

**THE  
ESOTERIC  
SCHOOL  
OF JESUS**









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## Dedication

TO YOU JESUS, of whom the preachers of the gospels have spoken, and who has walked before us to show us the Way, to you I venture to dedicate these pages in which I have sought the spirit of your words.

You are just as modern as we, the children of today, because in your time you, too, preached against the idol who distributed his favors blindly and whose anger was unappeasable and whom we have not been able to believe in either; you measured and weighed the values of life just as critically as we are trying to do, even though we sometimes go astray in our judgement. But you are more modern than we are because you are a being of the future in comparison to us, the children of today; your field of spiritual intuition is broader, your powers of clairvoyance sharper, and your knowledge of humanity deeper and more compassionate than ours could ever be.

I love you and wish that others to whose ears your name is familiar would be able to learn about your real being and about the wonderful philosophy you have bestowed on your followers.



## In Front of the Gate

Then opened he their  
understanding, that they  
might understand the scriptures.

Luke 24:45.



# I

## Religion as Science

Before we can examine the relationship between religion and science we must determine what we mean by "religion" and "science", and what are the conditions which religion must fulfil in order to constitute a science. In this book we wish to give you a simple explanation of religion which has been arrived at on rational grounds, so to speak. The concept of religion can be determined in several ways, and very often it is interpreted as piety and approached on mystical" grounds. But when we analyse the concept of religion and science through cold reasoning both of those concepts or ideas become clear to us.

The human mind has three different modes of action. These are referred to as philosophy, science and religion. Science, in order to be science, is founded on observations of facts, and concepts of the law of nature as arrived at by the logical classification of those facts. Nothing is called science (in its empirical sense) if it is not based on material observation. Through science the world which surrounds us has become well known to us as far as our physical natures are concerned. We no longer need to rely on the exaggerated stories of seafaring-men adout the countries of the world, their inhabitants and their modes of living. Science has revealed to us the nature of life on this earth and the lives of the people as well as the lives of animals and vegetables. Science has also opened up to our inspection the

secrets of space, so that when we read books on Astronomy we do not need to rely on sense impressions and momentary observations, but know that the starry sky is in front of us and that all those shining heavenly objects in space are large suns, stars, similar to our sun, and that some of them are planets like the earth. With the aid of science we also know what our physical body is composed of and what it is like. We do not need to rely on conjectures regarding our physical composition, the circulation of the blood and the nervous system, because these have been established by science.

But no matter how many observations have been made about this world for our eyes to see and our brain to understand, there is a tremendous number of questions concerning the world that science cannot answer. I do not wish to turn your attention to any fact other than that of death, which is certain to come to all of us. What death is from the physical point of view has been scientifically examined, but as to what is behind it (if there is anything) has not been officially determined. And I would like to mention another subject about which science remains silent although this question concerns everybody to such extent that their thoughts turn to it at least some time, and that question is: what is God? What is the primary cause of this existence? What is this unknown power which has created life and brought man into this world? What is the miraculous wisdom which is behind everything? Science has not been able to answer these questions, though it seeks the primary cause of life and though it goes back to the farthest conceivable atom. Behind that atom, however, there must be some consciousness, some life, which is the eternal primary cause and basis for all existence, and which science cannot explain or define.

But the question of God as well as the question of death is very close to every human being. It is natural that human beings have not been able to ignore these questions and accept what has been scientifically proved. In past ages, when the field of knowledge was comparatively smaller than it is today those questions pressed even more urgently on the individual. The schoolboy of today knows more about nature than the bishops and priests of the Middle Ages. But as the human brain is developing to accommodate a larger field of vision and understanding of the outside world the eternal questions of life and death continue to occupy his mind and create in him a desire to find an answer to these questions.

What kind of approach should a human being adopt in order to arm himself against the question that science cannot answer? There are two ways to go about it — philosophical and religious. When approaching each question philosophically man tries to both pose the question and supply the answer himself. His reply would depend on the origin of the question with which he started his investigation. If he relies on his intuition or feeling that there are other worlds in existence, and not only the visible world, that there is a divine power behind the visible phenomenal world, then he reasons a posteriori and tries to explain intuitively the unanswerable questions of life.

Another type of philosophical thinking is founded on known and scientifically proved facts from which he tries to deduce and make clear for himself questions that are not even clear to science, and which are in fact quite unknown. This type of philosophical thinking has converted many to materialism.

But not all people think for themselves. Sometimes they may think of the important questions of life when they are

faced with a catastrophe or sad events in their own lives, but otherwise they do not bother thinking and are satisfied with the answers they get from others. And when a human being does not try to solve problems by thinking for himself, but accepts what is offered by others, for example the Church, then he approaches the questions of life in unison with religion or in a religious way. He then believes and does not think. Of course, he may be very happy in his belief. The happiness of the people of the Middle Ages was not disturbed by the fact that the earth was flat and a crystalline sphere was placed around the earth, and that the suns and stars were heavenly lanterns which were there for the purpose of lighting the darkness, and which revolved beautifully in their spheres above the surface of the flat earth and sometimes disappeared completely below the earth, sometimes rising from under the earth making their rounds. On the contrary, this belief explained what they saw, and it was not at all difficult to believe that beyond the heavenly cupola, God the Father lived with his army of angels and that a human being, who lived as God wished and believed what the Church taught, and paid his church dues punctually, would go there after his death and join the blessed ones in bliss.

Of course, a person who does not think can be satisfied with any kind of a description of the world if it does not offend his common sense. That is why, even today, the majority of people do not think about the great enigmas of life but are satisfied with the explanations given by the Church. All religions are outwardly systems which explain the universe and give definitions of that unknown which science has not been able to explain. Every religion offers a metaphysical picture of the universe, and a person who does

not himself engage in philosophic enquiry is, of course, satisfied with the ready-made picture. Furthermore, since religions have always appeared to possess great power and since their representatives have always declared that they alone are right, it is natural that the majority of people will accept such an approach without objection.

But let us return to our original subject of whether religion could be science and what requirements it would have to fulfil in order to be science. We can determine this clearly by relying on our powers of reasoning, and we can lay down the requirements which religion should comply with, just as clearly, if we take one subject, say astronomy, whose studies, we know, have arrived at certain conclusions concerning the universe because its principles are expounded in scientific literature. These books are sometimes presented in technical form and sometimes in a readily understandable form for the benefit of the layman who is not acquainted with astronomy, since it has been found desirable to make the results of astronomical investigations known. When an ordinary person starts to study astronomy, he first encounters and overcomes the difficulties, and then starts to understand what Astronomy is and what it wishes to teach. When he thinks and uses his reason, he begins to believe in Astronomy, because of the convincing character of the statements it contains. He becomes satisfied that the seasons of the year vary when the earth goes around the sun, that night and day follow each other because of this same truth, that the world turns on its axis simultaneously turning now to this side, now to the other facing the sun, that stars are suns as big, or even bigger than our sun, that comets follow certain trajectories, etc. , and he believes that these things are true, as explained in the literature of astronomy, and that

all educated people believe them to be true.

But how is the reader convinced that this is the truth? Simply because he relies on the authenticity of the information gathered from these books which are the result of patient investigation and mathematical calculation. Furthermore, he is satisfied that people who have investigated astronomical phenomena have really studied them and know what they are talking about. When they tell you how they have arrived at such conclusions, it constitutes evidence for the reader. This is not real proof. In order for it to be real proof it is necessary for the reader to make the same investigations himself. But when he is reading he thinks it sounds reasonable, and therefore he relies on those authorities. He relies on their integrity and the inspiration they have felt, their scientific purpose and the scientific aspect of their investigations. But he knows that if he himself wishes to reach a closer understanding of the truths which are expounded in these books, there is a set procedure which he must follow. He must first learn mathematics and then enrol at a university to study under the supervision of a professor of astronomy and study under him in some observatory where he can make investigations for himself, so that he can be satisfied that these teachings are correct. He knows this and he is reassured. There are scientists who do this. They investigate, make observations, provide proof to supplement the existing theories and even add to them.

Viewing the above procedure, we can understand what is required of religion in order for it to be science. Religion has to prove that it is a universal truth, that it is not idle gossip, that it is not blind speculation, that it is not hallucination, that it is not superstition but that it is knowledge. If religion were a science, its philosophy would necessarily be founded

on factual knowledge. This is clear. When religion explains that of a human being is in a certain state after death, and that someone is God by nature, this is, of course, science, provided it is founded on knowledge. Nobody who thinks logically can deny this. Religion would therefore be a science, like astronomy is, if the explanations which religion can give were founded on factual knowledge. And this by no means implies that the teaching of religious philosophy would be immediately clear to everybody, so that they would then be able to prove it for themselves. On the contrary. In our discussion of astronomy we came to the conclusion that if a human being desires total conviction of the truths expounded in any theory, he has to go through a certain process of learning. At the same time, we understand that if the theory of the universe, as propounded by religion, is founded on knowledge an individual must adopt some method of investigation to this end in order to prove its authenticity to himself. In the same way that human beings trust the investigations made by astronomers, they can trust the theories given by religion, if they are satisfied that these theories of the universe are the results of investigation and are the honest product of such investigation and that the investigators themselves are honest. This is so clear and logical that we must put a question to ourselves: "Has all religion always been mere superstition? Has religion always been less esteemed than philosophy, not to mention science? Is it really the case that the great unknown which we call God and the whole question of life beyond death has always been kept secret? Is it really true that these problems, which are the closest concern of the individual, have always been a mystery and still are, and that it is not possible to solve them in any other way except by superstition or with the

help of one's own limited intellect? Is this really how things stand?"

It is essential for us to put this question to ourselves since we are keenly aware that the answer could be different. We understand clearly that religion could be a science if only someone had knowledge, for example, of the state beyond death or of that great secret power which we call God. If someone had knowledge of these things, then the account that he could give of them to others would, of course, be based on knowledge. That view of the universe would then have scientific value, in spite of the fact that the next man would not be immediately able to prove it to himself.

What can it be? What is the status of the religions? What do they try to prove of themselves? Let us turn our attention to the one fact that every religion has always maintained: "I have the truth, I know what I am talking about." If you talk today with any theologian and ask him "Is superstition your explanation for God and life etc. or is he the product of your own philosophy", he will be shocked and reply: "Of course not, it is not philosophy nor is it superstition — it is the truth as given by God through his Son." He does not have firsthand knowledge from his own experience but he blindly trusts in the books and in the word of men of God, the apostles, the prophets etc. who give such information of the afterlife and of God. He has no personal proof of whether man even lives after death or if there are any states after death. He does not believe that a human being could obtain information of "secret" theories and he thinks such information is unnecessary and even dangerous. But the intrinsic value of his belief is that religion is truth in itself, that the original proclaimers of religion were men who knew the truth.

Now we come to the logical question: what if the religious teachers, priests, theologians etc. of the present time have misunderstood the true meaning of religion? Perhaps its intention is not to induce blind faith in its followers but a lifelong quest. Perhaps the religious truths are the result of scientific investigation and are only revealed to one who goes through a certain process of investigation? Perhaps the way of the spirit has been forgotten by the Church and the worldly picture of the dead letter alone has remained?

You know that as Theosophists we have to answer this question in the affirmative. Theosophy solves this problem simply by saying "Religion was originally a science. It is a science in its esoteric sense". Just as astronomy is a science so is religion. Of course, there are many people who only read books on astronomy and believe what they read but some people also become astronomers themselves. In the same way, most people are supporters of religion, but there are some who concentrate more deeply on religious teaching and its secrets and can therefore see their meaning more clearly. Therefore the early founders of the religions and their key figures have always been people who have had the knowledge of religious truth. They have related different things — one on one subject, the other on another subject depending on the times in which they lived. The stories in themselves are of secondary importance — one cannot verify them or even understand them unless one is aware of the truth. One has only to remember that the persons who provided the information have had the truth revealed to them. They have known the truth and, as real scientists, they explain how to go about possessing the information and arriving at the truth. Their true esoteric teachings have been "Do as I tell you in order to find the truth", and one cannot

prove their teachings by any other method but by traversing the path pointed out — which they, prophets and wise men have travelled and revealed, just as the astronomers have studied in the observatories and universities.

But how can we know that the wise have in fact taught of the road leading to truth since even the churches have forgotten it? We can obtain this knowledge from the so-called Holy Books. We have books which, just like the books of astronomy, tell us of the way we have to take. We have such books and they are called holy books — they appear in every belief or religion. Starting with the New Testament, which is such a book, and which tells us what the Christians have seen of life and death and shows us how we could possess the same knowledge, we will try to explain some of the concepts which arise in the New Testament.

## II

# How to Read the New Testament

Books can be read in two ways. One way is to accept without criticism, trying to assimilate what is beautiful, spiritual, and true; the other way is to stand aside from the book and view it dispassionately, even if one does not derive much benefit from it oneself.

The so-called Holy Books, of which our Bible is one, differ from the other books in that they can be read in three different ways. That is to say, they can be read in the light of feeling, of intelligence and of will. If one reads them with feeling this happens in the light of pre-conceived faith. If one reads them with intelligence, one reads them critically. If one reads them with will, this happens with the aid of practical living.

We wish now to examine these different ways of reading the Holy Books. For example, what does it mean to read the Bible with feeling in the light of faith? It means that one believes beforehand that the voice of God is speaking in the Bible. There are many people who read the Bible in this way. Most Christians have always read the Bible in this light. God speaks to them, to their conscience, to their heart in that book, and they divide the book into two parts, the Old and the New Testaments. In the Old Testament God speaks to them in a harsh voice, as a punisher or judge, punishing for wrongdoing, as a judge who will meet the sinners face to face. They are afraid of his justice, and

because of this fear they want to cleanse themselves of their sins.

In the New Testament God speaks in a different way. He speaks with mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation. He tells sinners that they were not created to remain for ever in sin. He tells them there is salvation from evil. "You can become snow-white even if your sins were blood-brown." How much consolation the Bible has given and still continues to give to many people who are fighting and suffering and who can read it as a book in which God speaks! If one reads the Bible with faith and devotion its words, being the words of the Holy Book, have a cleansing effect on the soul and conscience. A person feels the consolation which springs from the words of the New Testament — he feels how his soul is becoming cleaner, and how he receives from God's promises power to fight against evil and to progress in goodness.

But the Bible can be read in another way. Today most thinking people, and they are increasing daily, read the Bible in the light of intelligence, that is, with their intellects. They read it critically. If we ask why they have started to read the New Testament critically, we can clearly see the original reasons. Before they started reading it with their intellects, they read it with faith. But as in every sphere of human activity, the quality of intelligent awareness reached such a level in Christian countries that it was not considered advisable to read the Bible with blind belief. Suspicions arose as to whether the word in the Bible was that of God or whether men had written it. We know the reasons for this change in thought but even so, it is appropriate here to impress on our minds some of the reasons.

First of all, a study of comparative religion was begun

about two hundred years ago and it was discovered that there were Holy Books like our Bible even in other religions. Studies of the old Indian, Persian, Egyptian, and Chinese Holy Books were carried out and the readers noticed that these books could equally reasonably be considered just as holy as our Bible could ever be. Not only was their form very much like that of our Bible, but their principles were just as elevating, and the metaphysical instructions as to moral behaviour were just as high as those in the Christian ethic.

At the same time as comparative studies took root in Europe the value of Christian writings became less highly regarded. They were no longer considered unique because instructions just as beautiful and wise were given elsewhere.

Another noteworthy fact was that during the Renaissance a whole literature of Greco-Egyptian origin was discovered and called Hermetic, after its author, Hermes Trismegistus. These books of Hermes Trismegistus aroused great interest in Europe, in scientific and also in theological circles, because they contained Christian principles most beautifully and originally presented — God the Father who loves the world and the good shepherd who guards humanity, teaching and redeeming it. The best-known book of Hermetic philosophy is called *Poimandres*, the human shepherd.

The theologians naturally explained that these books were Christian writings. They were written very long ago at the beginning of the Christian era and apparently revealed Christian influence. This belief prevailed, until during the last century new investigations were made in the light of new philological and historical findings, and it became evident that these writings had no connection with Christian

writings and tradition nor with its ethic. They were conceived entirely in the Hellenic-Egyptian world, and we know for certain that *Poimandres* was written during the first century A.D., if not earlier.

On the other hand, Egyptian literature has revealed fragments belonging to the Hermetic literature which are so old that it is impossible to tell when they were written — perhaps a thousand years before Christ or even earlier. When it became clear that there were writings in existence that had no historical connection with Christian belief but which expounded the same philosophy and the same teachings which had become known as Christian, it induced the scientists to ask themselves — What is the Bible and what is the New Testament? They are no more amazing in content than the old holy books.

There is a third fact worth commenting on which I should like to bring to your attention. This concerns a Jewish philosopher, Philo Judaeus, who died in 45 A.D. and was born 20—30 years before Christ. We know for certain that he wrote in the year 22 A.D., (before Christ had, according to our calculations, appeared in the world, since he only started his work at the age of thirty) about the Esseans and Therapeuts, who lived in the upper part of Egypt, and about their communal life. He writes about these sects in such a way that we are reminded of the first Christian community, familiar to us from the works of the Apostles. He describes these sects so beautifully, half astonished himself that such marvellous people lived in Egypt in those days.

When the book of Philo became known in Europe it was explained by the Church authorities as a description of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, but as research has

shown, this was not the case. The community that Philo describes had no connection with Christianity because it was in existence before our Christian Church was officially established.

When these facts were taken into consideration, it was necessary to start thinking critically about the New Testament, and to start looking at the descriptions of the life of Jesus in another light. This is what religious scientists are doing today and this is why we have Biblical exegesis and critical theology.

As for the conclusions which the readers arrive at when they have read the New Testament critically, we can say that they are twofold. One of these conclusions, which some private scientists hold and which has not received much support, is that the New Testament does not tell us about people who have truly lived, but it has been written for a mythical purpose. The person Jesus Christ of whom the gospels speak is a legendary being, who never existed in the flesh but who is a typical product of divine existence or, as some scientists say, a symbol of the sun and its motion, etc. This idea may not be as foolish as it first appears to be since it is held by very intelligent scientists. In Germany a Professor Drews holds this view and defends it competently.

But the second conclusion, which critical research has arrived at, has received much more sympathy and has received wide publicity. There is a new theological body of opinion which supports this view. This belief does not hold with a mythological figure but a real man who existed and lived two thousand years ago. This new theory has been trying to select from the New Testament those facts which make this man more true to life and expose to us what Jesus

Christ really was like. All the evidence gathered from the scriptures reveal that Jesus was a man, and as such not perfect, that he was capable of error, and was sometimes suspected of being a fanatical dreamer and a fool. All these facts have been scrutinized and checked. And this new theological thought states for certain that even if he was more talented, morally above the average human being, gentle, compassionate, a dreamer, he was still only a human being.

One of the representatives of this belief is a priest, who later gave up priesthood, the German author Frenssen. He wrote a little book of the life of Jesus and, step by step, tried to trace the life and development of Jesus. In his opinion the gospel is historical evidence of a human being who was not afraid to live and fight for his belief, and who was not afraid to die for it either. This kind of example is enough to strengthen anyone in times of distress and in weak moments. When anyone, taking an example from Frenssen, starts investigating the psychology of Jesus, he will feel new determination to travel on the road already opened up. According to the new theology, the great and real meaning of the life of Jesus was to give a typical example.

But surely there are people who are not satisfied just to read the New Testament intelligently, but who suspect that "there must be something behind this strange book". Although there are many similar books in the world perhaps they contain something other than mere stories about talented people or superstitious presentations of the great questions of the universe. Otherwise they would not have that irresistible attraction, that elevating influence over millions of human beings for thousands of years. Perhaps the old manner of reading the Holy Books with faith is

justified; to enjoy that divine life which they finally reveal. This question is asked by many, and in their opinion Holy Books lose a great deal of their attraction if they are read as historical books — not as ordinary or well written novels or half realistic and half idealistic biographies.

That is why it is proclaimed in our time that there is a third way of reading the Holy Book. The above-mentioned ways of reading it with faith and with the critical mind are external and preparatory in character. They cleanse the soul and promote intellectual activity, but the wisdom of the Holy Book is not revealed in such a light, nor is its beauty. This will happen when the Holy Book is read in the third way, that is by the will — founded on the practical life, as the Holy Book, (in order to be holy), is written by a wise prophet out of his own knowledge — what he truly knew — and how he came to possess that knowledge.

If the New Testament is a holy book, the gospels must tell the truth of how some wise men or prophets lived their lives, what they knew of the secrets of life and death and how they became the possessors of such knowledge. The gospels are, as stated above, scientific books.

Does the New Testament fulfil these requirements?

Theosophic and other occult societies proclaim unanimously that the New Testament is a holy book in this respect. It is a real guide to life and contains much more wisdom than the so-called "believers" have even dreamed of. It contains more important, scientifically detailed and more trenchant advice than the Christians have ever believed. The Christians have read it as a divine book and have rarely used the key which alone will open it. In the Holy Books, keys are always mentioned and it is said that it could be understood if only one had the keys."

What is a key?

Many people think that keys are intelligent explanations by the use of which secret meanings will be revealed. It is understood that for example in the New Testament all the names mean different things. For instance, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Peter, Christ etc. mean certain things. If one gets the key which will explain what each word means and fits the right meaning in place of the name then the meaning of the whole New Testament will be transformed. Then the obscure, unscientific, historically unreliable book will become a profound psychological work, pregnant with meaning or even open to astronomical interpretation depending on what key is used. This is the general understanding and no doubt there are such keys in existence. But if the question were only that of the keys of intellect, we could not claim that the New Testament rather than any other holy book is a book of life and a real guide to life for everyone. The real key which will open the mysteries of the gospels is entirely different — it is a key which does not come from outside but will come from the gospel itself.

The true key can be found only by searching the gospels, by letting the wisdom of the gospels fill your souls so that you begin to live the gospel. Only then can one progress in the wisdom of the gospels, of the Holy Books and in knowledge. Only when someone reads the Holy Books in terms of his own life can it be said that he understands the gospels.

When we take the gospels as they appear in their present translation and read them, we will observe that the contents are presented on three levels. First of all they tell of a man, a human being, Jesus Christ, who lived in Palestine two thousand years ago, who travelled around the country

preaching, healing the sick and performing miracles, who was persecuted, imprisoned, tried and crucified. This is the first level we notice. Secondly the man, Jesus Christ, according to the gospels, expounded beautiful advice and wise thoughts, which have sunk into our minds but which at the same time we think of as impracticable because they do not refer to our own times. "What would become of us if we started to act according to these principles", even Christians themselves think because the whole of our Christian society is so constructed that it rejects the words and speeches of the very person it recognizes as its Master. Thirdly, we notice when reading the gospels that Christ introduced all kinds of beautiful parables, many of which may remain in our minds as wonderful or startling, but which all the same are more remote to us than moral claims and duties.

When we read the gospels like this, we have not used the "keys". The Holy Book needs keys and the keys must be found in the book itself. What is the first key to understanding of the gospels? It is the key which instructs us as to the order in which we must study and reflect on the above-mentioned levels of meaning of the gospels.

When we read the New Testament as a holy book, we have to admit that the gospels speak about a person who lived and acted in the world. Even if the stories were historically unreliable and covered only a very meagre portion of his life, we cannot deny the fact that they tell us about a living human being, because the picture of that being and his personal expressions is presented to us in closeup. These opinions and expressions could not have been collected from any other books in the world because they do not appear in any other books. We admit all this but it

has not made us regard the gospels as holy. In order to do this, we must turn our attention to the teachings of this human being and to what he tells us of his own life and knowledge. We must also study how he advises us to get to know the same truth. Then we will notice that we must read the gospels in an order which is the opposite to that which we first thought of as the right way. It is said that Jesus had disciples to whom he explained the "secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven". He taught these secrets only to his disciples, but lots of other people followed him when he wandered around, and now and then he also spoke to the people. But how did he speak to the people? The gospels tell us that he spoke to the people in parables — he never spoke to the people, except in parables.

Therefore the order is clear. If we want to read the gospels as a holy book, in other words, if we want to learn from Jesus, we must use the order designated by the gospels. We cannot immediately be the disciples of Jesus. We cannot ignore everything he said to the people. We cannot flatter ourselves by saying: "We are automatically the disciples of Jesus, we need only make clear to ourselves what he spoke to his disciples." In that case we might learn nothing, nor would we become any wiser. But when we start from the beginning, we assume the position of the people, as they were when this great, wonderful teacher wandered in the world. Therefore we must, like the people, think and meditate upon what he said to them. And the form he used was that of the parable. We must first enter into the spirit of the parables, and learn to understand them. Only when we have understood what Jesus taught in his parables and when we have accepted the teachings in our souls, so that they live in us and we practise their wisdom, may we adopt the stand

of a disciple of Jesus and start to study what Jesus told his disciples. After we have learned and understood what he taught his disciples, it will be made clear to us what the historical expositions of the life of Jesus mean. First in this third place do those secrets begin to be dimly visible which to the ordinary reader seem to be the most tangible realities.



# In Through the Gate

I speak to them in parables.

Matthew 13:13.



### III

## Parables of Jesus

"The Heavenly Kingdom is close at hand — will you repent?" In this way, according to the gospels, Jesus started to preach the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven to the people. To his disciples, it is said, he explained the secrets of its meaning but to the people he only spoke in parables. Therefore, when we share the position of the people, as we must, we must first enter into the spirit of the parables. We must first understand them and get so clear a picture of them that we can live them out. And indeed we will not understand them fully before we know how to live them. And only after we have a living understanding of the parables can we become the disciples of Jesus.

What is the real meaning of the parables of Jesus ? What did he desire to convey in his parables? He spoke in them of the Heavenly Kingdom. Different gospels give different names — Matthew says "Heavenly Kingdom" — Luke talks of the "Kingdom of God" and a third name is the "Kingdom". But all these three names mean the same thing when we want to enter into their spirit. First of all we understand that there is a kingdom which has a ruler, and soon we also know who the ruler is. In the Kingdom of God, God is the ruler whom Jesus refers to as "Father" and "Good". In the heavenly kingdom, God or the loving and good Father is sovereign, and he has servants who obey his orders. When Jesus says that "the Heavenly Kingdom has approached that

we should repent”, he obviously means that we should enter the kingdom of goodness and love where God rules, where his orders are obeyed and where we should be the subjects of this great and wonderful King. This is the literal meaning of the text.

We also know that Jesus says: ”This Kingdom, where I am also, my kingdom, is not an earthly kingdom; it is not here and there, it is an invisible kingdom.” All theologians and scholars, who have tried to explain the Heavenly Kingdom, have understood that the question is of a kingdom which is invisible and spiritual and where the Father, God, reigns. Then it has also been explained to mean partly a kingdom of the next world; partly future kingdom on earth, where love and brotherhood prevail and all the subjects obey the orders of the Father and live in harmony, love and peace. Undoubtedly there is truth in these explanations. The ”Kingdom of God” undoubtedly means such a time on earth when God truly rules through human beings. ”Heavenly Kingdom” undoubtedly also refers to a kingdom of the next world which in itself is invisible; at least it consists of those spiritual beings and the deceased, who belong to it or have entered it. But above all, we must bear in mind that the question in the gospels is of great spiritual goodness and power, of an organized kingdom of love which Jesus invites us to enter.

1. When we read the gospel of Matthew, we at once learn from the first parable how important the message of Jesus is. He tells us that beautiful parable of a sower who went out to sow and when he was sowing some of the seeds fell by the wayside and the birds came and devoured them, and some fell on good soil and brought forth grain a hundred-fold, etc.

In this first parable Jesus speaks, according to the gospels, of the word of the Kingdom, for he immediately explains what he means by the parable. He says:

But to the stony-land is sown that who gladly accepts the word but he has no roots in himself but keeps to it only for a time and when persecution comes through the word he flees. But among the thorns is sown that who hears the word but the worry and the falsity of the riches of this world will suffocate the word and he becomes fruitless. "But to the good earth is sown the word who hears the word and understands, who brings out the fruit some hundred-fold, some sixty-fold and some thirty-fold. (Matthew 13: 20—23).

This explanation is put into the gospels for us, the readers, as it is improbable that he needed to explain this to the disciples. Its symbolism is so clear that the gospels only explain it in order that we may understand the importance of the heavenly kingdom as taught by Jesus. The gospels convey to us a tone that convinces us of the soundness of what Jesus says. Its explanation is to encourage us, to train us to believe and use our powers without fear, holding out the promise of knowledge and wisdom if we do. In my opinion this first parable is only an introduction to the reading of the gospels.

When we concentrate upon those parables which are described in the gospels of Matthew, we notice that they are naturally divided into two main parts, of which the latter part is again divided into two further parts. The first parables present the heavenly kingdom, and describe it. There are three parables of this kind. The final parables give a description of the relationship between man and the Kingdom of God. The first series of parables describes the

inner relationship with the heavenly kingdom, and the second group describes the outward relationship and how the heavenly kingdom is manifested in man in his everyday life. All the parables in the gospels of Matthew are in right order.

The second parable which Jesus gives is as follows: 2. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?" He said to them: "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him: "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he said: "No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers: "Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned; but gather the wheat into my barn." (Matthew 13: 24—30). This parable is clearly a description of the inner law of the heavenly kingdom, a metaphysical description of the nature of its foundation. Jesus says that it is the invisible life in the consciousness and behind the consciousness of mankind and he likens it to the sower who has sown seeds in the souls of all people so that the seed of life is in everyone. But when the people are sleeping the enemy comes and sows other kinds of seeds in the souls of men. What does sleeping mean? The relegation of consciousness from the waking state. According to the parables, the waking state of the soul of a man is therefore the state when the seed of the Heavenly Kingdom is embedded in his

consciousness. In theosophical language this is a state of consciousness in which the divine life acts upon the soul of man. He does not therefore mean this physical life but a spiritual invisible life (the higher intellect and the planes beyond that). But when people are "sleeping" they are relegated from the celestial plane and fall down into matter and are born into this world. Then the adversary of the free heavenly life, the enemy, the I in matter, or ego, the selfish idea of limitation sows bad seed into them, so that they forget the good, or even if they know of the good seed of the Heavenly Kingdom, they become aware of the bad and cannot solve the riddle of the good and the bad.

Now, the parables describe how the good powers of the Heavenly Kingdom come to the Father and say: "Shall we not go and save those people and take away the evil that is in them." Similarly there are people who ask: "Why should there be evil at all, why does an omnipotent God not expel evil from the world altogether?" But the wise Ruler of the Heavenly Kingdom replies: "No, do not go and take evil away from the soul of people without them knowing it because at the same time the good would also disappear. — Let both grow in peace, let good and bad grow in the hearts of the people as long as the people are living on earth because the harvest time will come, when, through death, they will be taken out of the world. Then the harvesters will take the human being and separate all the bad from him and throw it into fire to be burned."

We know, according to modern and ancient supersensory studies, that when a human being dies, a mysterious division into two parts takes place. Evil will manifest in him first, this state is known as "hell-fire" or "kamaloka", and then he will purge the evil; then the good in him is elevated into the

heavenly state and will gradually infuse into his soul. This happens, according to the laws of the Heavenly Kingdom, to all people on earth. The good powers of the spirit which are behind us will not prevent us from being bad, and do not in any way exert force against the moral rights of the free will. A man can be good or bad as he chooses. But death will come and show him what was good and what was bad in him.

In this there is a mysterious moral teaching for us human beings. If we wish to carry out the Father's wish and belong to the Heavenly Kingdom and obey the laws which prevail there, we must stand in relation to good and bad at the side of the good powers of the kingdom. We must also let the evil grow without exerting any force or eradicating any of it. Our responsibility is only to love the good, work for the good and not to resist the evil.

But Jesus has two further metaphysical parables of the Heavenly Kingdom as follows:

3. The Heavenly Kingdom is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree so that the birds come and make nests in its branches.

4. The heavenly kingdom is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened. (Matthew 13: 31—33).

These two parables describe the Heavenly Kingdom's own law and order. The Heavenly Kingdom is the higher intellect and life which attempts to manifest itself in the human consciousness. Its seed is in every individual, and it is in reality like a seed, which grows alone in the earth. Furthermore, it is like the smallest seed because it is invisible.

But its power is so great that when it starts taking root it grows by itself. We do not have to worry that this kingdom, says Jesus, has not any life force; on the contrary, nothing can resist its life force. In time, like leaven, it permeates the whole being of an individual and all mankind.

Now, as we have some idea of the life and essence of the Heavenly Kingdom, we understand this leading parable in a new way, namely, the parable of the sower. Jesus does not speak of himself in it, although at first it seems so. It should be carefully noted that he does not speak of his own word but of the word of the kingdom. People hear, he says, the word of the kingdom in a different way. This is now understood in a Church context to mean that the sermons of the priests are the same as the word of the kingdom, because the word of the kingdom is proclaimed in the sermons. But as we now understand that Heavenly Kingdom is the life force behind the human consciousness in an invisible world, we understand also that the word of the kingdom is a word which is heard in silence and without the agency of the senses. The word of the kingdom is not presented by a person standing and speaking about it, but it speaks for itself in silence, it can be heard in the human consciousness inside every human being.

And what does the word of the kingdom sound like? Differently to each individual. Even though it tells all of us the same thing: "Listen, man, don't you know yet what the purpose of your life is ? Don't you know that the purpose of your life is to become part of the life of the Heavenly Kingdom, that your life's purpose is to become unified with God, the Father. You should hear the voice of the Father inside yourself and discard the selfish life, in which you only serve yourself and other people, in which you live in sin and

evil and selfishness. Cast off your old life and enter into union with the Father. Enter the Heavenly Kingdom.” This is how the word of the kingdom speaks within everyone and in the minds of individuals there is an image of how noble, free, courageous and magnanimous he should be. ”It is a question of an entirely new life”, says this voice of the silence, this voice of the kingdom — a new life altogether. ”As a human being, you belong to the Heavenly Kingdom and you have a spiritual wonderful and omnipotent Father. You should conform to his will and live his life, but instead you live in blindness, darkness, sin and evil. You never think that you could live a beautiful and wonderful life and that you could be a free and strong son of God. You do not think, you have no faith, you only believe that you are condemned to remain bad, sinful, selfish. Hear my voice, change your mind and transform yourself into a new human being.” So speaks the word of the kingdom and that is what Jesus meant in his first parable.

Then follows the second major group of parables, of which the first part describes what kind of mind the individual must have when he sees and hears the word of the kingdom. The first two parables describe the same thing as follows:

5. The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

6. Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, in finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

These parables are very short but the truth in them is made clear. It tells of the joy which comes to a human being when he sees the truth of the existence of the heavenly

kingdom. He is filled with such wonderful joy that he immediately understands: "Everything else I will throw away because the existence of this kingdom is really so great a treasure that with pleasure I will part with selfishness and evil because of the joy in my possession of that kingdom. The pearl of truth is so beautiful that nothing can be compared to it. Why should I solicit further for happiness when bliss is given to me." This natural joy fills a human being when he sees the truth. In his next parable Jesus further consoles him by saying:

7. Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. (Matthew 13:47-48)

By this Jesus wishes to sharpen our minds: "Your joy, when you found the pearl of the kingdom, and when you wished to throw everything else away for its sake, is a real joy because the Heavenly Kingdom is so powerful that it draws you, your evil side, too, completely to itself with great rejoicing, and you do not need to be afraid, because the net draws everything — then what is evil in you will be thrown away. You just go ahead on your way and trust in that joy which you feel." And when man has understood this first joy, Jesus uses his parables to describe what the state of his soul is in relation to others. We have the following very remarkable and beautiful parable:

8. Therefore the Heavenly Kingdom is like a King who cleared accounts with his servants. And when his servant owed him Ten Thousand talents he ordered him to be sold as a slave with his family. But when the servant prayed the King for mercy the King forgave him the whole debt. Then

the servant went out and found another servant who owed him One Hundreds pennies, grabbed him by the throat and demanded payment. When his Master, the King, heard about this he ordered him to the care of his executioner until he had paid all his debts that he owed the King. (Matthew 18:23—24). In a couple of words Jesus explained the meaning of the parable:

”So also my heavenly Father will do to everyone of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.” (Matthew 18:35).

This parable is a moral teaching which relates to the relationship between human beings. It is so noble, and looking at it from the earthly point of view, it appears so impossible that it really belongs to the laws of the Heavenly Kingdom. It is the new law — ”human being, forgive from your heart everybody for everything.”

What keeps us in the tower or in imprisonment, or in other words, in the body into which we must always be thrown in order to pay our karmic debts. Only the hardness of our hearts; we would like to demand righteousness from others but we ourselves readily accept forgiveness and mercy. But Jesus says: ”There is no joy, no real deliverance from debts, no forgiveness if we ourselves do not forgive.”

When a human being understands the word of the kingdom, he sees himself as being in great debt to the Ruler of the Heavenly Kingdom. He has the whole of his past behind him in which he has lived in sin and ignorance. He has, as the Theosophists say, a great karma to pay. This karma would oppress him and prevent him from living the life of the Heavenly Kingdom if he had to pay it before he could live in the joy of the Heavenly Kingdom. But then the Ruler of the Heavenly Kingdom, the Father says to him:

"You can freely be my servant and my son, in my kingdom, because all your debts to me are forgiven. You can pay when you are able to do so." And we know that when a human being stands in front of his God, he will pay his karmic debts with pleasure.

His heart is full of holy desire, but some pay their debts more quickly than others. But life is opened up for both. And life has only one absolute condition: "You may pay when you can, if you will only forgive your brother everything, if you will wipe out from your heart all bitterness, all hate, all emotion which separates you from other human beings. Then it is almost as if you were not indebted to me either, then you will feel that peace and joy, which is always an integral part of my kingdom. You can clear your debts when you have enough time and riches."

This is an extraordinarily deep truth with respect to the karma. It means that man does not need to pay anything for the old bad deeds, for old sins so that he should suffer for them, complain or lament about them saying: "I do not wish to suffer, why should I suffer?" That kind of thing is not inevitable for a human being. When he forgives others, when he does not ask for anything from others, not even "righteousness", then the Father has also forgiven him everything and taken him into his joy. But a human being must pay his karma-debts, though not by suffering. Suffering to him is not suffering. Suffering to him is joy; he pays his debts with joy. It is almost as if he has so much wealth that he can pay with ease. He does not therefore pay before he is so rich that the paying of debts is easy. You know that the capitalist payment of debts is a difficult and bitter process when one is poor, when one has to save one's last few cents to pay off the interest and the principal, but if one suddenly

becomes rich, then the paying of debts would be a joy because it would constitute a liberation from the old ties. Such is the life of the Heavenly Kingdom: When a human being becomes a partaker in it and forgives his brother everything, then the paying of his own debts only brings him joy and not misery.

The following parable of Jesus seems extraordinary on the face of it but deals clearly with the state of the human mind in relation to other human beings:

9. The heavenly kingdom is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard etc. (Matthew 20:1 — 16). The parable tells of a master who paid all his employees an equal wage although some of them had been at work longer than others. The parable concludes:

”So the last will be first and the first last. Many are invited but few chosen.”

This parable may insult our everyday understanding as an extraordinary introduction of truth. We would imagine that the servants should be paid according to their work, but Jesus seems to say: ”You must not feel any kind of bitter feelings in your heart, when you are in the Heavenly Kingdom, and you must not have the same conception of right in relation to yourself as exists in the world. Be not like the servants who lament that they have not been given enough payment. You must not think anything like this. You must not ask for any payment. You get what you get. Do not in your hearts in any way compare yourself with the others, never think about it personally saying: ”I, too, have made efforts as he has; look how far he has progressed and become wise, although I have tried longer to live the life of the Kingdom of God. You must think nothing like that.”

This can be understood if we remember that the Heavenly Kingdom is a living force behind us. Its power immediately infuses us when we approach it, and there are no payments to be made nor salaries given and no different kinds of measures employed. Whether a human being comes to it today, tomorrow or after thousands of years, the Heavenly Kingdom will wait and when he comes he gets his payment and the Heavenly Kingdom is in him. There is no question of rights of freedom. On the contrary, a person who, let us say, in a later race accepts the message of the Heavenly Kingdom and becomes its member, such a person can only feel greater joy because he has been longer out of the Heavenly Kingdom. On the other hand the person who had been part of the Heavenly Kingdom — from the older times — has, of course, done more work and made more effort but he has also enjoyed the bliss of the Heavenly Kingdom longer. Even if he has not won more (undergone more initiations) than the new-comer, he has been really happy a longer time. But the other who for a long, long time has lived with everyday people, suffered and rejoiced like them, has in fact been less happy, and it is quite natural that the joy, peace and freedom which he attains, when he arrives late in the Heavenly Kingdom, is at the same time just as great a joy as that which the other one attains, though he has been a member of the Heavenly Kingdom longer.

It is to be noted that the God-Father, who rules in the Heavenly Kingdom, is love and goodness itself, who never uses force on anybody. Human beings can, if they please, live outside the Heavenly Kingdom. From the point of view of God, they can, if they wish, live in sin and evil. The longer they live in darkness and selfishness the greater the joy that the Heavenly Kingdom will prepare for them. But

the Heavenly Kingdom always invites man to approach and it rejoices in every human being who comes. God is a lover who with open arms waits forever in the certainty that the loved one will eventually fly to his arms.

These are absolutely clear metaphysical laws and the final words of the parable "Many are called but few are chosen" point the way to the following section:

The other section of this group of parables speaks of the relationship between the human being and the Heavenly Kingdom, explicitly or in actions, and the words in the 9th parable indicate that we now have to refer to the parable of the wedding garments, which deals more closely with vocation.

10. Heavenly Kingdom is likened unto a certain King, who made a marriage for his son. And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they did not come. Again he sent other servants saying: "Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fatlings are killed and all things are ready — come unto the marriage." But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his farm and the other to his merchandise; and the remnant took his servants entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the King heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants: "The wedding is ready but they who were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highway and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage." So those servants went to the highways and gathered together all as many as they found, both good and bad and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the King came in to see his guests, he saw there a man who had not on

a wedding garment. And he said to him: "Friend, how comest thou hither not having wedding garment?" And he was speechless. Then the King said to his servants: "Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of the teeth — for many are called but few are chosen". (Matthew 22:2-14).

What we immediately understand from this parable and from these words is that the word of the kingdom may be heard and we may see the kingdom in some elevated moment but when the moment has passed we again close our eyes and our ears to it. In other words we could be invited guests, and this means that inside we already understand, recognize, see and hear. But even so, we do not take the inspiration seriously and obey its voice, make the voice our conscious living, convert our understanding into practical acts and change the mental fleeting enlightenment into reality. And therefore we consider ourselves "not chosen". We have for a moment in our souls woken up to that higher world where the seed of the Heavenly Kingdom is. We have woken up for a moment but we do not obey the voice. And therefore we are ushered into the "darkness" where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. This outer darkness is our everyday understanding of life which is really like the weeping and gnashing of teeth compared to the understanding of life in the heavenly kingdom. Even if everyday life has its happiness and its joys, it is nevertheless, according to the wise Solomon, "bother and trouble even at its best". And the poet Goethe said when he was 80 years of age that if his life's happiest moments were woven together it would barely make a five week period. People often do gnash their teeth and swear at others. That is why

the Heavenly Kingdom feels compassion towards those people who live in this outer darkness and do not wish to discard that individual into the selfish life in which he thrives. They do not realize what great happiness, joy and bliss is waiting for them and calling to them every moment.

Many are called but few are chosen, says the parable, because the transformation of man from being invited to being chosen means that the intellectual calling develops in him into a living existence, when, as the parable says, he is dressed in wedding garments. Even before his eyes were clear, his ears had for a passing moment heard, but when he is dressed in the wedding garments, his whole being is changed. And we ask how does this moral improvement, this dressing in the wedding garments take place?

Jesus gives a clear picture in the following two parables, showing at the same time how broad and deep the conception of change must be. These two parables are well-known and read as follows:

11. Then must the kingdom of heaven be like ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise and five foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps but took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. But in the midnight there was a cry made: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all these virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: "Give us of your oil because our lamps are gone out." The wise answered: "Not so, lest there be not enough to us and you, but go you rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went with him in to the

marriage and the doors were shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins and said: "Lord, Lord, open to us." But he answered and said: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Watch therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the son of man cometh. (Matthew 25:1 — 13).

Here it is obvious that ten devotees are invited. They all have lamps, which means that they all have seen the light of the Heavenly Kingdom. But only five have taken oil with them, the oil of love which enables the light to shine forth and enables the fire to burn in the lamps. Love for the light makes people want to change. Jesus says clearly: "You must have this love. Otherwise your light will go out. The light of the Heavenly Kingdom needs love in order to burn forever. Only when you have it can you change."

What must we therefore do? Jesus explains immediately in the following parable:

12. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to another one; to every man according to his several abilities; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged into the earth and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoned with them.

And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents saying: "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents, behold, I have gained beside them five talents more." His lord said to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou has been faithful over a few

things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” He also that received two talents came and said: ”Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents, behold, I have gained two more talents beside them.” His lord said unto him: ”Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

Then he who had received one talent came and said: ”Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth, lo, there thou hast that is thine.” His lord answered and said to him: ”Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received my own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him and give it to him which hath ten talents. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:14—30).

This parable is the most extraordinary and profound of the parables that Jesus has told. There three men are described as being given ten, five and one talent respectively, which means that every human being is given certain talents and gifts, and at least one individual talent. He has got his own talent from karma, as we would say theosophically, so that his gifts are with him when he is born into the world. Otherwise, it is immaterial how we explain the talents we are born with, the main thing being that each

of us has his own individual characteristics and talents at birth.

When a man hears the word of the kingdom, loves it and wishes to live the life of the kingdom, then he must of necessity do in his lifetime the job which he loves and with which he can express himself and promote his own individual characteristics. This is advice which Jesus gave to human beings in connection with his active and practical life. When man steps into the Heavenly Kingdom, he must examine himself, what talents he has and whether he lives up to his talent, does he elicit the Heavenly Kingdom with his talents; does he do the work he loves; is his soul, heart and spirit with him in his work? The law of the kingdom states, that a human being must not do someone else's job. A human being must not do a job for which he has no desire, which is not his own work and which he does not love from his heart. We human beings are born into different social classes in life, we are brought up differently; we are given different possibilities to make our living in the outside world; all this must not mean anything to us. When a human being approaches the Heavenly Kingdom, he must become humble in front of the Father and say to him: "Father, what is my capability, what is my work? How can I work on behalf of your kingdom? He must not take earthly matters into consideration or think of himself: I am this.

He must strip himself naked and say: "Look, how insignificant and small I am, what can I do, what am I worth?" And then the Father's voice will say to him: "That talent is yours, use it in the service of the Kingdom. Do not look at somebody else's work, and do not think that you wish to perform miracles. Do not let your selfish ideas fly

into space on the wings of conceit, vanity and selfishness. It is all false and here only reality and truth matter. You should do only what you are suited for; furthermore, you should do it in the name of the Kingdom and for its furtherance. And you must be so enthusiastic about doing it that you do not feel a slave or servant but really feel yourself to be a son, truly feel yourself as Mine, your father's and your God's son."

Really, the question is one of acting. This is what Jesus points out in the following parable.

13. One man had two sons. And he went to the first one and said: "My son, go to-day to my vineyard to work." But the son answered: "I don't want to." But then he regretted and went. Then the father went to his other son and said the same. The son replied: "Yes, lord, I will go." But he did not go. Which one of these two did the father's wish? They said to him the first one. (Matthew 21:28—31).

Even if at first we say no, but then do it, it is real doing. We are not asked and demanded to show enthusiasm at the outset and say, yes, yes and then fail to perform what is required. Jesus shows us how real the demands are.

There is one more parable which reads as follows?

14. There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But

last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.” (Matthew 21:33—41).

In this last parable Jesus gives important advice as regards the work of the Heavenly Kingdom. That we must not work in the hope of a reward; not even in the hope of seeing the results of our work; in the Heavenly Kingdom work is done for its own sake. Work is its own reward. The fruits do not belong to the workers; they belong to the owner.

Is it clear to us now what the new understanding of life is what Jesus taught to the people? Can we now go in through the Gate of the Outer Court in order to hear what he taught to his disciples?

When a human being approaches death and is lying ill in his bed, waiting for the moment of his last breath, it will be made clear to his soul what was real in his life. Then he will be placed in a most extraordinary position; he will look at himself and his own life as though from a distance. Everything will flee from him — everything that in his body prompted him to live, everything that involved passion, desire and temptation, everything will gradually leave and evade him. These ties, that in the full vigour of life appeared to be strong and gave him faith in himself, will disappear and he will not feel them. If he has inherited a fear, a terror

of death or hell, there will arise before the eyes of his soul pictures in which he is the subject, and they may frighten him. Each day, however, the number of those increases who are not really afraid of death because throughout their lives they have understood and gradually become assured of the fact that there is no eternal hell. God could not possibly be the same as the Devil. Most of the people "who do not fear God" are in the position that when they die, they notice to their own surprise that life disappears from them, and when they do not know anything about their soul, they naturally think: "Death must be the end of all."

The only thing that carries a human being consciously through the narrow Gate of death, is the living faith — this faith which the wise point to and which Jesus taught in the gospels. He teaches us to believe in a good life of which we also are a part, in which we also live, and which is happiness, joy and goodness and beautiful throughout. His whole understanding of life consists of the new faith: "Believe that the mystery of life is love, joy and peace. Believe in God. Because belief in God is the same as "belief in the living power of goodness."

When this understanding is clear to us and our lives are filled with it, then there is no question of fear of death or feelings of loneliness or desertion in the face of death, because this belief will not disappear at death. Belief in goodness does not disappear, belief in God does not disappear, when it has achieved life in us.

# In the Outer Court of the Temple

To you are given the secrets  
of the Kingdom of Heaven.  
Matthew 13:11



## IV

# The Angel and the Demon

When we have adopted the principles as taught by Jesus in his parables, we want to study the New Testament further and concentrate on the other teachings given by Jesus. It seems that he gives in the gospels several new teachings at random, independent from one another: "Do not judge; be not against evil; if someone asks for your coat give him also your waistcoat etc." We cannot fully comprehend these principles because we do not know what Jesus means by them; it seems to us that in the parable a new guiding principle has been given to human life. We ask ourselves what these commandments are, and we must really concentrate deeply on the gospels in order to notice, that before we can obey those commands, we must understand a certain division of which Jesus spoke frequently, and to which he refers in his teachings. There has been some casual talk about it in the parables already but only now does the division become clearer to us from the gospels and from our own lives.

Jesus, you will notice, does not speak only of the Kingdom of God. He does not only speak of the Heavenly Kingdom, where the Father rules and in which goodness, happiness and joy are the living realities, but he also speaks of the other, of the kingdom of darkness, in which the Evil Spirit rules, and where all kinds of evil creatures dwell. He speaks of these things explicitly, and therefore we are

accustomed to classify even Christian belief among the dualistic religions. It has been asserted by theologians that Christian belief is not dualistic like for example Zoroastrian religion, but from the scientific- philosophical point of view it is obviously dualistic because it believes in two opposing powers, good and evil.

If in the first conception of life our eyes opened upon goodness, now we are on our way along the road of the principles taught in the gospels and can see that there are two kingdoms. In addition to a good power there is also the power of evil; in addition to the Kingdom of God there is also the Kingdom of the Evil Spirit.

And when we notice the gospels teaching the existence of evil, we ask what is meant by the kingdom of evil. Does the kingdom of evil consist, as taught in the Zoroastrian religion, of all suffering, all evil in the outside world, sickness, accidents, death, war, loss, damage. Is this the kingdom of evil or is the evil something else?

In order to find the right explanation to this question we must think of the fact that the Kingdom of God has to be within us. Jesus says expressly: "The Kingdom of Heaven is not here not there but it is within yourselves." And because the Kingdom of God is within us, and we understand that we could not partake of it at all if it was not within us, might it not be possible that the kingdom of evil of which Jesus speaks, where the evil spirit rules, is also within us? Can we answer this question with anything else but "yes"? The kingdom of evil is within us in the same way as the kingdom of goodness is within us is. It is in ourselves, even if we do not notice it at once, when we embrace a new philosophy and are glad of the fact that good is within us; we rejoice as the business man who found a priceless pearl;

but we notice later, when we have lived in our new belief, for a while that the kingdom of evil is also within us. Not only God's kingdom of Goodness but also the dark kingdom of the Evil spirit is within us.

This is the teaching of Jesus. This belongs to the secrets of the Heavenly Kingdom. When we try to be like ordinary people and take notice of the parables of Jesus and try to live according to them, it becomes clear to us that, within us, there is a contrast of good and evil. In this way we come in contact with the most profound psychological truths of human life, the extraordinary fact that, within us, good and bad, love, goodness, beauty and hate, jealousy and selfishness exist side by side. As Goethe says: "Two souls are living in my breast, the one wishes to divorce from the other; one in the frenzy of love clutches the world, the other by force rises from the dust to the level of the forefathers." (Faust, I.)

What is the reason for this and why is it like this, who are we who live in such peculiar cross-currents? We have two powers, one prompting us to unselfishness and the other attracting us to selfishness, and it is not possible for ordinary psychology to solve this riddle. The scientist who examines people from the outside cannot explain why there are "two souls" in the human being.

Even though some scientists and investigators argue that evil or selfishness is natural to the human being, and that goodness will appear only after the human soul has matured and has become civilized, one who has lived in the light of the new understanding will reply: "How then the power of good of which he is conscious is greater than he is himself, is not himself." What is the origin of the power of good, which is part of the Heavenly Kingdom, and which means

that God is really within every human being even though he cannot be equated with this power, since it is greater than he is himself?" He cannot call himself good. He understands what Jesus meant when he said in the gospels "Why do you call me good, nobody is good except God alone." A human being could not become conscious of the power, which is greater and nobler than himself, if that power sprung from only his own development.

We can understand that evil is in us because of our earlier development, but where does the goodness come from that our psychology cannot discover. Only somebody who has delved deeply into the secrets of the Heavenly Kingdom can discover it, and it can be understood by all who accept theosophical philosophy, viz., the philosophy which the wise who understand these things have propounded.

The result is as follows: In a human being there are two entities, and he is himself the third. Man himself is the so-called personal "I", or ego, which he knows himself to be and which he calls himself. And this selfconsciousness of his lies on the border of two areas, like a third neutral party between two other parties. A human being who has woken up to the understanding of the Heavenly Kingdom makes the observation, that his own "I" can salute the good with one hand and evil with the other.

As long as we are "children of the world", we do not know of this division in three. In our practical life, our knowledge of goodness and God is infinitesimal or absolutely nonexistent. We know only of ourselves and what moves in us, and we do not believe in the good power in itself and its superiority over us. We notice within ourselves all kinds of powers, and what is good in us has developed as a result of experiences in former lives, and it is that "natural good" of which the apostle speaks. But above

all else we notice in our nature something which is a reminder of an earlier development and which we must call selfishness and evil. We must not forget the fact that homo sapiens is the result of earlier systems of development, development from the animal kingdom, and that all kinds of natural instincts are endemic to the animal kingdom, which seen from the human point of view are selfish, even if they are natural in the animal kingdom. In the human race these instincts do not bear the same relationship to the human consciousness as in the animal kingdom, because the human being is an entity, who brings to animal instinct the powers of his intellect. Because of this, a human being who accepts even one natural instinct, which he has inherited from animal life and which he recognizes as his own "I", and endows it with his reason, makes it a passion, which is no longer animally natural, but it becomes humanly unnatural through his selfishness. All animal evil in the human being springs from the fact that he has in his ignorance indulged some old instinct. We can clearly see that these excrescences are based on natural instincts. For example, a human being has a natural animal instinct: he must eat and drink. But what is natural for the human and animal body, food and drink, can grow in a human being and turn into an unnatural eating and drinking appetite, when he can — in ignorance of the good power of the Heavenly Kingdom, which is above him — start wondering at, admiring and obeying the animal instincts, and, almost unable to resist them, he augments them because they bring him momentary satisfaction and happiness. That is how the passions which dominate human beings are born. They are absolutely natural to begin with, but man has lent them his reason and changed them from natural animal instincts into unnatural human passions.

All this will become clear when man lives in the light of the new understanding. He knows that he must solve this problem practically. There is a saying that inside a human being there are two entities, on the one side an angel and on the other a demon. The majority of us know nothing of angels. Man can acquire knowledge of the angels only after he has started to believe in the good power, the Heavenly Kingdom of which Jesus speaks in his parables, and only then does he become aware of the demon in himself. As long, says Paul, as he is in his "natural state" he does not know of angels or devils, but thinks that the good and the bad in him is himself. An ordinary human being feels that he has been given passions, desires and instincts in order to satisfy them, but only a "religious" person, who believes in good and evil, is placed between two fires, good and bad. In his soul, angels and devils are in conflict, and he must make a choice between the two, he must give the domination to one or the other. The evil in him tempts him to selfishness and enjoyment by pampering his lower nature, and the angel, on the other hand, prompts him to give up his selfishness, prompts him to suffering and asks him to carry his cross with resignation.

A man is thus torn between the two for a long time. He feels in himself that he cannot resolve this conflict. He feels that the belief in good very often eludes him. The power of evil is so strong in him, it takes him in its arms and draws him towards itself, saying: "Leave this so-called goodness, don't you see that it is only fraud and delusion? You are only being tempted. This is the only reality."

We know from the occult point of view that a human being in his emotional body or "astral body" exaggerates some element of passion, a force of passion which should not

be there. Man should, of course, have a clean astral body which should have no influence, but instead he has created these elements of passion which are alive and can speak within him. It is that body which like a temptor talks to him when he intends to carry out a good resolution: "Better start tomorrow or the New Year, then you can give up your bad habits — of course, there must be a little ceremony, you should not do this on an ordinary weekday." The lower nature can fabricate this kind of thing — because there is the question of its very existence: must it be left in our souls to suck our life's energy or must it be cast out?

Now we can understand what the gospels mean when it is said that Jesus often helped those who were "possessed". These possessed individuals had allowed the element of passion to grow so large that in the end it attacked their brain. For a moment they became mad so that they were not responsible for their own actions.

If we study criminology and the state of mind of the criminals, we find that there are criminals, as we call them, who are otherwise peaceful human beings, quiet by nature and even shy, but who are now and again possessed by evil and cannot help themselves. For example, there are murderers, who murder for the passion of murder, to whom murder is a sensuous satisfaction and who very often have the opportunity to murder several people. Jack the Ripper was such a murderer. When the state of their mind is studied, it is discovered that they cannot resist temptation when the blood lust suddenly comes over them; this lust starts with a headache, they are mentally deranged, walking round, trying to fight it off, but in the end they yield and find a suitable situation in order to satisfy their passion.

They attack the unfortunate victim — murder him and

then feel tremendous satisfaction when the warm blood flows. Very often they even drink the blood; take home some parts of the body and even fry them. They are temporarily insane, and when they have satisfied themselves, they become quiet, wondering themselves how they could ever have done this. However, they are chained to their fate. Sometime later the lust reasserts itself in their soul and they cannot resist it.

This example is an extreme one of its kind, but we know from experience of ourselves that several bad desires in us appear in this way. When satisfied they leave us in peace, only to reappear. This is the kamic elemental in us which we must not allow to thrive, but on the contrary must expel. We think at the moment of temptation that we are the devil — it will blind us — but if we can say: "You are not me, I am not a devil", then it will at once be surprised because it cannot bear the human voice. When the possessed came face to face with Jesus, he had only to speak to them, and the elemental passions were frightened at once. They call out: "Jesus, son of God". They are frightened of the human voice. I will mention a secret known to scientists. When the kamic elementals in a human being become very pronounced, he will attract to himself from the astral world one or more entities who have the same kind of lust, and then a human being is really possessed — he has bandits in his house.

A human being who does not know of the good Heavenly Kingdom or of the angel within him is in a difficult position. He has the possibility to control himself through his reason, but this possibility may take him into still greater evil — as we call it in Theosophy — towards black magic.

For this reason, the wise have been of the opinion that

people should not be taught to control themselves too much. If they do not know good or selfishness — no human idol who controls himself and other people with his reason must be placed in front of them. Such an idol will, however, in our time start calling several people. He will have power over himself, power over others, and a will as cold as steel. Although they do not know themselves, within such people there can live a lust which is more cruel and far worse than the animal passions, namely a desire to govern others and rise above others. This kind of desire for power and personal glory arises in the human soul almost as by force when he denies animal instincts and learns to conquer them but does not know of goodness nor of the angel within him. We see this when we look at the miserable drama of human life: on the one hand, a group of people governed by all kinds of animal passions and desires, on the other hand, intelligent individuals, the slaves of a passion for power, personal glory and honor and human selfishness. All this belongs to the kingdom of darkness where a human being lives before he knows anything about the angel within him or of the Kingdom of God. If man imagines himself only as an idol of strength and power, he is forced to travel on the road which will eventually take him into black magic, because a human being who completely controls himself is a black magician. He has no animal instincts, he appears absolutely clean; when you meet him at the level of the astral world, he does not have to show his blackness but he can appear as a beautiful creature. Even if he is a wolf in sheep's clothing, others do not notice it, because the black magician controls the astral forces. Fortunately, in our time, there are not many such magicians, and there is no great danger that human society will be taken along the road to black magic,

if we can only make people see the truth. Because all individuals in the human race are potential heirs to the Heavenly Kingdom. Goodness lives within everyone and everyone has his own angel, his higher "I" . . . (Ego).

When we understand that man is torn between two powers, angel and demon, we understand that in order to walk on the narrow road of the Heavenly Kingdom and join our angel, we must make a choice. It is natural, if we take the position of the disciples of Jesus, as we have the right to do, as soon as we have lived in the new understanding of life. It is therefore natural that like the disciples we ask him: "How can we enter the heavenly kingdom, what is the procedure?"

This question of ours reflects some scepticism. We doubt whether the Heavenly Kingdom is altogether a good spiritual power generally; we suspect that this name has some kind of secret meaning. The more difficult the entry to it seems to be, the more clearly we understand that the Heavenly Kingdom consists of some particular area, the membership of which is not open to everyone that comes along. We understand that the heavenly state in our souls is the belief in the Kingdom ruled by the Father, which is in us, but also that the Heavenly Kingdom is in reality a group of people who have pledged themselves to serve the Father. Those human beings who can choose and have made the choice, belong to the Heavenly Kingdom. Throughout the history of mankind, in the remote past there have been people who have really belonged to the Heavenly Kingdom. All those people belong to that extraordinary group who have steadfastly chosen the angel, who serve God and not evil, the angel within themselves and not the demon; all the so-called "initiated" as we call them in Theosophy.

We see the proof of this in the gospels when Jesus asks Peter: "Whom do you say I am?" Peter replied: "You are the Christ, annointed, the son of the living God." Then Jesus said to Peter: "Nobody else gave you this information except the heavenly kingdom, the Father himself, and you also belong to our group. I will give you the keys of the kingdom, you can open and close, you know the secrets of the heavenly kingdom and can teach them to the others and introduce them to be initiated as one of our group." (Matthew 16:15-19).

With reference to this question, the gospels' reply is to, prepare us by telling about Jesus and the children. (Matthew 18:2 — 10) As to the question how we must prepare ourselves to enter the Heavenly Kingdom Jesus explains: "If you do not become like these children you cannot enter the heavenly kingdom." And soon after he adds: "Verily I say unto you, their angels in heaven see the face of my Father who is in the heaven." In these words Jesus exposes an extraordinary deep psychological truth in relation to children. "Their angels are always looking at the face of the Father." In other words, the higher "I" of the children is in such a state that their vision is always directed toward the Kingdom of God, the good Father.

Is not the higher mind of older people in the same state, so that it can at all times look into the face of the Father? No. There is an extraordinary difference, because the grownup person, within whom the elemental passions or demons have arisen and who lives in the natural state and sometimes hears the voice of natural good and sometimes of the demon, draws so much attention and power away from his higher self that his angel is, as it were, in a sleeping state.

We must remember Jesus parable of the sowing of

seed (Matthew 13:24—25) which has already been dealt with: when people are sleeping, the devil comes and sows bad seed. This was explained to show that when people are born into this world, into matter, the demon can perform his bad works on them because then they are asleep. This parable of Jesus is true also literally. Our higher I is half asleep when we live only a personal life, a life in which we do not know of the power of good and of the angel within us, but only of our personal ego and its desires. Then our angel is in a helpless position, he must only give power to the personal ego and he is himself unable to do anything on his own account.

This principle relates to adult people, but the case of children is different. In a small child, the demon has not yet wakened up, if the child lives a natural life and there are no conflicts except on the surface. In a small child the consciousness is in his higher "I", the angel, and the eyes of the angel are directed toward the Father and his kingdom. That is why the life of the small child is so important. Therefore it is of the highest importance how we treat little children, what kind of education we give them, what kind of surroundings we let them live in, and what we let them see. If we could bring up children properly, if we could treat ourselves and others properly when we are small, then we could bring up children so that (I am saying this in a theoretical sense — of course, I have not experienced it myself) their angel would always be able to look into the face of the Father in heaven, and they would even as children be aware in their own personal consciousness of their own divine self.

If we speak to the children of the good angel — we have all experienced that — they accept such words with great

enthusiasm and devotion, they understand. Who has understood children better than Topelius — and we remember how in his fairytales and plays he lets a white angel whisper something good into one ear and a black angel something bad into the other ear. As a poet, he has seen the truth. In the child the bad power is not the same as in the grownup. A child is always afraid of evil within himself when he is told of it. If we could make a child believe in the angel, want to be with it always and hear its voice, then he would at all times be able to look at the face of the Father — then we would have solved the problems of bringing up children — then we would have begun to make a new human race . . .

In these words Jesus has shown us what we must be if we want to see the gates of the Heavenly Kingdom. We must educate ourselves to be more conscious of the supremacy of good in our souls so that we do not draw the power and attention of the angel to our own selfish ends . . . Our angel, however, does not see evil; he is not in the same way personally aware of the bad that we know of within us; our angel only sleeps. But it is up to us to see that our angel is awake. And when the angel is awake, he looks only into the eyes of the Father.

## V

# The Five Commandments of Jesus

## 1

The so-called Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5—7) is universally accepted as a pearl of world literature but we must admit that the teachings which are given in the Sermon on the Mount are not reciprocated with equal understanding in the Christian community. The moral precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, if we penetrate even a little into the spirit of the teachings of Jesus, forbid us to wage war and carry weapons, but if anyone in a Christian society tries to carry out these teachings, he has to formulate a new sect (for example Quakers), which separates him from the Church, or he is treated as a breaker of the "bourgeois" law and thrown into prison or otherwise persecuted. There are several other examples which indicate that Christian society has not taken the Sermon on the Mount seriously although it is acclaimed as beautiful and wonderful. When in our time the well-known Russian prophet and author Leo Tolstoy tried to penetrate into the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount and explain it, and when he proclaimed those five commandments of Jesus now known all over the world and which completely differ from the old ten commandments of Moses, the world recognized his capability and sincerity, but very few went so far that they seriously regarded him as having interpreted the teachings of Jesus correctly. Most devoted Christians held the opinion that Tolstoy went too

far in his ideas because he simply wanted to shape the whole communal life differently on the basis of the commandments of Jesus.

These five commandments which are given in the Sermon on the Mount, are designed to build a new community and change the entire system of the old communal life. Tolstoy calls Christianity a new philosophy of morals. The cornerstone of Tolstoy's teachings is the argument that there should not exist judges, governments, or public institutes. He says that his argument is in accordance with the Christian spirit, but Christendom pretends to interpret that this could not have been the meaning of the teachings of Jesus, because the life of the community would thus be made impossible. Christendom has no inkling of what the life of society would be if we practised the commandments of the Sermon on the Mount as Tolstoy has presented them.

But we do not intend to explain the teachings of Tolstoy. We only mentioned his name because, in our opinion, we think it essential for a Christian today to familiarize himself with and study the teachings of Tolstoy. Our work is to study the Sermon on the Mount itself; investigate what new thoughts and principles in relation to man's spiritual development, the commandments of Jesus and other teachings would open up for the one who, entering into the spirit of the gospels, can see in them scientific guideposts to the seekers of the Heavenly Kingdom.

At the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount it is said that "when Jesus saw the people, he went up to the mount and when he sat down his disciples came and he spoke". Here it is expressly indicated that there were a lot of people, but that Jesus only spoke to his disciples.

However, it is said at the end of the Sermon on the

Mount: "and it happened that when Jesus had finished his sermon the people were surprised at his knowledge because he taught them with power and not like scholars did." (Matthew 7) There is some conflict here. At the beginning, it is said that he spoke to the disciples, and at the end the people had also heard.

We can understand it realistically — that a group of people also followed the disciples to the mount and were thus able to hear the sermon which Jesus gave to the disciples surrounding him. On the other hand, the writer of the gospels has ingeniously referred to a point which we could imagine in the following way:

"Even if these teachings are directed at the disciples, the people may also hear them and be surprised. People will not, however, fully understand them before they have understood the parables of Jesus. Only the one who understands can fully accept, but the one who does not yet understand may, even so, benefit by hearing the teachings." And truly: even if Christendom has not understood these commandments — for if it had understood, it would naturally have followed them — it has in any case found a great deal of advice, suggestions, learning and consolation when it has read the Sermon on the Mount.

Only when we have, with the help of the parables, formed a conception of the Kingdom of God as a good kingdom which is within us, and in accordance with the parables entered into the spirit of this new philosophy of life, only when we have understood the explanation of Jesus of the two empires, the good and the bad, and his teachings of the two entities or powers within the human being, namely the good power or angel and the bad power or demon; only when we have understood all this and we possess a "child's

mind” so that our angel in heaven knows how to look at the face of the Father — only then can we penetrate into the new commandments inherent in the sermon on the mount.

The Sermon on the Mount starts with the eight Beatitudes. We will not deal with these now — I have collected writings on them in *The Secrets of the God's Kingdom*, so whoever wants to know what I think of them may read this booklet. After them Jesus gives the five new commandments in the Sermon on the Mount.

These commandments are new because they all start with the same formula: "You have heard it said of old, but I say to you . . .", and our curiosity is therefore first aroused by the question of why Jesus gave new commandments and what he meant by them.

We can get a reply to this question only if we adopt the position of the disciples.

There is the question of our membership in the Heavenly Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is not of this world, but we have had our eyes opened to see what the Kingdom of God is, and we have become almost like subjects of this Kingdom, because we have tried to live in accordance with the parables of Jesus and construct the new philosophy.

However, our membership in the Kingdom is for the present defective and only partially satisfactory; it is theoretical rather than practical. Why? Because we do not yet comprehend it with our senses. We do not see the kingdom and the people in it, we do not see who are the members and why some people are not members of it.

Think of our lives in this outside world. We all know we are alive in it; we know by which means we stay alive, we can also see each other; we can criticize each other, thank and scold. Is the Kingdom of Heaven a totally different

world? Does nothing which can be said and conceived in this visible world correspond with the Heavenly Kingdom? Of course the Heavenly Kingdom is different from the visible world because the worlds of the body and the soul are different. But it is real and objective in its own way, and we can express it in words like *conceive, observe, see, hear* etc., just as with physical reality. That is why we are blind and walk in the semi-darkness, feeling our way before we are conscious subjects of the Heavenly Kingdom. And we are only conscious subjects when we perceive its existence and when we can see that it is not only talk of beautiful things, fancy talk from above the clouds, but that there really is in existence a world, our soul's kingdom, where the powers of the spiritual world are supreme even if it is invisible to our physical eyes. How could we "see" unless some new senses have wakened and developed in us which can connect us with the Heavenly Kingdom.

Of course this is what Jesus meant. If he has invited us to become members of the Heavenly Kingdom; if he has told us what is required of us in order for us to qualify for the passage to the kingdom; if he has shown us that in that kingdom we are not equal but we can speak of "small" and "great", he could not have meant anything other than that if we carry out his commandments, we will be made conscious subjects of the new kingdom, and that those senses will then awake in us and enable us to observe that we are members of that kingdom and notice how other individuals will react to it.

The five new commandments of Jesus are expressly mystic roadsigns which are adapted, when we obey them, to awaken new senses in us. In other words they are scientific instructions — clear occult science as it were. When we now

turn to these commandments, it should be observed that they are divided into two groups. The former comprises the first three and the latter the last two. The former teaches us to see other people as psychical beings and the last two teach us to see the Heavenly Kingdom itself as a new world.

The commandments of Jesus need not, and must not, be carried out consecutively but simultaneously, however, so that each time the emphasis should be put on one particular commandment. To carry out these commandments is not a mechanical process like "good behaviour", because they are living spirit and rise as ideals high above the material world. All we can do is try to carry them out.

### 1.

The first commandment is as follows: "You have heard that it was said by them of the old time, that thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement; but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say to his brother Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell fire." (Matthew 5:21—22).

I wish to point out that the word "fool" is not used in the same commandment when it is mentioned in Luke's gospel to which, as is well-known, Tolstoy paid a great deal of attention, considering it an original text. But now, in the light of later research, it has been found that in the original manuscripts, both in the texts of the gospels and in the

excerpts of the fathers of the Church the word "fool" occurs. But there is an old writer, Cassianus, who agrees with Tolstoy that the word "fool" was a later addition. And even if scholars argue about this in their own way and decide whichever way they like, I must also on the grounds of occult science say that I am of the opinion that Jesus did not use this word but that he really said "who is angry with his brother he is liable to judgement."

The old commandment "you must not kill", relates to life in the physical world and tells us how to conduct ourselves without causing trouble. When we look at the world around us, we notice that — with the exception of war — human beings as individuals have already learned not to kill other people. Of course, now and then murders occur but we must regard them as exceptional. On the whole, people do not go so far in their hate, and for that reason there is order in society. Public opinion is definitely against murder. And although a person, who is influenced by hate, desire of vengeance or some other reason, has committed murder and in his heart is convinced that what he did was right, and although his crime is unknown to everybody but is always a secret between his thought and his heart, we will notice an extraordinary fact: the murderer's conscience gives him no peace. Even if he assures himself that he did right when he killed that scoundrel, there is still a quiet voice inside his heart which tells him "you did not do right, you violated Gods law." "You knew that in life there are secret spiritual laws which you must not violate." And even when it is a question of a soldier who does not kill his brother on his own account, but on the orders of others, we notice the same laws affecting him also: either his mind is filled with terror against warfare or his heart becomes dull and his conception

of good and bad become crude and he loses something of the original finer human instincts.

When the old sages gave commandments, they only revealed a law of life which we must not violate.

But Jesus, in his new commandment, deepens the whole conception. He no longer speaks of the outward relations of human beings. He no longer speaks of not killing because he presumes that this commandment is known and obeyed. He speaks to his disciples of the secrets of the Heavenly Kingdom, and he says: "If you wish to become conscious citizens of this wonderful world of the soul, you must not become angry."

His commandment must not be understood superficially. It does not mean that human beings must always suppress their anger and avoid appearing angry. This would lead to hypocrisy. A human being who is even a little bit diplomatic, even if he is annoyed inside may be outwardly unaffected. This is an aristocratic method and constitutes proper behaviour in society. It is said that the Chinese and Japanese become extremely polite to one another when they are angry. They exchange very elegant courtesies and become more and more composed the angrier they are. Even in the Western countries every well educated man and woman suppresses his hate and is terrified of a person who gets angry and enraged.

But there is no denying that this kind of non-expression of anger is hypocrisy. From the view point of truth a human being should show his anger in order to show what he has in his heart, and not carry the hate around within him.

In his commandments Jesus does not mean outward behaviour in itself. His instructions are directed deeper. He speaks of the heart. He means that we must not get angry in

our inner self, in our heart. His whole commandment is life and not form. "Do not be angry in your heart." Maybe a human being, who is not at all angry inside can use just as harsh language as Jesus himself, according to the gospels, when he said: "oh you — the adder's offspring." Who knows, he may look just as angry as Jesus when he drove the animals out of the temple. Who knows ? I do not know but am only saying "it may be". Because here it is not a question of form but a question of life and spirit. Therefore, non-indignation is an ideal which we must ceaselessly try to attain. When do we reach it? Perhaps when we are Masters? And we must certainly beware that we do not boast to ourselves that "I have reached the ideal." Because how pure would our hearts be if they were really pure?

Why then does Jesus give this commandment? What secret meaning does it hold? The intention of the commandments is to awaken in us new senses, so that we would be conscious citizens of the new world. What, then, is meant by this first commandment?

It means something very extraordinary. If I were to speak as an occultist, I should say that it has something to do with our secret forehead. When we are angry, when we are hurt or disappointed inwardly, we put our invisible mechanism into vibration in a certain way, we wake up certain powers within our invisible mental body, powers which will blind us so that we cannot see or understand the thoughts of other people. But when we strive to attain freedom from anger, we become accommodating, intelligent, unbiased and understand the thoughts of other people. At one time we may have been clear in our own opinion and our own conception of the world. We were ready to persecute the whole world for the sake of truth, as

believers have often done. We were ready — at least in our imagination — to chop someone's head off if he could not see as we did. But when we started to eliminate hate and anger from our hearts, our first achievement was to have a new world opened to us, the world of human thought. We learned to notice that other people also think. How amazing that we had not understood it before. The purer our hearts become, the clearer we understand and see that human beings, our brothers, think intelligently and reasonably. We learn to think and understand the opinions of everybody. Have you met people who have thus worked and been rewarded? Everyone who meets such a person talks about himself, exposes the deepest secrets of his soul, speaks to him straightforwardly of his own philosophy. He does it instinctively because he anticipates sympathy and understanding from such a person. And he gets it. This is the first achievement, when we begin to understand people as people. And I do not need to speak about the other side of this achievement, that we begin to understand animals, plants, stones, the powers of nature, the whole world, and — amazingly enough — we begin to see what people think even if they do not say a word to us.

## 2.

And when we turn our attention to the second commandment, it reads as follows: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you: that whosoever looketh on a

woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27—28).

Here again the old commandment of Moses has been referred to — do not commit adultery — by which Moses wanted to organize conditions in the world. He said: you can live happily in your society if you do not break the marriage laws.

Now, we must confess that mankind has not learned to obey the sixth commandment, not even to the same extent as the fifth — “You must not kill” — because the latter commandment is understood by most people at once, whereas the former has become more obscure the more it has been preached.

The reason is that the sixth commandment of Moses seems too superficial to people today. It may satisfy believers, but our entire modern culture is trying to arrive at a recognition of a higher foundation for marriage than the promise sanctified by a priest. People today do not regard as holy the fact that two people are going to live together and are blessed by a priest with witnesses present, when after some time the momentary rapture has passed, happiness has gone, peace has been destroyed, bitterness and misunderstanding and scorn have taken over the home. And it may even happen that a new friend will step into the path of one of the couple, win his heart and make him think he really loves her. What is to be done? Continue an unhappy married life together or break the marriage laws? Nowadays civilization sympathizes with the feelings of people who suffer: The first marriage was a mistake, it was not a holy marriage because the only foundation of marriage is mutual love. So, too, writers and poets today praise the love between man and woman but despise marriage which is

founded on any basis other than love. That is why we think the commandment of Moses (do not commit adultery) is superficial and old-fashioned.

Or we could turn it around and say the commandment is too modern for us. Perhaps we live so much in the modes of the old world that we cannot help committing adultery. The history of the development of marriage is a complicated one. Marriage to one person and the faithfulness demanded by it is a thing that we have not yet learned. Perhaps the commandment of Moses demands too high a standard for ordinary people.

And if we admit that the sixth commandment is very difficult to obey, how much more difficult must the new commandment of Jesus be. And yet he says expressly: "Whosoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her in his heart." It is not enough that the act is forbidden, it is a natural thing — just as natural as not to kill. The judgement in its severity has more sensitive aspects: the secret thoughts of the heart. What is Jesus aiming at? What is evil in his opinion? What is the question about? Is it a question of love or the ideal of a monk? Must a human being live alone and wage war against the whole question of sex? Is that what Jesus meant?

Some, of course, have interpreted this commandment to mean that Jesus has forbidden natural sexual relationship; forbidden us to bring children into the world, to procreate and add to the human race. Skoptsies in Russia mutilate their bodies in order to be more acceptable to their God.

But, of course, this is a misunderstanding. The fact that the commandment mentions the word "adultery" means that there is no question of celibacy involved because who else can commit adultery except the married person?

From the practical point of view, the problem of "sex" cannot be solved like this. If absolute celibacy and virginity were required from the disciple, not many could even apply; except those few of whom Jesus says, "some have, for the sake of the heavenly kingdom, accepted celibacy . . ." Most of the seekers are affected by the emotion of loneliness which makes their spiritual development hopelessly difficult if they do not get help. Man is still so young, as a soul, that he longs for a friend, and his longing for love is so piercing that he yearns for companionship precisely in sex. Only when he loves another person and gets married, organizing his sex life naturally, only then can an ordinary applicant start cleansing his heart according to the commandments of Jesus. If a young applicant saw the entire ideal and would think "I want to be a saint" — he would without doubt end up like the so-called "oldtime saints", who went to live as hermits in the mountains and woods. They escaped from a natural human existence and did not want to enjoy friends; they did not want to love a living attractive woman — but threw themselves into more dangerous loneliness, conjured up from their own souls alluring pictures and pronounced themselves, even in their own eyes, as most miserable sinners. And the reason for this secret failure is that they wanted to reach "sainthood" before they could even love properly.

The new commandment of Jesus, therefore, presupposes that the applicant for discipleship should have his love and sex life naturally organized. And from the disciples he demands that these relationships, to which the disciple as a human being is tied, should not be violated. So he gives a stern commandment and at the same time advises the disciples how they can attain purity of heart according to

the direction given by the commandment. Jesus says directly, if not in words: "you must beware, not only of acts, but first of all, of the passionate thoughts and feelings, because even the fact that you look upon another woman or man thinking: — oh, I wish I could own you and love you — is adultery. But even in this connection one must not be a hypocrite. Better outward adultery than storing impurity in the heart, because the thought always leads to action in the end. Let your heart therefore be pure."

And when we ask what is the inner significance of Jesus' statement to his disciples: "Your heart must be pure", — what is it he really wants to develop in them, — then we answer: he wants to open up a new sense, which puts the disciples in a position to understand people better.

Experience teaches us that if our senses desire a person of the opposite sex, we do not understand that person as a human being, we do not understand the feelings of that person. It is even said that those in love are blind. An apparent understanding may prevail between them if the love is mutual. But it is only by chance that they will understand each other as human beings. How often mistakes are made. They get married, and only afterwards comes the awakening: "good gracious, is that how you feel? — and I have also always felt the same way." A most awful chasm of unhappiness may open in a marriage if the married couple has not understood one another's feelings. This is such a complicated question that getting married is really like taking part in a lottery, as Mrs. Blavatsky was in the habit of saying.

Jesus drew up his new commandment as an expert in the law of the soul. Only to the extent that we are free from selfish passions and desires ourselves can we understand

other people's emotional life and give brotherly sympathy. It is almost as if Jesus had said: "Even if you do not understand your husband or wife, purify your heart in order that you can at least learn to understand other people and their feelings. Then, if you want to become conscious of the heavenly kingdom, you must learn to understand human emotions properly. And we know from experience, when we are in the company of a person who in his heart is free from passions, that he can understand our emotions and analyse and criticize them, showing what is good and what is not. There is another meaning to this purification, which I only mention in passing. We learn to understand, apart from individuals, the emotional life of nature as well, and gradually we awaken within ourselves a capacity to see other people's feelings, without them revealing them to us, in other words, we learn to see the auras.

## 3.

The third commandment is as follows:

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt you swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Here, too, is one of the Mosaic commandments. "Do not commit perjury but keep your oaths to the Lord". This commandment is related to the outward life which regulates outward circumstances. "Do not commit perjury but keep your oaths to the Lord." What does this commandment assume? It clearly assumes two things: first, that when one wishes to speak the truth one must swear in the name of God, and secondly, that generally honesty is not required in speech. This commandment could not be given to anyone but human beings who are allowed to lie generally, but who are forced under certain circumstances to be honest and speak the truth. And how may it be with human society? We all know that there is a lot of dishonesty and telling of lies, both in people's private lives and in public life.

Thus, it may be really like a higher festive occasion, like a divine service when people sometimes speak pure truth. And then it is almost self-evident that they swear and declare that they are now speaking the truth.

But Jesus gives to his disciples an entirely different piece of advice. He does not point to the outward but to the inward man. "Of course", he says, "you must never take an oath because it would show that you do not always speak the truth. But as it is natural that untruth and deceit must be far removed from your everyday life, it follows then that your speech must always be quiet, peaceful, without protest or oaths. The chief emphasis, however, is not on outward honesty, and outward honesty is not even possible if you cannot be truthful in your hearts. Be therefore inwardly truthful to your God, to your own Higher Self."

And it is true that aspirants to the heavenly kingdom, in order to reach inner truthfulness, become so precise in their speech that they do not use their tongue unnecessarily —

even as Jesus says in another connection "of every futile word you must make an accounting on the day of judgement". This becomes so natural to them that on the whole they retire from ordinary social life, the ordinary tenor of life, because in their opinion, a human being has the gift of speech in order to be able to give expression to divine truth and beauty. But when man uses his powers of speech wrongly or speaks to no purpose, prattles incessantly and cannot listen quietly, it is impossible for him to make any distinction between right and wrong; he does not understand the truth but is moving away from truthfulness, moving even against himself. The more he learns to control his tongue and to use it for advising, teaching, consoling, helping, delighting, expressing beauty, the more he can also be truthful to himself.

To be truthful to himself! Oh — there is indeed a prerequisite for the disciples — upon which all the new understanding of life is founded. When, according to the commandment of Jesus, the control of thoughts and tongue is united with this essential quality, it possesses a deep occult meaning. When we ask what new sense Jesus wishes to awaken in us with the aid of this commandment — in what new way can we become aware ourselves of the Heavenly Kingdom, if we learn to control our thoughts and speech — then we get this reply: "You learn to see other people as they are — within you a new sense will waken — which will inform you what talents, inclinations and characteristics the other people possess."

There are examples in everyday life which illustrate this law. A businessman who has always been honest in business and never defrauded anyone and who himself has suffered losses when they have been inevitable in his opinion, who

has always demanded from himself what he demands from others — he is almost the "conscience" of his fellows and his assistants — severe but capable in his demands — almost clairvoyant in choosing his assistants and servants. Those who are near him grow to be like him. They will also become honest if they were not honest before because in his eyes no dishonesty can exist. And we remember the story of an Indian judge who regularly and constantly trained himself in honesty and truth and in the end developed the powers of the clairvoyant so that he always knew when the other person lied. When he sat behind his bench at a hearing and when some witness for example began to lie or to tell something that he did not know, the judge said quietly, "how is that? Now you are not telling the truth". And the witness had to confess that he was not telling the truth.

By following this commandment of Jesus the disciple will come in touch with some powers of development which have influence in the world, and which will help him to understand the lines along which the development of human beings to take place.

In brief, Jesus wishes to show us with these three commandments how to develop within ourselves the heavenly characteristics, senses, with the help of which we learn to see other people and beings as real living souls. If we do not get angry we will learn to see the thoughts of other people, their mental functions; if we do not covet, we will be able to see and understand other people's feelings, their astral life — and if we do not utter trifles and are not dishonest, we will learn to understand other people's inclinations and characteristics, the powers of their etheric body.

Even though Jesus speaks to his disciples anyone can

listen to him, because his words do not hurt anybody, who tries to stop being angry, to reject the passions and to refrain from uttering trivialities. On the contrary, this is great self-development, which in its final aspects is impossible if a human being has not understood the new philosophy of life which Jesus has enunciated in his parables.

## VI

# The Five Commandments of Jesus

## 2.

The preceding section dealt with the first three commandments of the Sermon on the Mount. We noticed that the observance of these commandments makes the invisible spiritual life real so that one observes other people primarily as psychical and spiritual beings. One not only sees physical beings and not only what the physical eyes reveal; and neither does a man see only what his reason, functioning through the physical senses, witnesses of the spirituality of other people, but he learns simply to see that other people are psychical beings. First of all he learns to understand their thoughts, when he follows the first commandment. Then he learns to understand their feelings, when he follows the second commandment, and thirdly he learns to understand their spiritual characteristics or in general their personality, when he follows the third commandment. The invisible life becomes real when the powers of observation develop, deepen and form what is called clairvoyance. The last two commandments put the person into a position, if he follows them, whereby he understands the invisible world, the Heavenly Kingdom, as a real world outside himself, where human beings, as spiritual souls, are the citizens.

All commandments of the Sermon on the Mount are moral in character and with the aid of the moral principles awaken his inner senses. There are, of course, other ways,

but the teachings of Jesus preserved in the Sermon on the Mount, as is generally the case with the teachings of the wise, differ from other teachings that are given in the world, in that only with the aid of moral principles do they develop the human being's psychic senses, without advising him to follow any outward or half-outward magical methods. And the moral principles are the only methods which are safe, sure and free from danger.

## 4.

The Fourth Commandment is as follows:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man shall sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give him that asketh thee and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." (Matthew 5 :38—42).

The emphasis is on the words "But I say to you, do not resist evil." In the Greek text it is "*too poneeroo*". And this word can be either masculine or neuter. Therefore the sentence can mean: Do not oppose an evil human being, do not resist him — or if one understands the word *poneeroo* as neuter it means — not to oppose evil generally.

We know that Leo Tolstoy emphasized particularly that the word *poneeroo* is to be understood as masculine, that is to say against an evil human being; because Jesus says: "turn

you the other cheek, etc". — and gives examples which prove that in the first sentence *poneeroo* is a personal pronoun and not a neuter. Even if I do not believe that Tolstoy has misunderstood the spiritual meaning of the commandment, at the same time I am confident that *poneeroo* is also to be understood as a neuter. It means the same as the expression: Do not resist evil. The evil may be an evil human being or evil in the form of suffering or grief. This word is ambiguous.

The old commandment "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" reflects the conception of righteousness in relation to human beings and life generally which we try to incorporate into society. If man violates the laws of the country, he is punished. We have legal institutions for that purpose, which are founded on the old commandment "An eye for an eye", and the purpose of which is to bestow justice on individuals in accordance with their merits. And we have in our animal nature the desire for revenge when someone has hurt us, and the desire to punish when someone offends our own conception of right. We say for example — to steal is wrong — no matter from whom something is stolen. We judge the act itself as wrong, and our feeling of righteousness is satisfied when it is followed by punishment. Therefore, when Jesus says, do not resist evil — does he mean that we should overthrow our legal institutions? He did not mean by his commandment that we should destroy all legal institutions and courts in the world. No, before we can do that, our understanding of right has to be changed. As long as it is right in our opinion that the evildoer is punished, it is better that he is punished rather than have the conception of righteousness in human society suffer. But the commandment of Jesus means something quite different.

If we want to be disciples and if our aim is different from that of other people generally, then we must observe other laws of life. We must not hatch inside us retaliation or nourish an injured conception of right, but, as Jesus says, take an entirely different position in relation to evil. We must then understand the commandment of Jesus 'do not resist evil' in the following way: "You say that people who anger you are evil; you say suffering and catastrophe are evil. As long as you in your heart say, that these things are evil, do not resist them but make yourself humble. You learn to eradicate the word "evil" from your mind; you learn to see good in evil and prepare yourself to overcome evil."

This is the well-known Christian humility which in the hands of the ignorant pharisee conceals the lowest of all characteristics, jealousy, hate and the desire to retaliate, but which in the hearts of the disciple is a constantly growing, wonderfully perfumed pure lotus flower.

This is a small and simple thing but it totally changes our relationship to the problem of evil. We must not confess, if we wish to be disciples and enter the heavenly kingdom, that anything is evil for us. We must not confess that. On the contrary, all that we are likely to call evil, things, circumstances, suffering, illness, human beings, are in themselves good. In order to bring about this little change of mind, which seems so simple, we require great belief and confidence in the fact that the advice given by Jesus is wise and that it is really in accordance with the laws of life and the world.

We, who call ourselves Theosophists and believe that a human being is a reincarnating entity and that the karma, or the law of karma is the guide to everything in this world, understand that there is no such thing as external evil. We

understand that what confronts us and what we want to call evil, is good, because it is the result of our own past mistakes, and when it returns to us as a result of those past mistakes we get rid of the evil which we once committed. This result is not evil, but it was evil when we first made the mistake. The result of evil is not evil, it is good, because the result frees us from our own deed, teaches us and enlightens us. If we are indebted to another person, this indebtedness will pre-occupy us until it has been paid. We would be very stupid if we thought that paying a debt was disgusting; we would indeed be stupid and ungrateful. It is natural for a healthy human being to pay his debts and then be free of such debt. It is equally delightful for a disciple to balance his own bad deeds, his own past mistakes through suffering and obstacles, through the evil which he encounters.

And let us now ask: Why does Jesus give us such advice? What is the hidden meaning of this advice; what is the secret practice behind it? It is simply that if we can thus manage it to control ourselves and step outside our own personality, be almost, as it were, beside ourselves our eyes will open to see the world as an organized cosmos. We can then see that from the invisible world a guiding power is focused to direct the lives of humans and animals. Our eyes will open to see that the life of man can be understood and explained only on the grounds of reincarnation, because the causes of events in our present life cannot be found in this life, but in the past which is on the other side of birth. The unshaken balance of the law of karma presupposes that a human being is a reincarnating spiritual being. And how wonderful! When our vision grows and develops, it changes into "reincarnating memory". Memories from the past will start flashing in front of our eyes, first obscurely, then more

and more clearly. We get clarification to our problems. We start to understand why we have such and such characteristics, how we have developed into what we are. The meaning of the fourth commandment is really very far-reaching.

## 5.

Now we come to the fifth Commandment:

”Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than other? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5 :43—48). As we know, Leo Tolstoy, who in the last century studied more devoutly than any Christian the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount and its spirit, saw in this fifth commandment a definite inclination toward the necessity to change the lives of the nations and their political status. He laid emphasis on the word ”enemies” which in Greek is *ekhtroi*. The primary meaning of this word is ”national enemy”; of another nation; also a person of another political party. Jesus in his teachings therefore forbids us to hate

other nations and requests us to love them. On the other hand, Jesus forbids war. This is the well-known opinion of Tolstoy and it is also represented by other Christian sects, for example, the Quakers in England and America and the Duhobors in Russia.

I have no wish whatsoever to dispute this. Without doubt warfare is forbidden in the commandment. If there existed a Christian state, it most certainly would not be engaged in war. But there has not yet existed a Christian nation, which would be Christian in this connection.

I am definitely of the opinion that Jesus did not give this commandment blindly. He is not speaking to just anyone. He is not speaking to large numbers of people, to nations, to states. He only speaks to his own disciples, to those who want to follow him. All the commandments of the Sermon on the Mount are given to individuals. And the fifth commandment is somehow the highest and most extraordinary.

The four first commandments are negative in character: Don't do this and don't do that. But the fifth is affirmative, almost commanding: love everybody, even your enemies. It comprises the teachings of the previous commandments. It is like their predecessor and executor. In another gospel Jesus sums up his philosophy in one sentence: "I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12).

Jesus points to the old philosophy of "Love your nearest and hate your enemies. Love those people who are good to you, with whom you are in close touch. Hate those who belong to another state, who are strangers to you and all those who inflict ill upon you and are your personal enemies." According to our old understanding of life this

was just and right. How new and radical is the new commandment of Jesus!

Yes, all Christians know this. Christianity has always preached the belief in brotherhood. But we see so little brotherhood being practised in the world simply because it is not clear to us that Christianity is only the following of Jesus and nothing else. Only the person who really deep down in his soul longs for truth and seeks it in Christianity will find it in following Jesus. And he, the future disciple of Jesus, will see the real element of spiritual life and order. To him love is natural. His heart does not prevent him from doing good, blessing evil people and loving his enemies — that is loving everything which to him is evil or bad.

If we ask why Jesus specifically advises us to love in this way, what hidden meaning it has, Jesus replies in his own words: "so that you would be the Sons of your Father who is in heaven". Good acts and love have extraordinary psychic influences and consequences — that is — the seeing of God, the heavenly Father. The experiencing of the great love which is behind everything, which contains everything within itself, depends only on our knowledge of love, not of evil. The Heavenly Kingdom becomes real to us in the invisible world in which we live and where the leading life force is that love which we call God, the Father. In another place in the Sermon on the Mount, it is said: "Only those can see God who are pure in heart". The purity of the heart consists simply in man's ignorance of evil. He does not know of evil outside himself. He does not see evil in the world and in other people, but changes all evil into good. And from himself, from his heart only love radiates. His heart is pure — he sees God.

But to reach this region of love he must really do much

good, bless much, and forgive much. When we say that a loving person does not know of evil, we mean that he only sees the good that is behind evil and focuses his attention on it. How could he be unaware of the selfishness and evil in the world? How could he be a stranger to suffering, pain and tears? If he knows good, this is the result of knowing evil. If in the invisible world, he wishes to rise to heavenly heights, he must in the same invisible world descend into the depths of hell. In order to ascend to the Kingdom of God, and look into the face of the high spiritual entities, who surround His throne, he must have descended as a purifying, uplifting, loving entity into the chasms of the kingdom of darkness and thrown light upon those creatures who curse themselves there.

We have now gone through the five commandments of the Sermon on the Mount and seen how wonderful is the teaching for the person, who, as a disciple, wishes to penetrate into the secrets of the Heavenly Kingdom. As the first three commandments awaken in us senses that perceive other people as spiritual beings, the last two open our eyes to see the secret world in itself, to understand its laws and to perceive its inhabitants.

In the next section we will deal with the prayers and the arrangement of meditations which Jesus gave to his disciples to help and encourage them on their way along the narrow road constructed by the commandments.

## VII

### Our Father

#### 1

Prayer is a universal human phenomenon. If we look at any nation or at any age regardless of whether they are "heathens" or have endowed their religion with some name they have all invariably prayed to God or Gods. Usually people request something for their friends or for themselves, for outward material things which in their opinion belong to a happy existence, and so for example it is common in a Christian nation to pray for good luck on behalf of the army.

When we look into the Bible we notice, when reading the Sermon on the Mount that the gospels take a different position with regard to prayer. Jesus apparently does not advise people to pray aloud with many words and in a group as is the custom in the churches, for "so do the heathens" he says. "The Heavenly Father knows what you need before you pray to Him" (Matthew 6:8). And he particularly forbids us to pray in "synagogues and on the corners of the streets" because it is "hypocrisy" (Matthew 6:5).

When praying one must be alone and speak to the Father in secret (Matthew 6:6). And when we concentrate on the philosophy of Jesus and try to seek the truth as he teaches it, we realize that Jesus's teaching as regards prayer differs

from the general concepts of prayer. The prayer that Jesus himself gives us in the Sermon on the Mount, namely *Our Father*, is not blindly given to just anybody but is designed for the disciples, who are no longer at the ordinary level and are not in the same situation as the groups of people who listened to the parables of Jesus. Those to whom Jesus speaks of praying, have already grasped the new philosophy which he has given in his parables and have tried to carry out the commandments which he has given in the Sermon on the Mount. *Our Father* is therefore for those who try to become self-knowing citizens of the secret world. To them Jesus says: "Prayer is not exoteric, an outward act which you can do in the presence of other people, but prayer is offered upward by going to your own room behind locked doors and praying alone in silence." And this "room" does not mean only a visible room, as there are poor people who have not got a particular room, where they could retire, but the room that Jesus speaks of is inside us, in our own consciousness. We must draw within ourselves when we pray. We must only shut out our sense of the outside world so that the outside world cannot disturb us. If we can only concentrate our whole attention on what we are praying for, it does not matter outwardly, if this praying takes place in a room or in the midst of a group of people. No one will know that we are praying if we are praying in our hearts. But why should we pray and what for? This we will understand immediately if we exchange the word pray for one in common use nowadays — "meditation". In fact Jesus advises us — if we are His disciples — to meditate regularly. He is not content to state in general that we ought to meditate, but He gives detailed advice on how we must meditate and what on. In the prayer *Our Father* He gives us

a program for meditation. He deals with this in the same way as all other spiritual teachers.

Prayer in the light of meditation is a necessary feature in the spiritual life, as everyone who has enjoyed spiritual experience will know. If a human being wishes to follow a determined plan in his moral life, if as a disciple of Jesus he wants to follow the commandments which Jesus has laid down in the Sermon on the Mount, the condition for success is that he meditates regularly.

If he does not regularly meditate upon the life which he should lead, he cannot keep his thoughts together in the rush of everyday life and will not always be able to remember the code of life which he wishes to follow. That we know from experience. If, for example, we have tried to avoid anger and have said to ourselves "from now on I will not become angry", then surely something will happen in life, which will arouse the desire to get angry, a natural inclination in us, and then we forget our former decision, and our anger is touched off and afterwards we regret remembering the rule we had to observe. But if a human being meditates regularly on his own rule of life, if he thinks every day of the good he specially wishes to achieve, that commandment, which now above all he wants to follow, then he has in the rush of life a better chance of being able to stick to his decision. For that purpose, meditation is necessary in the beginning, and later it has a much deeper significance.

When we look at the prayer *Our Father* which was given to us by Jesus, and which is also a meditation program, we notice that He has even designated the time for meditation. He urges us to pray "Give us this day our daily bread" which, of course, cannot be asked for when the day is over, but naturally at the beginning of the day, in the morning. In

the morning the disciples should therefore enclose themselves in the room of their hearts, close the doors of the senses and meditate. And the daily program which Jesus asks us to meditate on is that prayer well-known to us all, *Our Father*.

Now this prayer is familiar to us all in our own language, but for a long time it was recited only in Latin. When the Church taught people to pray in Latin, they were no longer aware that it was a meditation program but thought it was an outward prayer. The Church perhaps knew from tradition that the words of the prayer had some mystical power and that this kind of prayer could constitute so called mantras or incantations, but the Church forgot that the words form the mantra only in so far as the person who recites them has knowledge and can recite the mantra. But as in our country *Our Father* has been read and heard for so many hundreds of years and in Latin, let us quote it in that dignified language:

Pater noster, qui es in caelis,  
 Sanctificetur nomen tuum.  
 Adveniat regnum tuum.  
 Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo, et in terra.  
 Panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie.  
 Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus  
 debitoribus nostris.  
 Et ne nos inducas in tentationem,  
 Sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

The prayer ends in the words "deliver us from evil". The usual concluding words, "yours is the power" etc. are not original but were added later.

Now we wish to analyse the prayer as a program for meditation.

Looking at it from this point of view, it falls into three parts. In the first part the human being, in meditating, attunes himself to a right relationship with the invisible world, to God, to good and evil. In the second part the human being attunes to a right relationship with the surrounding visible world and its people. And in the third part the human being attunes to a right relationship with his own lower self.

The first part is as follows: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

In this first part there are two sides, the positive and the negative relating to that which is good and that which is evil. First of all, when we sit down to meditate according to the program, we must remember our Father who is in heaven. Concerning our spirit we must picture that we are spiritually the sons of God, and that there is a great life which appears empty but in reality is our Father — the divine love, which fills the whole of cosmos. His name be hallowed. We must in our spirit and heart acknowledge the fact that we are the sons of the Father, the divine love. We must achieve first of all this positive stand that we feel in our spirit, that we are standing on a rock from which nothing can shake us away, that we feel that we are the sons of God. The children of his love. The sparks of the fire of His mind. This is the positive side of the first part in the prayer.

Then while meditating we will remember the other side, or negative side, in which it is said: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

"Thy kingdom come" — — with this thought we will

remember the presence of the evil which is in existence, darkness, selfishness and all those powers that obstruct the Heavenly Kingdom from prevailing everywhere, the divine love and mind manifest as the Father. Therefore in meditating we wish and desire the Heavenly Kingdom to come and then we add: "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." In heaven the will of God is always done. In that invisible world, which we call the Heavenly Kingdom, the will of God always prevails, in other words, there is no evil, for all evil is instantly defeated there. If any evil were to reach it, if any selfish power were to ascend to it, the will of God confirmed in the dwellers of the Heavenly Kingdom would conquer it at once. The law of God is freely dominant in it, but on earth, in the material world, an almost entirely different law applies. Here the voice of God cannot be heard in the hearts of people; on the contrary, the selfish will most often succeeds, although the divine will fights against it. We live in a world of cross currents and contradictions — or in a world even worse than that — where often only the selfish, evil will dominates. Therefore, in our meditation we hope in our hearts: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.", and at the same time we think of the relationship to evil which a disciple must have.

The relationship of a disciple to evil is unique in character. The selfish personality of a human being wishes to be free from all suffering and pain, and in his mind he even says that suffering and pain are evil, because he sees that suffering originates from the evil which exists in the world. Therefore he is at war with evil. He calls evil "evil" and tries to avoid it and fight against it. But a disciple will not do this. A disciple will not recognize suffering as evil. He says only: "Thy will be done, Father. What suffering comes

to me will be your will, Father, which is then fulfilled in me. Not my will, but your will be done." He takes the stand that evil does not exist to plague him but to develop him. What his own lower self would call evil, is the work of the Father in him, it is actually good which comes to him by the will of the Father or Karma, to use the old Indian name. It comes to him in accordance with the laws of the mind and of love and is therefore good. And when a disciple sees good in evil, he overcomes evil, and the secrets will be revealed to him. When we remember in our meditation our relationship to the Heavenly Kingdom and God and in this second prayer: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we will attune ourselves to a right relationship with good and evil, therefore our will to truth and love must be serious and honest. We must not think that *we* should become good, that *we* should become extraordinary in some way. We must only think "Let your kingdom come, let your will be done. When your will is manifest through us, then it will be manifested in the world."

When in our meditations we have become the subjects of the Heavenly Kingdom in this way, and, to use the Christian expression, become the medium of the will of God, in willing the kingdom of love and truth to approach the earth, then we move on to the next part or the second part — that part which relates to the relationship with the outside world. This is founded on the prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us."

Let us first look at one side of this two-sided prayer.

The expression "daily bread" is used, but in the Latin prayer there is no mention of daily bread. It was Luther who translated it in this way and by doing so caused a

tremendous misunderstanding. In the Lutheran catechism it is particularly emphasized that practically everything is classified as daily bread, good neighbours, property etc. Almost all material life is included in the term "daily bread". It is Luther's mistake. There is no question of anything like that. Even in the Vulgate the words *pattern nostrum supersubstantialem* are used, which means "above material" bread, which clearly points to the words of Jesus in another place that "man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of Father."

There is no question of anything material in the meditations of a disciple. It is a question of a spiritual awakening, a human being becoming a conscious citizen of the invisible world. He meditates according to the program of the *Our Father* in order to become a percipient member of the spiritual world and is able to carry out the commandments of Jesus with greater ease. Therefore there is no question of material things. In the meditations it is wrong to think of material things, because in the material world things come about through work and one must not worry about them. According to the Gospels, Jesus says in the same chapter: "Do not think what you eat, what you drink and what you wear, because all these things are given unto you — they come about naturally when man works in the outside world, they develop better in a society the more a human being makes progress as regards intelligence, heart and conscience."

When meditating the disciple does not think of any nourishment other than that bread which to him is necessary, in order for him to remember who he is. In the program given by Jesus it is a question, as in the Latin text, of spiritual bread which is necessary or essential to his soul

in order that he does not starve. And what is this bread? What is the real bread for which we should pray? In a way this is the most dangerous part of the meditation because a disciple prays: "Give us disciples today this kind of experience, this kind of sorrow, pain, suffering or this kind of happiness which remind us of the fact that we are thy sons." This is the bread that the disciple needs because he is prone to forget who he is, if he does not continually experience something which reminds him of that fact. In his meditations he therefore courageously says to the invisible powers of the world, to God. "Lead me to suffering, let pain overwhelm me in order that I may not forget you." We often see that the spiritual life is difficult. In the esoteric school it is said that when a human being appeals to his higher self, when he calls upon the powers of his higher self and says "I would now like to rise out of all ignorance, sin and evil", then he is almost praying for the mighty powers of the world to free him from all the chains which bind him, to let him suffer for all that evil which confronts him due to his past, let it overwhelm him. A disciple then does not pray for that kind of nourishment that will free him from all suffering, but on the contrary he summons up those sufferings from which he must free himself. He is like a butterfly in a chrysalis. Imagine that a butterfly knew its own being, that it must get free from the chrysalis and call to God: "God, free me soon from this chrysalis and let me be a butterfly." This prayer would not mean that God would liberate the butterfly from the chrysalis or cut the cords that hold it there, but only that God would give it power to free itself more quickly. And how else could this happen but that the powers of oppression would press him down so that he would have to use all his strength to free

himself. A scientist once watched the struggle of a butterfly to free itself from the chrysalis and thought that he would help to facilitate the operation a little by cutting some of the cords so that the butterfly got out quicker. But what kind of butterfly? It had no power to fly, it was pale, thin, powerless, with broken wings; it could not be a butterfly.

The same would happen to a disciple who desired to enter the freedom of the Heavenly Kingdom, if God came and cut the ties that encumber his soul to free him from his selfish personality. His own powers would be tired and worn out and he would say to himself — you cannot live as a soul. But when he prays "give me that bread which is essential to my soul, let those chains that oppress me be heavy, let them oppress me so that I may put my greatest efforts to free myself, then his prayer would be right. And if the good law of life listens to him, and life oppresses him so that blood will run from his brow, then he will also grow powerful and wise.

But, as we know, this prayer-meditation is dangerous and bold and is only for the disciple who has already said: "Your will, Father, and not mine."

## VIII

### Our Father

#### 2

Let us now examine the last half of the second part of the prayer-meditation which is in English: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive those that are indebted to us." The text is a verbatim translation of the Latin and Greek texts. In this verse there are two parts, firstly forgive our debts, secondly, as we forgive them etc.

What kind of law of life does this particular verse proclaim? Undoubtedly an important point, since the Church has formed from it and from other similar points in the Scriptures a doctrine which it has raised to a position of a central dogma in the Christian faith; the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins.

The usual conception of the forgiveness of sins is generally that God in some way releases us from the results which follow from our bad deeds and our evil doings; and the Church tells that we all go to eternal hell — an eternal break with God, if we do not accept his forgiveness which in his mercy he has prepared for us. Of course, thinking people, who do not believe blindly, bring all kinds of arguments against this doctrine of the Church. Notwithstanding the fact that eternal hell is logically impossible, there is such a concept whereby a divine entity can release one person from the result of his bad deeds but

not another person when the question is only of venial matter such as a right belief in God — a concept so repulsive to logic that many people become pessimists, even mad, because in their minds they have not seen any righteousness in such a world order.

We understand that Jesus meant something specific when preaching the dogma of the forgiveness of sins. As a matter of fact, this prayer-section consists of one of the most wonderful teachings — a teaching which we cannot understand and which is even more difficult to carry out unless one follows the teachings of Jesus according to the spirit which gives life to his parables and is a concomitant of his commandments.

Let us examine this line. We notice immediately that the last half of the sentence "as we forgive them that are indebted to us" has been made a condition so that the Father or God would also "forgive us our indebtedness". It is not said "Father, give, so that we can give" but "Give, because we also give". What should we do then in our meditations? We address God like this: "We forgive others all evil they have committed against us."

What is the real meaning of this? Why are the words "debt" and "indebted" used in the gospels? In the Latin text it is "debitum", debt, why is the word sin or evil not used? Is there really a question of a debt then? Yes, because of the nature of debt. A debt is an "agreement" to which one must respond or be responsible. How do people usually incur debts? When people make financial agreements among themselves, they agree at law and in equity that the money or debt will be repaid; and when a person has even a little righteousness in himself he will pay, but he does not do it cheerfully if he does not love righteousness and truth

unselfishly. The more selfish the debts he incurs the more difficult it is to pay them back.

Now Jesus using the words "debt" and "indented" points to a certain law in life. He points to the common law in life that we people are always incurring debts. When and how? Always when we do something bad or selfish. We understand when we think of the law of karma: if we do something wrong, tell lies, hate, murder, then it is just like incurring debts. Then we incur a debt to life. While we are doing something bad or evil it is as if we said to ourselves: "Now I will take this from life as a loan and pay it back in the future." Of course, people as a rule do not think of their bad deeds in this way, but the law of nature states that these debts must be repaid. We contract debts to life in our ignorance, like young people in their thoughtlessness contracting large monetary debts which they must afterwards repay with great patience and effort. And the debts of life are not pleasant to the selfish mind because suffering is involved. All the evil we do, we pay with suffering. It is the law of karma.

But Jesus says: there is a way of freeing oneself from the law of necessity. And he explains the procedure to his disciples "as we forgive them that are indebted to us". When people commit evil against us they become indebted to life because of us. Even if in the world we did not retaliate, we call up, however, the law of life, whether we have been hurt inwardly or are nursing a grudge or are unconcerned. And then we demand retaliation from nature. In this way, all people in their ignorance demand retaliation from life against those who have committed evil against them. We are not even satisfied with that but we organize the whole of society in such a manner that we demand

retaliation and punishment which we can see with our own eyes. We fine, punish and imprison those who do evil.

Now Jesus says "you who are my disciples, you will always forgive; because it is the law of the spirit. Evil will never disappear from the world if you wish to punish and retaliate. Evil will only disappear when we stop being bad and do not demand judgement, retaliation and punishment, but will forgive. When you forgive each other then evil will disappear from the world because all those who have committed evil are debtors. When we forgive them their debts from our hearts, the debts are bound to terminate some time."

This does not mean that we should alter societies or suddenly abolish all our courts of justice, since it is not said that a human society could do without them. What is involved is an esoteric commandment or advice to the disciples. But if — let us say — the whole upper class, i.e. the class that is in power, were disciples, then according to my way of thinking, we could try such a social arrangement, where there would not be courts of justice of any kind, and I am almost sure that everything would go well. There is one psychological point in relation to human wickedness. As long as a human being is afraid of punishment and revenge he tries to hide his wickedness and evil-doing. We can look at any criminal and notice that he will try to hide his guilt. They do not do evil publicly and then tell others. But it is always done in secret — always with the fear of discovery. Why? Because then revenge and punishment must certainly follow. But if there is no revenge and punishment, then the pangs of conscience influence the human being so that he confesses his evil doings. We know this from our own private lives. In a family where the children are afraid of

punishment and discipline on the part of their parents, they start concealing their bad deeds but in a family where the children know their parents are their best friends and understand and love them, the children will always tell their parents everything. They will not hide anything and do not always understand what is good and what is bad. The parents, in their love, can do this, and they are very careful not to condemn innocent acts. Why could this not be done on the social level?

Jesus advises his disciples that they should, at least in their meditations, observe this law of forgiveness; nobody should owe life anything on our account. By so doing we will act as a moral power in the world. Such is the moral power of a disciple. He can, by simply living in the world, soften people's hearts.

Now we come to the second part of the prayer in which it is said: "Forgive us our debts". We do not need discussion to understand that there is no question of an external God relieving us from the results of our acts, because an outward God cannot do such a thing. It can only be done by the internal God, only the God within a human being. This power has been given to us human beings. We human beings can forgive sins in others but God cannot. God does not change the laws of the world, because the order of the world is included in the laws of the world, but we human beings can in our consciousness rise above them inasmuch as they operate in the lower worlds. We can forgive.

But what then does God forgive us? Why do we say to God: "forgive us our sins"? Of course, it is a question of something we owe to God. We do not offend God when we do something bad, because one cannot trespass against God. We only trespass against the order of the world — we

trespass against each other. God is above everything; even so we ask the Father to forgive us our debts. What do we then owe to God? Our debt to God is entirely different from that which we owe to the world. One can have debts to the good and with joy. When one contracts debts for an unselfish purpose, the heart is joyful when there are helpers, and a human being does everything to pay back this debt with pleasure. A person can then make debts with joy, and God does not accept debts of any other kind. One cannot borrow from God anything other than joy. How is this to be understood? This will become clear when we think of one particular experience. You must all have experienced at some time religious ecstasy, artistic inspiration or the wonderful happiness of love? At the moment when this wonderful feeling was within you, you thought along these lines: "This experience was most wonderful and great and it comes absolutely without my meriting it, but I would like it to recur. Oh, that I would never do anything bad to the one who gave me such exaltation! I would like to live that life — the life that God lives."

At such a moment a human being in reality promises himself something. The more wonderful his experience of the exalted moment, the stronger his desire for fulfilment. When the exaltation is entirely of a mystical nature, the whole feeling is absolutely clear: "Now I never wish to commit sin any more, not to be bad and not to transgress, now I must try to be a perfect creature to be able to experience such a thing." The higher the nature of the experience the clearer the internal promise. "I promise that I will never be weak." This is then a natural feeling.

When will such an experience happen to every human being? If it does not come during physical life, everybody has experienced such a moment before being born to earth;

when he leaves the heavenly life, he rises for a moment into his higher self. — Then he sees what his karma is like in the next life, he sees what point he has attained in his spiritual development. He sees what qualities or virtue he must especially acquire and which side in him is weak — he is wonderfully inspired and then and there he promises to do his best. And every time a human being experiences wonderful exaltation in his life — such a moment, when the influence from the higher self or the "angel" pours into his personal consciousness, it is as though he were renewing the promise which he made before he was born.

Every human being has made this promise, though different in form, and in this way he is indebted to God. He is indebted to God in joy. And Jesus, who knew that we cannot completely fulfil our promise unless we are especially watchful and self-aware and hold fast to our own aim of life; unless we are almost more than human beings — Jesus who knew this, also knew that we are likely to break our promises. We do not carry out that promise which we have given freely and with joy, and therefore he always advises us to meditate: "Forgive us, Father, our debts." We ask our Father to forgive us because we are not as good as we have promised to be, just as we forgive all those who are bad to us. Only this can balance the scales. Then within ourselves the divine consciousness gets an outlet. We form this outlet when we forgive others, when we give some of our life and love to others. Then our "angel", our higher self, our savior, our Father can descend into us and fill us with his own joy and make us feel that we have been forgiven our badness in his eyes. "How could we demand from others that they should pay a debt to life on our account when we do not pay God what we owe Him."

## IX

### Our Father

#### 3

The third part of the prayer-meditation affects our personal self and relates to our lower ego. This part of the prayer is as follows: "Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil." The word temptation is generally understood to mean the same as "trial". We almost ask from God, we Christians, when we pray like this: "Do not impose too heavy a trial on us — lest we cannot stand it. What pleasure do you get out of letting us fall into temptation; why do you test us?" This is the way temptation is understood — forgetting completely what for example the Apostle James says: "God will not tempt anybody." The whole prayer in itself is nonsense, if we suppose that God is a bad entity who tests us for his own pleasure, submits us to all kinds of tribulation just to see if we are so good that we can endure it. In the Old Testament there are stories of creatures who played like this with people. Such is the story of Job. This has caused a misunderstanding that such things really happen. But let us remember that God will not purposely tempt anybody. On the contrary, life is so organized that it is a testing ground for us. Life is not walking on roses, but the laws of the world naturally tempt us or put us to the test, and for those laws we must be thankful for they give us an opportunity to improve, get stronger and develop some

character, for otherwise we should say that little children, who have not in this world been subjected to any kind of temptation or testing have the highest morals. They are, of course, innocent but we cannot see what is latent in them. Only when life puts them to the test will they really reveal their true inborn nature. And this is the only way in which to grow and develop one's character, powers, independence, steadfastness and ability.

Only thoughtless people will pray "lead us not into temptation" — meaning by that, that this worldly life should become as easy and comfortable as possible. According to the translation by Luther, it has been said in the fourth prayer that all the good things of life should come to us, and now, fancy that, that temptation should cease to exist? This point in fact has been avoided in one French translation which may not be absolutely word for word. Even so, I have heard that the original Greek text is difficult to translate because it can be understood in a number of different ways. The translators of the Vulgate have understood it like this; Lead us not into temptation (*ne nos inducas in tentationem*). But in the above-mentioned French translation we have: Let us not succumb (*ne nous laisse pas succomber à la tentation*). This is a natural prayer; in it help is asked from God: "There are temptations in the world, but, God give us power so that we do not succumb to them." There is some sense in this kind of translation but it only applies exoterically to all people. But we, who are students of the teachings of Jesus know, that *Our Father* is intended for the disciples. Therefore, in this last part, there is an esoteric meaning which we must discover.

As we have said, Jesus urges us to meditate on our relation to our lower self. What does Jesus mean then when

he says: "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil?" He is referring to something very deeply mystical and occult. There exists a certain temptation in connection with which a human being may pray to his higher self — his Father — that the Father would not lead him into it or that the Father would not let him perish under it, a certain human temptation of the kind that it will not make a disciple happy. This is a temptation that will simply prevent mental growth. It is not a helpful test, but self-torture which draws one downward. What is this temptation?

When a human being supposes and imagines that there is in existence spiritual evil outside himself or generally outside the human consciousness, that there is in existence evil separate from God, so-called Evil or Devil, then he falls into that temptation, of which Jesus warns his disciples. The Christian Church has fallen into this very temptation. The Church believes in hell, the existence of evil, fallen angels, Satan and all kinds of evil outside the human being. This belief keeps the Church enthralled, so that it cannot go further on its way until it throws off the chains of belief in evil. Therefore wisdom warns us: we must not believe in it, we must not believe that there is any evil outside ourselves. Moral evil is the only evil in us — we cannot speak of any other evil; diseases and suffering that come from outside are not evil, they belong to the order of nature. Real moral evil exists only within ourselves.

But let us look at this evil within us. It appears in two forms, as two kinds of tormentor, ugly and beautiful. We have already spoken of one in the chapter "Angel and Demon". It is the reminder of a man's animal existence and nowadays, in theosophical literature, it is called elemental lust. It has almost its own thinking faculty, intelligence etc.

All people who try to tread the path of mysticism experience this extraordinary temptor within themselves, insofar as they have some animal left within themselves. If a human being, like Glyndon (in Bulwer-Lytton's novel *Zanow*) is too soon subjected to looking at himself with clairvoyance, he will see this astral temptor, this animal demon as if it were another being, a monster-like creature, a beast, who wants to attack him, and a human being would be driven in terror to the verge of despair or insanity. In this manner there is in the animal-human-being the first or lower "doorkeeper". It is always ugly, and the temptation of the human being is that he thinks it is outside himself. He must know that it is within himself but at the same time he must know that it is not his own self. It is not outside himself as an objective reality of which he could accuse God or anybody else, it is his own lust, his besetting sin which he has created himself — his own child. But it is not he himself. He must learn to conquer it. He must not fall into the temptation of thinking that moral evil is outside himself, because then he will become a pessimist, an agnostic, one who denies God; "The Devil has created the world, everything is black and dark, brutal, wrongful, evil." This is a temptation to a human being and he may truly pray to the Father: "Do not lead me into this temptation; do not let me succumb to it; take care of my consciousness so that I never doubt you, so that I do not believe your universe to be bad, so that I will not hate and curse your cosmos.

The other tormentor within a human being is beautiful in appearance. It is conceit, selfishness, the voice of self-satisfaction and mental pride. Man can develop his intellect to be so clever that he separates himself from the world and does not wish to recognize that there is a God or

that there is anything greater in the world than the human intelligence. "I can solve all questions; I can lead human society forward; and know everything, and I know that this world is lacking. If I had made the world it would be a much more spiritual, more intelligent, more righteous place." The more clever a human being becomes, the nearer he is to this temptation. All desire to philosophize and speculate about the world, solve great problems with the help of one's own intellect, and enjoying it, all this springs from this temptation. A man does not then open up himself like a flower to the light of the sun, does not open his own soul to receive divine light, so that his own small and dark intelligence would be illuminated and he could see what the world in reality is like, but he takes the position of a critic, an onlooker who solves the problems of the world as though he had created it himself. This is such a subtle temptation, so extraordinary, so mystical and delicate, that only when he has been rather long on the road of spiritual knowledge does a human being come face to face with this second "dweller on the threshold".

An ordinary believer is unable to take the right position in relation to this temptor. One cannot refute it by hypocritical humility, which asserts that nothing must be searched, that a human being cannot know anything, that he is only created to believe and adore God. This kind of hypocrisy only postpones the solution. On the contrary, a human being must develop his own intelligence as far as possible; and luckily the world is so constructed that the intelligence develops itself inevitably. Even if all the churches preached against the development of the brain and all the inventions of the wicked intelligence, it would still grow and develop. But a disciple who walks on the narrow

road, and to whom Jesus has given his meditation program, must remember to be on his guard against this same "genius", brain, intelligence which in spite of everything must develop in him, and can become a terrible temptor if he puts it above everything, if he lets it rule and makes it the Devil, Satan or Lucifer.

Therefore the name of the second "dweller on the threshold" is Satan. When the disciple meets this "dweller on the threshold" he faces a beautiful creature, shining, lovely but proud, like Mephistopheles whom Goethe has described in *Faust*, a clever creature who always laughs sarcastically and undermines religion. But if it so happens that a human being sees this second temptor too soon, he sees him as black and is terrified; it is the Devil! (the belief in the Devil no doubt first started in this way). But when a disciple sees this "dweller on the threshold" at the right time he sees him as a shining entity. The devil then makes a final attempt to separate the human being from God; "Will you still not be against God — you are now strong and wise enough to be against God. Look at this world which God has created, can you not see how imperfect it is? Create a better one!" At the same time there appears to the disciple another creature, a heavenly being, the Saviour sent by the Father, Christ or the Master, who with his smile vanquishes the last doubts. Now the disciple finally understands that Lucifer, the beautiful angel-entity is a servant. He is the most powerful and most wonderful of all the servants of God. Satan is the first of all the angels, Lucifer is the bringer of light. Intelligence in us is, of course, the most divine attribute but only when it really serves God, when it does not serve itself and its own purposes, when it does not go to help and serve the devil in the hearts of human beings, but

serves only God in His majesty and His goodness, then it is the most shining and beautiful of all angels.

The temptation is that we believe on the one hand, that Satan is black, and, on the other hand, that he is outside ourselves. It is a temptation and we must remember that Satan is within us and that Satan is the whitest of all whites when he worships God.

This is the way we have also understood the prayer's final section which contains the following words: "Deliver us from evil", — because evil consists in these very temptations, and evil is good when it is subject to God and is a servant of good.

## X

### ”One Is Your Master”

When a human being seeks or has become a disciple, he is faced with the very important question of a teacher, Master, Christ, and of his own relationship to Jesus Christ. He has an internal desire for enlightenment as to who is his Master or Teacher and in what relationship Jesus Christ is to him or even who Jesus Christ really is.

As Theosophists, we have become familiar with many theories in regard to Jesus Christ. In the opinion of some doctors, Jesus was epileptic or insane (for example see *La folie de Jésus* by Dr. Binet-Sanglé). The normal materialistic belief is that Jesus was a goodnatured dreamer, a little impractical but morally clever, on the whole a talented human being. According to Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, a distinction must be drawn between Jesus and Christ. Jesus was an initiated disciple, who aspired to mastership, and Christ was a high world-teacher, the Master of Masters, who used the body of Jesus for three years. According to a theory by Steiner, a German, Jesus was the reincarnation of Zoroaster, and Christ was the spirit of the Sun, one of the elohims who did not belong to mankind or the evolution of this universe, but came here from somewhere else. And finally, according to the Church, he was born of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit of God, a human being who at the same time was God Himself.

When a human being takes things seriously, when, as a disciple, he wishes to understand life right, he, of course,

asks himself, when he is faced with so many theories, which is the right concept and what is the truth? Has Jesus himself given any explanation to this question?

One thing we know for certain, if we have offered ourselves as the disciples of Jesus, and that means that we must not believe in external evidence. Even when we studied the parables of Jesus, we were obliged to search ourselves, to grow, each one individually. There was no question of anything strange, but only that we should acknowledge spiritual life within ourselves. This will give us an idea of what great stress Jesus, as a teacher, laid on the independence of the human being and his honesty. If as disciples of Jesus we accept any dogmas, any doctrines or any theories, we must first understand why we accept them, and secondly we must know from our own experience what we believe in.

To questions pertaining to Christology, we get some very clearly stated instructions from Jesus himself in the gospels. I would like to mention three particular parts in the gospel of Matthew in which this question is clearly spoken of. The first is the following:

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He said unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

This is the way in which Jesus asked and replied to those who were not as yet really his disciples.

The other part is as follows:

”When Jesus came into the coasts of Ceasarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say I the son of man am? And they said that some say you are John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He said unto them, but whom say ye I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 16:13—17).

The third part is as follows:

”But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” (Matthew 23:8)

These are the points in the Bible on which the Church relies when it wants to prove that according to the Bible Jesus is God. And from points like these it can be seen most clearly, when we enter the spirit of these points, what is truly meant by the name of Christ and what was the relationship of Jesus to Christ. We must first ask what the words mean. ”Christ” is not a noun nor pronoun, which would be suitable, as such, as a name for a person but an adjective which means ”anointed”, in Hebrew — Mashiah, Messiah. The Jews held — as did Christians later on — that the Messiah was a certain person, and Jesus denies this conception of ”anointed” as a form of person in the first of the above mentioned excerpts from the Bible. When Jesus asked the Pharisees, what do you think of the Messiah. Whose son is He? they replied ”He is the son of David” — so is not the following what Jesus meant:

”Oh, you materialists, who immediately think of wordly and material things. Don’t you understand that it can already be seen in the Scriptures, that the Messiah, or the

Anointed can not be the son of David because even David calls him Lord. Nobody calls his own son Lord. Messiah or Christ is a spiritual thing. You always understand everything from the material point of view: "David's son — or any other physical being's son. That is not what Christ is.

In order to implant in his disciples' minds this spiritual truth he asked them once more: "Whom do men say I am?" They replied: "Many say John the Baptist, some say Elias, some say Jeremiah or one of the Prophets." "But", asks Jesus, "whom do you think I am?" And Simon Peter replies: "Verily you are Christ the son of the living God." Then Jesus says: "Peter, blood and flesh did not tell you this, but only my Father which is in Heaven."

What do these words of Peter and Jesus mean, when we bear in mind that "Christ" or "Anointed" in their mouths was an adjective? No doubt the following:

"Do you not understand", says Jesus, "that in all people the most precious and divine thing is their soul or their Ego, which is born from God. You think that the Ego is born of matter. When you speak of Ego, you say: I am this or that person reincarnated, as people say of me that I am this or that prophet, as if this were the most important thing to know. There is no question of what kind of form I assumed before. It is not the most important question in relation to any human being. Looking at it from the spiritual point of view, there is only one important thing, and this is that a human being should know that he is the son of God. Because his own "I", his inner soul, his true self is not of the material world but is of God. How could intelligence have been born from unreasonableness, how could wisdom have come from stupidity? Divine spirit, divine conscience has

descended to the consciousness of the animal kingdom, and then in the animal world, centres of divine consciousness are born, human selves, Egos. All these human Egos, of which every human being has one, are therefore born of God, and when the "I" born of God has become conscious, of its own divine descent, aware of the fact that he is the son of God, then he has stepped into the "anointed" life, then he is "Christ" or "anointed". You, Peter, know that. You know within yourself that I am not Jeremias nor Elias or one of the prophets or just any reincarnated being — which we all, of course, are — but you know that I am the anointed son of the living God, because you know yourself to be the son of God, born from eternity and therefore, I say that only the Father has given you such information. You would not know this in the ordinary way, and you could not have heard it from others because then you would not understand it. Only when you felt within yourself the Christ consciousness, when you felt that you were also a partaker of the same divine consciousness, that also your self-Ego is anointed, only then can you know of some other person that he is also anointed."

So says Jesus. We see from this that the word Christ or Anointed was used in the same meaning as we use it in theosophical literature — the word "initiated". We say nowadays — initiated. And nobody can say of the others "you are initiated" if he does not himself possess a secret consciousness which informs him so. How could you tell of someone that he is initiated and belongs to the secret white brotherhood, to those divine angels who stand behind human society as leaders and guides, if one does not know it within oneself. If someone says that this or that person is an initiated, it would be almost superstitious or blind faith to

start believing such things merely on his word. It is not worth discussing. Only when we have something within us, the inner consciousness, that tells us: this person is initiated or anointed — only then can we say that we know it as Simon Peter did. As disciples, such honesty, candour and sincerity is necessary for us, so that we do not believe at random everything we hear or blindly trust everything that is said about other people. We understand at least that the Ego of every human being is of divine origin but that most people know nothing about it. Only when a human being knows within himself that he is the Son of God, a spiritual being, born of God and not from matter, flesh nor blood, only then can he be partaker of the Christ Consciousness — only then can it be said of him that he has passed through the Christ Consciousness to unity with Father. We do not need to bother our brain with further speculation, we do not need to ask ourselves- what is the status of such and such a person, dead or alive, in the secret world. As regards Jesus, we can initially be satisfied in the firm belief that he, of course, was Christ or anointed, because his teachings have elevated us into the same Christ Consciousness.

Therefore, the third section, where it is specifically said: one is your Master, implants in our mind the truth that only the anointed ego is to be our real teacher, even though there are many teachers in the world, just as the one Father is the true father of the disciples, even though they have an earthly father. As Jesus expressly says: "Do not call anybody your Father because one is your Father" — he surely impresses on us that we must not be misled into believing that we are only of the material substance in which we appear to others; we must not begin to live or think with the idea that "I am the son of so and so"; we must try to live on the level of our

divine Ego. The Ego of all human beings has a common Father, only one, mutual Father, that divine consciousness, from whom we are all born. Jesus advises us to think in the same way of the teachers. There are many of them in the world, but "do not call anybody Master", says Jesus and, "do not let anybody call you Master", because only one shall be your Master. He is not a Master, who appears so outwardly. I am not your Master because you can say of me — you are the son of Joseph. You can examine how I was born and how I came here, you can go even further back and examine whose reincarnation I am. This personal consciousness of mine is not a teacher or rabbi. And one must not call me good because only God is good. Remember, remember, that there is only one who is your Master, i.e. Christ, the anointed ego. This anointed ego lives in my person and represents the Christ to you, the consciousness of the anointed. But do not confuse it with my physical I. When you, therefore, understand, as did Simon Peter, that there is the anointed consciousness of Christ in another person, then this consciousness in another person is your Master and represents Christ to you, but the anointed I or ego is at the same time within yourselves. And only if it is within your own self can you see it in others, and only then is the other your teacher if Christ in him is more powerful than within yourself."

These facts are quite clear psychologically, because the minds of human beings are in different stages of development, and the members of the Kingdom of Heaven or of the White Brotherhood or Brothers are also in a different phase of spiritual development.

The Secret Brotherhood of heaven is behind the whole of mankind. The Christ Consciousness embraces the whole of

human society. But only a being who is completely filled with the Christ Consciousness incorporates in his own ego the whole of the human race. The others enter into Christ gradually. According to the depth of the Christ Consciousness within a human being, the consciousness of the same human being extends to human society, but no human being, no matter how low the standard of development, is very far from the Christ Consciousness. No one needs to think himself so bad or so undeveloped, so sinful, that the members of the White Brotherhood would not care about him, because the consciousness of the White Brotherhood is behind all human beings; everyone is just as close to the Christ Consciousness no matter what his development is. The difference is only that a less developed human being is on the level of the outermost zone of the cycle of the Kingdom of Heaven, while the more spiritually developed the person is, the greater the part of the white brotherhood is turned toward him. When a private individual aspires to the Christ Consciousness and contact with the secret brotherhood, he naturally cannot jump straight on to the high level, but must ascend the stairs step by step to the Kingdom of Heaven.

When we bear these things in mind we are not troubled with conflicting feelings and misgivings about the important question of who and what Christ is. Then we can always reply, if we encounter new doctrines, that "this and that I know and have experienced, but of those things I do not yet know". If someone explains something, we can calmly say: "I do not know anything about that and, therefore, I am not criticizing your explanations. I build my life on what I myself know and understand, for such is the advice of Jesus and all wise men."



## In the Temple

For this I was born and for  
this I have come into the  
world to bear witness to the  
truth. Everyone who is of the  
truth hears my voice.

(John 18:37)



## XI

### The Christ Initiations

At the beginning of this book it was stated that when the gospels are read from the third point of view, through the will, in the way of the truth-seeker, illumination will come to us in three stages. First, we may study the parables of Jesus which he told the people; then his teachings to the disciples, his special moral commandments, advice and other instructions; and now thirdly, we may examine the biography of his life or the life of Christ, which has the deepest, most secret, occult meaning in the gospels.

When we look back to the result of our studies of the gospels and their practical applications, we can say that Jesus wanted, with those public teachings which he gave the people, to arouse in them a new enthusiasm to seek the truth — not only with understanding and with the effort of the intelligence nor just with the emotions — but with their whole will-power, so that they themselves would seek the truth by living. The first philosophy of living given in the parables will free the soul of the individual from intellectual bondage and narrowmindedness. And when man has first experienced the revival of the "holy spirit" and has let the divine seed, which he has in his soul and spirit, freely germinate and grow, then he is faced with what we call the positive and negative period when the first difficulties will confront him. He has woken up to the holy vision of the truth. The people around him still live in darkness and

ignorance. They either believe in extraneous Gods and Devils or deny everything. But the truth-seeker has understood that the only God is within himself. Therefore, his surroundings will become alien and antipathetic to him. Many a truth-seeker, just converted to Theosophy has without doubt had the experience that, at the same time as he himself understands life in a new way, his surroundings, his friends and relatives cannot understand him. On the contrary, they set up a barrier against him, distrust him, may even think he is mad, so that the word of Jesus thus becomes true: "the family members of a human being are his enemies." Through this suffering, the young Theosophist will realize that he must not stop halfway. He must not be satisfied with what he has already found. His new understanding of life is still more intellectual than experimental. It has not yet gone through the practical baptism of fire of the spiritual life. If his surroundings ask him: "Do you know that what you now believe in is true" — he must answer to himself, that he does not know the answer absolutely, even though the new belief is as clear as day to him. And then he feels that he must of complete necessity start to seek higher and deeper understanding, which will take him, not only to the understanding of truth, but to the knowledge of truth. He moves from the mass of people into the more narrow circle of the disciples of Jesus. The time of active struggle will now begin for him, when he tries to carry out the commandments of Jesus in his life and practise the meditation program given by Jesus. This is the time of positive purification, and the disciple does not care about the criticism and disapproval of his neighbours. He only searches, lives and strives, and gradually those around him will be quiet. They will no longer criticize.

This kind of "time of the holy spirit" in the life of a truth-seeker might be of long duration, even through several incarnations. In any case, it prepares the human being for the understanding and study of the gospels in the third state, in other words, it leads him to experience the occult meaning of the gospel; to experience the life which starts only after man becomes a personal disciple of Jesus and actually enters the Heavenly Kingdom of the Secret Brotherhood.

The third level of significance in the gospels or the biography it represents symbolizes that which we call the Christ life and, which, on the other hand, is the self-conscious life of love. It is life in unision with the Father, since the word Christ or Anointed represents that quality of God which we call love, when we say: God is love: Christ or Anointed, initiated, is the consciousness which comprises the love of God. Christ Consciousness in a human being, in an angel, in a divine being, or in anybody, fulfils and substantiates the love of God. Therefore, in Christian theology it has been stated: Christ is the Son of God or the second person of the Trinity. This is due to the fact that God as love appears as self-conscious love. From this point of view Christ is "the living God — God himself as everlasting love". But we have no knowledge or actual experience of this love in any other way except through that consciousness which can appear in us and which we call Christ Consciousness. Therefore, Christ is also a "perfect human being".

When a human being inspired by the holy spirit walks along that cleansing road of preparation, which Jesus explains and about which he gives advice in the gospels, he comes into contact with the living Christ Consciousness, with God as love, and at the same time with all those beings

who live in that consciousness. And then this mighty collective consciousness affects his soul, which has been pregnant with the holy spirit, and by doing so it also gives birth to the same consciousness. In a human being Christ is born.

The gospels, as biography, show that Christ Consciousness is born and grows within a human being. This truth cannot be understood in its depth and height by anyone other than the one in whom the Christ Consciousness is alive. But we can form some idea of it with our understanding and intellect, because in the spirit of every human being there is latent a divine seed or his divine ego, and because from the moment when a human being is subjected to the influence of the truth of the holy spirit, there is in him a ray of the Christ Consciousness, or the Christ Consciousness is like an embryo, although not yet born.

But when the disciple has in his soul passed through the narrow gate to the Heavenly Kingdom, Christ is born within him. And this birth is then said to happen according to the description in the gospels, and it does not happen in a "dream world", but in his physical body during his waking consciousness. Very often the inner eye of the disciple will open and he becomes clairvoyant and sees the whole action taking place of which the gospels say: within him the Christ child is born, wise men of the East come and pay homage to the child, the star of Bethlehem is shining above the cave where the child is born. And when the Christ child is born within a human being, his personality is changed. Then he is a new being. He is "saved", because the Christ born within him is the saviour who in time will free him from all ignorance and sin, from all necessity to be born again in this world, because the Christ child has the keys to perfect

freedom and release. Even if it still takes a long time before the human being can be finally saved and liberated, in this child, which is born within him, the design of the Father God will surely be fulfilled. And within a human being there is then born the spirit of love, self-awareness and life, which will change the whole world in his eyes. He did not understand this world before when he looked at it. When he looked at life he saw there only misery and suffering, and he was often ready to doubt the existence of any divine love behind this life. But when within him, at the beginning of the purifying process, the new understanding of life arose, he began to believe in good within himself and was sometimes obliged to close his spiritual eyes not to see the suffering and misery around him. But when the spirit of love is born in him, the self-conscious love in his personal waking consciousness, he knows that there is no danger in this world. He knows in some extraordinary way that everything is right, because he, at least at the time the love was born in him, knew and felt that he was one with mankind. There is a song inside him: "now the saviour has been born for mankind. There is no worry because I shall bear mankind in my embrace; I will take upon myself all its sins, its sufferings and pain; everything I will take upon myself, there is no need to worry, now, most certainly, there will be an end to all suffering and the sun will rise over the whole of humanity".

There will then again follow a passive or negative time, when the world turns against the disciple and starts to oppress and trample the new-born Christ child under their feet and doubt him. Then the persecutions of which we learn in the gospels begin. A child which is born within a human being is so small, so young and inexperienced that it can

only run away to seek shelter from the "older", i.e., the personal capabilities, understanding and feeling. It is not yet itself capable of going into the world and of speaking for itself. It only loves and suffers, it is pursued and it must hide; it must wait. The flight into Egypt of the newly born is like this.

The child grows quietly in hiding. This is man's new period of development. On this preparatory purifying road, man in his physical body, in his waking consciousness, observes that he is a member of the spiritual or heavenly world. Now, in a new way, he grows to be a member of the other world. He will grow a new body, a new glorified instrument in the other world, and this body grows at the same time independent of the physical body. Soon the disciple will be faced with an amazing experience in the invisible world — not in the physical world but in that other world where he is also a selfconscious citizen. When the disciple is absent from his physical body, he will undergo something which is described in the gospels as baptism, the baptism of Jesus. The human being will be baptized, and a voice from heaven will speak "this is my dear son in whom I take delight".

Now begins an extraordinary time for the disciple, a period which is described in the gospels at length. The new being within him is no longer a child but a young selfconscious person. He gets an assignment now to go into the world, because a young Christ-being can no longer grow and develop anywhere else except in the world. But before his actual entry into the world, the Christ-being withdraws into the wilderness just as the gospels describe: immediately after his baptism "Jesus was taken into the wilderness by the spirit". What and where is the wilderness? The withdrawal

into the wilderness takes place when a man in his innermost self gives up everything. He will give up everything, his life, himself, he will change his whole life. He has nothing to eat, no place to live in. He has no clothes, no land, no job, no occupation. He throws voluntarily away all that binds him. His karma has taken him to a point where he has no earthly ties to hinder him in his rejection of all earthly things.

This sojourn in the wilderness may last a lifetime — and then he will be faced with temptations. As the gospels relate, the entire life will step in front of him in the form of three temptations — not in any vision but in living reality. He must go and live in the world just in order to overcome all temptations. As a Christ-being, there is, in his hand, a wand and temptations come to him only for him to overcome them.

The first temptation is described in the gospels as follows:

”And when the temptor came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered: It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:3-4).

The temptor came and said: ”If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” This means — the Christ-being knows: I am the son of God and the stones in my hand will be made bread. And he must now go into the world where the stones will be made bread. What is this? It is a life where material wealth will come to him.

His situation is not the same as that of a man who from lust or for other personal motives seeks the riches of the world, and when he finds them gets tired of them because they did not give him what he wanted and did not make

him happy. The Christ-human-being is in another situation. He has not asked for the riches for himself — he has not asked for them at all. They come to him as a burden and he must know how to bear his burden. His temptation is: "have you forgotten that a human being does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God? Have you forgotten that what gives life to a human being is not matter, not riches, luxury, outward culture but love, only the love of God? Now that the riches of the world serve you, have you forgotten that love and truth are the only things that matter in life?" And a Christ-human-being will not fall. In the story, Jesus immediately rejects the temptor. As a Christ-being he has no battle, no desire for the riches of the world either for himself or for anybody else. His mind is always centered in the divine truth. In the midst of life in which riches serve him, he lives the life of love. He does not forget for a moment that the only real life is in God and divine love. He has to bear a burden which he does not even in a moment of thoughtlessness lift away from his shoulders. And the second temptation is as follows: "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus said unto him: "It is written again Thou shalt not tempt Lord thy God". (Matthew 4:5—7).

There is another life facing the Christ-being when he is lifted to the highest point of honor, "on the pinnacle of the temple" when he is wordhipped as "some divine being".

The greatest geniuses of the world, artists, poets, writers, composers are usually in this stage of their spiritual development. They have, as we also say, undergone certain initiations in their previous incarnation. They have in their previous lives gone through spiritual experiences which have enriched their souls, and now they are being tempted in life where they are taken to the highest point of honour. If the Christ-spirit in them is alive, they can see very clearly that the life or the human being does not consist of honour, of being served, admired and worshipped. No, human life only consists of love. To believe that man should be served, admired and worshipped is to tease God. The duty, *dharma*, of the Christ-man is to teach this to the world. He takes the honour — temptation upon himself — to show that the honour of the world is empty and even painful. And a human being does not desire it, he only desires the love of God. Men who have not had any spiritual experiences love and seek honour, they would do anything to be famous. Let them play in peace. They have not experienced enough. But those great souls that sometimes appear in the world as geniuses, know, and they serve human society to show that all honour is empty. And the greatest geniuses have always said: "honour has not satisfied me, I have not searched for it; behind everything I have searched for something else". Such great souls do not remember in their personal consciousness that they have, in their previous incarnations, gone through certain spiritual experiences; only the result of their experiences will be visible. And if memory in them does not awaken, their temptation is that they come into this world without knowing who they are, accepting honours, and they are forced to win. How barren and lonely is their life! They must win, that they know themselves. They are

shown no mercy; great souls are aware of this. A burden has been placed upon their shoulders, and they must win.

And the third temptation:

"Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Then saith Jesus unto him "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt serve." Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matthew 4:8—11).

This is also the life to which the Christ-man will submit, almost presenting an example to the world. It is a life in which power is made his, the power of the world. This temptation is one of the greatest burdens, and it is impossible to take it upon oneself in its entirety, unless the conditions in the world impose it. Absolute power is not always offered to a disciple. On the contrary, the karma of different countries seldom seems to approve of great, wise, clever and wonderful rulers in the seat of government. Very often there is a human being who is not spiritually experienced, but is full of lust for honour, wealth and power. He may prove to be an able and powerful ruler and is without doubt cleverer than an idiot or idler. But a Christ-man he is not; because the Christ-man in the seat of government would use his power in another way — so that the power would never appear to be his own but that of righteousness and love. Such temporal and ecclesiastical rulers have sometimes appeared in the world.

But a Christ-man can assume the temptation of power in a smaller way. He need not necessarily be a ruler of a country. He may be in a position of ruler in another way.

And then, what to other people is temptation, viz. the power itself if you serve me, that is, your personal self, then the whole world will serve you — is not a temptation to a Christ-man but only a burden. While in a position of power he always remembers that "the Lord your God you must serve." The true life subsists only in love. Power does not exist in itself nor through any personal being. Love and wisdom alone have eternal power.

And when a Christ-man has passed these proofs, the invisible beings of the world come to him and say: "Now step out into the world as a teacher. Now you can go, now you understand life, now you know all the secrets of human life, human hearts and souls, now you know the most secret powers deep down in the personal human soul. Now you can step into the world in a new way."

So in the gospels the life of Jesus as a world teacher begins. He goes among the people to preach the gospels of the kingdom urging them to repentance because the Heavenly Kingdom is around them. This time is described at great length in the gospels. Jesus walks among the people and preaches. In the course of his teaching he also heals the physically and spiritually ill and sometimes even performs miracles. The chief purpose behind all his activity is, however, to teach.

In the course of this short survey of the mysteries of Christ's life we cannot dwell on every single point. We will, however, mention one point in the teachings of Jesus. A little earlier, when it was mentioned that Jesus was glorified, it happened according to gospels, that all the disciples, Peter first of all, recognized out of the fullness of their hearts that "you are the Son of the living God". This point should be emphasized because here the gospels

demonstrate how long a Christ-man must work in the world. He must teach people in the world until he has at least some disciples who will acknowledge him in their soul: "you are the Son of the living God. Through you the truth has been made clear to us." Before that he cannot, in his work, withdraw into that secret and invisible state which is the ideal of an unselfish human being. But when he has received this acknowledgement from his friends, a new experience will open before him: glorification, when the Father reaffirms his union with him and as much as says: "Verily you are my Son — All knowledge and power I will give you." And then turning to the world says: "Hear you him."

When this experience is given him, then the time of great sorrow begins for the Christ-man. After the glorification, many thousands of people in the world will truly begin to acknowledge: He is the Son of God — He is a teacher. And at the same time as this acknowledgement is heard from the lips of the world, as the world shouts hosanna, then, too, all the opposing powers in the world will rise up and cry out: "Crucify him." The Christ-being then feels humiliated because the world honours and at the same time hates him. He walks the way of the cross to Calvary. His suffering will end at this fourth point, called the crucifixion, at the place of the skull. Then only will he be able to say "consummatum est", "it is fulfilled". Now the suffering is finished. Now he need not suffer in any way on his own account. Now he can completely live for the sake of the suffering of mankind, take upon himself its sufferings. He has carried them a long way, because Christ will never carry anything but the suffering of all people and their sins but now he need no longer suffer personally. With his powerful selfconscious hand he takes all

the suffering of humanity upon himself and changes it in his own heart into joy. "Come to me you who are heavily laden and I will give you rest. — I have conquered the world." His whole body is glorified, his whole personality is dead. He is a glorified human being. He is an angel, he is a saviour. Step by step he rises to the perfection of a Master, key after key is given to him, until as a risen saviour he "ascends into heaven" and "sitting on the right side of the Father judges the living and the dead"; he is himself truly the lord of life and death.



# Church as a Symbol of Temple

Howbeit the most High dwelleth  
not in temples made with hands;  
as saith the prophet,  
Heaven is my throne, and earth  
is my footstool.

Acts 7:48-49



## XII

# Holy Communion

From the early period of Christianity certain holy rites have been performed called "sacraments" which are held in equal respect in every Christian church, although, as we know, different churches will interpret these mysteries in different ways. Particularly with regard to Holy Communion, the Lutheran Church teaches us that in this mystery the body and blood of Christ are present in the bread and the wine; he who believes and is willing to accept in his mind and spirit, becomes in this holy communion a partaker of the body and blood of Christ and in doing so will be forgiven his sins.

The teaching is somewhat different in other churches. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the result of the mystery is not dependent on the mental condition of the recipient but that it will affect everybody who takes part in it in a similar way. The rite itself is so holy that it will *ex opere opera* to affect those present. Because, says the Roman Church and the Greek Orthodox Church, a change has taken place in the bread and wine of the Holy Communion, transsubstantiation, through which the bread and wine have changed into the body and blood of Christ, so that in reality the body and blood of Christ is consumed.

The Reformed Church teaches in a third way. It is the most liberal and the least mystical, when it says, Holy

Communion is a meal of remembrance which is held in memory of the life and the death of atonement of Christ. However, the power of Christ, the body and blood of Christ are present, but only in a spiritual way — invisibly, not so that the blood and wine are changed or that there is any part of the being of Christ in the blood and wine, but the body and blood of Christ comes in a spiritual way to those who are in the state of mind to receive it.

Even if Christian churches differ in their teaching of Holy Communion and the other sacraments, all are unanimous in that the sacraments are mystical.

In the course of our investigation of the doctrine of Jesus, we cannot ignore the sacraments and explain them as some scholars do, that they have been invented by a church which has renounced the doctrine of Jesus. Without doubt they are spoken of in the gospels, and even if the Church had invented them on its own account, it has had a more important and serious reason at the beginning than to deceive people. We cannot take the position of the general materialist and say that everything is humbug — for the simple reason that thousands of people have had amazing experiences in connection with these mysteries. We are not talking about the agnostics and blasphemers. But some sensitive believers have encountered disturbing experiences when they have received the sacraments. I know this from my own experience even though I have not taken the sacraments more than once in my life, that was when I had my first Holy Communion. In most cases the original reason for this mystical experience is to be found inside the sensitive believers but sometimes elsewhere, too. In any case, we must not as honest men deny the facts but examine why they are so.

Let us now read the gospels and see what they tell us of Holy Communion.

Jesus was with his disciples for the last time eating the pascal lamb. It was the last time the friends had supper together. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Matthew 26:26—28).

These are the words on which the Holy Communion, as the Church teaches it, were based. What conclusions can we draw from this gospel story? We need to discover what Jesus meant by his words. Undoubtedly Jesus was in the habit, when he ate with his disciples, of constantly sharpening their minds upon the great truth on which his whole philosophy was founded and which the disciples should never forget. And when he ate with them for the last time, he made it more ceremonial and said "do this in commemoration of me" as is related in some of the gospels, because he knew that his time in this world was at an end.

What then was the teaching Jesus wanted to underline for his disciples when he asked them always to remember it when they ate together? "When there are two or three of you gathered together then I am among you always until the end of this time cycle" he had said earlier. And a disciple may then, even when eating alone, think of this wonderful fundamental teaching which Jesus had given. But what did the lesson consist of that eating and drinking should remind him of? This lesson was: Everything that is, is filled with divine consciousness. Behind everything is the divine I.

"You think", says Jesus, "there are dead places, dead

objects in nature, lifeless things. You believe that this bread you eat and this wine you drink is dead. You speak of the blind and unconscious powers of nature which have given birth to the water, wine, bread, but you are wrong when you speak like that, because behind everything is the divine everlasting consciousness, the divine I, that which is called Christ and which I am here to represent. Verily I say unto you that the human I which participates in the Christ consciousness can gradually experience participation in the great life, which is behind everything, and may experience the essence of the divine I, which operates and lives in nature. In the bread and wine which you eat and drink for your sustenance the divine Christ-I is present. Therefore, do not ever forget that you in reality eat and drink the divine consciousness. Where else could your body get its nourishment? Dead matter can surely not give life. Remember that what you eat and drink is only the outward symbol, the outer layer or shell of that internal life which is behind all matter.”

Even our scientists say that a human being cannot get nourishment from any food which does not contain the energy of the sun, or, as we could as easily say, the power of Logos. Therefore, we can indeed say that in eating we eat the divine I, God in Christ, and in drinking we drink divine consciousness and divine power. Therefore, it is important that we should not eat or drink to our detriment, but that in this Holy Communion we remember what and why we eat and drink, in order to become partakers in the divine consciousness. If we do this, the eating and drinking will cleanse, uplift, nourish us, and we will feel impregnated with the divine life.

This is how Jesus taught his disciples, and from history

we know that the first Christians were accustomed to eating together and even invited the poor people of the neighbourhood to the table. These meals were called *agapee* or "love meals". We can imagine how the disciples conducted these "love meals", as Jesus had before them and how they explained the meaning of eating and drinking to those present, whose spirits were elevated by the ceremony of the occasion. We also know from experience that when people eat and drink together, it is easy for them to adopt this kind of brotherly attitude. This is such a well-known fact that in the world all festive occasions are accompanied by eating together.

When the original form of Holy Communion was so simple, we may now ask how it came to be regarded as a profound mystery by the Church. And why this mysterious ritual has such an influence on the minds of people. But because this question also touches upon the very existence of the Church, we should also perhaps find out what the Church is. Jesus collected people around him in his lifetime and tried to awaken them with his teachings into a new understanding of life. He discarded his visible physical body in death and moved into the invisible world to teach and lead his disciples from there. The disciples remained in this world to carry on his work. The duty they inherited was to preach the same philosophy which their teacher had proclaimed. It was left for them to bring mankind to that life to which their teacher had raised them. It had become their duty to instruct new disciples who could carry on the same work etc.

In that way the presence and effect of the Heavenly Kingdom, the White Brotherhood would continue to operate through the ages without interruption.

Let us now think of the position of the disciples. Their great teacher had moved away to the invisible. They stood alone in the world among strangers, people who did not understand the philosophy which they had to teach them. How should the disciples now operate in this world?

Two methods, which their teacher had also used, stood out sharply in their memory. One way was to impress people on the mental plane with the help of thoughts, that is by speaking. Jesus had advised them to "go around and preach repentance, preach the gospel of the kingdom; tell of the existence of the Secret Brotherhood; proclaim that people are free entities and they must learn themselves to rule their own lives; free human beings from those chains that have enslaved them". This first natural method is speech or the sermon. But they also thought of another method. Why could there not be a place in the visible world such a chamber where they could speak? There were seasons when it was difficult to speak outdoors. In every part of the world speakers have used rooms. Why could there not be special sanctuaries which would be designed specifically for these sermons, where the message of this kingdom was spoken and to which the people around would be invited. Even the pagans had their temples. Why not he followers of Jesus. This was so natural a thought in the minds of the disciples that another thought was immediately associated with it: "Why could we not, as we probably will not be able to exert an immediate influence on the minds and reasons of the people, attract their attention to us by such rites which we infuse with holy power and which in themselves are holy to us? Why could we not invite people to eat and drink with us and let them feel and experience that this eating together is a holy procedure. When in eating

and drinking they can feel that power which we infuse into it, they will get interested and their thoughts will be awakened and they will ask us what our understanding of life is.”

This is the beginning of the Church and of Church services. From the original ”love meal”, Holy Communion emerged in due Course, when the congregation grew and the communal meal had to be abandoned and only the sacramental ceremony was preserved.

Of course, all the disciples had to be members of the Heavenly Kingdom. The meaning of disciple is: a human being who is a partaker within himself of the divine consciousness of Christ. A disciple was, what we call in Theosophical terminology, initiated. A disciple was really a member of the Secret Brotherhood who was in contact with the entities and powers of the invisible world. These initiated disciples had a special relationship to the outside world. They had something which the world did not have. They had been given the key to the Kingdom of Heaven as Jesus said to Peter. They could open the gates and they could close them. They could with their words open the minds and understanding of other people to the treasures of the Heavenly Kingdom. They could kindle a desire in the souls of people to seek membership in the Kingdom of Heaven. They held the bread of life. With the aid of the sermon and the sacraments they invited the people of the world to them and called them away from suffering, sin and ignorance, called them to joy, knowledge and brightness. That is why they used these mysteries. They were mysteries only because they obtained the holy approval of the Master himself. Jesus himself, who had promised to be among them to the end of the time cycle, approved of their methods and

said he would stand invisible by their side when they were two or three together. And why should they not have trusted his words, because he had proved in so many ways that he was truly the Christ, the anointed, the lord of life and death?

This was so at the beginning, and during the first few centuries. But now we must confess that not a single one of the Christian churches has been able to maintain the level of the disciples. With the exception of a few persons, the Church as such has not been able to maintain the level of the apostles. However, the Church has preserved those two methods formally to impress people who do not yet know of the Heavenly Kingdom: the sermon and the sacrament.

But what kind of sermons does the Church preach? Are they not usually meaningless even in the protestant countries where so much value is placed on them. Some preacher may on occasion infuse spirit into his sermons, if he has got it, but on the whole the sermons, in accordance with the ordinances of the Church are only formal performances. And what is left of the original mystical procedure?

Outward formality, the sacrament, which does not have a direct effect on people as it did originally. In the beginning the power of the mystery depended upon the secret knowledge of the disciples and the co-operation of Jesus. Now it is necessary to have the faith of the partakers and their co-operation.

The tradition of the Catholic Church is right: The sacrament is a justification in itself (*ex opere operato*). But nowadays it is right only in theory. The fact is, as Luther thought, that only faith will help. The power of the sacrament has disappeared. Is it obsolete? Is the age of the Church and Church ritual past? Does mankind no longer need these re-enactments of mystery?

I would not like to answer this question in the negative. In my opinion, people still desire the Church and Church services because the intelligence of the people is still a long way from the bright philosophy of Jesus. But it does not require the formalities of the Church, or the formal sermons, or the unspiritual masses, or the sacraments without occult power. It desires the spirit of the Church. It needs those people who in the visible world can represent the Lord's invisible temple. It needs real disciples of Jesus, the real citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom, initiated members of the White Brotherhood.

Will the time ever come when the desire of mankind is satisfied? Will the time ever come when the disciples of Jesus will live in the world, with the keys of knowledge, love and power in their hands ? Will the time come when a wayward human society can seek assistance and protection from the temples, a time when the Church can really guide the steps of the human-children not only towards the gates of death but also along the narrow road of life?

Time itself may answer this.

But in our hearts we hope that those words are true in which the Book of Revelation ends:

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord, Jesus."









