orthodox gnosticism free

from ontological dualism was reiterated by such modern Orthodox thinkers as Apostolos Makrakis and Nicholas Berdyaev, the latter of whom states in his book *Truth and Revelation* (p. 38): 'Knowledge of truth is not knowledge of something which is alien to oneself, of an object which stands over against one. It is rather communion with it.'¹ In the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament *episteme*, or *gnosis*, is the scientific and esoteric knowledge of

God which He gives to His children, i.e., Seirach 7:16; 8:4. Eusebius A. Stephanou notes that "The English word 'science' does not render the meaning of the Greek term 'episteme' in all its esoteric content as found in classical literature, the Septuagint and in the patristic writings. *Episteme* is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew *binah* which means "in-depth knowledge" in distinction to *gnosis* that conveys the Hebrew *daath* meaning 'secular knowledge'"²

The same author also notes that there is no dichotomy between reason and intellect and the special endowment of *episteme*, since they are both charismatic, originating from a common source. The reason for this is due to the fact that the early Church Fathers, all Orthodox Catholics (the word "Orthodox" means "right knowing" or "right worship"), held that the Holy Spirit held a very important role in the doctrine of illumination.

In fact, the Gnosis, or heavenly knowledge, is the very basis of the Catechesis. All Orthodox theologians speak of the Catechesis as divine and sacred and consider it the knowledge of salvation. The Catechesis that imparts the knowledge or gnosis of salvation and eternal life is the same knowledge that filled the house where the Apostles had gathered at Pentecost which is recorded at Acts 2:1-4.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were with an accord in one place. And suddenly there came an echos (sound) from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

According to this scriptural passage the word Catechesis signifies the language of the Church that echos (sounds) which came down from Heaven on Pentecost. It symbolizes the speech of the tongues of fire which illuminated the multitudes in the gnosis or divine knowledge.

Those who are catechized and enlightened by the sounds and utterances of the Holy Spirit know God. The catechesis from Heaven, according to Orthodox theology, causes those who are instructed to ascend into the Heavenly Kingdom,

transporting them out of death into eternal life to rule with Christ. The lesson of the Holy Catechesis presupposes a catechist and one who is catechized. The catechumen is the one who is catechized. The true catechist, hence must be a gnostic in the truest sense of the word.

In Western Christendom it is often stressed because of certain early Christian gnostic sects or divisions that gnosticism is a heresy. However, it is quite clear from even a casual examination of Eastern Christianity, often called the Orthodox Church, that gnosticism is very much a part of Christian thought.

"Orthodoxy" and "Orthodox" reflects a conservative character which is frequent in the realm of mysticism. The early Church was Eastern, and very conservative in its mysticism. The early mysticism of the Hebrews was a theosophy or God Wisdom, a gnosis. It eventually became the central preoccupation of Essenian thought. There is strong historical evidence to indicate that this mystical theology was adopted or evolved into what is now called early Christian thought. Originally the Essene teachings looked for the Messiah or Christ (Greek for "Anointed one") of Israel, but the doctrine evolved into a more universal or Catholic doctrine. The Christ would not just "save" Israel, but the entire world! St. Paul, in particular, emphasized this doctrine, but claimed to do so under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. St. Peter, who at first openly opposed the doctrine, later accepted it, likewise claiming that the Holy Spirit affirmed that such a doctrine was true. Later this Jewish and then Catholic doctrine with all of its ramifications would be known as the Cabalah.

The word "Cabalah" does not appear in the Bible per se, but it is quite apparent that the dogma of the Cabalah is there in its complete form. Cabalists of the 11th and 12th centuries, and later, others, would develop a technical "jargon" to explain the dogma utilizing diagrams and other esoteric symbols. We need not go into this development at this time. It should suffice to say that this claim can be fully established by a careful examination of both the dogma of the Cabalah as well as Holy Scripture.

What is essential for our present consideration is the obvious historical

fact that within the early Church, the Orthodox Church, a Catechesis or doctrine of Gnosis with all its esoteric ramifications existed. In the two great schools of Orthodoxy, Alexandria and Antioch, this assertion is fully supported by even a cursory examination.

St. Gregory of Nyssa speaking on the dogma of the Trinity Mystery, a definite Cabalistic doctrine, shows no hesitation in stating that the dogma is in accord "with the exact standard of rational episteme."⁴

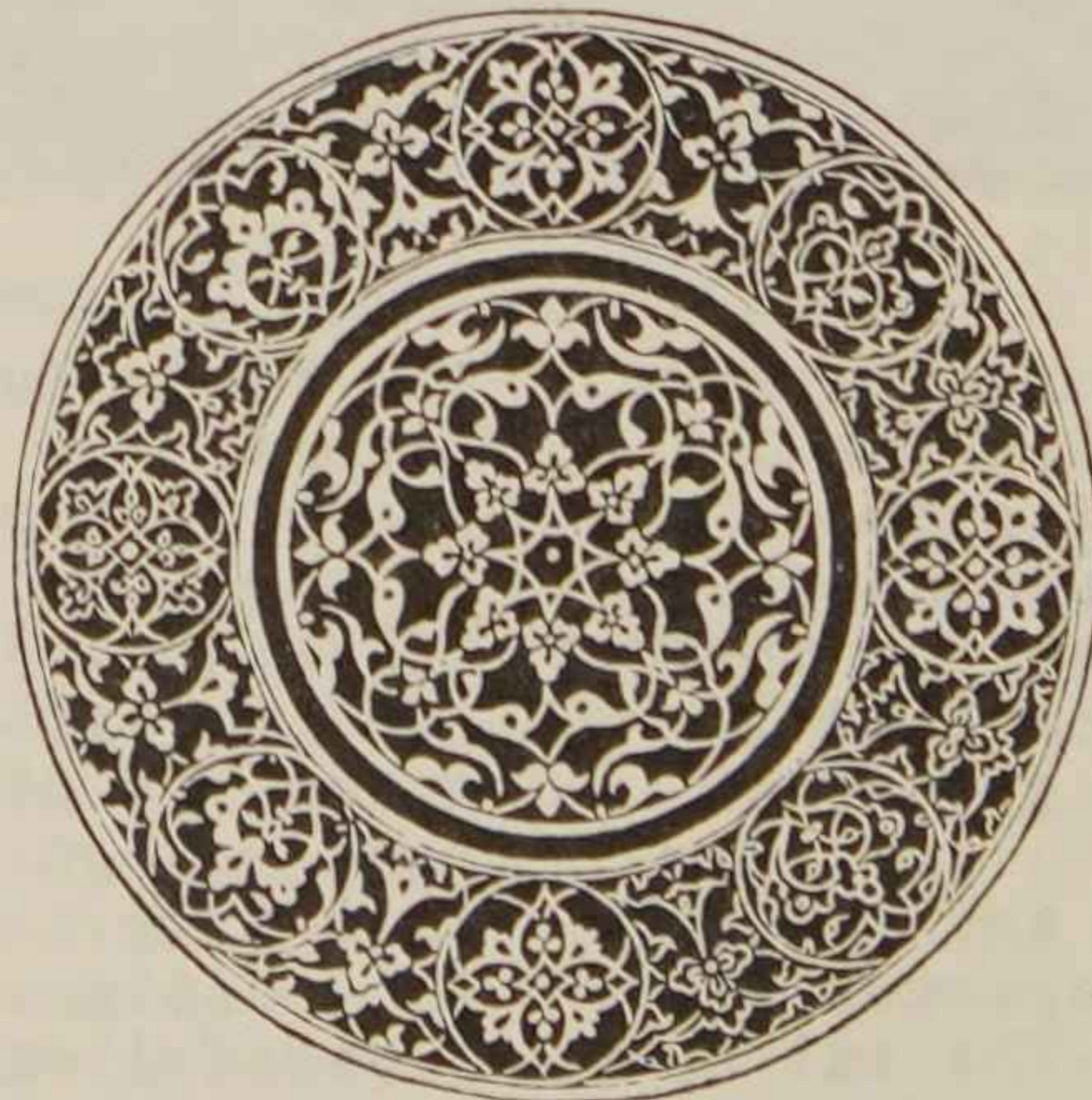
Epistemology is known in the Greek as gnosiology. Stephanou notes that ". . . the scriptural and patristic understanding of episteme was somehow lost in oblivion somewhere along the way. A departure from the original conception of episteme is evidenced especially at the time of Greek emancipation from Ottoman subjugation. Scholarship was mistaken then for episteme . . . Emphasis was shifted from the essence of Orthodox thought to its outward expression, methodology and history. Scholarship was regarded as the ultimate criterion of sound theology."⁵

Stephanou further argues that true "Orthodox teaching of divine imminence

and divine indwelling, affirms that reason is in principle an infallible guide in the soul's quest for truth to the degree that it maintains its communion with the fullness of the Holy Spirit."⁶

We have quoted extensively from Stephanou who is the Editor of *The Logos* magazine which serves the charismatic renewal in the Orthodox Church because we believe he has something important to say regarding our subject and also because, like the AROHN and the Holy Order of the Rose and Cross, he reflects what we consider to be a growing interest in the Gnosis and Charisma. This may also be said in part concerning Western Christianity and particularly the Independent Catholic movement, which includes a small multitude of Churches. We can only hope that this interest will continue for the measure of Gnosis, of the divine knowledge, the Wisdom of God, the Mind of Christ, is identical to the amount of spiritual growth among the members of the Body of Christ (the Only Holy Apostolic Catholic Church).

1. Eusebius A. Stephanou, *Charisma and Gnosis in Orthodox Thought*, p. 16.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 15-16.
3. Echos (*ecos*) is the Greek word meaning "sound".
4. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Discourses*, 11.
5. Stephanou, *Op. cit.*, p. 23.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.



Study Questions

[Editor's Note: Once each month the members of the HORC temples meet for one hour to study one of the designated AROHN articles prepared by the Education Committee of the HORC.]

1. What is the literal and mystical meaning of the word *episteme* as St. Clement of Alexandria and the Wisdom literature of the Bible uses it?
2. Explain Acts 2:1-4 in the context of what the Orthodox Church calls the "Catechesis".
3. What is the difference between the Eastern Orthodox view of Gnosis and the Western view?
4. Can the view that early Jewish mysticism, particularly the Cabalah, be directly related to the Orthodox view of Gnosis and if so, how?
5. What is author Stephanou concerned about and argues for?

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The Technique for Spiritual Regeneration



Isaiah

Prayer . . . for many this word brings to mind memories of tedious repetition of meaningless phrases in church; still others think of the delayed beginnings of their evening meals. To some the term has no meaning whatsoever. On the other hand, there are people whose entire lives are permeated by prayer and who attribute to it the most exalted and sublime concepts and results. In this study we wish to examine the nature of prayer

and determine, possibly, what its role in the spiritual life might be.

Eleazar ben Judah of Worms noted that "the root of prayer is that the heart rejoices in the Love of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: 'Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord', which is why David used to play on the harp."¹ It is this attitude which has filled the writings of countless mystics, saints and followers of the spiritual disciplines of cultures

and religions throughout the world when addressing the topic of prayer. For those souls who are immersed in the God-centered life, no tool is as indispensable to the development of higher consciousness than prayer, for it is seen as both a path and a means whereby the hidden worlds, and even God, can be reached.

In the Hebrew scriptures three terms can be found which convey certain aspects of the overall concept of prayer. *Tiphillah* (תפילה), *Tehinnah* (תחנון) and *Bahkashah* (בקשה). *Bahkashah* is used at Ezra 8:21 and Daniel 1:8 to mean "to ask", "seek from", or "request". It can also mean "petition" (Est. 5:3,7,8). This latter meaning also carries an implication of seeking "the King's face", or to "see the face of God" (Josh. 11:20 Ezra 9:8), or it can be translated as being "supplication" (Ps. 6:10; 55:2; 119:70). *Tiphillah* is the term most commonly defined as "prayer" (Ps. 4:2,6,10; 109:4) but also carries the connotation of "a hymn" or "a sacred song".

The Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures employs the Greek word *Prosemchie* (προσευχη) as being synonymous to *Tephillah*. *Prosemchie* is commonly translated as "prayer addressed to God", but there is more to this word than its literal meaning. This word is both a noun and a verb, i.e., "a prayer" and "to pray". Beyond that, when combined with the word "ecos" (οικος), as in the phrase *ecos prosemchie*, it means a "place or house of prayer" and at Acts 13:13,16 is used as a synonym for synagogue. *Ecos* literally means "house" or "home", but it is related to the English word "echo". Thus we might loosely view this phrase as being the return of sound to its source, or in this case, prayer to God is the creative sound or word (*logos*) returning to its source. Perhaps it was with this in mind that Thomas Merton said, "In prayer we discover what we already have . . . Everything has been given to us in Christ. All we need is to experience what we already possess."²

As we study the nature of prayer, we find that over the centuries there has been an evolution - both in form and in content. This is intimately linked to the understanding of those who have employed prayer in their spiritual or religious lives. Older forms of prayer appear to be more ritualistic and less personal than later formulas. In those

times, prayer was seen for the most part as a means of attracting the attention of the deity. This led to the elaboration of the ceremonial aspects of ancient worship, taking the focus from the individual and focusing it on rites, songs, dances and sacrifices. Most of these traditions utilized little in the way of informal personal worship. Prayer and religion were the province of the priesthood and prayer was one of the arts of priestcraft. For that matter, God (or the gods) was the concern of the religious pundits, and it was they who were to be consulted when the individual had need of recourse to divine intervention or interaction.

We cannot state with certainty when this general attitude changed, for though the greater masses had their spiritual channels outlined and prescribed by the ecclesiastics of their time, we can always point to the exceptions that have appeared throughout history. In the time of David, the author of many of the Psalms, the vast majority of the nation of Israel no doubt left the religious practices to the Levitical priesthood. Yet David's songs of the heart have long stood as a monument of one man's personal prayer life, his interaction and communication with God, without the benefit of priest, intermediary or sharply delineated format.

Since the Protestant Reformation, the practice of private devotions and prayers has become far more prevalent in the Western world. What was once the province of the trained priesthood or professional religious has now blossomed into the solace of many. In some traditions and churches the ritual aspects of prayer have been replaced with "charismatic" or "spirit inspired" ejaculation. This modification of ritualism has been counterbalanced, if not replaced, by a conception of prayer as an act of "intimate communion" between God and the individual. Interestingly enough, this was the attitude common to the early Fathers (both East and West) of the Catholic Church as is evidenced by St. Basil when he states, ". . . Peace is the beginning of the purification of the soul, . . . For, the mind when not wasted on outward things, or led astray by the world of the senses, turns inward on itself, and through this ascends to the thought of God, . . ." ³ We should also note the words of St. John Chrysostom,

"Prayer is indeed a great and blessed thing, since by means of it we speak with God."⁴

Prayer may take many forms: vocal, silent (mental), ejaculatory or occasional, private or public, for ourselves or for others. It can be invocatory, petitionary, or simply praising. We can ask for things or ask to avoid them. It can be simple or complex, but most important of all, it must be sincere, for, "He who truly prays, cooperates with God internally, while externally he produces good fruit."⁵

For most people the hardest aspect of prayer is the matter of what form they should employ. Where should they start? Jesus, when asked, said, "When you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites . . . , go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place In your prayers do not babble as the pagans do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard So you should pray like this: 'Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us. And do not put us to the test, but save us from the evil one,'" (Matt. 6:5-13, Jerusalem Bible).

If we read the Gospels closely we will see that ordered explanation of prayer and the development of the consciousness associated with its use is presented to us. In Matthew 6:5-9 we are given an introduction to prayer. Verses 9-14 show us a form of prayer and Matt. 7:7-12 indicates how we might succeed at and develop effective prayer. Mark 14:32-42 shows us that repetition and perseverance are integral parts of prayer as does Luke 11:5-14. Luke 18:1-8 tells us of how necessary it is to "pray continually and never lose heart".

The Gospel of John gives us our first instructions in what is called the "prayer of the heart" (John 4:5-25). John 15:4-8 explains the power, might and necessity of inward prayer, while John 16:23-25 gives us the key of prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Chapter 17 is sometimes called the "Priestly Prayer of Christ" and serves as a landmark of inestimable worth to those who are studying the nature of prayer.



Leaving the Gospels, we now turn to the writings of the Apostles where we will find much to enlighten us on the properties (or gifts) of prayer. At Acts 4:31 we discover that we should be diligent in the constant exercise of prayer, for from it shall we obtain many wonderful results. This theme is repeated for us at Chapter 16:25,26 where the fruits of constant prayer are revealed. James 5:13-18 exhorts us to pray in all circumstances, while Jude 20,21 and Romans 8:26 show us how the Holy Spirit helps us to pray. Ephesians 6:18 states that we should "Pray all the time . . . in the Spirit on every possible occasion". At Phillipians 4:6,7 we are told prayer will lead to peace and calmness. Lastly, we are shown that we must "pray constantly" (1 Thess. 5:17) and for all mankind (1 Tim. 2:1-5).

Needless to say, the above is by no means an exhaustive listing of all of the scriptural passages related to prayer, but it should serve as a basic outline of some important biblical concepts related to our subject.

Faith is an essential part of true prayer. In fact, there are those who say that effective prayer cannot take place without faith. St. Clement of Alexandria, one of the great proponents of the Gnosis and gnostic thought, said, "Certainly prayer is a test of the attitude of the character towards what is fitting."⁶ While Manly P. Hall has written that "Form and word are less important than the genuine statement

of faith made either audibly or silently, and it is assumed the Deity ever-mindful of the needs of his children, will be attentive to all honorable and honest petitions."⁷ When Jesus walked past the two blind men, as we read at Matthew 9:27-31, He heard them cry, "Jesus, son of David, have mercy." We cannot doubt that He was filled with mercy, yet before He cures them He asks whether they believe (i.e., have faith) that He is able to heal their infirmities. After they had answered in the affirmative they were healed. Such was also the case with the centurion's servant. First came the affirmation of faith, then the healing. In this latter case, Jesus was so moved by the centurion's faith that He declared, "I tell you solemnly, nowhere in Israel have I found faith like this" (Matthew 8:5-13). Remember the words of the Apostle James, "The prayer of faith will save the sick man and the Lord will raise him up again" (James 5:15).

With all of the above in mind, let us turn our attention to what many Christians, especially those in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, have found to be among the most powerful of prayers: the Jesus Prayer. This prayer is so simple that it appears at first glance to be almost too good to be true. However, it has over the centuries proven to be among the most powerful and efficacious. It draws its inspiration from the scriptures and especially from the statement found at John 16:23-26, "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and so your joy will be complete."

The name of Jesus is the most ancient form of this invocation. Now when we speak of the invocation of the name of Jesus we are referring to the petition of the Name itself. In its earliest form, the Jesus Prayer consisted simply of frequent repetitions of the Name Jesus itself. As time went by, this was changed to "Jesus have mercy". In the modern Mass celebrated by many Catholic churches this tradition is found in the phrase *Christie eleison* (Christ have mercy). Still later the prayer became "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me". Today many practitioners of this spiritual technique say, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy

on me, a sinner". These last words are a very late development in the history of the Jesus Prayer. Members of the HORC who wish to begin using this prayer are encouraged to use either "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me" or "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me".

There are few restrictions where this prayer is concerned. There is no set posture or time when the Jesus Prayer should or must be done. It may be pronounced audibly or mentally, both being real invocations of the Name. As with all spiritual disciplines, the more regular your practice the greater the results. Therefore we might suggest that you start with a program of ten minutes of verbal repetition in the morning and ten minutes of mental repetition in the evening. Your repetitions can be either fast or slow, though the traditional way has been to do it slowly. Many practitioners have found that by tying the prayer into the rhythms of both their heart and their breathing, the power of the prayer is expanded. As time goes by you can increase the length of time you devote to your prayer. In the meantime, invoke the prayer as often as you feel the desire during the day. Should you wish, you can even do it continually, but, as with everything, caution is a good principle to keep in mind. More information about this prayer and its effects can be found in *The Way of a Pilgrim* (translated by R.M. French) and *On the Invocation of the Name of Jesus* by a Monk of the Eastern Church.

In closing, let us consider the following quote from Jacob Boehme:

"By what means can man effect the process of his spiritual regeneration? . . . All that man can do is to employ the powers which he has received from God for the purpose that there may be no impediment created by his self-will which might prevent the action of the Holy Spirit within his own soul. To accomplish this he must rise by the aid of the divine Spirit within himself above the inferior elements within his own nature, and thus surrender his whole self-will to God, an act which is expressed in the original meaning of the word 'prayer'."⁸

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1. Eleazar ben Judah, *Sefer Raziel*, Medzibezh, 1818, p. 96.
 2. Thomas Merton, quoted in *Thomas Merton, Monk*, Br. Patrick Hart, ed., Image Books, Garden City, 1976, p. 96.
 3. St. Basil, "Constitutiones Monasticae", Ch. 1, in *Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, M.F. Toal, ed., Henry Regnery Co., Chicago, 1958, Vol. 2, p. 384.
 4. St. John Chrysostom, "Eclogue on Prayer", 2, *Ibid.*, p. 391.
 5. Jacob Boehme, *Prayer*, xxiv.
 6. Clement of Alexandria, "On Spiritual Perfection", in *Alexandrian Christianity*, Henry Chadwick, ed., The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 120.
 7. Manly P. Hall, *Cabalistic Keys to the Lord's Prayer*, PRS, Los Angeles, 1964, p. 2.
 8. Jacob Boehme, *Regeneration*, 1.
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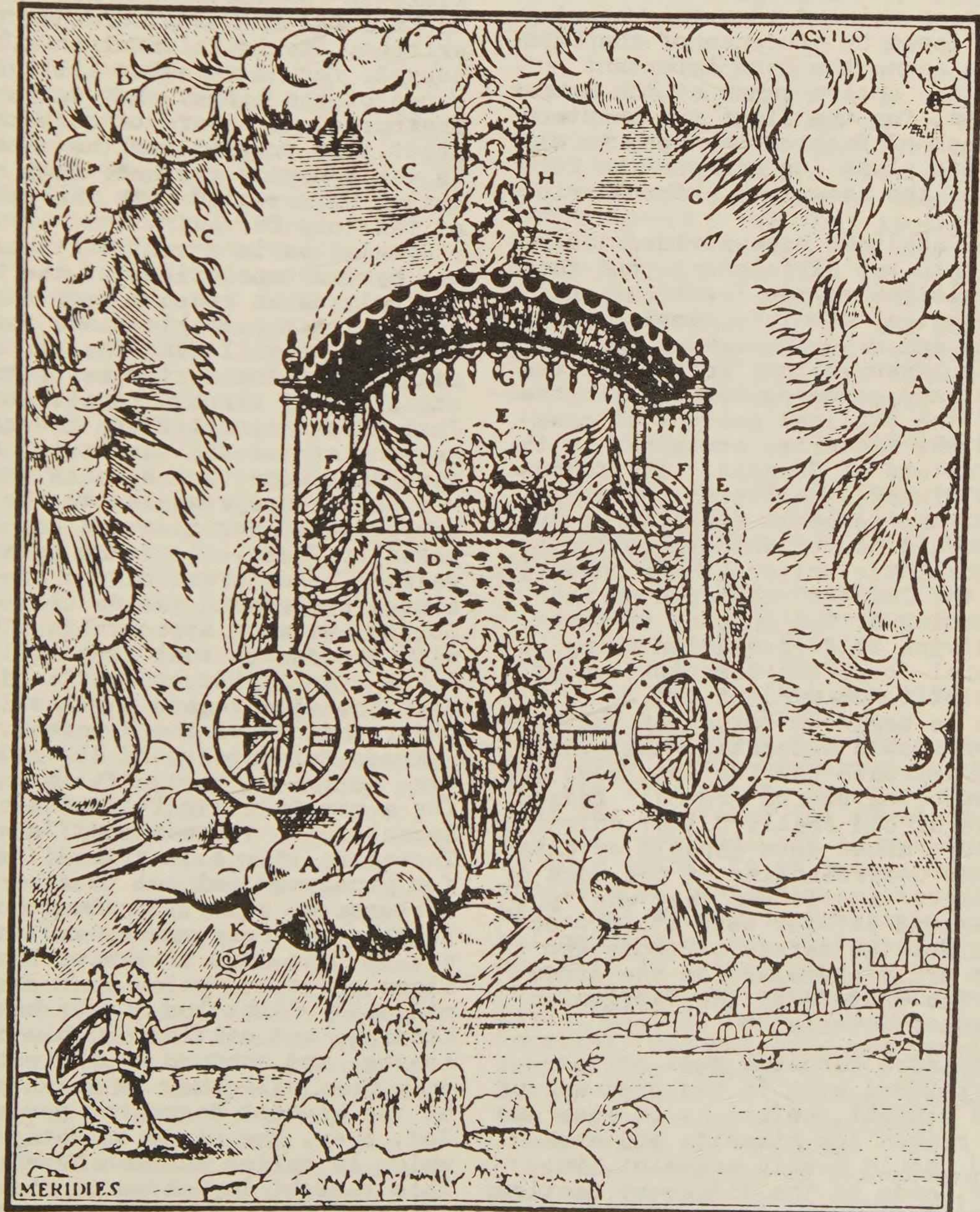


Study Questions

[Editor's note: Once each month the members of the HORC temples meet for one hour to study one of the designated AROHN articles prepared by the Education Committee of the HORC.]

1. For those souls immersed in a "God-centered life, why is prayer indispensable to the development of higher consciousness?
2. What terms (and their aspects) can be found in the Hebrew scriptures to convey the overall concept of prayer?
3. Over the centuries there has been an evolutionary process taking place in both the form and content of prayer. Discuss these processes.
4. Most individuals have their greatest difficulties with prayer in that they know not what forms to employ. How, then, did Jesus ask his followers to pray? What instructions might we find in the Gospels and Epistles?
5. What graces or gifts might the religious obtain through prayer?
6. What evidence can be found to support the statement that ". . . Faith is an essential part of prayer. . ."
7. Is the Jesus prayer a form of invocation? How can we use the Jesus prayer as a spiritual technique?

The Chariot of God



THE VISION OF EZEKIEL.

From *The "Bear" Bible*.

In the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month as I was among the exiles on the bank of the river Chebar, heaven opened and I saw visions from God . . . the word of Yahweh was addressed to the priest Ezekiel . . . in the land of the Chaldeans, on the bank of the river Chebar."

Ezekiel 1:1-3

The words of the prophet Ezekiel and the chapters which follow this opening are considered by students of the Cabalah to be among the most important found in the entire canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, for the first ten chapters of the Book of Ezekiel lay open to all who wish to plumb its secrets the full mystery of the *Mercabah* - the Chariot of God.

Jewish Cabalists have divided their subject into two divisions beyond those outer divisions of the Practical and the Theoretical Cabalah; namely *Ma'aseh berashith* and *Ma'aseh mercabah*. The former is known as the "Account of the Creation" and concerns itself with the study of the Biblical account of creation and the mysteries contained in the first chapters of Genesis. The famous Cabalistic work, the *Pirkei D'Eleazar*, is one of the foremost examples of such inquiries and has often been quoted by other Cabalistic writers. The "Description of the Chariot" centered on the understanding of the problem of theophany, divine Self-revelation using as its central focus the descriptions of the Chariot (*Mercabah*) of God.

Before we begin our study of the *Mercabah*, we should understand that that which we approach has for long been regarded as being sacred ground. Indeed, the sages of old realized that only the most mature minds were capable of entertaining an understanding of the work of the chariot. And it was they who "put a wall around it" for both its protection and for the safety of those who were not truly prepared for the study of it. The writers of the Babylonian Talmud put it thusly:

"The *Ma'aseh Mercabah* must not be fully expounded even in the presence of a single student, unless he be wise and able to reason for himself, and even then you should merely acquaint him with the heads of the different sections of the subject."

(Hagigah, fol. 11b)

The rabbis considered the "secrets of the chariot" (*razei mercabah*) to be so sacred a branch of their doctrine that for a period of time there was even a proposal that the Book of Ezekiel be removed from the canon so that no possibility of profaning these mysteries would remain (see Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah*, page 373 for more on this). Perhaps it was in answer to this that the author of the *Zohar* wrote: "Ezekiel, it is said, could not have been as faithful as Moses, of whom it is written, 'He is faithful in all my house', for he revealed all the treasures of the Kings. But we have been instructed to beware of such thoughts about this prophet; on the contrary, he was a worthy prophet; what he revealed he revealed with the permission of the Holy One . . ."1

Revelation is a central theme within the myriad conceptions of the *Mercabah*. Not only do we receive our teaching concerning the chariot as a revelation but also we will find that true understanding of the mysteries of the Chariot is by and through revelation as well. Just as one cannot storm the gates of heaven, so too the secrets of the divine theophany by the banks of the river Chebar are revealed to those who are prepared for them and cannot be taken by force. As Jacob Boehme has said, "The external nature of the world cannot comprehend the nature of heaven." So too, we must approach the Chariot with the desire that it reveal itself to us - as a gift and not as a right does the sage regard the knowledge and understanding of the *Mercabah*.

Moses Maimonides, in his *Guide for the Perplexed*, said, "It is impossible for a man to study it (*Ma'aseh Mercabah*) successfully without moral preparation".2 Therefore it was considered inadvisable for young men (minds) to embark on such a course of study, for they would not be able to truly comprehend this work due to "the heat of their blood and the flame of youth, which confuses their minds;"3 First they "must have become moderate and settled, humble in their hearts, and subdued in their temperment; only then will they be able to arrive at the highest degree of perception of God, i.e., the study of Metaphysics, which is called *Ma'aseh Mercabah*."4 This thought is echoed in the Book of Isaiah, "For thus speaks the Most High,

whose home is in eternity, whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but I am also with the contrite and humbled spirit, to give the humbled spirit new life, to revive contrite hearts.'"5

With all of the above in mind, let us now turn to the Mercabah of our Lord and see what we might discover.

"I looked; a stormy wind blew from the north, a great cloud with light around it, a fire from which flashes of lightning darted, and in the center a sheen like bronze at the heart of the fire. In the center I saw what seemed four animals. They looked like this. They were of human form. Each had four faces, each had four wings. Their legs were straight; they had hoofs like oxen, glittering like polished brass. Human hands showed under their wings; the faces of all four were turned to the four quarters. Their wings touched each other; they did not turn as they moved; each one went straight forward. As to what they looked like, they had human faces, and all four had a lion's face to the right, and all four had a bull's face to the left, and all four had an eagle's face. Their wings were spread upward; each had two wings that touched, and two wings that covered his body; and they all went straight forward; they went where the spirit urged them; they did not turn as they moved. Between these animals something could be seen like flaming brands or torches, darting between the animals; the fire flashed light, and lightning streaked from the fire. And the creatures ran to and fro like thunderbolts. I looked at the animals; there was a wheel on the ground by each of them, one beside each of the four. The wheels glittered as if made of chrysolite. All four looked alike, and seemed to be made one inside the other. They went forward four ways and kept their course unswervingly. Their rims seemed enormous when I looked at them and all four rims had eyes all the way around. When the animals went forward, the wheels went forward beside them; and when the animals left the ground, the wheels too left the ground. Where the spirit urged them, there the wheels went, since the spirit of the animal was in the wheels. When the animals moved on, they moved on; when the former halted, the latter halted; when

the former left the ground, the wheels too left the ground, since the spirit of the animal was in the wheels. Over the heads of the animals a sort of vault, gleaming like crystal, arched above their heads; under this vault their wings stretched out to one another, and each had two covering his body. I heard the noise of their wings as they moved: It sounded like rushing water, like the voice of Shaddai, a noise like a storm, like the noise of a camp; when they halted, they folded their wings, and there was a noise. Above the vault over their heads was something that looked like a sapphire; it was shaped like a throne and high up on this throne was a being that looked like a man. I saw him shine like bronze, and close to all around him from what seemed his loins upward I saw what looked like fire; and from what seemed his loins downward I saw what looked like fire, and a light all around like a bow in the clouds on rainy days; that is how the surrounding light appeared. It was something that looked like the glory of Yahweh. I looked and prostrated myself . . ."

Ezekiel 1: 4-28

A careful reading of this passage from the prophet Ezekiel's vision will show that the Mercabah is divided into four sections:

The Cherubim (the "animals having four faces")
The Wheels
The Throne
The One who sits on the Throne

This number four plays a most important role in the narrative of the Chariot and lies at the heart of understanding the nature of the revelation that Ezekiel received. It is not for us, at this point, to go into a detailed analysis of the entire vision of Ezekiel, but rather to ascertain the overall meaning of the vision of Ezekiel, and this is to be found in the concept which lies at the base of the number four. Eliphaz Levi (the Abbe Louis Constant) was not only the premier student of the Cabalah of his generation, but he was also a longtime student of the Mysteries of the Mercabah. Levi states that the Mercabah " . . . exhibits the tetragram of characters analogous to that of the element and elemental forms. It is a glyph of perpetual



motion The state of universal equilibrium is suggested by the counterpoised emblems, and the pairs of symbols. The flying eagle balances the man; the roaring Lion counterposes the laborious Bull." Beyond even this we find reflected in the description of the Chariot the concept that the elementary forms, being in perpetual motion, ever return on themselves. In other words, form, ever changing form, does not return to the point from which it has departed. Thus the Chariot states quite

simply the universal axiom of evolution or the perfection of matter through and by spirit. This too is one of the central concepts to be found in the revealed name of God - Yahweh, the Tetragrammaton - Yod, He, Vav, He. Whose letters are mirrored in the Mercabah.

Many mystics and writers on esoteric doctrine have been quick to point out the identification of the four animals as being analogous to the four elements of Earth (Bull), Water (Man), Air (Eagle), and Fire (Lion). These four also have

their parallels in the Christian Scriptures and, indeed, the four evangelists (Matthew-Man; Luke-Bull; John-Eagle; Mark-Lion) have also been likened to the four faces of the Cherubim. If such is the case, then we can draw the following analogy. The four evangelists carried the Gospel to the nations. In like manner the Cherubim carry the divine word - the TORAH which is the revelation of God's will to mankind. Just as the Cherubs carry the vehicle of rectification, of salvation on their backs (it is a central doctrine of the Cabalah that the Torah or Law of God is the most powerful means of bringing about the *tikkun* or atonement - The At-One-Ment - of the universe which has fallen), so too, the works of the Gospels can also be seen as the vehicle of salvation for the nations. Through them the Infinite has been revealed to the finite; the Bridegroom has revealed Himself to His Bride and announced their coming nupial.

The Chariot is also, as has been previously noted, an archetypal pattern of revelation. What is revelation? In this sense it is the growth of the knowledge of God. It is the light of Gnosis in the hearts and minds of man. This revelation displays itself in a number of ways. As the revealed word (the Torah and the Christian Scriptures) it shows us the Laws, both greater and lesser, the commandments which are reflective of or are the manifestations of inner realities in the outer world. These Laws provide us with a set of customs, ethics and morals in their outer forms while their inner meanings provide for us a framework for a truly spiritual understanding of the nature of the cosmos and the relationship of the Creator to that Cosmos. Thus the revealed word becomes for us a means of accomplishing the work of *tikkun*,

of rectification through and by means of esoteric study, reflection and action.

This "problem of Theophany", which by the Greeks was called "epiphany" and which is known to us as divine Self-revelation, is the core of the experience of the prophet Ezekial and is the true meaning behind the term "Ma'aseh Mercabah". Ezekiel gave to us, in comparatively few words, his vision that God is truly in His Creation and in the final analysis is inseparable from it. Without the presence of God, this universe, any universe, would become nothing more than a shell, the Qlippoth of the Cabalah. That Ezekiel would have undertaken to reveal his vision and speaks of God under the veil of form could be seen as an idolatrous act, but we understand that what he gave us was a vision of Infinity as it limits itself. There are no words which can fully give expression to such a concept. All we have are shadows of reflections, for the problem of Divine Revelation is one of images based on the difficulties of time and space in the midst of a God of eternity and infinity. Motion, matter and incongruity are the results of an inharmonious balance between the limited and the Unlimited. Yet these are the very truths of the Divine Self revealing itself to its creation.

"Said R. Eleazar: 'As it is the virtue of a nut to be closed in from all sides, so is the Chariot which goes out of the Garden (Paradise) hidden on all sides; as the four sections of the walnut are united at one side and separated at the other; so are all the parts of the Celestial Chariot united in perfect union, and yet each part fulfills a special purpose . . .'"?

1. *Shemoth Zohar*, II 5a.
2. Maimonides, Moses, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, Dover Publications, New York, 1956, p. 48.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
5. Isaiah 57:15, *The Jerusalem Bible*.
6. Levi, Eliphaz; *The Magical Ritual of the Sanctum Regnum*, Crispin Press, London, 1970, p. 39-40.
7. *Shemoth Zohar*, II 15b.

Study Questions

[Editor's Note: Once each month the members of the HORC temples meet for one hour to study one of the designated AROHN articles prepared by the Education Committee of the HORC.]

1. What is Ma'aseh Berashith? Ma'aseh Mercabah? What is each related to?
2. Why did some rabbis propose that the Book of Ezekiel be removed from the canon of the Hebrew scriptures?
3. Why did Maimonides warn young minds to stay away from the study of the Mercabah?
4. What is the importance of the number four to the vision of the Chariot?
5. How do the four Evangelists relate to or correspond to the Chariot?
6. In what sense is the Chariot "an archetypal pattern of revelation"?



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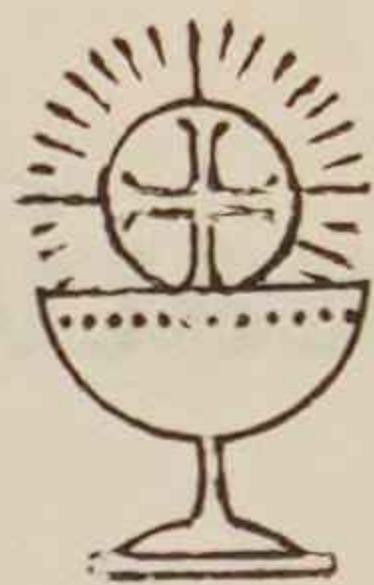
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John 13:35

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Malachi 2:10

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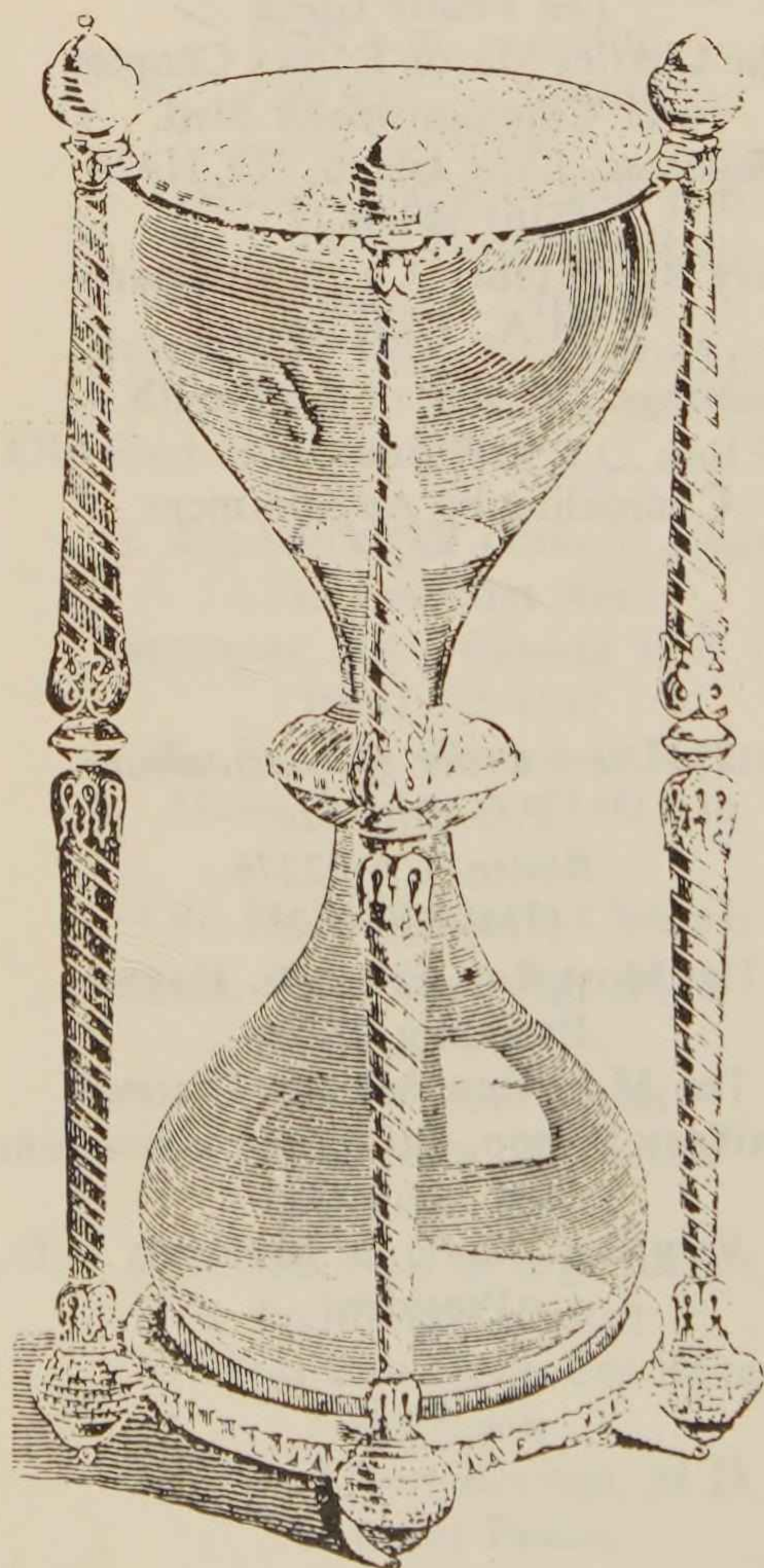
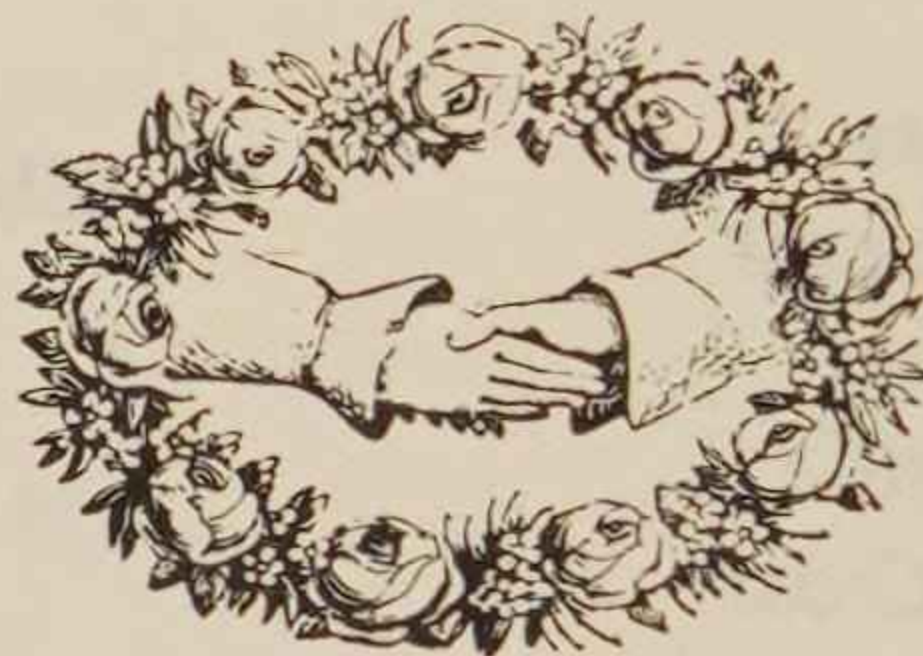
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