

The Aquarian Gospel For Awakening

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Introducing the Aquarian Gospel

In 1908 a book appeared on the shelves of American bookstores that was destined to garner interest throughout the world, so much so that today it has gone through more than seventy editions in America alone. This book was *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ* by Levi H. Dowling. Immediately it evoked a response in those who intuited and sought for a deeper meaning of the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Many at that time, as well as today, could not honestly accept the limited interpretation of Jesus and his words that was offered by Churchianity, an acceptance that would have obligated them to reject him as but one of many misperceiving religionists of the past. For them the Aquarian Gospel was truly Light in Darkness, a fount of life-giving knowledge.

What were (and are) the advantages of the *Aquarian Gospel* for seekers of deeper truth?

Firstly, it made no claim to be “the word of God” or even perfect, much less infallible, in its expression. Nor was it some kind of “new revelation for a new age.” It was a transcription of the psychic investigations made by Dowling into what is popularly known as “the akashic records.” It was entirely subjective and made no demands to be accepted in whole or even in part. Dowling saw and spoke; the rest was up to the reader. No promised blessings or curses were set forth to those who accepted or rejected it.

Secondly, it was not a translation of Jesus’ original Aramaic speech, but Dowling’s relaying of the *concepts* that underlay the outer words of Jesus, for that was what was conveyed in his investigations. For this reason we find anachronistic words like “harpsichord” and “photograph” used in the text to convey the idea, but not the literal wording. Whether he caught the inner meanings correctly was a matter for the reader to decide. Nor could it be used as an authoritarian club to beat unbelievers or doubters into submission, or a razor to dissect Jesus’ words into hair-splitting dogmatics. Although its being put down in English was advantageous to those who knew that language, recourse to dictionaries could not be a basis for proving “the truth” about any passage.

Thirdly, the message conveyed in its pages was not the inbred deformity of “orthodox” Christianity, but the universal message found at the heart of all valid religions—religions whose study was recommended to better understand the person and teachings of Jesus. Some years back a priest of the Saint Thomas Christian [Malankara Orthodox] Church of India said to me: “You cannot understand the teachings of Jesus if you do not know the scriptures of Hindu religion.” Regarding this, Father Jacob Kurian, teacher of theology at the Malankara Orthodox seminary in Kottayam, Kerala, had this to say to Christine Chaillot, the author of *The Malankara Orthodox Church*: “We cherish so much the [fact] that we could build our Christian tradition on the foundations of the *Sanatana Dharma* [Hinduism]. Of

course, there is the foundation laid by Christ and the Apostles and the long spiritual tradition of Christianity. But the theological tradition of the Indian Church has to be in line with the Indian philosophical tradition, which is not necessarily only the Hindu one, but also that of the Buddhists, the Jains and other non-Christian traditions which also contribute to the Indian philosophical tradition.... We want to present to the world a model of Christianity that has lived for the last twenty centuries in a tradition of pluralism, but at the same time we want to keep the central elements of Orthodox Christian spirituality and doctrinal integrity.... When Christians adopt this attitude of *Sanatana Dharma* which incorporates all truth, they will be able to overcome all anxiety regarding 'syncretism.'"

Thus students of the Aquarian Gospel are urged to study Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism on an equal footing. How greatly and blessedly this contrasts with the bitter and hostile exclusivity of "orthodox" Christianity which cannot survive outside the confines of pious arrogance, narrowness, and ignorance.

Who was Levi H. Dowling? Not a great deal is known, because he did not want to be heralded as a messenger from God or a prophet of a new age with the accompanying personality cult that inevitably arises. Like Saint John the Baptist, his motto was: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). "It was his great desire that each one should have the message regardless of the messenger," wrote Eva S. Dowling in later editions of the Aquarian Gospel. But we do know the following from the printings of the *Gospel*.

Levi H. Dowling was born on May 18, 1844, at Belleville, Ohio. His father was a Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) minister. Levi was always a student of the deeper things of life, and a devoted student of the religions of the world from childhood. At the age of thirteen, in his first public debate, he took the negative side against a Presbyterian Elder on "The Everlasting Punishment of the Wicked." He began preaching at the age of sixteen; and at the age of eighteen was pastor of a small church. He entered the United States Army at the age of twenty as Chaplain, and served in this capacity to the end of the Civil War. Afterwards he became a publisher of Sunday School Literature, issuing Sunday School Lesson Papers, Song Books, and a Children's Sunday School Paper. Much of his time was devoted to the cause of Prohibition. He was a graduate of two medical colleges and practiced medicine for a number of years. He finally retired from the medical profession in the early 1900's to resume his literary work, particularly the *Aquarian Gospel*.

When but a boy he was impressed with the sensitiveness of the finer ethers and believed that in some manner they were sensitized plates on which sounds, even thoughts, were recorded. With avidity he entered into the deeper studies of etheric vibration, determined to solve the great mysteries of the heavens for himself. Forty years he spent in study and silent meditation, and then he found himself in that stage of spiritual consciousness that permitted him to enter the domain of these superfine ethers and become familiar with their mysteries. He then learned that the imaginings of his boyhood days were founded upon veritable facts, and that every

thought of every living thing is there recorded.

Early in life, when but a mere lad, he had a vision in which he was told that he was to “build a white city.” This vision was repeated three times with years intervening. The building of the “white city” was *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, which was transcribed between the early morning hours of two and six, the absolutely “quiet hours.”

Levi passed from earth-life on August 13, 1911.

Jesus foretold Dowling’s work, saying: “This age will comprehend but little of the works of Purity and Love; but not a word is lost, for in the Book of God’s Remembrance a registry is made of every thought and word and deed; And when the world is ready to receive, lo, God will send a messenger to open up the book and copy from its sacred pages all the messages of Purity and Love. Then every man of earth will read the words of life in the language of his native land, and men will see the light. And man again will be at one with God” (*Aquarian Gospel* 7: 25-28).

The idea of psychically-received knowledge of the lives and teachings of the Masters of Wisdom was not new when Levi did his work. G.R.S. Mead’s *The Gospels and the Gospel* discusses the possibility that a psychically relayed Gospel may be more accurate than a “historical” one. Both Hindu and Buddhist scriptures have been relayed in the same manner as Dowling revealed the *Aquarian Gospel*. It is rarely mentioned, but the *Bhagavad Gita* is exactly such a book, and says so at the end (18:74-75). The *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* (both Valmiki and Tulsidas versions), and the Puranas were also transcribed in the same way, as were a great number of the Mahayana Buddhist Sutras.

Throughout the centuries various Christian saints and visionaries such as Saint Bridget of Sweden, Mary of Agreda, Catherine Emmerich, and Therese Neumann have psychically perceived events from the life of Jesus and conveyed their impressions to others. The perceptions of Mary of Agreda and Catherine Emmerich fill several volumes each. None of these were considered “holy scripture,” but neither does the *Aquarian Gospel* make such a claim. We *can* say with Eva Dowling:

“Further references to the personality of Levi are, seemingly, unnecessary. It matters but little who he is; his work in the transcription of the *Aquarian Gospel* of Jesus, the Christ, stands unimpeachable. The lessons of this book all bear the stamp of the Nazarene, for no man except the world’s greatest Master could have touched the high chords of divine Love and Wisdom which characterise the pages of this marvellous book.”

As the angel said to Saint Augustine: “Take and read.”

Chapter One

Augustus Caesar reigned and Herod Antipas was ruler of Jerusalem. Three provinces comprised the land of Palestine: Judea, Samaria and Galilee. (Aquarian Gospel 1:1-2)

This is important for us to know, for Israel was sharply, even acrimoniously divided.

Judea

The more sophisticated Hebrews, who had contact with other nations, especially the Romans, lived in Judea. Because of this, throughout the Mediterranean world all Hebrews were called “Judeans” (“Jews”), just as the modern world often calls Americans “Yankees” even though that term is really proper only to New Englanders. As humans are wont to do, the Judeans considered themselves the only true or worthy children of Abraham, and looked down upon the people of other sections. The despised, in return, despised their despisers.

But it was the Hebrews in diaspora, scattered throughout the Mediterranean world and eastward into Asia, who really detested and even hated the Judeans. First, they considered the Judeans had betrayed Israel and its people into the hands of the Roman Empire. Not only was Israel oppressed by the Romans through military occupation and unjust taxation, it was ruled by a Roman Procurator who appointed the High Priest of the Jerusalem Temple—always a Judean who had bribed him to get the appointment. At the time of Jesus, Annas and his son-in-law Caiaphas were alternately appointed High Priest by Pontius Pilate, each producing the required bribe when the other’s term expired. Naturally, the Romans only recognized those two and the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, as the legitimate religious authority in Israel.

The Sanhedrin had obtained from Rome the permission to coin their own Temple money, supposedly so the Temple would not have to deal with Roman coins that had the “idolatrous” image of Caesar. The way this pious fraud worked was very simple. Those wishing to make offerings in the Temple had to purchase those offerings in the Temple with Temple money. First they had to change their money with the Temple money-changers at an outrageous loss, and any Temple money left over after their purchases had to be exchanged back into regular coinage at another cut-throat loss. So they were victimized both coming and going. Rich Hebrews of the diaspora often came to Jerusalem with a small fortune to be spent in the Temple only to find that the rate of exchange was so low that they could obtain only a fraction of what they intended to offer. Then, if any Temple money was left over and they had to change it for secular money, the rate of exchange was outrageously small. Some people left Israel virtually impoverished, their lifetime savings depleted.

All this is background for understanding the references to “the Jews” in the Gospels and early Christian liturgical ceremonies of Holy Week. “Jews” does not mean every descendant of Abraham, but only the Judeans of that time. When the Gospel of John tells us that Joseph of Arimathaea was a secret disciple and the eleven remaining disciples of Jesus were in hiding in Jerusalem “for fear of the Jews,” the Greek text is *dia ton fobon ton Ioudaion*, “for fear of the Judeans.” Jesus was murdered by the machinations of the corrupt Judeans in authority. That is a fact. The rest of Israel, and most of Judea, had nothing to do with it and were not in any way implicated. So it is moronic to say that the Hebrews killed Jesus. But those Judeans involved in the plot certainly did, using the arm of the Roman authority because they were not permitted to execute—only the Romans could do that. Furthermore, Jesus was betrayed by Judas, whose name sounded enough like Judea to make him a symbol of Judea. So Jesus was considered a symbol of the Hebrew people in general and Judas was Judea who betrayed them into the enslavement of Rome. A Saint Thomas Christian priest once explained to me that the Aramaic texts of Holy Week that virtually curse the Judeans were written by early Hebrew Christians who thus vented their loathing in such expressions as “O, you cursed Judeans!” This explains the expression *perfidis Judaeis* and *Judaicam perfidiam*, “perfidious Judeans,” in the ancient Latin prayers of Good Friday. “Perfidious” is defined as: “deceitful, untrustworthy, treacherous, and traitorous.” Which is just what most Hebrews thought of the Judeans.

Samaria

We are used to identifying Samaria only with the detested religious group called “Samaritans,” but actually it was a district of Israel also populated by ordinary Hebrews.

Galilee

At the time of Jesus the Galileans were the “hillbillies” of Israel, objects of very real contempt and social prejudice. Much of this was directed toward the Essenes, who were numerous there. The Essenes maintained their own tabernacle in the Mosaic style on Mount Carmel (in Galilee) which they considered the true center of worship. They adamantly rejected the Jerusalem temple which had been built in Gentile style by Herod, a puppet of Rome who was thoroughly Roman in thought and deed.

So alienated was Galilee from the rest of the land that the Galileans celebrated Passover on a day different from everyone else. In the Gospels we see that Jesus celebrated Passover on Thursday evening, when the rest of Israel observed it on Saturday. That is why Saint John says: “the Judeans’ Passover was at hand” (John 2:13; 11:55). Apparently one of the charges against Jesus was his celebration of Passover in Jerusalem on the “wrong” day.

Much of the prejudice against Jesus on the part of the Judeans was simply the fact that he was a Galilean. The Galileans even had their own ghetto in Jerusalem

called “Galilee.” Saint Matthew uses the term “Galilee of the Gentiles” (Matthew 4:15). It is said that many of the Galileans were Gentile converts to Judaism and so considered of “impure blood.” All in all, it was no advantage to be a Galilean unless you were an Essene, as was Jesus’ family. (For more about Jesus and the Essenes, see *The Christ of India*.)

Joachim was a master of the Jewish law, a man of wealth; he lived in Nazareth of Galilee; and Anna, of the tribe of Judah, was his wife. (Aquarian Gospel 1:3)

Various books tell us about the parents of the Virgin Mary (see *The Unknown Lives of Jesus and Mary*). They were Essenes, and Saint Anna was a prophetess among them. Saint Joachim was the wealthiest person in Israel. His financial policy was most interesting. Each year he gave one-third of his possessions to the Essenes’ tabernacle on Mount Carmel, one-third to the poor, and kept only a third for himself. Yet, from the blessing gained from annually giving away two thirds of his wealth, Saint Joachim was the richest man in Israel. Both Joachim and Anna were examples of spiritual living, whose holiness was renowned.

To them was born a child, a goodly female child, and they were glad; and Mary was the name they gave the child. (Aquarian Gospel 1:4)

On December 9 the Eastern Christian Church has for many centuries celebrated the Conception of Mary because it was a supernatural event. Here is the account from *Robe of Light*.

“Joachim and Anna had grown old without having children. Yet, when he was serving in Jerusalem as high priest, Saint Joachim was told by an angel that he would indeed have a child. Further, the angel told him to go to a particular gate of Jerusalem, and there he would meet Saint Anna, who had also received the same revelation and instruction. And it was so: the two met right at the gate.

“The priests of the temple knew of the angelic prophecy and arranged for its fulfillment. Taking Saints Joachim and Anna, they separated them and led them to different parts of the temple. Though few knew it, there was a passage under the temple which ran directly beneath the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. The Ark was the one object on earth where God’s presence dwelt in its fullness, and in the Ark was the golden jar of manna. The Ark and the golden jar were prophetic symbols of the Virgin Mary, for in Her God was to dwell in his fullness as Jesus, her Son, Who was to be the new manna, the ‘bread from heaven.’

“At the divinely ordained hour, Saints Joachim and Anna were taken to opposite ends of the passage, unknown to each other. The priests simply instructed them to start walking forward into the passage, and then departed. The holy ones did as they were told.

“Meeting directly beneath the Most Holy Place, in a state of divine exaltation, the two saints embraced in greeting. Brilliant light descended from the Ark above

and enveloped them both, and in that moment Anna conceived the glorious Virgin, not through the earthly animal mode of sexual intercourse, but in the way Adam and Eve would have channeled the upward-moving spirits into Paradise had they not fallen. Thus the Virgin was conceived in the truly human manner.”

Joachim made a feast in honor of the child; but he invited not the rich, the honored and the great; he called the poor, the halt, the lame, the blind, and to each one he gave a gift of raiment, food or other needful thing. He said, The Lord has given me this wealth; I am his steward by his grace, and if I give not to his children when in need, then he will make this wealth a curse. (Aquarian Gospel 1:5-6)

A worthy descendant of Saint Joachim, Jesus told some rich Pharisees who had invited him to a banquet: “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee” (Luke 14:12-14).

Three principles are taught in these words from the Aquarian Gospel and the Gospel of Saint Luke:

1) All things belong to God. Even though they may have come to us through the agency of our karma, still they belong to him alone and never are really ours.

2) We are obligated to help those in need from our material resources, for they belong to God, whose children they are. To not do so is to render our possessions a curse of selfishness. Conversely, to do so is to make them a blessing of noble character.

3) If human beings cannot reward us for what we do for them, then God will reward us of his great abundance, and our blessing will be spiritual as well as material.

Now, when the child was three years old her parents took her to Jerusalem, and in the temple she received the blessings of the priests. The high priest was a prophet and a seer, and when he saw the child he said, Behold, this child will be the mother of an honored prophet and a master of the law; she shall abide within this holy temple of the Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 1:7-9)

From *Robe of Light*: “At the end of the third year, Saints Joachim and Anna took their divine child to Jerusalem to offer Her unto the Lord’s service to be one of the consecrated virgins who dwelt in the Temple and made the priestly vestments and the great veil which hung before the Holy of Holies. To demonstrate to the priests that, though so young, the Virgin yet came of her own will and understanding, her parents decided to place her at the foot of the flights of steps which ascended to the Temple, and to have her walk up them unassisted. However, when they placed her at the foot of the steps, she was instantly transported to the top of the steps!

“In that exact moment, by prophetic inspiration, Saint Zachariah, the future father of Saint John the Baptist, who was high priest at that time, came forth with all the Temple virgins, who were dressed in festal garb and holding lighted lamps as for a wedding. They surrounded the Virgin, who then began to dance in their midst. Moving slowly while she continued to dance, they led her into the Temple. Not once did she glance back to Saints Joachim and Anna, but kept her gaze intently toward the Holy Place where none but the priests were allowed to go, and which no woman had even seen, much less entered.

“To the astonishment of all, Saint Zachariah led the Virgin into the Holy Place. With furious indignation, the priests pursued them to expel Her from that sacred place of sacrifice. But upon entering, they saw to their compounding chagrin that Saint Zachariah was leading her into the Holy of Holies, where they themselves could not go, only the High Priest being allowed to enter, and that only once in each year.

“In this manner the New Ark of the New Covenant was witnessed to by the holy Zachariah. (He was later killed by the soldiers of Herod at the instigation of some of the priests, who felt that he had defiled the Temple by these actions.) There is speculation that upon the entrance of the New Ark into the Most Holy Place, the Old Ark was taken away by the angels to an unknown place.”

And Mary did abide within the temple of the Lord; and Hillel, chief of the Sanhedrin, taught her all the precepts of the Jews, and she delighted in the law of God. (Aquarian Gospel 1:10)

From *Robe of Light*: “Thenceforth the Virgin lived in the Temple, working in silence and prayer. Until the day of her entry, she had eaten no food but the milk of Saint Anna. Here she was fed exclusively on the food of Paradise which was brought to her by angels. This was to ensure that her body would be capable of enduring the mighty power that would descend at the incarnation of Christ in her womb. An ‘earthy’ body would have been destroyed, just as was Uzzah’s when he simply touched the Ark whereon the Presence rested which was to dwell within her for nine months. Moreover, her body had to be of the type from which Adam-Christ could draw a suitable physical vehicle for his redemptive work.

“The weaving of the veil for the Most Holy Place was a great honor, bestowed on the virgins by the drawing of lots. The most honored part of this task was the weaving of the purple, the color symbolizing the Divine Presence, into the veil. While she lived in the Temple, the lots always assigned to Mary the task of weaving the purple into the veil. This was indicative of the fact that she was going to provide the Messiah with the veil of flesh by which he would enshroud his incarnate glory, revealing it only to Peter, James, and John at his transfiguration.”

It is remarkable that Hillel, perhaps the most famous rabbi in the history of Judaism, was the Virgin’s personal teacher of religion.

When Mary reached the age of womanhood she was betrothed to Joseph,

son of Jacob, and a carpenter of Nazareth. And Joseph was an upright man, and a devoted Essene. (Aquarian Gospel 1:11-12)

From *Robe of Light*: “It was the custom that, upon reaching a suitable age, the Temple virgins should become espoused, and later married. To marry a Temple virgin was considered one of the highest honors in Israel. Ordinarily, the families of the virgins made the arrangements, but in the case of the wondrous Virgin, the priests decided that they would themselves determine which man should marry her, for they knew she was unique.

“The prophets among them were given the revelation that all the eligible men of Israel who were descended from David should come to Jerusalem, bringing their staffs; and the one whose staff was seen to bear flowers would be the one to whom the Virgin should be betrothed.

“This was announced, and the men assembled in the Temple. After prayers were offered, it was seen that no staff had flowered! The priests were confused at this, but when it was reported to them that one man had not brought his staff, the priests demanded that he be brought to them. There came before them a venerable, elderly man with shining white hair: Joseph, a carpenter from Nazareth. He explained that in his haste to reach the Temple that morning he had left his staff behind and, feeling assured that he could never be chosen for such an honor (also, having secretly made a vow of virginity in his youth), he had not felt the need to return and fetch it.

“The priests commanded him to bring his staff without delay. He did so, and in the presence of all, during the prayers of the priests, his staff blossomed with lilies, the symbol of virginity. In this way, the priests knew that he was to be espoused to the Virgin, and made all arrangements.

“After the espousals (Saint Joseph was never married to the Virgin), the Virgin went with Saint Joseph to Nazareth. There the Saint had already divided his house into two completely separate dwellings—one for the Virgin and the other for himself. For by the budding of the lilies, he knew that God still honored his vow of virginity, and that the Virgin should dwell with no mortal man, however holy he might be.”

Chapter Two

Near Hebron in the hills of Judah, Zacharias and Elizabeth abode. They were devout and just, and every day they read the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms which told of one to come, strong to redeem; and they were waiting for the king.

Now, Zacharias was a priest, and in his turn he led the temple service in Jerusalem. It came to pass as Zacharias stood before the Lord and burned the incense in the Holy Place, that Gabriel came and stood before his face. And Zacharias was afraid; he thought that some great evil was about to come upon the Jews.

But Gabriel said, O man of God, fear not; I bring to you and all the world, a message of good will, and peace on earth. Behold, the Prince of Peace, the king you seek, will quickly come.

Your wife will bear to you a son, a holy son, of whom the prophet wrote, Behold, I send Elijah unto you again before the coming of the Lord; and he will level down the hills and fill the valleys up, and pave the way for him who shall redeem.

From the beginning of the age your son has borne the name of John, the mercy of the Lord; his name is John. He will be honored in the sight of God, and he will drink no wine, and from his birth he will be filled with Holy Breath. (Aquarian Gospel 2:1-11)

Elijah the prophet is returning to earth to prepare the way of his former disciple Elisha who, about to be born as Jesus, has become the Christ, the Messiah. How will he prepare? "He will level down the hills and fill the valleys up, and pave the way for him who shall redeem." These three actions are spiritual symbols. Leveling down the hills is removing all that is unnecessary in our lives, and filling up the valleys is supplying all that is lacking to us. Paving the way is making the process of ascent to Christhood as smooth, straight, and clear as possible. All in all, Gabriel is talking about a complete overhaul of our life that is required for intelligent and effective spiritual endeavor.

The holy prophet's name, Yohanan, meant "God has been gracious."

To prepare himself to herald the Messiah, John had to be pure in every way, including physically. Therefore he never ate meat or drank wine. This is not much of a surprise since the Essenes never did. Because of his past as the holy Elijah who never died but was translated into heaven (II Kings 2:11), he was filled with the Holy Spirit even in the womb.

And Gabriel stood before Elizabeth as she was in the silence of her home, and told her all the words that he had said to Zacharias in Jerusalem. When he had done the service of his course, the priest went home, and with

Elizabeth rejoiced. (Aquarian Gospel 2:12-13)

Five months passed by and Gabriel came to Mary in her home in Nazareth and said, Hail Mary, hail! Once blessed in the name of God; twice blessed in the name of Holy Breath; thrice blessed in the name of Christ; for you are worthy, and will bear a son who shall be called Immanuel. His name is Jesus, for he saves his people from their sins. (Aquarian Gospel 2:14-16)

The Archangel of the Lord salutes Mary not once but twice, for she is doubly worthy of respect. More than that she is thrice blessed in the Name of God.

God is not an object that can be labelled or named. Thus all “names” of God are really descriptive titles expressing the divine attributes. But there is more. “Name” means perception. We see something and then we “name” it. So in the case of God “name” also means the state of God-awareness. God is Triune: Father, Mother (Holy Breath), and Son (Christ). The Father is Transcendental Divine Consciousness, the Son is Immanent Divine Consciousness, and the Mother is Divine Power (which is essentially consciousness). To be blessed in the “name” of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit means to be in possession of the fullness of those modes of God Consciousness. To no longer be a human, but a god. This was the status of Mary.

In the Gospel of Saint Luke the word “blessed” used by Gabriel is translated from the Greek word *eulogeo*, which means to be praised: glorified. Thus Saint Gabriel is saying that the Holy Trinity Itself praises Mary. Since God praises her, so also will the godly. *Eulogeo* comes from two roots, *eu* and *logos*, that mean to call something or someone good. At the time of Jesus this meant to declare someone to possess the goodness of God. They also mean to declare something well done. In short, Gabriel is telling Mary that she is good in the sight of God and declared to be pleasing to God.

This is no simple thing. Only a supremely evolved being could give birth to the Christ—in fact would have to virtually be a Christ herself. We know this from the fact that it was Mary and not Joseph or anyone else that was designated to be the spiritual teacher of Jesus. In the seventh chapter of the Aquarian Gospel we find her commission stated by the Essene master Elihu. Only a great soul could undertake this task. Saint John the Baptist prepared the way of Jesus, but Mary prepared Jesus Himself. The very nature of Jesus glorifies Mary. His title, Immanuel, means “God with us,” the Presence of the Divine. Another meaning of Immanuel is Bringing to God, or even just Unto God. How great is Jesus; and therefore how great is his mother.

His name is Jesus, for he saves his people from their sins. Very few Christians know that “Jesus” is a Hellenized (Greek) version of the Old Testament name Joshua, and they are often shocked to hear of someone, especially in Spanish-speaking countries, being named Jesus (Joshua). But so it is. The actual name is Yehoshua (in Aramaic: Yeshua). It means “God will save.” It can, a bit obliquely, be translated “Divine Deliverer.” *Yasha*, its Hebrew root, means to open wide or set free. “Sins” are the bonds of evil karmas and ignorance that constrict our lives and darken our

consciousness. But Jesus opens our conscious and expands it, breaking all those bonds and thereby setting us free. Jesus is Liberator in the fullest sense. This makes him Savior.

When Joseph's daily task was done he came, and Mary told him all the words that Gabriel spoke to her, and they rejoiced; for they believed that he, the man of God, had spoken words of truth. And Mary went with haste to tell Elizabeth about the promises of Gabriel; together they rejoiced. And in the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth did Mary tarry ninety days; then she returned to Nazareth. (Aquarian Gospel 2:17-19)

To Zacharias and Elizabeth a son was born, and Zacharias said, Most blessed be the name of God, for he has opened up the fount of blessings for his people, Israel. His promises are verified; for he has brought to pass the words which holy prophets spoke in olden times.

And Zacharias looked upon infant John, and said, You shall be called the prophet of the Holy One; and you will go before his face, and will prepare his way. And you will give a knowledge of salvation unto Israel; and you will preach the gospel of repentance and the blotting out of sins. Behold, for soon the Day Star from on high will visit us, to light the way for those who sit within the darkness of the shadow-land, and guide our feet unto the ways of peace. (Aquarian Gospel 2:20-26)

Through the prophet Malachi nearly five centuries before the birth of Jesus God said: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 3:1). Isaiah spoke in more detail about the Baptist seven centuries before his birth, saying: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 40:1-5).

Chapter Three

The time was nearly due for Jesus to be born, and Mary longed to see Elizabeth, and she and Joseph turned their faces toward the Judean hills. And when upon their way they came to Bethlehem the day was done, and they must tarry for the night. But Bethlehem was thronged with people going to Jerusalem; the inns and homes were filled with guests, and Joseph and his wife could find no place to rest but in a cave where animals were kept; and there they slept.

At midnight came a cry, a child is born in yonder cave among the beasts. And lo, the promised son of man was born. And strangers took the little one and wrapped him in the dainty robes that Mary had prepared and laid him in a trough from which the beasts of burden fed. (Aquarian Gospel 3:1-6)

It is good to read the so-called “apocryphal” accounts of the birth of Jesus as found in *The Unknown Lives of Jesus and Mary*, because they contain much more material than the Gospels. All of those books were accepted by the original Christians, and still are by the Eastern Christian Churches. They were not included in the Bible only because they were not written by one of the twelve apostles. Some claim to be written by Saint James and Saint Thomas, but it was decided that the church could not be sure of that authorship. Not including a book in the Bible did not mean that it was of no authority, and many of these apocryphal books were read and expounded and in churches for the first few centuries of Christianity.

There is not enough space for me to give all the information found in these “other” gospels, but they do agree that “strangers” from Bethlehem came at Saint Joseph’s request and helped with the newborn Jesus.

Three persons clad in snow-white robes came in and stood before the child and said, All strength, all wisdom and all love be yours, Immanuel (Aquarian Gospel 3:7)

The “persons” in this verse came from India and were actually of great importance in Jesus’ life. There was much more to their visit than Levi records here. They established permanent contact with the Holy Family and in time Jesus went to India and learned dharma and yoga from them.

Now, on the hills of Bethlehem were many flocks of sheep with shepherds guarding them. The shepherds were devout, were men of prayer, and they were waiting for a strong deliverer to come.

And when the child of promise came, a man in snow-white robe appeared to them, and they fell back in fear. The man stood forth and said, Fear not! behold I bring you joyful news. At midnight in a cave in Bethlehem was born the prophet and the king that you have long been waiting for.

And then the shepherds all were glad; they felt that all the hills were filled with messengers of light, who said, All glory be to God on high; peace, peace on earth, good will to men.

And then the shepherds came with haste to Bethlehem and to the cave, that they might see and honor him whom men had called Immanuel (Aquarian Gospel 3:8-16)

As we will see later on, in India Jesus was often in trouble with the Hindu priests because of his rejection of caste distinctions and prejudice. But the Buddhists, who also rejected such attitudes, welcomed him. Here we see a living example: Jesus was visited by the greatest Masters of India and by humble shepherds, for in his spiritual kingdom they were one. This teaching is perhaps the one most ignored in Christianity.

Now, when the morning came, a shepherdess whose home was near, prepared a room for Mary, Joseph and the child; and here they tarried many days.

“And Joseph sent a messenger in haste to Zacharias and Elizabeth to say, The child is born in Bethlehem.

And Zacharias and Elizabeth took John and came to Bethlehem with words of cheer. And Mary and Elizabeth recounted all the wondrous things that had transpired. The people joined with them in praising God

According to the custom of the Jews, the child was circumcised; and when they asked, What will you call the child? the mother said, his name is Jesus, as the man of God declared (Aquarian Gospel 3:15-19)

Conforming to the archangel’s message, Mary and Joseph named the miraculous child Jesus: God Shall Save. All of Israel soon came to know of this wondrous thing that had occurred in their midst. We who live in America think of a country being so huge, as ours is, that amazing things can remain unknown to just about everybody, but it was not so in Israel. Just look at an atlas. When Jesus appeared at the Jordan to be baptized there surely was not an adult in Israel that had not heard of him. And after his astonishing three-year ministry there may not have been many that had not seen him at least once.

Chapter Four

Now, Mary took her son, when he was forty days of age, up to the temple in Jerusalem, and he was consecrated by the priest. And then she offered purifying sacrifices for herself, according to the custom of the Jews; a lamb and two young turtle doves (Aquarian Gospel 4:1-2)

Forty days after the birth of Jesus, Mary took him to the Temple to be consecrated, for the Law said: "Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord" (Luke 2:23). That is, if the firstborn child was male, he would be consecrated to God and considered of the priestly class (Levite) and allowed to teach in the synagogue. She also offered thanksgiving for having given birth without any mishap to her or the child.

A pious Jew named Simeon was in the temple serving God. From early youth he had been looking for Immanuel to come, and he had prayed to God that he might not depart until his eyes had seen Messiah in the flesh. And when he saw the infant Jesus he rejoiced and said, I now am ready to depart in peace, for I have seen the king (Aquarian Gospel 4:3-5)

According to ancient records Simeon, then a young man, had been among those chosen to translate the Hebrew scriptures into Greek at the request of Ptolemy, Pharaoh of Egypt, to be placed in the great library of Alexandria. The religious leaders in Jerusalem had initially refused to allow this translation, but when Ptolemy offered to free all Hebrew slaves that were then in Egypt, they agreed to it. Seventy scholars, one of whom was Simeon, went to Egypt and made the translation there. (Therefore it is called The Septuagint, The Seventy.) When the translators came to the words: "The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14), Simeon objected to translating it, saying that the Egyptians would laugh at it. That night an angel visited him and told him that he would not die until he himself should see the virgin and child spoken of in the prophecy. Eventually all Israel knew of this, and every Passover looked to see if he was still alive. At the time of Jesus' birth he was one hundred and fifty years old. So when he acknowledged the child as the promised Messiah all Israel came to know of that, too. When we consider all these things as well as the tremendous signs given later in Jesus' ministry of three years, it is astonishing that he was not only rejected but murdered. No wonder Saint John wrote in his gospel: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John 2:23-25).

And then he took the infant in his arms and said, Behold, this child will

bring a sword upon my people, Israel, and all the world; but he will break the sword and then the nations will learn war no more (Aquarian Gospel 4:6)

This is a prophecy of the two comings of the Lord Jesus. In his first coming he surely brought a sword. For those who believed in him and followed his Way, he brought the sword of victory over all evil, the power to cut away all the bonds of ignorance that held them captive. To those that rejected (not just passively ignored and disbelieved) him he brought the sword of cutting off for that and many lifetimes. He brought a sword of separation between the wise and the foolish, the just and the unjust, the faithful and the unfaithful, the believing and the unbelieving. For all nations he brought the sword of bewilderment to the eyes of the willfully ignorant and wayward and the sword of confusion to the dull of heart who could not comprehend his gospel. Christianity itself because a sword of destruction in the hands of the unfit and prideful to work their lust for power and conquest and riches. That which should have been a blessing became a curse unto the earth. All this came from his first coming as Son of Joseph. But in his return as Son of David he Himself will break all such swords and bestow peace upon nations as well as individuals so they “will learn war no more.” (This is according to the esoteric tradition of Judaism which says that the Messiah would come two times: first, and be rejected, and second, and be accepted.)

Speaking further of Jesus, Simeon declared:

The master’s cross I see upon the forehead of this child, and he will conquer by this sign (Aquarian Gospel 4:7)

It is thought that the cross is a Christian symbol, but it is more than that, being an ancient holy sign both to the Jews and to the Egyptians, the Jews calling it Tau (Mark), and the Egyptians calling it Ankh (Life). The Tau or Ankh is a T surmounted by a circle or an ellipse (oval) representing the mastery of materiality by the spirit, matter being represented by the T and spirit by the circle. Hence it is a symbol of eternal life, of the triumph of spirit life over material death. It is therefore a symbol of resurrection from death to life, not a symbol of sacrifice and death. The original Christians did not use the Roman implement of crucifixion as their symbol as that would be a declaration of the power of death over life. Rather, they used the *crux ansata*, the Cross of Life, the Tau/Ankh. Both Jews and Egyptians looked upon the Ankh as having the power to convey life. So it was also considered a symbol of Christ and of Jesus Who conquered death through Christhood. This cross was the mark of Christhood. The original Christians (Christines) used the Cross of Life, wearing it and drawing it upon the walls of their homes.

The Cross of Life is also a symbol of the Trinity. The circle is the Father, the horizontal bar is the Son, and the base is the Holy Spirit Mother. It also symbolizes the human being: the circle is the superconscious mind, the horizontal bar the conscious mind, and the base the subconscious mind. The circle is also considered to be the rising sun resting upon the horizon of the earth, a symbol of the dawning of spiritual-consciousness.

The Egyptians particularly looked upon the Ankh as having innate energizing power either by touch or by sight. This immediately reminds us of the cross which Moses made in the wilderness, the sight of which cured those bitten by poisonous snakes (Numbers 21:8-9). In later times the gods were shown holding the Ankh by the circle to indicate that they were masters of spiritual consciousness, that this was what made them gods.

In the book of Ezekiel God speaks to an angel and says to him: "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark (*tau*) upon the foreheads of the men" (Ezekiel 9:4) that were righteous. For a great destruction was coming upon the people, but it would "come not near any man upon whom is the mark (*tau*)" (Ezekiel 9:6).

And in the temple was a widow, four and eighty years of age, and she departed not, but night and day she worshipped God. And when she saw the infant Jesus she exclaimed, Behold Immanuel! Behold the signet cross of the Messiah on his brow! (Aquarian Gospel 4:8, 9)

There must have been some esoteric lore among the Essenes, known to Simeon and Anna, which said that a Tau would be seen clairvoyantly upon the foreheads of the Masters and of the Master of masters, the Messiah.

And then the woman knelt to worship him, as God with us, Immanuel; but one, a master, clothed in white, appeared and said, Good woman, stay; take heed to what you do; you may not worship man; this is idolatry. This child is man, the son of man, and worthy of all praise. You shall adore and worship God; him only shall you serve. The woman rose and bowed her head in thankfulness and worshipped God. And Mary took the infant Jesus and returned to Bethlehem (Aquarian Gospel 4:10-14)

This is a most valuable lesson, since religious people continually break the command to have no other gods but God (Exodus 20:3). They substitute just about anything for God, some things being more ridiculous or harmful than others. Perhaps the last "idol" to be erected is that of enlightened beings that are Christs and Saviors, yet only by virtue of their total union with God. True, they are part of God, waves of the Infinite Sea, yet they are not God, and without God they would be less than nothing, they would not even exist.

When Paul and Barnabas were at Lystra the people thought they were the gods Jupiter and Mercury because of their miracles and their sacred demeanor. The priest of Jupiter even tried to offer sacrifice to them (Acts 14:11-18). But they called out to the people and said: "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God" (Acts 14:15). On one hand this shows the laudable eagerness of the people to have contact with God, but on the other it shows their ignorance of the nature of God.

The proofs commonly set forth by exoteric Christianity as to the divinity of Jesus

are really the proofs of his being a perfect Son of God, a Christ. Compared to ordinary men (and angels) Jesus certainly is a god. But he is not *the* God, and so the Master appeared and stopped Anna in her attempt to worship the Child. It is no honoring of Jesus to call him what he is not and to use him as an excuse to usurp the rightful place of God Who alone is worthy of worship. Rather, it is an attempt to turn Jesus into the “man of sin” who “as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thessalonians 2:3, 4). It is an insulting attempt to turn Jesus from Christ into Antichrist however sentimentally and “reverently” it may be done.

During his vision recorded in Revelation, Jesus guided Saint John who tells us that toward its end: “I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10). To accept the testimony of Jesus is to worship God alone.

When Jesus was in Bethany he had this to say about who and what he was and was not:

“Men call me Christ, and God has recognized the name; but Christ is not a man. The Christ is universal love, and Love is king. This Jesus is but man who has been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform, to be the temple through which Christ can manifest to men. Then hear, you men of Israel, hear! Look not upon the flesh; it is not king. Look to the Christ within, who shall be formed in every one of you, as he is formed in me” (Aquarian Gospel 68:11-13).

Nothing further need be said; but much must be done.

Chapter Five

Beyond the river Euphrates the magians lived; and they were wise, could read the language of the stars, and they divined that one, a master soul, was born; they saw his star above Jerusalem. And there were three among the magian priests who longed to see the master of the coming age; and they took costly gifts and hastened to the West in search of him, the newborn king, that they might honor him. And one took gold, the symbol of nobility; another myrrh, the symbol of dominion and of power; gum-thus the other took, the symbol of the wisdom of the sage. (Aquarian Gospel 5:1-3)

The Zoroastrians of Persia were master astrologers. When Jesus was born, there were astrologers who discovered in their analysis of the heavens that a great Master had been born in Israel. Three of them wished to meet this great soul, so taking gifts that symbolized the traits of such an exalted person—nobility, dominion and power, and sagely wisdom—they hastened to Jerusalem where they felt sure he would be, or would be known.

Now when the magians reached Jerusalem the people were amazed, and wondered who they were and why they came. And when they asked, Where is the child that has been born a king? the very throne of Herod seemed to shake. And Herod sent a courtier forth to bring the magians to his court.

And when they came they asked again, Where is the newborn king? And then they said, While yet beyond the Euphrates we saw his star arise, and we have come to honor him. And Herod blanched with fear. He thought, perhaps, the priests were plotting to restore the kingdom of the Jews, and so he said within himself, I will know more about this child that has been born a king. And so he told the magian priests to tarry in the city for a while and he would tell them all about the king.

He called in council all the Jewish masters of the law and asked, What have the Jewish prophets said concerning such a one? The Jewish masters answered him and said, The prophets long ago foretold that one would come to rule the tribes of Israel; that this Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. They said, The prophet Micah wrote, O Bethlehem Judea, a little place among the Judean hills, yet out of you will one come forth to rule my people, Israel; yea, one who lived in olden times, in very ancient days.

Then Herod called the magian priests again and told them what the masters of the Jewish law had said; and then he sent them on the way to Bethlehem. He said, Go search, and if you find the child that has been born a king, return and tell me all, that I may go and honor him. (Aquarian Gospel 5:4-14)

This is quite straightforward, the only unusual thing being that according to

Levi the prophet described the Messiah as “one who lived in olden times, in very ancient days” referring to the previous lives of Jesus that were bound up with the ultimate destiny of the Hebrew people. Neither the Hebrew or Septuagint texts convey this idea.

The magians went their way and found the child with Mary in the shepherd’s home. They honored him; bestowed upon him precious gifts and gave him gold, gum-thus and myrrh.

These magian priests could read the hearts of men; they read the wickedness of Herod’s heart, and knew that he had sworn to kill the new born king. And so they told the secret to the parents of the child, and bid them flee beyond the reach of harm.

And then the priests went on their homeward way; they went not through Jerusalem.

And Joseph took the infant Jesus and his mother in the night and fled to Egypt land, and with Elihu and Salome in ancient Zoan they abode. (Aquarian Gospel 5:15-20)

Though the Gospel of Saint Matthew tells us that an angel appeared to Saint Joseph and told him to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt, we see from this that the wise men also warned them. The ability of highly evolved people to read hearts is well known. Warren Vickerman, Yogananda’s second American disciple, was once visited by someone who spoke at length about his yogic experiences and insights. After the man left, Annie Vickerman, Warren’s wife, remarked about how impressed she had been with what he said. “It was all lies; not a word of truth in it. I was watching his heart center all the time” Warren quietly stated.

One time an astrologer told a person about his difficulties: “All of this is to make you be what you should be and be public about it. This is the universe’s way of moving you forward.” And that proved to be exactly true.

Chapter Six

Now, when the magian priests did not return to tell him of the child that had been born a king, King Herod was enraged. And then his courtiers told him of another child in Bethlehem, one born to go before and to prepare the people to receive the king. This angered more and more the king; he called his guards and bid them go to Bethlehem and slay the infant John, as well as Jesus who was born to be a king. He said, Let no mistake be made, and that you may be sure to slay these claimants to my throne, slay all the male children in the town not yet two years of age. The guards went forth and did as Herod bade them do.

Elizabeth knew not that Herod sought to slay her son, and she and John were yet in Bethlehem; but when she knew, she took the infant John and hastened to the hills. The murderous guards were near; they pressed upon her hard; but then she knew the secret caves in all the hills, and into one she ran and hid herself and John until the guards were gone. Their cruel task was done; the guards returned and told the story to the king. They said, We know that we have slain the infant king; but John his harbinger, we could not find. (Aquarian Gospel 6:1-9)

There is no way to tell if they really thought they had killed Jesus or were lying.

The king was angry with his guards because they failed to slay the infant John; he sent them to the tower in chains. And other guards were sent to Zacharias, father of the harbinger, while he was serving in the Holy Place, to say, The King demands that you shall tell where is your son. But Zacharias did not know, and he replied, I am a minister of God, a servant in the Holy Place; how could I know where they have taken him?

And when the guards returned and told the King what Zacharias said, he was enraged and said, My guards, go back and tell that wily priest that he is in my hands; that if he does not tell the truth, does not reveal the hiding place of John, his son, then he shall die.

The guards went back and told the priest just what the king had said. And Zacharias said, I can but give my life for truth; and if the king does shed my blood the Lord will save my soul. The guards again returned and told the king what Zacharias said.

Now, Zacharias stood before the alter in the Holy Place engaged in prayer. A guard approached and with a dagger thrust him through; he fell and died before the curtain of the sanctuary of the Lord. And when the hour of salutation came, for Zacharias daily blessed the priests, he did not come. And after waiting long the priests went to the Holy Place and found the body of the dead. And there was grief, deep grief, in all the land.

Now Herod sat upon his throne; he did not seem to move; his courtiers came; the king was dead. His sons reigned in his stead. (Aquarian Gospel 6:10-23)

A fitting end to an unfit ruler. "All they that take the sword shall perish" (Matthew 26:52).

Chapter Seven

The son of Herod, Archelaus, reigned in Jerusalem. He was a selfish, cruel king; he put to death all those who did not honor him. He called in council all the wisest men and asked about the infant claimant to his throne. The council said that John and Jesus both were dead; then he was satisfied. (Aquarian Gospel 7:1-3)

Now Joseph, Mary and their son were down in Egypt in Zoan, and John was with his mother in the Judean Hills. Elihu and Salome sent messengers in haste to find Elizabeth and John. They found them and they brought them to Zoan. (Aquarian Gospel 7:4-5)

Since their two sons were to be the key figures in the spiritual transformation of the Mediterranean world and beyond, Mary and Elizabeth, the mothers of Jesus and John the Baptist, were asked to live for some time in an Essene community in Zoan, Egypt. There they were taught by two master teachers, Elihu and Salome. As was traditional with the Essenes, they were instructed in the wisdom of various spiritual traditions, including Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism.

Now, Mary and Elizabeth were marveling much because of their deliverance. Elihu said, It is not strange; there are no (random) happenings; law governs all events. From olden times it was ordained that you should be with us, and in this sacred school be taught. (Aquarian Gospel 7:6-8)

We can hardly wonder that throughout the ages men and women have rebelled against what seemed the random nature of life, of blind “luck” or “fate,” and have even focussed their exasperation on God, gods, planets, or other human beings. The seemingly arbitrary nature of life that reduced man to a bit of litter floating on the stormy bosom of matter was tormenting to them. And even more tormenting was their total helplessness amid the incomprehensible changes of life. They felt themselves to be worse than nothing.

The foolish simply raved at the uncertainties and caprices of life, becoming progressively embittered. The wise, on the other hand, did not submit to the apparent chaos and unreasonableness of things. Intuiting that more lay beyond the eye than was seen by it, they looked inward rather than outward, guided by those angelic intelligences set over the destiny of the human race. With the opening of the inner eye they clearly saw the pattern and purpose behind that which hitherto had only confused and frustrated them. And even beyond the pattern and purpose they saw the Creator and Ordainer of both.

But did they not then see themselves as much a slave of Law as others saw themselves slaves of chaos? No; for they saw that they were the creators and ordainers of their personal law, albeit on a level of which they were usually

unaware. And seeing this they set themselves to become permanently aware of that creative level on which they and God were one. In this way the first Christs arose among the children of Adam.

Even unwittingly we “work” the law; and because it is unwitting we usually turn ourselves into the paths of pain and sorrow. But if we can, like the first Christs, open our spiritual hearts, we shall be completely masters of our lives in even the slightest thing. Meditation opens this mastery unto us. Today is the result of yesterday and tomorrow is the creation of today. And our eternal nature transcends both.

Elihu and Salome took Mary and Elizabeth out to the sacred grove nearby where they were wont to teach. Elihu said to Mary and Elizabeth, You may esteem yourselves thrice blest, for you are chosen mothers of long promised sons, who are ordained to lay in solid rock a sure foundation stone on which the temple of the perfect man shall rest—a temple that shall never be destroyed. (Aquarian Gospel 7:9-11)

Mary and Elizabeth are thrice blest: blessed by the Triune God Who chose them to be the mothers of the Messiah and his forerunner who had long ago been promised to mankind. Upon the rock of divine revelation, upon the rock of Christhood, they were to erect the Temple of the Perfect Man: not another temple of a deific tyrant before whom all should bow and whose will all should fear to contravene, but the temple in which all should neither bow nor fear, but who should rise into that perfect love that casts out all fear (I John 4:18). In that temple every worshipper is transmuted into deity.

That temple can never be destroyed for it is inherent in each one of us and in creation itself: inherent in God. Outside factors such as false religion may slow down its revelation, but nothing can hold it back forever. Because many had evolved to the place where they could enter that temple of holy transfiguration, in response God was sending Jesus and John, once Elisha and Elijah, to raise up the structure, the means by which man could ascend to divinity, and call those who were ready to enter.

A new age was come, and Elihu explained its advent.

We measure time by cycle ages, and the gate to every age we deem a milestone in the journey of the (human) race. (Aquarian Gospel 7:12)

The best thing in considering this subject is to look at what Eva Dowling, Levi Dowling’s scribe, wrote on the subject: “What is an Age? Astronomers tell us that our sun and his family of planets revolve around a central sun, which is millions of miles distant, and that it requires something less than 26,000 years to make one revolution. His orbit is called the Zodiac, which is divided into twelve signs, familiarly known as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. It requires our Solar System a little more than 2,100 years to pass through one of these signs, and this time is the

measurement of an Age or Dispensation. Because of what Astronomers call ‘the precession of the Equinoxes’ the movement of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac is in order reverse from that given above.... It is conceded by all critical students that the sun entered the zodiacal sign Taurus in the days of our historic Adam when the Taurian Age began; that Abraham lived not far from the beginning of the Arian Age, when the sun entered the sign Aries. About the time of the rise of the Roman empire the sun entered the sign Pisces, the Fishes, and the Piscean Age began, so that early in this Age Jesus of Nazareth lived.... The Piscean Age is identical with the Christian Dispensation.”

Elihu speaks further of the Piscean Era, saying: **An age has passed; the gate unto another age flies open at the touch of time. This is the preparation age of soul, the kingdom of Immanuel, of God in man; and these, your sons, will be the first to tell the news, and preach the gospel of good will to men, and peace on earth. (Aquarian Gospel 7:13, 14)**

The Piscean Age is a time of preparation for the Aquarian Age. Yet, as John the Harbinger was Messianic though not the Messiah, in the same way the Piscean age partook of the Aquarian character for those who were ready. In that age too, in the temple of Piscean Christianity, many became revelations of the divine in humanity, many remaining incorrupt after death as a testimony to their immortal consciousness, while a few others simply dissolved into light upon their death, having achieved perfect transmutation of matter into spirit. Millions remained in ignorance and obscurity, not comprehending the truth of “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27), yet tens of thousands followed the footsteps of Jesus their Master unto the same mastery that he possessed. Some of them became so identified with their Lord that his wounds, the stigmata, appeared upon their bodies. The multitudes lagged behind, or did not even start the journey, but these pressed on, passing from glory to glory, until they arrived “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:13). The glory of the Piscean Age was those who did indeed become Christians, other Christs. We ignore and forget the failures and mediocrities, remembering only the greats of art, science, and history. Why will we not do the same in relation to the Christianity of the Piscean Age? I write this because many who have not yet reached its level dare to speak contemptuously of that Age, demonstrating that they are not yet ready for the Aquarian Age and its fuller vistas. They still need to live “the gospel of good will to men, and peace on earth” before reaching toward divine matters.

A mighty work is theirs; for carnal men want not the light, they love the dark, and when the light shines in the dark they comprehend it not. (Aquarian Gospel 7:15)

The work of John and Jesus was not an easy one; they were both killed by those they sought to save. For those whose consciousness is confined to the body and material things want to keep playing with the mud pies of earth and are annoyed at

the suggestion there is something higher, and infuriated at the attempt to rouse them to seek the higher. They love the dark, for it gives full scope to their egos and does not reveal the futility and pettiness of their lives and hearts. The light, however, reveals their folly, and since they wish to cling to it they need the dark to hide their shame. They may not comprehend the light, but they certainly hate it and the light-bearers.

Mary and Elizabeth were Messiahs in their own right, for Elihu told them: **We call these sons Revealers of the Light; but they must have the light before they can reveal the light. And you must teach your sons, and set their souls on fire with love and holy zeal, and make them conscious of their missions to the sons of men. (Aquarian Gospel 7:16, 17)**

It takes a flame to kindle another flame. If these two women were not Christs how could they awaken their children to Christhood? How could they “set their souls on fire with love and holy zeal, and make them conscious of their missions to the sons of men” if they were not already themselves living flames of divine wisdom and love? Only those who possess the light can show the light to others. If only the self-appointed spiritual teachers of the world would acknowledge and follow that!

It is easy to become lost and overwhelmed in the swamps of theology and philosophy, so Elihu comes directly to the heart of the teaching needed by Jesus and John.

Teach them that God and man are one; but that through carnal thoughts and words and deeds, man tore himself away from God; debased himself. Teach that the Holy Breath would make them one again, restoring harmony and peace; that naught can make them one but Love; that God so loved the world that he has clothed his son in flesh that man may comprehend. (Aquarian Gospel 7:18-20)

These five principles are to be the basis of the spiritual education of Jesus and John:

1) *God and man are one.* This is an eternal fact and must ever be uppermost in our mind. No matter how efficient human beings are in making it seem that they are the antithesis of God, and that the tangle they have created for themselves is completely unseverable, that bondage is natural to them and freedom is unattainable, it is not so. The opposite is true. The “nature of things” is really an illusion; the sole nature is God, who is the Supreme Nature, not “supernatural.” Perfection is natural; imperfection is unnatural. But:

2) *Through carnal thoughts and words and deeds, man tore himself away from God; debased himself.* “Carnal” means fleshly, body-oriented, *sarkikos* in Greek. It also means temporal, as opposed to eternal. By implication it means human “nature,” which is really unnatural, even anti-natural. Interestingly, one of its roots is *sarao*, which means something which drags, draws, or sweeps something along against its will. The idea is that the body drags us helplessly into birth after birth, deeper and

deeper into physical-material consciousness. Another root means to seize something for oneself, to steal. And certainly our body and human nature does that: it seizes our consciousness, our intelligence, and our wills and appropriates them to itself, eventually itself seeming to be the person, and we only a helpless appendage-witness. The willing slaves of carnality denounce suppression or repression of the flesh, assuring us that it will get us into trouble, when the opposite is true. Discipline and mastery leads to freedom. In Hebrew the word is *nasa*, which means to lift up and carry something. Its Greek equivalent, *airo*, means the same. The connotation is that the body is lifted up and carried along by the spirit. But in the distortion and degradation of human beings things are reversed, and the body picks up and runs away with the spirit.

Just as the state of embodiment is unnatural, so an unnatural entity has arisen in rivalry to the spirit: the ego; and when we speak of “fleshy” it also implies *egoic*. Carnal thoughts, words, and deeds have a two-pronged wounding: they tie us deeper into material consciousness and dependency, and they put us further under the domination and delusion of the ego. The world has become our prison and the ego is the warden. To be free of one but not the other is to remain bound; both must be shed by the questing soul. The two have come between us and God, blinding us to Reality and therefore certainly degrading us.

If we carefully read the third chapter of Genesis we will see that the transgression of Adam and Eve was not disobedience, but indulgence of their matter-turned desire and will; of mistaking outer appearance for reality. The “subtle serpent” was not the mythical devil, but the Satan of their own egos. No doubt some warped and negative entity did speak to Eve, but it was her own ego-devil that really led her astray, beguiling her with cunning half-truths that therefore were lies practically speaking.

3) *The Holy Breath will make them one again, restoring harmony and peace.* God and man need not be made one, they are one from eternity. Yet the bodies (physical, astral, and causal) and the ego stand between them and divide them. (Not really; it is a deception, but by believing in it we “make it so.”) No activity of the bodies or the ego can reunite our consciousness with God. As Ramana Maharshi put it, to make such an attempt is like making a thief a policeman and telling him to catch himself. Thoughts, words, and deeds have separated us from God, but they cannot unite us, they separate us by their innate nature.

The only unifying power is the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit. By baptizing ourselves in the consciousness of the Holy Spirit, She looses us from the bonds of body and ego and restores us to the bosom of the Father, restoring to us the status of the sons of God. She is the divine oil which Christs (Christs) us. “God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit” (I John 4:12,13). Harmony and peace follow naturally upon our reunion.

4) *Naught can make them one but Love*, for the Holy Breath is the active Love of God working through us to effect our return to the Father. She is the infinite Love of

God; but also necessary is our finite love, the effusion of our Godward-turning spirits. We must keep our hearts increasingly open to God. Then “deep shall call unto deep” (Psalms 42:7). and become one again.

All this is extremely inspiring, but it is also extremely abstract. We, however, are definitely concrete. Hence:

5) *God so loved the world that he has clothed his son in flesh that man may comprehend.* Certainly Jesus is Teacher, Master, Redeemer, and Savior, but pre-eminently he is divine love incarnate. Having ascended to perfect union and been declared a Son of God, though freed from all bonds of body and ego, by the will of the Father-God Jesus was clothed in flesh—not flesh born of ignorance and karma, but miraculous flesh created by divine intervention in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Every breath and step he took in this world was a teaching and an opening. Having seen, heard, and even touched him as The Word Made Flesh, Immanuel, human beings were enabled to comprehend the Way. And enabled to say to future generations: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.... And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (I John 1:1-3; 4:14).

A generation before Saint John wrote those words Elihu told his pupils:

The only Savior of the world is love, and Jesus, son of Mary, comes to manifest that love to men. (Aquarian Gospel 7:21)

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2,3). This also the Beloved Disciple wrote about the Incarnate Love that was Jesus. And Elihu (whom it is very likely was known to Saint John) anticipated him decades before when he told Mary and Elizabeth:

Now, love cannot manifest until its way has been prepared, and naught can rend the rocks and bring down lofty hills and fill the valleys up, and thus prepare the way, but purity. But purity in life men do not comprehend; and so, it too, must come in flesh. And you, Elizabeth, are blest because your son is purity made flesh, and he shall pave the way for love. (Aquarian Gospel 7:22-24)

We should not fool ourselves; sentimentality and “liking” (*fileo*) are not love (*agape*).

“Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto

him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep” (John 21:15-17).

This conversation is confusing to us who read it in English translation. In Aramaic, the language of Jesus and Saint Peter, only a single word was used for “love.” But when Saint John wrote his Gospel in Greek he used two very different words. When Jesus says “love,” Saint John uses the word *agapao* (the verb from of agape). *Agapao* means to love deeply from the spirit, it is exclusively spirit-to-spirit. When Saint Peter says “love,” Saint John uses the word *fileo*, which means to feel great affection and friendship (*philos* is the Greek word for friend) for someone. “Kindly-affectioned” was the Elizabethan way of translating it. It carries the connotation of a personal (egoic) sentimental *feeling*. Better than indifference or hostility, it is still not love in the truest sense. Agape is an intelligent, consciously willful loving, having nothing to do with: “I don’t know why, but I love you,” or: “I can’t help myself; I just love you.” That is only *fileo*. *Fileo* comes and goes at the whimsy of ego. Agape remains forever rooted in the spirit. This what Jesus desired from Saint Peter.

Only the pure are capable of agape; the impure manage only *fileo*, and often not even that. Only the pure can love; therefore “blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). Only true, pure love for God and his saints enables us to respond in a life-changing manner. It is not a matter of “good” or “bad” but of capable and incapable. To the impure Jesus said: “Where I am, thither ye cannot come” (John 7:34,36). That is why, speaking of the unveiling of our inner Christ, Saint John wrote: “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:3).

If we want to know what purity is like, let us look at Elizabeth’s son. What do we know about him? 1) He lived apart from most people As Master of the Essenes he spent a great deal of time with the Essene initiates, so he was not averse to human beings. But he associated only with the wise. 2) He never touched alcohol. 3) He was an absolute vegetarian. 4) He was a lifelong celibate. This should give us the idea. He was an example for all that wished to know God.

This age will comprehend but little of the works of Purity and Love; but not a word is lost, for in the Book of God’s Remembrance a registry is made of every thought, and word, and deed. (Aquarian Gospel 7:25)

Devout as the Piscean Age Christians certainly were, they just as certainly comprehended “but little of the works of Purity and Love,” as is reflected in their versions of the scriptures and their expositions of them. For the texts have been altered to suit their theological ideas that were rooted in the limited concepts of degenerate Greek and Roman philosophy. In the West Aristotle became far more an

early authority of the Church. Why outline the awful distortions of Jesus and his teachings? Just go into any church or walk into any Christian bookstore. They have a name that they live, but are dead (Revelation 3:1). Jesus' words: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17), apply exactly to contemporary Christianity as it stands on the cusp of the Aquarian Age. This is not a criticism but a critique.

However, every word and act of Jesus was impressed in the akasha, the etheric substance of the cosmos, so nothing was lost. The divine seed was planted in the very fiber of creation. Various saints through the centuries, such as Saint Bridget of Sweden, Anna Catharine Emmerich and Teresa Neumann, "read" those akashic records and told of what they perceived. But the most spiritually complete record was that of Levi Dowling, who had dedicated forty years of his life to reading the etheric records of Jesus. About him Elihu prophesied:

And when the world is ready to receive, lo, God will send a messenger to open up the book and copy from its sacred pages all the messages of Purity and Love. Then every man of earth will read the words of life in language of his native land, and men will see the light, walk in the light and be the light. And man again will be at one with God. (Aquarian Gospel 7:26-28)

This is really nothing new. As I say, many Christian saints viewed the akashic records and relayed a bit of what they saw. Anna Catherine Emmerich, for example, even though she was a Roman Catholic Augustinian nun, told that Jesus had lived in India, which was the only place where his teaching was understood, and that he often explained the basis and value of astrology to his hearers. Before the Christian era, in India the sage Valmiki wrote the first verse-epic in Sanskrit, the *Ramayana*, which was a retelling of the life of the avatar Rama which he had seen in vision centuries after Rama had lived in north-central India. Some time later the saint Tulsidas did the same. The most influential scripture of India is the Bhagavad Gita, which records the conversation between the avatar Krishna and his disciple Arjuna. The entire Gita was spoken by the yogi Sanjaya as he had seen it in vision by the empowerment of the sage Vyasa. Vyasa was one of the greatest sages of India, commentator on the Yoga Sutras, author of the Mahabharata (which includes the Bhagavad Gita) and the Brahma Sutras, and codifier of the Vedas.

The Aquarian Age

Levi H. Dowling relayed the Aquarian Gospel at the beginning of the twentieth century. Each age is prefaced by a century of preparation, usually embodying great change. Such was the twentieth century, the door to the twenty-first century, the exact beginning of the Aquarian Age. (The twentieth century can be thought of as part of the Aquarian Age in the same way a vestibule is part of a house.) The Aquarian Gospel was immediately popular, and in less than a hundred years went through seventy printings in America alone, and has been printed in translations

throughout the world. Now its message will be fully realized, for this is the age for which it was intended. (Blavatsky said that her masterwork, *The Secret Doctrine*, would not be fully understood until the twenty-first century.)

Here are Eva Dowling's words on the Aquarian Age.

"What is the Aquarian Age? The human race is to-day standing upon the cusp of the Piscean-Aquarian Ages. Aquarius is an air sign and the New Age is already noted for remarkable inventions for the use of air, electricity, magnetism, etc. Men navigate the air as fish do the sea, and send their thoughts spinning around the world with the speed of lightning.

"The word Aquarius is derived from the Latin word *aqua*, meaning water. Aquarius is however, the water bearer, and the symbol of the sign, which is the eleventh sign of the Zodiac, is a man carrying in his right hand a pitcher of water. Jesus referred to the beginning of the Aquarian Age in these words: 'And then the man who bears the pitcher will walk forth across an arc of heaven; the sign and signet of the Son of Man will stand forth in the eastern sky. The wise will then lift up their heads and know that the redemption of the earth is near.' (Aquarian Gospel 157: 29, 30.).

"The Aquarian Age is pre-eminently a spiritual age, and the spiritual side of the great lessons that Jesus gave to the world may now be comprehended by multitudes of people, for the many are now coming into an advanced stage of spiritual consciousness; so with much propriety this book is called 'The Aquarian (or Spiritual) Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.'"

Not everything will be perfect in this era, but we will find that the great opening of consciousness that preceded it in the twentieth century will continue. Naturally there will be many mistakes in expressing and living out that awakening, and a great deal of missteps will be made. Since duality is a fundamental necessity for relative existence, there will also be resistance to this opening, sometimes intense and vicious reaction to it. Even violence will occur, and we can expect entire nations to dedicate themselves to the annihilation of the emerging wisdom. Just as the dinosaurs died out, but not without great resistance, so also the dinosaurs of human society will do the same. We are at present engaged in a fearful struggle against the evil and oppression that dominates most of the Middle East, and a great deal more confrontation will be necessary before the way is cleared for the Aquarian enlightenment. Both armed conflict and moral challenging of governments will surely occur. Yet, just as no one can hold back the dawning of day, neither can the spiritual dawning of the Aquarian Age be prevented.

The major factor of the Aquarian Age will be the reappearance on the earth of him Who was Jesus the Christ, Who Himself said at the age of twelve: "The time will come when God will bring again the captive hosts; for Israel shall return and dwell in peace. And after many years our temple shall be built again, and one whom God will honor, one in whom the pure in heart delights will come and glorify the house of God, and reign in righteousness" (Aquarian Gospel 19:32-33).

That advent is the real focus of this Age, and the Aquarian Gospel is a major

factor in the preparation for the actual Second Coming of Jesus the Christ.

Chapter Eight

Again Elihu met his pupils in the sacred grove and said, No man lives unto himself; for every living thing is bound by cords to every other living thing. Blest are the pure in heart; for they will love and not demand love in return. They will not do to other men what they would not have other men do unto them. (Aquarian Gospel 8:1-4)

There is only the One within which the many live in total and irrevocable union. Therefore “no man lives unto himself; for every living thing is bound by cords to every other living thing.”

Loving our neighbor as our self is profoundly metaphysical, not just social. When we understand our unity with all that live, mineral, plant, animal, human and angelic, we realize that to injure another is to injure ourself; to help another is to help ourself. How can we be so foolish as to kill and eat ourselves? Or enslave ourselves? Or oppress ourselves? Or neglect ourselves? In this perspective Jesus’ account of the judgment given in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew takes on an altogether different complexion. It is our true self that says to our lesser, illusory self: “I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.... I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.”

Oftentimes meditators and monks are challenged as to what they are doing for others and accused of being selfish. But the truth is that every time we think a positive thought it registers in the lives of everyone in the universe. (Conversely, when we think a negative thought it harms everyone.) So if we can enlighten our hearts, that light will be shared among all other beings as well. Those who liberate themselves greatly further the liberation of others and make the path easier for them.

We usually think of purity in negative terms: no impurity. But it entails much more, and Elihu speaks of two aspects of purity in heart: “Blest are the pure in heart; for they will love and not demand love in return. They will not do to other men what they would not have other men do unto them.”

Love, real love, is rare, for it only gives and demands nothing in return. This is a primary mode of God’s existence. See how he loves us, expecting nothing in return, wishing only for our highest welfare. This is because God is perfectly egoless. In a sense he sees only us, never himself. And we should be the same in relation to him. From this aphorism we also see that ego is the impurity that must be removed from the heart to make it pure. “What about me?” cannot arise in the pure heart. The pure in heart demand much of themselves, but nothing from others. The saints are perfect demonstrations of this. Loving is their fulfillment.

Wishing only the best for others, they can never do aught to others but what they would wish for themselves. In their love they experience the unity spoken of in the previous section, and can have no duality in their thoughts, no dual standard. Being the best, they give only the best: themselves and their love.

There are two selves; the higher and the lower self. The higher self is human spirit clothed with soul, made in the form of God. The lower self, the carnal self, the body of desires, is a reflection of the higher self, distorted by the murky ethers of the flesh.

The lower self is an illusion, and will pass away; the higher self is God in man, and will not pass away. The lower self is the embodiment of truth reversed, and so is falsehood manifest. The higher self is justice, mercy, love and right; the lower self is what the higher self is not. The lower self breeds hatred, slander, lewdness, murders, theft, and everything that harms; the higher self is mother of the virtues and the harmonies of life. The lower self is rich in promises, but poor in blessedness and peace; it offers pleasure, joy and satisfying gains; but gives unrest and misery and death. It gives men apples that are lovely to the eye and pleasant to the smell; their cores are full of bitterness and gall.

If you would ask me what to study I would say, yourselves; and when you will have studied them, and then would ask me what to study next, I would reply, yourselves. He who knows well his lower self, knows the illusions of the world, knows of the things that pass away; and he who knows his higher self, knows God; knows well the things that cannot pass away.

Thrice blessed is the man who has made purity and love his very own; he has been ransomed from the perils of the lower self and is himself his higher self. (Aquarian Gospel 8:5-16)

Twins fascinate virtually everyone; and stories about conflict or confusion between an evil twin and a good twin never fail to interest readers and theatergoers. This is because twins are an archetype of the human psyche. Nothing can exist without being fundamentally dual, and that includes the mind. The contradictions that thrive within each human being are a marvel and a torment to all. Elihu is going to make their nature plain to all and give the resolution for the problems they produce.

The soul is not the same as the spirit, but is the complex of several levels, from the biomagnetic to the causal, that link the spirit with the body. However in this instance the higher self is considered as consisting of the higher astral and the causal bodies as well as the spirit. The higher self reflects the divine nature, both the Trinity and the Septonate, in its makeup. It is this likeness that enables the spirit to move upward towards God even while being in the body. For all these levels are both entities and the powers that enliven those entities; and they in turn enliven the body by focusing the Divine Light downward upon it.

The “carnal self” entails the physical, biomagnetic, and sensory mind bodies.

The lower self is not only bound by the materiality of the physical body, it is enslaved by the material attunement of the biomagnetism and the senses. The biomagnetic and sense bodies together are “the body of desires” which includes egoic and fleshly emotions such as anger, greed, lust, and fear. Since the lower self “is a reflection of the higher self” it masquerades as the higher self and is a kind of satire of the higher self. Even worse, because of their reflective natures, both the higher and lower selves are continually echoing off one another and so become confused with one another.

Think of the higher and lower selves as an object set upon a mirror. There will appear to be two of them, though only one is real. They will mirror each other in an inverse manner: the top of the real object will appear as the bottom of the reflected image. In the chakra system of Yoga this is seen very clearly. “Earth” consists of the three lower chakras: one at the base of the spine, one above it about a third of the way between the base and the navel, and one at the navel itself. (The chakras are really in the spine, but it is easier to locate them by thinking of their corresponding points on the front of the body.) “Heaven” is the three higher chakras at the center of the chest (heart chakra), the hollow of the throat, and the point between the eyebrows. (The seventh chakra is “out of the game” and corresponds to no other chakra, but is the ruler of all six.) Their polarity correspondences are: 1) eyebrow-base, 2) throat-middle, and 3) heart-navel. (So you see, the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach!).

There is a subtle polarization of the higher and lower centers through which the activation of aspects of the higher self automatically activates the corresponding aspects of the lower self. The result is conflict and confusion, producing despair in anyone whose conscience is at all developed. The employment of even wise speech (throat chakra) can somehow trigger off the emotions that reside in the middle lower or “water” chakra. We think of intellect as opposed to emotion, and that is so; but intellect is chained to emotion in most people, so we get the arousal of both. The love of the heart chakra becomes mixed with the greed and dominance drive of the navel chakra. (This is why so many caring and charitable enterprises end up being strongholds of greed, and why so many marriages degenerate into selfish exploitation and battles for domination.) And worst of all, the stimulation of the eyebrow chakra can stir up the lusts of the base chakra, which is why so many religious and spiritual leaders have had great problems (and downfalls) with sexuality. A superficial view causes us to class them as hypocrites, but that is not so. Rather, they are suffering from this uncontrolled polarity, experiencing the reality of the esoteric statement: “Satan is God reversed.” Unpleasant as it is, we must pursue this subject further. For if we do not understand the workings of the lower-higher self connection we will not be able to work out the problems it causes.

First of all, the black-dog-white-dog analogy is completely false. I am speaking of the oft-told story of a simple person who said that the spiritual struggle is like a fight between a black dog and a white dog, the black one being the evil in us and the white being the good in us. The way to ensure the victory of the white dog and

the defeat of the black dog is to only feed the white dog and starve the black dog. The implication is that the lower nature will either die or be so weak it will be of no significance. The simile is cute, but it is not so. When one “dog” gets fed, so does the other, because they are interconnected. Essentially they are the positive and negative poles of a single thing: the envelope of the spirit. This is why great sinners make great saints, and vice versa.

Some philosophies postulate that there are two equal cosmic forces, one negative and the other positive, that are in perpetual conflict; that one cannot win out over the other, but they keep seesawing back and forth endlessly. In the field of relative existence, this is absolutely true. Only in the transcendence of relativity does the state of Unity prevail (*not* the winning out of good over evil; both are left behind). Consequently, as long as we are centered in relative, dual consciousness, there will be no victory of either side. Those with memory of their past lives know that some lives are mixed in character, and some are altogether negative or positive, that a horribly negative life can be immediately followed by a thoroughly positive life, and the other way around. We just go around and around, up and down, tossing on the sea of rebirth. “Continuous shows all day” in the theater of our life. “Today one walks in gloom, downhearted and oppressed; tomorrow that same one is filled with joy. Today the heavens seem full of blessedness and hope; tomorrow hope has fled, and every plan and purpose comes to naught. Today one wants to curse the very ground on which he treads; tomorrow he is full of love and praise. Today one hates and scorns and envies and is jealous of the child he loves; tomorrow he has risen above his carnal self, and breathes forth gladness and good will. A thousand times men wonder why these heights and depths, these light hearts and these sad, are found in every life” (Aquarian Gospel 9:5-9).

There is no stopping this until duality is transcended, until the six chakras are subordinated to the consciousness of the seventh chakra. That is why in the book of Revelation, after a great deal of action and noise, “when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven” (Revelation 8:1). The battle only stops when the “sabbath” of the seventh level of consciousness is opened and the process of transmuting the lower six levels into the seventh is approaching its end. Meditation alone is the opening of the seventh seal.

Right now “the murky ethers of the flesh” usually prevail, pulling us downward. Yes, the picture is awful, but: “the lower self is an illusion, and will pass away; the higher self is God in man, and will not pass away.” So a clear view may be ugly, but it can be equally optimistic and confident. For if we pick up our object and take it away, it will no longer have an unreal reflection in the mirror. The bondage-polarity of the six chakras can be escaped by the activation of the seventh (spirit) chakra. Through meditation we can awaken from the nightmare of reflected being into the life of true being.

The lower self is “the devil, the father of lies” (John 8:44) and we must not listen to or believe it. This is not so easy, since the body, feelings, and lower mind are the only reality most of us know. And even those of us who occasionally rise to

higher perceptions are bound by the conditionings from countless lives in which we had no higher perceptions. A little pressure, and we revert immediately to our lower habit patterns. Hard as it will be to do, we must wean ourselves away from the lower self and steadfastly refuse to pay attention to or follow it. It is always a lie and a liar. In regard to it we must keep in mind the words: "Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Corinthians 6:17). The wise will not even look at it lest they be enticed to touch and get stuck up in the tar baby of the lower self. For the lower self is absolutely "the unclean thing."

In contrast, "justice" implies both clearightedness and an aspiration for divine order. It also implies an objective fairness in relation to others, uncolored by egoic ideas or desires. It implies a love of truth and orderliness that transcends personal self-centered motivations. "Mercy" is an active care for others, not just a noble attitude. It also implies tolerance, patience, forgiveness, and self-sacrifice. "Love" implies an embracing of others in a sense of spiritual unity and identity. "Right" implies rectitude (ritam: cosmic order) on all levels of being and a love of truth above all personal inclinations. It implies the banishment of prejudices and demands. It does not make us blind, but makes us clear and at peace.

Without mercy and love, justice and right become oppressive and heartless injustice and wrong. Without justice and right, mercy and love becomes unprincipled indulgence and emotional sentimentality.

We can profile the lower self by simply thinking of the traits opposite to those of the higher self. The lower self is not a thing in itself, merely the negation of the higher self.

"The lower self breeds hatred, slander, lewdness, murders, theft, and everything that harms." The lower self is not itself these things, but when planted in the soil of earth through incarnation it breeds them like germs in a host. And it breeds them in our minds, from whence they develop into actions. The lower self is a seed from which all evils can proceed without hindrance. However, we need not fight, oppose, or hate it. Since it is unreal we need only dispel it like the illusion it is. We need to "become real" in God, the sole Reality. Therefore we should not waste time with the lower self, but become involved exclusively with the higher self through yoga sadhana.

A rose is not fragrance, but wherever a rose is, there is its perfume. In the same way, whenever the higher self is allowed to function it gives birth to the virtues and harmonies of life. And let us not forget that "virtue" means not just a positive quality, but the *power* that such a quality conveys. ("And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me" Luke 8:46). How often do our well-intentioned words or deeds produce conflict or misunderstanding. When we act through the higher self, only good results. Outside the higher self good becomes impossible. That is why so many people strive to be good and fail. They are striving through the lower self, which can never do good. They must learn to rise to the consciousness of the higher self and function from there before they can either be or do good. The path to hell is paved with good intentions because the

“intenders” are walking with the feet of the lower self.

“The lower self is rich in promises, but poor in blessedness and peace; it offers pleasure, joy and satisfying gains; but gives unrest and misery and death. It gives men apples that are lovely to the eye and pleasant to the smell; their cores are full of bitterness and gall.” This passage demonstrates one of the values of the Aquarian Gospel Levi Dowling has done an inestimable service to all truth seekers by setting down his perceptions in such a straightforward manner.

There is one point I will comment on, though, and that is the fact that it is the lower self that makes promises. The higher self never does, for it is itself Fulfillment. And once you are in contact with it you have all you shall ever need.

One of the requisites of Yoga is swadhyaya, self-study, because if we do not analyze ourselves we will not detect when the lower self is working its will and fooling us. Also, we will not know how to distinguish between the higher and lower. Just as an expelled enemy can creep back and resume power, so the lower self can do the same. (“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first” Matthew 12:43-45). Eternal vigilance is the price of spiritual as well as political liberty.

Further, when we know our higher self it becomes possible to progress onward to know God, for Elihu continues: “He who knows well his lower self, knows the illusions of the world, knows of the things that pass away; and he who knows his higher self, knows God; knows well the things that cannot pass away.” We have to face the truth about this world and that which ties us into it: all is illusory and impermanent. Buddha gave the full picture: everything of the lower self is impermanent, having nothing to do with us (not-self), and stressful, pulling us out of shape into the distorted state of suffering, ignorance and bondage.

To master and perfect the threefold nature of the human being, physical, astral and causal, and become a perfect imaging of the Father-Mother-Son Trinity, is to be “thrice blessed.” This occurs when the aspirant makes purity and love “his very own” by making himself a literal embodiment of purity and love. Purity in the highest sense is freedom from all that is not spirit, and love in the highest sense is permanent union with God. These “ransom” us from the dungeons of the lower self, freeing us to enter into the true being of our higher self. For the higher self is not really an aspect of our being, it is our being. We do not “have” a higher self, we *are* the higher self. As long as the higher self is an object to us, something that can be risen to and fallen away from, that can come into play and sink into abeyance, we are not thrice blessed but are “under the curse” (Galatians 3:10) of duality. However, since the lower self is really illusory, our ascent to the higher self and the reclamation of our true being is inevitable, “for we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (Galatians 5:5).

Men seek salvation from an evil that they deem a living monster of the nether world; and they have gods that are but demons in disguise; all powerful, yet full of jealousy and hate and lust; whose favors must be bought with costly sacrifice of fruits, and of the lives of birds, and animals, and human kind. And yet these gods possess no ears to hear, no eyes to see, no heart to sympathize, no power to save. This evil is myth; these gods are made of air, clothed with shadows of a thought.

The only devil from which men must be redeemed is self, the lower self. If man would find his devil he must look within; his name is self. If man would find his savior he must look within; and when the demon self has been dethroned the savior, Love, will be exalted to the throne of power. The David of the light is Purity, who slays the strong Goliath of the dark, and seats the savior, Love, upon the throne. (Aquarian Gospel 8:17-23)

Being in the grip of duality, it is only natural that those who follow the various religions of the world project that duality into their spiritual views and practices. Some see a great Duality in the form of God and the Devil. Others, because of the fragmented state of their minds, project many forms of gods and demons and set about pleasing the gods to get what they want and protecting themselves from the misfortunes brought about by the demons. Rare are those that (really) see the One True beneath the illusions of the two and the many.

We will save the first clause of this to examine in the second half of our study, dealing with demons.

Men... have gods that are but demons in disguise; all powerful, yet full of jealousy and hate and lust.” This to be expected, since the subconscious from which these projections emerge is indeed “all powerful, yet full of jealousy and hate and lust. Egocentric human beings do not want to be like God, they want God to be like them. So they create “holy scriptures” in which God hates and harms and becomes angry at whatever he dislikes and is pleased and favorable to whatever he likes. In these scriptures God threatens his potential displeasers and promises reward to potential pleasers. His entire state of mind and actions are determined by the character of his creations. He seems to have no mind or personality of his own; rather he is a bundle of instinctual reactions, a cosmic tyrant with the outlook of an overpowerful child Who, because of his eternity, simply does not have to care about either the character or the consequences of his actions. His creations, however, had better care if they know what is good for them.

Polytheists complicate matters, for their many gods not only act the same way in regard to humans, they also envy, hate, lust, and war among themselves, creating even more chaos in creation, often eclipsing humanity entirely and even destroying worlds. Their gods do to human beings things that in human society would result in jailing or worse. Both “God” and “gods” engage in thoughts, words, and deeds that their supposedly inspired scriptures declare reprehensible in their devotees. For example, in the ancient world rapists were executed while the gods raped

women and sired demigods all over the place. The gods of the ancients seemed incapable of speaking a simple truth. But they ruled because they had the power. And the religions were mirrored in the unjust and chaotic societies in which those religions flourished.

Such gods (and “God”) were demons, dwelling in the nether world as much as the “devils” that populated the cosmologies of such devotees. For although said to dwell in the lower regions of the cosmos, they really dwelt in the subconscious of their worshippers. They were only projected symbols of the negative instincts with which the unconscious ever teems.

That they were demons was proven by their being self-centered entities “whose favors must be bought with costly sacrifice of fruits, and of the lives of birds, and animals, and human kind.” Both the negative drives of the subconscious and the gods that were their outward projections demand sacrifice and rob mankind of its rightful life. The true God is just the opposite, for he gives all things to us: his life continually flows in and around us. Through creation he has made himself, as Ishwara, the Son of God, the Christ, the Cosmic Sacrifice for the benefit of man. And his messengers have likewise sacrificed themselves totally for the uplift of humanity. The Devil, on the other hand, exists only to take, since the only way to maintain his shadow existence is to live off real life. So when he parades as God he demands obedience and sacrifice, and so do his servants, the real enemies of humanity. The Devil and his “angels” mock and deride the self-sacrificing mercy and love of God and his saints as folly and weakness. Strength and domination is their desire. When they die, they become discarnate fiends, real demons, until they are born again as human beings; and even then they often carry over their demonic ways. Consider the Communists and the Nazis.

The vampire is a powerful symbol of the inner Satan and his devils. The antithesis of the vampire is Christ, especially Jesus the Christ. The vampire kills human beings by taking their blood so he can live. Jesus died for humanity and shed his blood so they might live. This is why the crucifix is agonizing to the vampire; its very sight negates the evil impulse that keeps him “alive.” Both the inner and the outer demons that men call gods are “soul eaters.”

And yet these gods possess no ears to hear, no eyes to see, no heart to sympathize, no power to save. This evil is myth; these gods are made of air, clothed with shadows of a thought. We must ever keep this in mind lest the gods/demons and their votaries gull us into accepting their reality and engaging in battle with them, and by our doing so give them the power to keep existing and even overcome us. Ignoring them is the only realistic response. Darkness has no being at all; we do not fight the dark, we just bring in the light. This truth is the thing the god-demons hate the most. That is why Churchianity teaches people that they are evil and sinners by nature; that they cannot help doing wrong, that all they need to is “believe in Jesus.” This is foul blasphemy of God and of his image and likeness, humanity.

When we have faith in evil we have disbelief in good. Belief in “the Devil” destroys faith in God. By “belief” I mean belief in his power and ultimate reality.

The Devil and demons do exist, *but only as modes of behavior and polarity*, they really have no self-existence. A good laugh is often the best exorcism.

The supreme Satan is our own ego; it, too, has “no ears to hear, no eyes to see, no heart to sympathize, no power to save” or destroy. But as the final clause informs us, the demons are *thought*; and thought-power is great. But since the thought is ours, we need only turn it around from darkness to the light and poof! there goes the Devil and his angels. I do not say it is easy, but it is simple.

Men seek salvation from an evil that they deem a living monster of the nether world, but that in actuality is only the petty foolishness of their own mind magnified into gigantic proportions by the false lens of the ego. *If man would find his devil he must look within; his name is self. If man would find his savior he must look within; and when the demon self has been dethroned the savior, Love, will be exalted to the throne of power.* What has been presented here is just incredible. Both the ego and the spirit are within; so those who turn their awareness within will no doubt first meet the ego instead of the spirit. They will encounter the Devil instead of God. For this reason many people quit meditation and denounce it as evil, since they met their inner demon instead of divinity.

It is hard to accept that we are both our own devil and our own savior, Christ. We like to hear that we are Christ, but we do not much like hearing that we are Satan. But why worry? The devil part is an illusion, only the Christ is real. Yet we must banish that illusion to reveal the Christ. We must dethrone ego, the Antichrist, and enthrone the spirit, the Christ in us the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). When we clear out every mote of darkness, every speck of duality and ignorance and ego, then the Light of Christ, the love of God made manifest, will sit upon the throne. “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night” (Revelation 12:10). “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5).

Chapter Nine

Salome taught the lesson of the day. She said, All times are not alike. Today the words of man may have the greatest power; tomorrow woman teaches best. In all the ways of life the man and woman should walk hand in hand; the one without the other is but half; each has a work to do.

But all things teach; each has a time and a season for its own. The sun, the moon have lessons of their own for men; but each one teaches at the appointed time. The lessons of the sun fall down on human hearts like withered leaves upon a stream, if given in the season of the moon and all the stars. (Aquarian Gospel 9:1-4)

Truth is eternal and unchanging, but human beings are bound in time and ever changing. Therefore there will be changes in the manner of teaching and in emphasis on what is taught. When the teachers are centered in Divine Consciousness this is perfectly as it should be. We see in the history of Sanatana Dharma a great fluidity which never contradicts itself, yet which is suited exactly to the psychology of people at a certain point in time. At all times only the truth of the One in All is being presented, but in different manners.

Today one walks in gloom, downhearted and oppressed; tomorrow that same one is filled with joy. Today the heavens seem full of blessedness and hope; tomorrow hope has fled, and every plan and purpose comes to naught. Today one wants to curse the very ground on which he treads; tomorrow he is full of love and praise. Today one hates and scorns and envies and is jealous of the child he loves; tomorrow he has risen above his carnal self, and breathes forth gladness and good will.

A thousand times men wonder why these heights and depths, these light hearts and these sad, are found in every life. They do not know that there are teachers everywhere, each busy with a God-appointed task, and driving home to human hearts the truth. But this is true, and every one receives the lessons that he needs. (Aquarian Gospel 9:5-11)

Human life, material, intellectual and spiritual, moves in cycles. For most people it is a matter of highs and lows. However, when yoga enters the life things become much steadier. After a while there are no highs and lows at all, but a steady ascent in awareness and experience. Then the cycles are times of new experience and insight and times of assimilation, following one another seamlessly and tranquilly.

And Mary said, Today I am in exultation great; my thoughts and all my life seem lifted up; why am I thus inspired?

Salome replied, This is a day of exultation; day of worship and of praise; a day when, in a measure, we may comprehend our Father-God. Then let us

study God, the One, the Three, the Seven.

Before the worlds were formed all things were One; just Spirit, Universal Breath.

And Spirit breathed, and that which was not manifest became the Fire and Thought of Heaven, the Father-God, the Mother-God. And when the Fire and Thought of heaven in union breathed, their son, their only son, was born. This son is Love whom men have called the Christ. Men call the Thought of heaven the Holy Breath.

And when the Triune God breathed forth, lo, seven Spirits stood before the throne. These are Elohim, creative spirits of the universe. And these are they who said, Let us make man; and in their image man was made.

In early ages of the world the dwellers in the farther East said, Tao is the name of Universal Breath; and in the ancient books we read, No manifesting form has Tao Great, and yet he made and keeps the heavens and earth. No passion has our Tao Great, and yet he causes sun and moon and all the stars to rise and set. No name has Tao Great, and yet he makes all things to grow; he brings in season both the seed time and the harvest time.

And Tao Great was One; the One became the Two; the Two became the Three, the Three evolved the Seven, which filled the universe with manifests. And Tao Great gives unto all, the evil and the good, the rain, the dew, the sunshine and the flowers; from his rich stores he feeds them all.

And in the same old book we read of man: he has a spirit knit to Tao Great; a soul which lives within the seven Breaths of Tao Great; a body of desires that springs up from the soil of flesh. Now spirit loves the pure, the good, the true; the body of desires extols the selfish self; the soul becomes the battle ground between the two. And blessed is the man whose spirit is triumphant and whose lower self is purified; whose soul is cleansed, becoming fit to be the council chamber of the manifests of Tao Great. Thus closed the lesson of Salome. (Aquarian Gospel 9:12-30)

Salome, a teacher of the Essenes in Zoan, gave this lesson to Elizabeth and Mary, who were to pass it on to their sons Jesus and John. Its main value lies in the wisdom principles it enunciates, but it is also of value since it shows that the Essenes knew and acknowledged the wisdom of Taoism and actively taught it.

The One, the Three, the Seven. Though one, God is all these: One, Three, and Seven. Yet, even to say that God is One is an error, for God is not like an egg that we can point at him and say: "One God." (When we are with God there is no pointing or speaking, either.) However, since we are fragmented we often have to speak of God accordingly just to get the right ideas across to our minds.

The Rig Veda (10:129:2) says that in the beginning the One "breathed breathlessly." This is a play on words, for in Sanskrit the word *prana* means both "breath" and "life." The idea is that God's life and breath were purely internal, perfectly self-contained with no outward movement, with no movement at all. All things were in perfect suspension and balance. The One really was ONE.

And Spirit breathed, and that which was not manifest became the Fire and Thought of Heaven, the Father-God, the Mother-God. Life lived; Breath breathed. If you want to know in detail how all things came about, I recommend *The Secret Doctrine* by Helen Petrovna Blavatsky. (I am recommending only the *original* text of *The Secret Doctrine*, which is available from The Theosophy Company of Los Angeles or The Theosophical University Press of Pasadena.) There you will find a full discussion of the Cosmic Fire known as Fohat that is being referred to here. Fire and Thought, Power and Consciousness, are the Father and Mother of all creation. In Indian philosophy they are termed Purusha and Prakriti, Spirit and Energy. Now it is important to note that God the Father and God the Mother are both manifestations of the One that transcends this Divine Duality. Of course They *are* the One, but they are also veilings of the One, as is the Trinity.

And when the Fire and Thought of heaven in union breathed, their son, their only son, was born. This son is Love whom men have called the Christ. Love, as used here, is not the emotion of one person for another, but the positive magnetic force that draws us into union with the One. (This is explained in *The Holy Science* by Swami Yukteswar Giri.) Christ is the essential life of the Father-Mother God. It is Christ-Love that impels all intelligences into higher and higher evolution until their own Christhood is revealed and made permanently manifested, fulfilling the divine dictum: “Ye are gods” (Psalms 82:6). It is in this sense that Christ is the only savior, the mediator between God and man. And Christ manifests in every age through those that have attained to Christhood. These Christs come to the world to show us the way to ascend to Christhood ourselves. They do not come to be worshipped or “believed in;” they come to give us the plain facts of spiritual life. The rest is up to us. We who truly believe their teachings do not accept them as our “personal Lord and Savior”—the idea would be abominable to them. Instead, we get busy and travel the same path they walked and attain the same Goal. “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (I John 2:6). “For even hereunto were ye called:... that ye should follow his steps” (I Peter 2:21).

Men call the Thought of heaven the Holy Breath. In this instance, Thought means the dynamic aspect of Divine Will. The Holy Spirit, the Holy Breath, the Mother-God, is the outward-moving flow of consciousness that manifests (fulfills) the intention of the Father-God for us. The duality of relative existence (creation) is the two “breasts” of the Mother from which we draw sustenance for our evolutionary life. Therefore in the eighth Ode of Solomon the Holy Spirit says: “I fashioned their members. My own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink My holy milk and live thereby.”

And when the Triune God breathed forth, lo, seven Spirits stood before the throne. These are Elohim, creative spirits of the universe. And these are they who said, Let us make man; and in their image man was made. (The Seven Spirits are discussed in Chapter Fifty-Eight.) “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26,27). “God” is a completely dishonest translation of Elohim, for Elohim is *plural*, and second, it is *feminine*. As Salome says, they are universal creative spirits, of which our bodies and souls (not our spirits) are images. They are our lesser father-mothers. But we should not lose sight of the Unity, so she returns to that subject, speaking of the Tao.

The Tao. Taoism was not only known to the Essenes, its principles were taught by them to all their members. Here we see that the Formless is the source of all forms, that they are not mutually contradictory. All form proceeds from the Formless and returns to the Formless. No matter how many times the Many proceed from the One, there is always a return to Oneness, for Oneness always is.

The One (Tao) is the basis for the Many, and underlies it as its true being. Nothing could exist if it were not rooted in the One, and an extension of the One. Therefore, like the lower self in relation to the higher self, the Many never really exists at all except as an appearance. The Tao alone is.

It is impossible for the One to have any desire, any yearning for either another besides Itself, or a desire for a change in status. Yet It “causes sun and moon and all the stars to rise and set,” to come into manifestation and to merge back into the Unmanifest. It is not impossible to understand the “why” of creation (see *Robe of Light*), but it is erroneous to attribute some desire or personal motive on the part of the Tao to its production. The desire and motive is on the part of the individual spirits alone.

The Tao has no existence as an object that It could be “named,” yet It is the source of all objects, indeed has become all objects, yet without any shadow of change whatsoever. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth” (James 1:17,18).

Because of ignorant and manipulative religion it has been supposed that God has likes and dislikes in relation to human beings, that he rewards the good, whom he likes, and punishes the guilty, whom he hates. Both Judaism and Christianity propagate this falsehood even though the Psalmist wrote: “The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works” (Psalms 145:9), and Jesus taught: “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 ye 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 others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:44-48) in unconditional love. Krishna said: “I am the same to all beings. There is no one who is disliked or dear to me” in the egoic human sense. “But they who worship me with devotion are in me, and I am also in them” (Gita

9:29).

When we comprehend that God has no “like” or “dislike” in relation to us we can no longer think that good fortune or misfortune come from God in response to our either pleasing or displeasing him, but rather they come from ourselves, just as an echo sends back to us the words we spoke beforehand. This is the truth about karma.

And in the same old book we read of man: he has a spirit knit to Tao Great; a soul which lives within the seven Breaths of Tao Great; a body of desires that springs up from the soil of flesh. God (Tao) is the ground of our being, our souls breathe the sevenfold “air” of his Seven Breaths, and our body is the product of our own desires. “God’s will for us” simply does not come into it except for the overshadowing impulse of evolution. We do live in and by him, but the how, why, and where of our living is determined by us alone. Finally, though, we get some sense and begin to grow upward and out of “the soil of flesh” into the higher life of the soul, and from thence into the consciousness of spirit.

Now spirit loves the pure, the good, the true; the body of desires extols the selfish self; the soul becomes the battle ground between the two. Although it actually took place, the Great Indian (Mahabharata) War which is the setting for the Bhagavad Gita, was set forth by the sage Vyasa in a manner that was symbolic of the battleground of the soul and the war that rages there until perfection is attained. In that battle, as in us, the forces of good were outnumbered overwhelmingly by the forces of evil. Not only that, the evil were all related to the good, were shadow-counterparts of the good. For that reason, the destruction of the evil was a painful prospect to the good. Yet the battle had to be waged and the enemy had to be annihilated.

And blessed is the man whose spirit is triumphant and whose lower self is purified; whose soul is cleansed, becoming fit to be the council chamber of the manifests of Tao Great. “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). Within him shall the One, the Two, the Three, and the Seven appear and commune with him and make him their abode, the dwelling-place of the Most High.

Chapter Ten

Elihu taught; he said, In ancient times a people in the East were worshippers of God, the One, whom they called Brahm. Their laws were just; they lived in peace; they saw the light within; they walked in wisdom's ways. But priests with carnal aims arose, who changed the laws to suit the carnal mind; bound heavy burdens on the poor, and scorned the rules of right; and so the Brahms became corrupt.

But in the darkness of the age a few great masters stood unmoved; they loved the name of Brahm; they were great beacon lights before the world. And they preserved inviolate the wisdom of their holy Brahm, and you may read this wisdom in their sacred books. (Aquarian Gospel 10:1-5)

Readers of the contemporary versions of the Jewish and Christian scriptures believe that Abraham, the ancestor of Jesus (actually one of the prior incarnations of Jesus), must have been some type of "pagan," an ignorant polytheist, who received a revelation of the One God. But in Egypt the Essenes taught otherwise.

Elihu taught; he said: In ancient times a people in the East were worshippers of God, the One, whom they called Brahm. He is speaking of the Indians who worshipped the One Whom they called Brahman. By "Brahman" they meant the Absolute Reality, the Supreme Reality that is one and indivisible, infinite, eternal, all-pervading, changeless Existence Itself. By his (Its) nature Brahman is indefinable, but the sages of India used the term Satchidananda, which means Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. Brahman is Absolute Consciousness, not only all-powerful but all-power Itself; not only all-knowing and blissful but Knowledge and Bliss itself. The seekers and knowers of Brahman were also called brahmans or brahmins.

Their laws were just; they lived in peace; they saw the light within; they walked in wisdom's ways, for they followed the primeval Laws of Manu in their outer life and the ways of the yogis in their interior life.

And they preserved inviolate the wisdom of their holy Brahm, and you may read this wisdom in their sacred books. Which Jesus did, as is seen in the Aquarian Gospel. The Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads are the basic texts relating to the nature of Brahman. (See *The Bhagavad Gita For Awakening* and *The Upanishads For Awakening*.)

And in Chaldea, Brahm was known. A pious Brahm named Terah lived in Ur; his son was so devoted to the Brahm faith that he was called A-Brahm; and he was set apart to be the father of the Hebrew race. Now, Terah took his wife and sons and all his flocks and herds to Haran in the West; here Terah died. And Abram took the flocks and herds, and with his kindred journeyed farther west; and when he reached the Oaks of Morah in the land of Canaan, he pitched his tents and there abode. A famine swept the land and Abram took his kindred and his flocks and herds and came to Egypt, and in these

fertile plains of Zoan pitched his tent, and here abode. And men still mark the place where Abram lived—across the plain.

You ask why Abram came to Egypt land? This is the cradle-land of the initiate; all secret things belong to Egypt land; and this is why the masters come. In Zoan Abram taught his science of the stars, and in that sacred temple over there he learned the wisdom of the wise. And when his lessons all were learned, he took his kindred and his flocks and herds and journeyed back to Canaan, and in the plains of Mamre pitched his tent, and there he lived, and there he died. And records of his life and works and of his sons, and of the tribes of Israel, are well preserved in Jewish sacred books. (Aquarian Gospel 10:6-15)

And in Chaldea, Brahm was known. A pious Brahm named Terah lived in Ur; his son was so devoted to the Brahmie faith that he was called A-Brahm; and he was set apart to be the father of the Hebrew race. So Abraham was a noted follower of the Vedic religion, which at that time was spread over the world and not confined to India alone as it later came to be. He was also of the Brahmin caste. (At that time caste was determined by the state of a person's evolution and karma, not by birth.) Some anthropologists, and Swami Bhaktivedanta the founder of the Hari Krishna movement, have believed that Abraham was actually part of the Yadava clan, the family of Krishna which disappeared from India after his death. If this is true, then all "Jews" are really Indian in their origin and related to Sri Krishna. Their spiritual bloodline came directly from India, a spiritual connection that the Essenes zealously maintained for more than a thousand years. When Jesus went to India he was returning to his ancestral homeland and to his spiritual roots, having been brought up in the wisdom of India by his mother Mary and other Essene teachers. Those who follow the path of Christ will find it leading them directly to the Vedic rishis and their revelations. To be a Christian in the sense of a disciple of Jesus is to be a disciple of the sages of Bharatvarsha (the proper name of India), including Gautama the Buddha as well. And like him we need to "read this wisdom in their sacred books."

After speaking of Abraham's Indian roots, Elihu told of his settling in Egypt, in Zoan where later the Essenes had a community and where Elihu taught. There Abraham had taught astrology and studied in the temple of Zoan as well.

You ask why Abram came to Egypt land? This is the cradle-land of the initiate; all secret things belong to Egypt land; and this is why the masters come. In Zoan Abram taught his science of the stars, and in that sacred temple over there he learned the wisdom of the wise. And when his lessons all were learned, he took his kindred and his flocks and herds and journeyed back to Canaan, and in the plains of Mamre pitched his tent, and there he lived, and there he died. In what was "the West" of that time, Egypt was the center of spiritual wisdom, being a spiritual extension of India from whence all their knowledge was derived, as Apollonius of Tyana proved when he visited Egypt around the time of Jesus. Jesus' connection to Egypt, then, was old and deep, for as Abraham he had taught the Egyptians in Vedic knowledge, including astrology, and in turn had learned further from them; had ruled Egypt and saved the descendants of Abraham from starvation

as Joseph; and as Moses had studied the ancient wisdom and led Abraham's children from bondage to freedom. This is why after leaving India Jesus went to Egypt where he was formally proclaimed to be The Christ.

In Persia Brahm was known, and feared. Men saw him as the One, the causeless Cause of all that is, and he was sacred unto them, as Tao to the dwellers of the farther East. The people lived in peace, and justice ruled. But, as in other lands, in Persia priests arose imbued with self and self desires, who outraged Force, Intelligence and Love; religion grew corrupt, and birds and beasts and creeping things were set apart as gods.

In course of time a lofty soul, whom men called Zarathustra, came in flesh. He saw the causeless Spirit, high and lifted up; he saw the weakness of all man appointed gods. He spoke and all of Persia heard; and when he said, One God, one people and one shrine, the altars of the idols fell, and Persia was redeemed. But men must see their Gods with human eyes, and Zarathustra said, The greatest of the Spirits standing near the throne is the Ahura Mazda, who manifests in brightness of the sun. And all the people saw Ahura Mazda in the sun, and they fell down and worshipped him in temples of the sun.

And Persia is the magian land where live the priests who saw the star arise to mark the place where Mary's son was born, and were the first to greet him as the Prince of Peace. The precepts and the laws of Zarathustra are preserved in the Avesta which you can read and make your own. (Aquarian Gospel 10:16-27)

When we study the history of the Saint Thomas Christians of India, descendants of the Brahmin disciples of Saint Thomas the Apostle, we find that they had strong ties with Persia. This becomes understandable when we consider what Elihu had to say about Persia.

The Vedic wisdom, the knowledge of Brahman, prevailed in Persia. Dowling used King James parlance when he says that the people of Persia knew and "feared" God. Those of us with a Jewish or Christian background are used to the idea of being afraid of God, but that is a distortion. The Hebrew word *yare* and the Greek word *fobeo* can mean ordinary fear, but their basic meaning is to reverence and be in awe of something, just as in Elizabethan English "terrible" meant awe-inspiring, not frightening. So when we read the Bible we must realize that we are not being told to be afraid of God, but to revere him and hold a sense of his greatness. It is also extremely interesting that Elihu in his discourse equates Brahman with Tao.

Elihu peripherally gives us a lesson in Trinitarian theology, using the words "Force, Intelligence and Love." The Holy Spirit is the great Power of God, the Mother (Mahashakti in Sanskrit). The Father is the transcendent Infinite Consciousness or Intelligence. Christ the Eternal Son is the Love of the Father, the immanent extension of the Father dwelling at the heart of all creation that is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Zarathustra was a great being sent into the world to renew the knowledge of the

Spirit among the people of Persia. His words: “One God, one people and one shrine,” were a call back to the One in a practical sense. For in the One God all humanity, yes, all that lives, is seen to be one worshipping in the one shrine of Divine Consciousness.

One indication of human evolution is the use of symbols. Words are the basic symbols, but speech, too, must evolve to encompass concepts that cannot adequately be expressed in ordinary verbiage. The more a society develops the more symbolic language is used. For example, we use similes like “cash on hand,” “hit it into the pocket,” “target the goal,” “a sunshine smile,” and so forth. The same is done with religion in which both verbal and visual symbols are used. We call Jesus “the water of life.” When we see the cross we are reminded of all of Jesus’ life, not just his death. In fact, we usually think of his resurrection, even though the Roman cross is not the proper symbol of immortality as is the ankh. Knowing this, Zarathustra used the sun as the symbol of God, as has virtually every religion to some extent. Without the sun there is no life, as without God there is no life. The sun draws the germinating plant out of the dark earth and into its light. In the same way, God draws us out of material darkness into spiritual light, the light of his own being. That is why, as recorded in the Bhavishya Mahapurana, an ancient Sanskrit history of Kashmir, Jesus told the king of Kashmir: “Meditate upon him Whose abode is in the center of the sun.... In truth, O King, all power rests with the Lord, Who is in the center of the sun.” (See *The Christ of India*.) From the land of Persia the magian priests came to honor Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, at his birth.

At the end of Elihu’s discourse about Persia and Zarathustra he says some of the most profound words in the Aquarian Gospel:

But you must know that words are naught till they are made alive; until the lessons they contain become a part of head and heart. Now truth is one; but no one knows the truth until he is the truth. It is recorded in an ancient book. Truth is the leavening power of God; it can transmute the all of life into itself; and when the all of life is truth, then man is truth. (Aquarian Gospel 10:28-30)

Until the words of our religion come alive in our lives, “until the lessons they contain become a part of head and heart,” a matter of our continual thought *and* deeds, so our life itself is an expression of our beliefs to such an extent that a person observing our lives and words will know exactly what it is we believe, our religion, our “faith,” is nothing.

“Truth is one”—that is, truth is God. Then Elihu says something that is almost never said in any religion today: *No one knows the truth until he is the truth*. This has two meanings. 1) Until we live absolutely truthfully according to the principles of truth, we cannot really know it or comprehend all its aspects, both theoretical and practical. We must *be* what we believe. 2) Until we pragmatically *become* God by ascending into Divine Consciousness, not momentarily but permanently, we cannot know God. God can only be known to Himself, so we must become consciously part

of him. (We already are, but unconsciously.) We must not just be “godly” or “godlike,” we must *be* god. This is the Gospel of Christ; nothing more, nothing less. Knowing about God or believing in God ultimately means Zero. We must BE.

How can we become God? Elihu gives the way: “Truth is the leavening power of God; it can transmute the all of life into itself; and when the all of life is truth, then man is truth.” God transmutes all of life into Himself; this is the intention behind creation. On a personal level, when all of our life is a manifestation of Divine Consciousness, then we have become the truth, have become God: “that God may be all in all” (I Corinthians 15:28).

Chapter Eleven

Again Elihu taught; he said, The Indian priests became corrupt; Brahm was forgotten in the streets; the rights of men were trampled in the dust. A mighty master came, a Buddha of enlightenment, who turned away from wealth and all the honors of the world, and found the Silence in the quiet groves and caves; and he was blest. He preached a gospel of the higher life, and taught man how to honor man. He had no doctrine of the gods to teach; he just knew man, and so his creed was justice, love and righteousness.

I quote for you a few of many of the helpful words which Buddha spoke: Hate is a cruel word. If men hate you regard it not; and you can turn the hate of men to love and mercy and goodwill, and mercy is as large as all the heavens. And there is good enough for all. With good destroy the bad; with generous deeds make avarice ashamed; with truth make straight the crooked lines that error draws, for error is but truth distorted, gone astray. And pain will follow him who speaks or acts with evil thoughts, as does the wheel the foot of him who draws the cart. He is a greater man who conquers self than he who kills a thousand men in war. He is the noble man who is himself what he believes what other men should be. Return to him who does you wrong your purest love, and he will cease from doing wrong; for love will purify the heart of him who is beloved as truly as it purifies the heart of him who loves.

The words of Buddha are recorded in the Indian sacred books; attend to them, for they are part of the instructions of the Holy Breath. (Aquarian Gospel 11:1-12)

At the time of Buddha, just as in India today, people were mentally and spiritually crippled by the false belief that they had to rely on others for their spiritual welfare. Whether priests or teachers, the authority figures of the time insisted that without them spiritual knowledge and attainment was impossible. But Buddha proved this to be completely wrong. Having followed such authorities, he found that he had only managed to gain exotic experiences and abilities, but he had not found liberation. Turning from all teachings and teachers, he looked deep within and became enlightened. Subsequently he emphasized that he had been *self-enlightened*, that no doctrine, god, or teacher had bestowed enlightenment on him. Worthy teachers are of great value, but they are external to us. According to Buddha we do not need any kind of spiritual empowerment from an external source. Rather, we need only turn inward and uncover what is already there.

Because self-reliance and an understanding of our self-sufficiency is so imperative: he *had no doctrine of the gods to teach; he just knew man, and so his creed was justice, love and righteousness*. It is true that theism can be a deadly thing for religionists when the identity of God and man is not comprehended and acted upon. The idea of deific power(s) that dispenses fortune and misfortune, before

which we are helpless and that we need to please and placate, is not just wrong, it is destructive. Buddha sought to free us from that false bondage which keeps us from the realization of our real nature, and a great proportion of that bondage is superstition in the guise of religion.

Furthermore, Buddha refused to give any teachings that were not practical. He refused to talk about gods, creation, higher worlds and elaborate theories of karma and the origin and constitution of human beings. Every word he spoke had a practical application. He had no abstract doctrines. Every single discourse he gave consisted of material that could be applied in practical, daily life. He even refused to say whether man had a self (atman) or not. Instead he urged his hearers to find out for themselves by applying his teaching. Those who wish to impose their ideas on Buddha claim that he taught there was no God (or gods) and no self. He did not. He refused to dogmatize and define, saying that anything he might say on the matter would be surely misunderstood. He did teach three doctrines: karma, rebirth, and nirvana. What else do we need to know? Buddha diagnosed the disease and prescribed the cure, always pointing us back to our own selves, for we have nothing else to work with, really. "And so his creed was justice, love and righteousness."

Hate is a cruel word. If men hate you regard it not; and you can turn the hate of men to love and mercy and goodwill, and mercy is as large as all the heavens. Here, too, Buddha was going against the prevailing attitudes of the time. In the West, spiritual seekers usually become much too involved with externals, including "doing good." In the East, because of such a firm understanding that reality lies within, seekers tend to become much too self-involved, forgetting everybody else. I heard a woman tell about being in Western India walking down a road and coming on a man who had just collapsed and was bleeding from striking his head on a rock. He was lying partially out in the road where traffic was zooming by. She attempted to drag him to safety, but he was dead weight and very hard to move. Sitting on the sides of a nearby bridge were two Hindu monks. When she asked them to help her get the man out of the way of the cars and trucks, they answered: "We are sadhus [monks]. We don't do things like that." Then they got up and walked away, leaving her to do it alone. This is not atypical. When Swami Vivekananda started the Ramakrishna Mission at the end of the nineteenth century, one of the aims of the monks was the assistance of suffering humanity. The majority of other monks condemned this aspect of their mission, and even referred to Ramakrishna Mission monks who worked in their hospitals as "bedpan sadhus" until they themselves got ill and could find help only from those bedpan sadhus. Even today many disapprove of the noble and selfless service rendered by Ramakrishna Mission: a classic example of perverted thinking on the part of those who think themselves spiritual.

Buddha faced the same ignorance, but persevered in teaching the necessity for positive interaction with our fellowman. See the all-around wisdom of the Buddha set forth here. A person can disregard the ill-will of others through mere stoicism and even through egotism that makes him despise those who hate him. Therefore Buddha went on to teach that we should heal those who hate us by helping them to

open the inner fount of love, mercy, and goodwill. Yes—we can transform their hatred into love; such is the power of those who rightly aspire to Buddhahood (Christhood). We have a moral obligation to recognize and exercise that power. Nor should there be a limit to our mercy; it must be as vast as the sky. But this is only possible when we open the infinity that is within us by meditation.

And there is good enough for all. Evil is small, and therefore measured; but goodness is boundless, beyond measure. So “a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good” (Luke 6:45). Never does real good run out, so if we find our kindness, mercy, and love running out or getting thin, then it is not the real thing, does not come from our inner supply of real kindness, mercy, and love. Nor are there some that can be beyond the scope of our good will. If it is real, it embraces all. We cannot reserve it for “the deserving.”

With good destroy the bad; with generous deeds make avarice ashamed; with truth make straight the crooked lines that error draws, for error is but truth distorted, gone astray. The last clause is the key to the first of the sentence. “Error is but truth distorted, gone astray.” Evil does not exist, really; it is a corruption of good. Therefore it can be dissolved by our resolutely thinking, speaking, and doing the good that is the reality of the illusory evil. Dark is nothing but the absence of light. Bring in the light and darkness is gone. We can do the same thing in practical life. And we need to concentrate on good, not on evil. Those who “combat evil” only compound evil. We can dispel evil through good alone.

And pain will follow him who speaks or acts with evil thoughts, as does the wheel the foot of him who draws the cart. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). Buddha’s simile is good, for there is no sneaky or clever way to pull a cart and not have it move along right after us. Also it makes clear that the result of an action springs from the action itself, and nothing more. The idea of reward or punishment dispensed by some metaphysical forces or supernatural beings because of the breaking of some arbitrary spiritual law has no place in Buddha’s realistic view. And just as we cannot pull the cart and not have it move, we cannot elude the consequences of our acts, ever.

Most religion is centered around the idea of escaping the consequence of our acts (and thoughts), usually to the profit of the ministry or priesthood. But we cannot fool Mother Nature in the form of karmic force. The attempt to cajole God into denying himself and working injustice to cancel justice in the form of cosmic law, is outrageous and does not work. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). So says Saint Paul. And so said the Buddha, who gave us the way to stop pain: quit pulling the cart in the wrong direction.

He is a greater man who conquers self than he who kills a thousand men in war. It is a lot easier to beat a thousand men in war than to conquer our lower self. The greatest heroism is in the realm of the soul. That is why in India spiritually advanced people are called *Maharaj*, great king, even if they have no social recognition or status. For those who rule themselves are truly great kings, more than those who rule other

men. I always find it funny when at the beginning of *The Shadow* radio program I would hear the words: “The Shadow, master of other men’s minds....” Yes, that is how it is. It is a lot easier to master other people’s minds through external persuasion than to master our own mind through inner endeavor. “He that ruleth his spirit [is better] than he that taketh a city” (Proverbs 16:32).

He is the noble man who is himself what he believes that other men should be. The meaning is clear. The wise make sure that they are themselves the embodiment of what they would teach to others. Those who are living demonstrations of their teaching are the proof of the teaching’s validity. We sometimes hear it said that it does not matter if Buddha or Jesus really existed, it is the ideals that matter. That is pure balderdash. If Buddha or Jesus did not exist, then their teachings are just pie in the sky with no proof that it is possible to really follow them, or that they are worth following. We must *be* what we believe, not just believe. We must *be* what we teach, not just teach. Otherwise we will be like parrots reciting a string of mathematical formulas with no comprehension of what we are saying. We will embody ignorance, not wisdom; so what will those become who listen to us?

Return to him who does you wrong your purest love, and he will cease from doing wrong; for love will purify the heart of him who is beloved as truly as it purifies the heart of him who loves. Here, too, love is not just an egoic emotion or attitude. Love is the spiritual power of Christ that is released through the cultivation of interior life through meditation and a compatible mode of thought and life. Love is light in the darkness, and can banish the dark of evil when it enters into the life of those we love. Through love we can heal, purify from sin, and save, as did Jesus. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12).

Elihu’s closing words are wisdom for us all: “The words of Buddha are recorded in the Indian sacred books; attend to them, for they are part of the instructions of the Holy Breath,” the Holy Spirit.

The land of Egypt is the land of secret things. The mysteries of the ages lie lock-bound in our temples and our shines. The masters of all times and climes come here to learn; and when your sons have grown to manhood they will finish all their studies in Egyptian schools. But I have said enough. Tomorrow at the rising of the sun we meet again. (Aquarian Gospel 11:13-16)

We will see later on that many years after these words Jesus was proclaimed The Christ in Egypt; and then he went to Israel to begin his public ministry.

Chapter Twelve

Now, when the morning sun arose the masters and their pupils all were in the sacred grove. Salome was the first to speak; she said,

Behold the sun! It manifests the power of God who speaks to us through sun and moon and stars; Through mountain, hill and vale; through flower, and plant and tree.

God sings for us through bird, and harpsichord, and human voice; he speaks to us through wind and rain and thunder roll; why should we not bow down and worship at his feet?

God speaks to hearts apart; and hearts apart must speak to him; and this is prayer. It is not prayer to shout at God, to stand, or sit, or kneel and tell him all about the sins of men. It is not prayer to tell the Holy One how great he is, how good he is, how strong and how compassionate. God is not man to be bought up by praise of man.

Prayer is the ardent wish that every way of life be light; that every act be crowned with good; that every living thing be prospered by our ministry. A noble deed, a helpful word is prayer; a fervent, an effectual prayer. The fount of prayer is in the heart; by thought, not words, the heart is carried up to God, where it is blest, Then let us pray.

They prayed, but not a word was said; but in that holy Silence every heart was blest. (Aquarian Gospel 12:1-12)

The core idea here is that God is everything, absolutely everything without exception. Why, then would we not worship Cosmic Being, for It is also Cosmic Love. God calls to us through all creation and teaches us much about himself and about ourselves. And in our contemplation of that Infinity our consciousness expands ever wider in the attempt to embrace that Infinite Life as It encompasses our finite life. In time we no longer view the cosmos objectively, but subjectively, as we begin entering into Christ Consciousness as the first step toward attaining God Consciousness.

The key approach to Divine Consciousness is meditation, for: “God speaks to hearts apart; and hearts apart must speak to him; and this is prayer.” After giving his disciples the Lord’s Prayer, the Lord Jesus then told them: “God walks within the Silence” (Aquarian Gospel 94:17), encouraging them to move from verbal prayer to meditation as the highest form of prayer.

A great deal is said about God talking to us, and countless religionists every day insist that God has spoken to them, but always in words, and usually to straighten out other people. Those who really pray turn within. “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret” (Matthew 6:6). The “closet” is our inmost awareness, and the “door” is our mind. There God speaks to us with the root of all speech, intuition, and even

more: by his Presence. This only happens when we take our hearts away from all things and thoughts, heeding the call of Jesus: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). Even during his most active ministry Jesus always took time to go apart for inner communion with the Father (Matthew 14:23; Luke 9:10; Luke 9:18). And so must we. "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakuk 2:20). "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself:... commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (Psalms 4:3,4). God's message to us is simple: "Be still and know..." (Psalms 46:10).

It is not prayer to shout at God, to stand, or sit, or kneel and tell him all about the sins of men. If you have ever been a Protestant or attended, watched, or heard their effusions, you know exactly what Salome is talking about.

It is not prayer to tell the Holy One how great he is, how good he is, how strong and how compassionate. God is not man to be bought up by praise of man. This pretty well covers the entire range of religion, East and West. Yogananda said that whenever he heard people say that we should praise God, he would get an image of a pampered and spoiled rich woman who so lacked self-confidence that she had to be constantly complimented and flattered so she would not get into a snit.

A lot of people tell God how compassionate he is because they are afraid of him and figure that if they speak positively to him then he will be kind, rather like speaking soothingly to a mad dog or an insane or violent human being. How telling this is about the character of God's "devotees" and their religions! Those who worship brute force are the most vociferous in telling God how powerful he is. Those filled with self-hate are wont to tell God that he is compassionate because he is not angry with their disgusting evil and vileness and does not destroy or torment them in response. "You are good, but you are not mean to me (at least not at the moment)." "You could kill me, it would even be the just thing to kill me, but You don't, O compassionate Lord." Words like this are more fittingly addressed to Nero, Hitler, or Saddam Hussein than to God. Those obsessed with power and control like to remind God how great and mighty he is for creating and ruling the universe and for running human beings around like a little boy "playing cars," alternately liking them and slamming them into the wall. And of course there are the most pathetic, those who ask God to break out their enemies' teeth in their mouths, banish them into outer darkness, and destroy them forever in hell.

Prayer is the ardent wish that every way of life be light; that every act be crowned with good; that every living thing be prospered by our ministry. And we actualize this ardent wish through the illumination received in meditation preeminently. From the final clause we see that prayer/meditation, although a personal action, accrues to the good of all living beings.

A noble deed, a helpful word is prayer; a fervent, an effectual prayer. For life itself can be a prayer. Nevertheless, interior life is the basis of prayer, for: *The fount of prayer is in the heart; by thought, not words, the heart is carried up to God, where it is blest.* The "heart" (kardia) is the core of our being. "Thought" means the intuitional silent

movement of aspiration toward God. Saint Teresa of Avila particularly emphasized this.

Perhaps the greatest lesson in all this is Salome's concluding words: *Then let us pray*. For theory accomplishes nothing unless it is exteriorized by outer action. That is why Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh coined the motto: "Be Good. Do Good." Being manifests through action.

And so they prayed, but not a word was said; but in that holy Silence every heart was blest.

After three years, when Mary and Elizabeth had studied enough in Zoan and it was learned that they could return to Israel in safety.

And then Elihu spoke. He said to Mary and Elizabeth, Our words are said; you need not tarry longer here; the call has come; the way is clear, you may return unto your native land.

A mighty work is given you to do; you shall direct the minds that will direct the world. Your sons are set apart to lead men up to righteous thoughts, and words, and deeds; to make men know the sinfulness of sin; to lead them from the adoration of the lower self, and all illusive things, and make them conscious of the self that lives with Christ in God.

In preparation for their work your sons must walk in many thorny paths. Fierce trials and temptations they will meet, like other men; their loads will not be light, and they will weary be, and faint. And they will know the pangs of hunger and of thirst; and without cause they will be mocked, imprisoned, scourged.

To many countries they will go, and at the feet of many masters they will sit, for they must learn like other men.

But we have said enough. The blessings of the Three and of the Seven, who stand before the throne, will surely rest upon you evermore. (Aquarian Gospel 12:13-21)

Your sons are set apart to lead men up to righteous thoughts, and words, and deeds. They are not to threaten, frighten, cajole, or philosophize; they are to *lead*. The response to their teaching must be voluntary, the exercise of free will. This is underscored in the eighty-eighth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel (Aquarian Gospel 88:17-35). When Jesus met his disciples, to all of them he spoke of the spiritual work that both he and they should be doing, each time concluding with the words: "I go and you may follow me." There was no doubt that he would fulfill his spiritual destiny, and if they willed to do so, they could follow him and do the same. But it had to be completely their choice. This must be the understanding in all religion; there is no "must," only "may." Only those who truly desire the Goal should travel the path. Otherwise there is only hypocrisy and futility. This is a truth the East has known from time immemorial, but one which the West has yet to grasp.

John and Jesus will not lead us up to heaven or to theologizing; they will lead us up to righteous thoughts, words, and deeds. And it is a matter of *up*: we must ascend in consciousness, not merely engage in mechanical, external appearances.

In the Four Gospels, the Greek word *dikaïos* is used for righteousness. The root meaning of this word is *rightness* in the sense of being in congruity with Reality: God. It is not a matter of observing arbitrary rules or thinking in demanded ways—that is the province of fake religion. Rather, it is being in harmony with the truth of things, with God. This is much more profound and effective than mere religious observance. The entire scope of human function, thought, word, and deed, is to be aligned with Divine Consciousness, which includes Divine Will.

The purpose of John and Jesus is perfectly set forth in the Sanskrit prayer:

Lead me from the unreal to the Real.

Lead me from darkness to the Light.

Lead me from death to Immortality.

To make men know the sinfulness of sin. Sin has got to be faced. There is nothing positive in ignoring or denying disease, and it is the same in regard to sin. It is only those who are determined to remain in sin that get indignant at its mention. Those who aspire to holiness want to comprehend sin so they can eliminate it.

It is highly significant that the Four Gospels were written in Greek. This was done not only so the more subtle meanings inherent in Greek could be conveyed, but also to break with the previous views inherent in Hebrew. Sin is a clear example of this. In Hebrew the word *chatta'ah* means an offence, a wrongdoing. But in Greek the concept is completely different. *Amartia* means to miss the mark, to fall short of the ideal. It has no connotation of transgression of law or condemnation. To sin is to fail. Sin is undesirable, not because it makes God angry, but because it is a falling short of the realization of our divine potential. This falling short has terrible consequences: just look at the present state of humanity and the world to see that. So sin is not just a little blip or inconvenience. It is a serious matter, indeed, for it is the root of great suffering. Sin is ignorance manifested. To “know the sinfulness of sin” means to learn its real nature and to realize its detriment. It is not to tremble at the wrath of an offended deity. As with everything else, sin must be viewed rationally and pragmatically. And eradicated from thought, word, and deed.

To lead them from the adoration of the lower self, and all illusive things, and make them conscious of the self that lives with Christ in God. To lead us to turn away from the false self of the ego and all that it binds us to in its bid for our enslavement, and to become freed in the consciousness of our true self, the spirit which ever lives with and in Christ as a son of God

In preparation for their work your sons must walk in many thorny paths. Fierce trials and temptations they will meet, like other men; their loads will not be light, and they will weary be, and faint. And they will know the pangs of hunger and of thirst; and without cause they will be mocked, imprisoned, scourged.

This is so important. Jesus walked the path that every one of us must tread to Christhood. Jesus is not a rarity or an abstract archetype. He is exactly what we are to be. And the path he travelled was one of “fierce trials and temptations.” The burdens were not light and he was often weary and faint. Hunger and thirst, mockery and persecution were not unknown to him, nor will they be to us, for “the

disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master” (Luke 6:40). And that includes the cross, the crown of thorns, and the wounds... but also the resurrection, the ascension, and the reign. Wherefore “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

We must be like Jesus, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2). Having gone the way before us, Jesus knows every nuance of the journey; and through our interior cultivation through meditation he will be with us and direct us all the way. “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

To many countries they will go, and at the feet of many masters they will sit, for they must learn like other men. Like them, we should seek out the traditions of many lands and learn from the wisdom of many masters of those traditions. Then we will be fitted to continue even now, two thousand years later, the same mission to which they were called and to which they have called us.

Thus closed the lessons of Elihu and Salome. Three years they taught their pupils in the sacred grove, and if their lessons all were written in a book, lo, it would be a mighty book; of what they said we have the sum.

Now, Mary, Joseph and Elizabeth with Jesus and his harbinger, set forth upon their homeward way. They went not by Jerusalem, for Archelaus reigned. They journeyed by the Bitter Sea, and when they reached Engedi hills they rested in the home of Joshua, a near of kin; and here Elizabeth and John abode.

But Joseph, Mary and their son went by the Jordan way, and after certain days they reached their home in Nazareth. (Aquarian Gospel 12:22-25)

Chapter Thirteen

Elizabeth was blest; she spent her time with John, and gave to him the lessons that Elihu and Salome had given her. And John delighted in the wildness of his home and in the lessons that he learned.

Now in the hills were many caves. The cave of David was a-near in which the Hermit of Engedi lived. This hermit was Matheno, priest of Egypt, master from the temple of Sakara.

When John was seven years of age Matheno took him to the wilderness and in the cave of David they abode. Matheno taught, and John was thrilled with what the master said, and day by day Matheno opened up to him the mysteries of life. John loved the wilderness; he loved his master and his simple fare. Their food was fruits, and nuts, wild honey and the carob bread.

Matheno was an Israelite, and he attended all the Jewish feasts. When John was nine years old Matheno took him to a great feast in Jerusalem. The wicked Archelaus had been deposed and exiled to a distant land because of selfishness and cruelty, and John was not afraid.

John was delighted with his visit to Jerusalem. Matheno told him all about the service of the Jews; the meaning of their rites. John could not understand how sin could be forgiven by killing animals and birds and burning them before the Lord.

Matheno said, The God of heaven and earth does not require sacrifice. This custom with its cruel rites was borrowed from the idol worshippers of other lands. No sin was ever blotted out by sacrifice of animal, of bird, or man.

Sin is the rushing forth of man into fens of wickedness. If one would get away from sin he must retrace his steps, and find his way out of the fens of wickedness. Return and purify your hearts by love and righteousness and you shall be forgiven. This is the burden of the message that the harbinger shall bring to men.

What is forgiveness? John inquired. Matheno said, It is the paying up of debts. A man who wrongs another man can never be forgiven until he rights the wrong. The Vedas says that none can right the wrong but him who does the wrong.

John said, If this be true where is the power to forgive except the power that rests in man himself? Can man forgive himself?

Matheno said, The door is wide ajar; you see the way of man's return to right, and the forgiveness of his sins. (Aquarian Gospel 13:1-22)

In the previous discourse we considered the meaning of sin as a falling short or failing to manifest our full spiritual potential, that the state of sin manifests in the acts we call sin. Yet, if we only look at the actions and try to merely stop them, the condition of sin-consciousness will persist and in time once more manifest in sinful

acts.

Evil is like a swamp, as Matheno says, for it has no firm basis, being fundamentally unreal, and those who wander in become sunk and eventually suffocated in its morass. People often wander helplessly in the swamps, becoming completely confused; and in the same way sin always produces confusion in the sinner. Yet we all rush headlong into the muck again and again.

Matheno's statement that we must *retrace our steps* to find our way out of the swampy byways of sin is very significant. It is useless to just say: "Let's quit doing wrong." We have to extricate ourselves from the *condition* which resulted in sin. And that condition is the identification with both ego and materiality that produced ignorance, which then produced desire for objects. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). The word translated "lust" in Greek is *epithumia*, which means an intense, even passionate, desire or longing for something. This is the equivalent of *tanha*, craving, which was used by Buddha in his discourses. Interestingly, the Greek word has *thoomos* as its root, which means fierceness and anger, the inevitable result of desire, since only a small percentage of desires can be fulfilled, and only a minuscule amount of fulfilled desires really "fulfill."

For this reason Krishna said: "Thinking about sense-objects will attach you to sense-objects; grow attached, and you become addicted; thwart your addiction, it turns to anger; be angry, and you confuse your mind; confuse your mind, you forget the lesson of experience; forget experience, you lose discrimination; lose discrimination, and you miss life's only purpose" (Bhagavad Gita 2:62, 63.).

Just as Krishna outlines the steps that lead from attention to material things to the resulting confusion, so we must comprehend the steps that lead us into sin and then backtrack, not whine and beg God to forgive us. Our sins never harmed God, so what is there to forgive on his part? But we have harmed ourselves through sin, and Saint John will question about that in a little while.

Back to the point at hand: the retracing of our steps out of the bog of sin. Meditation is the way, for it repolarizes the consciousness and takes our awareness back along the path we slid down so long ago into the quagmires of sin. Meditation repositions our consciousness and thereby frees us from sin. Through meditation we return our awareness to where it belongs. Then, when the fount of our inner life is opened, love will eradicate the fundamental selfishness and greed of the ego that forces us to reach out and rush into the fens of sin. Furthermore, having a clear sight (vipassana) of things, seeing them as they are, and ourselves as we are, the ordering of our thoughts, words, and deeds according to the ways of righteousness, the Divine Order, *Ritam*, spoken of in the Vedas becomes possible. Then we will be "forgiven."

Spiritually we must apply the law: "For every action there must be an equal and opposite reaction." Sin must be counteracted, neutralized. How? "The Vedas says that none can right the wrong but him who does the wrong" By this we see that John, and Jesus, were taught the Vedic wisdom even in childhood; and we need to

study the same if we want to understand their perspective. Sin cannot be cleansed or set right except by the sinner—by none other, not even God. “You made the mess; you clean it up” is the rule. No one can forgive us our sins in the usual sense, and certainly no sensible person (including ourselves) will want to just overlook it. The wrong must be set to rights by us.

What about the Churchian doctrine of the atonement? It is nonsense based on a complete incomprehension of the nature and mission of Jesus. There you have it. Here is what Saint John really said about Jesus: “Behold the king who cometh in the name of God!” (Aquarian Gospel 65:4). “Behold the Christ!” (Aquarian Gospel 66:2). The doctrine of the Lamb of God is an interpolation by those who were still obsessed with the idea of shedding blood to redress sin, and who wanted to make Jesus an extension of that perversion rather than the liberator from it.

John said, If this be true where is the power to forgive except the power that rests in man himself? Can man forgive himself? To the first question the answer is: Nowhere Else, and to the second: Yes. For: *Matheno said, The door is wide ajar; you see the way of man’s return to right, and the forgiveness of his sins.* Once we grasp the truth of our responsibility and our innate power to expunge our sins the door to liberation opens wide.

“What is man’s will and how shall he use it? Let him put forth its power to uncover the Atman [Divine Self] not hide the Atman: man’s will is the only friend of the Atman: his will is also the Atman’s enemy” (Bhagavad Gita 6:5).

Let us then purify ourselves and enter.

Chapter Fourteen

Matheno and his pupil, John, were talking of the sacred books of olden times, and of the golden precepts they contained, and John exclaimed, These golden precepts are sublime; what need have we of other sacred books?

Matheno said, The Spirits of the Holy One cause every thing to come and go in proper time. The sun has his own time to set, the moon to rise, to wax and wane, the stars to come and go, the rain to fall, the winds to blow; The seed times and the harvest times to come; man to be born and man to die.

These mighty Spirits cause the nations to be born; they rock them in their cradles, nurture them to greatest power, and when their tasks are done they wrap them in their winding sheets and lay them in their tombs. Events are many in a nation's life, and in the life of man, that are not pleasant for the time; but in the end the truth appears: whatever comes is for the best.

Man was created for a noble part; but he could not be made a free man filled with wisdom, truth and might, If he were hedged about, confined in straits from which he could not pass, then he would be a toy, a mere machine. Creative spirits gave to man a will; and so he has the power to choose. He may attain the greatest heights, or sink to deepest depths; for what he wills to gain he has the power to gain. If he desires strength he has the power to gain that strength; but he must overcome resistances to reach the goal; no strength is ever gained in idleness.

So, in the whirl of many-sided conflicts man is placed where he must strive to extricate himself. In every conflict man gains strength; with every conquest he attains to greater heights. With every day he finds new duties and new cares. Man is not carried over dangerous pits, nor helped to overcome his foes. He is himself his army, and his sword and shield; and he is captain of his hosts. (Aquarian Gospel 14:1-15)

When we were children we yearned to grow up so we would not be under the control of anyone; but now that we are adults we are controlled by many more people and things than we could even have imagined as children. That is life. We have free will, but only in a limited scope. In India they say that free will is like a rope with one end tied around the neck of a cow and the other around a tree. The cow is perfectly free to move within the circumference of the area permitted by the rope. Like the cow we are both free and bound; and we are a lot more bound than free. So we need to comprehend our freedom and its boundaries.

The Spirits of the Holy One cause every thing to come and go in proper time. A mechanistic view of the cosmos is mistaken, including the idea of "natural laws" that are simply mechanical functions of the cosmic machine. Rather, everything is under the aegis of Cosmic Consciousness functioning through various highly evolved beings. These "Spirits of the Holy One" are responsible for all that occur.

There are no blind or automatic “forces” but divinely-directed intelligences wielding the powers of God. This is their way of creating and working out their karmas. They are bigger versions of us.

The sun, moon, and the planets are not just lumps of matter, but are the living bodies of indwelling spirits (angels) whose psychic influences flow from those planets and influence all the living creatures within the “circle of the sun,” the solar system. This is the basis of the science of astrology. The same is true of the stars, which are an important part of Indian astrology. Like human beings, these entities have their allotted lifespan or time of embodiment, and both planets and suns go out of existence according to precise timings.

Rain, wind and all other “natural forces” are directed by intelligences that are their angels or “gods.” Hence they can be invoked to both cause or stop the forces they direct, and the planetary and solar angels can be invoked to strengthen or mitigate the influences of their “bodies.” The cycles of plant, animal, and human life are all under the administration of these great spirits; even our birth and death are in their hands. Since they are all faithful servants of God, it is the divine will that is worked by them, never their own.

Nations, small and great arise and decline according to the acting of their guardian or patron spirits. Nothing is capricious or a matter of “history” as a kind of blind ricocheting power.

Although certain epochs and events in a country’s history may be unpleasant, in the end it will be seen that all works to its benefit. And the same is true of the life of human beings.

God intends us to be gods walking the earth, healing and blessing. But this can only come about if we are free: free to harm or heal, free to curse or bless. If we did not have this freedom we would be mere biological machines running on a preordained track. We were not created for God’s amusement, but for our deification. “O Lord, Thou hast created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of Thine own eternity” (These are the opening words of the Confiteor of the Liberal Catholic Mass.) Yet, possessing free will, “he may attain the greatest heights, or sink to deepest depths; for what he wills to gain he has the power to gain. If he desires strength he has the power to gain that strength.” We are truly the masters of our fate, the creators of our destiny. We are the “god” in the center of our lives, as God is the center of the cosmic life. There is nothing we cannot attain, so we must be careful what we want, for the getting can be disappointing, painful or even self-destructive.

But he must overcome resistances to reach the goal; no strength is ever gained in idleness. So, in the whirl of many-sided conflicts man is placed where he must strive to extricate himself. In every conflict man gains strength; with every conquest he attains to greater heights. With every day he finds new duties and new cares. Man is not carried over dangerous pits, nor helped to overcome his foes. He is himself his army, and his sword and shield; and he is captain of his hosts. There is no short or easy path, there is only The Path

Regarding this there is an instructive story told in India about the immortal

sage Narada. Once Narada accidentally stepped on an ant. Feeling sorry for this, Narada prayed and then blessed the ant to immediately attain liberation. To Narada's amazement, in a moment he saw the ant experience birth, life, and death in millions of forms, evolving through each one and finally attaining liberation as a human being. As Narada watched, he saw it all happening in an eye-wink, but he realized that to the ant untold ages and untold lives had been experienced, that his blessing had not eliminated a single pain or struggle in the path to perfection. This is the truth. We have to traverse every bit of the way, and by our own free will.

Now Matheno comes to the answer of John's question about why there should ever be any more scriptures than those of ancient times.

The Holy Ones just light his way. Man never has been left without a beacon light to guide. And he has ever had a lighted lamp in hand that he may see the dangerous rocks, the turbid streams and treacherous pits.

And so the Holy Ones have judged; when men have needed added light a master soul has come to earth to give the light. Before the Vedic days the world had many sacred books to light the way; and when man needed greater light the Vedas, the Avesta and the books of Tao Great appeared to show the way to greater heights. And in the proper place the Hebrew Bible, with its Law, its Prophets and its Psalms, appeared for man's enlightenment.

But years have passed and men have need of greater light. And now the Day Star from on high begins to shine; and Jesus is the flesh-made messenger to show that light to men.

And you, my pupil, you have been ordained to harbinger the coming day. But you must keep that purity of heart you now possess; and you must light your lamp directly from the coals that burn upon the altar of the Holy Ones. And then your lamp will be transmuted to a boundless flame, and you will be a living torch whose light will shine wherever man abides.

But in the ages yet to come, man will attain to greater heights, and lights still more intense will come. And then, at last, a mighty master soul will come to earth to light the way up to the throne of perfect man. (Aquarian Gospel 14:16-27)

The way we all must tread is said to be filled with "the dangerous rocks, the turbid streams and treacherous pits" of ignorance and delusion. Certainly the Path to Life is not smooth and one to be blithely skipped down humming a cheery tune. It is of the utmost gravity, for we can be crushed, broken, drowned and trapped by contact with the rocks, streams and pits. It is darkness of mind and heart that renders them deadly to us, and so we need the light to survive.

Matheno says that human beings ever have a lighted lamp in their hand to see the way. That is the lamp of their own spirit-consciousness. But since the lamp burns within, those absorbed in outer unrealities stumble on in their self-induced darkness. Even so, human beings have never been left in the dark; it is the closing

of their eyes to the light that creates such an illusion. From age to age God has sent great souls into the world to light the way. There are cycles for this, too. In the Introduction to the Aquarian Gospel we read:

“What is an Age? Astronomers tell us that our sun and his family of planets revolve around a central sun, which is millions of miles distant, and that it requires something less than 26,000 years to make one revolution. His orbit is called the Zodiac, which is divided into twelve signs, familiarly known as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. It requires our Solar System a little more than 2,100 years to pass through one of these signs, and this time is the measurement of an Age or Dispensation. Because of what Astronomers call “the precession of the Equinoxes” the movement of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac is in order reverse from that given above.

“It is conceded by all critical students that the sun entered the zodiacal sign Taurus in the days of our historic Adam when the Taurian Age began; that Abraham lived not far from the beginning of the Arian Age, when the sun entered the sign Aries. About the time of the rise of the Roman empire the sun entered the sign Pisces, the Fishes, and the Piscean Age began, so that early in this Age Jesus of Nazareth lived.

“The human race is to-day standing upon the cusp of the Piscean-Aquarian Ages.... The Aquarian Age is pre-eminently a spiritual age, and the spiritual side of the great lessons that Jesus gave to the world may now be comprehended by multitudes of people, for the many are now coming into an advanced stage of spiritual consciousness; so with much propriety this book is called ‘The Aquarian (or Spiritual) Gospel of Jesus, the Christ.’”

At the beginning of each age a world-teacher appears whose influence extends far beyond the place of his birth and lasts even beyond the age of which he was the master-teacher. Throughout an age other teachers come as well, but their mission is confined to a smaller sphere of influence, and usually within the context of the world-teacher.

It is a distinct trait of the three Mediterranean religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to insist either that never before them has anyone known the truth, or that everyone before them knew much less than they. Whichever is set forth, the conclusion is the same: to be on God’s side everyone must join their religion. Judaism, having its roots in the mystery religion of Egypt, of which Moses was an illumined adept, can hardly have held this view originally. And in its beginnings Christianity cannot possibly have had such an attitude since the first Christians, including Jesus, were Essenes; and in Elihu, Salome, and Matheno we find the Essene attitude which embraced that which was true and meaningful in all prior traditions.

As far as can be determined, Vedic religion (dharma) seems to be the oldest known (recorded) spiritual tradition. But Matheno tells us that there were many sacred scriptures before the setting down of the Vedas. This was the position of Madame Blavatsky, who said that before the Vedas there were many holy texts

written in a pre-Sanskritic language known as Senzar. As a point of honor (i.e., bigotry), “scholars” of East and West derided her assertion, but Swami Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj and Hindu reformer of vast Vedic scholarship, supported Blavatsky’s statements, saying that he had seen entire libraries of Senzar texts hidden away in caves, and that they definitely were pre-Vedic.

In each age teachings and scriptures are produced that reflect the characteristics of the prevailing consciousness of the people to whom they are addressed. They are not meant to conform to the common mind, but to elevate it to a higher plane, starting from the point where it presently stands. And so in their respective eras the Vedic, Zoroastrian, Taoist, and Hebrews texts were given to the world. Their message was fundamentally the same; it was only the mode of presentation and the emphases that differed. By studying them, a person could be fitted to communicate the universal truths (Sanatana Dharma) to all types of individuals.

“And Jesus greatly loved the Vedic hymns and the Avesta; but more than all he loved to read the Psalms of David and the pungent words of Solomon. The Jewish books of prophecy were his delight; and when he reached his seventh year he needed not the books to read, for he had fixed in memory every word” (Aquarian Gospel 16:2,3). So Jesus and John had been instructed in them all.

Jesus was not to only convey the wisdom-approaches of the past; he was to establish a new religion for a new age, for the waves of souls that would be coming into earthly incarnation for the next four millennia, since his mission was to span two ages, the Piscean and the Aquarian. For it was written in the esoteric texts of Judaism that the Messiah should appear twice on the earth: once as Son of Joseph and be rejected, and again as Son of David and be accepted. The real “second coming” of Jesus is his re-incarnation in the Aquarian Age to complete his salvific task.

An age of two thousand years is preceded by a century of preparation and transition that is the last century of the preceding age. This was the twentieth century. In the twenty-first century we crossed the threshold of the Aquarian Age and, like John, are called “to harbinger the coming day.” To us, as well as to John, these words may be applied: “But you must keep that purity of heart you now possess; and you must light your lamp directly from the coals that burn upon the altar of the Holy Ones. And then your lamp will be transmuted to a boundless flame, and you will be a living torch whose light will shine wherever man abides.” It is incumbent on us to preserve the Piscean wisdom and to study the ancient traditions to make it more comprehensible to us. Then our vision will be transmuted into the Aquarian light in preparation for the second advent of the Christ, when “a mighty master soul will come to earth to light the way up to the throne of perfect man.”

Chapter Fifteen

When John was twelve years old his mother died, and neighbors laid her body in a tomb among her kindred in the Hebron burying ground, and near to Zacharias' tomb. And John was deeply grieved; he wept.

Matheno said, It is not well to weep because of death. Death is no enemy of man; it is a friend who, when the work of life is done, just cuts the cord that binds the human boat to earth, that it may sail on smoother seas. No language can describe a mother's worth, and yours was tried and true. But she was not called hence until her tasks were done.

The calls of death are always for the best, for we are solving problems there as well as here; and one is sure to find himself where he can solve his problems best. It is but selfishness that makes one wish to call again to earth departed souls. Then let your mother rest in peace. Just let her noble life be strength and inspiration unto you. (Aquarian Gospel 15:1-7)

If we think about it we will realize that spirit never reacts, but the ego-mind does. This is especially true when we suffer loss or deprivation of any kind, and death is one of the most traumatic of losses. Somehow we are never ready for it, and its absolute finality from which there is no appeal is stunning. Death goes completely against our grain as immortal beings, for it is an overwhelming denial of our true nature that naturally outrages our sense of right. However, we have taken upon ourselves an unnatural mode of existence through causal, astral, and physical embodiment, all piled in upon one another, and participation in earthly life. The realization of this should be the frame of reference within which we react to the ways of life on earth. Matheno outlines to John the wise way to view the death of the body, telling him that "it is not well to weep because of death." Why?

Death is no enemy of man; it is a friend who, when the work of life is done, just cuts the cord that binds the human boat to earth, that it may sail on smoother seas. It is intriguing to notice that in the West physical immortality is set forth as the highest blessing, whereas in the East it is looked upon as an awful curse. This is because the West is simply ignorant of the three truths without which no intelligent understanding of human life is possible: 1) karma; 2) reincarnation; 3) evolution of consciousness. These three "facts of life" within the framework of the prevailing conditions of earthly life show that perpetual embodiment would certainly be a horror. Even if the body could remain in good health and optimum condition, the nervous system and brain could not withstand age-long embodiment. One of the reasons we sleep is to give them a respite from the wear of day-to-day life, even tranquil life. And the Great Sleep of death grants perfect rest to the world-worn mind and heart.

The loss of prior memory from life to life is a great mercy. Imagine toiling along under the burden of the memories of the struggles of thousands of years of earthly embodiment. How weary we would become. Therefore our karmic force is divided

into amounts that we can deal with through the process of rebirth. In each life we are given only as much as we can handle. Sometimes that amount is heavy indeed to bear, but it is bearable, nevertheless.

After working out karma according to our capacity for a single life, death comes to give us rest, respite, and refreshment in preparation for the next series of allotted lessons. As Matheno says, “when the work of life is done, [death] just cuts the cord that binds the human boat to earth, that it may sail on smoother seas.”

Perhaps one of the ugliest aspects of ignorant religion in the West is its absurd rationale about death. According to the “only one life” religions, we die because:

- 1) We are sinners and deserve to die so we can be kicked into eternal hell.
- 2) We are sinners and deserve to die so we can be kicked into Purgatory.
- 3) We are good and deserve to go to heaven.
- 4) God wants us to die, or at least “has a purpose” for it.
- 5) We need to die in order to shock sinners into repentance.
- 6) We are “needed over there.”
- 7) There must be a good reason for it.
- 8) We do not know and should not care.

Who would not rebel against such silliness? Or worse, who would not detest a God who operates on such premises? The East has long said that Western religion is the doorway to atheism if not outright hatred of God. Anyone who thinks about the idiotic premises of Western religion has to reject it or go crazy. That is why most (if not virtually all) Jews, Christians, and Moslems do not think about their religion, but just “believe” and “accept” it. I am using the terms “Christianity” and “Christian,” but I should say “Churchianity” and “Churchian,” for Christianity is an Eastern religion that teaches karma, reincarnation and the evolution of consciousness.

Karma is like the sand in an hourglass. When it runs out, the hour is over. When the stock of karma we brought with us into an incarnation is expended, death transfers us out of this world into another where we will be prepared for the next incarnation. Whether we die after a few minutes of earthly life or even after more than a century, it can only occur at the moment of the exhaustion of karma. Therefore Matheno says of Saint Elizabeth: “She was not called hence until her tasks were done.”

We do not just have physical, material, karma, we also have emotional and intellectual karma. These karmas can be worked out in astral and causal realms as well as the material world, so we go to those worlds to work out karmas that do not require physical embodiment. Consequently, “the calls of death are always for the best, for we are solving problems there as well as here; and one is sure to find himself where he can solve his problems best.” Perhaps the most complete and best-expressed exposition of this is found in the forty-third chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi* entitled “The Resurrection of Sri Yukteswar” (Another valuable writing is *Through the Gates of Death* by Dion Fortune.)

Wherever we find ourselves, in this world or another, it is exactly where we need

to be to resolve our karmic problems and gain real wisdom and evolve our consciousness. This is why meditation is so essential, for through meditation we accelerate the evolution of our consciousness and greatly reduce the need for incarnation, eventually attaining liberation from all confining worlds and entering into the perfect freedom of Spirit.

It is but selfishness that makes one wish to call again to earth departed souls. Although death is meant to free us for further growth, it is possible to bind those who die to the earth plane, preventing their advancement and even causing them pain and distress. We do this in several ways: 1) through intense grief; 2) through wishing that they were not “gone” but were still with us; and 3) through attempting to draw them back into the orbit of earth life through some kind of communication.

It is not unusual for the newly-departed to remain for a while on earth, completely aware of their family and loved ones, even hearing their words and reading their thoughts. When they see the pain and distress produced by their death, they naturally try to comfort the grieving. Being unable to do so, they experience terrible agony of heart and often refuse to pass on into the astral world and leave their dear ones comfortless. Being aware of the calling of the hearts of those who grieve they feel it would be heartless to leave them and pass on to other worlds. In time they may become earthbound and wander in sorrow and frustration.

In some instances people pass on into the astral worlds that are very near the earth plane, but are drawn back earthward through the intervention of spiritualistic mediums and their “guides.” When this happens over and over, they, too, often become earthbound. And all of this takes place because of the misguided and uncomprehending sorrow of others.

Naturally we regret the loss of those we love, but our love should be illumined and wise. However much we may miss their physical presence, we should speed them on their way through prayers for their spiritual advancement. It is good to quietly think of them and mentally speak to them, telling them that we love them, but we want them to be free, and so they should pass on to a higher world. *This is our duty towards those we love.* Otherwise we make them a sacrifice to our emotion and disturb their needed rest and regeneration in preparation for their next life. “Then let your mother rest in peace.”

This does not mean that we forget those who pass through the gate of death. We should often remember them with love and appreciation, considering the time we had with them as a blessing from God, Whom we should thank for that association. Moreover, we should strive to be worthy of that blessing and work to make ourselves better persons because of having lived with them. As the *Book of Common Prayer* expresses it: “We bless Thy holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear, beseeching Thee to grant them continual growth in Thy love and service” (“Fear” is the old English word for *reverence*.) As Matheno counseled Saint John: “Just let her noble life be strength and inspiration unto you.”

Matheno spoke very plainly to Saint John about the nature of death and how we must deal with it. Then he said to him:

A crisis in your life has come, and you must have a clear conception of the work that you are called to do. The sages of the ages call you harbinger. The prophets look to you and say, he is Elijah come again. Your mission here is that of harbinger; for you will go before Messiah's face to pave his way, and make the people ready to receive their king.

This readiness is purity of heart; none but the pure in heart can recognize the king. To teach men to be pure in heart, you must yourself be pure in heart, and word, and deed. In infancy the vow for you was made and you became a Nazarite. The razor shall not touch your face nor head, and you shall taste not wine nor fiery drinks.

Men need a pattern for their lives; they love to follow, not to lead. The man who stands upon the corners of the paths and points the way, but does not go, is just a pointer; and a block of wood can do the same. The teacher treads the way; on every span of ground he leaves his footprints clearly cut, which all can see and be assured that he, their master went that way. (Aquarian Gospel 15:8-16)

There are a lot of truths that people turn into clichés. One of the most worn-out, and least comprehended, is: "When the student is ready the master appears," and is usually cited by spiritual layabouts to reprimand those who are both anxious about their possibilities for development and who express a willingness to seek far afield if need be to find the keys to wisdom. On occasion charlatans cite these words to imply: "You are ready; so here I am: your Master!"

We see that Jesus travelled all the way from Israel to India, traversing the entire subcontinent to the far Himalayas and all the way down to the easternmost part of India (Jagannath Puri). Then he went all the way back westward to the Himalayas and from there onward into Persia, Greece, and Egypt. The difficulties of travel in that day made it a pilgrimage that can only be equaled in our time by several circuits of the globe.

Yet Jesus went to India because the Indian Masters had first come to him. When he was born and placed in the manger of the Bethlehem stable-cave, "Three persons clad in snow-white robes came in and stood before the child and said, All strength, all wisdom and all love be yours, Immanuel" (Aquarian Gospel 3:6-7).

There was much more to their visit than Levi records here. They established permanent contact with the Holy Family and in time Jesus went to India and became a disciple of the Nath Yogi Master known as Chetan Nath. (See *The Christ of India*.)

There were nearly fourteen years between the appearance of Chetan Nath in Bethlehem and Jesus' arrival in the Himalayas. Some people "flame on" the moment the teacher is met. Others may take some years to become flammable. Consequently, it does not matter if the greatest Master that ever lived comes into the orbit of our life, or even if God Incarnate comes to us. If we do not ready ourselves nothing will come of it, except the wasting of the teacher's time. *We have*

to qualify ourselves. No teacher can do that. It is our responsibility.

In Matheno John had met his teacher. In Chetan Nath Jesus met his. We who would attain their attainment must look and heed their example.

You must have a clear conception of the work that you are called to do. The sages of the ages call you harbinger [herald or messenger]. The prophets look to you and say, he is Elijah come again. Little can be done in this present life until we connect with our past lives. It is not the simple memory of previous embodiments that is needed, but a re-entry into the lifestream that runs through all our incarnations, the basic fabric upon which all our lives are but embroiderings. This is one of the worst parts of reincarnation. Having to start over as an infant, we can easily and usually inevitably get sidetracked from the life-path we had been traveling in previous births. We will eventually return to that track, but in the meantime we can waste a lot of time and suffer a lot of frustration. And mere remembering is not what we are after. Dr. Morris Netherton, founder of the Association For Alignment of Past Life Experience, sums it up like this: “You must bring the past life experiences into alignment with present-day living.” That covers it all.

It was needful for Saint John to remember his spiritual work as Elijah so he could build his present life on that holy foundation. The culmination of his life-work as Elijah had been his teaching of Elisha. Now Elisha had also been reborn and would in time come to Elijah-John for the washing that was the pledge of spiritual seeker to learn and persevere. And that would be the capstone of John’s life-mission. In the Aquarian Gospel it is recounted in this way:

“Jesus with the multitude went down to where the harbinger was preaching at the ford. When Jesus saw the harbinger he said, Behold the man of God! Behold the greatest of the seers! Behold, Elijah has returned! Behold the messenger whom God has sent to open up the way! The kingdom is at hand. When John saw Jesus standing with the throng he said, Behold the king who cometh in the name of God! And Jesus said to John, I would be washed in water as a symbol of the cleansing of the soul. And John replied, you do not need to wash, for you are pure in thought, and word, and deed. And if you need to wash I am not worthy to perform the rite. And Jesus said, I come to be a pattern for the sons of men, and what I bid them do, that I must do; and all men must be washed, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul. This washing we establish as a rite—baptism rite we call it now, and so it shall be called. Your work, prophetic harbinger, is to prepare the way, and to reveal the hidden things. The multitudes are ready for the words of life, and I come to be made known by you to all the world, as prophet of the Triune God, and as the chosen one to manifest the Christ to men. Then John led Jesus down into the river at the ford and he baptized him in the sacred name of him who sent him forth to manifest the Christ to men. And as they came out of the stream, the Holy Breath, in form of dove, came down and sat on Jesus’ head. A voice from heaven said, This is the well-beloved son of God, the Christ, the love of God made manifest. John heard the voice, and understood the message of the voice” (Aquarian Gospel 64:1-14).

This last sentence is made clear in the Gospel of Saint John: “The next day John

seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God” (John 1:29-34).

Some explanation is needed. “After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.” This is a reference to an incident from the life of Elijah as the teacher of Elisha: “And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him” (II Kings 2:9-15).

Through the blessing of Elijah, Elisha attained twice the spiritual status of Elijah. Then he progressed onward to become the great Messianic Prophet Isaiah, and then to be born as Jesus. (See *Robe of Light*.) Not only had Saint John not seen Jesus for more than twenty years at least, in that time Jesus had become The Christ of the Age, of a divine level heretofore unseen by John in any life. Therefore he did not know Jesus when he first saw him. But Matheno had foretold this meeting. Therefore John said: “He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

From that moment on the life of Saint John began hastening to its close. As he said of himself in relation to Jesus: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

There is a hidden message regarding the teacher/student relationship in Saint John’s statement: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” The meaning is simple:

The student's "teacher consciousness" must fade away as Christ Consciousness perpetually increases to perfection. Now I know that this is not the popular view. Most people fall between two extremes: rejection of any need for a teacher and a sentimental, superstitious, and almost hysterical adulation-dependence on the teacher, substituting "discipleship" for spiritual growth.

There was a time when someone got the idea that in Self-Realization Fellowship centers there should be no talks by the leaders, but only readings from the works of Yogananda. When he learned of this, Yogananda was extremely displeased. "I did not come to make you *Yogananda*-conscious," He told them, "I came to make you *God*-conscious." This is the way of the true teacher.

A clear demonstration of the teacher-student situation is given in the eighth chapter of the book of Acts: "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:26-39). There you have it. The work is done; and then it is over. Furthermore, we can have more than one teacher. In one Indian scripture there is an account of a man who had two dozen teachers. I knew a venerable yogi in India, Sri Yogeshwar Brahmachari, who had *twenty-two* gurus. This is not common, but it is neither impossible or wrong.

We have to look beyond the herald, who is only an instrument, no matter how holy or venerable, to the Source of All. The Sons of God are messengers, but God is the Source of the Message. To keep our attention solely on the earthly manifestations of the messengers, their lives, personalities, and so forth, is to blind ourselves to the import of their teaching: *Know God*.

Jesus said: "I am the door (John 10:7,9), but the purpose of a door is to pass through it and go beyond it. This of course does not please those in the business of religion, who claim to be the representatives of Jesus or other Great Teachers, but their claim itself proves their unworthiness. Jesus did not call people his followers, disciples, worshippers, devotees, and any such. Rather: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:14,15). Having gotten the message, they then pursued their own Christhood rather than adoring Jesus as the only Christ. And in this way they became his true disciples and showed that they truly believed in him and his words.

A true spiritual teacher is neither dictator nor nursemaid. He teaches the student what he needs to know and then sends him on his way. If possible he will be available for consultation and will assist the student in any problems or questions he might have in the future, but the student is on his own and needs to realize that. Since the kingdom of God is within (Luke 17:21), all that the student needs is within himself. If he has a worthy teacher, then he has learned how to turn within and gain whatever he needs. Another great yogi I met in India, Swami Rama of Hardwar, had met his guru only one time, and that when he was only nine years old. But his guru taught him what he needed to know to find God, and he applied it. Yogananda's greatest disciple was Sister Gyanamata, who attained total liberation. Except for public functions, it was estimated that she had been in her guru's presence for only six to eight hours during the entire time of her discipleship of twenty years. She learned the way to God and went to God. We must do the same.

Your mission here is that of harbinger; for you will go before Messiah's face to pave his way, and make the people ready to receive their king. A spiritual teacher has two functions: to awaken us to the possibility of our own Christhood and to show us how to attain that Christhood. Yet, he cannot awaken us to that possibility unless we are capable of awakening, "ready to receive our king." He cannot make us capable, as is erroneously thought by players of the Guru Game. In fact, he cannot do anything for us if we are not ready. Matheno wants Saint John to understand this, so he emphasizes it, continuing: "This readiness is purity of heart; none but the pure in heart can recognize the king." The impure of heart readily "see" external authorities and follow after them, whether books or people. But only those whose inner consciousness has been awakened and purified are ready for the kingdom.

The worthy teacher does not distract the student or waste time in labyrinthine theologizing and philosophizing, but concentrates on purification of consciousness in a practical manner. Methodology is the heart of his teaching, almost the whole of it. This being so, Matheno tells him: "To teach men to be pure in heart, you must yourself be pure in heart, and word, and deed." Saint John had become Matheno's student at the age of seven. He began his public teaching when he was thirty; so he had twenty-three years of intense practice behind his words. Only those who have

successfully traversed the way can tell others how to travel it successfully. Practice is the key. The only key.

Occasionally we hear it said that it does matter whether or not Buddha, Jesus or other great teachers really lived, that it is their ideals that matter. This is, of course, patently silly. If those teachers never lived, then their teachings are fabrications, lies, and their ideals were never demonstrated to be true. For it is the living of principles that proves their possibility and practicality. Living Masters are living scriptures, demonstrations of truth. This is what the world needs, not more books claiming to be revelations from God. Matheno expresses it so well that it needs no comment:

“Men need a pattern for their lives; they love to follow, not to lead. The man who stands upon the corners of the paths and points the way, but does not go, is just a pointer; and a block of wood can do the same. The teacher treads the way; on every span of ground he leaves his footprints clearly cut, which all can see and be assured that he, their master, went that way. Now, you may never point the way and tell the multitudes to do what you have never done; but you must go before and show the way.”

The prime thing in spiritual life is a living example. But there are other helps, and Matheno now explains them to John.

Men comprehend the inner life by what they see and do. They come to God through ceremonies and forms. And so when you would make men know that sins are washed away by purity in life, a rite symbolic may be introduced. In water wash the bodies of the people who would turn away from sin and strive for purity in life. This rite of cleansing is a preparation rite and they who thus are cleansed comprise the Church of Purity.

And you shall say, You men of Israel, hear; Reform and wash; become the sons of purity, and you shall be forgiven. This rite of cleansing and this church are but symbolic of the cleansing of the soul by purity in life, and of the kingdom of the soul, which does not come from outward show, but is the church within.

Now, you may never point the way and tell the multitudes to do what you have never done; but you must go before and show the way. You are to teach that men must wash; so you must lead the way, your body must be washed, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul. John said, Why need I wait? May I not go at once and wash? Matheno said, 'Tis well, and then they went down to the Jordan ford, and east of Jericho, just where the hosts of Israel crossed when first they entered Canaan, they tarried for a time.

Matheno taught the harbinger, and he explained to him the inner meaning of the cleansing rite and how to wash himself and how to wash the multitude. And in the river Jordan John was washed; then they returned unto the wilderness. (Aquarian Gospel 15:17-28)

Men comprehend the inner life by what they see and do. Humans learn by example

better than by any other way. Even a printed book is a compilation of symbols. Language itself is symbolic. Therefore to decry symbolic ritual is to ignore human nature. It the duty of those performing the rituals to explain their meaning, for in many instances ritual is performed like a magical superstition without perceivable meaning. But once a rite is explained people can learn much from it, just as we have to learn a word before we can meaningfully use it.

They come to God through ceremonies and forms. But ritual is also reality. That is, ritual can have a definite spiritual and even material effect on the participants, sometimes visible and sometime invisible. As Matheno says, ceremonies and forms can be pathways and bridges to very real God-contact. All conscious people engage in ritual, even if it is only brushing their teeth, taking a bath, dressing or cooking. And spiritually conscious people are very aware of the value, and even the necessity, of ritual. For a religion to “work” it must have ritual of some kind. It cannot be denied that excessive elaboration of ritual can distract seekers and turn into nothing but holy show; but that is no argument against ritual any more than misuse of a tool could be turned to its condemnation. Rather than engage in elaboration of this subject, I recommend that you read my study, *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.

And so when you would make men know that sins are washed away by purity in life, a rite symbolic may be introduced. In water wash the bodies of the people who would turn away from sin and strive for purity in life. This rite of cleansing is a preparation rite and they who thus are cleansed comprise the Church of Purity.

Baptism was originally done by total immersion in water like a bath, so its symbolism was obvious. However, it has an inner dimension far beyond mere appearance, for it is a vehicle for cleansing and empowerment of a person’s total being. Nevertheless, it is only a beginning, an initiation and preparation for much more to follow. *The Yoga of the Sacraments* explains the complete meaning and effect of the ritual.

And you shall say, You men of Israel, hear; Reform and wash; become the sons of purity, and you shall be forgiven. This rite of cleansing and this church are but symbolic of the cleansing of the soul by purity in life, and of the kingdom of the soul, which does not come from outward show, but is the church within. The first step is reformation and the continued purpose of reformation. “Reform” comes before “wash.” The next great principle is: “Become the sons of purity and you will be forgiven,” because only through purifying ourselves can we be in such a condition that our negative karmas and samskaras can be expunged. (Karmas are our past actions, and samskaras are the mental impressions and behavior patterns produced by those actions.) Finally Matheno makes it clear that no rite is of value if there is no corresponding inner change for the better.

Now, you may never point the way and tell the multitudes to do what you have never done; but you must go before and show the way. If only all leaders in all segments of society would know and follow this principle, things would be ideal. When Saint John was told this he instantly asked: “Why need I wait? May I not go at once and wash?” This and this alone is the attitude of one who is going to succeed in spiritual life.

No delay; immediate compliance with the divine precepts. Those who grudgingly drag their feet and want to do the least they can should not even be bothering, for they will never attain any good whatever. Nor should spiritual teachers waste their time with them. As the saying rightly goes: “Never try to teach a pig to sing; it only annoys the pig and wastes your time.” Humanity is much more than walking upright and having a flexible thumb.

“Now in Engedi’s hills Matheno’s work was done and he and John went down to Egypt. They rested not until they reached the temple of Sakara in the valley of the Nile. For many years Matheno was a master in this temple of the Brotherhood, and when he told about the life of John and of his mission to the sons of men, the hierophant with joy received the harbinger and he was called the Brother Nazarite. For eighteen years John lived and wrought within these temple gates; and here he conquered self, became a master mind and learned the duties of the harbinger” (Aquarian Gospel 15:29-31).

So while Jesus was spending his formative years in India, Saint John was in Egypt with the sages there.

Chapter Sixteen

The home of Joseph was on Marmion Way in Nazareth; here Mary taught her son the lessons of Elihu and Salome. And Jesus greatly loved the Vedic hymns and the Avesta; but more than all he loved to read the Psalms of David and the pungent words of Solomon. The Jewish books of prophecy were his delight; and when he reached his seventh year he needed not the books to read, for he had fixed in memory every word. Joachim and his wife, grandparents of child Jesus, made a feast in honor of the child, and all their near of kin were guests.

And Jesus stood before the guests and said, I had a dream, and in my dream I stood before a sea, upon a sandy beach. The waves upon the sea were high; a storm was raging on the deep. Someone gave me a wand. I took the wand and touched the sand, and every grain of sand became a living thing; the beach was all a mass of beauty and of song. I touched the waters at my feet, and they were changed to trees, and flowers, and singing birds, and every thing was praising God. And someone spoke, I did not see the one who spoke, I heard the voice, which said, *There is no death.*

Grandmother Anna loved the child; she laid her hand on Jesus' head and said, I saw you stand beside the sea; I saw you touch the sand and waves; I saw them turn to living things and then I knew the meaning of the dream. The sea of life rolls high; the storms are great. The multitude of men are idle, listless, waiting, like dead sand upon the beach. Your wand is truth. With this you touch the multitudes, and every man becomes a messenger of holy light and life. You touch the waves upon the sea of life; their turmoils cease; the very winds become a song of praise. There is no death, because the wand of truth can change the driest bones to living things, and bring the loveliest flowers from stagnant ponds, and turn the most discordant notes to harmony and praise. (Aquarian Gospel 16:1-14)

Ordinary dreams are monologues of the subconscious mind, which thinks in visual imagery rather than words. Most dreams are inane babble, and it is wise to dismiss them and get on with our waking life. But sometimes they do give us information about what is happening in the depths of our minds and bodies. Still, the effort needed to decode the message is usually more than the resulting worth. For this reason spiritual aspirants usually ignore their dreams.

There are, however, dreams that are communications from the superconscious mind. These are of a completely different order and should be examined for our benefit. How can we tell when a dream is subconscious or superconscious? Without the sharpened perceptions produced by meditation it is impossible to either comprehend the nature of the dreams or their meaning.

In my dream I stood before a sea, upon a sandy beach. The waves upon the sea were high; a

storm was raging on the deep. The superconscious mind uses many symbols, one of the most common being water. Usually water represents consciousness, either the individual's consciousness or the Divine Consciousness. In the Bible water often means awakened spiritual consciousness which itself is the Water of Life. But when the vast ocean is seen in a dream it represents the Infinite Consciousness in which our individual consciousness is rooted, and from Which it is inseparable. In Jesus' dream the sea was heaving with great waves and the atmosphere was charged with power. This symbolizes the stirring of Divine Consciousness preparatory to re-creation.

Someone gave me a wand. I took the wand and touched the sand, and every grain of sand became a living thing; the beach was all a mass of beauty and of song. The sand, then, represents the individual sparks of consciousness that manifest as all forms. Out of seemingly inert and unconscious matter intelligent consciousness emerges. This is the story of evolution. The fact is that every single atom is a potential consciousness. All things are not just alive, they are *lives*. Jesus indicated this when he told his opponents: "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matthew 3:9). He is not only able, he *does*. Creation itself is a glorious explosion of life, streaming forth the infinite number of "sons of God" as it was intended to do, in very truth "all a mass of beauty and of song."

Continuing this theme: *I touched the waters at my feet, and they were changed to trees, and flowers, and singing birds, and every thing was praising God.* From the One proceeds the Many. From material creation emerges awakened consciousness. And it is this procession and emergence that is the real praise of God, something of which only the meditation-awakened consciousness is capable.

And someone spoke, I did not see the one who spoke, I heard the voice, which said, There is no death. There is only Life, to which the Way and the Truth lead.

Jesus' grandmother Anna was esteemed among the Essenes as a prophetess. In many ways this was demonstrated both before and after the birth of Jesus' Mother. Here she reveals her prophetic abilities and interprets his dream.

I saw you stand beside the sea; I saw you touch the sand and waves; I saw them turn to living things and then I knew the meaning of the dream. The sea of life rolls high; the storms are great. The multitude of men are idle, listless, waiting, like dead sand upon the beach. Your wand is truth. Let us not fall into the exoteric pit of thinking that truth is an idea, nothing more than a set of doctrines or philosophical principles. It is interesting that in some languages a clear distinction is made between relative, at-the-moment truth and the truth which never changes. For example, it is true that at this very moment I am entering these words into a computer. But in a few moments that entry is finished, and I am no longer entering them. So it ceases to be truth. At noon it is the truth that it is twelve o'clock. But in one minute it is no longer noon. What was truth is no longer true. This is relative truth. But real bedrock truth cannot be abrogated by anything. Even creation is not absolutely "true" because in the future it will be dissolved and "be" no longer.

Later in the Aquarian Gospel we find an exposition of this: "Jesus said, Truth is

the only thing that changes not. In all the world there are two things; the one is truth; the other falsehood is; and truth is that which is, and falsehood that which seems to be. Now truth is aught, and has no cause, and yet it is the cause of everything. Falsehood is naught, and yet it is the manifest of aught. Whatever has been made will be unmade; that which begins must end. All things that can be seen by human eyes are manifests of aught, are naught, and so must pass away. The things we see are but reflexes just appearing, while the ethers vibrate so and so, and when conditions change they disappear. The Holy Breath is truth; is that which was, and is, and evermore shall be; it cannot change nor pass away” (Aquarian Gospel 22:3-10). In other words: God is Truth. God Consciousness alone is Reality. Jesus, then, did not touch his hearers with the “wand” of dogma, but with the wand of God Consciousness.

With this you touch the multitudes, and every man becomes a messenger of holy light and life. Saint Anna knows that Jesus’ vision for humanity is not that they become docile and pliable “sheep” that meekly follow the few that he will choose to “shepherd” them, functioning as his mediators and interpreters, keeping them orderly and quiet. Not at all. When the touch of Christ comes to human beings “every man becomes a messenger of holy light and life” Having entered into the Light and Life that is the Holy Breath, God. Every single drop in the sea of Infinite Life is equal to all the others. There are no “chiefs and Indians,” there is only Divinity. The egoistic and soul-stunting hierarchical structure that developed in Piscean Churchianity has no place in Christ’s Gospel, for he said: “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God” (John 6:45. “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.” Isaiah 54:13).

Prophesying of the advent of Jesus for this purpose, the prophet Jeremiah said: “After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts... And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: *for they shall all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:33-34). That is why Saint Paul, speaking of his knowledge, wrote: “I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:12). And Saint John: “The anointing [Christing] which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you” (Galatians 1:12). This ties right back in with our previous subject of the true spiritual teacher. Such a one teaches the student how to become spiritually independent, himself “a messenger of holy light and life.”

The Hermetic principle: “As above, so below” applies here as well. Jesus’ intention for us does not deal only with the abstract side of things; the Divine Order is to be manifested outwardly as well. So his grandmother says: *You touch the waves upon the sea of life; their turmoils cease; the very winds become a song of praise.* This is the experience of all those touched by the Wand of Truth. Consequently: *There is no death, because the wand of truth can change the driest bones to living things, and bring the loveliest flowers from stagnant ponds, and turn the most discordant notes to harmony and*

praise.

This is the perfect vision of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

Joachim said, My son, today you pass the seventh milestone of your way of life, for you are seven years of age, and we will give to you, as a remembrance of this day, whatever you desire; choose that which will afford you most delight.

And Jesus said, I do not want a gift, for I am satisfied. If I could make a multitude of children glad upon this day I would be greatly pleased. Now, there are many hungry boys and girls in Nazareth who would be pleased to eat with us this feast and share with us the pleasures of this day. The richest gift that you can give to me is your permission to go out and find these needy ones and bring them here that they may feast with us.

Joachim said, 'Tis well; go out and find the needy boys and girls and bring them here; we will prepare enough for all.

And Jesus did not wait; he ran; he entered every dingy hut and cabin of the town; he did not waste his words; he told his mission everywhere. And in a little time one hundred and three-score of happy, ragged boys and girls were following him up Marmion Way.

The guests made way; the banquet hall was filled with Jesus' guests, and Jesus and his mother helped to serve. And there was food enough for all, and all were glad; and so the birthday gift of Jesus was a crown of righteousness. (Aquarian Gospel 16:15-23)

Long before Jesus said to others, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39), he was living it. I am reminded of Jagannath Roy, a man I met in India. Mister Roy was from one of the richest families in India. All of his relatives were charitable, and his family had set up the largest charitable trust in the subcontinent. Mister Roy had only two changes of clothes of the most simple kind. He always traveled third class on the train. Once when a friend of mine asked him: “Mister Roy, why don't you spend any of your money on yourself?” He answered: “If I spend it on myself, how will I give it to others?” And his humility was as great as his charity. No wonder Jesus loved India and its people loved him.

“And so the birthday gift of Jesus was a crown of righteousness.” May it also be ours.

Chapter Seventeen

Now, Rabbi Barachia of the synagogue of Nazareth, was aid to Mary in the teaching of her son. One morning after service in the synagogue the rabbi said to Jesus as he sat in silent thought, Which is the greatest of the Ten Commands?

And Jesus said, I do not see a greatest of the Ten Commands. I see a golden cord that runs through all the Ten Commands that binds them fast and makes them one. This cord is love, and it belongs to every word of all the Ten Commands.

If one is full of love he can do nothing else than worship God; for God is love. If one is full of love, he cannot kill; he cannot falsely testify; he cannot covet; can do naught but honor God and man. If one is full of love he does not need commands of any kind. (Aquarian Gospel 17:1-7)

It is a peculiarity of the Western mind to split things up and classify them, the invention of the pie chart being the pinnacle of such a mind's achievement. This insistence on fragmentation of all things runs through every level of Western man's life and experience, joined with the insistence that things should be looked at in a series, only one link at a time, going along in a linear movement. Even an overview is considered to be a collage of its parts and not a unity, only a means to look at disparate parts in relation to one another. This is particularly evident in Western religious thought (including Eastern Christianity) where delineation and separation are looked upon as absolutes. Uncrossable lines are drawn between God and all spirit-intelligences, as well as between every individual object or person in existence. Division and dissimilarity are fundamental to this way of viewing things. Hence, the unity of God, man, and creation is viewed as an absurdity and pantheism as a base heresy. Reconciliation is considered perhaps possible, but oneness is deemed impossible. Western politics, religion, economics and social structures are manifestations of this disbelief. "Celebration of diversity" is the best it gets, an upbeat, positive insistence on division and difference as the real mode of being.

Naturally, such an outlook manifests in questions as to what single thing is the most important, necessary, or essential. This is a backhanded way of seeking unity, but a unity that denies the viability of everything but that one factor, rather than a reaching out to embrace and unify them all. This also leads to a listing of "bare minimums" ("what is the least... what is the essential"), a dogged insistence on mere subsistence especially in the realm of religion, even though those who insist on stark and unadorned houses of worship and simple, minimalist theology live in luxurious houses and drive luxury cars (usually more than one per family) and dress in elaborate styles. Denying themselves nothing, they usually deny God everything. This is the way of "simple" religion.

Rabbi Barachia's question: "Which is the greatest of the Ten Commands?"

reflects the mentality just outlined. But Jesus' answer mirrors the vision of Unity. (He answers the same question again in Chapter 155.).

Jesus said, I do not see a greatest of the Ten Commands. I see a golden cord that runs through all the Ten Commands that binds them fast and makes them one.

Originally there was the One Which became the Many. Yet this fundamental unity remains unimpaired, and imperative, since it shall in time reunite the Many which shall merge back into the One. Jesus, having come to earth to open the way from diversity to unity, looks at all things from that perspective and sees not a theoretical unity but the dynamic which produces unity.

This cord is love, and it belongs to every word of all the Ten Commands. Love, as spoken of by Jesus, is not the emotion of attraction and attachment, firmly based in the ego-mind, that ordinary people mean when they speak of love. Rather, he means the drawing power of God, the One, into original Unity. (This is definitively discussed by Swami Yukteswar Giri, the guru of Paramhansa Yogananda, in his book *The Holy Science*.) Furthermore, he sees the Ten Commandments as manifestation of God's love, not tyrannical mandates as they are usually thought to be. (See *The Gnosis of the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes*.).

But love is neither a commandment nor a fulfilling of a commandment; rather it is a deep inward movement toward the Divine. Consequently Jesus said: "If one is full of love he can do nothing else than worship God; for God is love. If one is full of love, he cannot kill; he cannot falsely testify; he cannot covet; can do naught but honor God and man."

A lot of people think they are "loving" or claim to be for a multitude of reasons, but all of them ego-based and selfish and therefore love-abrogating. Jesus gives us a profile of those who truly love.

If one is full of love he can do nothing else than worship God; for God is love. According to Jesus a loving person *first of all* worships God; "for God is love" and it is his nature to love and be loved in return, just as it is our nature as his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26; see Genesis 1:27, 5:3, 9:6) to do the same. Those who love, worship, but what is worship? Our English word comes from "worthship," which means to acknowledge someone's value or worth and to respect it. Worship, then, is a disposition of the heart, not a lot of outer action or inner emotion. In Hebrew the word is *shachah*, which means to bow down in reverence. In Greek the word is *proskuneo*, which means the same, but also carries the idea of adoration and service. Some believe that it is derived from *kuon*, which means to kiss as an expression of love. It also implies drawing very close to the object of worship, even entering into union with it.

If one is full of love, he cannot kill. Surely there is no sensible person who would deny that loving and killing are opposites. Yet people kill all the time, even though they do it through commercial agents, when they eat meat or use animal products of any kind. "'Tis cruelty that makes the world awry. When men have learned that when they harm a living thing they harm themselves, they surely will not kill, nor cause a thing that God has made to suffer pain" (Aquarian Gospel 28:10). It takes a

great violation of conscience to kill another human being, but how easily and thoughtlessly we support the killing industry when we eat meat or use “animal by-products.” As an Essene, Jesus never did either of these things, nor did his ancestors.

Later he will make it clear that vengefulness and hatred are also a form of murder committed in the heart, and none the less evil: “The letter of the law commands; you shall not kill; and he who kills must stand before the judgement seat. A person may desire to kill, yet if he does not kill he is not judged by law. The spirit of the law avers that he who shall desire to kill, or seeks revenge, is angry with a man without sufficient cause, must answer to the judge” (Aquarian Gospel 97:5-7).

He cannot falsely testify. We lie for one purpose: to deceive; and no one will deceive those he loves. Oh, yes, we think up all kinds of reasons for lying to those we claim to love, such as we are “protecting” them (or ourselves) or that it does no harm. The most shameless lies are those told by adults, especially parents, to children. Children, being intuitive, almost always know they are being lied to, unless they so much want what is told them to be true that they lie to themselves and make themselves believe what they are told, or just cannot believe that their parents would lie to them. This is markedly true in the matter of the Santa Claus myth. Victimized children by this lie so their deluded behavior will be “cute” and amusing to parents and grandparents is indefensible to any sense of truth or reality: the very things the ego completely lacks. Lies of any kind are manifestations of dishonesty and disrespect. Malicious lies in the form of character assassination really are metaphysical murder. Lying because people “deserve” to be deceived is a double lie. This manifests constantly in deceiving insurance companies, the IRS and other government agencies. Even if it is true that a lie does not hurt the person lied to, it does hurt the liar by weakening his moral strength and integrity. Yes; we should love ourselves as well as others.

He cannot covet. This does not mean that we cannot admire something another person has and wish to have one like it and work toward getting it. “Covet” in the Bible is translated from three different words, one Hebrew and two Greek. *Chamad* means to intensely long after the possession of a specific thing owned by another which can be obtained only by taking (not purchasing) it from him. *Epithumeo* means the same thing. *Zeloo* means to “burn” with both desire for someone else’s property and intense jealousy and resentment of that person because he possesses it. (This latter is the basis for most Socialism, however it may be masked.) Obviously no one can feel this way toward someone they love, for love prevents such egoic feelings and desires. This is why Saint Paul says that love “envieth not” (I Corinthians 13:4). For love is absence of egotism. Finally, love lifts us above material greed that is the basis for covetousness.

[He] can do naught but honor God and man. The Hebrew word *kabad*, translated “honor,” is very interesting, for it literally means to be heavy or weighty. The idea is that to honor someone is to consider them significant and meaningful. The Greek

word is *timao*, which means to value or esteem something, even to look upon it as precious and dear to oneself. It also means to think highly of something and consider it has innate dignity. A peripheral meaning is to render what is due to someone. (This is because *timao* has several roots.)

We have just said that love lifts us above the material. Even more, it focuses us on the spiritual. Thus, those who love see the divine spirit in all human beings, however reprehensible their behavior and words may be, value them accordingly though they repudiate their deeds and words. The ultimate expression of this was Jesus' prayer for those who had crucified him: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Love is not approval or acceptance of wrongdoing, but it looks past the doing to the doer, and loves.

It is easy to love God, who is all perfection and Love itself, but "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:20-21).

Jesus has told us that those who love will fulfill the Ten Commandments (and much more), but he caps his discourse on this subject by stating: "If one is full of love he does not need commands of any kind." This is because love centers our conscious in spirit so that we automatically live according to the Divine Pattern. For "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance" (Galatians 5:22,23). Therefore, "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25,26) in love. "For God is love" (Aquarian Gospel 17:5; I John 4:8,16).

And Rabbi Barachia said, Your words are seasoned with the salt of wisdom that is from above. Who is the teacher who has opened up this truth to you?

And Jesus said, I do not know that any teacher opened up this truth for me. It seems to me that truth was never shut; that it was always opened up, for truth is one and it is everywhere. And if we open up the windows of our minds the truth will enter in and make herself at home; for truth can find her way through any crevice, any window, any open door.

The rabbi said, What hand is strong enough to open up the windows and the doors of mind so truth can enter in?

And Jesus said, It seems to me that love, the golden cord that binds the Ten Commands in one, is strong enough to open any human door so that the truth can enter in and cause the heart to understand. (Aquarian Gospel 17:8-12)

We have already looked at what a true spiritual teacher is, and, consequently, is not. Now Jesus is telling us what even a true spiritual teacher does not and cannot do: open up the truth for another. This is because truth, reality, is within, whereas illusion is without. Opening to truth, then, is an interior matter, something that cannot be accomplished by an exterior agent, however mighty or holy.

If God were not the inmost core of our being, even he could not open our consciousness to the Truth that is his nature. For although Rabbi Barachia is thinking that truth is doctrinal, Jesus knows that Truth is God. That is why he tells the Rabbi: "It seems to me that truth was never shut; that it was always opened up, for truth is one and it is everywhere." This establishes that God alone is Truth, for only God is One and Everywhere. The mind can learn theology or philosophy, but only the spirit can know God through its innate oneness with God.

This is true, but why, then, do not human beings perceive and dwell in the Truth? Because they do not do the needful. For "if we open up the windows of our minds the truth will enter in and make herself at home," for our hearts are the natural abode of Truth, of God.

So Jesus tells us that it is not Truth that needs to be opened, but the windows, the perceptions, of our minds. Our inner eyes and ears need to be opened. This is possible only when through meditation we turn our consciousness inward to its source and there discover the Spirit in which our spirit eternally dwells. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isaiah 35:5).

Will this be hard to do? No, for God, the Truth is everywhere, and that illumining aspect of Truth we call the Holy Spirit (the Holy Breath) "can find Her way through any crevice, any window, any open door." Any opening, however small, can be the entryway for the Truth. So we should work diligently at opening ourselves, for the Lord ever seeks a way to enter. This is why he is symbolized as a thief. "Behold, I come as a thief" (Revelation 16:15). In Hinduism God is sometimes called "Hari" which means "thief" in the sense that he steals the hearts of his devotees, that he steal in unawares and takes them captive to his love. This is why both Saint Paul and Saint Peter say that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night" (I Thessalonians 5:2; II Peter 3:10).

Yet, blindness and ignorance have prevailed in us through countless incarnations. No wonder, then, that "the rabbi said, What hand is strong enough to open up the windows and the doors of mind so truth can enter in?" When viewed with outer eyes the situation seems without hope. But "Jesus said, It seems to me that love, the golden cord that binds the Ten Commands in one, is strong enough to open any human door so that the truth can enter in and cause the heart to understand." Truth reveals itself.

Love of God is the key that opens the long-closed doors and windows of the spirit. Those who strive to love God shall surely find him; for the striving is itself the sign that "the Day of the Lord" draws near.

Evolution equals expansion. Human beings have their subconscious deeply rooted in the samskaras from their incarnations in animal form, and one of the common traits of most animal forms is life in a herd. Even insects often live in groups. The "us and them" mentality is extraordinarily hard to break out of. Those of sophisticated philosophy even manifest it in their genteel contempt for those who hold "ignorant" or "backward" philosophies. When they did not believe in

reincarnation, for example, they considered those who did believe in reincarnation as “nuts.” After coming to believe in reincarnation, they then consider the “only one life” people as ignorant and imperceptive, certainly not up to their own level. Meditators think non-meditators are obtuse. We busy ourselves drawing and redrawing lines around us and building and shifting walls to make us the “in” people and others the “out” people.

Jesus spoke of this to his mother regarding Rabbi Barachia, one of his teachers. “Now, in the evening Jesus and his mother sat alone, and Jesus said, The rabbi seems to think that God is partial in his treatment of the sons of men; that Jews are favored and are blest above all other men. I do not see how God can have his favorites and be just. Are not Samaritans and Greeks and Romans just as much the children of the Holy One as are the Jews?

“I think the Jews have built a wall about themselves, and they see nothing on the other side of it. They do not know that flowers are blooming over there; that sowing times and reaping times belong to anybody but the Jews. It surely would be well if we could break down these barriers down so that the Jews might see that God has other children that are just as greatly blest.

“I want to go from Jewry land and meet my kin in other countries of my Fatherland” (Aquarian Gospel 17:13-20).

Jesus rightly points out that those who build walls around themselves then become blind to what is on the other side; and so their lives are hemmed in and made small along with their minds. We must assiduously avoid this, including the attitude: “I am more understanding, more accepting and more broad-minded than you!” If we would grow in spirit we must “see that God has other children that are just as greatly blest” as are we. And like Jesus we should delight in meeting them.

Chapter Eighteen

The great feast of the Jews [the Passover] was on, and Joseph, Mary and their son, and many of their kin, went to Jerusalem. The child was ten years old. And Jesus watched the butchers kill the lambs and birds and burn them on the altar in the name of God.

His tender heart was shocked at this display of cruelty; he asked the serving priest, What is the purpose of this slaughter of the beasts and birds? Why do you burn their flesh before the Lord? (Aquarian Gospel 18:1-3)

All normal children are shocked at the slaughter of animals, and usually dislike meat and have to be forced to eat it until it so coarsens and darkens their consciousness that it no longer repulses them. We can only imagine how the spectacle of ritual killing affected the mind and heart of the child Jesus, forcing him to challenge the priest that he saw doing such horrific things.

The priest replied, This is our sacrifice for sin. God has commanded us to do these things, and said that in these sacrifices all our sins are blotted out.

And Jesus said, Will you be kind enough to tell when God proclaimed that sins are blotted out by sacrifice of any kind? Did not David say that God requires not a sacrifice for sin? that it is a sin itself to bring before his face burnt offerings, as offerings for sin? Did not Isaiah say the same? (Aquarian Gospel 18:4-6)

Jesus is referring to many passages in which God expresses disapproval of animal sacrifice for sin, but he no doubt had these three in mind specifically: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required" (Psalms 40:6). "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering" (Psalms 51:16). "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats" (Isaiah 1:11).

The priest replied, My child you are beside yourself. Do you know more about the laws of God than all the priests of Israel? This is no place for boys to show their wit.

But Jesus heeded not his taunts; he went to Hillel, chief of the Sanhedrin, and he said to him, Rabboni, I would like to talk with you; I am disturbed about this service of the pascal feast. I thought the temple was the house of God where love and kindness dwell. Do you not hear the bleating of those lambs, the pleading of those doves that men are killing over there? Do you not smell that awful stench that comes from burning flesh? Can man be kind and just, and still be filled with cruelty? A God that takes delight in sacrifice,

in blood and burning flesh, is not my Father-God. I want to find a God of love, and you, my master, you are wise, and surely you can tell me where to find the God of love. (Aquarian Gospel 18:7-13)

I knew a highly intelligent but somewhat unstable man who, when he saw he was losing an argument, would begin cursing at his opponents, using shockingly foul language, and then walk away leaving them stunned. In the same way when wrongdoers and deceivers are confronted with the truth about their ways, since they have no intelligent arguments they start personally attacking the ones they disagree with. This is rampant in American politics, but happens in religion too, as in this instance. “Just who do you think you are?” is a time-worn attack. But Jesus could not be intimidated by such a strategy.

Knowing that the great Rabbi Hillel had been his mother’s personal teacher in religion while she lived in the Temple, he sought him out and expressed his rejection of the foul cruelty prevalent in the Temple worship. Moreover, he declared that “A God that takes delight in sacrifice, in blood and burning flesh, is not my Father-God,” which indicates that Jesus did not think that the sacrifices were compatible with the true God who was supposedly being worshipped in the Temple. When he met the king of Kashmir after his resurrection and return to India, Jesus told him: “I hail from a land far away, where there is no truth, and evil knows no limits.” That pretty well puts a seal on it.

Asking where the God of love could be found, Jesus ended his questioning.

But Hillel could not give an answer to the child. His heart was stirred with sympathy. He called the child to him; he laid his hand upon his head and wept. He said, There is a God of love, and you shall come with me; and hand in hand we will go forth and find the God of love.

And Jesus said, Why need we go? I thought that God was everywhere. Can we not purify our hearts and drive out cruelty, and every wicked thought, and make within, a temple where the God of love can dwell?

The master of the great Sanhedrin felt as though he was himself the child, and that before him stood Rabboni, master of the higher law. He said within himself, This child is surely a prophet sent from God. (Aquarian Gospel 18:14-18)

Here Jesus teaches Rabbi Hillel a great lesson: our search for God must be an inner search involving perfect purification of our hearts and development of our consciousness to such a degree that God can dwell within us as his temple. Without this, externals are of no value or consequence whatsoever.

Then Hillel sought the parents of the child, and asked that Jesus might abide with them, and learn the precepts of the law, and all the lessons of the temple priests. His parents gave consent, and Jesus did abide within the holy temple in Jerusalem, and Hillel taught him every day. And every day the master learned from Jesus many lessons of the higher life.

The child remained with Hillel in the temple for a year, and then returned unto his home in Nazareth; and there he wrought with Joseph as a carpenter. (Aquarian Gospel 18:19-22)

The rabbi taught Jesus outer lessons and Jesus taught him the inner wisdom which none else knew. After a year Jesus returned to Nazareth, prepared by his study in the Temple to bring an even greater challenge to those that would be assembled there for passover when he had reached the ages of twelve.

Chapter Nineteen

Again the great feast [of Passover] in Jerusalem was on, and Joseph, Mary and their son were there. The child was twelve years old. And there were Jews and proselytes from many countries in Jerusalem. And Jesus sat among the priests and doctors in the temple hall. (Aquarian Gospel 19:1-3)

Being the son of a Temple virgin and himself having lived in the Temple for a year, Jesus was able to sit among the spiritual notables of the land.

And Jesus opened up a book of prophecy and read: Woe, woe to Ariel, the town where David dwelt! I will dismantle Ariel, and she shall groan and weep: and I will camp against her round about with hostile posts; and I will bring her low and she shall speak out of the earth; with muffled voice like a familiar spirit shall she speak; yea she shall only whisper forth her speech; and foes unnumbered, like the grains of dust, shall come upon her suddenly.

The Lord of Hosts will visit her with thunder and with tempest, and with storm; with earthquake, and with devouring flames. Lo, all these people have deserted me. They draw to me with speech, and with their lips they honor me; their hearts are far removed from me; their fear for me is that inspired by man. And I will breathe upon my people, Israel; the wisdom of their wise men shall be lost; the understanding of their prudent men shall not be found.

My people seek to hide their counsel from the Lord, so that their works may not be seen. They fain would cover up their works with darkness of the night, and say, Who sees us now? Who knows us now? Poor, foolish men! shall that which has been made say of its maker, he is naught, I made myself? Or shall the pot speak out and say to him, who made the pot, You have no skill; you do not know?

But this will not forever be; the time will come when Lebanon will be a fruitful field, and fruitful fields will be transformed to groves. And on that day the deaf will hear the words of God; the blind will read the Book of God's Remembrance. And suffering ones will be relieved, and they will have abundant joy; and every one that needs will be supplied; and it will come to pass that all the foolish will be wise. The people will return and sanctify the Holy One, and in their heart of hearts, lo, they will reverence him. (Aquarian Gospel 19:4-18)

Though not exactly like the Hebrew or Greek (Septuagint) texts, what Levi Dowling perceived was certainly to the point and really needs no comment of mine.

When Jesus had thus read he put aside the book and said, You masters of the law, will you make plain for us the prophet's words? Now, Hillel sat among the masters of the law, and he stood forth and said, Perhaps our young

rabboni who has read the word will be interpreter.

And Jesus said, The Ariel of the prophet is our own Jerusalem. By selfishness and cruelty this people has become a stench unto the Elohim. The prophet saw these days from far, and of these times he wrote.

Our doctors, lawyers, priests and scribes oppress the poor, while they themselves in luxury live. The sacrifices and the offerings of Israel are but abomination unto God. The only sacrifice that God requires is self. Because of this injustice and this cruelty of man to man, the Holy One has spoken of this commonwealth: Lo, I will overturn, yes, I will overturn, it shall be overturned, and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is and I will give it unto him.

In all the world there is one law of right, and he who breaks that law will suffer grief; for God is just. And Israel has gone far astray; has not regarded justice, nor the rights of man, and God demands that Israel shall reform, and turn again to ways of holiness. And if our people will not hear the voice of God, lo, nations from afar will come and sack Jerusalem, and tear our temple down, and take our people captive into foreign lands.

But this will not forever be; though they be scattered far and wide, and wander here and there among the nations of the earth, like sheep that have no shepherd guide. The time will come when God will bring again the captive hosts; for Israel shall return and dwell in peace. And after many years our temple shall be built again, and one whom God will honor, one in whom the pure in heart delights will come and glorify the house of God, and reign in righteousness. (Aquarian Gospel 19:19-33)

By selfishness and cruelty this people has become a stench unto the Elohim.... The sacrifices and the offerings of Israel are but abomination unto God. The Elohim, the Creator-Mothers, made all the forms of life needed for inhabiting spirits to evolve, moving up the evolutionary ladder from life to life. For human beings to kill and eat any of these forms is a terrible crime against the Divine Purpose. As Saint Paul wrote: "Destroy not the work of God for food" (Romans 14:20). To commit this evil under the guise of worshipping God is truly abominable. All who wish to attain higher consciousness must take this very seriously. Abstinence from animal food is a foundation stone of conscious spiritual life, especially of yoga.

The only sacrifice that God requires is self. Here the word "self" means the ego. That alone should be slain and burnt in spiritual offering to God.

In all the world there is one law of right, and he who breaks that law will suffer grief. The one universal law is that of karma: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7-8). Those who transgress that law through ego, ignorance, malice or conscious evil shall indeed suffer grief, not as punishment, but as simple reaction in kind. The cosmos is a mirror and karma is a reflection in that mirror. There is no living outside the law for either sinner or saint. There is no partiality or favoritism with God: "I am

the same to all beings” (Bhagavad Gita 9:29). God cannot be influenced by human beings: “The Omnipresent takes note of neither demerit nor merit” (Bhagavad Gita 5:15). It is up to us whether we will suffer or not.

If our people will not hear the voice of God, lo, nations from afar will come and sack Jerusalem, and tear our temple down, and take our people captive into foreign lands. Fifty-eight years later this prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled exactly.

The time will come when God will bring again the captive hosts; for Israel shall return and dwell in peace. When Levi Dowling received these psychic impressions no one could have dreamed that the State of Israel would one day exist, but it does and shall continue despite the threats and assaults of the enemies of righteousness. Those who hate Israel and demand its annihilation are simply the agents of Satan who dread the return of Jesus for the second time as the Messiah who will be accepted, as written about earlier. The time of peace shall come, and who can say if some of us will see it?

When Jesus had thus said, he stepped aside, and all the people were amazed and said, This surely is the Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 19:34)

It is a long-standing practice to dismiss “the common people” as uncomprehending and insignificant, but we see over and over that they are able to see and understand saints better than the religious “aristocracy” does. “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Matthew 11:25). “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (I Corinthians 1:27). For some reason this is especially true in the case of appearances of the Virgin Mary. The simple intuit the presence of their Mother and flock to see her, but the “wise” remain no better than wood or stone.

Once again we see that many people of Israel recognized Jesus as Messiah at that time and later.

Chapter Twenty

The great feast of the pasch was ended and the Nazarenes were journeying towards their homes. And they were in Samaria, and Mary said, Where is my son? No one had seen the boy. And Joseph sought among their kindred who were on their way to Galilee; but they had seen him not. Then Joseph, Mary, and a son of Zebedee, returned and sought through all Jerusalem, but they could find him not.

And then they went up to the temple courts and asked the guards, Have you seen Jesus, a fair-haired boy, with deep blue eyes, twelve years of age, about these courts? The guards replied, Yes, he is in the temple now disputing with the doctors of the law. And they went in, and found him as the guards had said.

And Mary said, Why Jesus, why do you treat your parents thus? Lo, we have sought two days for you. We feared that some great harm had overtaken you.

And Jesus said, Do you not know that I must be about my Father's work?

But he went round and pressed the hand of every doctor of the law and said, I trust that we may meet again. And then he went forth with his parents on their way to Nazareth; and when they reached their home he wrought with Joseph as a carpenter. (Aquarian Gospel 20:1-11)

After Jesus, at the age of twelve, had demonstrated by his questioning of the teachers in the Temple that they had nothing to teach him, he returned to Nazareth for a while before seeking out the three master-teachers of India that had come at the time of his birth. ("Three persons clad in snow-white robes came in and stood before the child and said, All strength, all wisdom and all love be yours, Immanuel" Aquarian Gospel 3:6-7.) Until then he assisted Saint Joseph in his carpentry work.

One day as he was bringing forth the tools for work he said, These tools remind me of the ones we handle in the workshop of the mind where things are made of thought and where we build up character. We use the square to measure all our lines, to straighten out the crooked places of the way, and make the corners of our conduct square. We use the compass to draw circles round our passions and desires to keep them in the bounds of righteousness. We use the axe to cut away the knotty, useless and ungainly parts and make the character symmetrical. We use the hammer to drive home the truth, and pound it in until it is a part of every part. We use the plane to smooth the rough, uneven surfaces of joint, and block, and board that go to build the temple for the truth. The chisel, line, the plummet and the saw all have their uses in the workshop of the mind. And then this ladder with its trinity of steps, faith, hope and love; on it we climb up to the dome of purity in life.

And on the twelve-step ladder we ascend until we reach the pinnacle of that which life is spent to build—the Temple of Perfected Man. (Aquarian Gospel 20:12-21)

Jesus' exposition is extremely valuable to us, for it first of all lays down the principle that we have to consciously work on our hearts and minds, that we cannot trust to everything needful taking place for us involuntarily. Part of our necessary development is the strengthening and perfecting of our will, and the best way to do that is to get to work on our own self in the workshop of our mind "where things are made of thought and where we build up character." If we do not consciously and willfully reshape ourselves we will not succeed in our spiritual endeavors and will not become "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (II Timothy 2:15).

Our tools are the inner powers we all possess by the mere fact of our being human beings, rather than outer influences. Jesus is speaking of those who have evolved in consciousness enough to intuit the way their lives should be shaped and transformed. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2). "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:18).

We use the square to measure all our lines, to straighten out the crooked places of the way, and make the corners of our conduct square. Having tied all the knots into our consciousness, and therefore into all our bodies, we have to untie them and set things in order. Here Jesus lists the steps.

First, we have "to measure all our lines" and come to understand the real meaning and scope of our thoughts, attitudes, and feelings. The yardstick of spiritual truth has to be laid alongside every component of our life to determine its "length." Is it too little? too much? relevant or irrelevant to spiritual life? And this is the first step. We must take stock of everything in our inner and outer lives and honestly evaluate them, facing up to their realities. Self-delusion has to give way to self-honesty.

We have to go to God in a straight line: no wavering, no deviation, no twistings and turnings. Saint John Vianney used to say: "Go straight to God like a shot from a cannon." After straightening out our thoughts, attitudes, and priorities, then we have to straighten out all our "ways."

Next the corners have to be made square. "Cutting corners" is a favorite pastime of heedless "seekers" who have no intention of finding or arriving. But this cannot be done if we would prepare for the Kingdom. We have to fill out anything that is lacking; every little bit. And there can be no ragged or angled edges. Everything must be square and exact. The seriousness of this cannot be exaggerated. Thought and deed must be perfectly aligned to the Goal. Both mind and body must be squared in relation to God in all their activities.

We use the compass to draw circles round our passions and desires to keep them in the bounds of righteousness. There is a most informative Buddhist sutra in which Buddha

counsels his hearers to adopt the right attitude regarding right conduct. He gives them a list of wrongdoings and tells them to affirm: “There shall be stealing; but we shall not steal. There shall be lying; but we shall not lie.” Many are the evils he mentions, but each time he says they should acknowledge that such things shall indeed go on, but not in their own life. The idea is that we must realistically understand that on the earth people do wrong; but the fact that others do wrong has no relevance to us: we should do no wrong ourselves. Nor should we condemn them for wrongdoing and try to get them to stop. We should tend to ourselves and act rightly.

Denying our passions and wrong desires is not positive but destructive for it is lying to ourselves and others. So Jesus tells us to acknowledge and clearly see these impulses to folly and evil and to imprison them in the circle of our will, not letting them roam and do *their* will. Yes: repress and suppress. No “Freudian” rationalizing here.

A friend of mine lived in an ashram in northern India. As a Hindu she would not kill any living being, but occasionally scorpions would get into her kutir (small hut). What to do? Her solution was excellent. She would put a bowl or bucket over the scorpion and wait for a few days until it was weak from lack of food and water. Then she would easily scoop it up in a dish or tray and gently carry it outside and put it on the ground. Everybody was happy. The same should be done with passions and desires. They are merely energy whorls that get stronger if added to and weaker if isolated. In time they expend themselves. Meditation will transmute them completely, but in the meantime we must draw the circle and hem them in. We do not struggle with them, hate them or bewail their existence. We just confine them. There is great power in a simple No. It is only the ego that gets upset, and the ego must be encircled also.

By saying that we should “keep them in the bounds of righteousness” Jesus is implying that some passions and desires are not negative in themselves, only when they become exaggerated or out of control. Even good can be overdone when it is a passion or a desire grown out of proportion to wisdom. Buddha was very insistent on this. Exaggeration is never healthy. But neither is minimization.

We use the axe to cut away the knotty, useless and ungainly parts and make the character symmetrical. Ouch, that hurts! Axes are not feather dusters or powder puffs. Axes are not particularly subtle, either, nor can they be used in tiny or gentle strokes. Bang and Whack is the order of the day. That is because “the knotty, useless and ungainly parts” are always very hard and resistant. They are barnacles, not bubbles. Diplomacy does not work with them nor a polite request to go away or shrink away. No. Bang and Whack: there is no other way.

It does not matter if a character trait is not intrinsically evil or harmful. If it is useless and unbalancing it will in time bear the fruit of evil and harm. Our character must become perfectly proportioned and balanced. And it is no artistic matter, but one of direct attack and eviction of the undesirable elements. There is no delicacy here, just straightforward assault. Egoic sensitivity (read: touchiness) will definitely

feel itself violated, but that, too, needs a good cutting off.

We use the hammer to drive home the truth, and pound it in until it is a part of every part. As with the axe, there is no subtlety in the hammer. Nails hold things together, and in the same way the truth of God holds our endeavors together and keeps them safe. But a nail does no good until it is internalized: “pounded home,” as we say. Truth in all its practical manifestations must be driven into our very fibers, it cannot be a superficial veneer or cosmetic. It must sink deep within. Nor can there be any inconsistency anywhere in our being or any part into which the truth does not penetrate. Therefore Jesus declares that it must become “a part of every part.” Every bit of us must be embodiments of the truth: consistent throughout. We must be living Truth, walking holy scriptures. According to Jesus we do not believe or follow the truth: we *become* the Truth.

We use the plane to smooth the rough, uneven surfaces of joint, and block, and board that go to build the temple for the truth. More cutting; more discarding; more ouch. Aquarian Christians are tough people. And they do it all themselves. There are laws that govern all things, and those that govern the spirit are more exacting than any others. Those things which go to build up our spiritual temple, which being “fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21), must be planed to perfect smoothness. There must be nothing either extraneous or insufficient. Balance, harmony, and “thusness” are requisite. Like Goldilocks’ porridge, chair and bed, we must be “just right.” Then God the Truth will dwell in us as in a temple.

The chisel, line, the plummet and the saw all have their uses in the workshop of the mind. The chisel or adze is much like the axe, but smaller in scope and finer in detail, removing the small irregularities from the building parts. The line makes sure all are straight and true, fitting together seamlessly to make a perfect unity. The plummet or plumb-line tests the perpendicular balance seeing that nothing leans right or left, forward or backward, but is completely “true” in alignment. The saw ensures that the size of each part is exact, that all which is unneeded is eliminated.

All the tools enumerated are powers of the mind by which the mind itself is “builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22).

And then this ladder with its trinity of steps, faith, hope and love; on it we climb up to the dome of purity in life. The nine tools when perfectly applied are also nine steps in the ladder upon which we climb to higher life. The final three steps are faith, hope, and love.

Faith is not simple belief or blind trust. *Pistis* means strong conviction and confidence in the truth that is born of experience. It also means fidelity to that conviction and further means to be in harmony with the truth and live in conformity with it. A minor meaning is to be a friend of truth.

Hope (*elpis*) means to look forward with anticipation and expectation and confidence, to eagerly desire what is to come.

Love (*agape*) is a deep and profound pull toward something, and in Greek always means a drawing to spirit, not mere friendship (*phileo*) or physical attraction (*eros*).

It means to feel that something is profoundly dear to oneself. The Hebrew, *agab*, means to think on constantly and yearn after. Literally, it means “to breathe after,” to live for, to orient the entire life toward the object. Obviously God is the only object worthy of *agape* or capable of responding to it.

The first nine steps are purificatory and correctional. The last three are focusing the whole mind and heart on God, fulfilling the commandment: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37).

By this ladder “we climb up to the dome of purity in life.”

And on the twelve-step ladder we ascend until we reach the pinnacle of that which life is spent to build—the Temple of Perfected Man. We spend our entire life, every moment of our time and every atom of our strength, to build the Temple of Perfected Man, the Temple of the Christ. The effort is great, but still finite, whereas the result is infinite: Infinity Itself.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).

Chapter Twenty-One

A royal prince of India, Ravanna of Orissa in the south, was at the Jewish feast. Ravanna was a man of wealth; and he was just, and with a band of Brahmic priests sought wisdom in the West. When Jesus stood among the Jewish priests and read and spoke, Ravanna heard and was amazed. And when he asked who Jesus was, from whence he came and what he was, chief Hillel said,

We call this child the Day Star from on high, for he has come to bring to men a light, the light of life; to lighten up the way of men and to redeem his people, Israel.

And Hillel told Ravanna all about the child; about the prophecies concerning him; about the wonders of the night when he was born; about the visit of the magian priests; about the way in which he was protected from the wrath of evil men; about his flight to Egypt-land, and how he then was serving with his father as a carpenter in Nazareth. (Aquarian Gospel 21:1-7)

Orissa is the country just south of Bengal on the east coast of India. Its renown comes from the pilgrimage city of Jagannath Puri. Originally the mammoth temple was dedicated to Shiva, but it long ago became a temple of Krishna.

Although it is well known that Buddhist missionaries were trickling through the Mediterranean world at that time (to no effect), it is surprising that Brahmins were coming from India in search of wisdom. Perhaps they had been told of Jesus by the three sages that came at his birth.

We see from the words of Hillel to Ravanna that already Jesus was considered the Messiah by many.

Ravanna was entranced, and asked to know the way to Nazareth, that he might go and honor such a one as son of God. And with his gorgeous train he journeyed on the way and came to Nazareth of Galilee.

He found the object of his search engaged in building dwellings for the sons of men. And when he first saw Jesus he was climbing up a twelve step ladder, and he carried in his hands a compass, square and axe.

Ravanna said, All hail, most favored son of heaven! And at the inn Ravanna made a feast for all the people of the town; and Jesus and his parents were honored guests. (Aquarian Gospel 21:8-13)

It would not take long for all Galilee to learn about the men from India who came to learn from the young Jesus, and in a matter of weeks the entire country would know. We should keep all this in mind when considering the rejection and execution of Jesus. This is why Jesus told Pilate: "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin" (John 19:11).

For certain days Ravanna was a guest in Joseph's home on Marmion Way; he sought to learn the secret of the wisdom of the son; but it was all too great for him.

And then he asked that he might be the patron of the child; might take him to the East where he could learn the wisdom of the Brahms.

And Jesus longed to go that he might learn; and after many days his parents gave consent. Then, with proud heart, Ravanna with his train, began the journey towards the rising sun; and after many days they crossed the Sind, and reached the province of Orissa, and the palace of the prince.

The Brahmic priests were glad to welcome home the prince; with favor they received the Jewish boy. And Jesus was accepted as a pupil in the temple Jagannath; and here learned the Vedas and the Manic laws. The Brahmic masters wondered at the clear conceptions of the child, and often were amazed when he explained to them the meaning of the laws. (Aquarian Gospel 21:14-20)

True wisdom is not learned in a short time. For one thing, the mind must undergo a profound transformation just to intellectually grasp the monumental spiritual truths taught by the enlightened Masters. That is why Jesus told his hearers: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

Jesus already knew much of the wisdom of India, for it was part of the knowledge of the Essenes, but now he was in one of the greatest centers of Sanatana Dharma in the land where he could learn the sacred scriptures of which the Vedas and Laws of Manu were foundational, but only a part.

Here, too, we see that Jesus was more often the teacher of those that would teach him.

Chapter Twenty-Two

One of the more inexplicable traits of the Western mind that can be traced back for thousands of years is the idea that skepticism is sophisticated, that even a person who has faith will somehow keep a tinge of disbelief or suspicion in spiritual matters, particularly in relation to the “supernatural.” Somehow this is thought to mark out a level-headed person, free of gullibility. “Blind faith” is just about the worst expletive such urbane and worldly-wise can toss about.

The Romans particularly prided themselves on cynical self-satirization (not from others, you understand, only from themselves) which of course extended to their religion, and they were wont to say that nobody really believed in “the old gods” anymore, but that the Roman religion was a link with their heritage, a force for social cohesion, and should therefore not be dislodged. How condescending and tolerant! “How I envy the simple peasant his simple faith” Has been a lament in the mouths of such jaded intellects for the last several centuries. Ah, the burden of superior intelligence. Some, such as Thomas Hardy, even wrote poems about it.

Pilate was one of these uppercrust unbelievers. When Jesus told him: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth,... Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out” (John 18:37-38). He did not even pause to see if Jesus would give a fatuous answer he could smirk at and pass off in scornful silence or with a telling *bon mot*. (Perhaps he could not take the risk?)

Nearly twenty years before Jesus spoke with Pilate, he had lived in the great temple of Jagannath in Puri (Orissa). There one of his closest friends was a Brahmin priest named Lamaas.

Among the priests of Jagannath was one who loved the Jewish boy. Lamaas Bramas was the name by which the priest was known. One day as Jesus and Lamaas walked alone in plaza Jagannath, Lamaas said, My Jewish master, what is truth?

And Jesus said, Truth is the only thing that changes not. In all the world there are two things; the one is truth; the other falsehood is; and truth is that which is, and falsehood that which seems to be. Now truth is aught, and has no cause, and yet it is the cause of everything. Falsehood is naught, and yet it is the manifest of aught. Whatever has been made will be unmade; that which begins must end. All things that can be seen by human eyes are manifests of aught, are naught, and so must pass away. The things we see are but reflexes just appearing, while the ethers vibrate so and so, and when conditions change they disappear. The Holy Breath is truth; is that which was, and is, and evermore shall be; it cannot change nor pass away. (Aquarian Gospel 22:1-10)

I challenge anyone to find any writing of religion, philosophy, or holy scripture that says this any better. Most of them do not even say these vital truths at all.

The hymn says: "Change and decay all around I see." Who can say this is not his experience as well? What does not change? Jesus says that truth does not change, but we come back to the question: *What* is truth? It is true that I am writing these words. Once I stop, it will no longer be true. It is true that one and one are two, but what happens when all relativity is resolved back into the One and the possibility of "one" as an object is no longer there, what to say of "two"? Yes; only the One is true. That is why in India God is called *Sat*, the Real, the True.

In all the world there are two things; the one is truth; the other falsehood is; and truth is that which is, and falsehood that which seems to be. Books upon books have been written on this subject. Life is like a motion picture. When the light shines on the screen we see colors, forms, and motion. People are born, live, and die right before our gaze. But they do not. Everything we see is only a modification of the single beam of light coming from the projector. But it passes through the film and overlays the screen as all we behold. When the movie is over the light is turned off and only the blank screen remains, unchanged. So God is the reality that underlies all illusion projected by our mind onto the screen of our awareness or by the cosmic will of God upon Himself. God is the great Magician, the great Illusionist, and we are little apprentices in magic and illusion.

No one denounces motion pictures as lies, false though they be. Why? Because they are not meant to deceive anyone. Everyone in the theater knows that only the screen is there. We, too, deep within know this about the world, but we have blocked it out of our consciousness for time out of mind. The illusion is not evil, it is just illusion. And it has a purpose. Life is an educational training film if we will observe it and learn as we should. All about us is a mere appearance, but an appearance with an intelligent purpose which we can learn and benefit from. Becoming able to see through the illusion to the reality behind it is one of its major purposes.

Now truth is aught, and has no cause, and yet it is the cause of everything. Usually we think of "aught" as meaning "anything" in an intentionally vague sense. But it also means *one*. When I was a child, older people sometimes spoke of the year 1917 as "nineteen aught and seven." So Jesus is saying that God is the One that is the Cause of the Many (everything). Yet, God has no cause whatsoever, but is Self-existent. If we look to the depths of anything we will discover God as its source. Even evil? Yes, for evil is not an entity in itself but a state of the distortion of good. All things do originate in God and return to God whether that is readily perceptible or not.

Falsehood is naught, and yet it is the manifest of aught. This affirms what I have just written, but is even broader. All that (at least in appearance) is not God is Zero. That is, it has no self-existence, but is only a modification of That Which Is. Why does Jesus call it falsehood? Because *we* see it falsely. If we "see true" we *will* see the True. Jesus is telling us that the world is real and true because it emanates from God; but our interpretation is false, so to us it is falsehood. But only in our own

minds. If we see with the divine eye it will be seen as a revelation of Truth. So we should not reflexively turn away from or push anything away, but try to see its true nature. Then we may turn or push away, but with a right understanding. The Bhagavad Gita sums it up rightly: We should see all things in God and God in all things.

Whatever has been made will be unmade; that which begins must end.” Sri Ma Anandamayi often said: “Getting implies losing,” and also emphasized that whatever has a beginning must have an ending. If we can really hold this perspective we will live our life in a perfectly realistic (truthful) way. We have to understand what is eternal and what is temporal and value and react to it accordingly. A poem was popular in the nineteenth and early twentieth century about a king who had a ring engraved with the words: “Even this shall pass away.” Throughout his life when bad and good times came, he was always saved from becoming lost in the experience of them and over-reacting to them by looking at the ring and being reminded that “even this shall pass away.” Finally the time of his death came. His hands were folded on his chest, and a ray of light struck the ring, drawing his attention to the inscription: “Even *this* shall pass away.”

None of these things Jesus is saying is said for the mere sake of intellectuality and philosophizing. It is intended to help us live our life meaningfully.

All things that can be seen by human eyes are manifests of aught, are naught, and so must pass away. This perspective is perfection. “All that we see or seem” (the opening words of a poem by Edgar Allan Poe) are manifestations of God, but their momentary appearance is nothing in the final analysis. Since they must pass away, as sensible people we will not try to make them everlasting. We may use or enjoy them, but we know they will not be with us forever. Grabbing and holding on to them as though they could ever be ours is to court frustration and misery.

The things we see are but reflexes just appearing, while the ethers vibrate so and so, and when conditions change they disappear. All “things” internal and external, including emotions and thoughts, are waves or whorls in the vast energy field of creation that is the Holy Breath (Holy Spirit). They rise (appear) on the surface of the sea of relative existence, remain for a time, and then resolve (disappear) back into the sea. The sea alone remains forever, for:

The Holy Breath is truth; is that which was, and is, and evermore shall be; it cannot change nor pass away. In other words, all that was, is and shall be are really manifests of the Holy Breath, the Divine Power of God, the Holy Spirit Mother. If we can unite our consciousness with the Holy Breath through meditation we will be enabled to see the “truth” of all things and not be distracted or confused by their “untruth,” their mere appearance. This will be immortality.

One of the greatest mystics of the West is completely unrecognized because of her literary reputation. Emily Bronte was a remarkable self-developed mystic whose poems contain some of the best descriptions of mystical experience, including the state of samadhi. Shortly before dying of tuberculosis (a death she had predicted at the age of eight or nine), she wrote this poem:

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And Faith shines equal, arming me from Fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life, that in me has rest,
As I, undying Life, have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thy infinity,
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of Immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and moon were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou—thou art Being and Breath,
And what thou art may never be destroyed.

This, too, cannot be expressed any better than it is here by the Yogini of Haworth.

Lamaas said, You answer well; now, what is man? And Jesus said, Man is the truth and falsehood strangely mixed. Man is the Breath made flesh; so truth and falsehood are conjoined in him; and they strive, and naught goes down and man as truth abides. (Aquarian Gospel 22:11-13)

Before Lamaas asked the question, Jesus himself in his incarnation as David asked “What is man?” in two of the Psalms (Psalms 8:4; 144:3). The full answer would fill many pages, but Jesus states the facts most relevant to those seeking Christhood.

Man is the truth and falsehood strangely mixed. A human being is an immortal, unconditioned spirit encased in bodies formed of conditioned, and conditioning, matter. In the earlier part of Lamaas’ questioning of Jesus regarding the nature of Truth (Aquarian Gospel 22:2-10) he learned that truth and falsehood are found together in this world. Yet not only the world: each of us is also a mixture of truth and falsehood, of spirit and matter. And it certainly is strange.

When we realize that we are a combination of truth and untruth (relatively speaking), we can be vigilant and discriminate between the times we are manifesting the truth or the untruth of ourselves and foster or censor our thoughts, words and deeds accordingly. If we pursue this diligently, then in time the “death” of falsehood shall be “swallowed up in” the “victory” of truth. (“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (I Corinthians 15:54). Until then, knowing about this mixture will help us to understand and deal with ourselves and with others, as well as the world itself. For one thing, we should expect that contradiction and inconsistency will arise in ourselves, in others and in the world. Our reaction should be one of attempting correction, not passively accepting or bemoaning. We are not slaves; we are masters-in-training, and this mixture is meant for our eventual betterment.

Man is the Breath made flesh. We are the outbreathed breaths of God, united to body-vehicles through which we are to accomplish our evolution to Christ Consciousness. In Lamaas’ prior questioning Jesus explained that what begins must end. Since our embodiment has begun it will end; but our nature as rays of God will not. So we need to do two things: recognize that our eternity is the real aspect of us, and work to eliminate the consciousness of the false so the real shall be revealed in us.

There is more to this. Jesus did not come to earth to convince us that we are miserable sinners who deserve everlasting damnation. Just the opposite: he came to prove that we are manifestations of divinity who have lost our way. But when we turn back into the right way through heeding his teaching we can move on toward the manifestation of our innate Christhood. The unworthy teachers of Judaism at that time hated this truth as much as the Churchians of today. And so the following occurred:

Jesus said: “I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I

said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:30-36).

This is the teaching of Jesus. We are gods, sons of God, and intended to demonstrate that just as did Jesus. Yes, in a sense we are all incarnations of God, and should live accordingly. That is why sin is so outrageous: it is not our nature. If we were sinners by nature then what else could we do but sin? What complaint would God have? How could he expect anything else from us? The Abusive Cosmic Father that Churchianity presents to us says that we are "but dust" and utterly corrupt and sinful from before our birth, and then proceeds to fume and rave at us, deprecating and condemning us to everlasting hell if we do not turn away from what it is our nature to do, a nature he created. He tells us that we are "offensive" to him, a "stench" in his nostrils, and we had better straighten up or else. But crookedness, he, insists, is our nature. Could we do otherwise than be crooked? I knew an abusive father that used to tell his children he was going to beat them until they wet their pants and then beat them for that. This is the God Churchians would have us believe in, and the hideous image they want us to have of ourselves. But Jesus taught otherwise.

So truth and falsehood are conjoined in him. We are a combination of truth and falsehood because the Holy Breath, who gives us "birth" into this world, Herself manifests in this mixed manner. But She does so for a purpose, which is that:

They strive, and naught goes down and man as truth abides. The most perfect exposition of the nature and destiny of humanity is the Bhagavad Gita, the most influential scripture of India. The Gita is a conversation that takes place on a battlefield in northern India just before the Great Indian (Mahabharata) War. The first chapter is a description of the forces drawn up for battle, and is intended as a symbolic picture of what goes on within the person who has evolved enough consciousness to be galled at the contradictions of positive and negative within himself, and who has developed enough will to intervene and begin working for the defeat of the negative and the ascendancy of the good. We all have to do it. That is why Jesus said he came to bring a sword, not a sword of earthly battle but the sword of illumination that would cut away the bonds of ignorance and set us free in the liberation of Spirit.

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). "Earth" is the state of good and evil, truth and false, being inextricably bound up together. Most religion tries to pacify this state and make it acceptable and even desirable to people. But the wise refuse pacification and engage in the inner warfare that alone can bring peace through the elimination of evil and untruth. (The wise do not try to reform others; only themselves.) Illumined consciousness is the sword that vanquishes the enemy and establishes real peace within. In Indian symbolism the Holy Breath is depicted as Durga and Kali, both holding swords that represent *prajna*, pure consciousness. To make this clear, Kali's

sword always has an eye drawn upon it.

We are all destined to win the battle, so we need not shrink back from the striving in which the “naught” of illusion (and sin and evil *are* illusions) sinks away from our consciousness, subconscious, and superconscious, and we as embodiments of the Truth, of God, remain. Thus it really has always been, so that state is not attained, just revealed as all that obscure it is dispelled.

This is the glorious message Jesus came to bring us, the revelation of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

Again Lamaas asked, What do you say of power? And Jesus said, It is a manifest; is the result of force; it is but naught; it is illusion, nothing more. Force changes not, but power changes as the ethers change.

Force is the will of God and is omnipotent, and power is that will in manifest, directed by the Breath. There is power in the winds, a power in the waves, a power in the lightning’s stroke, a power in the human arm, a power in the eye.

The ethers cause these powers to be, and thought of Elohim, of angel, man, or other thinking thing, directs the force; when it has done its work the power is no more. (Aquarian Gospel 22:14-18)

Just as there is the silent word in the depths of the mind that precedes the spoken word from the mouth, so Jesus, following the Essene tradition as presented by Elihu in the tenth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel, makes the distinction by using the terms Force and Power. Force is the symbolic expression Jesus uses for the Father-God, indicating that, even though the Father is transcendent and has given all things (relativity) into the hands of the Son, he should not be thought of as passive or inactive. All things are done by the Father, but “done” in the sense that he is the Will, the Unmoving Mover through the agency of the Son and the Holy Breath.

In the body, the brain seemingly does nothing; but without its impulse not a single muscle moves. The brain is the actor, though only through the agency of the nerves and muscles. The same is true of the Father, Who therefore is Force, though not Power. It is Power that carries out the intentions of Force. I know this sounds like a lot of word-juggling, but it is important, as it is tied up with the statement of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita: “He who perceives inaction in action and action in inaction—such a man is wise among men” (Bhagavad Gita 4:18).

In contemporary Indian thought it is usually considered that Brahman is absolutely inactive and uninvolved in the evolving universe. Some even believe that Brahman is so absolutely transcendent that he may not even know the universe exists! Jesus wanted to explain to Lamaas, as they walked in the plaza of the great temple of Jagannath (Krishna) in Puri, the correct perspective on these things. For even at the time of Jesus the vision of the Vedic sages had become eroded through the philosophizing and interpretation of the ignorant, and needed a refurbishing and restoration (which was no more palatable to the religious authorities in India

than their equivalents in Israel. Both reacted murderously).

Power is a manifestation of Force, a result of the Divine Will; yet “it is but naught; it is illusion, nothing more.” This concept is current in Indian thought today: the dynamic power (Mahashakti, Prakriti) Jesus calls the Holy Breath is the substance of which all “things” are made; yet it is ultimately illusory. A common misperception regarding the state of illumined teachers such as Shankara when they say that creation, and Power Itself, is “unreal” is that it is non-existent. This is erroneous. A hallucination is unreal, but it truly exists in the mind of the hallucinator. Even a thought exists, even if it is confined to the mind. It is an impulse in the energy field that is the mind. A misperception exists in the same way. So to say a thing is unreal is the not the same as saying it does not exist. An artificial flower is unreal, but it exists. As Krishna also says, it is great wisdom to know the meaning of “is” and “is not.”

What is real, and what is unreal? Jesus presents the way to distinguish them when he says: “Force changes not, but Power changes as the ethers change.” God in his essential nature as the Father is unchanging, but the Holy Breath constantly changes in its manifestations as the ethers, the building blocks of matter such as the atomic particles, join and disjoin in ever-changing and ever-varying recombinations.

Force is the will of God and is omnipotent, and power is that will in manifest, directed by the Breath. Divine Intelligence and Divine Energy bring about creation and its evolution. By the will of the Father, the illumination of the Son, and the power of the Holy Spirit, all things consist. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

Whatever we experience outwardly are rays of the Power of God, the Holy Breath.

There is power in the winds, a power in the waves, a power in the lightning’s stroke, a power in the human arm, a power in the eye. Just as electricity passes through a series of transformers that step down the force of the current so it can power a light bulb without exploding it or burning it out, in the same way there is a chain of ever-lesser energies behind all that appears in the material world. “The ethers cause these powers to be, and thought of Elohim, of angel, man, or other thinking thing, directs the force.” Here we have four steps: 1) will, 2) thought, 3) power and 4) ethers. Although God is at the top of the chain, the seven Elohim, angels, and even human beings participate in the movings of the ethers and the powers. This is what psychosomatic disease, and its reverse, psychosomatic health, are about; why when we see attractive food the digestive juices start to flow, and when we encounter fear-inspiring or unpleasant situations the glands start excreting appropriate hormones.

“Thinking makes it so” is a reality for those who have opened the inner potencies of their minds. Mastery is the lesson we learn as we pass from form to form. (See *Robe of Light*.) And thought is the instrument of our mastery, not random mind chatter, but real Thought: extensions of our will empowered by our spiritual evolution.

When it has done its work the power is no more. We climb a stair until we get to the top. Then we get off and leave it behind. The same is true of power, but with a difference: the stair remains when we abandon it, but in the case of our personal evolution, the power “is no more” because it becomes transmuted and resolved back into Force, into Divine Consciousness.

Again Lamaas asked, **Of understanding what have you to say? And Jesus said, It is the rock on which man builds himself; it is the gnosis of the aught and of the naught, of falsehood and of truth. It is the knowledge of the lower self; the sensing of the powers of man himself. (Aquarian Gospel 22:19-21)**

Our English word “understanding” Has a simple meaning, but in the Bible it has many facets that we should consider, even though Dowling is clothing his impressions of Jesus’ Aramaic speech directly into English.

Sunesis is the Greek term translated “understanding.” It does not mean a simple understanding, but intelligence and its exercise in the sense of putting the factors together to come to an insight into something. It includes intellect, perception, thought, knowledge and understanding. Interestingly, it comes from the root word *sunieimi*, which means to draw wise consideration from thought, but also means to *act* accordingly. Theoretical understanding is not sufficient; there must be a corresponding course of action. The basic root of *sunesis* is *sun*, which means union or alignment with an object. Understanding, then, comes about through entering into the being of an object, to be fully synchronized with it. It is not without significance that in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali it is stated that to know something we must become one with it. *Sun* also means to have a complete comprehension of something. So full knowledge comes about through oneness.

When we realize that all is One, that there is nothing that is not a manifestation of Consciousness, then we understand how it is really possible to become one with anything, that there are no “objects” that are not extensions of the Eternal Subject: Spirit. Understanding, then, is intuition that illumines the intellect. It is a direct effect of meditation, and is impossible without meditation.

It is the rock on which man builds himself. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house” (I Peter 2:5). Religion is continually being presented as a matter of “believing” or “feeling” in some sort of “spiritual” way, but Jesus tells us otherwise. Without illumination of intellect proceeding from the intuition opened by meditation, we are without a foundation on which to build ourselves—and we must build *ourselves*; no one can do it for us. Here again we see the fact that spiritual life is based on intelligence and is in no way the vague, dreamy pseudo-spirituality of popular religion. Spiritual life is impossible without both a well-functioning intellect and a well-functioning intuition.

It is the gnosis of the aught and of the naught, of falsehood and of truth. I have given a definition of understanding from the perspective of the Greek text of the New Testament that is useful, but here Jesus defines understanding in its practical manifestation. “It is the gnosis of the aught and of the naught, of falsehood and of

truth.” In the section *What is Truth?* we have already considered the meaning of “aught” and “naught.” Aught means both One and something that has substance—that really exists. Naught is nothing, is basically nonexistent.

Understanding is the comprehension of what is real or unreal, true or false. This has deep metaphysical roots and means much more than the simple meanings which we attribute to these words which have both superficial and profound meanings and applications. But that, too, we have already discussed, so I will not repeat it here.

Understanding is Gnosis—direct experience resulting in direct knowledge.

It is the knowledge of the lower self. In *The Two Selves* we considered Jesus’ definition of the lower and higher selves, so that, too, I will not repeat. What is noteworthy here is that Jesus does not say that understanding is knowledge of the higher self, but rather it is knowledge of the lower self. How is this? *Because the lower self can only be known through the higher self.* So if we really know the lower self it is evidence that we also know the higher self. This is no small point. Also, the higher self is on our side, whereas the lower self has become corrupted into opposing us, and is usually now our enemy. What a terrible schizophrenia this is. But it is nonetheless true and must be faced and dealt with. We have to know the enemy; it is just that simple. In this case, though, when we know the enemy we will discover that the lower self needs healing rather than defeat or elimination. In time the inimical lower self can be restored to friendship. This is a major insight.

[It is] the sensing of the powers of man himself. Saint Paul wrote that “we are more than conquerors” (Romans 8:37). We have the innate power to order our lives and ascend to divine consciousness. Yet if we look at the Bible for confirmation of Saint Paul’s statement we will find none. Instead we will be told that just about everything but we ourselves has the power to overcome evil. We are made to believe in our fundamental helplessness. This produces the soul-killing dependency that is the bedrock of most of this world’s religions. We are always being told that someone else has to do the needful for us, that at the best we can triumph through the agency of something or someone else. This is, as I say, deadly to the soul.

Jesus came to awaken humanity to its potential and self-sufficiency, but Churchianity does just the opposite, telling us we are weak and miserable sinners who can do nothing for ourselves but beg for mercy. Invaders of a country often engage in this type of propaganda, pounding away at the conquered people with statements that they are incompetent and weak and thus unable to throw off their oppression. The religious enemies of our souls do the same. India was effectively subjected to this evil brainwashing for generations in order to paralyze their wills and prevent their rising up to free themselves from domination and exploitation. I personally knew Indians who really believed that India and its people were hopelessly backward and ineffectual. They seemed blind to the incredible progress India had made after gaining its independence. In 1968 a friend of mine was told by an Indian student in Illinois: “In my country the people are so incompetent they can’t even make a pin!” Yet at that time India was one of only five countries in the

world that could manufacture jet engines. And India was more self-sufficient economically than just about any country in the world except for the United States. Indeed there were problems and frustrations, but India had leapt from virtual feudalism and the domination of one thousand years (seven hundred of the Moslems and three hundred of the British, French and Portuguese) into a leading world power. But the evil conditioning hung on in the minds and hearts of so many people. Now that darkness is lifting, but it has taken two to three generations to do so.

Evil religion does the same thing to people, making them believe in their unworthiness, their sinfulness, their weakness, and their futility. "Without us you can do nothing" they trumpet into the ears of their adherents, turning them into spiritual slaves, degrading them for their own exaltation. Jesus had fought against this "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12) when he challenged the religionists who objected to his saying that he was a Son of God, reminding them that David had quoted God as saying to human beings: "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High" (Psalms 82:6. See John 10:30-36.).

Jesus tells us that understanding, not error or arrogance, includes "the sensing of the powers of man himself." We must know our divine potential, and furthermore we must realize that it is the potential of everyone around us, that we are all gods in the making however well we may be hiding it. We need to have confidence in ourselves and our fellow humans, otherwise we are not having confidence in God. As one woman said some time ago about herself: "My God does not make junk!" The Prodigal Son's conduct was not very wise or worthy, but it could not change the fact of his sonship; never. He may have wasted his inheritance, but he could not dissipate his sonship. Moreover, he had the good sense and the ability to arise and go to his father. Which he did. He did not send a letter asking for the money to get home, nor did he find someone who would take him home. He stood up on his feet and went. There is no other way. It is all in our power. That is how God set things up for our benefit and we neither can nor should evade it.

"I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things" (II Corinthians 7:16). "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward" (Hebrews 10:35).

Again Lamaas asked, Of wisdom what have you to say? And Jesus said, It is the consciousness that man is aught; that God and man are one; that naught is naught; that power is but illusion; that heaven and earth and hell are not above, around, below, but in; which in the light of aught becomes the naught, and God is all. (Aquarian Gospel 22:22-24)

In the Greek texts of the Old Testament "apocrypha" many of the books are called "wisdom books" dealing with Wisdom as a divine power, even Divine Being. In early Christianity Christ was often equated with Wisdom.

The Greek texts of the Old and New Testaments use the word *sophia* for wisdom. It does mean wisdom, but comes from the root word *sophos*, which literally

means *clear* in the sense of unobstructed transparency. From clarity of inner sight comes wisdom. Again we find ourselves in the practical realm of meditation. As with Understanding, Wisdom is not abstract but eminently practical, for sophia also is derived from *phronimos*, which means practical skill or acumen. Most interesting is another root of sophia: *phren*, which means to master or discipline, implying that only the disciplined and self-controlled can attain wisdom. And it particularly means control of the emotions and senses. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 8:8).

It is the consciousness that man is aught. Note, Jesus is not speaking of belief or acceptance of an external authority regarding the nature of man, but “the consciousness that man is aught.” This is real wisdom for it is experience of things as they are. Without the cultivation of consciousness through meditation, how could this arise? It cannot.

Again, “aught” means both one and substantial, actually existing. It may seem hard to think that anyone could not believe in their own reality, but if we look around us we will see that most people utterly ignore the truth of their being and live as though they were not what they actually are. Instead they live as “nothings” in the pursuit of nothing. Also, “aught” means that we are unities, not dualities as we presently think and live. Now Jesus tells us of a further unity.

[It is the consciousness] that God and man are one. “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). This is the consciousness of Christhood, of the state that is Christhood. In Spirit there is absolute unity. God and man are one in the Oneness that is God. Now, there is a difference between being one with God and *identical* with God. The wave is one with the ocean, but it is not identical with, the same as, the ocean. The ocean is the wave, but the wave is not the ocean. There is perfect unity, but there is a distinction between God and man. It is crucial for us to realize this, otherwise we fall into the sophistry of “I am God.” Certainly God can say of Himself: “I am God; and beside Me there is no other.” But man cannot. They are undeniably one, but the oneness comes from God’s Being.

[It is the consciousness] that naught is naught. “It is a wise child that knows its own father,” and it is a wise child that knows who is *not* his father, including himself. To see Nothing for what it is, is no small accomplishment. This, too, is not intellectual only, but a matter of interior consciousness. It is foolish to tell people to stop running after illusions when illusion is all they know. True spiritual teaching imparts the way for people to know for themselves the actuality of things, to truly see what is real and what is unreal. And we need not define it for them; they will see for themselves: everything but God is naught.

[It is the consciousness] that power is but illusion. The Divine Energy, the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit, is real, but She manifests as illusion (power). At first the illusion bewilders us, but in time it becomes our instructor leading us to wisdom and thus beyond itself to the Son and thence to the Father. Again, through meditation we experience the Real. Then, outside of meditation when we experience the unreal we shall know it for what it is and no longer be confused by it, but rather uplifted by

the very thing that once cast us down. When we understand the illusory nature of phenomena we do not reject or turn from it, but learn from it, for that is its purpose. This insight will deliver us from great anxiety and fear. No matter how unpleasant a dream may be, when we know it is a dream we are not distressed by it. We may even laugh at it. And even better, we may decide to awaken from it. But first we must understand that it is only a dream. Our dreams are not real, but *we* are. The cosmic dream is not real, but the Cosmic Dreamer *is*. We and God are dreaming, but God knows it and we usually do not. But when the divine image matures in us, then we, too, shall know the dream for what it is, and the Great Dreamer and ourselves, the little dreamers, for what we are. As Tennyson wrote:

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

What God and man IS.

[It is the consciousness] that heaven and earth and hell are not above, around, below, but in [us]. This is a remarkable truth. We sit in the motion picture theater and seem to be on the ocean, on top of mountains, or speeding over the plains in the vast outdoors and yet we are tucked away inside in our theater seats. In the same way all experience occurs within, even though the experienced may be outside us. Yet, since space is part of the great illusion, it is correct to say that everything is inside us, in the part of us that transcends “in” and “out.” There is a further meaning to this. Heaven, earth and hell are essentially states of consciousness that are symbolized by the external forms the Holy Breath projects onto the screen of our awareness. We choose whether we live in heaven, earth or hell by the attunement of our consciousness. It is all up to us. “Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things” (II Timothy 2:7).

Lamaas asked, Pray, what is faith? And Jesus said, Faith is the surety of the omnipotence of God and man; the certainty that man will reach the deific life.

Salvation is a ladder reaching from the heart of man to heart of God. It has three steps; Belief is first, and this is what man thinks, perhaps, is truth. And faith is next, and this is what man knows is truth.

Fruition is the last, and this is man himself, the truth. Belief is lost in faith; and in fruition faith is lost; and man is saved when he has reached deific life; when he and God are one. (Aquarian Gospel 22:25-31)

Most of what is written about faith in religious books miss the mark because the word itself is not understood. In modern English “faith” means believing in something for which there is no substantial proof. But the Greek word *pistis*, used

in the New Testament, means stability in personal knowledge drawn from one's own experience. It further means to be loyal to that knowledge by living in accordance with it. *Pistis* also means to be confident in our experiential knowledge. Faith cannot be "awakened" in a person by reading books, listening to discourses, or engaging in discussions. It comes only from within, from his own self. Saint Paul underlined this when he wrote that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Note that he says *substance* and *evidence*. Faith is not an insubstantial idea. This is no matter of mere intellectual acceptance or emotional hope. Faith is proof that a person has experienced the reality of something; it is not a mere conviction based on reason or feeling.

Why, then, did Jesus say: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29)? This is continually used in exoteric Christianity to bully doubters into "faith" and to assure blind followers that they are blessed in their blindness. Here is how the Aquarian Gospel tells it:

"Now, Thomas, had not seen the Lord since he had risen from the dead, and when the ten averred that they had seen and talked with him he said, Until I see the nail prints in his hands and feet, the spear wound in his side, and talk with him as I have talked with him before, I cannot have a reason to believe that he is risen from the dead. At Simon's house in Bethany the men from Galilee had met. It was the evening of the first day of the week, and on the morrow all would turn their faces toward their homes. The eleven apostles all were there: the doors were closed and barred, and Jesus came and said, Peace be to all! And then he said to Thomas, Friend, you do not know that I have risen from the dead; the time has come for you to know. Come here and see the nail prints in my hands, the spear wound in my side, and talk with me as you have often talked with me. And Thomas came and saw and then exclaimed, My master, and my Lord! I do not now believe, I know that you are risen from the dead. And Jesus said, Because you see me you believe, and blessed are your eyes; but blessed thrice are they who see me not and yet believe. Then Jesus vanished from their sight, but the disciples were established in their faith" (Aquarian Gospel 177:20-29).

Jesus is speaking of faith in his resurrection; this is not a blanket approval of all belief whatsoever. Furthermore, he is speaking of those living at that time. His words have nothing to do with future "believers" who never met him. Those who had met Jesus and claimed to become his disciples should have believed in his resurrection because he had told them he would rise from the dead. Also they should have believed the other disciples, knowing their reliability. But most of all, they should have believed because their intuition should have been developed enough for them to know when someone was speaking the truth to them. They should have been able to intuit the fact that Jesus was alive. How often we hear of people reported dead and those close to them declaring that they *know* (not just believe) that they are alive. And they later are found to be living. In the same way many people know inwardly that someone close to them has died, and it is found to

be so. For example, one of my uncles was killed by an automobile colliding with the horse he was riding at night. Several miles away two of my cousins were driving down a country road when they saw a brilliant light flash up into the sky. One turned to the other and exclaimed: "Herbert's dead!" And so he was, having been killed at that very moment.

Jesus was not just a teacher, he was an opener of consciousness, and those who were his worthy disciples should have known even without anyone telling them that he had arisen. His living presence shone throughout the world on that Easter dawn, and the sensitive picked it up. Thomas' problem was not doubt but imperception. Blessedness is not in blind faith but in a knowledge that goes beyond normal knowing, reaching into the higher levels of existence where the unknown becomes known.

Many things are true, and therefore there can be faith about many things, so Jesus outlines what worthwhile and illuminative faith is by listing what a worthy believer *knows*.

The surety of the omnipotence of God and man. This is astonishing truth, rarely spoken anywhere. Firstly, Jesus speaks of faith as surety, as unshakable knowledge that can be demonstrated. Even the religious bullies want us to believe in the omnipotence of God, otherwise how could he scare us and eventually take vengeance on us if we ignore or disobey his representatives? But to believe in the omnipotence of man, of ourselves, this is faith indeed. Yet, how else could it be if God and man are truly one? And they are.

Throughout the ages we read of human beings who seemed as gods to their contemporaries because of their great power, even omnipotence. In truth, many of the ancient "gods" really were human beings who had realized their full potential as Sons of God. Many of those believed to be incarnations of God Himself really were perfected beings who returned to earth for the deliverance of others, and many who in religions that insisted on a unique state of ultimate exaltedness for their founders were classified as saints, arhats, or bodhisattvas were omnipotent Sons of God, fully equal to those founders. But human classification means but little; and it means absolutely nothing to those who have heard the divine decree: "Thou art my Son" (Psalms 2:7).

Sons of God have appeared in all places of the world beyond number, and most beyond human memory, but India is a virtual factory for Sons of God.

The certainty that man will reach the deific life. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). Spiritual life is more a matter of unfoldment and revealing rather than attainment. Those with Christine faith are certain that they and all others shall reach the deific life, which in Greek is called *theosis*: divinization or deification. This certainly runs counter to the religions that want to keep us penned up forever in some heavenly realm where we shall everlastingly flatter the insatiable ego of some deity with ceaseless praise and adulation. It is not to be wondered at that those who teach the true gospel of

Christ, of divine sonship, are execrated and even slain by the “righteous” of such religions. But truth cannot be changed. “For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalms 119:89).

It is also to be understood that faith manifests in life, in this instance in our perpetual striving to “reach the deific life.” This is salvation. “For by grace are ye saved through faith;... for we are his workmanship” (Ephesians 2:8,10). It is a matter of nature.

Salvation is a ladder reaching from the heart of man to heart of God. We start out with humanity and end up with divinity, having ascended from “earth” to “heaven,” from finite human consciousness to infinite Divine Consciousness. This ladder of divine ascent goes from heart to heart, from the core of our being to the core of God’s Being. We cannot start from any other point: not from the body, the emotions, the senses, the intellect, or even the will. We must penetrate into the center of our own existence, our spirit. This can be done only through meditation. Meditation propels us from rung to rung of the ladder of evolving consciousness. Anything other than the essential being of God is not the goal. Most seekers get lost along the way in many distractions, but those who realize that Consciousness alone matters will not go astray.

[Salvation] has three steps: Belief is first, and this is what man thinks, perhaps, is truth. This is purely intellectual and even on occasion a great deal emotional. Both limited reason and limited feeling are the basis of belief.

And faith is next, and this is what man knows is truth. We have been talking about this all along, so there is nothing to add to this statement.

Fruition is the last, and this is man himself, the truth. We are ourselves the truth: reality. Therefore the seventh Pillar of Aquarian Christianity says: “A perfect man! To bring before the Triune God a being such as this was nature made. This consummation is the highest revelation of the mystery of life. When all the essences of carnal things have been transmuted into soul, and all the essences of soul have been returned to Holy Breath, and man is made a perfect God, the drama of Creation will conclude. And this is all” (Aquarian Gospel 59:14-16).

Wherefore Jesus concludes his words on faith by saying: “Belief is lost in faith; and in fruition faith is lost; and man is saved when he has reached deific life; when he and God are one.” Amen.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Now, Jesus with his friend Lamaas went through all the regions of Orissa, and the valley of the Ganges, seeking wisdom from the sudras and the visyas and the masters. (Aquarian Gospel 23:1)

“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” Let us be honest: we love to draw lines to separate ourselves from others. Especially we like drawing lines that establish us as superior to others. This line-drawing was at its worst in India where it was claimed that divine law was the basis for the system of hereditary caste. It certainly is true that human beings are in varying stages of evolution and that we can even distinguish four large divisions or levels in human development that correspond to the four castes.

Originally, the Vedic sages outlined a social system that took these differences into account. Caste was based on a person’s individual characteristics and had nothing to do with birth. A person could even change caste by moving forward or backward, not by outer behavior but through change of interior disposition. We have no doubt all seen people that improved their spiritual status over the years, and some that unhappily regressed over time.

Also, the original ideas of caste had nothing to do with inferior or superior, only difference. Society was set up so people would progress from one level to another, not imprisoned in only one caste for an entire life. Things were also arranged so a person could adopt a way of life consistent with his mental character. Outside India people adopted a profession just for material gain, even if they disliked or were bored with the work they had to do. Within the caste system people’s professions were in keeping with their own predilections and they were happy and fulfilled in their work, for it expressed their personalities. This was ideal.

But in time the satan of ego entered the picture and caste became a horribly evil and oppressive monster. Today in India the negative aspects of caste have become greatly alleviated, but at the time of Jesus caste was rapidly degenerating into the stifling system it eventually became. The Brahmins were the religious authority and the Kshatriyas (the warrior-ruler caste) were the civil authority. The Vishyas (Vaishyas) were the farmers, artisans, merchants, and the Sudras (Shudras) were “common laborers” and servants. Vishyas and Sudras were considered of no consequence socially or spiritually. They were not allowed to study the Vedic scriptures, and the Sudras were not even allowed to *hear* them being chanted or read. Sudras were not allowed to enter temples, and they were never to touch those of higher caste or even to come within several feet of them. Their shadows were considered polluting.

Knowing that wisdom resides in the heart of all beings, and that caste no longer counted for much, Jesus and Lamaas associated with Vishyas and Sudras and

learned from those among them who were spiritually advanced. Jesus sought out wisdom wherever he found it and cared nothing for the caste or non-caste of an individual.

The message for us here is to never consider that someone's outer situation has a relation to their inner development, even though it certainly reflects the karma they are working out. We should be willing to hear what everyone has to say unless they have proved themselves completely untrustworthy. One of the things that impressed me in India was the way adults would listen to children and take their words seriously. Of course an understanding of reincarnation helped in this. Even a child may tell us profound and valuable things. A book that seems to be of little worth may contain a single truth that can greatly enhance our life. So we should look for wisdom everywhere with open heart and open mind, aware that there is folly everywhere, too, but discriminating wisely between the two and rejecting nothing without soberly considering it. In India I met plenty of ignoramuses that pretended to be wise, but I also met a saint that pretended to be insane. She imparted real wisdom to me and then wandered off down the road, mocked and laughed at by the uncomprehending. Remember the old saying: "Often in a wooden house a golden room we find." A wise man is aware that wisdom may be learned from anyone.

Benares of the Ganges was a city rich in culture and in learning; here the two rabbonis tarried many days. And Jesus sought to learn the Hindu art of healing, and became the pupil of Udraka, greatest of the Hindu healers. (Aquarian Gospel 23:2, 3)

Benares (Varanasi or Kashi) was and is the highest center of spiritual learning and practical traditional knowledge. Ayurvedic medicine is based on Indian scriptures which cover the science of health and the treatment of disease. It is considered to be of divine origin, having first been taught by the sage Dhanvantari, and is both philosophical and practical.

Udraka taught the uses of the waters, plants and earths; of heat and cold; sunshine and shade; of light and dark.

He said, The laws of nature are the laws of health, and he who lives according to these laws is never sick. Transgression of these laws is sin, and he who sins is sick. He who obeys the laws, maintains an equilibrium in all his parts, and thus insures true harmony; and harmony is health, while discord is disease.

That which produces harmony in all the parts of man is medicine, insuring health. The body is a harpsichord, and when its strings are too relaxed, or are too tense, the instrument is out of tune, the man is sick. Now, everything in nature has been made to meet the wants of man; so everything is found in medical arcana. And when the harpsichord of man is out of tune the vast expanse of nature may be searched for remedy; there is a cure for every

ailment of the flesh.

Of course the will of man is remedy supreme; and by the vigorous exercise of will, man way make tense a chord that is relaxed, or may relax one that is too tense, and thus may heal himself. (Aquarian Gospel 23:4-12)

These words are a perfect encapsulation of the laws of health and healing and merit deep pondering.

Harmony is health, while discord is disease. That which produces harmony in all the parts of man is medicine, insuring health. It is natural for us to speak of being in or out of harmony with “nature,” but what is Nature? It is the Holy Breath (Holy Spirit) in manifestation. Transgressing the laws of that manifestation will impair health, but “nature” is really the thought and will of God. So being out of harmony with God and the Divine Will is the root of disease. The ultimate medicine, then, is that which puts us into harmony with God, including our own inner spirit. Meditation is the supreme remedy because it affects the entire range of our being and aligns us with Divinity itself.

The body is a harpsichord, and when its strings are too relaxed, or are too tense, the instrument is out of tune, the man is sick. The “strings” spoken of here are the nerves of the physical body and the subtle energy channels in the astral and causal bodies, all of which are called nadis (tubes) in Yoga and Ayurveda. Meditation sets all the inner mechanisms right and empowers them, therefore:

The will of man is remedy supreme; and by the vigorous exercise of will, man way make tense a chord that is relaxed, or may relax one that is too tense, and thus may heal himself. This is demonstrated in two incidents from the twelfth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

One afternoon during my early months at the ashram, found Sri Yukteswar’s eyes fixed on me piercingly.

“You are too thin, Mukunda.”

His remark struck a sensitive point. That my sunken eyes and emaciated appearance were far from my liking was testified to by rows of tonics in my room at Calcutta. Nothing availed; chronic dyspepsia had pursued me since childhood. My despair reached an occasional zenith when I asked myself if it were worth-while to carry on this life with a body so unsound.

“Medicines have limitations; the creative life-force has none. Believe that: you shall be well and strong.”

Sri Yukteswar’s words aroused a conviction of personally-applicable truth which no other healer—and I had tried many!—had been able to summon within me.

Day by day, behold! I waxed. Two weeks after Master’s hidden blessing, I had accumulated the invigorating weight which eluded me in the past. My persistent stomach ailments vanished with a lifelong permanency. On later occasions I witnessed my guru’s instantaneous divine healings of persons suffering from ominous disease—tuberculosis, diabetes, epilepsy, or paralysis. Not one could have been more grateful for his cure than I was at sudden freedom from my

cadaverous aspect.

"Years ago, I too was anxious to put on weight," Sri Yukteswar told me. "During convalescence after a severe illness, I visited Lahiri Mahasaya in Benares.

"‘Sir, I have been very sick and lost many pounds.’

"‘I see, Yukteswar, you made yourself unwell, and now you think you are thin.’

"This reply was far from the one I had expected; my guru, however, added encouragingly:

"‘Let me see; I am sure you ought to feel better tomorrow.’

"Taking his words as a gesture of secret healing toward my receptive mind, I was not surprised the next morning at a welcome accession of strength. I sought out my master and exclaimed exultingly, ‘sir, I feel much better today.’

"‘Indeed! Today you invigorate yourself.’

"‘No, master!’ I protested. ‘It was you who helped me; this is the first time in weeks that I have had any energy.’

"‘O yes! Your malady has been quite serious. Your body is frail yet; who can say how it will be tomorrow?’

"The thought of possible return of my weakness brought me a shudder of cold fear. The following morning I could hardly drag myself to Lahiri Mahasaya’s home.

"‘Sir, I am ailing again.’

"‘My guru’s glance was quizzical. ‘so! Once more you indispose yourself.’

"‘Gurudeva, I realize now that day by day you have been ridiculing me.’ My patience was exhausted. ‘I don’t understand why you disbelieve my truthful reports.’

"‘Really, it has been your thoughts that have made you feel alternately weak and strong.’ My master looked at me affectionately. ‘You have seen how your health has exactly followed your expectations. Thought is a force, even as electricity or gravitation. The human mind is a spark of the almighty consciousness of God. I could show you that whatever your powerful mind believes very intensely would instantly come to pass.’

"Knowing that Lahiri Mahasaya never spoke idly, I addressed him with great awe and gratitude: ‘Master, if I think I am well and have regained my former weight, shall that happen?’

"‘It is so, even at this moment.’ My guru spoke gravely, his gaze concentrated on my eyes.

"Lo! I felt an increase not alone of strength but of weight. Lahiri Mahasaya retreated into silence. After a few hours at his feet, I returned to my mother’s home, where I stayed during my visits to Benares.

"‘My son! What is the matter? Are you swelling with dropsy?’ Mother could hardly believe her eyes. My body was now of the same robust dimensions it had possessed before my illness.

“I weighed myself and found that in one day I had gained fifty pounds; they remained with me permanently. Friends and acquaintances who had seen my thin figure were aghast with wonderment. A number of them changed their mode of life and became disciples of Lahiri Mahasaya as a result of this miracle.

“My guru, awake in God, knew this world to be nothing but an objectivized dream of the Creator. Because he was completely aware of his unity with the Divine Dreamer, Lahiri Mahasaya could materialize or dematerialize or make any change he wished in the cosmic vision.

There is an old joke about the minister who was preaching in the chapel of a mental institution on the purpose of life. “Why are we all here?” He asked rhetorically, but to his chagrin one of the inmates called out: “Because we are ‘not all there’!” We are all here, in the body, because of the force known as karma, the reactions to our former action in this life and in previous lives. Until our consciousness can transcend the power of karma (for karma is too vast to ever be “worked out” completely) and ascend to Christ Consciousness we shall remain right here in the realm of illusion, in the limitation of consciousness that is often called “death” by the wise.

I have said that karma cannot be fully worked out, but it does have to be eliminated to the degree that will enable us to overreach it and manifest Christhood. As a consequence, we need to be untangling the karmic snarls that are keeping us bound. Karma can be dissolved by the inflow of higher consciousness in meditation and by keeping our minds attuned to the highest levels even during our daily routines. Outside meditation, karma can be neutralized by engaging in thoughts, words, and acts that are opposite in character to the past negative thoughts, words, and acts that produced the karma. Since we have all done injury and harm to others in previous lives, healing can be an effective means of neutralizing karma so we shall not be injured or harmed as we would if we did not eliminate the karma. Not everyone needs to be a healer, but for those who do, Udraka explains what knowledge and characteristics are necessary.

When man has reached the place where he has faith in God, in nature and himself, he knows the Word of power; his word is balm for every wound, is cure for all the ills of life. (Aquarian Gospel 23:13)

We have already seen that faith is actually spiritual knowledge gleaned from our own experience; so to have “faith in God, in nature and himself” a person must know God, nature and himself. This is no small matter. Many people want to be healers and think that all they need is to learn healing methods, but Udraka is showing us that real gnosis of the spirit is the basis for healing.

The knowledge of various natures, including the divine, is necessary, but not sufficient of itself to impart healing to others. Knowledge of “the Word of power” is also needed, for it embodies the Consciousness and Power that lies behind all manifestations, including our bodies and the forces that produce harmony or

disharmony in them. That word was learned by Jesus in India when he came into contact with the Nath Yogis and became a part of their order (sampradaya). It is Soham, which means “That Am I” or I Am Spirit. (See *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.)

The Word can also nullify karma when Its light enters into the aura and body. “Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee” (John 5:14). “As Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:1,2).

Disease comes from negativity, and its removal is a form of the “forgiveness of sins.” Those who have the inner development and the requisite knowledge can forgive sins by infusing themselves and others with the Light of The Word. Although this would be denied by exoteric Christians, Jesus gave another picture. When he was in Capernaum one time the people crowded into and around the house so that no one could enter. Four men brought a friend who had palsy, hoping Jesus would heal him. “And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion” (Mark 2:4-12). And we never will if the Churchians have their way.

It is clearly stated in the New Testament that we are all sons of God, but knowing that in the future ignorant Christians would continually claim a unique status for Jesus especially when they would be challenged to do what he did, Jesus usually referred to himself as “son of man” to emphasize that he was a (deified) human being, and what he did other human beings could do also. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12).

The Aquarian Gospel gives an interesting insight in its recounting of this incident. When the “virtuous” objected to Jesus’ asserting that the man’s sins were forgiven, he countered that he would heal the man “just to prove that men may here forgive the sins of men” (Aquarian Gospel 90:23).

The essential message of Jesus’ words about healing with the Word is that

through immersion in divine consciousness, both in and out of meditation, all the words of a person become endowed with creative and healing power. That healing is often accomplished simply by his merciful and healing speech. In the Word “is balm for every wound, is cure for all the ills of life,” and it resides in those who make the Word their own through practice.

The healer is the man who can inspire faith. The tongue may speak to human ears, but souls are reached by souls that speak to souls. He is the forceful man whose soul is large, and who can enter into souls, inspiring hope in those who have no hope, and faith in those who have no faith in God, in nature, nor in man. (Aquarian Gospel 23:14, 15)

These are wonderful words. Those who have expanded their consciousness (made their souls “large”) to such a degree that they can attune themselves to others so perfectly as to heal them from within their own being are the greatest of healers, for they heal the soul at the same time that they heal the body. In truth, they work the inner healing before the outer occurs, though one is unseen and the other seen. The healers of mind and heart are they who “work the works of God” (John 6:28). Even though they speak with outer words, they are speaking inwardly to the souls of their hearers. This is why reproof or advice are of no effect except from the spiritually awakened. That is because they speak from love alone. As Udraka said:

There is no universal balm for those who tread the common walks of life. A thousand things produce inharmony and make men sick; a thousand things may tune the harpsichord, and make men well.

That which is medicine for one is poison for another one; so one is healed by what would kill another one. An herb may heal the one; a drink of water may restore another one; a mountain breeze may bring to life one seeming past all help; a coal of fire, or bit of earth, may cure another one; and one may wash in certain streams, or pools, and be made whole.

The virtue from the hand or breath may heal a thousand more; but love is queen. Thought, reinforced by love, is God’s great sovereign balm. (Aquarian Gospel 23:16-21)

One with God Who is Love, the sons of God walk in love and heal in love.

But many of the broken chords in life, and discords that so vex the soul, are caused by evil spirits of the air that men see not; that lead men on through ignorance to break the laws of nature and of God.

These powers act like demons, and they speak; they rend the man; they drive him to despair. But he who is a healer, true, is master of the soul, and can, by force of will, control these evil ones. (Aquarian Gospel 23:22-24)

The expression “spirits of the air” means those invisible intelligences that do not have physical bodies but whose astral bodies are of a coarse enough vibration to

enable them to remain in the atmosphere of the earth and on occasion to appear to human beings and even to tangibly affect them and physical objects. They are usually called “earthbound spirits.” For various karmic reasons after death they did not pass on into other (astral) planes, but remained tied to earth, usually through intense attachments to earthly people, things or situations. Some of them are evil and some are insane. Both kinds can do great harm to the living in many ways, but in this instance Udraka is speaking of those who cause illness through their negative influence. Oftentimes illness results from the attempts of these spirits to possess someone. Since the body and nervous system are formed and configured only for a particular individual, the invasion of an alien consciousness causes great disruption in the body’s functions. Blindness, deafness, loss of muscular control, paralysis, intense pain, deformity, and seizures can occur in these cases. If an entity cannot fully possess someone, they often are able to control them to some degree, and that is what is meant by the term “obsession.” Obsession by spirits can result in personality change, impediments in thinking, speaking, or movement. Many addictions come from the presence of negative addicted spirits that are trying to get the addictive experience through those they obsess. They urge and even force their victims to indulge in drugs, alcohol, and sexual behavior. Hallucinations also may come from these obsessing entities. Many supposed insane or psychotic people are suffering from obsession or possession. Depression is frequently a symptom of obsession. As Udraka says, the evil spirits “lead men on through ignorance to break the laws of nature and of God.”

In exoteric religion there is a lot of talk about demons or devils, but nothing is understood of their nature. In Christianity they are usually considered to be fallen angels. In some cases this is true, but mostly they are earthbound human beings. No being is a demon by nature, and that is why Udraka says “these powers *act like* demons.” It is a matter of behavior, not nature.

There is another kind of “demons” that are fields of negative energy floating in the atmosphere and affecting whoever comes into contact with them. Usually they are just “muck clouds” that produce depression or illness through their toxic vibration, but occasionally a kind of half-consciousness activates them and they seem to be real beings. This kind of entity is a thoughtform produced by negative people, negative thought-and-emotion energies that have detached themselves from their auras, especially through anger or hatred. Some evil human beings know how to create these energy robots and send them to do specific harm. Being “made in the image” of their creators they work their will, or attempt to. “These powers act like demons, and they speak; they rend the man; they drive him to despair.”

But he who is a healer, true, is master of the soul, and can, by force of will, control these evil ones. Evil spirits, however harmful and malicious, should not be despised or hated, for they, too, are children of God. Yet, being wayward and out of their minds spiritually speaking, they must be prevented from doing evil to others, and thus to themselves through the creation of bad karma. Two things have to be done: they must be retrained and they must be assisted in passing on to other worlds where

they can start evolving again. This is not the place to enumerate the various options open to the healer for exorcism, but the basis of everything is the invocation of the Divine Consciousness. In the spiritual light produced by invoking it no evil can be done by the spirits and its healing effect will pacify and heal them and enable them to effortlessly make the transition to higher realms for further growth.

It should be understood that on occasion earthbound spirits seek out those who are developing spiritually in hope that they will be helped by them. Often, though, the disturbance they cause to get the person's attention is frightening rather than communicative. Also, being conditioned to negativity, the spirits may even attack the very ones they hope will help them. At such times we should remain calm and pray for the blessing and release of the spirits. They will be helped or they will leave, unable to bear the Divine Light. That is their choice. We have made ours.

Udraka does not mean that a healer controls evil spirits and gets them to do things for him or tell him things as do the foolish ceremonial magicians. No; he heals, he does not dominate or exploit them for, as already said, they are sons of God and "as ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40), says the Christ.

Some spirits of the air are master spirits and are strong, too strong for human power alone; but man has helpers in the higher realms that may be importuned, and they will help to drive the demons out. (Aquarian Gospel 23:25)

There are powerful evil spirits that have been in their negative condition for long ages, growing more and more powerful and more and more bound in their evil. They are not incurable, but dealing with them is usually beyond the scope of the healer. In that case he calls upon the "helpers in the higher realms that may be importuned." These are highly evolved beings whose assistance to human beings is part of their spiritual evolution. Those beings known as angels and archangels is powerful helpers in dealing with any form of negativity. They may be called upon for help with evil spirits.

These holy helpers may also be called upon in healing work of any kind. Many holy helpers have healing as their special gift from God, and they, too, will assist us when we ask them.

Of what this great physician said, this is the sum. And Jesus bowed his head in recognition of the wisdom of this master soul, and went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 23:26)

Chapter Twenty-Four

Four years the Jewish boy abode in temple Jagannath. One day he sat among the priests and said to them, Pray, tell me all about your views of castes; why do you say that all men are not equal in the sight of God? A master of their laws stood forth and said, The Holy One whom we call Brahm, made men to suit himself, and men should not complain. (Aquarian Gospel 24:1-3)

This philosophy of societal order has prevailed throughout nearly all of “civilization,” even into the twentieth century, and is no doubt rampant in lesser-known cultures even now. People were brainwashed into believing that God had made them specifically to be of the social stratum into which they were born, and that to change that status was to defy God and break his laws. In the very beginning of the operetta *Die Fledermaus* the chambermaid Adele laments that God has made her a chambermaid and she will be one all her life. She does not consider that it is the unjust social order into which she was born or the prejudices of others that is at fault. Rather she thinks it is God’s will which, being perfect, it is evil to defy. Such thinking is mental slavery, and it explains how people through the ages have been voluntary servants or slaves without question. Their “betters” let them know how things were supposed to be—and remain. To protest was wickedness and ingratitude. When such attitudes prevail there is no hope for the betterment of anyone, including those “at the top” who are also slaves in their own order.

In the beginning days of human life Brahm spoke, and four men stood before his face.

Now, from the mouth of Parabrahm the first man came; and he was white, was like the Brahm himself; a brahman he was called. And he was high and lifted up; above all want he stood; he had no need of toil. And he was called the priest of Brahm, the holy one to act for Brahm in all affairs of earth.

The second man was red, and from the hand of Parabrahm he came; and he was called shatriya. And he was made to be the king, the ruler and the warrior, whose highest ordained duty was protection of the priest.

And from the inner parts of Parabrahm the third man came; and he was called a visya. He was a yellow man, and his it was to till the soil, and keep the flocks and herds.

And from the feet of Parabrahm the fourth man came; and he was black; and he was called the sudras, one of low estate. The sudra is the servant of the race of men; he has no rights that others need respect; he may not hear the Vedas read, and it means death to him to look into the face of priest, or king, and naught but death can free him from his state of servitude. (Aquarian Gospel 24:4-13)

Figures may not lie, but liars figure, even in religion. Scriptures may be true, but their interpretation can be outrageously false. And that is the case here. I am sorry to tell you that for countless centuries in India those of “low” caste were not allowed to look at, speak to or touch anyone of a higher caste. If they did, they were often put to death instantly. One aspect of this violent craziness was “distance pollution” which decreed how far away a low caste person had to be to not pollute those of higher levels. In some sections of India kings granted huge distances to affirm how pure and worthy those people were who could lawfully *kill* anyone of low estate who came close to them. I am not exaggerating. Studies in the history of Saint Thomas Christianity relay many decrees showing the great favor accorded the Saint Thomas Christians by the rulers of Kerala, all based on both whom they could kill with impunity and how far away the “lessers” had to be when they were around. By the way, except for a few segregated congregations, even now all Saint Thomas Christians are Brahmins. One of my Saint Thomas Christian friends told me that for centuries a low caste family had been his family’s hereditary servants. They lived in hovels against the far wall of his parents’ compound. Every day the “head man” came to be given the day’s work by John’s father. Because of distance pollution, the servant stood so far away that the two had to shout at each other to be heard. John was utterly disgusted and chagrined and vowed that he would never perpetuate this terrible evil.

The account of caste origin told to Jesus is based on the ninetieth hymn of the tenth book of the Rig Veda. Known as the Purusha Shukta, it tells of how the primeval Person, Ishwara or God, manifested Himself as the entire range of sentient life. It is a very interesting symbolic picture and worth studying, but the part that interests us now is this:

“When they divided Purusha how many portions did they make? What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?

“The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms was the Rajanya made. His thighs became the Vaisya, from his feet the Sudra was produced” (Rig Veda 10:90:11, 12).

Do not despair! The Bhagavad Gita makes complete sense of this. In the fourth chapter Krishna, speaking as God, tells Arjuna: “The fourfold caste was created by me, based on guna and on karma” (Bhagavad Gita 4:13). “Karma” Here has a very special meaning. We tend to think of karma as only two things: 1) action that is going to produce a reaction, and 2) the reaction from prior action. But “guna” means “quality” or kind; it also means the way in which a person’s energy makeup functions. So when guna and karma combine they become a force that impels to a certain kind of psychology as well as action. Not only that, it usually manifests as an aptitude for that type of action. So caste is based on the individual’s karma and innate propensity for a certain mode of life.

A person’s “caste-duty” is really the kind of activity that comes naturally, even spontaneously, to a person. It is not forcing a person into a straitjacket of social or economic convention, but actually an expression of what is natural to him.

Obviously if everyone followed their caste-nature they would be perfectly happy and harmonious. However, please understand that caste has nothing to do with a “caste system” based on circumstances of birth and parentage, and it certainly is not the caste-ism that is the curse of any society, including that of India. Caste is a profoundly personal thing, coming from within and not imposed from without. Of course we all know people that try to do things they have no ability to accomplish and neglect to do things that they have an inborn affinity and skill for. That is what free will is all about.

Back to the Purusha Shukta. There is nothing here about four kinds of men appearing or coming out of God’s mouth, arms, thighs or feet. God does not have any mouth, arms, thighs or feet. What is expressed here is the fact that each person is a part of God and embodies a particular aspect of divine consciousness. According to their level of evolution so will they be empowered by their innate divinity to live in this world. But it must be their choice, not anyone else’s. That is why Krishna also told Arjuna: “Better is one’s swadharma, though deficient, than the swadharma of another well performed.... The swadharma of another brings danger” (Bhagavad Gita 3:35), because it will bring confusion and conflict into your life.

And finally Krishna assures Arjuna that those whom society consider of lesser value “also attain the Supreme Goal” (Bhagavad Gita 9:32).

And Jesus said, Then Parabrahm is not a God of justice and of right; for with his own strong hand he has exalted one and brought another low.

And Jesus said no more to them, but looking up to heaven he said, My Father-God, who was, and is, and evermore shall be; who holds within thy hands the scales of justice and of right; who in the boundlessness of love has made all men to equal be. The white, the black, the yellow, and the red can look up in thy face and say, Our Father-God. Thou Father of the human race, I praise thy name.

And all the priests were angered by the words which Jesus spoke; they rushed upon him, seized him, and would have done him harm.

But then Lamaas raised his hand and said, You priests of Brahm, beware! you know not what you do; wait till you know the God this youth adores. I have beheld this boy at prayer when light above the light of the sun surrounded him. Beware! his God may be more powerful than Brahm. If Jesus speaks the truth, if he is right, you cannot force him to desist; if he is wrong and you are right, his words come to naught, for right is might, and in the end it will prevail. (Aquarian Gospel 24:14-22)

Then Parabrahm is not a God of justice and of right; for with his own strong hand he has exalted one and brought another low. This has a major philosophical implication. Jesus certainly believes in the Supreme God (Parabrahman), and does not believe God is unjust. But he is adamant that God does not in any way control or determine the life and destiny of anyone. It is all in our hands as individuals. We may allow external factors such as other people, society, religion and various outer conditions

to influence or even dictate to us, but that is our free will choice. God and those we allow to control us have nothing to do with it. That is what karma is all about: we sow and we reap. We do not reap what another has sown and we certainly reap nothing but that which we ourselves have sown. From life to life we have groveled before God and “praised” Him by telling him how all-powerful and all-ruling he is and how totally dependent we are on his “will.” That is nonsense, but a habit that is hard to break. Even the most metaphysically-inclined people are continually found to revert to this kind of attitude and talk because they are conditioned by dozens if not hundreds of lives in which this was drummed into their minds. We have to break out of it and realize that we are in total control. Certainly if we are wise we will live according to divine principles and laws, but that is our doing, not anyone else’s. Our life is truly ours.

My Father-God, who... has made all men to equal be. The white, the black, the yellow, and the red can look up in thy face and say, Our Father-God. There is verbal denial of God and denial of God by our thoughts, words and deeds that imply there is no God. Jesus said to the religious leaders of his time: “Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me” (Matthew 15:7-8). Anyone who denies the humanity or the equality of any other human being or group of human beings does not truly believe in God, however religious they may think they are. I grew up singing in Sunday School: “Jesus loves the little children; all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the children of the world.” But the people who taught me that song did not believe it. If a red, yellow or black child and his parents had shown up in our church people would have nearly dropped dead.

In May, 2018 Mark Stoeckle Senior Research Associate in the Program for the Human Environment at Rockefeller University in New York and Dr. David Thaler Center for Molecular Life Sciences at the University of Basel in Switzerland published the results of a study of mitochondrial DNA, which mothers pass down from generation to generation, in which they stated that “all humans alive today are the offspring of a common father and mother.” Various religions have stated that the human race came from two original human beings. The researchers also discovered that every animal species also originated from two animals of that species. (See: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/new-scientific-discovery-supports-bibles-adam-and-eve-story-science-writer-says.html>)

This is the fact: There is only one race: the human race. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “[God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). There we have it. We are all our “own kind.” The human race is a single family whose father is God. If we do not live this truth, we deny it.

And then the priests refrained from doing Jesus harm; but one spoke out and said, Within this holy place has not this reckless youth done violence to Parabrahm? The law is plain; it says, he who reviles the name of Brahm shall

die. Lamaas pled for Jesus' life; and then the priests just seized a scourge of cords and drove him from the place.

And Jesus went his way and found shelter with the black and yellow men, the servants and the tiller of the soil. To them he first made known the gospel of equality; he told them of the Brotherhood of Man, the Fatherhood of God. The common people heard him with delight, and learned to pray, Our Father-God who art in heaven. (Aquarian Gospel 24:23-28)

What hypocrisy to say that those who insist on the truth about God are blaspheming God. But the negative reaction was really all for the good, because Jesus went among the "low castes" and told them the truth of their own divinity as sons of God.

Chapter Twenty-Five

For most of the world's population caste is no problem as it does not exist among them. But the problem of spiritual bondage is common to all, so we should look at Jesus' words of hope to the lower castes, for they apply to every one of us.

When Jesus saw the sudras and the farmers in such multitudes draw near to hear his words, he spoke a parable to them; he said:

A nobleman possessed a great estate; he had four sons, and he would have them all grow strong by standing forth and making use of all the talents they possess. And so he gave to each a share of his great wealth, and bade them go their way.

The eldest son was full of self; he was ambitious, shrewd and quick of thought.) he said within himself, I am the oldest son, and these, my brothers, must be servants at my feet. And then he called his brothers forth; and one he made a puppet king; gave him a sword and charged him to defend the whole estate.

To one he gave the use of lands and flowing wells, and flocks and herds, and bade him till the soil, and tend the flocks and herds and bring to him the choicest of his gains. And to the other one he said, You are the youngest son; the broad estate has been assigned; you have no part nor lot in anything that is. And he took a chain and bound his brother to a naked rock upon a desert plain, and said to him, You have been born a slave; you have no rights, and you must be contented with your lot, for there is no release for you until you die and go from hence.

Now, after certain years the day of reckoning came; the nobleman called up his sons to render their accounts. And when he knew that one, his eldest son, had seized the whole estate and made his brothers slaves, he seized him, tore his priestly robes away and put him in a prison cell, where he was forced to stay until he had atoned for all the wrongs that he had done. And then, as though they were but toys, he threw in air the throne and armor of the puppet king; he broke his sword, and put him in a prison cell.

And then he called his farmer son and asked him why he had not rescued from his galling chains his brother on the desert plains. And when the son made answer not, the father took unto himself the flocks and herds, the fields and flowing wells, and sent his farmer son to live out on the desert sands, until he had atoned for all the wrongs that he had done.

And then the father went and found his youngest son in cruel chains; with his own hands he broke the chains and bade his son to go in peace.

Now, when the sons had all paid up their debts they came again and stood before the bar of right. They all had learned their lessons, learned them well;

and then the father once again divided the estate. He gave to each a share, and bade them recognize the law of equity and right, and live in peace. (Aquarian Gospel 25:1-21)

This parable is very easy to understand; the law of cause and effect will eventually work toward the right order of things. As the esoteric creed formulated by Bishop Leadbeater of the Liberal Catholic Church says: "We believe that God is Love, and Power, and Truth, and Light; that perfect justice rules the world; that all his sons shall one day reach his feet, however far they stray. We hold the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of man; we know that we do serve him best when best we serve our brother man. So shall his blessing rest on us and peace for evermore. Amen." The perfect justice that rules the world eventually corrects all things and liberates all people. This is the message of Christ.

And one, a sudra, spoke and said, May we who are but slaves, who are cut down like beasts to satisfy the whims of priests—may we have hope that one will come to break our chains and set us free?

And Jesus said, The Holy One has said, that all his children shall be free; and every soul is child of God. The sudras shall be free as priest; the farmer shall walk hand in hand with king; for all the world will own the brotherhood of man.

O men, arise! be conscious of your powers, for he who wills need not remain a slave. Just live as you would have your brother live; unfold each day as does the flower; for earth is yours, and heaven is yours, and God will bring you to your own.

And all the people cried, Show us the way that like the flower we may unfold and come unto our own. (Aquarian Gospel 25:22-27)

No matter how deeply human beings may delve into ignorance, and no matter how distorted and degraded their minds and wills may become, there are two things that they cannot change, distort, or weaken in the least: 1) all the children of God are destined for perfect freedom; and 2) every single human being is a child of God, and therefore a partaker of divinity. We should ever keep in mind these two ineradicable truths about ourselves. Levi Dowling, the seer of the Aquarian Gospel, wrote in *Biopneuma* that every day those who seek illumination should say the following, which they should commit to memory:

"Wisdom! Wisdom! It must be mine; Light! Light! I will see the True Light; Illumination! Illumination! I will attain unto Divine Illumination, through Jesus Christ, My Lord."

Saint Peter wrote: "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (II Peter 1:3,4). And Saint Paul: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II

Corinthians 3:18). And finally, Saint John the Beloved: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). This is the true Gospel of Christ, of "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Accept no substitutes!

These are beautiful words, and they certainly inspire us, but what shall we do to realize their truth for ourselves? Jesus continues:

O men, arise! be conscious of your powers, for he who wills need not remain a slave. Become conscious! This is the call. Consciousness is the nature of spirit, not just an attribute. Therefore if we will open our consciousness, enter into it fully, and dwell in it completely, the first step has been taken. And it cannot be taken by looking here and there outside of us. We must penetrate into the essence of ourselves, into our immortal spirit. Meditation is the only way to do this. Everything else is busywork if meditation is not the basis of our life.

When we are really conscious we will be aware of the divine potencies within us, especially our will. Usually we only manifest our whims and petty desires. Many people who seem to have strong wills are only being driven by their egoic desires and aversions and have no operative will. Only the awakened person can exercise his will, for the will of the spirit is vastly different from the artificial force of our emotional and intellectual "wills." But once that true will comes alive we can arise and cast off our bonds and be free from slavery of any form. Until then we languish in the prison of ignorance, slaves of birth, death and all in between.

From childhood we hear the Golden Rule, that we should do to others as we would have them do to us. But that is only part of human life, only social interaction. Jesus gives a more comprehensive rule when he says: "Live as you would have your brother live." It is easy to look at others and consider we know what they should be thinking, saying, and doing. So we should do ourselves exactly what we think others should do! In religion particularly we like to have "special" people, such as priests, monastics and spiritual teachers who are living according to divine principles in every way and whose presence is a benefit to all. And how upset we get when they do not live up to our ideals! Sometimes we even turn from religion and belief in God. How foolish.

The failure or success of anyone else means absolutely zero. We are the ones that must be living out the truths revealed by God to mankind. Even if everyone else fails to do so, that is no reason for our neglect. If we were in a group of people and learned that everyone but us was going to die in some catastrophe, would we object and say: "If they are not going to live, then I am not going to live, either!?" Hardly. Just because others fail, or never even try, is no reason for us to fail or not try. Saint Paul wrote: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (I Corinthians 9:24). If we are the only one in this entire creation cycle to attain Christhood, let it be so. But it will not be so. In the nineteenth chapter of First Kings Elijah told God that he was the only one in Israel to not worship Baal, but God answered that there were seven thousand

others who had not done so either. We will find ourselves in a large company. So let us get Christing. Live as you would have a saint live, and you will become a saint.

We are confronted by two serious errors of Churchianity. One is the doctrine that we just do something to “get saved” and bang! it is all done. Now we need only sit and wait to go to heaven. The other is the idea that as long as we are in this world, burdened with the body, we can have no illumination beyond a few glimpses that inspire us to “yearn for heaven” and long for death. But Jesus says: “Unfold each day as does the flower; for earth is yours, and heaven is yours, and God will bring you to your own.”

Evolution is the word, not instant salvation or enlightenment. A doctor once assured me that drastic change in the body is always pathological, and he concluded by saying that the same was true in spiritual life. There may be an instant shaking up or coming into awareness of the reality of spiritual life, but from then on it is a steady process of movement toward the divine. Spiritual growth does not go in fits or spurts, but is a matter of “each day.” The hare ran fast, then dawdled and even slept; but the tortoise kept at it and proved that “slow but sure” is the way.

The likening of our development to the unfolding of a flower underscores the truth that not only is spiritual life one of steady continuous progress, it is also a movement from within outward, the expression of our eternal nature. A flower does not *become* a flower, it reveals its flower-nature. We do not attain Christhood, we unfold it, for it is always within us in potential form, just as the tree is in the seed.

Part of the second error of Western religious thinking is that things earthly are hindering our spiritual vision and that we must turn from earth to heaven, that the body is a curse which we must separate from before the spirit can be free. That we are not “this” but are “that.” This creates all kinds of problems and conflicts for those who seek God within that context. But Jesus assures us that “earth is yours, and heaven is yours, and God will bring you to your own,” saying: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34).

Earth and heaven are the manifestation of our Father-God, so they are ours, as well. Moreover, our attunement to God gives us mastery of both earth and heaven, uniting them in us, ending the dichotomy and duality that plagues us now. Jesus was referring to this condition when at the end of his time with them he told his disciples: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18. “The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine” Psalms 89:11). He meant that earth and heaven were his inheritance from the Father.

The final clause of Jesus’s words say it all: “And God will bring you to your own.”

Chapter Twenty-Six

Every year in the city of Jagannath Puri in eastern India, a great festival takes place during which a gigantic chariot is pulled through the streets carrying the image of Krishna. It is from this that we get our English expression “Juggernaut.”

In all the cities of Orissa Jesus taught. At Katak, by the river side, he taught, and thousands of the people followed him.

One day a car of Jagannath was hauled along by scores of frenzied men, and Jesus said, Behold, a form without a spirit passes by; a body with no soul; a temple with no altar fires. This car of Krishna is an empty thing, for Krishna is not there. This car is but an idol of a people drunk on wine of carnal things. God lives not in the noise of tongues; there is no way to him from any idol shrine. (Aquarian Gospel 26:1-6)

This is not easy for externalized people to accept, for in their outward-turning ways they sincerely seek to worship and communicate with God. In his words Jesus does not condemn them or their external rites, but wishes to explain to them that they are looking for God in a mistaken manner and in a mistaken place.

Truly God is everywhere and in all things, yet they seem to blind us to him rather than reveal him. Sri Ramakrishna often said that even though an almanac makes predictions of rainfall you cannot get a single drop of water by squeezing it; and although water is everywhere in all things and in the air itself, we have to go where water is accumulated in sufficient quantity if we would quench our thirst. So we have to find God’s “reservoirs” if we would commune with him. However well-meaning and sincere our approach and endeavors might be, they must be in harmony with the nature of things, and God, to be successful.

Jesus has begun by telling us two places where the Water of Life cannot be found: in words, whether theologizing, praising, or petitioning, and in external objects. No, we really do not “see God” in the wonders of nature, in impressive temples or in any imagery whatsoever, verbal or visual. Nor are we really “lifted up” toward God by concepts of any kind, whether devotional or intellectual. Nor can we draw near to God by words. Because of the Protestant stamp on our culture, every time the word “idol” comes up only visual images of holy persons or deities become targeted in our minds, but idols are much more; they are any “thing” whatsoever that intervenes between us and the perception of God, and that includes just about everything that is presented to us as a bridge or door to God by religion (or even yoga). Our own heart can be an idol shrine from which we can find no way to God because the idols cover or block the exits.

Both words and imagery affect us profoundly, but only on the levels of intellect and emotion. They have nothing to do with consciousness, rather they veil it, and that is the sole component of spirit. Thoughts and emotions are blots on the fabric

of our awareness; they are the waves in our mind that Patanjali says must be erased before we can touch God in the state of union we call yoga. Yet we cling to those idols with the strength of a spiritual death-wish. Considering that we really have no experience of anything else, that is understandable, but it is no less deadly. Most people have no religion at all, only a set of ideas and “feelings” about them and God. The truth is simple: we really worship the false ego-self we call “me” and ignore (and often deny the very existence of) our true self and the true God. Most religion and “spirituality” is a wasteland of spiritual death, however endlessly they may be entertaining and assuring.

Unlike most religion, though, Jesus does not tell us what to avoid and then leave us there, as empty as we were before. He goes on to tell us the sure place to find God.

God’s meeting place with man is in the heart, and in a still small voice he speaks; and he who hears is still. (Aquarian Gospel 26:7)

First we must clear out the idols from the shrine of our heart. Once we do that, the blindness will vanish and we will perceive God to be present—as he always was. Admittedly, it is not as simple and quick as saying it, and we need to experience the presence of God through the interior process of meditation. And once we become aware of the Presence we must do more: we must hear the “still small voice” by which “he speaks.” That is why we use sound (mantra) in meditation. By entering into the most subtle modes of sound which touch the Silence out of which God speaks, we train our inner ear to hear his “speech.” It is far subtler than ordinary verbal speech, is actually a state of consciousness (bhava), but it is the purest form of communication. This is why Patanjali sometimes refers to meditation in the Yoga Sutras as “bhavanam.”

How will we know we have truly heard “the still small voice”? Jesus tells us: “He who hears is still.” That is, we will dwell in the Silence beyond the noise of ignorance and relativity, and we will be “still” in our lives, no longer initiating karma or delusive involvements. This does not mean that we will become inactive and passive, but that we will be able to act without making more ripples in the sphere of our lives. This, too, is part of eliminating the waves that inhibit the state of yoga. “He who perceives inaction in action and action in inaction—such a man is wise among men, steadfast in yoga and doing all action” (Bhagavad Gita 4:18), says Krishna. In the nineteenth century a book was written entitled *A Manual For Interior Souls*. The appellation is apt: those who have truly heard the voice of God become inwardly oriented.

“He whose happiness is within, whose delight is within, whose illumination is within: that yogi, identical in being with Brahman, attains Brahmanirvana” (Bhagavad Gita 5:24).

And all the people said, Teach us to know the Holy One who speaks within the heart, God of the still small voice. (Aquarian Gospel 26:8)

They are asking to know about God, but see how much the inquirers know already! Those who consciously inquire about the Way already know a goodly bit about it, even if only subliminally, otherwise they would not inquire.

What do they know? That God speaks within the heart as a still small voice.

Although we can cite a number of evils that seem inherent in externalized religion, its basic defect is just that: it is *externalized*. And spirit is internal.

“And when he [Jesus] was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20,21). Those words were spoken two thousand years ago, and were but an echo of the same spoken many more thousands of years before in India. But who is listening? Still we insist that the divine kingdom must be outside. We roam around to “holy” spots, run in and out of temples, keep material objects as though they were divine epiphanies, enslaving ourselves to innumerable outside things that will supposedly put us in contact with Spirit. If we get really crazy we decide to create an external kingdom of God on earth, either through a political or religious hierarchy, and attempt to herd others into it “for the greater glory of God.” It will not work. History proves it.

A man once came to Sri Ramana Maharshi bubbling over with enthusiasm and joy: The avatar Sri Rama had come to him and even spoken with him! “Did he leave?” was the laconic inquiry made by Ramana. “Why, yes,” replied the puzzled man. Some time later he expressed to Bhagavan [Sri Ramana] the desire to see Lord Krishna. In response Bhagavan gave him a meditation practice that would enable him to see Krishna. After some time it was so: Krishna came and, like Rama, spoke with him! Rushing to Arunachala, he exuberantly told him: “Krishna came to me!” Again the question: “Did he leave?” Again the reply: “Yes.” Ramana then asked him very forcefully: “When are you going to leave aside these ‘gods’ that come and go and seek for the Ever-present One that can neither come nor go?” Jolted awake, the man saw the truth of this and did begin earnestly to seek that One. And he sought him within only. And found him there.

God is everywhere, but he speaks from within the heart, and not from someone else’s heart to us, but from within our own heart.

The speaking of God in our heart is very subtle. To hear it the mind must be refined and honed by purification and meditation. Some systems of meditation can produce a great deal of noise, psychic thunder and lightning. But the voice of God will not heard in that din. “And he [Elijah] came thither unto a cave, and lodged there... And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice” (I Kings 19:9,11,12). Wind, quake, and fire; yet in all that noise there was nothing. But in the silence God spoke. “While all things were in quiet silence,... Thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal

throne” (Wisdom 18:14-15).

Those who look within and enter their heart will in the Silence find the Word that is God. And that Word is Soham, for in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, we are told: “In the beginning this (world) was only the Self [Atman].... He first said, I am Soham [*Soham asmi*]” (1:4:1). Later in the Upanishad (5.15.2), the identical words are found as what the yogi should recite when leaving the body at death. For Soham embodies the knowledge and the knowing of both the Absolute and our own Self. Both are Soham.

And Jesus said, The Holy Breath cannot be seen with mortal eyes; nor can men see the Spirits of the Holy. (Aquarian Gospel 26:9)

But the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit, can be seen with the immortal eyes of the spirit by those who through yoga have learned they are more than men.

When I typed in the above words I immediately remembered an incident both amusing and sad. Soon after our first ashram temple had been established, we celebrated the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna. Do not ask me why, but we invited the heads of a local “experimental” Roman Catholic monastic community to attend. Since the Second Vatican Council had told them to be “open” to the heathen, they accepted.

After the worship I spoke a bit, explaining who Sri Ramakrishna was, and then we had lunch together in our main room. During the conversation the founder of the community began asking about who of our number had been baptized. I understood that we was wondering who was apostate and who was just invincibly ignorant. To his horror he found that most of us had been baptized in one “church” or another.

As he sat there, politely aghast, I worsened the situation greatly by saying: “But none of these have really been baptized; they were just wetted down by the Protestants in a feeble ceremony. There is no comparison between that and the authentic baptism of the sacramental churches such as the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox.”

“What do you mean?” He demanded, and I, the fool, strode in where the angels would prudently have stood apart.

“The Protestants just take tap water and slosh it on you or dunk you in it. But in the real Baptism, the divine power of the Holy Spirit descends into the water and transforms it into a supernatural vehicle of enlivening and purification.”

He drew back and thundered at me: “YOU CANNOT SEE THE ACTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

I, undaunted, shrugged and said: “Well *I* did.”

After some sputterings, there was sullen silence and a soon departure.

This is why commercial religion of all types detest mysticism. The mystics have a direct “seeing” which reveals the truth of what is (or is not) really going on in religion. For example, I knew two mystical, psychic Catholics that got into big trouble when they perceived that the new rituals adopted by the church in 1968-69

were often ineffectual. One went from parish to parish, and when asked by Catholic friends, including a priest, the reason why, replied: "Because the Mass no longer 'works'!" Things were compounded when her little daughter, who was very psychic, chimed in and said: "Jesus doesn't come to grandma's church anymore." Another friend attended the supposed consecration of a bishop and saw that nothing whatsoever had taken place. The interesting feature of this incident was that after his "consecration" the "bishop" Had looked directly into my friend's eyes with virulent hatred and later refused to give him a blessing. Get the stake ready!

It is true, human eyes can see neither the spirits of the Holy nor that transforming divinity from which they draw their holiness. But we are not human; we are extension of the Divine itself. And when the divine eye is opened in us we will see The All. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Psalms 36:9).

Saint Paul tells us that humans cannot even see the light in which God "dwells," much less God Himself. ([God is] dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." I Timothy 6:16) Jesus said that no "man" Had ever seen God. ("No man hath seen God at any time." John 1:18) But it was none other than God who explained the matter, saying: "There shall no man see me, and live" (Exodus 33:20). Jesus clarified this by saying: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, *save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father*" (John 6:46). Yes, God is invisible (Colossians 1:15; I Timothy 1:17), but only to the eyes of mortality. Once we have in truth passed "from death to immortality" we see the Immortal with our immortal eyes.

To see Divinity we must enter into our own divinity. In India they speak about an insect that, when attacked by another species of insect, takes on the exact form of the attacker and becomes indistinguishable from it, and thereby disarms its enemy. This comes about because it becomes totally fixated on the form of the attacker. So, it is said, the yogi must become so utterly absorbed in the contemplation of God that he becomes a god. Then the problem is solved. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Corinthians 15:53-54). "Death" must be understood symbolically in this passage as spiritual death, the absence of spiritual consciousness or perception.

To see God is to be God. All lesser being vanishes. In his comic poem, "The Hunting of the Snark," Lewis Carroll speaks of a "boojum," a being whose very sight causes the beholder to dissolve instantly. God is the ultimate boojum, causing all mortality, all limitation and ignorance to vanish like the chimera they really are all along.

Both the King and the Kingdom are beyond the reach of earthly eyes.

"And Jesus said, This kingdom is not far away, but man with mortal eyes can see it not; it is within the heart" (Aquarian Gospel 29:19).

“The kingdom of the Holy One is in the soul; men cannot see it with their carnal eyes; with all their reasoning powers they comprehend it not. It is a life deep hid in God; its recognition is the work of inner consciousness” (Aquarian Gospel 75:15,16).

“I cannot show the king, unless you see with eyes of soul, because the kingdom of the king is in the soul. The man of God is pure in heart; he sees the king; he sees with eyes of soul” (Aquarian Gospel 71:4, 15). And in the fortieth chapter Jesus also speaks of meditation as the process of gaining spiritual sight.

“And Jesus said, There is a Silence where the soul may meet its God, and there the fount of wisdom is, and all who enter are immersed in light, and filled with wisdom, love and power. Men carry with them all the time the secret place where they might meet their God. It matters not where men abide, on mountain top, in deepest vale, in marts of trade, or in the quiet home; they may at once, at any time, fling wide the door, and find the Silence, find the house of God; it is within the soul. The Silence is the kingdom of the soul, which is not seen by human eyes. If you would find this Silence of the soul you must yourself prepare the way. None but the pure in heart may enter here. And you must lay aside all tenseness of the mind, all business cares, all fears, all doubts and troubled thoughts. Your human will must be absorbed by the divine; then you will come into a consciousness of holiness. And then the curtains part, and you are in the Holiest of All, where rests the Ark of God, whose covering is the Mercy Seat. And then, behold the manna there, the hidden bread of life; and he who eats shall never die” (Aquarian Gospel 40:3, 6-7, 10, 12-14, 19, 23).

And Jesus said, The Holy Breath cannot be seen with mortal eyes; nor can men see the Spirits of the Holy; but in their image man was made, and he who looks into the face of man, looks at the image of the God who speaks within.

And when man honors man he honors God, and what man does for man, he does for God. And you must bear in mind that when man harms in thought, or word or deed another man, he does a wrong to God.

If you would serve the God who speaks within the heart, just serve your near of kin, and those that are no kin, the stranger at your gates, the foe who seeks to do you harm; assist the poor, and help the weak; do harm to none, and covet not what is not yours; then, with your tongue the Holy One will speak; and he will smile behind your tears, will light your countenance with joy, and fill your hearts with peace. (Aquarian Gospel 26:9-15)

But in their image man was made, and he who looks into the face of man, looks at the image of the God who speaks within. In the ninth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel Jesus describes the manifestation of the “Elohim, creative spirits of the universe. And these are they who said, Let us make man; and in their image man was made” (Aquarian Gospel 9:19-20). We see from this that it is inaccurate to say that we are made in the image of the invisible God, the Father or the Son. Rather, we are

made in the image of the Divine Power, the Holy Spirit, *and* the Seven Archons who are the immediate creators of the cosmos. That is, the human status, including the human body, is a reflection of these eight beings, one infinite and seven of them finite though of inconceivable scope and power.

The Father and the Son are pure spirit, invisible and transcendent, whereas the Holy Spirit Mother is visible as all things. Consequently human beings are visible. Further, the Holy Spirit is undifferentiated Power, but the Seven Archons are the great Intelligences that formed that Power into all that “is.” “From God’s own Record Book we read: The Triune God breathed forth, and seven Spirits stood before his face. (The Hebrews call these seven Spirits, Elohim.) And these are they who, in their boundless power, created everything that is, or was” (Aquarian Gospel 32:20-21).

Human beings embody both the power and the intelligence of creation. How awesome we are! And how foolishly we have let our egos, and the egos of others, convince us that we are weak, sinful, and mortal, unworthy of Divine regard.

But the truth of our nature is not for self-congratulation. It is to be turned outward in the realization that “he who looks into the face of man, looks at the image of God” and react accordingly. Jesus had no intention of limiting to himself the meaning of the words: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). This is true of all human beings.

The first time I witnessed the evening worship of the Eastern Christian (Russian Orthodox) Church many things amazed and delighted me. One was the practice of the celebrant censuring everyone present and bowing to them, just as he censured and bowed to the holy icons. Several times, the holy Nectary, the Bishop of Seattle who was visiting the church in Los Angeles, came and stood in front of each one of us, censuring and bowing to us. He was honoring our inner divinity. Each time we bowed in turn acknowledging his divinity. And I well remember how after attending the worship conducted by the holy priest John Diakonoff in Chicago, everything “looked holy” to me for hours afterward. Even the people standing at the bus stop seemed worthy of being bowed to, and I used to do so mentally.

It is not easy to do, but we who strive to have “the mind of Christ” must keep in mind that, however buried it may be, the “pearl of great price” of divinity is within every single person upon the earth. It is a high ideal, but if we will not seek to attain high ideals, why are we bothering with spiritual life at all?

There is a problem we may have with holy writings and the words of the wise. We can easily miss profound concepts because they are so easily, even casually, and briefly stated. This is demonstrated in the first verse of the passage we are considering. At the end we find the five words: “the God who speaks within.” They are worth far more than the tons of religious books that are printed every week. Let us sum them up in a few points.

- 1) God is within each one of us.
- 2) God is active within each one of us.
- 3) God is speaking to (guiding) us from within.

4) God can speak out from within us, just as he did through the prophets.

5) If we want to see and hear God we need only turn within.

All this being true, there is a sixth proposition: We are living manifestations of God. Then it only follows that:

When man honors man he honors God, and what man does for man, he does for God. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). God is unseen and unheard to most of us, so if we want to relate to God we can do so through other human beings. “For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (I John 4:20). In the ultimate analysis we really cannot serve God or make offerings to him. If he needed anything from us he would be finite and dependent like us. And what is there in the world that is not already his—a manifestation of him? It is only through others that we can serve God or give him anything. A place where suffering and needy humanity is relieved and helped is a true “house of worship.” Saint John the Beloved put it exactly right: “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us” (I John 4:12).

Jesus wraps up the whole subject easily:

And you must bear in mind that when man harms in thought, or word or deed another man, he does a wrong to God. If you would serve the God who speaks within the heart, just serve your near of kin, and those that are no kin, the stranger at your gates, the foe who seeks to do you harm; assist the poor, and help the weak; do harm to none, and covet not what is not yours; then, with your tongue the Holy One will speak; and he will smile behind your tears, will light your countenance with joy, and fill your hearts with peace.”

And then the people asked, To whom shall we bring gifts? Where shall we offer sacrifice?

And Jesus said, Our Father-God asks not for needless waste of plant, of grain, of dove, of lamb. That which you burn on any shrine you throw away. No blessings can attend the one who takes the food from hungry mouths to be destroyed by fire.

When you would offer sacrifice unto our God, just take your gift of grain, or meat and lay it on the table of the poor. From it an incense will arise to heaven, which will return to you with blessedness. Tear down your idols; they can hear you not; turn all your sacrificial altars into fuel for the flames.

Make human hearts your altars, and burn your sacrifices with the fire of love. (Aquarian Gospel 26:16-22)

This makes perfect sense, because Jesus also said: “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). So when we want to serve and love God we should aspire to serve and love even the least of humanity. Saint Francis’ love for lepers and his devoted service to them is the perfect example, but not so perfect that we cannot do it also.

Whatever we do to any sentient being, not just humans, we do to God. For: "I am the Atman that dwells in the heart of every mortal creature: I am the beginning, the life-span, and the end of all" (Bhagavad Gita 10:20). "The Lord lives in the heart of every creature" (Bhagavad Gita 18:61).

It is important that we reach out to others in love, not just from a sense of duty. I have seen "charitable" people treating those they helped like cattle to be herded around "for their own good." It was obvious they saw those unfortunate ones as a kind of mess to clean up and get out of the way. Caring for others is not a dose of bitter medicine, but it will be if love is not the beginning, middle and end of our caring.

And all the people were entranced, and would have worshiped Jesus as a God; but Jesus said, I am your brother man just come to show the way to God; you shall not worship man; praise God, the Holy One. (Aquarian Gospel 26:23, 24)

Jesus asked his disciples who the people, and they, thought he was (Matthew 16:13, 15). But more important is the question: Who does *Jesus* say he is? The proof of this is the fact that the Christians wrangled, cursing and slaughtering one another, for several centuries over the question of just who/what Jesus was. The answer is found here in the Aquarian Gospel.

First we must remember that this is taking place in India, not in Israel. This is most important. For in India they considered Jesus was divine because of his wisdom teachings. In Israel some thought he was divine because of his miracles. One response is from spiritual intelligence and the other is from material identification. The visionary stigmatist Anna Catherine Emmerich said that in India the people loved Jesus and understood his teachings thoroughly, and Jesus loved them and felt at home only in India. In contrast, she said, in Israel Jesus felt completely alien and the people could hardly understand anything of what he said. (Consider the frequent incapacity of his own disciples to understand his words.)

Because of this, Jesus could say in India what would be useless to speak in Israel. However, truth is truth wherever we are, and his defining of himself is totally clear, and as true in the West (Israel) as in the East (India).

I am your brother man. Jesus says quite clearly and unequivocally that he is in his incarnation a human being, a "brother" of all human beings. He is not God pretending to be a human, or somehow having "taken upon" Himself a human nature and thereby becoming both God and man. No. He is simply a man. A very special man, a god-man, but nonetheless a man.

To be perfectly accurate, Jesus had evolved far beyond the human status, but, as with all of us, he retained his evolutionary experiences; they were built into him permanently as his past, upon which his present status was based. In a sense, through our experiences and the effect of those experiences (samskaras) we all remain whatever life-form we ever manifested through. It like the Ph.D. who has passed beyond the learning of grade school, yet he still embodies it.

Just come to show the way to God. His statement of purpose is also simple and direct: to bring to mankind the way to God, not a philosophy or a theology, but the practical means by which humans can journey to divinity. Elsewhere in the Aquarian Gospel Jesus speaks of meditation, the Silence, and the Divine Word which emanates from that Silence and leads us to it. Jesus brought no elaborate system of ritual or belief, only The Way.

Though not a god or founder of a religion, he nonetheless had something to say to us in our journeying along the path he came to reveal.

You shall not worship man. Surely Jesus had in mind a presage of his eventual divinization and the erection of a multi-mouthed religion which would din into the ears of a confused humanity that he alone must be worshipped as God or else they would suffer the terrible consequences of everlasting damnation.

Having told us that he is a man, Jesus then tells us to worship no human being, ever. Certainly Jesus is worthy of total respect, even reverence, and it is no mistake to contemplate him with both awe and love. But he is Perfect Man, not Perfect God. As Perfect Man he deserves our unreserved admiration, and even more, he merits our serious attention and attempt to follow the Way he came to show us. As he himself said to those who hypocritically professed to follow him: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). The idea is not that we must believe a theology and acknowledge him as God, but we must *do* what he says: engage in spiritual practice that leads us to God-realization.

I am your brother man just come to show the way to God; you shall not worship man; praise God, the Holy One." This is the perspective true disciples of Jesus must have. He is worthy of all reverence and love, but he must not be mistaken for God Who alone we should worship. That is why the esoteric Christian Creed says: "We believe in Jesus Christ, the Lord of love and wisdom, first among his brethren, Who leads us to the glory of the Father, showing us the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus has shown us the way, the truth and the life by his example, the pattern, for all disciples to conform to and follow in all aspects of their life. Unless we follow his example, we will not find either way, truth or life. Jesus is himself the Gospel of Christ in manifestation.

Praise God, the Holy One. What shall we do, besides? Glorify God. And why do that? Because in doing so we will be fixing our minds on God and therewith draw into our own being the infinite life that manifests in infinite glory. To think of any person or place is to be there on a subtle level of our being. To continually think of God, then, is to consciously dwell in God and become transmuted into his perfect image, to truly "find" God.

God is said by Jesus to be holy. Why not almighty, all-knowing, and such attributes? Certainly God is all those things, but foremostly he is HOLY. "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [conduct]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15,16). In Indian languages the same word, shuddha, is used for holy and pure. God being pure, we must also be pure. With this in mind, Saint John wrote: "Beloved, now are we the

sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2,3).

This the Way of Christ.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

The fame of Jesus as a teacher spread through all the land, and people came from near and far to hear his words of truth. At Behar, on the sacred river of the Brahms [the Ganges], he taught for many days. And Ach, a wealthy man of Behar, made a feast in honor of his guest, and he invited every one to come. And many came; among them thieves, extortioners, and courtesans.

And Jesus sat with them and taught; but they who followed him were much aggrieved because he sat with thieves and courtesans. And they upbraided him; they said, Rabboni, master of the wise, this day will be an evil day for you. The news will spread that you consort with courtesans and thieves, and men will shun you as they shun an asp. (Aquarian Gospel 27:1-6)

Jesus did not modify his behavior when he returned to Israel after his sojourn in India, for Matthew, Mark and Luke record the complaints of “the righteous” about his association with just the same kind of people. There is a difference in his response, however. In Israel he just spoke of how much those people needed him and how he had come to uplift them. In India he speaks more metaphysically, to the shame of teachers who well knew the principles but did not live them.

And Jesus answered them and said, A master never screens himself for sake of reputation or of fame. (Aquarian Gospel 27:7)

Few, then are the Masters on this earth! It is almost impossible to find a single teacher of religion that does not completely tailor himself to suit the “taught.”

A friend of mine came from India to America to teach mathematics at a university. He continued to dress just as he did in India, so after several weeks he was approached by two Indian men in hopes that he was a guru or at least a teacher of spiritual things. During their conversation he asked them if there were any dharma activities in the area. “Oh, yes,” they told him, “Swami X lives just over the river.” Eagerly he got the address and phone number from them and hurried home to call the swami’s center and get an appointment. When the day came, he flew there, anticipating the relief and joy of being in the presence of a sadhu, for he came from a family of yogis that greatly loved monks.

He was shown into a room where another Indian was sitting. But whereas Professor Dwivedi was dressed just as he would in India, this other man was, in Dwivediji’s words: “Well suited, well booted, with gaudy necktie and a mass of shiny pomade on his hair.” He assumed the man was also waiting to see the swami.

After sitting there a few minutes in silence the man asked Dwivediji: “Is there anything I can do for you?” Dwivediji replied: “I am waiting to see Swami X.” “I am Swami X,” came the astounding revelation. “One moment I was flying in the sky and the next I was crashing to earth,” Professor Dwivedi told me. “I could not

believe it. This dandified man called himself a sadhu?”

Dwivediji was not a shy man. He challenged his host on his utterly inappropriate attire and general appearance. “Oh, I have to dress this way,” He was told, “otherwise no one would listen to me.”

“So who is the teacher, then?” pressed Dwivediji. “Instead of them learning from you, you have learned from them! Tell me, do you also ‘date’ so you will not make them feel you are different from them? Why did you come to America to become a worldly man? You could do that back in India, though there people would have the good sense to disregard you as a spiritual teacher.”

And the interview ended.

By contrast, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh was once urged in Tamil by a disciple to act in a way that would be more “acceptable” to some very rich visitors. “Why should I care what they think of me?” He demanded in English, a language the rich people understood, much to the disciple’s embarrassment.

I cannot count the number of hoops I have seen some “gurus” leap through, both in India and America to please the crowd or a rich few. But the genuine teachers are another article altogether. Of course they are not popular with a lot of people as a consequence. But the true souls seek them out and profit by their association.

These are but worthless baubles of the day; they rise and sink, like empty bottles on a stream; they are illusions and will pass away. (Aquarian Gospel 27:8)

Easily said! And very easily agreed to by those who have no chance of either great reputation or fame. It is easy to be detached from the things we do not have. The secret is this: desire for reputation and fame is a purely psychological matter, and escaping attraction for them is also purely psychological.

Only Self-knowledge will dispel these illusions in two ways: 1) it reveals their totally illusory nature and 2) gives us a self-image in which they are thoroughly pointless. When we know our Self we need nothing more. People boast because they do not know how wonderful they really are. Consequently they have to create a false appearance of “wonderful.” When you have real diamonds you forget all about fake ones. Knowing the Self is the solution that eliminates the problem.

Until we gain that true knowledge we can be tormented by anxieties regarding what others think of us, and we may even be foolish enough to believe that we are what others think of us. And since, as Jesus said, reputation and fame “rise and sink like empty bottles on a stream” we are endlessly tantalized, fearful that we will not gain them, and once we do gain them, fearful that we will lose them, even though it is their nature to be lost. Such is the suffering we create for ourselves, and literally for nothing.

They are the indices to what the thoughtless think; they are the noise that people make; and shallow men judge merit by noise. (Aquarian Gospel 27:9)

In reading this verse I am reminded of the “applause meters” that once were used by radio and television competitions or game shows. The louder the applause made by the audience the more likely a person was to win, a victory based on noise rather than merit. It is the same with reputation and fame. They truly are barometers of shallow approval or adulation, with little or no reference to merit or excellence. Observation will reveal that popularity has an inverse ratio to the worthiness of individuals and organizations. It has been evident to me for a long time that really good frauds have no hope of success, only the really cheap and obvious frauds sweep upward to the heights. Intelligence and creativity are death-knells in pop culture, whereas mediocrity is lavishly rewarded.

If someone or something is loved by “the crowd” we can be sure they are cheap and flimsy at best and twisted or perverse at worse. Jesus did not call ignorant people pigs and dogs for nothing (see Matthew 7:6; 15:26; Isaiah 56:10-11; Philippians 3:2). Their taste in all things reveal their character. Conversely, the less something or someone is esteemed popularly the more likely they are to be good and worthy.

This holds true in religion especially. The wildly popular leaders and organizations are usually outrageously fraudulent and outright abominable. A woman I know used to gauge a spiritual group by telephoning and asking questions regarding the kind of people who belonged. She would go through a list of “cool” and “with-it” types. If they attended, she would not. When she called our ashram she asked if certain conservative religious groups would “like” us. She was told No. Then she asked if certain liberal religious groups would “like” us. When she was also told No, she exclaimed: “I’ll be there!”

Just as there will always be those who prefer margarine to butter, the fake to the genuine, so it will be in spiritual matters. People may be deluded, but they have an unerring sense of the true and the false: they avoid the true and flock to the false. It is very much like a motion picture made in the 1940’s called *Lady From Lisbon*. The “Lady” was the Mona Lisa which had been stolen from the Louvre during the upheavals of the Second World War. The thieves took it to Lisbon where people were able to travel freely, usually to the Western Hemisphere. Once the news of the theft went out, several people made fake copies of the Mona Lisa and also came to Lisbon to sell them. Every one of the fakes sold readily, but no one would buy the real item. The reason? It looked fake to the prospective buyers, and the fakes looked real. In the photographic negative of an object the light areas are dark and the dark areas are light. The same is true in the judgment of negative people. You can judge something by their reaction to it, knowing that the truth will be exactly the opposite to their opinion. Popularity and “public confidence” truly are only “the noise that people make.” And it is also true that “shallow men judge merit by noise.”

Before and after the advent of Jesus, false messiahs gathered tens of thousand of followers. But Jesus began and ended with twelve, and one of them betrayed him. Later, when he was no longer around, many flocked to be Christians. As Sri Ma

Sarada Devi said about the growing popularity of Sri Ramakrishna after his departure from this world: “Now that the Master is only a photograph everybody loves him!”

It is hard to find the real in spiritual matters because it is invisible to most. I have seen great saints completely ignored by those who lived not only near but even with them. The greater a person or teaching is, the less they are esteemed in the popular “mind.”

Yet there are those who see true.

God and all master men judge men by what they are and not by what they seem to be; not by their reputation and their fame. (Aquarian Gospel 27:10)

God told the prophet Samuel: “The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7).

Of course all people are divine in essence, and that is the real “truth” of their being. But this divinity is encased in many layers of energy that go to make up their personality and mentality. Although these energy configurations are not ultimately real, they must not be ignored. Divinity is inside the human and the tiger, but we only shake hands with the human. To run the maze of this world rightly we have to pay attention to temporary realities. There is a lesser “are” to people that we must gauge and respond to. But that, too, is far more real than mere public opinion. The crowd shouted “Crucify him!” when asked what should be done with the innocent Jesus. But there were those who saw him rightly, and they were blessed.

We must look deeply into all things with the eye of atmic intuition that has been opened by meditation. We must see people as they are in the energy levels of their present manifestation and evaluate and react accordingly, though always keeping their divinity in mind. (This is not always so easy.)

These courtesans and thieves are children of my Father-God; their souls are just as precious in his sight as yours, or of the Brahmic priests. (Aquarian Gospel 27:11)

We are parts of the Eternal Whole, waves of the ocean of Infinite Being. Every single one of us is as much “of God” as is God himself. And our innermost nature is just as inalienable. Each individual, no matter what the outer condition, is of infinite value. And no matter how darkened or tangled the life-path may be, still the movement is toward perfection. From Egypt to Israel is not such a long way, yet the Hebrews wandered in the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land. They were greatly delayed, but they made it, nevertheless. So it is with us and all others. Even the most degraded life is precious because it is part of the path Godward.

We must learn to distinguish between life and the conditions in which life can be entrapped, and to value them accordingly, for they are not the same.

Jesus further tells his critics:

And they are working out the same life sums that you, who pride yourselves on your respectability and moral worth, are working out. And some of them have solved much harder sums than you have solved, you men who look at them with scorn. (Aquarian Gospel 27:12, 13)

So we are all in it together, from the amoeba to the highest evolved beings at the top of creation. And God is right here in the midst of it with us, for Krishna said: "I am the Atman that dwells in the heart of every mortal creature" (Bhagavad Gita 10:20). And "The Lord lives in the heart of every creature" (Bhagavad Gita 18:61). God experiences everything we experience. The implications of this are great.

Yes, they are sinners, and confess their guilt, while you are guilty, but are shrewd enough to have polished coat to cover up your guilt. Suppose you men who scorn these courtesans, these drunkards and these thieves, who know that you are pure in heart and life, that you are better far than they, stand forth that men may know just who you are. (Aquarian Gospel 27:14, 15)

Jesus is here making a distinction between wrongdoers. There are the trapped and the willfully evil. The trapped do not hide their problems and thus have hope of amendment, but the intentionally evil hide their deeds and practice hypocrisy. There are no limits to their coverings-up. They will even kill teachers of righteousness lest the truth about them be revealed. This is the main reason Jesus was murdered by "the righteous." "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:20).

For the trapped Jesus had nothing but compassion and offered hope, and for the lovers of evil he had only the light of truth, which they hated.

All people do foolish and even harmful things, yet some are "sinners" and some are not. How can this be? Jesus makes it clear in few words, saying:

The sin lies in the wish, in the desire, not in the act. (Aquarian Gospel 27:16)

This is not original with him, but is the teaching of Buddha half a millennium before. Karma consists of two aspects: creation of a future effect or destiny, and the manifestation or "reaping" that is the effect. Buddha made it very clear that "originating" karma was a purely psychological matter, though it usually manifested physically in its working out. Therefore it was the intent of the person that determined the quality and form of the "reaping" of the karma.

A dizzy person cannot help staggering or walking into things. In the same way, there are those in the grip of ignorance and folly that seem hopelessly caught in patterns of wrong thinking and acting. For these there is a way out, and to them Jesus gladly came for their deliverance. We must realize this, however: Jesus did not just "accept" them and hobnob with them to prove what a liberal, broad-minded and "non-judgmental" person he was. No. His association with them was intended to free them from the destructive cycle in which they were caught. He did indeed

accept them, but he did not accept their inner distortion. He came to heal, to do away with that, not in “righteous” disapproval, but in mercy.

There is absolutely no virtue in associating with and “tolerating” evil or evil people. But there is supreme virtue in helping those who wish to escape from bondage to find the way out of darkness into the light. There is, of course, no virtue in trying to drive people into the light. Those who do not wish to be led should be left alone. And Jesus did. Now back to the truly “bad.”

You covet other people’s wealth; you look at charming forms, and deep within your hearts you lust for them. Deceit you practice every day, and wish for gold, for honor and for fame, just for your selfish selves.

The man who covets is a thief, and she who lusts is courtesan. You who are none of these speak out.

Nobody spoke; the accusers held their peace. And Jesus said, The proof this day is all against those who have accused. (Aquarian Gospel 27:17-21)

There is religion which reveals and religion which conceals. The first kind is beloved of those who desire to purify their hearts and rise to higher life. The second is beloved of those who wish to hide their impurity and remain sunken in it. Obviously, the second form is the most sought after. It is unjust to condemn all religion because we see the second type so prevalent. Jesus is going to present to us the picture of right religion versus the hypocrisy that usually prevails.

The pure in heart do not accuse. The vile in heart who want to cover up their guilt with holy smoke of piety are ever loathing drunkard, thief and courtesan. This loathing and this scorn is mockery, for if the tinselled coat of reputation could be torn away, the loud professor would be found to revel in his lust, deceit and many forms of secret sin.

The man who spends his time in pulling other people’s weeds can have no time to pull his own, and all the choicest flowers of life will soon be choked and die, and nothing will remain but dandelion, thistles, burs. (Aquarian Gospel 27:22-24)

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). The primary sense of this statement is that purification of heart prepares us for the vision of God. But there is a secondary sense, and that is that the pure in heart see divinity at the heart of all others, though they clearly see the muck that covers that divinity in people. They see through to the inner holiness, though aware of the veiling sins. So their attitude is one of positivity and of optimism about those around them. They accept and do not reject. Yet they know well that much is needed to reveal the hidden treasure. The way of the impure of heart is quite different, as Jesus has shown us.

Finally Jesus gives us a parable so perfect and so clear that it needs no commentary.

And Jesus spoke a parable: he said, Behold, a farmer had great fields of ripened grain, and when he looked he saw that blades of many stalks of wheat were bent and broken down. And when he sent his reapers forth he said, We will not save the stalks of wheat that have the broken blades. Go forth and cut and burn the stalks with broken blades.

And after many days he went to measure up his grain, but not a kernel could be find. And then he called the harvesters and said to them, Where is my grain? They answered him and said, We did according to your word; we gathered up and burned the stalks with broken blades, and not a stalk was left to carry to the barn.

And Jesus said, If God saves only those who have no broken blades, who have been perfect in his sight, who will be saved? And the accusers hung their heads in shame; and Jesus went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 27:25-32)

May we go that way, as well.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Benares is the sacred city of the Brahm[in]s, and in Benares Jesus taught; Udraka was his host. Udraka made a feast in honor of his guest, and many high born Hindu priests and scribes [pandits] were there.

And Jesus said to them, With much delight I speak to you concerning life—the brotherhood of life. (Aquarian Gospel 28:1-3)

Rarely, when growing up, did I hear a sermon delivered with any manner but solemnity. Plenty of times the discourse was a stick to belabor the mental backs of the hearers. Even when I was free of the imprisoning ignorance of Protestant fundamentalism, still the aura of gravity prevailed in the various centers I visited which were oriented toward Indian philosophy and yoga. Evidently the speakers (both American and Indian) felt the profound concepts of Sanatana Dharma were to be approached with a devout wariness on the behalf of the seeker, rather like working up to taking a particularly bitter, nasty-tasting medicine.

But in India I found things to be greatly different. Those speaking about dharma did so with a lightness, even a buoyancy and humor, that was almost as engaging as their words. I can never forget the joy that radiated from the eyes of many of them, both in public talks and in my private conversations with them. Optimism is a cardinal feature of the genuine yogi. So it is fitting that Jesus, in the holy city of Benares (Varanasi), should express his joy in being able to speak of the divine realities than can only rejoice the heart when correctly understood.

In contrast consider the common religious milieu he had left behind in Israel. Thunderings, fulminations, and threats by a bloodthirsty deity whose temple in Jerusalem flowed literal streams of blood throughout the day. Virtue was not its own reward. Rather, virtue's reward lay in being left alone by a testy God whose knowledge of men's hearts inspired the deepest loathing for them, and who had a history of wiping out entire nations as well as individuals who "offended" Him. He often demanded the deaths of their families and clans, as well. And the offenses were sometimes so slight as to be nonexistent. This does not make for a very jolly time when religion becomes the subject.

How blessed it was for me in my own life to experience the same relief and uplift that Jesus had felt two thousand years before me! And how sad that the burden from which I had been relieved had been thrust upon me in the name of that same Jesus.

However, Jesus had managed to adjust to freedom and cheerfulness, so he continues with these words of glorious vision:

The universal God is one, yet he is more than one; all things are God; all things are one. (Aquarian Gospel 28:4)

God is not just one in the sense of number, a single entity. He is much more

than that. He is a Unity that embraces, includes and in a mysterious way is the Many. In him diversity and difference exist without diminishing his Unity and his identity with all. We say that “all things are God,” and this is true, but ultimately we see the higher truth that there are no “things” at all, but only God. That fact of this divine unity is awesomely hopeful, eradicating fear and doubt when it begins to become part of the yogi’s inmost knowing. Long before the attainment of perfect unity, the joyful anticipation colors the yogi’s consciousness and life.

By the sweet breaths of God all life is bound in one; so if you touch a fiber of a living thing you send a thrill from the center to the outer bounds of life. (Aquarian Gospel 28:5)

Now this is truly awesome. When we interact with any thing or person we are entering into exchange and influence of the entire range of being. Cosmic Karma! For “the sweet breaths of God,” the currents of the Universal Life (Vishwaprana), flow through all things, drawing them into perfect unity on both an abstract and a functional level. This gives infinite scope to Jesus’ assertion: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40).

When we touch a leaf, we touch God. When we join our consciousness to God in meditation, we join ourselves to all that exist. There can never be a separation. The closer we are to God, the closer we are to all. We live in God and at the same time all live within us in a mystical way. When we lift ourselves we lift all that is.

This world is a duality, so there is a downside to even the most wonderful truth. Jesus wants us to have a complete, practical understanding of what he is saying, so he further tells us:

And when you crush beneath your foot the meanest worm, you shake the throne of God, and cause the sword of right to tremble in its sheath. (Aquarian Gospel 28:6)

Simply living is a grave responsibility for many reasons, not the least being the reality of karmic response to all thoughts and acts.

To harm any thing is to harm all, even God, at least in a metaphysical sense. In a moment we will hear more about this.

The bird sings out its song for men, and men vibrate in unison to help it sing. The ant constructs her home, the bee its sheltering comb, the spider weaves her web, and flowers breathe to them a spirit in their sweet perfumes that gives them strength to toil. (Aquarian Gospel 28:7, 8)

The entire field of Life is like a woven fabric. Each thread affects the others. We live within all and all lives within us. All affects us profoundly and we also affect all. This unity is glorious and sublime, even terrible (in the old sense of the word). We live because all live. And all live because God is Life Itself.

What a blasphemy, then is death; and what a horror is the causing of death. For

we deal the death-blow not to a single thing, but we injure all that live, and insanely attempt to destroy Life. Yes, in our madness we would kill that which is God. We will not succeed, but the psychic damage to ourselves will be tremendous.

Jesus does not spare any truth, but goes on, saying:

Now, men and birds and beasts and creeping things are deities, made flesh; and how dare men kill anything? 'Tis cruelty that makes the world awry. When men have learned that when they harm a living thing they harm themselves, they surely will not kill, nor cause a thing that God has made to suffer pain. (Aquarian Gospel 28:9, 10)

Here we find the perfect definition of *ahimsa*, one of the foundations of spiritual life. (See *The Foundations of Yoga*.)

To “kill” God! Of course it is impossible, but to aspire to do so is madness of the worst sort. Moreover, to feel either the hatred, malice or indifference required to willingly take life is not the gate to hell, it is hell itself. And those who dwell in such a hell are demons. “They are addicts of sensual pleasure, made restless by their many desires, and caught in the net of delusion. They fall into the filthy hell of their own evil minds. These malignant creatures are full of egoism, vanity, lust, wrath, and consciousness of power. They loathe me, and deny my presence both in themselves and in others. They are enemies of all men and of myself; cruel, despicable and vile. I cast them back, again and again, into the wombs of degraded parents, subjecting them to the wheel of birth and death. And so they are constantly reborn, in degradation and delusion. They do not reach me, but sink down to the lowest possible condition of the soul” (Bhagavad Gita 16:16, 18-20, Prabhavananda translation).

But Jesus is not speaking only of the murder of human beings. He includes animals as well, saying that they, too, “are deities.” Basically, all sentient beings are evolving gods, and it is rank “atheism” to deny this by either word or deed. Jesus does not even bother to speak of the craziness of killing and eating animals. There will be no world peace or harmony as long as human beings kill and eat “deities.”

There are many hindrances to true religion. One is the materialistic approach which thinks that the externals of a religion validate it and make it worth consideration. Foremost is the question of number of adherents, next is its economic assets, and then, of course, the matter of how socially and politically influential it and its members may be. Peter Cook’s comedy group, The Establishment, had a routine that was a consumer’s report on religion. The questions asked about each religion were: 1) What do you put into it? 2) What do you get out of it? 3) How much does it cost? 4) What about divorce?)

Therefore, after Jesus had spoken so exquisitely and movingly on the unifying presence of God in all things...

A lawyer said, I pray you, Jesus, tell who is this God you speak about; where are his priests, his temples and his shrines? (Aquarian Gospel 28:11)

Here is the typical attitude: people, in large numbers, validate God, God does not validate people. So he wants to know where are the religious professionals, the theologian-oracles, the impressive places of worship and pilgrimage? In other words: Where is the money, the power, and those to be controlled by them? Without them how could anyone accept the teachings of Jesus or anyone else? As one of my high school teachers once asked me: “What class of people belong to your church?”

I once travelled with a remarkable yogi whose insight was far beyond the usual, even in India. One thing that impressed me about him was his ability to give intelligent answers to stupid questions. No matter how idiotic the query, he managed to impart profound wisdom by replying to the question that *should* have been asked. Utilizing the same skill:

Jesus said, The God I speak about is everywhere; he cannot be compassed with walls, nor hedged about with bounds of any kind. (Aquarian Gospel 28:12)

And, by implication, he cannot be compassed or hedged about within the bounds of the human mind, nor can he become confined within the bounds of any human religion. As long as we are bound up with “here” and “there”, especially philosophically and religiously, there is no possibility of our touching the Omnipresent Consciousness. It is only when we pass beyond all such bounds that the Supreme Reality can be communicated with, known, and entered into.

Until this happy state is reached, humans have to do their best with their present status.

So Jesus continues:

All people worship God, the One; but all the people see him not alike. (Aquarian Gospel 28:13)

The first phrase is one of those astonishing statements to be found in the Aquarian Gospel, in contrast to the obviousness and occasional banality of the four “canonical” gospels. They are usually so brief that it is easy to treat them as a bridge to the next thought and completely miss the marvelous truths they embody. In this case it is the first half of a sentence:

All people worship God, the One. Everyone worships God, but some do so completely unknowingly, as Saint Paul told the Athenians (Acts 17:23). Everyone is seeking God, but most do not know it and so they wander around in bewilderment, continually pierced by the pains of samsara. This includes most religious people, for they do not really seek God, but only strive to please God, obtain his forgiveness or favor, or spread his “word” around the world and bring people to “the truth.” God is reduced to a bystander occasionally lending a hand or taking responsibility for their successes and their failures. They become the gods and he becomes the Servant. And believe me they make sure he stays in his place.

Basically, people want what God has, but care little for God. God is quite a bit

like Dickens' Fagan: people want his assistance and advantages, but no one wants to touch him, much less associate intimately with him. Nevertheless, since he is everything, not just inside everything, whatever they seek in life, they are seeking God. "Ah, 'is love, and love alone the world is seeking." What they fail to do is make the connection: God is Love (I John 4:8, 16); and God is the mystery of life because he is life.

But all the people see him not alike. And so the mystery goes on until the call is heard: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Ephesians 5:14), the Christ that is your own inner Self. In the light of that sun, that eye, we shall see clearly and "know what we worship: for... God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:22, 24).

God is beyond conceptualization, thought, and speech, yet we must have some kind of idea about him, so Jesus continues:

This universal God is wisdom, will and love. (Aquarian Gospel 28:14)

Obviously these are both attributes and powers of God, but they most truly reflect the ineffable Nature of God. They also correspond to the concept of the Trinity.

Wisdom. God is not just all-knowing, he is Understanding. Many people know things but cannot figure out their meaning. This is not the situation with God. Thus God is the source of all wisdom, and those who increasingly link their consciousness with him will increase in wisdom, as did Jesus before them (Luke 2:52). Implied in this is the fact that God is Consciousness Itself. In him are all the patterns or divine ideas that manifest in creation.

Will. As Wisdom, God is transcendent, beyond creation. As Will he is immanent in creation, guiding the movement of every particle of every atom. He is the sole accomplisher. We only act through his creative power (kriya shakti). In the ultimate sense everything is done by the power of God Who is totally present in all things at all times.

Love. God is the Divine Energy that manifests as creation and draws all the spirits embodied in creation upward to pure Divinity, to perfect freedom in Spirit. In the Trinitarian context, Wisdom is the Father, Will is the Son, and Love is the Holy Spirit. It is interesting that for centuries the official theological definitions of the Roman Catholic Church refer to the Holy Spirits as "the mutual Love of the Father and the Son." As this Love, the Holy Spirit is the Power that enables our evolution in consciousness and stimulates us to engage in that evolution. The Holy Spirit is the Awakener and Enabler for all sentient beings.

All men see not the Triune God. One sees him as the God of might; another as the God of thought; another as the God of love. (Aquarian Gospel 28:15)

Not everyone has a complete concept of God. Some see him simplistically as only one of his aspects. Such an incomplete and unbalanced view produces

simplistic and unbalanced religion, which in turn confirms and empowers simplistic and unbalanced thinking. This is not just a matter of “Oh, well, we cannot expect everyone to see everything alike.” It lays the finger on the pulse of destructive and degenerative religion as the manifestation of fundamental wrong-headedness.

Might. Looking upon God as nothing more than “Mighty God,” whose Deity is determined solely by his power to create and destroy, produces real problems. God becomes a cosmic dictator whose sole proof of legitimacy and rightness is the fact that he can do anything he wants and can destroy any thing or person who thwarts his will or incurs his wrath.

Just as dictators produce the worst and most degraded societies in the world, so the view of God as a dictator produces the worst and most degraded of religious outlooks. Adherents of such religions cringe and grovel before God, whining and confessing their sinfulness and hatefulness in God’s sight, declaring that they deserve to be punished and tortured, but because of his mercy (!) God does not annihilate them. (If he did annihilate them, who would he have to punish and torture?) He will, however, some time in the future dish out his just vengeance on those who are his enemies; and in the meantime the believers will do it for him and thereby gain his favor.

Do I need to list those world religions that presently operate on this current? They are the ones that declare good fortune to be proof of God’s approval and misfortune as evidence of his disapproval. Consequently wealth is divine favor and poverty is divine contempt. Some years ago, myself and some members of our ashram were in the Tel Aviv airport enroute to India. Naturally we were dressed as sannyasis. A nearby man remarked very indignantly and loudly so we would hear: “I can’t believe what I am seeing. People from America, the richest country in the world, following the religion of India, the poorest country in the world.” Might is Right. Money is Divinity.

Thought. Those who are enamored with their intellects revel in theologizing, building card houses of theories that need have no relation to any form of reality. Some of these people are satisfied to be ineffectual but clever, while others are as (or more) obsessed with “heresy” as they are with “truth,” and have no hesitation in bullying and coercing others into their false orthodoxy. Both are uninterested in practical spiritual results, being content with their dogmatic air castles. They vary in scholarship from minimal to maximally academic. But they are all by-the-book religionists in some form and are ideologically repressive, some being outright oppressive. Even the most liberal among them are rigidly insistent on their liberalism being imposed on others, and the same is true of the conservatives. They begin and end in the mind.

Love. Emotion- and ego-oriented people reduce religion to their idea of love. Their “love” is fundamentally sociopathic, being self-directed and manipulative of others. Their main obsession is with being “loved” by themselves, by others and by God. “It is all love” is their favorite truism which, if examined, means absolutely nothing. It is used as a foil to any good sense or questioning of their effusions and

manipulations. With this verbal cream puff they halt all discussion that comes dangerously near to actual reality, especially about themselves. “Unconditional love” is a blindfold they liberally tie over the minds and hearts of whoever will accept it, including themselves. Yet they can be viciously denunciative of those who do not fall into step with them or their aims. In fact, their favorite hate bomb is the declaration that someone has no love! At worst these people are effective, and at best ineffective and ignored. They utterly lack either intellectual or genuine emotional content, and are devoid of any moral principles, especially in the realm of sexuality.

Many are seeking the love they feel their parents did not give them, hoping to find it in others and, as a last resort, in God. The problem is, even God becomes nothing more than a mirror for their ego, a supplier of their emotional and material needs. This is no basis for a viable relationship with anybody, including God. The result is an amorphous and directionless mode of life and thought. “Only love” is not enough. And since you truly cannot live on love alone, the “love” churches universally focus on “abundance” and “prosperity consciousness” to an obsessive degree. After all, loving is giving and getting, isn’t it?

The Might, Thought and Love people are really alike: their egos are the only God they “know, or need to know.”

In seeking God we have to have the whole picture, as Jesus shows. Jesus has shown us the problem and he tells us the only solution: individual (not collective) evolution, saying:

A man’s ideal is his God, and so, as man unfolds, his God unfolds. Man’s God today, tomorrow is not God. (Aquarian Gospel 28:16)

This idea is not easy to accept, for we have an egocentric attachment to our spiritual concepts and an equally egocentric valuation of them. It is very hard to acknowledge that our concept of God has little or nothing to do with God, but is merely our creation. Our ideas about God arise from many aspects of our life and personality, but none of them are based in reality. People cling to their ideas of and about God the way they once clung to their wooly blanket or their beloved stuffed toy. And with just as infantile motivations.

As a rule our concepts of God are our concepts of the authority figures in our life. On occasion they may be what we think those authority figures should be. Most people’s concept of God is the image of their parents or early teachers. Naturally, a lot of people’s concept of God is their concept of themselves, only bigger. Sometimes our ideas about God are those which authority figures have implanted in us in the early part of our life. If we reject any of these, we become “atheists,” not really disbelieving in God, but disbelieving in what we do not like. This is why so many people in the West are desperate to believe that Jesus never existed. Although they claim to disbelieve, they are deeply conditioned in the belief that Jesus is going to come back and burn them in hell forever for not doing what he wanted them to. They often foolishly think that if religion is eliminated

everything will be all right for them. But the problem is in themselves, and that they must change, not any external factor. They need to really “see” God.

The only lasting way to come out of the darkness into the light is to turn within and discover the truth. Being a part of God we already know everything about divinity, but have forgotten it. Meditation is the way to recover that lost knowing. We should also trigger our subliminal insights by reading the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, the best of all delineations of the nature of God and us.

As we evolve, so will our concepts of God evolve, until we evolve beyond the need for conceptions and can intuit the spiritual realities that can never be formulated by the intellect or expressed by speech. As God told the psalmist: “Be still and know” (Psalms 46:10).

The nations of the earth see God from different points of view, and so he does not seem the same to every one. Man names the part of God he sees, and this to him is all of God; and every nation sees a part of God, and every nation has a name for God. You Brahmans call him Parabrahm; in Egypt he is Thoth; and Zeus is his name in Greece; Jehovah is his Hebrew name; but everywhere he is the causeless Cause, the rootless Root from which all things have grown. (Aquarian Gospel 28:17-19)

To say what God really is in the highest sense is simply impossible, but Jesus comes as close as can be by saying that God is the Ground and Mover and Source of all things. Yet he himself has no ground, mover, or source, being eternally what he truly is.

When men become afraid of God, and take him for a foe, they dress up other men in fancy garbs and call them priests. And charge them to restrain the wrath of God by prayers; and when they fail to win his favor by their prayers, to buy him off with sacrifice of animal, or bird. (Aquarian Gospel 28:20, 21)

Primitive people, that is, people of primitive minds, are impressed by and admire brute strength. They do not question the idea that the strongest and the most potentially destructive should rule them. It only seems natural to them. This is because they have evolved into the human form from numberless animal incarnations in which these principles prevail and are actually practical from the standpoint of genetics.

It takes a long while in the human form to learn to be human, and development does not go on simultaneously on all levels. Usually the spiritual/intuitive part of us lags way behind. So we may have keen intelligence, a well-developed ethical sense, etc., but still be stone-agers in the spirit. If we are, then God naturally is viewed by us as the biggest and most powerful of beings. And proof of that is in his destructive and coercive powers.

How many times have you heard people speak admiringly of extremely muscular men in terms of the physical dominance or damage they could work on others? “He

could break me in two like a matchstick!" "He could knock down a wall with a single fist!" "He could fight a dozen men at a time!" These words come out of the mouths of even the most cultured and well-behaved people. And so it will be with their ideas of God, unless they choose to call themselves atheists to avoid dealing with such a berserk Behemoth. The religion of such people exhorts them to fear God, painting graphic word pictures of God's great power, of his destruction and punishment of the wicked and his rewarding of the righteous (those who fear and obey him).

For a while this keeps them happy, but slowly they begin to see God as an adversary, one who demands that they continually prove their worthiness, and who will blast them if they fail to come up to expectations. It is true that in Christianity there is a great deal about how Jesus soothed God's just anger and that he is merciful toward the believers. Yet in the background there ever lurks the possibility that our frailty will again incur his displeasure. So God is always a potential threat.

In time fear breeds hatred. The less inhibited overtly hate God and his religion, but the fearful mask their hatred by turning it on "sin," the "wicked," the "unbelieving" and the heretical. A great deal of self-loathing compounds this lethal mess.

Those who have a strong sense of God's greatness create a class of protectors to shield them from God. But, as the old question asks, who will protect them from the protectors?

Even in the midst of foolishness some wisdom inevitably arises, so Jesus is able to say:

When man sees God as one with him, as Father-God, he needs no middle man, no priest to intercede; he goes straight up to him and says, My Father-God! and then he lays his hand in God's own hand, and all is well. (Aquarian Gospel 28:22, 23)

Jesus does not of just thinking or believing God is one with us, but "when man sees God as one with him." Such is the yogi who turns within and *experiences* the truth of his unity with God. For when we experience God as one with us, essentially inseparable from us, then all is well.

The aspiring yogi needs to know that yoga which reveals God, which enables him to go directly to God and touch God. For from the first moment of practice, the yogi must be in contact with God and in each subsequent moment draw nearer and nearer to the perfect knowledge of God. If we look at most yoga practices, they are only preparations or purifications that sometime in the undefined future will take us into contact with God. We are told that many years and even many lifetimes will be needed to obtain that ultimate result. This is because they are not yoga at all, for the very word means "union," not preparations or promises of future success. (To learn of authentic yoga, read *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.)

And this is God. You are, each one, a priest, just for yourself; and sacrifice

of blood God does not want. (Aquarian Gospel 28:24)

And this is God. The God that can be directly approached, known, and inwardly touched is the true God, none other. And that which immediately and directly put us into touch with this one and only God is the true yoga.

You are, each one, a priest. We can enter into communication with God if we only know how, for “he is not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:27). Churchianity often talks a great deal about “God’s salvation plan,” but Saint Paul gives it completely and extremely briefly: “He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). Just three points cover the entire field:

- 1) An inner certainty that God exists (which results in:)
- 2) Seeking God (and)
- 3) Finding God.

Now that is blessed simplicity.

We are each of us a priest, but *just for yourself*. For no one else. We cannot think or live for another, though many sociopathic teachers and gurus would like to, or at least have us think they can. No one can search on our behalf for God, “whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19:27). Each one of us does it completely on our own. Naturally we can be inspired and advised by others along the way, but the journeying is ours, step by step. It truly is “the flight of the alone to the Alone.”

Sacrifice of blood God does not want, neither the blood of animals, other humans, or even our own blood. There are deluded persons who think that extreme asceticism in which the body and health are damaged somehow makes them spiritual. This is nonsense, and also a way to fool themselves and others into thinking they have a spiritual life when it is only body-oriented. Animalistic human beings are very impressed with such things, and a following, especially in India, can be gained by self-torture, although Krishna says such foolish ascetics are demonic in nature. “Those who practice extreme austerities not ordained by the scriptures, accompanied by hypocrisy and egotism along with the force of desire and passion, senselessly torturing in the body the entire aggregates of the elements, and me within the body, know them to be of demonic resolves” (Bhagavad Gita 17:5-6). “Physical austerity which is practiced with deluded notions of the Self, and self-torture, is declared to be tamasic” (Bhagavad Gita 17:19).

Just give your life in sacrificial service to the all of life, and God is pleased. (Aquarian Gospel 28:25)

Perhaps the problem in responding to this high call is our understanding of *the all of life*. Obviously there is only one All of Life: God both in his own transcendent nature and in his immanence within all creation and in the hearts of all beings. We must serve God with body, mind, and spirit, both within ourselves and within others. This can entail a great many ways, ways that should be determined, not by others, but by our own meditation-awakened intuition. According to our karma and

samskara, so will our ways of divine service be decided, by ourselves and not by any other.

Let us, then, seek to please God in the right way: in ourselves, in others and in Spirit.

When Jesus had thus said he stood aside; the people were amazed, but strove among themselves. Some said, he is inspired by Holy Brahm; and others said, he is insane; and others said, he is obsessed; he speaks as devils speak. (Aquarian Gospel 28:26, 27)

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matthew 12:34). What is inside comes out through our speech. Those with God awakened within them said that Jesus was inspired by God; but those who were spiritually insane, themselves obsessed and demons, said otherwise, attributing their state to him. So it will always be. When we see how Jesus was renowned from birth, how many people declared him the Messiah and what incredible signs of his divine sonship were witnessed by multitudes, we are astounded that he was eventually rejected and killed. But if we realize that the bestial nature still living in humanity was simply “doing what comes naturally,” we are saddened but no longer amazed.

But Jesus tarried not. Among the guests was one, a tiller of the soil, a generous soul, a seeker after truth, who loved the words that Jesus spoke, and Jesus went with him, and in his home abode. (Aquarian Gospel 28:28)

Here we have a very typical picture. Those who had been questioning Jesus and playing the role of “seeker,” offered him no place to stay. When Swami Vivekananda was in Boston, the social elite would introduce him fulsomely on the platform, and anyone who “mattered” in Boston society clamored to hold receptions for “The Swami Vivekananda from India.” But when the speeches and receptions were over, none of them opened their homes to him. Instead, he was required to live in the squalor of the “colored section” of Boston because of his dark skin. Twenty years later, nothing had changed. Although invited to Boston as a delegate to the International Congress of Religious Liberals, Yogananda also was shunted off into the same ghetto. The Boston Brahmins still had their own code of untouchability. And Jesus experienced this code nearly two thousand years before.

In this verse from the Aquarian Gospel we learn that the host of Jesus was a farmer, a member of the Vaishya caste. He was not an outcaste, yet was considered too low for the Brahmins to come into his house. Surely Jesus remembered this when in Israel the Roman centurion, a man of great power and position, said: “Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof” (Matthew 8:8).

But we learn three other things about Jesus’ host which we can adopt to qualify ourselves to become an abode of divinity.

A generous soul. The spiritually worthy soul seeks to give, and finds fulfillment in giving. He gives to both God and man in gladness. I have had the good fortune to live with such people. Some were “ordinary people,” but others were saints and

Masters. The supreme example of generosity was Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. In him I saw total and perfect generosity, springing from a soul-felt love for all he came in contact with.

God is the supreme Giver, and if we would draw near to him we, too, must be givers in all aspects of life.

A seeker after truth. The second trait of Jesus' host was a very real seeking after truth. There was no duplicity or shadow of doubt in his seeking. He wanted the truth and all it entails, for God is the ultimate Truth.

Who loved the words that Jesus spoke. He did not just accept and follow the teachings of Jesus mechanically, but rejoiced in the truth of Jesus' words.

Many religionists obviously find the truth a dose of bitter medicine, and see it as a discipline they must undergo. So they coerce themselves and others into "obeying." Fear and bullying are the goads by which they push both themselves and others along a path for which they obviously have no affinity or liking. But the worthy love the path, even if it be thorny and stony, taking as their inspiration Jesus, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2) as nothing, as a small price to pay for the infinite glory to which it was the necessary door. If we would become abiding-places of God, the same path must be ours, as well.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Among Benares' temple priests was one, a guest, Ajainin, from Lahore. By merchantmen Ajainin heard about the Jewish boy, about his words of wisdom, and he girt himself and journeyed from Lahore that he might see the boy, and hear him speak. (Aquarian Gospel 29:1, 2)

First we are given the example of a seeker who would journey far to see and hear the Lord Jesus, though having only heard about him. If you look on a map you will see that Lahore is a great distance from Benares. Why would someone go to such great trouble with no more stimulus than the words of others? Because of the deep intuition Ajainin had developed through seeking spiritual wisdom. We see this ourselves. Sometimes at the mere mention of a name, someone becomes eager to see the person spoken about. A name or a word can touch off a life-changing response. I have known of people buying a book about which they knew nothing but the title, the conviction having arisen that the book had great significance for them. In each instance they were right. Even in esoteric life "a word to the wise is sufficient."

Now the contrast:

The Brahmic priests did not accept the truth that Jesus brought, and they were angered much by what he said at the Udraka feast. But they had never seen the boy, and they desired much to hear him speak, and they invited him to be a temple guest. (Aquarian Gospel 29:3, 4)

They detested the words of Jesus and had no interest at all in learning from him, but they wanted see and hear him. Why? They are mirror-images of Ajainin, but backwards. Their intuition tells them that Jesus has great power of truth, that what he has to say would dissolve their power over people and ruin their business, for priestcraft is nothing but a business. So they call him in order to accuse, mock, and cast him from them. It is perverse; but they are perverse. Evil often has a twisted attraction to good that is almost involuntary. Besides that, people of the priests' ilk are filled with idle curiosity.

For most of my life I have experienced this myself. Over fifty years ago when I was a beginning yogi and the word went around that I was interested in "that kooky stuff from India" there were plenty of people who would invite me to their house or to a restaurant so they and their friends could get a look at "the weirdo," poke fun and embarrass him, and get a good laugh to assure themselves that they were sane and normal. This never worked for them, because Sanatana Dharma completely flummoxed them, and our encounters would end with them lapsing into sullen silence, glowering at me as I left, for I even had the temerity to be smiling! Then they set about erasing the memory of the debacle and the possibility that I might be right.

When I became a monk with orange clothes and a Sanskrit name this increased markedly. Whereas before my erstwhile interrogator-mockers had been drawn from fellow university students and ordinary church members, now the rich became intrigued. Why not have the monk(ey) over and let him dance for their amusement? My reaction to these overtures was different from my non-monastic days. Previously I would go and entertain myself by seeing how intelligently I could answer their silly questions or accusations. Now my response was more simple: I refused the invitations. In the past my inviters had at least been wanting to make a point. The idle-minded rich just wanted to pass some time with minimal effort and thought. My non-yogi friends were appalled that I would happily dismiss the Summons From On High. “But he/she is worth X million dollars!” they would lament, “and if he/she is interested in you he/she might bankroll you in getting something started!” Since I had no plans to “get something started” this was not much of an inducement. Why, one multimillionaire who lived far from where I was, even hinted that if I visited him he *might* pay my way back home on the train. How could I refuse? One Mister Bucks called from about two thousand miles away and invited me to a beach party he was giving, saying that I would be very sorry and miss out if I did not attend. Money-hungry friends lamented that I would not even go to the phone when he called. Once I considered visiting a very wealthy man who had evinced an interest in metaphysical things and had even travelled some in quest of esoteric experience. To save myself time talking about basics, I sent word that I would come to see him after he had read a certain book that gave an excellent background in Sanatana Dharma. Every time he would call I would ask if he had read the book. The answer was always No. Finally I sent word that I had no interest in pursuing this ring-around-the-rose. Things were varied a bit when an internationally known composer invited me to his house so I could explain to him why his former boyfriend had become a Buddhist monk in Burma. Again: no sale.

I am telling you this, because if you are serious about spiritual life you will run into the same nonsense. If you are bored and need a diversion, go ahead to the gape-and-giggle fest, but otherwise say No and hang up the phone. And be assured that you are under no obligation to explain yourself to anyone, including your reasons for not being made a spectacle for shallow and empty heads and souls. There was a time in the early twentieth century when the idle-minded would invite in a spiritualist medium so they and their equally inane friends could get a snicker and a chill. As a yogi you will be much more exotic and in demand.

But Jesus said to them, The light is most abundant, and it shines for all; if you would see the light come to the light. If you would hear the message that the Holy One has given me to give to men, come unto me. (Aquarian Gospel 29:5, 6)

There are two aspects to this response, one universal, and one particular.

Jesus is not, as his followers later would be, interested in claiming some exclusive spiritual value; just the opposite, for he says: “The light is most abundant,

and it shines for all.” There is nothing here about believing in a particular deity, teacher, or teaching. Rather, the Light is everywhere and is shining abundantly for all. Why do people not see it? Because it shines within and they never look there. Or if they do, they have no idea how to open their inner eyes to see the Light. For we must “come to the light,” not just desire to see It. If anyone wills (not just wishes) to see the Inner Light he must turn within. We should seek out a teacher or written teaching based on illumination that has come from the Light and learn how to go within and unite with the Light.

Now we are going to see two wrong responses: one utterly and bitterly wrong, and the other sincerely naive.

Now, when the priests were told what Jesus said they were enraged. (Aquarian Gospel 29:7)

Of course. There could be no other honest response. “For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:20-21).

Since Ajainin was good of heart he made the mistake that is so common even to true seekers. He wanted to be a reconciler of Light with darkness—of course in hope that the darkness would be turned into light. As we say colloquially, he wanted to “make nice.” So:

Ajainin did not share their wrath, and he sent forth another messenger with costly gifts to Jesus at the farmer’s home; he sent this message with the gifts: I pray you master, listen to my words; The Brahmic law forbids that any priest shall go into the home of any one of low estate; but you can come to us; and I am sure these priests will gladly hear you speak. I pray that you will come and dine with us this day. (Aquarian Gospel 29:8-10)

His motives were pure though mistaken, and he spoke from a positive attitude toward those incapable, by their own choice, of coming to the light. For those “men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

Since Jesus “knew what was in man” (John 2:25), his response to both Ajainin and the priests was clear and direct.

And Jesus said, The Holy One regards all men alike; the dwelling of my host is good enough for any council of the sons of men. If pride of caste keeps you away, you are not worthy of the light. My Father-God does not regard the laws of man. Your presents I return; you cannot buy the knowledge of the Lord with gold, or precious gifts. (Aquarian Gospel 29:11-13)

Neither social standing nor wealth can have any influence on those who are worthy teachers of divine things, what to say of Divinity itself. (“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34.)) I urge you as a friend to remember these words of Jesus and keep yourself

from falling into the deep pit of worldly considerations. Remember Moses, the friend of God (Exodus 33:11), who chose the Hebrew slaves above the royal family and aristocracy of Egypt. Not only can you not take wealth and position with you, it often keeps you from going at all.

These words of Jesus angered more and more the priests, and they began to plot and plan how they might drive him from the land. (Aquarian Gospel 29:14)

Again: of course! We must learn from this. In relation to the material-minded it is particularly true that “the least said the better.” And sometimes the best is to say nothing, ever. However, in contrast with them:

Ajainin did not join with them in plot and plan; he left the temple in the night, and sought the home where Jesus dwelt. (Aquarian Gospel 29:15)

We all need to leave the temples of our egoic and social idols and seek out the dwelling-place of Jesus: our own Christ Self; to “walk in the light, as he is in the light” (I John 1:7).

And Jesus said, There is no night where shines the sun; I have no secret messages to give; in light all secrets are revealed.

Ajainin said, I came from far-away Lahore, that I might learn about this ancient wisdom, and this kingdom of the Holy One of which you speak. Where is the kingdom? where the king? Who are the subjects? what its laws?

And Jesus said, This kingdom is not far away, but man with mortal eyes can see it not; it is within the heart. You need not seek the king in earth, or sea, or sky; he is not there, and yet is everywhere. He is the Christ of God; is universal love. The gate of this dominion is not high, and he who enters it must fall down on his knees. It is not wide, and none can carry carnal bundles through. The lower self must be transmuted into spirit-self; the body must be washed in living streams of purity. (Aquarian Gospel 29:16-22)

How perilous is the search for truth! The moment we decide to seek for higher consciousness, especially if we decide to take up meditation, there unfolds before us a panorama of clamoring ignorance, a raucous carnival of spiritual ignorance demanding our trust and our time. A myriad teachers are hawked by devotee-barkers, each one God’s Special Messenger For The Age (some are even The Avatar of the Age), making outrageous claims that even the nineteenth century Medicine Shows could not surpass. And the spiritual rubes (dupes) crowd in with exuberant hope of being fleeced, and worse. Those who are worthy teachers, not joining in the sideshow, are like Saint John the Baptist, “a voice crying in the wilderness” (John 1:23) Yet those who are true of heart will hear those voices and find the real treasure they desire.

When Swami Vivekananda came to America he was immediately denounced by the fake yogis that were making a living off the uninformed sincerity of many

Americans. Rabid with jealousy they even tried to have him banned from the Parliament of Religions he was attending in Chicago. The same was true of Swami (Paramhansa) Yogananda. Nevertheless, they transformed the lives of numberless people, Yogananda personally teaching yoga meditation to one hundred thousand people. And through their printed works both Vivekananda and Yogananda are even now imparting spiritual truth and inspiration to seekers throughout the world.

The light cannot be buried, yet aspirants can wander down many byways and endure frustration and disappointment. Some give up in despair and spend another lifetime wandering in the mists of spiritual confusion. Therefore, when someone comes across an honest teacher who speaks the truth openly and fully, a treasure beyond price has been found. Such a one was Jesus, as Ajainin discovered.

And Jesus said, There is no night where shines the sun; I have no secret messages to give; in light all secrets are revealed. Surely Jesus was aware that at the end of his life Gotama the Buddha stated emphatically that he had no secret or advanced esoteric teachings to be imparted only to the wise. He even insisted that he had never spoken symbolically; that whatever he had said should be understood in a thoroughly ordinary manner. His teachings had no symbols, no hidden meanings, no hints for only “the chosen” to comprehend. He had said exactly what he meant and had meant exactly what he had said. Nothing more and nothing less.

Where the light of truth shines there are no secret teachings. Being embodiments of truth, genuine spiritual teachers keep nothing back and never veil anything. They speak openly to all, just as do guileless children. (This is one of the reasons why saints love children.) Jesus told his disciples that they must “become as little children” to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:3; Luke 18:17). Saints are not childish, as are many fake gurus of today, but they are childlike in their straightforwardness and honesty. Truth and truth alone comes from their mouth, and that in fullness. For this reason many in the world do not love the saints. But that affects them not at all.

In spiritual life secrecy equals charlatanry. “I know something you don’t know” is as popular with infantile spiritual pretenders as it is with little children. This is not a trait of the childlikeness recommended by the saints. All through childhood we encounter the “I know a secret” types, and some of them grow up to become secretive adults who believe themselves special and chosen if they know the arcana revealed only to the worthy few, especially in religion, and Eastern religion and yoga particularly.

Fake yoga literally traffics in Secret Teachings. Mystification and not mysticism characterizes quack yogis. Leading their ego-hungry followers ever onward and onward toward the next “advanced teaching” they keep them bound (oops! loyal) in greedy expectation. Atremble with egoic anticipation they crowd into the Chamber of Secrets that is as spiritually deadly as the Harry Potter version, and just as fictional.

Lest you think this is a personal bee-in-the-bonnet with me, here are the words of Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest spiritual figures known to the world.

Speaking of yoga to his American students, he had this to say:

“In India, for various reasons, it [yoga] fell into the hands of persons who destroyed ninety per cent of the knowledge, and tried to make a great secret of the remainder....

“Anything that is secret and mysterious in these systems of Yoga should be at once rejected. The best guide in life is strength. In religion, as in all other matters, discard everything that weakens you, have nothing to do with it. Mystery-mongering weakens the human brain. It has well-nigh destroyed Yoga—one of the grandest of sciences. From the time it was discovered, more than four thousand years ago, Yoga was perfectly delineated, formulated, and preached in India. It is a striking fact that the more modern the commentator the greater the mistakes he makes, while the more ancient the writer the more rational he is. Most of the modern writers talk of all sorts of mystery. Thus Yoga fell into the hands of a few persons who made it a secret, instead of letting the full blaze of daylight and reason fall upon it. They did so that they might have the powers to themselves.”

In short, Jesus followed the philosophy of the old country preacher in a joke I heard as a child. This preacher was very popular, and when asked the secret of his popularity he replied: “I tell them what I am going to tell them; and then I’ve done told them.” Divine simplicity.

The kingdom of God is not a secret, but it is unseen to most of humanity. So it must be sought. Therefore: *Ajainin said, I came from far-away Lahore, that I might learn about this ancient wisdom, and this kingdom of the Holy One of which you speak*). We should note a profound insight that he certainly had. For he states that he had come to Jesus “that I might learn about this ancient wisdom.” Wise man. He knows that truth is eternal, primeval, that any “new truth” is no truth at all. This, along with secrecy is another bugaboo: “New Age Teachings For A New Age.” “Yoga For Modern Man.” “Ancient Truths Reinterpreted For Today.” Fiddlesticks. And somewhere lagging back along the parade of silliness is Yoga For Westerners taught by a host of American gurus. (No longer need we have an Indian who cannot understand our Western ways tell us what to do, especially a *monk!*)

The human race has not mutated into another species. What was true at its inception is just as true now. Nor has the earth morphed into something else. Conditions today are as they were always. The discoveries of the ancient yogis are neither new nor old: they are the facts.

Where is the kingdom? where the king? Who are the subjects? what its laws? And Jesus said, This kingdom is not far away, but man with mortal eyes can see it not; it is within the heart. Can we think of a single religion that does not try to make the kingdom of the spirit a material, religio-political entity? Christians equate “the Church” with the kingdom: a kingdom to be found on earth, whose life is externalized and administered by those that claim to be representatives of God and interpreters of his revelation. “Outside the Church there is no salvation!” they trumpet, meaning only their faction of theological opinion. All religions claim that seekers must join them and become members “in good standing”—a “standing” that is really

stagnation. The only religion we cannot join is the Eternal Religion to which we have belonged from eternity. It is sad that even in India people are busily creating differences and thinking of labels to distance themselves from each other. "I am a Vaishnava." "I am a Shaivite." "I am a shakta." "I am a bhakta." "I am a jnani." Instead of the One True Church they peddle The One True Sampradaya. And on and on and on. Rare are those who just want to be the Self.

But Jesus tells Ajainin that the kingdom is both near and invisible to earthly eyes, for "it is within the heart." And what is within the heart? *Only the Self*. We are ourselves (our Selves) the kingdom. Here are just a few passages regarding this from the Katha Upanishad:

"The ancient, effulgent being, the indwelling Spirit, subtle, deep-hidden in the lotus of the heart, is hard to know. But the wise man, following the path of meditation, knows him, and is freed alike from pleasure and from pain" (Katha Upanishad 1:2:12).

"This Self forever dwells within the hearts of all. When a man is free from desire, his mind and senses purified, he beholds the glory of the Self and is without sorrow" (Katha Upanishad 1:2:20).

"Both the individual self and the Universal Self have entered the cave of the heart, the abode of the Most High" (Katha Upanishad 1:3:1).

"This Brahman, this Self, deep-hidden in all beings, is not revealed to all; but to the seers, pure in heart, concentrated in mind—to them is he revealed" (Katha Upanishad 1:3:12).

"None beholds him with the eyes, for he is without visible form. Yet in the heart is he revealed, through self-control and meditation. Those who know him become immortal" (Katha Upanishad 2:3:9).

Any external "kingdom," However religious and noble, is not the real spiritual kingdom, and we must not accept it as such, for we shall then be distracted from the real kingdom. Animals run in herds and are directed by the biggest and strongest animal. Those who have not fully emerged into humanity despite inhabiting a human body, still desire the security, the safety, of such a structure in their religion. Even the coercion, the bullying, assures them.

The Masters all call us into the freedom and independence of the Self, but their ignorant followers hurriedly fix up a religion so they can feel comfortable in dependence and confinement. "Adore the Messenger and ignore the Message" is the motto of all externalized religion. The Great Ones call us to the glory of the Self, but the religions erected in their names extol the glory of the Holy Herd and yet preach the sinfulness, valuelessness, and helplessness of the herd members. They rob them of the kingdom which their founders came to open for them.

Yet in each religion we find those whose spirits are awakened and who are actively seeking transcendence of the false self, the ego. Together they constitute the one true religion of the Spirit-Self. In time, however, they will find themselves alienated from those outer shells and will have to walk the path on their own. If they can find some others like themselves that is a blessing, but they must be

careful not to join together to create another soul-trap. It is absolutely true that the way to God is the flight of the alone to the Alone.

You need not seek the king in earth, or sea, or sky; he is not there, and yet is everywhere. God is all-encompassing, yet he is not to be found in any “thing” whatsoever. As long as we have “thing consciousness” we cannot have God Consciousness. Also, we must not look for God in a “place,” but utterly beyond time and space. God is everywhere and nowhere; so the yogis say.

He is the Christ of God; is universal love. “God is love” (I John 4:8, 16). The Christ (Messiah, Christos) is the Anointed One. And the “oil” with which he is anointed is the Cosmic Love of God. For the Christ is nothing other than the Self which is bathed in the Love that is God and made eternally radiant. This is why a saint is the presence of God’s love for us.

The gate of this dominion is not high, and he who enters it must fall down on his knees. It is not wide, and none can carry carnal bundles through. Saint Matthew recorded Jesus as saying: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). In this instance Jesus is saying that people can hardly even see the gate that leads to the life of the spirit. But in this verse from the Aquarian Gospel he is speaking of how hard it is to enter the gate of life after it is found.

“The gate of this dominion is not high, and he who enters it must fall down on his knees.” In ancient times the doors to sacred places were often made very low so that those entering would come in already bowing in reverence. It is said that the Mayan pyramids had such shallow and steep steps so worshippers were compelled to climb up bowing in humility all the way. Jesus is thus telling us that the gate of the kingdom must be entered through identical humility

“It is not wide, and none can carry carnal bundles through.” This is equally important for us to comprehend. Not only is the door short so we must enter on our knees, it is so narrow that we cannot bring anything through it but the consciousness of ourselves as spirit-beings. No “bundles” of material consciousness or attachments can come with us, and if we refuse to divest ourselves of such encumbrances we will find ourselves unable to enter. Many, oh so many, stick in the gate and never get through, like the greedy monkey unable to pull its fist out of the narrow-necked jar, yet refusing to “give up the goods.” This is why meditation is so necessary. Only through meditation do we learn to drop the bundles of materiality from our consciousness.

The lower self must be transmuted into spirit-self; the body must be washed in living streams of purity. This is an extremely important principle, for ignorant religion tells us we must either destroy or escape from the lower self: advice which Sri Ramana Maharshi said is like telling someone to bury their shadow.

Authentic spiritual teaching is what Jesus tells us: the lower self can be transmuted into spirit-self. This should not really be so amazing to us if we really believe that spirit is the only reality, that there is nothing but spirit at any time.

Here, too, what is being presented to us is the need for a change in consciousness. When the consciousness changes, everything changes. We see this continually in the lives of saints and Masters: matter continually behaves contrary to its supposed nature. This is because it is not really matter, but conscious intelligence. That is how Jesus walked on water and turned it into wine. He saw the water as solid and also as wine. His “seeing” was sufficient. As Sri Ramakrishna often said: “The mind is everything.” Again, meditation is the key.

“The body must be washed in living streams of purity” Jesus does not leave out even the lowest part of ourselves, the body. As John the Beloved Disciple wrote: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2, 3).

How is the body washed in living streams of purity? By thought, word, and deed. Absolute purity in these are essential for those who seriously aspire to spiritual development. That which is right and good is also purifying. The moral principles found in all true religions are indispensable.

The supreme purifier is meditation, for in meditation the living streams of God-Consciousness arise from the core of the yogis being and cleanse him of all impurities. “As the scripture hath said, out of his inmost heart shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38).

Jesus has spoken to Ajainin about the nature of the kingdom of God, the infinity of Spirit. God is the King of All, reigning in that kingdom, so naturally:

Ajainin asked, Can I become a subject of this king?

And Jesus said, You are yourself a king, and you may enter through the gate and be a subject of the King of kings. (Aquarian Gospel 29:23-24)

This perspective of the sages of India, is needed by all who would meaningfully pursue a spiritual life rather than the abject superstition most people today consider religion—even in India, I am sorry to say. The pleasing and displeasing of gods, the bewailing of sins, and insistence on personal weakness and unworthiness, and the need for “grace,” prevails just about everywhere. It is a fact beyond doubt: a sincere person must decide whether to be a “Christian” or a follower of Jesus, seeking to also become a Christ.

The first thing we must realize is our own spiritual kingship. The kingdom of heaven is ours, not by gift but by nature. True, the absolute power there is that of the King of Kings, of God, but we are the kings that reign there with him. We are the waves and he is the Ocean, but we are of the same essence as him. The controversies that went on in the early centuries were confined to arguments about the nature of Jesus, when they should have been about our nature. For we, too, like Jesus, are “of one substance with the Father,” as the Nicene Creed says. Until we comprehend our own divinity we cannot intelligently worship God, much less know him.

Although we are kings we have lost the awareness of that, and thereby in a sense lost the kingdom. But Jesus says that we can “enter through the gate” and regain our status as kingly subjects of the One King.

Of course we want to enter the kingdom, so Jesus says:

But you must lay aside your priestly robes; must cease to serve the Holy One for gold; must give your life, and all you have, in willing service to the sons of men. (Aquarian Gospel 29:25)

We are not professional priests as was Ajainin, but what has been told to him can be applied to us.

You must lay aside your priestly robes. We must lay aside all egoic definitions of ourself. Especially we must not pride ourselves on our “spirituality” or our supposed dedication to God. Nor should we “think little” of ourselves. We should not think of ourselves at all, but rather of God. Even when affirming our oneness with God, it is God who should dominate our thought, not us. We should look ever to the Divine Light. Then we shall unerringly enter there and discover our oneness with it.

You must cease to serve the Holy One for gold. Our involvement with God cannot be for any material or external gain. Nor can it be for some kind of ego satisfaction. We should be seeking nothing from God: only God Himself. There is a state in which God gives the seeker anything he wants. And so the poor fool plays with the toys God gives in place of himself. This is a trap many fall into. Yes, God does test us: to reveal our real motivation to ourselves. I knew a man who became a fervent yogi. Time went on, and things got better and better for him. Then one day a relative died and left him an apartment house. After a while he had three more apartment houses, but had along the way totally abandoned his search for God. His misery was great, but the world had entered his heart and crowded out even the sense of his own self-worth as a king of spirit. In such a state he did not even know what was wrong, and avidly read “self-help” books.

You must give your life, and all you have, in willing service to the sons of men. In the Bhagavad Gita, which Jesus knew well, Krishna describes those who are enlightened. At one point he says that they “rejoice in the welfare of all beings” (Bhagavad Gita 5:25). We see this in the lives of all saints. In God they become keenly aware of the plight of those around them and work for the alleviation of their suffering. They do this in many ways, according to their own nature and development, but all are dedicated to serving God in others.

Spiritual service must of course be rendered by all of us, even if we also engage in some type of more external assistance. To lose ourselves in the removal of physical suffering and leave aside the very basis for our involvement with others is to betray both ourselves and them. For we will lose our spiritual perspective and be unable to really help them. Any material help we give must by its nature be temporary, but the spiritual upliftment will be eternal if they respond accordingly and also turn their attention to God and their own divinity. In the fourth chapter of

Autobiography of a Yogi, Yogananda presents this wisdom regarding the helping of others on the material plane:

“It was evident in all miracles performed by Lahiri Mahasaya that he never allowed the ego-principle to consider itself a causative force. By perfection of resistless surrender, the master enabled the Prime Healing Power to flow freely through him.

“The numerous bodies which were spectacularly healed through Lahiri Mahasaya eventually had to feed the flames of cremation. But the silent spiritual awakenings he effected, the Christlike disciples he fashioned, are his imperishable miracles.”

So it is with all true saints, and must be with us.

Real spiritual life is very much like physical life: growth often takes place imperceptibly, but it is eventually perceived by us.

And Jesus said no more; Ajainin went his way; and while he could not comprehend the truth that Jesus spoke, he saw what he had never seen before. The realm of faith he never had explored; but in his heart the seeds of faith and universal brotherhood had found good soil. (Aquarian Gospel 29:26, 27)

This is the experience of all seekers of higher life. Sometimes we not only do not understand, we are actually confused. But if we have seen what we have never seen before, either in our intuition as we heard the words of life, or saw lived out before us in the life of a great soul, we need not worry. The seeds will grow.

And as he journeyed to his home he seemed to sleep, to pass through darkest night, and when he woke the Sun of Righteousness had arisen; he had found the king. (Aquarian Gospel 29:28)

It sometimes is just like that. I remember when the idea of “Divine Mother” seemed completely alien to me, and even a bit silly. But time went on and I kept meditating and keeping quiet when others talked of Divine Mother. Then one morning I woke up comprehending the concept completely and having the strange urge to “wear my Mother.” So I went right away to a religious goods store and got a medal of the Virgin Mary which I wore from then on. It had just been a matter of time. And so it is with us all. It is a wonderful thing to be a yogi, for in time everything comes to us.

Now, in Benares Jesus tarried many days and taught. (Aquarian Gospel 29:29)

But from now on Ajainin was taught by the Teacher of teachers, his own Self.

Chapter Thirty

The human being undergoes many forms of suffering, but perhaps the most shattering is death, especially the death of someone that has been known since birth. When that person is a parent who merited love and respect, the sorrow is greatly compounded. It is as though a vital part of us is no more, leaving us incomplete and desolate. The greatest and surest solace at such a time is the truth of the eternal spirit.

One day as Jesus stood beside the Ganges busy with his work, a caravan, returning from the West, drew near. And one, approaching Jesus, said, We come to you from your native land and bring unwelcome news. Your father is no more on earth; your mother grieves; and none can comfort her. She wonders whether you are still alive or not; she longs to see you once again.

And Jesus bowed his head in silent thought; and then he wrote. Of what he wrote this is the sum: My mother, noblest of womankind; A man just from my native land has brought me word that father is no more in flesh, and that you grieve, and are disconsolate. (Aquarian Gospel 30:1-5)

Jesus did not respond instantly with glib “spiritual” cliches, but looked deep within and drew out that which his mother truly needed to understand in her sorrow and loneliness, the truth that we all need when faced with the death of those we love and value. When considering these we must keep in mind that Jesus was writing from his own spiritual realizations, not mere personal ideas or emotion-based hopes. Without such realization his words would have been empty.

I once found in the library of the monastery where I was a novice a small booklet that contained an account of a family’s pilgrimage to see the miracle-worker Saint Seraphim of Sarov, in Russia. At that time a great many Russian soldiers had been killed fighting against Napoleon, and consequently many of those coming to the saint were grieving over the loss of husbands, children, fathers and friends. Saint Seraphim spoke to them very simply about the fact that their loved ones were not dead, but now lived in a higher world. The woman writing the account said that the words he spoke to them had been heard by all present many times in church. Yet, she said, it was as though they were hearing them for the first time, and their hearts were soothed and lightened by them. The Saint, through his words, had conveyed the power of his own spiritual vision: a knowing beyond all doubt or question. So it is with Jesus’ words to his mother.

My mother, all is well; is well for father and is well for you. (Aquarian Gospel 30:6)

One of England’s greatest mystics was the hermitess Juliana of Norwich. In one of her mystic experiences Jesus told her that “All shall be well.” This has caused a

flutter ever since among the devotees of everlasting damnation, for its context cannot be mistaken: ALL, including all human beings of all ages, shall be well. And spending eternity in hell is not being “well” by any stretch of the intellect. Nearly one and a half millennia before Jesus told this to the holy Juliana, he told his mother, Noblest of Womankind, the same in reference to death and those left behind.

Saint Joseph was a just man (Matthew 1:19), without blemish. So of him it could be said: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Revelation 14:13). But the truth is that all is well for every sentient being, for nothing happens to them that is not for the furtherance of their evolution. Even the miseries of earthly life and the miseries of the astral worlds we call “hells” are for our benefit. (“Even though it be a cross that raiseth me” is no joke or inane platitude. I know this by experience.) Actually it takes a goodly degree of spiritual development to go to hell rather than just fall asleep like a log and only wake up when our new body gets whacked on the rear end.

Although we tend to look on each incarnation as a prison sentence, that is our miscomprehension. Each life is a gate to progress or regression, according to how we decide to live it. But even the regression helps us along the path to wisdom. When we look in the back of a Bible at the map of the wandering of the Hebrews after leaving Egypt, we see that they meandered in a huge rectangle, taking forty years to do what should have taken only a few years at the most. Yet, they got there, and in the meantime they were learning and progressing. And so are we.

All is well for those who leave this world because the time of potential benefit has ended and they are ready for further education in subtler worlds as well as the astral recharging needed for another session of earth life. It is also well for those left back here, for there are many valuable lessons to be learned from the death of others, not the least being our own mortality. Also, in some instances it is the death of a loved one that impels us to look at life in a more intelligent perspective and begin living wiser. There are even some who need to be freed from a detrimental dependency or influence. “I can’t live without you” needs to be seen as an illusion, and on occasion it takes death to get this across and make us more independent and self-reliant. As Charles de Gaulle said: “The cemeteries of the world are filled with ‘indispensable’ people.”

The highest perspective regarding this is that in which we realize that all proceeds from God, exists in God, and returns to God; that in an ineffable manner all is God. So there can be nothing that is not well.

His work in this earth-round is done, and it is nobly done. In all the walks of life men cannot charge him with deceit, dishonesty, nor wrong intent. Here in this round he finished many heavy tasks, and he has gone from hence prepared to solve the problems of the round of soul. Our Father-God is with him there, as he was with him here; and there his angel guards his footsteps

lest he goes astray. (Aquarian Gospel 30:7-10)

Buddha spoke of seeing with the divine eye. Not many of us have developed this eye, and so we do not see truly regarding our fellow human beings and their lives. We may think a life has been shamefully wasted when in reality it was a pivotal life in which much potential good was gained. So no matter how little we may respect someone's life-path, valuable work has been done. In the astral world that life will be analyzed by the person's higher self and learning will take place, learning that will be implanted in the subconscious and manifest in a future earthly life.

Not only is God with the departed in the higher worlds, so also are their spiritual guides that are usually called "guardian angels." These are beings who are furthering their evolution through assisting and guiding others. Sometimes they are loved ones who have gone higher in evolution and sometimes they are holy souls they have known in previous lives. Whichever it may be, the departed have both infinite and finite help in moving forward toward perfection, a perfection that is already present but which needs a great deal of work to manifest. Of course God and guardians are with those on earth, but in subtler regions they are seen and understood much better than here.

Why should you weep? Tears cannot conquer grief. There is no power in grief to mend a broken heart. (Aquarian Gospel 30:11)

Emotion, being egocentric, has a terrible power to overshadow intelligence and plunge us into a whirlpool of confusion and negativity in the form of despair and self-pity.

Misery is not a cure for misery, only a compounder of misery. Those who choose to sink into the mire of grief have no future except more grief. Some even precipitate themselves into mental illness. Like Judas, they hang themselves with a poisonous egotism that frustrates any hope of betterment. We may not like to admit that we are ravaging ourselves, that we are deliberately choosing to suffer, but it is so. Until we acknowledge this we are not only miserable, we are foolish and self-destructive. And only we ourselves can halt this absurd cycle.

There is more:

The plane of grief is idleness; the busy soul can never grieve; it has no time for grief. (Aquarian Gospel 30:12)

Grief is stagnation, even a form of sloth, of inertia. Thus it is death to the heart.

Jesus, like any worthy teacher, does not just say "Don't do that," but tells how grief is to be expunged from the heart.

The busy soul can never grieve; it has no time for grief. Jesus is not saying that activity will merely distract the mind and heart, but that when the inner part of us, the soul-mind, is active in an intellectual and spiritual way, it will be free of grief. "It has no time for grief" because it is moving on through self-betterment, whereas grief is sinking into the mire, what John Bunyan called The Slough of Despond.

When grief come trooping through the heart, just lose yourself; plunge deep into the ministry of love, and grief is not. Yours is a ministry of love, and all the world is calling out for love. (Aquarian Gospel 30:13, 14)

“The ministry of love” Jesus speaks about it is mostly an interior matter. We know from early histories of Jesus and Mary that Jesus’ mother lived an extremely withdrawn, even hidden, life, having little interaction with anyone beyond the family circle. How can we engage in a ministry of love through inward activity?

First, by meditating, for everything and everyone in the cosmos are united to one another in the great field of Living Consciousness we call God. Anything we do to ennoble ourselves ennoble others, for whatever we do to ourselves we do to everyone in the universe. This is why no one of us can dare to speak of our life as our exclusive property or to claim that we are not hurting anyone else when we harm ourselves.

That is the negative side. The positive side is the fact that when we elevate our consciousness we assist in elevating the consciousness of every sentient being, and help in moving the insentient beings along toward sentience. This is certainly a great benefaction. There is also the spiritual process of blessing others through God-centered meditation.

All this is a ministry of love because love in essence is the spiritual force that unites us with one another in God, that enables us to see our oneness and truly love God and all as our own self. (“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God...and thy neighbour as thyself” Luke 10:27.)

When based on interior development, external acts of kindness and mercy are certainly part of our ministry of love. Krishna emphasizes this in the Bhagavad Gita when he describes the perfected yogi, saying: “He who is steadfast in yoga at all times sees the Self present in all beings and all beings present in the Self. He who sees me everywhere, and sees all things in me—I am not lost to him, and he is not lost to me. He, established in unity, worships me dwelling in all things. Whatever be his mode of life, that yogi ever abides in me. He who judges pleasure or pain by the same standard everywhere that he applies unto himself, that yogi is deemed the highest” (Bhagavad Gita 6:29-32).

The form our external ministry of love will take is according to our situation in life and our capabilities. But this is definite: some of it must include direct one-on-one, face-to-face contact and interchange with those we are helping. It is good to give money and moral support to programs and institutions that help people, but we need personal contact. We should see and know, to some degree, those we are doing good to. Love is not abstract; it manifests only between real people. “All the world is calling out for love.”

It is true, “grief comes trooping through the heart.” Its power is strong, much too strong to wrestle with by ourselves. This is why others must come into the equation. If we sit at home by ourself, what can we do but sink into the sorrow that floods our heart? But if we associate with others, especially those who also suffer or are in need, the positive karma created will begin our healing. The love we feel for

those we have lost should be shared with those still here on earth, and in the sharing our love for the departed will grow, not diminish. Jesus is not telling us to forget our loved ones. We will not forget them, we will find them in others, for we are all one in essence.

Then let the past go with the past; rise from the cares of carnal things and give your life for those who live. And if you lose your life in serving life you are sure to find in it the morning sun, the evening dews, in song of bird, in flowers, and in the stars of night. In just a little while your problems of this earth-round will be solved; and when your sums are all worked out it will be pleasure unalloyed for you to enter wider fields of usefulness, to solve the greater problems of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 30:15-17)

The shock of death often makes us feel that time has stood still, as if there will be no future. Many stay frozen in this state for the rest of their life. But we must exert our will and turn from this stagnation. Jesus also points out that our grief comes from physical identification, for the departed are not dead, only physically absent. If we stay immersed in material consciousness they shall continue to be dead for us. But when we elevate our mind to spiritual things we will find they are not lost. We can feel and even see them near. Believe me, the adept yogi is never separated from anyone by death. He can communicate with them and help them along their evolutionary journey. This is my own experience, and I am not unique.

The important thing is our expansion of the scope of our life to include others. Selfishness is the door to hell, for self-centeredness is hell. If we turn toward a wider field of life we will find that the entire creation will come alive for us and we will experience ourselves as a drop of life in the Ocean of Life. When we live in such a broader awareness, we are well on the way to solving the puzzles of this earthly life and being freed for higher life in higher realms where we will be able to live and love much more than we could here. Ever onward we can rise until Infinity is gained and Infinite Life shall be ours.

Strive, then, to be content, and I will come to you some day and bring you richer gifts than gold or precious stones.... I am with you all the way, Jehoshua. And by the hand of one, a merchant, going to Jerusalem, he sent this letter on its way. (Aquarian Gospel 30:18-20)

We tend to think that peace and contentment are when there is no striving, no labor, but Jesus points out that tranquillity is a result of intense effort on our part. And he further promises that if we do put forth the effort we will not just be at peace, but in time we shall be visited with “richer gifts than gold or precious stones.” Blessed prospect of a blessed future. And assurance of a blessed present.

Chapter Thirty-One

“I am come to send fire on the earth” (Luke 12:49). “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34).

There is no better evidence of these two statements than the description given in the thirty-first chapter of the Aquarian Gospel:

The words and works of Jesus caused unrest through all the land. The common people were his friends, believed in him and followed him in throngs. The priests and rulers were afraid of him, his very name sent terror to their hearts. He preached the brotherhood of life, the righteousness of equal rights, and taught the uselessness of priests, and sacrificial rites. He shook the very sand on which the Brahmic system stood; he made the Brahmic idols seem so small, and sacrifice so fraught with sin, that shrines and wheels of prayer were all forgot. (Aquarian Gospel 31:1-5)

Before considering the implications of these verses, we should step back a moment and look at the period of India’s history in which these events occurred. More to the point, we need to look back in time to a better past.

Originally the sages of India taught a simple but profound creed: The all-embracing nature of God, the unity of the individual spirit and God, the evolutionary purpose of the cosmos, and the necessity for each person to achieve liberation from all bondage, especially that of constant birth and death, through perfection of consciousness. Other things were recommended by them as adjuncts, not the least of which was the practice of meditation, but these four principles were ever uppermost in their thinking and way of life.

But at the time of Jesus great degeneration had taken place. Instead of believing in their divine spiritual self-sufficiency, people had come to think that they were dependent on the pleasure and displeasure of “gods” and the priests of those gods that could intercede with them and gain for them material welfare. The single valid goal of spiritual perfection, of enlightenment, had long ago been either forgotten by the masses or relegated to a point far in the future after the living of many lives. The inward look had been abandoned and external religion had arisen in its place. The gods were now represented by stones wrought according to the imagination of sculptors and housed in temples intended to awe the worshippers by their sublime form and the solemn rituals taking place there. People now resorted to these glorified magic shops rather than seeking freedom within.

Jesus, having learned in the Himalayas the pure spiritual tradition (for it has never been erased from India, only obscured and ignored), spoke without hesitation of the foolishness and evil of such spiritual degeneracy and called them back to the vision of the ancient seers.

His words were not without effect as the already-cited verses show. And even more:

The priests declared that if this Jewish boy should tarry longer in the land a revolution would occur; the common people would arise and kill the priests, and tear the temples down. And so they sent a call abroad, and priests from every province came. Benares was on fire with Brahmic zeal.

Lamaas from the temple Jagannath, who knew the inner life of Jesus well, was in their midst, and heard the rantings of the priests, and he stood forth and said, My brother priests, take heed, be careful what you do; this is a record-making day. The world is looking on; the very life of Brahmic thought is now on trial. If we are reason-blind; if prejudice be king today; if we resort to beastly force, and dye our hands in blood that may, in sight of Brahm, be innocent and pure, his vengeance may fall down on us; the very rock on which we stand may burst beneath our feet; and our beloved priesthood, and our laws and shrines will go into decay.

But they would let him speak no more. The wrathful priests rushed up and beat him, spit upon him, called him traitor, threw him, bleeding, to the street. And then confusion reigned; the priests became a mob; the sight of human blood led on to fiendish acts and called for more.

The rulers, fearing war, sought Jesus, and they found him calmly teaching in the market place. They urged him to depart, that he might save his life; but he refused to go. And then the priests sought cause for his arrest; but he had done no crime. And then false charges were preferred; but when the soldiers went to bring him to the judgement hall they were afraid, because the people stood in his defense. The priests were baffled, and they resolved to take his life by stealth. They found a man who was a murderer by trade, and sent him out by night to slay the object of their wrath. (Aquarian Gospel 31:6-20)

Certainly this was a vivid foreshadowing of what would later take place in Israel.

Lamaas heard about their plotting and their plans, and sent a messenger to warn his friend; and Jesus hastened to depart. By night he left Benares, and with haste he journeyed to the north; and everywhere, the farmers, merchants and sudras helped him on his way. And after many days he reached the mighty Himalayas, and in the city of Kapi[la]vastu he abode.

The priests of Buddha opened wide their temple doors for him. (Aquarian Gospel 31:21-24)

The thing to be noted here is the fact that the Buddhists welcomed Jesus among them. This was because Buddhism at that time in India was very different from the Buddhism of today, just as the Hinduism of that time differed from the original teaching. This is historical fact. It is well known that what today is known as Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism were in the minority; that the majority of Buddhists and Buddhist institutions were Pudgalavadins who believed in the eternal Self (Atman).

The truth is this: Jesus, like Buddha, was a classical Sankhya yogi with a strong

Aryan identification. Just as the ignorant subverted the teachings of Jesus to suit their dim minds, so did the uncomprehending degrade the teachings of Buddha to suit their whims. At the time Jesus was in India, it was the followers of Buddha that were the real proponents of Sanatana Dharma. A perusal of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* reveals this, especially their theistic outlook. Consequently, Jesus found a spiritual home among them.

Chapter Thirty-Two

We have already seen in the early chapters of the Aquarian Gospel that the Essenes studied the spiritual traditions of all religions known to them, including those of India and China. Jesus maintained this universal outlook in India, for we are now told:

Among the Buddhist priests was one who saw a lofty wisdom in the words that Jesus spoke. It was Barata Arabo. Together Jesus and Barata read the Jewish Psalms and Prophets; read the Vedas, the Avesta and the wisdom of Gautama. (Aquarian Gospel 32:1-2)

It is obvious, then, that a true follower of Jesus will do the same and garner wisdom from all spiritual traditions, like the wise bee imbibing the essential wisdom of all traditions and assimilating it into the honey of their own spiritual realization. With their awakened spiritual eye they will see unity in the many.

Although we tend to think that religion should be focused on God and revelation, since God and man are one in essence, religion must also focus intensely on humanity in order to reveal its nature, origins, and destiny. Jesus and Barata had this perspective:

And as they read and talked about the possibilities of man, Barata said, Man is the marvel of the universe. He is part of everything for he has been a living thing on every plane of life. Time was when man was not; and he was a bit of formless substance in the molds of time; and then a protoplast. By universal law all things tend upward to a state of perfectness. The protoplast evolved, becoming worm, then reptile, bird and beast, and then at last it reached the form of man. Now, man himself is mind, and mind is here to gain perfection by experience; and mind is often manifest in fleshy form, and in the form best suited to its growth. So mind may manifest as worm, or bird, or beast, or man. The time will come when everything of life will be evolved unto the state of perfect man. And after man is man in perfectness, he will evolve to higher forms of life. (Aquarian Gospel 32:3-9)

One thing we know: they were studying dharma and not ordinary religion. For the message of religion is disempowerment, focusing on what a mess man is in and what prophet, doctrine, or action is going to save them, unworthy as they are. The only potential of the human being which they acknowledge is the potential for ignorance, evil, suffering and (perhaps) salvation by an external force. "You are nothing—worse than nothing" is their message. They claim great potential for their religion and its potentates, including the supreme potentate: their deity. But for the ordinary human being: nothing. All are worms and sinners, deserving annihilation or hell.

Dharma, on the other hand, is the science of the unfoldment of the infinite potential of each one of us. Dharma is a call to higher life, a life which is inherent in us, only waiting for the right conditions for it to manifest. The rules of dharma have nothing to do with pleasing or displeasing a cosmic dictator, but rather they deal with what facilitates our development and what hinders it. Even then, dharma is not some kind of authority or means to keep us in line. Rather, it is the information on how, as a matter of our free will exclusively, we can take our evolution in hand and begin to consciously direct and empower it. Dharma shows us how to release the almighty power of the spirit that is our eternal nature. For dharma and yoga are the same thing. One is the “why to” and the other is the “how to.” One is a map and the other is the actual journey.

Breaking through limitations on all levels and emerging into the vastness of our essential capacity is the purpose and the result of dharma.

Man is the marvel of the universe. Jesus and Barata reveled in dharma. For them it was not a bitter medicine or a burdensome obligation, or a threat of impending doom. It was a joyous and confident picture of the reality of each sentient being. And we will do the same once we, too, find the treasure of dharma and begin acting upon it.

He is part of everything for he has been a living thing on every plane of life. Each one of us is a distillation of billions of manifestations in physical form. We embody the experience of every single life form upon the earth, including a great many that by now have disappeared. We are one with all life around us, having been a part of every form, organic and inorganic. There is no gas, mineral, plant or animal we have not been. And those of us who have now entered into the final phase through yoga have been every type of human being that can be conceived. In us, the parts, truly the whole range of earthly life can be found.

Time was when man was not; and he was a bit of formless substance in the molds of time; and then a protoplast. In the beginning we did not exist in relativity. Rather, we were simple potentiality-consciousness. Then by choice we entered into the field of relative existence and became enwrapped in primary potentiality-energy. First we were a “protoplast” on the subtle levels of manifestation, and then we emerged into the physical level of things as the very first form of objective life, as a material protoplast.

If we step on a moving surface it will move us along with its movement. If we embark on a flowing river it will carry us onward at it moves along. It is the same with our entry into the manifested cosmos.

By universal law all things tend upward to a state of perfectness. This is the law, the fundamental fact of life. Any dogma or doctrine to the opposite is destructive ignorance. Later in the Gospel Jesus will say: “According to your faith so shall it be” (Aquarian Gospel 102:15). It is clear: if we think it is our nature to be ignorant and sinners, so shall we be—at least for a very long while. Jesus often told people that they were made well through their faith. The other side of this is that we limit and stagnate ourselves if we are convinced that is our real condition. It is no easy

thing to open ourselves to the limitless vistas available to us, since for countless lives we have been conditioned to see ourselves as insignificant little dots in the Big Picture of the cosmos. Nevertheless, the law is operative, and no matter how negatively we view ourselves, we shall move upward. But if we do not cooperate with that upward movement it will be incredibly slow and even painful. We must allow ourselves to rise into the light of Truth that is our real nature.

The protoplast evolved, becoming worm, then reptile, bird and beast, and then at last it reached the form of man. We are inexorably moving upward, but we have the determining power as to how fast and how high we ascend in this life. Yoga is the means for greatly accelerating our ascent and progress.

Now, man himself is mind. This is one of the most important statements in the entire Gospel. We are mind, immortal consciousness, alone, though manifesting in many forms and modes within those forms. Amidst the ever-changing experiences we are unchanging awareness. We are supposed to experience, but not to identify with the experiences or the vehicles which enable the experiences. It is identification with externals that gets us into trouble. The solution for such difficulty is to shift our identity inward to our true being. Again: meditation is the way.

And mind is here to gain perfection by experience; and mind is often manifest in fleshy form, and in the form best suited to its growth. So mind may manifest as worm, or bird, or beast, or man. Experience is necessary for our evolution. To call halt to the process is not the answer to anything. We must move forward, onward and upward. But we must keep centered in our consciousness, not forgetting who and what we really are. Even when we lose this central awareness on the conscious level we keep moving up the scale of evolution, fully cognizant at least in our higher mind of the purpose and the goal. We move slowly, oh, so slowly, up the evolutionary ladder, progressing from form to form as the scope of our functioning consciousness increases, for each form that exists corresponds to a precise level of consciousness. From level to level we advance until:

The time will come when everything of life will be evolved unto the state of perfect man. And after man is man in perfectness, he will evolve to higher forms of life. From perfect humanity we are destined to move on into higher forms of life that are found in the astral and causal planes, each reflecting the countless increments of expansion in consciousness, the expansion that is evolution. At the top of the ladder we shall move into the Infinity from which we came, but with a glorious difference. For we shall have developed the capacity to participate in the limitless Consciousness and Being that is God. (See *Robe of Light*.)

All beings are conscious, but when Barata says “mind” He means the state of consciousness manifested in the human form. For him “mind” and “man” are synonyms. So his words imply that human beings can move back and forth between human and animal forms. This view is held somewhat, though not to any great degree, in Indian philosophy, but it is very prevalent in Buddhist thought, especially in Mahayana Buddhism. Chances are at the time Jesus was in India both Hindus

and Buddhists believed it to a great extent.

And Jesus said, Barata Arabo, who taught you this, that mind, which is the man, may manifest in flesh of beast, or bird, or creeping thing? (Aquarian Gospel 32:10)

Many yogis have pointed out that human beings create human karma, and therefore birth in an animal form would accomplish nothing, unless there was some strongly compelling karma in relationship to animals as is seen in the ancient example of King Jada Bharata who was so obsessively attached to a deer that he died thinking of it and so was born as a deer for a brief time, but with full human awareness. But it can be safely said that once we reach the human level we can no longer be born in animal form except for very rare circumstances.

However, Jesus may be saying that the ordinary view of transmigration held in India is incorrect, and that human beings have always been human beings. This will appear to be affirmed later on in his conversation with Barata Arabo, and we will consider it there. But it is most important to remember that the entire Aquarian Gospel is a record of Levi Dowling's psychic perceptions as he sought to look into the past and see the life of Jesus, and there is no guarantee that his perceptions, or his relaying of them, is without error. He certainly never claimed that they were. Whatever the incident or teaching found in the Aquarian Gospel we should always keep this in mind. There are no infallible books or scriptures. Our own intelligence and experience must be the final court of appeals on these matters. This is not everyone's viewpoint, for:

Barata said, From times which man remembers not our priests have told us so, and so we know. (Aquarian Gospel 32:11)

Throughout the world religious people feel absolute security in trusting their leaders and their scriptures. Unquestioning acceptance is considered a virtue. This attitude is found at its most intense in India in relation to gurus, whose every word is declared to be a mantra(!). For the guru is declared to be Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva: the Supreme Brahman. Jesus held no such view. Rather:

And Jesus said, Enlightened Arabo, are you a master mind and do not know that man knows naught by being told? Man may believe what others say; but thus he never knows. If man would know, he must himself be what he knows. (Aquarian Gospel 32:12, 13)

There are three great principles in these two verses, each of which deserves serious attention.

Man knows naught by being told. Words are symbols, not realities. Though they are processed by/through the intellect, nevertheless they are grounded in material orientation and consciousness, even though it is subtle materiality. Words can never be the truth, though they can approximate or indicate the truth. Therefore we must use words only as a means to lead us to the truth which is really beyond words.

Rather than a “leap of faith” we need a leap of intuition. We need words, but we also need to use them as a bridge to something more meaningful.

Words can be misunderstood and even purposely distorted, so they can be vehicles for error and even outright untruth. This is why knowledge never results from anyone “being told.” The positive side of words is their ability to trigger or evoke from deep within the knowledge we have always possessed or gained in the past. For this reason a worthy spiritual teacher does not intend to inform or indoctrinate us but to *remind* us of what our eternal spirit has always known. Just as Jesus often said, “Your faith has healed you,” in the same way it is our own spirit (atman) that teaches and illumines us. However, teachers can stimulate this uncovering of already-known wisdom, so their value should not be discounted.

Man may believe what others say; but thus he never knows. Believing is not knowing. But Jesus is pointing out something much more grave: believing what others say, and being satisfied with that, is a block to knowing. So we can prevent ourselves from ever coming to knowledge of the truth by “accepting truth” from external sources, whether books or living teachers. Rather, we should investigate rather than passively accept.

If man would know, he must himself be what he knows. I have mentioned the exercise of intuition, but valuable as that can be, it still is only leading toward the truth at best. Jesus is giving us the highest understanding by the amazing statement that we can only know something by becoming it. Now this sounds quite strange to Western minds, but Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras makes quite a point of this. We tend to think of samadhi as some kind of superconscious trance state in which the functions of senses, etc., may be suspended. But those things are only symptoms of samadhi, not samadhi itself. And they are not necessarily indicators of samadhi at all.

In the highest sense samadhi is the state of superconsciousness where unity with the Absolute is experienced. But it also means a state of oneness in which the mind merges with the object of concentration and experiences the very being of that object, even if it is a material object. Patanjali indicates that this is the only way to really know anything. Of course the highest known in this way is God, but lesser things can also be known by “becoming” them in samadhi, even though such a state would be temporary. How necessary it is to be a yogi!

Finally Jesus says:

Do you remember, Arabo, when you were ape, or bird, or worm? Now, if you have no better proving of your plea than that the priests have told you so, you do not know; you simply guess. (Aquarian Gospel 32:14, 15)

Again, we cannot be sure whether Jesus is asking if Barata remembers ever being in a non-human form at any time, or whether he is asking if Barata remembers being born in a non-human form after having reached the level of human birth. Whichever it is, there is no doubt as to his meaning when he says that if we can only cite teachers and scriptures we do not know, we simply guess. And

that is virtually worthless.

True knowing is gained only in the realm of higher consciousness. So Jesus says:

Regard not, then, what any man has said; let us forget the flesh, and go with mind into the land of fleshless things; mind never does forget. And backward through the ages master minds can trace themselves; and thus they know. (Aquarian Gospel 32:16, 17)

This is exactly the teaching of Buddha: that eventually we will remember all our previous embodiments and see the entire “route” our evolution has taken. The most valuable lesson here is that we must seek for all our answers in attunement with higher levels of existence, and that we accomplish through centering ourselves in our own higher consciousness which corresponds to those levels.

Time never was when man was not. That which begins will have an end. If man was not, the time will come when he will not exist. (Aquarian Gospel 32:18, 19)

This is a paraphrase of the Gita verse: “Truly there never was a time when I was not, nor you, nor these lords of men—nor in the future will there be a time when we shall cease to be” (Bhagavad Gita 2:12). But again we are not sure: Is Jesus saying that we have always been human beings, and by implication will forever be human beings, or is he saying that from eternity there have been individual spirits in the state of humanity? Is he saying that the entire range of evolution has existed forever?

Jesus now gives us a detailed lesson on creation and its results. We will take it bit by bit so we miss nothing he intends for us to know.

From God’s own Record Book we read: The Triune God breathed forth, and seven Spirits stood before his face. (The Hebrews call these seven Spirits, Elohim.) And these are they who, in their boundless power, created everything that is, or was. (Aquarian Gospel 32:20, 21)

The Seven Archons, sometimes called the Seven Archangels, are the actual creators of all the worlds and all that appears within them. They not only create the worlds, they continue to supervise and foster their development and that of all beings living within them.

These Spirits of the Triune God moved on the face of boundless space and seven ethers were, and every ether had its form of life. These forms of life were but the thoughts of God, clothed in the substance of their ether planes. (Men call these ether planes the planes of protoplast, of earth, of plant, of beast, of man, of angel and of cherubim.) (Aquarian Gospel 32:22-24)

There are seven worlds, one above the other, like the layers of a cake. Within these seven major “layers” of the cosmic cake, there are innumerable, lesser layers, nuances of the state of being “native” to those layers. As Jesus said: “In my Father’s

house are many mansions” (John 14:2), dwelling-places for the many levels of consciousness. It would be reasonable to assume that there are at least forty-nine levels, seven in each of the seven greater levels. But there may be many, many more.

These planes with all their teeming thoughts of God, are never seen by eyes of man in flesh; they are composed of substance far too fine for fleshy eyes to see, and still they constitute the soul of things; and with the eyes of soul all creatures see these ether planes, and all forms of life. (Aquarian Gospel 32:25, 26)

Those who have refined their minds can see these various levels with their inner sight.

Because all forms of life on every plane are thoughts of God, all creatures think, and every creature is possessed of will, and, in its measure, has the power to choose, and in their native planes all creatures are supplied with nourishment from the ethers of their planes. (Aquarian Gospel 32:27, 28)

Every form of life has a mind which is under the direction of that form. They draw their life from the subtle energies of their proper plane. Even those on the earth plane are nourished by both physical and subtle “food.”

And so it was with every living thing until the will became a sluggish will, and then the ethers of the protoplast, the earth, the plant, the beast, the man, began to vibrate very slow. The ethers all became more dense, and all the creatures of these planes were clothed with coarser garbs, the garbs of flesh, which men can see; and thus this coarser manifest, which men call physical, appeared. And this is what is called the fall of man; but man fell not alone, for protoplast, and earth, and plant and beast were all included in the fall. (Aquarian Gospel 32:29-31)

Here we see that “the fall” is not totally the doing of humans, but all the forms that sank into physical manifestation from the higher planes were cooperating in the coarsening of their vibrations. In contrast:

The angels and the cherubim fell not; their wills were ever strong, and so they held the ethers of their planes in harmony with God. (Aquarian Gospel 32:32)

Being “in harmony with God,” these holy beings are ever descending to the lower worlds to help all forms of life to uplift themselves and return to their original status in subtle form. These are the bodhisattwas of the whole creation. But on earth there were profound troubles:

Now, when the ethers reached the rate of atmosphere, and all the creatures of these planes must get their food from atmosphere, the conflict came; and that which the finite man has called survival of the best, became

the law. The stronger ate the bodies of the weaker manifests; and here is where the carnal law of evolution had its rise. And now man, in his utter shamelessness, strikes down and eats the beasts, the beast consumes the plant, the plant thrives on the earth, the earth absorbs the protoplast. (Aquarian Gospel 32:33-35)

As a result the very consciousness of all beings is horridly distorted. As Rudolf Steiner observed: "If you feed herbivorous animals with carnivorous matter, they will go mad." Since in their normal worlds no types of being eat one another, those in the material plane who do so are driven insane to some degree. Just look at present-day humanity: Is this the picture of sanity on any level? Even the world's religions are a form of insanity except for those that enjoin vegetarianism. (Foolish they may sometimes be, but not mad.) There is no hope for carnivorous beings except through abstention from eating the dead. It hardly needs good sense to see this, but carnivores do not have good sense, and I am including myself in my pre-vegetarian days in this statement. Looking back I can see the utter hopelessness of my condition until I became a vegetarian.

Saint Peter the Apostle speaks of the same situation as Jesus. In one of his discourses recorded by Saint Clement of Rome, he says: "The things which are pleasing to God are these:... not to taste dead flesh, not to touch blood..." (*The Clementine Homilies*. Homily VII, section iv). Then he describes the effect of meat-eating upon the ancient world: "By the shedding of much blood, the pure air being defiled with impure vapor, and sickening those who breathed it, rendered them liable to diseases, so that thenceforth men died prematurely. But the earth being by these means greatly defiled, these first teemed with poison-darting and deadly creatures. All things, therefore, going from bad to worse, on account of these brutal demons" (*The Clementine Homilies*. Homily VIII, section xvii).

Jesus then tells us of the way to escape this terrible situation:

In yonder kingdom of the soul this carnal evolution is not known, and the great work of master minds is to restore the heritage of man, to bring him back to his estate that he has lost, when he again will live upon the ethers of his native plane. (Aquarian Gospel 32:36)

So vegetarianism is the first step back to Paradise! When we have thus purified the ethers of our bodies then there will be the possibility of ascension to the higher world from which we have fallen. This is why Jesus said: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). But as Saint John observes: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:3). A person who will not do something as easy as being a vegetarian obviously has no interest in ascending to higher life, however much he may desire the benefits of such an ascension.

When we have purified ourselves on all levels, not just diet, then, and then

alone, will we know immortality. For Jesus further says:

The thoughts of God change not; the manifests of life on every plane unfold into perfection of their kind; and as the thoughts of God can never die, there is no death to any being of the seven ethers of the seven Spirits of the Triune God. (Aquarian Gospel 32:37)

In this just-cited verse we are told that: “The thoughts of God change not; the manifests of life on every plane unfold into perfection of their kind....” Jesus dispels any doubt as to what he means by continuing:

And so an earth is never plant; a beast, or bird, or creeping thing is never man, and man is not, and cannot be, a beast, or bird, or creeping thing. (Aquarian Gospel 32:38)

According to this, we never change species, but become perfected in our “native” form through many incarnations in that form. Since there are degrees of consciousness in each of the seven great divisions, it may be, for example, that “plant souls” progress through many types of plant life until they reach the level of the highest plant forms, just as humans start out in very primitive states and then advance to nearly angelic condition.

Does this mean, then, that the spirit in a plant will be a plant forever, an animal an animal forever, and a human being a human being forever? No, for:

The time will come when all these seven manifests will be absorbed, and man, and beast, and plant, and earth and protoplast will be redeemed. (Aquarian Gospel 32:39)

All things must return to their original condition beyond relative existence which is only temporary, however long it may last or how often it may occur. So in time all the forms of manifestation will be absorbed into Pure Spirit, freed from any limiting forms whatsoever. Then it will all be seen as an exercise in the evolution of consciousness.

Yet there are people who, investigating their past lives, recall living in animal forms, and Indian philosophy postulates that we exist in all forms until being freed back into Spirit. Can Jesus’ words and this idea be reconciled? Yes, if we consider the possibility that in one creation cycle we evolve to perfection in a series of births in one form, then in the next we evolve in the next form in the evolutionary scale, and so on until we have traversed the range of evolution in all seven levels. This would mean that we take many creation cycles to fully evolve back to Spirit.

So it is amiss for a human being to fear being capriciously thrown back and forth between animal and human births, as is the view of many Mahayana Buddhists and some Hindus. And this is really what Jesus was wanting to get across in his discourse to Barata Arabo.

Barata was amazed; the wisdom of the Jewish sage was a revelation unto

him.

Now, Vidyapati, wisest of the Indian sages, chief of temple Kapivastu, heard Barata speak to Jesus of the origin of man, and heard the answer of the Hebrew prophet, and he said, You priests of Kapivastu, hear me speak: We stand today upon a crest of time. Six times ago a master soul was born who gave a glory light to man, and now a master sage stands here in temple Kapivastu. This Hebrew prophet is the rising star of wisdom, deified. He brings to us a knowledge of the secrets things of God; and all the world will hear his words, will heed his words, and glorify his name. You priests of temple Kapivastu, stay! be still and listen when he speaks; he is the Living Oracle of God.

And all the priests gave thanks, and praised the Buddha of enlightenment.
(Aquarian Gospel 32:40-45)

Unlike the Hindu priests, the Buddhists recognized Jesus as a Buddha, equal to Sakyamuni Buddha. (Later, as we shall see, they acclaimed Jesus as the Maitreya Buddha). Truly, it does “take one to know one,” so a person who truly recognizes a Master is himself drawing near to Buddhahood.

Chapter Thirty-Three

Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.—Luke 17:21

In silent meditation Jesus sat beside a flowing spring. It was a holy day, and many people of the servant caste were near the place. And Jesus saw the hard drawn lines of toil on every brow, in every hand. There was no look of joy in any face. Not one of all the group could think of anything but toil. (Aquarian Gospel 33:1, 2)

These two verses show the truth of Sri Ramakrishna's frequent assertion: "The mind is everything." We are in Buddhist territory, and Buddhism rejected the caste system, yet here are "many people of the servant caste." How amazing. Buddha's teachings freed them from the absurd idea of hereditary caste, yet they clung avidly to the social order he long ago repudiated.

When reading about "the hard drawn lines of toil on every brow, in every hand... no look of joy in any face" we should not be quick to react emotionally, for we are told why they were so miserable: "Not one of all the group could think of anything but toil." So it was all in their mind. Remember, this is a holiday and they are not working, but instead of relaxing and enjoying themselves they are all gloomy and glum. Why? Because they are slaves in their minds, reveling in their victimhood. We will see this when Jesus in his compassion starts reasoning with them.

And Jesus spoke to one and said, Why are you all so sad? Have you no happiness in life? The man replied, We scarcely know the meaning of that word. We toil to live, and hope for nothing else but toil, and bless the day when we can cease our toil and lay us down to rest in Buddha's city of the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 33:3, 4)

"Buddha's city of the dead"? This shows that no matter how surrounded people may be with freeing wisdom, if they choose ignorance and bondage that is exactly what they will get. I have seen this in nearly every ashram I have visited. No matter how wise and worthy the guru may be, and how many hours are spent listening to the guru's teachings, there will always be some that act as though they have hardly heard of God, much less the subtleties of Indian philosophy. They are walking bundles of misery and resentment, what Yogananda called "spiritual skunks," stinking up the place that is fragrant with holiness and the highest wisdom.

Perhaps those that choose to be miserable are more to be pitied than others who cannot help it for:

Jesus' heart was stirred with pity and with love for these poor toilers, and he said, Toil should not make a person sad; men should be happiest when

they toil. When hope and love are back of toil, then all of life is filled with joy and peace, and this is heaven. Do you not know that such a heaven is for you? (Aquarian Gospel 33:5, 6)

One of the reasons so many people in ashrams, especially in India, are so miserable is that they live in a useless, pointless, and idle manner. Their minds have gone to seed from years of indolence and they are no longer fit for this world or any other. Swami Vivekananda and Swami Sivananda understood how destructive it is even for sadhus to fall into this morass and become worse than nothing. They wisely required that ashram inmates engage in useful work to keep their minds in shape and also to give them self-respect. Sivananda used to tell those that came to the ashram that he intended for them to become competent in all areas of ashram work. The idlers fled, but the fit remained and became proficient in spiritual life.

Jesus understood the right principle of work, which is the entire message of the Bhagavad Gita. So he followed the precept of the Gita: “One should not unsettle the minds of the ignorant attached to action. The wise should cause them to enjoy all actions, himself engaged in their performance” (Bhagavad Gita 3:26). For work is an expression of hope for betterment, as Jesus points out. When work is done in the right perspective, life becomes a heaven on earth.

Writing this I see vividly in my mind’s eye a tiny laundry that was run by a Chinese family very near where I once lived in Hollywood. At that time I was living right next to the Self-Realization Fellowship Church and immersing myself in the study of yoga while at the same time attending college. (I spent a lot more time at SRF than school—a wise choice.) Heaven was opened to me, right in my grasp, through the wonderful practice of meditation. One day I wandered into the hot and steamy laundry and saw the harried faces of the parents and their little children as they drudged along to make a living. Looking at them I thought: “If they knew how to meditate, they would be living in Paradise within their hearts. How happy they would be!” A prayer of gratitude flew up from my heart to God as I turned and went back out onto the street. No, I did not evangelize them because they knew right where they, too, could find what I had learned. They passed it every day. It was a matter of choice, conscious or subliminal

The man replied, Of heaven we have heard; but then it is so far away, and we must live so many lives before we can reach that place! (Aquarian Gospel 33:7)

Right there in India, amid the teachings of Buddha, they thought heaven was the goal, and that it would take lives for them to be good enough for it. Lots of return tickets to planet earth... might it be that they wanted it that way?

And Jesus said, My brother, man, your thoughts are wrong; your heaven is not far away; and it is not a place of metes and bounds, is not a country to be reached; it is a state of mind. (Aquarian Gospel 33:8)

In an audience in 1999 Pope John Paul II described heaven as “neither an

abstraction nor a physical place in the clouds, but that fullness of communion with God, which is the goal of human life.” Both Jesus and the Pope agree with me!

God never made a heaven for man; he never made a hell; we are creators and we make our own. (Aquarian Gospel 33:9)

The Pope also defined hell as “the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God, the source of all life and joy.”

So it is all up to us whether we live in heaven or hell, and how high or how low. Physically there seems to be only one world, but people live in vastly differing degrees of heaven and hell. People who live in the same “world” group together and say theirs is the only world, but fortunately it is not true. In C. S. Lewis’ *The Great Divorce* (a book I certainly recommend) the main character discovers that anyone can pass back and forth from heaven to hell easily. It is matter of simple choice. (Shaw presented the same view in the “Don Juan in Hell” section of *Man and Superman*.)

There was a Buddhist monk whom people jokingly named Wintermelon because he seemed a completely useless blockhead. One day he left the town and was never seen again. He left behind a piece of paper on which he wrote a poem that concluded with the words: “I walk through the streets and no one guesses that Paradise [Sukhavati] is within.” Once an over-educated wiseacre in China met an old woman who was walking along the road muttering the mantra of Amida Buddha. “Old lady,” He sneered, “are you thinking that you will go to Amida’s Paradise when you die?” To his surprise, she emphatically shook her head No. Being a confirmed fool, he tried another tack. “Where is your Amida Buddha, then?” She smiled, tapped her chest, and walked on. He never got the idea, but we can.

A phrase that could easily slip by us is this: “We are creators.” If we believe the Biblical statement that we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), that we *are* gods (Psalms 82:6; John 10:34-36), this is only logical. Of course we have the ability to create our world, our life. We create heaven or hell, and it is silly to pray to God to do for us what we are intended to do. It is even more foolish to blame God or anyone else for the state of our life and mind. If we do not like the way things are we can change them, but not without unlocking the power to do so through the practice of yoga. Without yoga all the philosophy and good thoughts and deeds in the world mean very little. The wise center their attention, even their identity, on being a proficient yogi. we have done everything at some time in our past lives, and where did it get us? Why not toss the nonsense aside and become yogis? We are on the shore of the Ocean of Infinity. Why are we paddling around, wading out a bit, swimming about a while, and then coming back to shore? It is time to plunge in and swim to the Other Shore of which Buddha spoke.

Once a man came to Sri Ramakrishna and related this: “I had a strange dream. The world was all covered with water. Endless water on all sides. A few boats were afloat. They all went down in a sudden swell. I and a few others boarded a ship when I saw a brahmin walking across the shoreless ocean. I asked him, ‘How can

you walk over water?’ The brahmin said with a little smile, ‘There is no problem here; there is a bridge running straightaway under water.’ I asked him, ‘Where are you going?’ ‘To Bhavanipur, the city of the Divine Mother,’ he replied. I said, ‘Wait a little; I shall also go with you.’ The brahmin said, ‘I am in a hurry. You will take time to get down. Notice this road now and come afterwards.’” How long will the road wait? It is just beneath the surface of our mind; we need only discover it by the means of yoga.

Creative people often intuit beyond their conscious reckoning and come up with words worthy of the greatest scriptures. Such is this passage from *Julius Caesar*: “There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat. And we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures.” This is absolutely true. We must sail with the tide or remain stranded on this foreign shore for another life... and another... and another.

Now, cease to seek for heaven in the sky; just open up the windows of your hearts, and, like a flood of light, a heaven will come and bring a boundless joy; then toil will be no cruel task. (Aquarian Gospel 33:10)

There is no “tomorrow” or “over yonder.” There is only the eternal Now and the eternal Here. We need only open up to them, to “see” in the truest sense. Just as light comes immediately into a place darkened for countless years, so the inner Light will come as soon as we remove that which is between us and the Light. We need to roll away the stone from the tomb so the Life within can come forth. Jesus taught the way to do this, as we will see in Chapter Forty. It is all within.

The people were amazed, and gathered close to hear this strange young master speak, imploring him to tell them more about the Father-God; about the heaven that men can make on earth; about the boundless joy. (Aquarian Gospel 33:11, 12)

We must understand that God is our origin, that it is back to God we need to go, wandering children that have at last understood the folly of separation. There must be an opening of the secret inner door into the kingdom of heaven and its boundless joy.

Finally Jesus gives a symbolic picture of humanity’s dilemma and its solution:

And Jesus spoke a parable; he said, A certain man possessed a field; the soil was hard and poor. By constant toil he scarcely could provide enough of food to keep his family from want.

One day a miner who could see beneath the soil, in passing on his way, saw this poor man and his unfruitful field. He called the weary toiler and he said, My brother, know you not that just below the surface of your barren field rich treasures lie concealed? You plough and sow and reap in scanty way, and day by day you tread upon a mine of gold and precious stones. This

wealth lies not upon the surface of the ground; but if you will dig away the rocky soil, and delve down deep into the earth, you need no longer till the soil for naught.

The man believed. The miner surely knows; he said, and I will find the treasures hidden in my field. And then he dug away the rocky soil, and deep down in the earth he found a mine of gold.

And Jesus said, The sons of men are toiling hard on desert plains, and burning sands and rocky soils; are doing what their fathers did, not dreaming they can do aught else. Behold, a master comes, and tells them of a hidden wealth; that underneath the rocky soil of carnal things are treasures that no man can count; that in the heart the richest gems abound; that he who wills may open the door and find them all. (Aquarian Gospel 33:13-23)

How wonderful are these truths which can be realized by all of us. Those Jesus spoke to may have been unsophisticated in philosophy, and surely were illiterate, but they understood it was a practical matter, not beautiful theory.

And then the people said, Make known to us the way that we may find the wealth that lays within the heart.

And Jesus opened up the way; the toilers saw another side of life, and toil became a joy. (Aquarian Gospel 33:24-25)

So it is. So shall it be.

Chapter Thirty-Four

It was a gala day in sacred Kapi[la]vastu; a throng of Buddhist worshippers had met to celebrate a Jubilee. And priests and masters from all parts of India were there; they taught; but they embellished little truth with many words. (Aquarian Gospel 34:1-2)

This is a failing in all religions and philosophies: wisdom is replaced with purposeless words. Recently I was reading a Buddhist Sutra that took a paragraph or more to say what could easily be written in a single sentence. The concepts were true, even profound, but absolutely drowned in elaborate verbiage—obviously the author’s idea of the way a Buddha and enlightened people would speak. In some instances the sutra took many words to say something so obvious or mundane that it did not even need to be said. The whole thing reminded me of what a psychologist friend of mine once remarked about Sociology: “It takes a page to say what could be said in a sentence, and it’s something you already know anyway.” The very same day I was listening to a car radio and turning the dial in hope of finding something interesting. It was Sunday, so I came across several “Christian” broadcasts. They all had the same characteristic: lots of words and little ideas.

To my way of thinking the greatest offenders are the Indian teachers and gurus. Not only do they say the same thing at least three times in a row, they say it poorly and usually to no point at all. A friend spent many hours transcribing for us the talks of a well-known Indian teacher in America. They were uniformly devoid of content and relevance. No matter how profound the concepts, it is a disservice to obscure them with useless verbal meanderings.

It was so in Jesus’ day, too.

And Jesus went into an ancient plaza and taught; he spoke of Father-Mother-God; he told about the brotherhood of life. (Aquarian Gospel 34:3)

This reminds me of the way I used to sit in dreary churches listening to ministers that were past-masters at obscuring and missing the point. I would mentally give my own talks on their subjects, just to relieve my boredom. Jesus, though, was showing compassion to the seekers—I was only being merciful to myself!

Jesus chose those two topics, Father-Mother-God and the brotherhood of life, because it is important to understand that all polarities are to be found in God, that it is spiritually unhealthy to look upon God as exclusively male or female, and in time we must get beyond even those concepts. The brotherhood of life means much more than the brotherhood of man. It means the unity of all life within God, not just human life. Jesus was teaching the people that the Father-Mother God is not separate from all that exists, but that the one God embraces all sentient beings as the Life of their life, that all is One. For God is the eternal Tao outside of which

there is nothing.

In the ninth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel we find this about the Tao: “In early ages of the world the dwellers in the farther East said, Tao is the name of Universal Breath; and in the ancient books we read, No manifesting form has Tao Great, and yet he made and keeps the heavens and earth. No passion has our Tao Great, and yet he causes sun and moon and all the stars to rise and set. No name has Tao Great, and yet he makes all things to grow; he brings in season both the seed time and the harvest time. And Tao Great was One; the One became the Two; the Two became the Three, the Three evolved the Seven, which filled the universe with manifests. And Tao Great gives unto all, the evil and the good, the rain, the dew, the sunshine and the flowers; from his rich stores he feeds them all. And in the same old book we read of man: he has a spirit knit to Tao Great; a soul which lives within the seven Breaths of Tao Great; a body of desires that springs up from the soil of flesh. Now spirit loves the pure, the good, the true; the body of desires extols the selfish self; the soul becomes the battle ground between the two. And blessed is the man whose spirit is triumphant and whose lower self is purified; whose soul is cleansed, becoming fit to be the council chamber of the manifests of Tao Great” (Aquarian Gospel 9:21-29).

The priests and all the people were astounded at his words and said, Is this not Buddha come again in flesh? No other one could speak with such simplicity and power. (Aquarian Gospel 34:4)

Buddha very firmly said that his dharma would only last for five hundred years, that even in his lifetime it was beginning to be eroded. Yet I have never met a Buddhist who really believed it. It is a clear example of my own adage: “Adore the messenger and ignore the message.” I did read one Buddhist essay which pointed out that five hundred years after Buddha the Theravada commentaries (which insist that only one construction can be put on the words of the sutras) and the Mahayana sutras began to be written, the latter creating a completely different form of Buddhism.

In the light of all this, the advent of Jesus in the centers of Indian Buddhism seems significant. Earlier, after speaking on the subject of universal evolution in Kapilavastu: “Barata was amazed; the wisdom of the Jewish sage was a revelation unto him. Now, Vidyapati, wisest of the Indian sages, chief of temple Kapivastu, heard Barata speak to Jesus of the origin of man, and heard the answer of the Hebrew prophet, and he said, You priests of Kapivastu, hear me speak: We stand today upon a crest of time. Six times ago a master soul was born who gave a glory light to man, and now a master sage stands here in temple Kapivastu. This Hebrew prophet is the rising star of wisdom, deified. He brings to us a knowledge of the secrets things of God; and all the world will hear his words, will heed his words, and glorify his name. You priests of temple Kapivastu, stay! be still and listen when he speaks; he is the Living Oracle of God. And all the priests gave thanks, and praised the Buddha of enlightenment” (Aquarian Gospel 32:40-45).

Vidyapati says that they stand at the threshold of a new spiritual era. By Buddhist reckoning Sri Gautama Buddha had been born six “ages” before, five hundred years by our reckoning. The Buddha had told his disciples that after five hundred years the Dharma would have vanished from the earth in its fulness, but that it would be restored by the next Buddha. This is the Buddha known in Buddhism as Maitreya Buddha. It is popularly supposed that Maitreya Buddha is yet to come, but according to Vidyapati Jesus himself was Maitreya Buddha. Certainly his prophecy about Jesus as a world teacher was fulfilled. And those who heard him “praised the Buddha of enlightenment.” And so should we.

One of the reasons those present believed in the spiritual message of Jesus was the fact that his teaching did not contain “little truth with many words,” but much truth in few words. Simplicity and power are the hallmarks of all life-changing scriptures such as the upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Dhammapada, and the Tao Teh King. From this we see that true enlightenment is expressed simply and powerfully, that books of true wisdom are simple and powerful. The works of Swami Vivekananda are demonstrations of this, as are the words of Sri Ramakrishna, the books of Swami Sivananda and Swami (Papa) Ramdas, and the writings of Paramhansa Yogananda. It is the same with many of the great modern Theravada teachers. Among Mahayanists the Venerable Master Chen Kung teaches with the same dynamic character.

And Jesus spoke a parable; he said, There was a vineyard all unkept; the vines were high, the growth of leaves and branches great. The leaves were broad and shut the sunlight from the vines; the grapes were sour, and few, and small.

The pruner came; with his sharp knife he cut off every branch, and not a leaf remained; just root and stalk, and nothing more.

The busy neighbors came with one accord and were amazed, and said to him who pruned, You foolish man! the vineyard is despoiled. Such desolation! There is no beauty left, and when the harvest time shall come the gathers will find no fruit.

“The pruner said, Content yourselves with what you think, and come again at harvest time and see.

And when the harvest time came on the busy neighbors came again; they were surprised. The naked stalks had put forth branch and leaf, and heavy clusters of delicious grapes weighed every branch to earth. The gatherers rejoiced as, day by day, they carried the rich fruitage to the press. (Aquarian Gospel 34:5-13)

There are many valuable lessons here. We will benefit from them all.

There was a vineyard all unkept. The description following these words is a perfect picture of a religion that has lost its way, abandoning its original simplicity and spiritual directness in favor of elaboration and institutionalization. There is not one of the major world religions that is not dangerously in this condition. The situation

would be hopeless if it were not that master teachers like Jesus are sent to earth to set matters straight. Sometimes they manage by purifying the existing religion, but usually the resistance of the religious establishment necessitates the starting of a completely separate philosophy and movement, which in time will degenerate into the same condition as the former religion.

Fortunately for us the book and printing has been invented so we can go back to the roots and find out for ourselves what the original teachings were. We need not rely on the “oral tradition” so foolishly prized in many religions, for it is a tool of delusion most of the time.

The pruner came. Whether a great teacher or “just us” the process is the same: everything must be cut away but the root and stalk. Observers will decry this and make a great fuss about babies and bathwater. But the pruners will not argue: simply let time prove the worth or worthlessness of their endeavors. Only true teachers dare to allow such a test. But we see this over and over: spiritual abundance is the result of such “pruning.” We see this within religions in reform movements and in “new” religions as well. Though it must be pointed out that the opposite often happens, too: the new movement or sect proves to be utterly barren.

But this we can say: Those who rightly go to the root of God-contact and themselves come to know God will be a glory in the world. It is a wrench to rid ourselves of venerable religiosities, but it is required if we would truly “enter into life.” Simplicity and power are the traits of effective religion, too. The fundamental need is meditation, meditation and more meditation. The amusing and entertaining trappings of external holiness and actions mean little, and often prove deadly, suffocating the spirit. Theologians and rule-makers miss the point altogether. Which is why Jesus said: “I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

The gatherers rejoiced. And so shall we.

Jesus has this to say about his parable:

Behold the vineyard of the Lord! the earth is spread with human vines. The gorgeous forms and rites of men are branches, and their words are leaves; and these have grown so great that sunlight can no longer reach the heart; there is no fruit. Behold, the pruner comes, and with a two-edged knife he cuts away the branches and the leaves of words, and naught is left but unclothed stalks of human life. The priests and they of pompous show, rebuke the pruner, and would stay him in his work. They see no beauty in the stalks of human life; no promises of fruit. The harvest time will come and they who scorned the pruner will look on again and be amazed, for they will see the human stalks that seemed so lifeless, bending low with precious fruit. And they will hear the harvesters rejoice, because the harvest is so great. (Aquarian Gospel 34:14-21)

The result?

The priests were not well pleased with Jesus' words; but they rebuked him not; they feared the multitude. (Aquarian Gospel 34:22)

It is not easy to be a Christ, but it is worth it.

Chapter Thirty-Five

At the beginning of a genuine new age a kind of psychic watershed is attained, and the potential consciousness of humanity becomes changed to a quite distinct degree. But please note the word *potential*. The first thing needed in any age is awakening to the possibilities now open to us and the willingness to realize those possibilities. Otherwise nothing will happen and we will truly be what Yogananda called “psychological antiques” However much we may talk of our “new age” citizenship. Therefore:

The Indian sage [Vidyapati] and Jesus often met and talked about the needs of nations and of men; about the sacred doctrines, forms and rites best suited to the coming age. (Aquarian Gospel 35:1)

It is essential that the inner qualities of a person be reflected in the externals of that person’s life. Otherwise their personal growth is retarded and often stopped. And without a religious life (yes, religious, not just “spiritual”) any significant growth is simply impossible. As indicated by this verse, “sacred doctrines, forms and rites” are necessary in every age.

Since Jesus was born at the beginning of the Piscean Age, that is first discussed.

One day they sat together in a mountain pass, and Jesus said, The coming age will surely not require priests, and shrines, and sacrifice of life. There is no power in sacrifice of beast, or bird, to help a man to holy life. (Aquarian Gospel 35:2, 3)

In reality there has never been a time in the history of the human race when the taking of life was ever a necessity in authentic religious life. Unhappily, those engaging in the worship of evil astral beings find that the shedding of blood gets the attention and patronage of such monstrous beings. What they choose to ignore is that fact that after death they will enter the realms where those entities dwell and be enslaved by them for incalculable time. And when they are reborn they will either be made to sacrifice to such demons or they will themselves become sacrifices to them. Either way it is not ever worth the price that must be paid for such evil.

As an Essene Jesus had never engaged in animal sacrifice. Here is the relevant section from *The Christ of India*:

“[The Essenes] rejected animal sacrifice, insisting that the Torah had not originally ordered animal sacrifice, but that its text had been corrupted in regard to that and many other practices as well. Their assertion was certainly corroborated by passages in the scriptures such as: ‘Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?’ (Psalms 50:13). ‘To what purpose [is] the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord:...I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he

goats' (Isaiah 1:11). 'For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices' (Jeremiah 7:22). The quotations from Isaiah are particularly relevant since he was himself the Master of the Essenes.

"It was the Essenes' contention that the 'animals' originally offered in sacrifice were symbolic effigies of animals that represented the particular failing or fault from which the offerer wished to be freed. (Appollonius of Tyana taught this same thing in relation to the ancient Greek sacrifices, and urged a return to that form. Long before that, in India dough effigies were offered in 'sacrifice.' See page 42 of *Ganesha*, by Chitrlekha Singh and Prem Nath, published by Crest Publishing House of New Delhi.) In the Essene practice, each person molded the effigies with his own hands, while praying and concentrating deeply on the traits he wished to have corrected, feeling that it was being transferred into the image. The effigies were made of five substances: powdered frankincense, flour, water, olive oil, and salt. When these had dried, they were taken to the tabernacle whose altar was a metal structure with a grating over the top and hot coals within. The effigies were laid upon this grating and burnt by the intense heat. As they burned, through the force of the heat the olive oil and frankincense liquefied and boiled or seeped upward. This fragrant liquid was called 'the blood' of the sacrifice. It was this with which Moses consecrated the tabernacle, its equipment, and the priests (Exodus 24:6, 8), not animal blood. And it was just such a 'lamb' whose 'blood' was sprinkled on the doorposts in Egypt (Exodus 12:7).

"For the Passover observance, the Essenes would bake a lamb effigy using the same ingredients, except for the frankincense they would substitute honey and cinnamon. (Or, lacking honey, they would use a kind of raisin syrup.) This was the only paschal lamb acceptable to them, and therefore to Jesus and his Apostles.

"Consequently, the Essenes refused to worship in Jerusalem, but maintained their own tabernacle on Mount Carmel. They did not have an actual building on Mount Carmel, but a tent-tabernacle made according to the original directions given to Moses on Mount Sinai. They considered the Jerusalem temple unacceptable because it was a stone structure built according to Greco-Roman style rather than the simple and humble tabernacle form given to Moses, a form that symbolized both the physical and psychic makeup of the human being. Further, the Jerusalem temple was built by Herod who, completely subservient to Rome, disdained Judaism and practiced a kind of Roman agnostic piety. Because of this the temple was ritually unclean in their estimation. They placated the Jerusalem Temple priests by sending them large donations of money. On occasion they gave useful animals to the Temple in Jerusalem, but only with the condition that they would be allowed to live out their natural span of life."

And Vidyapati said, All forms and rites are symbols of the things that men must do within the temple of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 35:4)

This is a supremely important principle in relation to all ritual. Ritual is only

“meaningless” or “empty” when its inner purpose is not grasped, when it is not seen or experienced as a tool for the focus and development of consciousness. Many rituals have an invisible side to them: the psychic effect they have on the participants and their environment. Perhaps the greatest contribution to understanding this side of things is C. W. Leadbeater’s monumental work *The Science of the Sacraments*. It has been my personal experience over the years that the rituals of Eastern Christianity especially have a marked effect on the interior awareness. Certain fire rituals I have attended in India had a surprisingly powerful effect. Some of them I am convinced actually can “burn up” karma and erase samskaras.

Valid religious rituals are not meant to be mere expressions of devotion or homage (though that may be a part of their effect) but transforming acts which further the development of consciousness.

The Holy One requires man to give his life in willing sacrifice for men, and all the so-called offerings on altars and on shrines that have been made since time began, were made to teach man how to give himself to save his brother man; for man can never save himself except he lose his life in saving other men. (Aquarian Gospel 35:5)

Jesus is the living embodiment of this principle.

The perfect age will not require forms and rites and carnal sacrifice. (Aquarian Gospel 35:6)

Momentarily Vidyapati speaks of the Aquarian Age in which the consciousness can be so freed as to encompass within itself the effect that prior rites were intended to produce. In that age, truly, the opened human consciousness will become the real temple of divine communication. Then it will be possible to realize the statement of Jesus: “The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

The coming age is not the perfect age, and men will call for object lessons and symbolic rites. And in the great religion you shall introduce to men, some simple rites of washings and remembrances will be required; but cruel sacrifice of animals, and birds the gods require not. (Aquarian Gospel 35:6, 7)

Wishing to engage in external acts of piety, the Pisceans did indeed demand some rites, but they were quite simple. The early Christian writer Tertullian says that the other Mediterranean religions scorned Christians because of the simplicity of their rites. But when Christianity became a state religion it became elaborated to suit the mentality of the Roman emperor and his subjects, neither of which were sincere or qualified converts to Christianity. (Constantine was not even baptized until he was dying.) The transformation from Christianity to Churchianity was effected very soon. Nevertheless, the core of the rituals which was embodied in the

Apostolic Succession was preserved and thereby the inner Life continued to be conveyed, though in ignorance and incomprehension. That is why even in the worst eras of the Church's history saints appeared and lightened the "official" darkness. (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.)

And Jesus said, Our God must loathe the tinselled show of priests and priestly things. When men array themselves in showy garbs to indicate that they are servants of the gods, and strut about like gaudy birds to be admired by men, because of piety or any other thing, the Holy One must surely turn away in sheer disgust. All people are alike the servants of our Father-God, are kings and priests. Will not the coming age demand complete destruction of the priestly caste, as well as every other caste, and inequality among the sons of men?"

And Vidyapati said, The coming age is not the age of spirit life and men will pride themselves in wearing priestly robes, and chanting pious chants to advertise themselves as saints. The simple rites that you will introduce will be extolled by those who follow you, until the sacred service of the age will far outshine in gorgeousness the priestly service of the Brahmic age. This is a problem men must solve. (Aquarian Gospel 35:8-14)

The Piscean age would still have much of the qualities of the earlier time, so the ego would have its day even within Christianity, an egotism what would especially display itself in externals of symbolic holiness until its gaudiness would far exceed the priesthood of the pre-Piscean age. As Yogananda often said: "People are skillful in their ignorance" and well know how to bury or cancel out the wisdom of the religions they are claiming to follow. As an American comedian once said: "When they invented pay telephones my grandfather invented slugs."

So "priestcraft" would certainly become "a problem men must solve," and not by the barbarism of Protestantism which only destroyed while claiming to restore. It is in the Aquarian Age that the ideals of Jesus will be realized:

The perfect age will come when every man will be a priest and men will not array themselves in special garb to advertise their piety. (Aquarian Gospel 35:15)

This day has begun for those who both can and are willing to realize the new potentials.

Chapter Thirty-Six

In Lassa of Tibet there was a master's temple, rich in manuscripts of ancient lore. The Indian sage had read these manuscripts, and he revealed to Jesus many of the secret lessons they contained; but Jesus wished to read them for himself. (Aquarian Gospel 36:1, 2)

The significant part of this verse is the fact that Jesus had many, many teachers. Beginning with his supernatural mother, he was taught by the wisest of many lands. Buddha said that no one was his friend who claimed he taught what he did not teach, or who denied that he taught what he actually did teach. It is the same with Jesus. To mythologize (lie) about him and claim he is the creator of the world and omniscient God is to rob him of the honor he rightly deserves. He is one like us who struggled and persevered, ascending the ladder of evolution until he fully became a god within God.

Now, Meng-ste, greatest sage of all the farther East, was in this temple of Tibet. The path across Emodus heights was difficult; but Jesus started on his way, and Vidyapati sent with him a trusted guide. And Vidyapati sent a message to Meng-ste, in which he told about the Hebrew sage, and spoke for him a welcome by the temple priests. Now, after many days, and perils great, the guide and Jesus reached the Lassa temple in Tibet. And Meng-ste opened wide the temple doors, and all the priests and masters gave a welcome to the Hebrew sage. (Aquarian Gospel 36:3-7)

It is amazing how the Eastern peoples have the ability to recognize spiritual stature even in those "from outside" (the term used colloquially in India for foreigners).

One time when eating in a restaurant in Chicago a very special Greek Orthodox man asked me: "Why do people in India come up and touch you when you are walking down the street?" This astonished me, as Indians do not at all touch others as it is considered impolite. "When did they do this?" I asked back. "When I was in Delhi as a representative of the Greek Orthodox Youth of the World Council of Churches, people kept coming up and touching me gently as I was walking along." This kept me quiet for a bit, and then I asked: "Were you walking with other non-Indians when this happened?" "Yes." "Did they touch them, too?" "No. I hadn't really thought of it before, but they only touched me." Aha! So I explained the matter: they had intuited his spiritual character.

Whenever Sister Durga, a very advanced disciple of Yogananda, would walk down the street in India people would start coming from all sides and begin walking along with her, gazing at her in reverence, until a huge crowd would be moving along together.

At the beginning of my very first cycle-rickshaw ride in India, the rickshaw man

told the Indian friend who was with me: "I won't charge you much since he is a sannyasi." I was dressed in shirt, trousers, and pullover sweater with a "Joe College" Haircut. Yet he sensed that it would not be long until the sadhu garb would be worn by me and my name changed as well.

If the East can recognize mere yogis from the West, how much more did they "see" and revere Jesus the Christ, in their midst. As we see from *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, the Buddhists recognized Jesus wherever he went, as today nearly all truly religious people of the world feel a kinship with him unless Churchians have so befouled his name that they cannot separate him from those that pretend to follow him.

And Jesus had access to all the sacred manuscripts, and, with the help of Meng-ste, read them all. (Aquarian Gospel 36:8)

Again we see that Jesus drew from the wells of all the world's spiritual traditions.

And Meng-ste often talked with Jesus of the coming age, and of the sacred service best adapted to the people of the age. (Aquarian Gospel 36:9)

The master teachers of India certainly shaped the thought and teaching of Jesus, instructing him in the ways he should present his wisdom to the world.

In Lassa Jesus did not teach. When he finished all his studies in the temple schools he journeyed toward the West. In many villages he tarried for a time and taught. At last he reached the pass, and in the Ladak city, Leh, he was received with favor by the monks, the merchants, and the men of low estate. And in the monastery he abode, and taught; and then he sought the common people in the marts of trade; and there he taught. (Aquarian Gospel 36:10-12)

It is not surprising, then, that the monks of the Himis monastery in Leh wrote the life of Jesus which we know as *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*.

Not far away a woman lived, whose infant son was sick nigh unto death. The doctors had declared, There is no hope; the child must die. The woman heard that Jesus was a teacher sent from God, and she believed that he had power to heal her son. And so she clasped the dying infant in her arms and ran with haste and asked to see the man of God.

When Jesus saw her faith he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, let power divine o'ershadow me, and let the Holy Breath fill full this child that it may live. And in the presence of the multitude he laid his hand upon the child and said, Good woman you are blest; your faith has saved your son. And then the child was well.

The people were astonished and they said, This surely is the Holy One made flesh, for man alone cannot rebuke a fever thus and save a child from death. Then many of the people brought their sick, and Jesus spoke the Word,

and they were healed.

Among the Ladaks Jesus tarried many days; he taught them how to heal; how sins are blotted out, and how to make on earth a heaven of joy. The people loved him for his words and works, and when he must depart they grieved as children grieve when mother goes away. (Aquarian Gospel 36:13-23)

There are some facts about healing, whether physical, mental, or spiritual, that are found in these verses. I think we are all familiar with Michelangelo's painting of the creation of Adam in which Adam extends his forefinger to be touched by the forefinger of God. This is a profound symbolism of spiritual birth-creation. Man and God must "touch" at that point where they are identical: Spirit. Then life flows between them both. This is the glory of yoga: it is the science of the Divine Touch. Action is required on both the finite and infinite levels of being, and yoga shows us just how that is done: not in a haphazard emotional way or in prayer implying helplessness on the part of the yogi, but with the intelligent application of the eternal principles revealed at the beginning of the human race to those highly evolved souls that first came into physical embodiment. Wonder of wonders, that same knowledge has been handed on unbrokenly throughout the succeeding ages, and is as valid and effective today as it was then.

My Father-God, let power divine o'ershadow me, and let the Holy Breath fill full this child that it may live. If the Holy Spirit was not in the child, then no act of Jesus could bring it to life. Healing is possible only because it is already in potential form within each one of us. All forms of healing are but revelations of what is present inside. But that, too, must be stirred up and awakened. The greatest Master in the world can do nothing with those who are dormant inside. Awakening takes place only when the inner consciousness is already active on unseen levels, just waiting for the catalyst to bring it forth. Jesus' call: "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43), would have produced no effect if Lazarus had not been alive, awaiting the command to emerge. It is the same in all aspects of spiritual life. Unless the potential is there and it is the time for awakening, nothing will happen. That is why Jesus said: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me" (John 17:9).

In the scorned Middle Ages, European Christians often prayed to "Jesus, my Mother," for the Masters embody all the aspects of God. That is why when Jesus left that part of Ladakh "they grieved as children grieve when mother goes away." This attitude exists even today in Tibet, for the title "Lama" given to the monks means "Mother."

Now Jesus spoke a parable that might be called a spiritual tragedy, one which applies even today, and which applied then to some of the religionists of India, and certainly to those who would clamor for his death later on in Israel.

And on the morning when he started on his way the multitudes were there to press his hand. To them he spoke a parable; he said, A certain king so loved the people of his land that he sent forth his only son with precious gifts for

all. The son went everywhere and scattered forth the gifts with lavish hand. But there were priests who ministered at shrines of foreign gods, who were not pleased because the king did not through them bestow the gifts. (Aquarian Gospel 36:24-27)

Professional religionists are always like this: they hate whoever encroaches on their “territory” or who dares to show them up as the empty souls they are. Christians are the absolute worse offenders, screeching about “the one true Church outside of which there is no salvation” and of course no spiritual life or holiness. It is interesting to see how “the Church” Has replaced Jesus as savior.

Here is Jesus’ attitude: “John said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us” (Luke 9:49, 50). Odd, how different “the Body of Christ” can be from Christ himself!

And so they sought to cause the people all to hate the son. They said, These gifts are not of any worth; they are but counterfeits. And so the people threw the precious gems, and gold and silver in the streets. They caught the son and beat him, spit upon him, drove him from their midst. (Aquarian Gospel 36:28, 29)

That pretty well sums up what Christianity does to Christ, and often what other religions do to their prophet or deity. The function of many religionists is to drive God from their midst.

The son resented not their insults and their cruelties; but thus he prayed, My Father-God, forgive these creatures of thy hand; they are but slaves; they know not what they do. And while they yet were beating him he gave them food, and blest them with a boundless love. (Aquarian Gospel 36:30, 31)

The reminds me vividly of a conversation I once had with a saint who had been closely associated with Gandhi. When I spoke of the blasphemy and corruption of so much that called itself Christianity, she smiled and said: “No matter how corrupt the servants may be, the master will not leave the house.” And we see this is so. Whenever anyone in those churches turn to Jesus with a sincere heart and a pure intent, they “find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). Saints are to be found in many churches. Even in the church in which I was raised I found humble, loving children of God, some of whom worked great miracles and, like Moses, conversed with God “face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11). In the twentieth century two of the greatest spiritual luminaries were the stigmatists Teresa Neumann and Padre Pio, both viewed by some Church authorities with suspicion. Padre Pio was officially forbidden to preach! So the love of Jesus cannot be stymied by the ways of the ignorant “officers of the law.”

In certain cities was the son received with joy, and he would gladly have remained to bless the homes; but he could tarry not, for he must carry gifts to

every one in all the king's domain.

And Jesus said, My Father-God is king of all mankind, and he has sent me forth with all the bounties of his matchless love and boundless wealth. To all the people of all lands, lo, I must bear these gifts—this water and this bread of life. I go my way, but we will meet again; for in my Fatherland is room for all; I will prepare a place for you. And Jesus raised his hand in silent benediction; then he went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 36:32-36)

J. B. Phillips wrote a book entitled *Your God Is Too Small*, an apt title. God is too big for most religion. Here we see this in Jesus' words, especially: "in my Fatherland is room for all." True saints are seen to have this insight even if their professed religion is much narrower in scope.

The miracle-working stigmatist, Teresa Neumann of Bavaria, said to a monastic disciple of Yogananda: "I am so glad you are a Catholic." When he protested that he was not, she told him: "You do not understand what I mean. There are people who go to Mass every Sunday, but their hearts are closed to God. They are not Catholics. And there are people in the world who have never even heard the Name of Jesus, but their hearts are open to God. They are Catholics. And you are a Catholic!" How could he then deny the wisdom of a saint? Nor should we.

Chapter Thirty-Seven

A caravan of merchantmen were journeying through the Kashmir vale as Jesus passed that way, and they were going to Lahore, a city of the Hand, the five-stream land. The merchantmen had heard the prophet speak, had seen his mighty works in Leh, and they were glad to see him once again. And when they knew that he was going to Lahore and then across the Sind, through Persia and the farther West, and that he had no beast on which to ride, they freely gave to him a noble bactrian beast, well saddled and equipped, and Jesus journeyed with the caravan. And when he reached Lahore, Ajainin and some other Brahmic priests, received him with delight. (Aquarian Gospel 37:1-5)

Ajainin was the priest who came to Jesus in the night time in Benares many months before, and heard his words of truth. And Jesus was Ajainin's guest; he taught Ajainin many things; revealed to him the secrets of the healing art. He taught him how he could control the spirits of the air, the fire, the water and the earth; and he explained to him the secret doctrine of forgiveness, and the blotting out of sins. (Aquarian Gospel 37:6-8)

This presents a Jesus undreamed of by those who have read only the Bible. It is also a Jesus that was seen by Anna Catharine Emmerich the stigmatist in her visions (see her *Biblical Revelations*), a Jesus who even explained the validity of astrology in his teaching.

The important aspect of this passage is the fact that Jesus really did mean it when he said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also" (John 14:12), and he taught people how to actually do those things themselves. That is why he said: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). And: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:23). A person who does not know how to do these things, and I do not mean by mere devotional prayer, but by knowing the esoteric science behind them and by having the ability to apply those principles successfully, is not fully a disciple of Jesus.

When Yogananda met his first American disciple, Dr. M. W. Lewis, he told him that he forgave his sins, and he did so by touching him and flooding his physical and subtle bodies with the divine light in which all the insurmountable obstacles accumulated in past lives were dissolved. Then he taught him how to purify his own sins. For example, Dr. Lewis was addicted to alcohol, and Yogananda showed him the way to free himself from that addiction. On more than one occasion when Dr. Lewis went to Yogananda about personal problems the great Master showed him the way to free himself from them.

True master-teachers do not do it all for us, they show us how to do it for ourselves, meditation being the major how-to. The true Gospel (Good News) of Christ is twofold: the truth of our inner Christ, and the way to manifest that Christ. That which does not teach and so empower us is not Christianity at all, but the darkness of antichrist, however piously it may be packaged.

One day Ajainin sat with Jesus in the temple porch; a band of wandering singers and musicians paused before the court to sing and play. Their music was most rich and delicate, and Jesus said, Among the high-bred people of the land we hear no sweeter music than that these uncouth children of the wilderness bring here to us.

From whence this talent and this power? In one short life they could not gain such grace of voice, such knowledge of the laws of harmony and tone. Men call them prodigies. There are no prodigies. All things result from natural law. These people are not young. A thousand years would not suffice to give them such divine expressiveness, and such purity of voice and touch.

Ten thousand years ago these people mastered harmony. In days of old they trod the busy thoroughfares of life, and caught the melody of birds, and played on harps of perfect form. And they have come again to learn still other lessons from the varied notes of manifests. These wandering people form a part of heaven's orchestra, and in the land of perfect things the very angels will delight to hear them play and sing. (Aquarian Gospel 37:9-16)

Certainly it is obvious that a Mozart is not an accidental combination of biochemical forces, but that behind such a one lie aeons of progress. The same is true of geniuses in every aspect of knowledge, including spiritual knowledge. Without understanding karma, rebirth and evolution of consciousness, nothing can be understood, only explained in a wrong manner or relegated to being "a mystery."

Jesus taught great and profound secrets of life, sublime secrets of subtle metaphysics, but he taught simple and practical things as well. For example:

And Jesus taught the common people of Lahore; he healed their sick, and showed to them the way to rise to better things by helpfulness. He said, We are not rich by what we get and hold; the only things we keep are those we give away. If you would live the perfect life, give forth your life in service for your kind, and for the forms of life that men esteem the lower forms of life. (Aquarian Gospel 37:17-19)

We uplift ourselves by uplifting others and showing them the way to uplift themselves. And not only human beings, but all sentient beings should be the recipient of our help. "The only things we keep are those we give away" is a priceless pearl of wisdom.

But Jesus could not tarry longer in Lahore; he bade the priests and other friends farewell; and then he took his camel and he went his way toward the

Sind. (Aquarian Gospel 37:20)

Chapter Thirty-Eight

The thirty-eighth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel is historical in character and needs no comment, though it is a prelude to spiritual teaching:

Four-and-twenty years of age was Jesus when he entered Persia on his homeward way. In many a hamlet, town and neighborhood he paused a while and taught and healed. The priests and ruling classes did not welcome him, because he censured them for cruelty to those of low estate.

The common people followed him in throngs. At times the chiefs made bold to try to hinder him, forbidding him to teach or heal the sick. But he regarded not their angry threats; he taught, and healed the sick.

In time he reached Persepolis, the city where the kings of Persia were entombed; the city of the learned magi, Hor, and Lun, and Mer, the three wise men. Who, four-and-twenty years before, had seen the star of promise rise above Jerusalem, and who had journeyed to the West to find the new-born king; And were the first to honor Jesus as the master of the age, and gave him gifts of gold, gum-thus and myrrh.

These magi knew, by ways that masters always know, when Jesus neared Persepolis; and then they girt themselves, and went to meet him on the way. And when they met, a light much brighter than the light of day surrounded them, and men who saw the four stand in the way declared they were transfigured; seeming more like gods than men.

Now, Hor and Lun were aged men, and Jesus placed them on his beast to ride into Persepolis; whilst he and Mer led on the way. And when they reached the magi's home they all rejoiced. And Jesus told the thrilling story of his life, and Hor and Lun and Mer spoke not; they only looked to heaven, and in their hearts praised God.

Three wise men from the North were in Persepolis; and they were Kaspar, Zara and Melzone; and Kaspar was the wisest master of the Magian land. These three were at the home of Hor and Lun and Mer when Jesus came. For seven days these seven men spoke not; they sat in silence in the council hall in close communion with the Silent Brotherhood. They sought for light, for revelation and for power. The laws and precepts of the coming age required all the wisdom of the masters of the world. (Aquarian Gospel 38:1-15)

Chapter Thirty-Nine

A feast in honor of the magian God was being held, and many men were gathered in Persepolis. And on the great day of the feast the ruling magian master said, Within these sacred walls is liberty; whoever wills to speak may speak.

And Jesus, standing in the midst of all the people, said, My brothers, sisters, children of our Father-God: Most blest are you among the sons of men today, because you have such just conceptions of the Holy One and man. (Aquarian Gospel 39:1-4)

I once heard the phrase: “Man’s inhumanity to God,” and years ago I had a small book called *Think Well of God*, written by a cleric of a church which has trafficked for centuries in threats of hell and damnation, and is especially fond of talking about incurring the wrath of God and “losing the friendship of God.” He was doing his best to counteract the damage done for so long, but considering his book is long out of print I can only assume that God as a Big Stick has remained the preferred usage in his church. It is no joke: believers can be far more blasphemous of God than unbelievers.

The only just conception of God and man is that of their fundamental unity, an understanding that it is their nature to be in total harmony with one another, for God to dwell in man and man to dwell in God. This is certainly the viewpoint of Jesus.

Your purity in worship and in life is pleasing unto God; and to your master, Zarathustra, praise is due. (Aquarian Gospel 39:5)

Purity is needed in both belief and deed, for impure belief will eventually produce impure action, and impure acts will corrupt the mind and thereby in time corrupt our beliefs. This is why sincerity alone is not sufficient in spiritual life, even though it is impossible to be truly spiritual without sincerity, which is a form of truthfulness.

Well say you all, There is one God from whose great being there came forth the seven Spirits that created heaven and earth; and manifest unto the sons of men are these great Spirits in the sun, and moon, and stars. (Aquarian Gospel 39:6)

The One and the Seven have already been covered earlier, the only new fact here being that the distinctive powers of the Seven are manifested in and through the radiations of the sun and planets. This used to be held by astrologers in Europe: that the powers of the seven archangels were conveyed by the planets, and planetary configurations were interpreted as angelic influences. Life was looked upon as a weaving together of angelic influences, and astrology was primarily a

spiritual science, life being looked upon as totally supernatural. This changed at the advent of “rationalism” and the “Enlightenment,” so that astrology now only tells us about external factors as though they were the real causes rather than the incidental effects.

But in your sacred books we read that two among these seven are of superior strength; that one of these created all the good; the other one created all that evil is. I pray you, honored masters, tell me how that evil can be born of that which is all good?

A magus rose and said, If you will answer me, your problem will be solved. We all do recognize the fact that evil is. Whatever is, must have a cause, If God, the One, made not this evil, then, where is the God who did? (Aquarian Gospel 39:7-10)

Outside India this was a prevailing dilemma.

And Jesus said, Whatever God, the One, has made is good, and like the great first Cause, the seven Spirits all are good, and everything that comes from their creative hands is good.

Now, all created things have colors, tones and forms their own; but certain tones, though good and pure themselves, when mixed, produce inharmonies, discordant tones. And certain things, though good and pure, when mixed, produce discordant things, yea, poisonous things, that men call evil things. So evil is the inharmonious blending of the colors, tones, or forms of good.

Now, man is not all-wise, and yet has will his own. He has the power, and he uses it, to mix God’s good things in a multitude of ways, and every day he makes discordant sounds, and evil things. And every tone and form, be it of good, or ill, becomes a living thing, a demon, sprite, or spirit of a good or vicious kind. (Aquarian Gospel 39:11-16)

Two points are made here: that “evil” is only a misapplication or distortion of good, and that many evil forces or entities are really only thoughtform creations of human beings.

Man makes his evil thus; and then becomes afraid of him and flees; his devil is emboldened, follows him away and casts him into torturing fires. The devil and the burning fires are both the works of man, and none can put the fires out and dissipate the evil one, but man who made them both. (Aquarian Gospel 39:17, 18)

This is absolutely necessary for us to understand. The sole problem is human ignorance and wrong action. All the evil in our life comes from us and must be dealt with by us. We must remit our own sins through purification of our consciousness. Whining before God accomplishes nothing but reinforcement of our mistaken ideas about evil, and about ourselves. We must “save” ourselves. God has given us the means to do this through the teachings of the great sages. Our task is to learn and

apply those teachings. Then all will be well.

Then Jesus stood aside, and not a magus answered him. And he departed from the throng and went into a secret place to pray. (Aquarian Gospel 39:19, 20)

There is a lot of talk in metaphysical circles about a balanced life. Jesus shows us what that really means. Whenever he engaged in intense teaching or other external activity he would withdraw by himself and engage in equally intense meditation. This is needful for those who would ascend to divine awareness. No one is exempt, not even the great Masters. Meditation is the basis for meaningful life.

Chapter Forty

Now, in the early morning Jesus came again to teach and heal. A light not comprehended shown about, as though some mighty spirit overshadowed him. A magus noted this and asked him privately to tell from whence his wisdom came, and what the meaning of the light. (Aquarian Gospel 40:1-2)

The phenomenon of light shining around or from the body of a spiritually advanced person is not common, but neither is it particularly rare. I have seen it several times, and in *The Sermon on the Mount According to Vedanta* Swami Prabhavananda gives an impressive account of seeing Swami Premananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, shining with light during a visit to the Vishwanath Temple in Benares (Varanasi).

It is not really the light that matters, but the state of consciousness, the inner illumination, which it indicates. So the magian asked Jesus where he got his wisdom, no doubt assuming that he would name a teacher or scripture as its source. Instead, Jesus told him that there is an inner state in which the Divine Source is tapped, from which all light, wisdom, love and power flow. ("Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" James 1:17.) Perhaps in enumerating these four things Jesus was thinking of karma, jnana, bhakti and raja yogas.

And Jesus said, There is a Silence where the soul may meet its God, and there the fount of wisdom is, and all who enter are immersed in light, and filled with wisdom, love and power. (Aquarian Gospel 40:3)

There is a Silence. Everything is consciousness. When consciousness moves we call it energy and matter, but when it is still we call it spirit. Only in the Silence will Spirit be perceived; everything else is noise and ultimately unreal. There are three references in the Bible to mystical experience involving the Silence Jesus speaks about:

"The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2:20). "The earth" is all material consciousness and the instruments of its perception and function. Only "heaven" should open in our consciousness and be entered, for heaven and silence/spirit are the same thing in the highest level of mystical thought.

"Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation" (Zechariah 2:13). "The flesh" is material consciousness which is silenced when the spirit is exalted within us, for we are temples of God (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).

"When he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven" (Revelation 8:1). When the consciousness ascends to the seventh level of consciousness which in the human complex is located in the Thousand-petalled Lotus or Sahasrara

Chakra corresponding to the brain, the divine Silence prevails.

Where the soul may meet its God. There alone God is “met” for God is the Silence into which the yogi enters.

There the fount of wisdom is. Only in Silence is the Word of Eternal Wisdom known from which flows all knowing.

All who enter are immersed in light. For “God is light” (I John 1:5), “the light of the living” (Psalms 56:13), and “the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light” (Isaiah 60:19), “for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Corinthians 4:6), who has taught us about that Light, being himself the living embodiment of the Light.

And filled with wisdom, love and power, all of which are manifestations of the Divine Presence in us, that Presence, the Silence and the Light being the One: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

The magus said, Tell me about this Silence and this light, that I may go and there abide. (Aquarian Gospel 40:4)

The magian is not without good spiritual sense. Unlike so many “seekers” who simply want to get a little buzz to brag about later, he understands what divine experience is intended to produce. He wisely seeks to abide in God permanently. For him the quest of God is not a trip to the beach for a little bit of paddling in the water only to go back to the dry land mistakenly called “home.” He wants to merge in the ocean and remain in its depths forever. Because of this, Jesus freely speaks to him of spiritual realities.

And Jesus said, The Silence is not circumscribed; is not a place closed in with wall, or rocky steeps, nor guarded by the sword of man. Men carry with them all the time the secret place where they might meet their God. It matters not where men abide, on mountain top, in deepest vale, in marts of trade, or in the quiet home; they may at once, at any time, fling wide the door, and find the Silence, find the house of God; it is within the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 40:5-7)

We need not go to some place, thinking that only there we will find perfect conditions for interior life and meditation. Rather, we carry right within us the ideal place for spiritual opening: our own spirit, our true Self. “For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21).

In the Gospel of Matthew (6:6) Jesus speaks of our inner consciousness as a “closet.” “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.” The Greek word *tameion* means an inner room of a house where valuables were kept and people went to be totally alone. He tells us to shut the “door” of the mind and the senses and be “alone” with God, perceiving him alone in the depths of meditation. Later in the Aquarian Gospel we will find these words: “But when you pray, go to the closet of your soul;

close all the doors, and in the holy silence, pray.” (Aquarian Gospel 94:5)

One may not be so much disturbed by noise of business, and the words and thoughts of men if he goes all alone into the valley or the mountain pass. And when life’s heavy load is pressing hard, it is far better to go out and seek a quiet place to pray and meditate. (Aquarian Gospel 40:8, 9)

Even though “the secret place” is always with(in) us, yet it helps to have a good environment. A special meditation room or place is extremely helpful. But it is also good to occasionally go to a place that is outwardly solitary, as well. Here is what Sri Ramakrishna had to say about it:

“The mind does not turn to God if one is immersed day and night in the world and practical affairs. It is very necessary now and then to retire into solitude and think of him. In the beginning it is very difficult to keep the mind on God without retiring into solitude.

“When a plant is young it is necessary to put a fence round it. Without a fence it is eaten up by goats and cows. To meditate you should withdraw yourself within or retire to a secluded spot or into the forest and always discriminate between the real and the unreal. God alone is truth; namely, the reality, and all the rest is unreal and transitory. Discriminating in this manner renounce the transient things from the mind.

“...to acquire the love of God it is necessary to retire into solitude. To churn butter milk has to be set in a quiet place to curdle. Milk won’t turn into curd if it is shaken off and on. Next, sitting in a quiet place and leaving aside all work the curd has to be churned. Then alone you get butter.

“And notice also that this very mind acquires knowledge, dispassion and devotion by dwelling on God in solitude....

“The world is water and the mind is like milk. If you pour milk into water they get mixed and you cannot find pure milk anymore. If you churn butter after turning milk into curd and put it in water it will float. So first churn the butter of knowledge and devotion by following spiritual practices in solitude. That butter will never mix. Even if you put it in the water of the world it will float.”

Mahendranath Gupta (“M”), the recorder of these words, followed this counsel all his life. He had several rented rooms around Calcutta where he would withdraw frequently and practice meditation in solitude, right in crowded and noisy Calcutta! But each must do as he can, and his circumstances did not allow him to go far away for his solitude. (Later he did establish a small ashram away from the city where he sometimes went.) To see the results he gained from following Sri Ramakrishna’s advice, read the ninth chapter of Yogananda’s *Autobiography of a Yogi*: “The Blissful Devotee and his Cosmic Romance.”

Throughout the Gospels we find that Jesus regularly would go into solitude, just as did Buddha.

In Eastern Christianity, meditation is called Hesychia, a Greek word meaning Silence. A monastery is often called a hesychasterion, a place of silence. Regarding

meditation, Jesus tells the magian:

The Silence is the kingdom of the soul, which is not seen by human eyes. When in the Silence, phantom forms may flit before the mind; but they are all subservient to the will; the master soul may speak and they are gone. (Aquarian Gospel 40:10, 11)

Now this is very important. By saying: “The Silence is the kingdom of the soul,” Jesus indicates that meditation is not really a practice in the sense of a mechanical methodology that is intended to produce a result, such as turning a key in a lock. Rather, meditation is spiritual experience itself. Meditation is experiencing Spirit, not a means or a process that hopefully will produce in time the result we want. Rather, right from the beginning we should be experiencing God. That experience may be so faint or so subtle that we do not even realize it. We may consider that we are only feeling peaceful, happier or more clear in our mind, but it is not our mind we are experiencing but our pure spirit which, as it is rooted in God, is also the experiencing of God.

Certainly our perception is limited, like looking at the vast ocean through a tiny porthole, but we are nonetheless “meeting” God, and by continually entering into meditation we enlarge the scope of our perception and “see” more and more of that which, as Jesus says, is beyond the scope of human perception. Fortunately we are not essentially human: we are divine, and such experience is natural and normal for us. It is absolutely necessary for us to grasp this. In our yoga practice we need not, must not, be straining and stressing.

Buddha said: “Turn around, and lo! The other shore!” Jesus continually exhorted people to Turn Around, not “repent” as it is absurdly translated. The Greek word *metanoeo*, is a compound of two words: *meta*, which means “around” or “across,” and *noieo*, which means “to use/exercise the mind.” In other words: “Turn your mind around” or “Transfer your mind across.” Mind in this instance is both the instrument of consciousness and our consciousness itself.

Jesus is not speaking of just everything that is called meditation. He has a very specific practice in mind: the yoga of the Nath Yogis which is centered on the intonation of the mantra Soham in time with the breath. (See *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.) This practice dispels the “phantom forms” that “may flit before the mind” during meditation.

The expression “master soul” does not mean some rare, skilled meditator, but any intelligent human soul that speaks the Word. For we are not weak and helpless mortals, we are gods, made in the image of God. “Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High” (Psalms 82:6). “God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him” (Genesis 1:27).

The power of the Eternal Word, Soham, is ours, we need only discover that. We will be looking a great deal at this subject of the Word, but now we need to continue with Jesus’ general observations on meditation itself.

A sure sign of a genuine spiritual aspirant, in contrast with a window-shopping

dabbler, is their immediately asking: “What do I have to do?” For spiritual life is spiritual action. And that action is Soham Meditation. Jesus was speaking to an awakened man, so he continues:

If you would find this Silence of the soul you must yourself prepare the way. None but the pure in heart may enter here. And you must lay aside all tenseness of the mind, all business cares, all fears, all doubts and troubled thoughts. Your human will must be absorbed by the divine; then you will come into a consciousness of holiness. (Aquarian Gospel 40:12-14)

You must yourself prepare the way. There must be preparation, and it must be done by us, not by God, or “guru’s grace,” or some other factor, such as passively “being ready.” When we first enter into relative existence we do evolve passively, pushed onward from within and without by factors of which we are mostly unconscious, but the time comes when that phase is over and we must consciously, intelligently and willfully take charge of our further development. Depending on any thing or person other than ourselves must come to an end. All the past ideas of “surrender” and “letting go” must be cast aside. We must stand up like conscious, responsible beings with a living awareness of the eternal truth, *Soham asmi*, and start manifesting it.

None but the pure in heart may enter here. There is no entry into the meditation that is the experience of the Self without purification on all levels of every aspect of our life. In the regular four Gospels, the word for “pure” is *katharos*. This word has three distinct meanings: clean; clear; and without any admixture. Our life, our total being, must be free from negativity in any form. We must also be absolutely clear: no cloudiness in our consciousness, intent or will.

In his first epistle, the Beloved Apostle John uses the phrase “as he is” five times. In each instance “he” refers to God, not just Jesus. So the ideal is of the highest. He tells us that we must “walk [live] in the light, *as he is* in the light” (I John 1:7). If we do so, “we shall see him *as he is*” (I John 3:2). Yet, to do this, we must purify ourselves, “even *as he is* pure” (I John 3:3). This is necessary, for “he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even *as he is* righteous” (I John 3:7). Those who follow this ideal can then say: “*As he is*, so are we in this world” (I John 4:17). What a marvelous ideal! That is why, Saint John says to us: “Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God” (I John 3:2). Hence he calls upon us with confidence to demonstrate this glorious truth.

You must lay aside.... Indeed we must. We must lay aside everything that is cluttering up our life and blinding us to realities and Reality. As Saint Paul says: “Let us lay aside every weight, and run the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). The list of “lay asides” is incredibly long, but Jesus cites five things: “all tenseness of the mind, all business cares, all fears, all doubts and troubled thoughts.” When we do that, we will be well on the way.

Your human will must be absorbed by the divine. Our petty, little egoic will that is nothing more than a bundle of foolish “wants,” must become assimilated into our

true spiritual will, the eternal will of our eternal Self, and thus the Eternal Will of God. This is a very active, positive, thing, not a passive giving up or becoming numb and indifferent.

Then you will come into a consciousness of holiness, the “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). For God is holiness itself. Jesus assures us that when we have prepared ourselves we will enter into the very Consciousness of God. As I said before, we will not be able right away to encompass the fulness, the infinity, of that Consciousness, but It will Itself begin to expand our capacity until we shall do so.

Seeing that such attainments lie before us, why would we even consider remaining any longer running in the little hamster-wheel of ordinary life and consciousness? As Swami Vivekananda often said to his hearers: “Awake, arise and stop not until the goal is reached!”

Each person will experience meditation in a different way, even if there are points of similarity with that of others. Also, meditations can vary greatly for each of us. Sometimes a great deal happens, at other times nothing seems to be going on at all, and we may mistakenly think something has gone wrong and we are just marking time. But this will not be so. Meditation produces profound and far-reaching changes in our extremely complex makeup. Therefore some meditations will be very active, and others will be quiet times of assimilation of what has taken place before and an adjusting to get ready for more change.

Also, a great deal of the effects of meditation are beyond our immediate perception. If our practice is correct, we can be assured that everything is going on just as it should be. Yet there are some things that each meditator will at some time encounter, and Jesus will now describe them and tell us what to do when they occur.

You are in the Holy Place, and you will see upon a living shrine the candle of the Lord aflame. And when you see it burning there, look deep into the temple of your brain, and you will see it all aglow. (Aquarian Gospel 40:15, 16)

We are “the temple of the living God” (II Corinthians 6:16), and when we meditate we are immediately in the Holy Place, the Holy of Holies. One of the first phenomena we experience in meditation is inner light in some form or other—it can vary greatly. But whatever form it takes, we should look into it. Jesus tells us to “look deep into the temple of your brain.” This will happen automatically at such times.

In every part, from head to foot, are candles all in place, just waiting to be lighted by the flaming torch of love. (Aquarian Gospel 40:17)

Many mistakenly think that the body is darkness shrouding the light of the spirit, but in its subtle regions the body is a great lampstand holding many lamps that await being lighted to reveal the Self, the spirit.

And when you see the candles all aflame, just look, and you will see, with eyes of soul, the waters of the fount of wisdom rushing on; and you may drink, and there abide. (Aquarian Gospel 40:18)

There is a great enlivening that takes place in the depths of meditation, as the faithful meditator will experience and make a permanent state.

All true knowledge of time and eternity lies within us awaiting our discovery in meditation. For Jesus next says:

And then the curtains part, and you are in the Holiest of All, where rests the Ark of God, whose covering is the Mercy Seat. Fear not to lift the sacred board; the Tables of the Law are in the Ark concealed. Take them and read them well; for they contain all precepts and commands that men will ever need. And in the Ark, the magic wand of prophecy lies waiting for your hand; it is the key to all the hidden meanings of the present, future, past. (Aquarian Gospel 40:19-22)

The Ark of God is the very core of our being, where God awaits to communicate with us. There we will find all we ever need. Supreme knowledge will be ours.

And then, behold the manna there, the hidden bread of life; and he who eats shall never die. (Aquarian Gospel 40:23)

Beyond perfect knowledge we will find immortality pervading our total being. Like Jesus, we will become the Bread of Life itself.

The next verse is very intriguing:

The cherubim have guarded well for every soul this treasure box, and whosoever will may enter in and find his own. (Aquarian Gospel 40:24)

Jesus has told us that this revelation of eternal life will take place in the head, which the yogis call the Thousand-petalled Lotus. The two six-winged cherubim that guard this treasury are the two hemispheres of the brain that cover and guard the core of the brain. The real “third eye” is there in the middle: the pineal gland. When we meditate correctly the attention automatically ascends to the Holy Place of the brain. There is no need for deliberate concentration. In fact such concentration may interfere with that which should occur spontaneously.

It is of great significance that Jesus refers to the meditator’s inner treasure as “his own.” This has a twofold meaning. One is that each one carries within himself his own treasure. The other is that it is really the seeker’s own eternal nature that is the treasure. Enlightenment is the entering in to our Self with full intention and awareness. We have possessed it forever, but now are about to “find” it. Meditation is the way into our treasure house, as well as the lamp that lights our way.

Now Kaspar heard the Hebrew master speak and he exclaimed, Behold, the wisdom of the gods has come to men! (Aquarian Gospel 40:25)

Instruction in meditation is the wisdom of God that transforms men into gods.

And Jesus went his way, and in the sacred groves of Cyrus, where the multitudes were met, he taught and healed the sick (Aquarian Gospel 40:26)

Chapter Forty-One

A flowing spring that people called the Healing Fount was near Persepolis. And all the people thought that at a certain time of the year their deity came down and gave a virtue to the waters of the fount, and that the sick who then would plunge into the fount and wash would be made whole. About the fount a multitude of people were in waiting for the Holy One to come and potentize the waters of the fount. The blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, and those obsessed were there. (Aquarian Gospel 41:1-4)

We will be given more on this subject of healing waters in Chapter Ninety-one. But now Jesus challenges those present.

And Jesus, standing in the midst of them, exclaimed, Behold the spring of life! These waters that will fail are honored as the special blessing of your God. From whence do healing virtues come? Why is your God so partial with his gifts? Why does he bless this spring today, and then tomorrow take his blessings all away? A deity of power could fill these waters full of healing virtue every day (Aquarian Gospel 41:5-7)

This is completely straightforward and needs no explanation, but I would like to point out a principle that is valuable to spiritual seekers. Jesus asks how it is that one day the waters would have healing power and the next day lack them. Anyone who perseveres in spiritual life will experience this phenomenon: what inspires and empowers us at a phase of our development will in time cease to inspire and empower—often the opposite. Does that mean we were deluded, that there was never any real value there? No. It means that we have grown beyond the point where those things could help us and we need to move on to higher and better things, and be ready to move beyond those as well until the Goal is reached where there is no “beyond.”

For example, books that were awakening and enlightening to us at one point in our life can later on be seen as minimal and even erroneous. But when we first read them they presented ideas new to us, ideas that brought about very real and beneficial changes in our way of thinking and living. Teachers that seemed veritable divine Masters can in time be seen as possessing only partial and sometimes defective knowledge. Even meditation techniques that at one time seemed to open the skies of Infinity to us can in time be seen as of minimal worth, and perhaps possessing detrimental side effects. It can be the same with spiritual groups and practices. In my spiritual journey, many times places that seemed holy and healing to me later were sterile and empty. The change was not in them but in me, yet until I realized this it was a source of confusion and doubt. We cannot move on without letting go of where we are at the moment.

Unhappily, not many people keep on growing in understanding and evolution, so

most people just stop at a point and never move beyond it. This is mistakenly considered stability and maturity when it is really stagnation. However, those that keep changing and moving from point to point are looked upon as unstable, spiritual butterflies that never put down roots and get serious. The old simile of digging wells in many places and so never getting water is trotted out over and over, but what if it really means that they have enough intuition to know when a hole will not strike water and have the wisdom to move on to another spot? Those who keep learning and growing will keep changing, it cannot be otherwise. As Yogananda said: "Don't become a spiritual antique."

I write all this to encourage you in remaining fluid and ready to learn and change, even drastically. There is nothing in relative existence that cannot be grown beyond. Some people need to get beyond their present, limited theism, so a period of atheism is beneficial. When someone told Sri Ramakrishna they were atheists, he would comment that atheism, too, is a stage on the path to realization. Swami Vivekananda was immensely helped by his honest and intense doubts and denials as a young man, because they led to understanding and assurance, making him a worthy teacher of others.

Hear me, you sick, disconsolate: The virtue of this fount is not a special gift of God. Faith is the healing power of every drop of all the waters of this spring. He who believes with all his heart that he will be made whole by washing in this fount will be made whole when he has washed; and he may wash at any time. Let every one who has this faith in God and in himself plunge in these waters now and wash. (Aquarian Gospel 41:8-11)

Faith is the healing power of every drop of all the waters of this spring. Similar statements in the four gospels are often misunderstood as meaning that it is only our faith that is the power behind miracles, including healing. For example, Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke 7:50; 18:42), and there is no doubt that faith is a power that does bring about changes. But there is more to it than that. Faith is often the force that opens the channels for the reception of healing and blessing. That this is so is revealed in the gospels of Matthew and Mark where unbelief prevented healing: "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:58). "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5, 6).

Even if we are immersed in water, if we do not open our mouth no water will come in. Similarly, if a bucket is held upside down under a waterfall it will stay dry inside. But if it is turned upward a bit, some water will enter, and if it is turned fully upright it will be completely filled. So it is with faith. Faith enables us to receive outside forces and unbelief blocks them. Those who believe negative things can attract negativity into their lives, and the same is true of positive beliefs having the power to attract positive things.

He who believes with all his heart that he will be made whole by washing in this fount will

be made whole when he has washed. Being made in the image of the Creator, we too can create within our limited life sphere. Actually, we all are creating our life from moment to moment. Even karma is in our mind, not outside us. “The Lord does not create either means of action or action itself in this world, nor the union of action with its fruit. On the other hand, the swabhava [self-nature] impels one to action” (Bhagavad Gita 5:14).

Let every one who has this faith in God and in himself plunge in these waters now and wash. So Jesus did not exhort the people to only look inside and not bother with the healing waters, just the opposite. Whatever will stimulate or release the inner power of good and benefit should be put to use. Margaret Laird, one of the greatest metaphysical thinkers of the twentieth century, was at one time on the board of the Christian Science Church, but she resigned because of philosophical differences, one of the major ones being that anything which triggered faith and healing should be used, including medicine. If people were able to cure themselves by mental means alone, she advocated that, but if it took a pill to make a person believe in their recovery, then she recommended that. As the healer Ben Bibb often: “You can’t argue with results.”

And many of the people plunged into the crystal fount; and they were healed. And then there was a rush, for all the people were inspired with faith, and each one strove to be among the first to wash, lest all the virtue be absorbed (Aquarian Gospel 41:12, 13)

When shopping in a health food store, have you ever noticed how unhealthy looking many of the customers are? There is a reason: selfish greed. Most of them are obsessed with “live foods” and talk about them like vampires discussing their victims. One juicer company waxes lyric about how their juicer alone rips the fibers of the vegetables and fruits in such a way that all the food value is released. Look at the shelves of those stores and you will see such unnatural horrors being sold such as human “mother’s milk” and colostrum seized from mother goats, thereby depriving their offspring of necessary nourishment. I remember when “royal jelly” was all the rage, snatched from the hives whose newly-hatched bees died without it. And the most disgusting of all: fertile eggs. These people believe that anything which will benefit them is theirs no matter what the source. So of course they never attain health because their minds are polluted and starved of human decency.

In the same way there are those who are spiritually and metaphysically greedy. If they hear of a place or person that has a good atmosphere they rush there like vampires and try to suck it all up. They especially like being touched in “healing” practices. They flock to healing services and sessions even when they have no illness at all. They also buzz around famed gurus, staying near to “absorb the vibrations” and be touched as a “blessing.” I will never forget the awful spectacle of a Western “swami” approaching Swami Sivananda in the morning satsangs. She would come forward like the undead in the silent *Nosferatu*, with her hands and fingers extended like claws. Then, like Bela Lugosi in *Dracula*, she would slowly

bend down and attack his feet. I expected to see tubes come out of her fingertips and enter into his feet to draw out the blood. These energy vampires are big on hugging, too.

Sometimes spiritual greed backfires, though. One time such a person went into a Greek Orthodox church to pray, and saw two women bowing at the front of the church with the priest's stole (epitrachelion) laid over their heads and a prayer book laid over that as the priest was chanting a prayer. Determined not to miss out on getting whatever they were getting, she ran up and pushed in between them, right under the book. When the priest finished the prayer, she stood up with the other two. Imagine her confusion when the priest said to her: "Your name is Irene." She asked him what he meant, and he said: "I've just made the three of you nuns. And your monastic name is Irene." What a surprise!

So in these two verses we see a picture of such greed: they began rushing to get into the water first lest the healing power get used up and they not get any. This happens in India every six years at the Kumbha Mela. At the time when the "amrita" is supposedly in the water, they fight and trample one another like wild beasts to get in and absorb the power. Oftentimes people are killed in the rush. This is not dharma, only greed and superstition.

And Jesus saw a little child, weak, faint and helpless, sitting all alone beyond the surging crowd; and there was none to help her to the fount. And Jesus said, My little one, why do you sit and wait? Why not arise and hasten to the fount and wash, and be made well? The child replied, I need not haste; the blessings of my Father in the sky are measured not in tiny cups [see John 3:34]; they never fail; their virtues are the same for evermore. When these whose faith is weak must haste to wash for fear their faith will fail, have all been cured, these waters will be just as powerful for me. Then I can go and stay a long, long time within the blessed waters of the spring. And Jesus said, Behold a master soul! She came to earth to teach to men the power of faith. (Aquarian Gospel 41:14-19)

Here again we have reincarnation expounded, and the understanding that a child may be a sage, wiser far than those with older bodies.

And then he lifted up the child and said, Why wait for anything? The very air we breathe is filled with balm of life. Breathe in this balm of life in faith and be made whole. The child breathed in the balm of life in faith, and she was well. (Aquarian Gospel 41:20-21)

This truth was continually being pointed out by Paramhansa Yogananda, including in his autobiography. We swim in the ocean of divine light and power, the very air about us carrying the blessing and healing power of God. He told about both Teresa Neumann and Giri Bala who lived on light and air, without ever eating or drinking.

The people marveled much at what they heard and saw; they said, This man must surely be the god of health made flesh. And Jesus said, The fount of life is not a little pool; it is as wide as are the spaces of the heavens. The waters of the fount are love; the potency is faith, and he who plunges deep into the living springs, in living faith, may wash away his guilt and be made whole, and freed from sin. (Aquarian Gospel 41:22-24)

After healing a paralyzed man, Jesus told him: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14), indicating that it was negative karma that had brought the sickness upon him. The cure for all illness of body, mind, and soul is not greed or demanding prayer, but entering into the abundance of God's love which inspires the needed faith.

Chapter Forty-Two

In Persia Jesus' work was done and he resumed his journey towards his native land. The Persian sage went with him to the Euphrates; then with a pledge that they would meet again in Egypt land the masters said, Farewell. And Kaspar went his way unto his home beside the Caspian Sea; and Jesus soon was in Chaldea, cradle land of Israel. In Ur, where Abraham was born, he tarried for a time; and when he told the people who he was, and why he came, they came from near and far to speak to him.

He said to them, We all are kin. Two thousand years and more ago, our Father Abraham lived here in Ur, and then he worshipped God the One, and taught the people in these sacred groves. And he was greatly blessed; becoming father of the mighty hosts of Israel. Although so many years have passed since Abraham and Sarah walked these ways, a remnant of their kindred still abides in Ur. And in there hearts the God of Abraham is still adored, and faith and justice are the rocks on which they build.

Behold this land! It is no more the fruitful land that Abraham loved so well; the rains come not as in the former times; the vine is not productive now, and withered are the figs. But this shall not forever be; the time will come when all your deserts will rejoice; when flowers will bloom; when all your vines will bend their heads with luscious fruit; shepherds will again be glad. (Aquarian Gospel 42:1-10)

The Gospel of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27), has many aspects, for it is all-embracing. Five of those facets are to be considered now.

And Jesus preached to them the gospel of goodwill, and peace on earth. He told them of the brotherhood of life, and of the inborn powers of man, and of the kingdom of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 42:11)

Goodwill. When Jesus was born, the angelic hosts sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). Despite the later history of Christianity, the Gospel of Christ emphasized the good will—the love, actually—of God toward men, an unchanging love that works the ultimate salvation of all humanity through the process of rebirth and the spiritual evolution it makes possible. The ideas of divine wrath and eternal damnation are anti-Christian denials of the eternal good will of God for all sentient beings. Equally part of the Gospel is the good will toward all mankind that the true followers of Christ will cultivate, inwardly and outwardly.

Peace on earth. Not "world peace" but "peace in the world" in the hearts of those that seek the inner Christ. No other peace is possible in this age. That is why Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27), for it is an inner peace, a peace of the true person, the

spirit. However, those who bear this peace within them will by their presence in the world increase the level of general peace and make peacemaking easier than it would be without them.

The brotherhood of life. All life is one appearing as many, just as the waves of the sea, even though they are at all times the one field of water. But since we are presently see diversity, we need to know how to react to it in a right manner so our consciousness can be disentangled and enabled to reclaim its awareness of unity. The easiest way is to think of God as Parent, Mother or Father or both, and all sentient beings as part of the divine family, intimately related to us. And we should value and respond to them accordingly. Nevertheless, it is the eternal unity of all that Jesus is pointing us toward, and the lesser idea is to lead to the higher, and from thence to the meta-conceptual realization of unity.

The inborn powers of man. When Madame Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society, it was dedicated to realization of the unity of all humanity and the study and development of the powers innate in all human beings. So she was carrying on the light of the Gospel of Christ far more truly than any of the churches at that time.

It is a necessary part of the Gospel for people to be taught about the abilities innate in their subtle bodies and to be shown the way to develop and exercise them. Yoga is both the knowledge and the way. Yet rare are those who understand these powers and make them accessible to their students. This dishonesty and deficiency is masked by a kind of pious horror about “the siddhis” that supposedly must be avoided, even though Patanjali not only mentions them but tells how they are to be attained. *A Brief Sanskrit Glossary* gives this definition of siddhi: “Spiritual perfection; psychic power; power; modes of success; attainment; accomplishment; achievement; mastery; supernatural power attained through mantra, meditation, or other yogic practices. From the verb root *sidh*, to attain.”

Certainly there are useless siddhis, but the existence of useless knowledge does not exempt us from gaining useful knowledge, and it is the same with the siddhis. Patanjali even lists the siddhis that come from perfection in yama and niyama. (See the glossary for these terms, and also the commentary on Aquarian Gospel 63:4 later in this book.) If they were potentially harmful, how could they arise from the observance of necessary moral principles? Such a view is ignorant, superstitious, and controlling, as is the decrying of astrology and divination. As could be expected, I. K. Taimni presents the intelligent perspective in *The Science of Yoga*.

The kingdom of the soul. All the four factors already considered are oriented toward the external life, but this fifth one is purely internal: the consciousness that is our true being, our spirit. And that spirit lives not in the finite world of external experience, but in the infinite world of divine being, itself able to participate in the infinite consciousness that is God. To become established in this inner kingdom is to attain liberation (Self realization) and be freed forever from all compulsion to rebirth. If such a liberated spirit takes any birth in any world, it is an avatara, a virtual incarnation of divinity. Obviously, then, this is the supreme doctrine of the

Christ Gospel just as it is the supreme state of Spirit.

All five of these elements are necessary to the gospel of Christ, and anything less is not the gospel at all, and is powerless to liberate the spirit into infinite life.

And as he spoke, Ashbina, greatest sage of all Assyria, stood before his face. The people knew the sage, for he had often taught them in their sacred halls and groves, and they rejoiced to see his face.

Ashbina said, My children of Chaldea, hear! Behold, for you are greatly blest today, because a prophet of the living God has come to you. Take heed to what this master says, for he gives forth the words that God has given him.

And Jesus and the sage went through the towns and cities of Chaldea and of the lands between the Tigris and the Euphrates; and Jesus healed a multitude of people who were sick. (Aquarian Gospel 42:12-17)

Chapter Forty-Three

The ruined Babylon was near, and Jesus and the sage [Ashbina] went through her gates and walked among her fallen palaces. They trod the streets where Israel once was held in base captivity. They saw where Judah's sons and daughters hung their harps upon the willows, and refused to sing. They saw where Daniel and the Hebrew children stood as living witnesses of faith.

And Jesus lifted up his hand and said, Behold the grandeur of the works of man! The king of Babylon destroyed the temple of the Lord in old Jerusalem; he burned the holy city, bound in chains my people and my kin, and brought them here as slaves. But retribution comes; for whatsoever men shall do to other men the righteous Judge will do to them. The sun of Babylon has gone down; the songs of pleasure will be heard no more within her walls. And every kind of creeping thing and unclean bird will, in these ruins, find their homes.

And in the temple Belus, Jesus and Ashbina stood in silent thought. Then Jesus spoke and said, Behold this monument of folly and of shame. Man tried to shake the very throne of God, and he assayed to build a tower to reach to heaven, when, lo, his very speech was snatched away, because in lofty words he boasted of his power. And on these heights the heathen Baal stood—the god wrought out by hands of man. Upon yon altar, birds, and beasts, and men, yea children have been burned in awful sacrifice to Baal. But now the gory priests are dead; the very rocks have shuddered and have fallen down; the place is desolate. Now, in the plains of Shinar Jesus tarried yet for seven days, and, with Ashbina, meditated long upon the needs of men, and how the sages could best serve the coming age. (Aquarian Gospel 43:1-16)

Then Jesus went his way, and after many days he crossed the Jordan to his native land. At once he sought his home in Nazareth. His mother's heart was filled with joy; she made a feast for him, inviting all her kindred and her friends.

But Jesus' brothers were not pleased that such attention should be paid to one they deemed a sheer adventurer, and they went not in to the feast. They laughed their brother's claims to scorn; they called him indolent, ambitious, vain; a worthless fortune hunter; searcher of the world for fame, who, after many years returns to mother's home with neither gold, nor any other wealth.

And Jesus called aside his mother and her sister, Miriam, and told them of his journey to the East. He told them of the lessons he had learned, and of the works that he had done. To others he told not the story of his life. (Aquarian Gospel 43:17-22)

We see parallels to Jesus' reception in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke

15:11-32), and in his statement that: “a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin” (Mark 6:4). But to those that truly knew him and understood his mission, his mother having had a major part in preparing him for it, he told of his experiences, of the wisdom he had gained, and of the practical applications he had made of that wisdom.

So it will be with those who accept wisdom: more will be given them along with the understanding of what they learn, so they, too, may apply it and manifest their Christhood.

Chapter Forty-Four

The Greek philosophy was full of pungent truth, and Jesus longed to study with the masters in the schools of Greece. And so he left his home in Nazareth and crossed the Carmel hills, and at the port took ship, and soon was in the Grecian capital.

Now, the Athenians had heard of him as teacher and philosopher, and they were glad to have him come to them that they might hear his words of truth. Among the masters of the Greeks was one, Apollo, who was called, Defender of the Oracle, and recognized in many lands as Grecian sage. Apollo opened up for Jesus all the doors of Grecian lore, and in the Areopagus he heard the wisest masters speak.

But Jesus brought to them a wisdom greater far than theirs; and so he taught.

Once in the Amphitheatre he stood, and when Apollo bade him speak he said, Athenian masters, hear! In ages long ago, men, wise in nature's laws, sought out and found the place on which your city stands. Full well you know that there are parts of earth where its great beating heart throws heavenward etheric waves that meet the ethers from above: where spirit-light and understanding, like the stars of night, shine forth. Of all the parts of earth there is no place more sensitized, more truly spirit-blest, than that where Athens stands. (Aquarian Gospel 44:1-11)

Before considering these words of Jesus, I would like to point out that those who are wise in matters of spirit usually are wise in lesser things, as well. The saints I met in India were every one extremely sensible people, possessing a wealth of practical knowledge. And this we see in Jesus, as well. In the twentieth century, Sri Ramana Maharshi was a marvel of intellectual power, even possessing knowledge of herbology which today is embodied in the many herbal formulas that are made and used by those in the Ramanashram. The range of Paramhansa Yogananda's practical knowledge was immeasurable.

Only in the last century did people in the West begin to realize that there is a kind of energy grid on the face of the earth, but the ancients knew about it very well, and often built spiritual centers where the energy lines intersected. Here we see that the acropolis of Athens is built on one such power spot. The Druids used this knowledge in both Ireland and England. In India for centuries past calculation the location of tapobhumis, places so magnetic that any kind of esoteric practice is greatly amplified, have been known.

Yea, all of Greece is blest. No other land has been the homeland of such mighty men of thought as grace your scrolls of fame. A host of sturdy giants of philosophy, of poetry, of science, and of art, were born upon the soil of

Greece, and rocked to manhood in your cradle of pure thought.

I come not here to speak of science, of philosophy, or art; of these you are the world's best masters now. (Aquarian Gospel 44:12-14)

Wisdom is the greatest heritage any culture can transmit, and Jesus rightly praises Greece.

But all your high accomplishments are but stepping stones to worlds beyond the realm of sense; are but illusive shadows flitting on the walls of time. But I would tell you of a life beyond, within; a real life that cannot pass away. In science and philosophy there is no power strong enough to fit a soul to recognize itself, or to commune with God. (Aquarian Gospel 44:15-17)

Jesus acknowledges and respects all the cultural greatness of Greece, but points out that even the intellectual brilliance of the philosophers is not an end in itself, but is meant to lead to the knowledge that will raise human beings to the transcendent Reality, beside which as he says all things “are but illusive shadows flitting on the walls of time.” In other words, the highest knowledge is that of yoga, by means of which we rise from the limitations of materiality and expand into the vastness of spirit.

One of the traits of a cult is militant anti-intellectuality and a prohibition of reading or studying anything that is not produced by the cult to indoctrinate its members. Sadly, there are quite a few yoga cults in the West which try to reduce their members to ignoramuses (if they are not already so; some yoga and guru cults mostly attract the ignorant and foolish). They fear independent thinking and especially hate creativity, accusing both of being “ego” and “maya.” Mediocrity alone is acceptable. But Jesus is not a cultist and so he continues:

I would not stay the flow of your great streams of thought; but I would turn them to the channels of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 44:18)

Respecting the intelligence of his hearers, Jesus explains his position so they can realize its correctness for themselves.

Unaided by the Spirit-breath, the work of intellection tends to solve the problems of the things we see, and nothing more. (Aquarian Gospel 44:19)

This is not a condemnation of practical intelligence, but a reasonable statement regarding its limitations. No one can reasonably expect that ordinary intelligence can reach to and grasp anything beyond the earth plane, and the same is true of language. It is impossible for normal thought or speech to express what which lies beyond earthly life and therefore beyond the comprehension and even experience of the majority of people. That is why religions that conform to those limitations actually bind their members to limitation and prevent their growing beyond them. But if some do break through into a wider insight or view of things, they find that all they have previously known is basically useless. Confusion and frustration alone can result until they find and apply the teachings of those who have gone beyond

and established themselves in expanded awareness.

Without the body and the senses we could not live and evolve on the earth, “the field of dharma” (Bhagavad Gita 1:1), but:

The senses were ordained to bring into the mind mere pictures of the things that pass away; they do not deal with real things; they do not comprehend eternal law. (Aquarian Gospel 44:20)

The body and its faculties are invaluable, but they, too, have their limitations. We never really see or hear or taste or smell what is going on, but experience only the neurological translations of external objects. The world truly does exist outside us, but our experience of it is purely subjective and internal. That is why we call it maya: illusion. Not that the world is unreal or non-existent, but that our perception of it can be mistaken and therefore unreal. The mind and senses cannot by their very nature perceive or interact with that which is “real” in the sense of being eternal and unchanging. Since we ourselves are actually eternal and unchanging, we cannot know our own Self until we open faculties beyond the mind and senses. Again, that is what yoga is all about.

But man has something in his soul, a something that will tear the veil apart that he may see the world of real things. (Aquarian Gospel 44:21)

This is a most important fact: the impulse to transcendence of mundane experience and existence is inherent in each one of us. Like leaven in dough, in time it will bring about expansion of awareness and the dispelling of past and present illusions, opening our inner eyes to realms of increasing reality as we ascend in consciousness. At first that opening is spontaneous, but after a certain point, the advent of yoga, we take charge and methodically continue our growth under the aegis of our own will.

We call this something, spirit consciousness; it sleeps in every soul, and cannot be awakened till the Holy Breath becomes a welcome guest. This Holy Breath knocks at the door of every soul, but cannot enter in until the will of man throws wide the door. (Aquarian Gospel 44:22, 23)

Here again, this is a matter of evolution. The Holy Spirit pervades all and continually draws each sentient being onward to further evolution, but the real opening of each one of us to/in the life of spirit only takes place when we decide to seek for such opening. Our will must become operative, for it is superior even to our intellect. The moment we decide to pursue higher life, the needful opening begins. However:

There is no power in intellect to turn the key; philosophy and science both have toiled to get a glimpse behind the veil; but they have failed. (Aquarian Gospel 44:24)

We must look elsewhere for the ability to attain our aspiration, and Jesus gives

us the first, absolutely necessary step:

The secret spring that throws ajar the door of soul is touched by nothing else than purity in life, by prayer and holy thought. (Aquarian Gospel 44:25)

We must purify our mind and body in the manner recommended by the yogis as yama and niyama, we must reach out in mind and heart toward God, our Supreme Self, and engage in meditation and prayer. This alone will enable us to open the door to Life Divine. Just being interested in yoga and practicing its mechanics is in no way enough. We must follow this counsel of Jesus. Nearly every yogi I met in the last half-century eventually fell or faded away. Why? Because they did not purify themselves in the manner Patanjali prescribes as the first step in the practice of yoga: through yama and niyama. This was not their fault. Those they trusted to teach them the yogic path gave them no teaching about yama and niyama. Some even told them no disciplines at all were needed. Just do the practice. This is the prime trait of a yoga cult. Some became trapped in a guru cult whose prime trait was just trust in and be devoted to the guru who will do everything for them. They need only trust and obey. The failure of those in both kinds of cults is inevitable.

Let us, then, take seriously the final exhortation of Jesus:

Return, O mystic stream of Grecian thought, and mingle your clear waters with the flood of Spirit-life; and then the spirit consciousness will sleep no more, and man will know, and God will bless. When Jesus had thus said he stepped aside. The Grecian masters were astonished at the wisdom of his words; they answered not. (Aquarian Gospel 44:26-27)

Once we learn the way, then it is all up to us. There is nothing the teacher, even the greatest of Masters, can do. Even God has no part in it. We must set our will and work at the Great Work of uncovering our spirit consciousness.

Let us not be silent like the Grecians, but give a resounding Yes and begin running the race that ends in liberation.

Chapter Forty-Five

Acceptance without understanding?

In the nineteenth century when Sunday School was a new idea, a little girl managed to memorize one hundred Bible verses. When she was given an award by the Sunday School teacher during a church service, the teacher asked her what was the latest verse she had memorized. Dutifully, she rattled it off. “And can you tell us what that verse means?” asked the teacher. The little girl stood silent for a moment, and then in a voice filled with surprise and wonder responded: “Do all them words *mean* something?” The vast majority of people have very little idea what their religion teaches and few read their scriptures with any degree of interest. They just “believe” and that is that. They seldom think at all about their religion, though they may gossip a lot about religious politics and their fellow religionists.

It should be obvious that believing in a religion out of habit or heritage is undesirable, but the Aquarian Gospel gives us an interesting variant:

For many days the Grecian masters listened to the clear incisive words that Jesus spoke, and while they could not fully comprehend the things he said, they were delighted and accepted his philosophy. (Aquarian Gospel 45:1)

One sign of a valueless philosophy or religion is its simplistic nature. For example, the beliefs of the church in which I was brought up could have been written in a paragraph of very modest size. Protestants especially love making little short formulas that “even a child can understand,” and that is what is wrong with them. Real religion is for adults with fully developed minds, and it is vast in scope, requiring real thought and a great deal of exploration to just comprehend its general outline. Such religion is a lifetime study. It was because of this that the Greek students of philosophy could accept the teaching of Jesus, realizing that there was a great deal more to it, and to whose pursuit they should devote themselves.

There is another aspect to this, however. It is not legitimate to accept a philosophy simply because its presentation is appealing and it appears logical, because true religion is beyond intellectualization. It is, though, legitimate to accept a philosophy through genuine spiritual intuition. Some people are able to hear a teacher, read a book, or attend a public gathering and know they are in the presence of truth. Often this is an instant knowing, especially when encountering a truly holy person. I have never figured out that someone was a saint: I always knew at the first sight.

One of the first saints I recognized was a simple little lady who was always silent and made no impression on anyone around her. But even now I can vividly see her walking toward me, smiling as though we were old friends. First I saw the subtle white radiance with which she and her clothes glowed, and then when she got about a dozen feet away I felt the holy fire in her aura. Another time I was in a

museum looking at some boring display. For some reason I looked up and met the gaze of a woman across the room. I almost took a step back, I was so struck by how *conscious* she was. When I came out of the building she was waiting for me and took me aside to where no one could hear. There she spoke to me words so amazing that I did not fully understand them until around fifteen years later. Once I saw a man standing completely still with his back to me as I was walking toward him. I stopped and looked, then went forward a few feet and stopped again, just looking and experiencing. Then I knew he must be the great saint I had been told about. And so he was.

This is why meditation is so crucial to our spiritual life. The intuition we develop through meditation is our only worthy guide as we attempt to find our way through the darkness of this world to the Light Beyond.

One day as Jesus and Apollo walked beside the sea, a Delphic courier came in haste and said, Apollo, master, come; the Oracle would speak to you. Apollo said to Jesus, Sir, if you would see the Delphic Oracle, and hear it speak, you may accompany me. And Jesus did accompany him. The masters went in haste; and when they came to Delphi, great excitement reigned. (Aquarian Gospel 45:2-4)

Notice that Apollo and Jesus are referred to as “the masters.” Both were Masters, not just Jesus, even though it was Jesus that would eventually become the Christ.

And when Apollo stood before the Oracle it spoke and said: Apollo, sage of Greece, the bell strikes twelve; the midnight of the ages now has come. Within the womb of nature ages are conceived; they gestate and are born in glory with the rising sun, and when the agic sun goes down the age disintegrates and dies. The Delphic age has been an age of glory and renown; the gods have spoken to the sons of men through oracles of wood, and gold, and precious stone. The Delphic sun has set; the Oracle will go into decline; the time is near when men will hear its voice no more.

The gods will speak to man by man. The living Oracle now stands within these sacred groves; the Logos from on high has come. From henceforth will decrease my wisdom and my power; from henceforth will increase the wisdom and the power of him, Immanuel. Let all the masters stay; let every creature hear and honor him, Immanuel.

And then the Oracle spoke not again for forty days, and priests and people were amazed. They came from near and far to hear the Living Oracle speak forth the wisdom of the gods. And Jesus and the Grecian sage returned, and in Apollo’s home the Living Oracle spoke forth for forty days. (Aquarian Gospel 45:5-14)

Every two thousand years we enter into a new era or age. Jesus was born at the beginning of the Piscean Age when the influence of the prior, Arian Age, was

ending. During the last century of an age a great deal of upheaval occurs to prepare for the coming age, and the first century of an age accelerates even more with changes that establish the characteristics of that age. We only entered the Aquarian Age fully in the year 2000.

Despite the desperate attempts of so many to prove that Jesus was not a historical figure, the fact is that many of the ancient oracles, the Sybils, prophesied of Jesus, as did the Druidic oracles. The Greek oracles did the same, some even announcing Jesus' birth. After the resurrection of Jesus many of the oracles of the Mediterranean world fell silent, most of them giving a last message in which they spoke of Jesus' bringing in an era where they would not be needed. For example, there was an oracle on the pinnacle of Mount Athos in Greece. When the Virgin Mary came there, the oracle told everyone to go down to the harbor to meet and venerate her. The oracle stated that now there would be no need for it, and that it would not speak again. Some of the early persecutions of Christians arose from anger at the silencing of the oracles, even though the oracles themselves urged the people to embrace the new age's teacher and teaching. That was because the teachings of Christ were of a totally esoteric and mystical character that were a continuation of the ancient wisdom, not a break with it.

One day Apollo said to Jesus as they sat alone, This sacred Delphic Oracle has spoken many a helpful word for Greece. Pray tell me what it is that speaks. Is it an angel, man, or living god?

And Jesus said, It is not angel, man, nor god that speaks. It is the matchless wisdom of the master minds of Greece, united in a master mind. This giant mind has taken to itself the substances of soul, and thinks, and hears, and speaks. It will remain a living soul while master minds feed it with thought, with wisdom and with faith and hope.

But when the master minds of Greece shall perish from the land, this giant master mind will cease to be, and then the Delphic Oracle will speak no more. (Aquarian Gospel 45:15-20)

These verses contain knowledge that all should know, for they explain the real nature of many "gods" and suchlike. Many are aware of the existence of thoughtforms: energy fields that are produced by thought or sound. These fields have a basic, characteristic vibration, and do influence people, but that is all. Jesus is telling us that concentrated thought has the capacity to unite and coalesce into a kind of energy thoughtform robot that, since all energy is fundamentally conscious, can develop a kind of consciousness of its own and assume an independent existence, at least temporarily. This can take place in various ways, some of them intentional and some of them unintentional.

It is literally possible, like the Sorcerer's Apprentice, to create artificial beings that can be directed to perform certain tasks, such as the Golem of Rabbi Lowe which gave rise to the Sorcerer's Apprentice legend. The Golem was animated matter, whereas Jesus is speaking of energy entities that may or may not be visible

to ordinary sight. History has recorded many instances of such beings. Abraham of Cologne supplied King Sigismund of Poland with an army of them that brought him victory. A friend of mine attended a gathering of African princes in Cairo. Some of them told her in confidence that despite all the warring going on in their countries at the time, “you will not find a single widow or orphan.” Then they explained that their shamans had the power to create duplicates of their warriors and that the duplicates were fighting and getting “killed” in battle. Both Dion Fortune and Alexandra David-Neel wrote of their experiences in producing energy entities that got away from their control and became negative.

At many healing shrines throughout history, it has not been the deity or saint who healed, but the mighty thoughtform being created by the faith and intentions of those that came for healing. Many “gods” are this kind of being, which is why they often require sacrifices to replenish the energy expended when they answer prayers.

Paramhansa Yogananda explained that “Satan” is the same kind of being, but of cosmic proportions, drawing its existence and power from negative energies throughout the universe, especially from sentient beings. Hatred, anger, fear, suffering and negative desires and deeds are the main energy sources of Satanic being.

There is also a kind of “God-Thing” existing on positive energies, especially faith and good will. Known as the Mahat Tattwa, this was originally brought into being by Ishwara, the Creator, and is a kind of mirror-reflection of Ishwara that is formed of the fundamental creative energies of the cosmos, a kind of energy clone of divinity. This is what usually answers prayers and even speaks and appears to people, for in essence God is pure Spirit and never “does” anything. The Mahat Tattwa is the intermediary, the instrument for all divine contact. Through the Mahat Tattwa God communicates with sentient beings, for no one can “see” God and live (Exodus 33:20). That is why the Apostle John wrote (John 1:18): “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” through the agency of the Mahat Tattwa which is the reflection in creation of his “face.”

Most authentic oracles and prophets really are channeling the Mahat Tattwa, but since it is a reflection of God, communications with or from it are ultimately from God. It is like a telephone that is not the person you are speaking with, but relays that person’s words.

Chapter Forty-Six

It was a holy day and Jesus walked upon the Athens beach. A storm was on and ships were being tossed about like toys upon the bosom of the sea. The sailors and the fishermen were going down to watery graves; the shores were strewn with bodies of the dead. And Jesus halted not, but with a mighty power he rescued many a helpless one, oft bringing back to life the seeming dead. (Aquarian Gospel 46:1-4)

Jesus was not a useless teacher, pretending to be a mouthpiece of God yet incapable of any tangible good. Nor did he wait to be asked for assistance, but saved numberless people, for that was his nature: to save in all ways.

Now, on these shores were altars sacred to the gods supposed to rule the seas. And men and women, heedless of the cries of drowning men were crowding all about these altars calling on their gods for help. (Aquarian Gospel 46:5, 6)

We become like what we think about, and this is especially true of our thoughts of God. Worshippers become like the worshipped, which is why, for example, that those who only worship God as masculine or feminine become unbalanced in mind, heart and life. Those who worship only one form or concept of God will themselves become partial, narrow and limited. And those that worship non-existent or impotent gods also become non-existent and impotent, practically speaking.

Here we also see the absurdity of asking God to do what we can do ourselves, or at least try to as best we can. I knew a fervent minister who after praying for something would say to those praying with him: "Now let's go put legs on those prayers." They accomplished miraculous things when they went out and did their best to make their prayers fulfilled.

My favorite example, though, is that of a minister who was being aggressively pestered by an "atheist" who kept demanding that if there was a God the minister should ask him to strike him down. "I never ask God to do what I can do," the minister replied. And decked the fool.

At length the storm was done, and all the sea was calm, and men could think again; and Jesus said, You worshippers of wooden gods, how has the fury of this storm been lessened by your frantic prayers? Where is the strength of these poor, weather-beaten gods with painted swords and crowns? A god that could abide in such a little house could hardly hold a frantic fly, and who could hope that he could hold at bay the Lords of winds and waves? (Aquarian Gospel 46:7-10)

Finite gods with likes and dislikes, who can be pleased or displeased, are of little worth. If they even exist, they draw their power from human beings, not from

within themselves. However, much greater than these gods are those mighty beings that supervise the movements of natural forces and phenomena. They are much more real than most gods, and even they are not to be worshipped. They do, however, help humanity, so Jesus continues:

The mighty powers of worlds unseen do not give forth their help till men have done their best; they only help when men can do no more. And you have agonized and prayed around these shrines, and let men sink to death who might have been, by your assistance, saved. (Aquarian Gospel 46:11, 12)

Having ignored their fellow humans, they will be ignored by gods and devas. It is just a matter of karma.

The God that saves dwells in your souls, and manifests by making use of your own feet, and legs, and arms, and hands. (Aquarian Gospel 46:13)

It is the God within that truly saves and delivers, and most of the time it functions through us since we are finite parts of the Infinite God, the Self of our Self, the Soul of our soul. So the way to always be sure of the divine assistance is to so evolve ourselves that divinity spontaneously lives and moves through us.

Strength never comes through idleness; nor through a waiting for another one to bear your loads, or do the work that you are called to do. (Aquarian Gospel 46:14)

Human beings like to create external saviors for themselves, but to no avail. Only the inner deity can really save us. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “Work out your own salvation” (Philippians 2:12), saying that we are “workers together” with God (II Corinthians 6:1). It is not enough to believe in God, we must believe in ourselves as part of God, living and being with Divine Life and Being.

But when you do your best to bear your loads, and do your work, you offer unto God a sacrifice well pleasing in his sight. And then the Holy One breathes deep upon your glowing sacrificial coals, and makes them blaze aloft to fill your souls with light, and strength and helpfulness.

The most efficient prayer that men can offer to a god of any kind is helpfulness to those in need of help; for what you do for other men the Holy One will do for you. And thus God helps. (Aquarian Gospel 46:15-18)

A woman with an huge abdominal tumor came to a renowned healer who told her that he could do nothing for her. Not willing to give up, she stayed at the healing center. After a while she realized that she should not just sit around feeling sorry for herself, but help out wherever she could. So she did just that, working as a volunteer, helping others. To her amazement and joy, she found the tumor shrinking, and in time it was completely gone. The healer could not help her because of her selfish attitude, but when she forced herself out of that, her healing was automatic. So she healed herself through doing good and opening the channels

of healing.

Through the ages people have come to healers and gone away blaming and defaming them because they were not healed, not understanding that it was their own mind that prevented healing. So we must realize that when we want some benefit we must open our minds and think and act in the ways that will make that benefit accessible to us.

His work in Greece was done, and Jesus must go on his way to Egypt in the South. Apollo, with the highest masters of the land and many people from the varied walks of life, stood on the shore to see the Hebrew sage depart; and Jesus said, The son of man has been in many lands; has stood in temples of a multitude of foreign gods; has preached the gospel of good will and peace on earth to many people, tribes and tongues; has been received with favor in a multitude of homes; but Greece is, of them all, the royal host.

The breadth of Grecian thought; the depth of her philosophy; the height of her unselfish aspirations have well fitted her to be the champion of the cause of human liberty and right. The fates of war have subjugated Greece, because she trusted in the strength of flesh, and bone and intellect, forgetful of the spirit-life that binds a nation to its source of power. "But Greece will not forever sit within the darkness of the shadow land as vassal of a foreign king. Lift up your heads, you men of Greece; the time will come when Greece will breathe the ethers of the Holy Breath, and be a mainspring of the spirit power of earth. But God must be your shield, your buckler, and your tower of strength.

And then he said, Farewell. Apollo raised his hand in silent benediction, and the people wept.

Upon the Cretan vessel, Mars, the Hebrew sage sailed from the Grecian port. (Aquarian Gospel 46:19-28)

The prophecy of Jesus about Greece can be applied to each one of us. When we banish forgetfulness of our true, spirit-life and make God our shield, buckler, and tower of strength, the Holy Spirit will live and breathe through us as well.

Chapter Forty-Seven

And Jesus came to Egypt land and all was well. He tarried not upon the coast; he went at once to Zoan, home of Elihu and Salome, who five and twenty years before had taught his mother in their sacred school. And there was joy when met these three. When last the son of Mary saw these sacred groves he was a babe; and now a man grown strong by buffeting of every kind; a teacher who had stirred the multitudes in many lands.

And Jesus told the aged teachers all about his life; about his journeyings in foreign lands; about the meetings with the masters and about his kind receptions by the multitudes. Elihu and Salome heard his story with delight; they lifted up their eyes to heaven and said, Our Father-God, let now thy servants go in peace, for we have seen the glory of the Lord; and we have talked with him, the messenger of love, and of the covenant of peace on earth, good will to men. Through him shall all the nations of the earth be blest; through him, Immanuel.

And Jesus stayed in Zoan many days; and then went forth unto the city of the sun, that men call Heliopolis, and sought admission to the temple of the sacred brotherhood. The council of the brotherhood convened, and Jesus stood before the hierophant; he answered all the questions that were asked with clearness and with power. The hierophant exclaimed, Rabboni of the rabbinate, why come you here? Your wisdom is the wisdom of the gods; why seek for wisdom in the halls of men?

And Jesus said, In every way of earth-life I would walk; in every hall of learning I would sit; the heights that any man has gained, these I would gain; what any man has suffered I would meet, that I may know the griefs, the disappointments and the sore temptations of my brother man; that I may know just how to succor those in need. I pray you, brothers, let me go into your dismal crypts; and I would pass the hardest of your tests.

The master said, Take then the vow of secret brotherhood. And Jesus took the vow of secret brotherhood.

Again the master spoke; he said, The greatest heights are gained by those who reach the greatest depths; and you shall reach the greatest depths.

The guide then led the way and in the fountain Jesus bathed; and when he had been clothed in proper garb he stood again before the hierophant. (Aquarian Gospel 47:1-17)

This is basically historical narrative, so I just gave it in a single quotation, but there are some points that merit our attention.

Jesus is described as “a man grown strong by buffeting of every kind” showing that it is adversity that makes us strong, not from the silly Western idea that suffering “enobles” us, but that struggle makes us stronger. Conflict does bring out

the best in the worthy person. That is why for so many people the hardest times of their lives are considered the best. For example, people who went through the Great Depression invariably remembered it with great nostalgia, describing their hardships with humor and even affection. In the same way I have known men who fought in the Second World War who definitely looked back on those years as the best in their life. It seems strange to us who seek to avoid inconvenience, much less pain, at all cost, but it is nevertheless true.

The universal mission of Jesus is expressed by Elihu and Solome saying that “through him shall all the nations of the earth be blest; through him, Immanuel.” “Emmanuel” means “God with us,” and this is a fitting title for those in whom Divinity has become fully awakened and is operative throughout their being. They truly are gods, conveying to us the presence of God.

The chief of the brotherhood in Heliopolis is not atypical of those who would prevent an aspirant from progressing. His ignorance is revealed in his asking Jesus: “Rabboni of the rabbinate, why come you here? Your wisdom is the wisdom of the gods; why seek for wisdom in the halls of men?” First we get the “What are you doing here in Egypt with us, Jew? Go be with your own kind.” After the insult then the flattery: “You have divine wisdom, why bother with lesser people like us?” Both mean: Go Away.

But Jesus had no ego to react to this foolishness, so he replied: “In every way of earth-life I would walk; in every hall of learning I would sit; the heights that any man has gained, these I would gain; what any man has suffered I would meet, that I may know the griefs, the disappointments and the sore temptations of my brother man; that I may know just how to succor those in need.” Is there any doubt that Jesus saw the entire range of humanity as part of his spiritual commission?

We all want it easy, but Jesus knew that would not produce the results he wanted, so he said: “I pray you, brothers, let me go into your dismal crypts; and I would pass the hardest of your tests.” And he still asks us what he asked the Sons of Thunder: “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” (Matthew 20:22). If we are wise we will answer with them: “We are able.”

The master said, Take then the vow of secret brotherhood. And Jesus took the vow of secret brotherhood. The brotherhood of awakened souls is not secret in the sense that no one knows about it, but rather it is secret because it is totally internal, and none but God and each individual member knows its ways and purposes.

Again the master spoke; he said, The greatest heights are gained by those who reach the greatest depths; and you shall reach the greatest depths. This underlines the fact that great labor is needed to reach great attainments.

The guide then led the way and in the fountain Jesus bathed. Purification is a necessary preparation for spirit endeavor, and perpetual purification is needed for perpetual endeavor.

Chapter Forty-Eight

The master took down from the wall a scroll on which was written down the number and the name of every attribute and character. He said, The circle is the symbol of the perfect man, and seven is the number of the perfect man. (Aquarian Gospel 48:1-2)

There is a sacred mathematics, particularly a sacred geometry. Its origin is unknown, but it certainly existed in Egypt, and Pythagoras was deeply involved in the numerological side of it. Since he spent years in India it is not unlikely that he learnt it there. This is not a subject on which I know much, but I do know that the circle has been the symbol of the spirit-self for thousands of years. The Egyptians used the winged circle or orb as a symbol of the soul flying through eternity from birth to birth. The reason the circle was used for the spirit, and in India is also considered a symbol for Spirit (God), is that fact that the circle does not appear in nature at all. Ellipses occur in many forms, but a perfect circle never does. Therefore the ancients considered it an apt representation for the spirit which is ever outside material, relative existence. “Know that sattwic, rajasic and tamasic states of being proceed from me. But I am not in them—they are in me. All this world is deluded by the three states produced by the gunas. It does not perceive me, who am higher than these and eternal” (Bhagavad Gita 7:12-13).

Seven is the number of perfection in the sense of all-embracing completeness. It is the number of God and of those who have perfected themselves and become gods within God.

The Logos is the perfect word; that which creates; that which destroys, and that which saves. This Hebrew master is the Logos of the Holy One, the Circle of the human race, the Seven of time. And in the record book the scribe wrote down, The Logos-Circle-Seven; and thus was Jesus known. (Aquarian Gospel 48:3-5)

Logos means “word,” but it also means concept or idea, and can even be a discourse on a particular subject. It was common in early Christianity to say: “Give us a word [logos]”, meaning “Give us instruction.” Logos also means the faculty of speech, which the ancient Greeks said was what marked human beings out from other sentient beings. Logos sometimes was used to designate intelligent thought or reason (buddhi). The Greek philosopher Heraclitus first used the term Logos around 600 B.C. to designate the divine reason or plan which brings into existence and guides all creation.

So when Jesus was registered as “The Logos-Circle-Seven” it was a recognition of his fully enlightened and liberated spiritual status. Why then had he entered the brotherhood in Heliopolis? Merely to prove himself, to set the seal on his attainment, and to receive recognition as the/a Christ on earth. We will see this

later.

The master said, The Logos will give heed to what I say: No man can enter into light till he has found himself. Go forth and search till you have found your soul and then return.

The guide led Jesus to a room in which the light was faint and mellow, like the light of early dawn. The chamber walls were marked with mystic signs, with hieroglyphs and sacred texts; and in this chamber Jesus found himself alone where he remained for many days. He read the sacred texts; thought out the meaning of the hieroglyphs and sought the import of the master's charge to find himself.

A revelation came; he got acquainted with his soul; he found himself; then he was not alone." (Aquarian Gospel 48:6-10)

The master said, The Logos will give heed to what I say: No man can enter into light till he has found himself. Go forth and search till you have found your soul. This is the message to each one of us. Until we have found (entered into) our Self, we live in darkness, and searching for the light anywhere but within ourselves is fruitless. To look to God outside us is equally pointless, for God is to be found in the core of our Self.

We "go forth" not to search outside ourselves, but to separate ourselves from all distractions in order to more easily engage in the inner search. It is very necessary to order our outer environment in keeping with the principles of spiritual life. There must be a break with our former mode of life. The character of that mode of life will determine how little or how much there needs to be a change.

The search must not end or slack off, but we must press on until we have "found ourselves" in the highest sense. One of the requisites of successful yoga practice according to the sage Patanjali is swadhyaya, Self study. Just as Jesus studied the walls of the room of the mysteries, we must study the "room" of our higher, spiritual mind. For the knowledge we seek is within us, and even the lesser aspects of our makeup can teach us valuable lessons. When the vision of the Self arises we will leave behind ignorance and the false sense of separation from the Divine. In finding our Self we also find God, the Self of our Self, the Ground of our Being.

It is impossible for us to succeed in spiritual life without being tested in many ways. For that reason we must ever be vigilant lest we stumble and fail. I have seen people utterly fall away from spiritual life just because they were not true to their principles in a very small thing. It was never anything big: just something that before they had taken up conscious spiritual life would not have mattered at all. But having set their feet on the path to higher life, that little thing was their total undoing. Over and over aspirants fall over the smallest of obstacles to never rise again. In themselves the thought or deed is hardly anything, but it carries with it the betrayal of their new-found understanding and determination. In nearly all cases it was something they were bullied into by a family member. Not wanting to "make trouble" or "be a fanatic" they did that little thing demanded of them, and darkness engulfed them and threw them back down into the pit they had escaped from. It

literally was their spiritual destruction. And they never recovered from it. As Saint Peter wrote: "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (II Peter 2:21-22).

Jesus, too, must face many tests. Here is the first.

One night he slept and at the midnight hour, a door that he had not observed, was opened, and a priest in somber garb came in and said, My brother, pardon me for coming in at this unseemly hour; but I have come to save your life. You are the victim of a cruel plot. The priests of Heliopolis are jealous of your fame, and they have said that you shall never leave these gloomy crypts alive. The higher priests do not go forth to teach the world, and you are doomed to temple servitude. Now, if you would be free, you must deceive these priests; must tell them you are here to stay for life; and then, when you have gained all that you wish to gain, I will return, and by a secret way will lead you forth that you may go in peace.

And Jesus said, My brother man, would you come here to teach deceit? Am I within these holy walls to learn the wiles of vile hypocrisy? Nay, man, my Father scorns deceit, and I am here to do his will. Deceive these priests! Not while the sun shall shine. What I have said, that I have said; I will be true to them, to God, and to myself.

And then the tempter left, and Jesus was again alone; but in a little time a white-robed priest appeared and said, Well done! The Logos has prevailed. This is the trial chamber of hypocrisy.

And then he led the way, and Jesus stood before the judgment seat. And all the brothers stood; the hierophant came forth and laid his hand on Jesus' head, and placed within his hands a scroll, on which was written just one word, SINCERITY; and not a word was said.

The guide again appeared, and led the way, and in a spacious room replete with everything a student craves was Jesus bade to rest and wait. (Aquarian Gospel 48:11-23)

This takes place in every aspirant's life, taking whatever form is most in keeping with their particular karma and mentality. Usually it includes ravings about "cults" and "brainwashing," and even "devil worship" and "going crazy." Sometimes it is only hot air and pathetic posturing, and sometimes it involves very vicious and destructive coercion. Those who stand firm, pass the test; those who weaken and give in have no idea what they have done to themselves. "To thine own self be true" is more relevant in spiritual life than in anything else. There must be unwavering sincerity of purpose and heart. The victory is only for the strong, never the weak and yielding.

The meaning of the final verse is that the reward for passing one test is another

test!

Chapter Forty-Nine

It was the habit of Paramhansa Yogananda to begin his talks by calling out to the audience: “How do you feel?” They would respond: “Awake and ready!” And if they did not sound awake and ready he would ask again and again until they replied that they were AWAKE AND READY. He was teaching a great lesson: those who are to succeed in spiritual life must be just that: awake and ready at all times. Jesus demonstrates this in the next two verses:

The Logos did not care to rest; he said, Why wait in this luxurious room? I need not rest; my Father’s work upon me presses hard. I would go on and learn my lessons all. If there are trials, let them come, for every victory over self gives added strength. (Aquarian Gospel 49:1, 2)

I need not rest. There is no time for slacking off in spiritual life. When I was a child we used to sing in church: “I cannot be idle; no time for delay. My resting shall be ‘over there.’” At other times we sang: “I will press the battle on till the victory is won....” I really did not know what I was singing, but later on after finding and studying the teachings of Yogananda I did. About the same time I read the poem “Uphill” by Christina Rossetti which opens:

Does the road wind uphill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day’s journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

There is a great work to be done, the passage from humanity to divinity, and it is an all-consuming endeavor. One of the reasons we need not rest is the fact that it is the spiritual quest alone that brings peace and refreshment to the soul that is weary and ragged from “enjoying” the world. But only the persevering sadhaka understands how he can keep pressing onward while at the same time being still and at rest.

In the Bible we find Jesus’ words: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). In his incarnation as Isaiah, the Master of the Essenes, he had said: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31). This is the blessed secret of the divine quest.

My Father’s work upon me presses hard. A sign of spiritual maturity is a sense of spiritual urgency: the Goal must be found and found as quickly as possible lest

distraction or death once again sweep us away before reaching full realization. Those who mosey along the way have spiritual senses dulled by involvement with the follies of the world. Most of them in time eventually sit down for a rest and never get up again. To them Jesus says: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16). Those who stroll along leisurely are convinced that they are "moderate" and "following the 'middle way,'" when in actuality they are like a scale in balance: at zero. And very likely to stay there. Jesus says he prefers us to be either cold or hot, on the way or out of the way, because definition is necessary in any endeavor. The middle-way types are not really anything at all except smug in their mediocrity. To them Jesus further says: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17).

In the Gita Krishna puts it this way: "Absence of pride, freedom from hypocrisy, harmlessness, fortitude, rectitude, approaching a teacher, purity, constancy and self-control, detachment from the objects of sense, absence of egotism, keeping in mind the evils of birth, death, old age, disease, and pain, non-attachment, absence of clinging to son, wife, home and suchlike; constant even-mindedness in desired and undesired events, unswerving devotion to me with single-minded yoga, living in secluded places, having distaste for association with many people, establishment in the knowledge of the Supreme Self, keeping in mind the goal of knowledge of the truth—this is said to be true knowledge." (Bhagavad Gita 13:7-11). That is the Yoga Life.

I would go on and learn my lessons all. There is no place for minimalism in spiritual life disguised as moderation. The wise know that unless they learn all that is necessary and develop all the requisite virtues through discipline they will not manage at all. As Mirabai, the great poet/musician saint of India wrote: "I have sold everything in the marketplace of this world and bought my Khanaia [Krishna]. Some laugh at me and say the price was too great, and some say that the price was too small. But Mira only knows that it was everything she had." It is a great relief to give all in the search for God. And an absolute necessity, too.

If there are trials, let them come, for every victory over self [ego] gives added strength. This is a basic fact. The life without conflict and struggle is a stagnant life. That does not mean that we have to be miserable and under tension all the time, just that we take all problems that arise as a chance to learn and strengthen ourselves. Our coping with the troubles that arise from outside us have the power to transform us inwardly. Those that come from within can be the hardest to deal with, but they are the most valuable, for we are engaging in a spiritual housecleaning that will bring great and permanent blessings.

There is simply no place for cowardice, laziness, hesitance or passivity in spiritual life. That is why in all religions the greatest number of mystics and Masters come from the countries that were once great empires. Unless a person has

a marked drive toward conquest and mastery there is no real success in anything, not even in winning the internal kingdom of Spirit.

And then the guide led on, and in a chamber, dark as night, was Jesus placed and left alone; and days were spent in this deep solitude. And Jesus slept, and in the dead of night a secret door was opened, and, in priest's attire, two men came in; each carried in his hand a little flickering lamp.

Approaching Jesus, one spoke out and said, Young man, our hearts are grieved because of what you suffer in these fearful dens, and we have come as friends to bring you light, and show the way to liberty. We once, like you, were in these dens confined, and thought that through these weird, uncanny ways we could attain to blessedness and power; but in a luckful moment we were undeceived, and, making use of all our strength, we broke our chains, and then we learned that all this service is corruption in disguise. These priests are criminals just hid away. They boast in sacrificial rites; they offer to their gods, and burn them while alive poor birds, and beasts; yea, children, women, men. And now they keep you here, and, at a certain time, may offer you in sacrifice. We pray you, brother, break your chains; come, go with us; accept of freedom while you may.

And Jesus said, Your little tapers show the light you bring. Pray, who are you? The words of man are worth no more than is the man himself. These temple walls are strong and high; how gained you entrance to this place?

The men replied, Beneath these walls are many hidden ways, and we who have been priests, spent months and years within these dens, know all of them.

Then you are traitors, Jesus said. A traitor is a fiend; he who betrays another man is never man to trust. If one has only reached the plane of treachery, he is a lover of deceit, and will betray a friend to serve his selfish self. Behold, you men, or whatso'er you be, your words fall lightly on my ears, could I prejudge these hundred priests, turn traitor to myself and them, because of what you say when you confess your treachery?

No man can judge for me; and if I judge till testimony all is in I might not judge aright. Nay, men; by whatsoever way you came, return. My soul prefers the darkness of the grave to little flickering lights like these you bring. My conscience rules; what these, my brothers, have to say I'll hear, and when the testimony all is in I will decide. You cannot judge for me, nor I for you. Be gone, you men, be gone, and leave me to this charming light; for while the sun shines not, within my soul there is a light surpassing that of sun or moon.

Then, with an angry threat that they would do him harm, the wily tempters left, and Jesus was again alone. (Aquarian Gospel 49:3-22)

Ajahn Fuang Jotiko, a master in the Thai Forest Tradition, said that people in the world are like those that step in excrement and then spend their time trying to get

everyone else to step in it to cover up their mistake. The worst are those that have fallen away from a spiritual ideal and resent those that have kept faith with those ideals. In their attempt to pull down others to make them “twofold more a child of hell” than themselves (Matthew 23:15), they stop at nothing. Many of them get on the “anti-cult” bandwagon and hold forth at length on websites that warn of the terrible evils to be escaped by abandoning all ideals and becoming like them: embittered failures with not a shred of self-respect left.

I well know the glare of sullen hatred that ex-monks direct at those still faithful to their ideals. Their desperate, grim clutching at their wives (usually not the first in a chain of marriages subsequent to abandoning monastic life), is a familiar sight, also. How anxious they are to get others to share in the shame and degradation they pretend is freedom. “Oh, I used to be like you,” they declare with either angry contempt or smarmy solicitude. “You need to wake up and face yourself before it’s too late.” They are the blind that would lead others into blindness, the Judas goats of the mayic world.

The words of man are worth no more than is the man himself. This is a valuable principle. The teachings of a worthless person are also worthless, because there is no vibration of truth behind them. I have been fortunate in hearing and speaking with holy men and women whose words affected me profoundly for good. There was one saint that I always went to see when I found myself slacking off. She did not even need to say a word to me. When she walked in the room I knew that nothing mattered but finding God, and my laziness evaporated. Toward the end of his life, Swami Sivananda sat through most of the morning and evening satsangs in silence, often with eyes closed, but oh! “did not our heart burn within us” (Luke 24:32) as we sat in his presence?

Some spiritual crooks speak a lot of truth, but their words convey the vibration of crookedness, not truth. On the other hand, the halting words of a simple, pure-hearted soul can lift us beyond the illusions of this world.

No man can judge for me. This is absolutely so. There is no virtue in mindlessly believing any “authority” in spiritual life just because they say something. Certainly we may assume that they know what they are talking about, but everything must be tested against our own experience and insight. We are not as dumb as such manipulators would have us think. As Paramhansa Nityananda said, we are born with a brain, not a book, and not with some institution or teacher attached to us. The wise should be honored and taken seriously, but first we have to find out if they really are wise. In the end it all comes to our understanding. Blind faith is blind folly. The most poisonous are those renouncers and denouncers like the false priests that came to Jesus to lead him away from truth.

Again the white-robed priest appeared, and led the way, and Jesus stood again before the hierophant; and not a word was said, but in his hands the master placed a scroll on which the word suggestive, JUSTICE, was inscribed.

And Jesus was the master of the phantom forms of prejudice and of

treachery. (Aquarian Gospel 49:23-25)

And so must we all be.

Chapter Fifty

The Logos waited seven days, and then was taken to the Hall of Fame, a chamber rich in furnishings, and lighted up with gold and silver lamps. The colors of its ceilings, decorations, furnishings and walls were blue and gold. Its shelves were filled with books of master minds; the paintings and the statues were the works of highest art.

And Jesus was entranced with all this elegance and these manifests of thought. He read the sacred books, and sought the meanings of the symbols and the hieroglyphs. (Aquarian Gospel 50:1-4)

Jesus had said that he had no interest in rest, and he proved that by diligently studying the books of wisdom he found there. At the same time, though, he admired the artistic genius in the other objects. This shows us that a fervent seeker after truth does not develop a narrow-minded intellect which rejects anything that is not “practical” and “useful.” Rather, his mental horizons expand and he comes to appreciate creativity and enjoy its creations. Yet he never loses his priorities, and values spiritual wisdom and progress above all.

And when he was absorbed in deepest thought, a priest approached and said, Behold the glory of this place: my brother, you are highly blest. Few men of earth, so young, have reached such heights of fame.

Now, if you do not waste your life in search for hidden things that men can never comprehend, you may be founder of a school of thought that will insure you endless fame; for your philosophy is deeper far than that of Plato, and your teachings please the common people more than those of Socrates.

Why seek for mystic light within these antiquated dens? Go forth and walk with men, and think with men, and they will honor you. And, after all, these weird initiations may be myths, and your Messiah hopes but base illusions of the hour. I would advise you to renounce uncertain things and choose the course that leads to certain fame. (Aquarian Gospel 50:5-11)

This assault was on many fronts and they should be examined.

First comes the flattery: how special and privileged you are, even though in a few more sentences Jesus will be told that his admittance to the Hall of Fame was useless. How, then, could it be fortunate and a sign of personal worth? This is often the case when someone wants to rob us of something. They compliment us on its possession and then try to make us disregard it and give it up.

Next he is told that he is wasting his life “in search for hidden things that men can never comprehend.” This implies that he is stupid and deluded. Flatterers always despise those they fawn upon and plot the deprivation of what they have gained.

Then back to flattery with the assurance that if he will give up his mystical

orientation and become a “practical philosopher,” Helping people live their lives rather than run away from them, he will become a great leader of others. After all, he is already greater than Plato or Socrates, and his teaching will “please the common people” more than theirs. Of course, anyone with good sense knows that only uncommon people attain anything of lasting value. As the poem says:

To every man there openeth
A Way, and Ways, and a Way,
And the High Soul climbs the High Way,
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A High Way, and a Low.
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go.

The common people drift around in the misty flats.

There is another aspect to this. For some reason Westerners are especially prone to setting themselves up as teachers when they have really learned and experienced very little. I have personally known people who wrote books on things they had only just learned and had never really assimilated or proved themselves in. (Some asked me to help them in writing the books, and some wanted me to write them for them.) This is very true in religion. One man I knew wrote an “authoritative” book on the Eastern Orthodox Church before he even joined it, having only about four to six month’s experience and study of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Those who wasted their time with the early years of *The Mother Earth News* will remember the articles and lengthy letters that gave detailed instructions on “how to” ending with: “I have never really done this myself, but it should work.” One article, with photos, was on how to make your own home sawmill, ending with these very words. The next issue had a letter in it explaining that if you followed those directions you might kill yourself!

The West is filled with half-baked teachers and movements who did not resist the temptation Jesus wisely rejected.

“Go forth and walk with men, and think with men, and they will honor you.” This is such hackneyed bilge. I heard it all my life, once from the lips of a supposed yogi I had invited to speak at a yoga seminar I taught at a university in northern California. It was the appeal of a spiritual sellout in hope that others might become like him.

Finally the tempter wants Jesus to doubt the reality of the mystery teachings, and especially to doubt his ability to become the Christ, the Messiah. Don’t *be* it, just have others *think* you are it, this is the trap fallen into daily by the ego-blinded.

And thus the priest, a demon in disguise, sung siren songs of unbelief; and Jesus meditated long and well on what he said. The conflict was a bitter one, for king Ambition is a sturdy foe to fight. For forty days the higher wrestled with the lower self, and then the fight was won. Faith rose triumphant; unbelief was not. Ambition covered up his face and fled away, and Jesus said,

The wealth, the honor, and the fame of earth are but the baubles of an hour. When this short span of earthly life has all been measured out, man's bursting baubles will be buried with his bones, yea, what a man does for his selfish self will make no markings on the credit side of life. The good that men for other men shall do becomes a ladder strong on which the soul may climb to wealth, and power and fame of God's own kind, that cannot pass away. Give me the poverty of men, the consciousness of duty done in love, the approbation of my God, and I will be content.

And then he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, I thank thee for this hour. I ask not for the glory of myself; I fain would be a keeper of thy temple gates, and serve my brother man.

Again was Jesus called to stand before the hierophant; again no word was said, but in his hands the master placed a scroll on which was written, FAITH.

And Jesus bowed his head in humble thanks; then went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 50:12-24)

There is no need for comment, just emulation.

Chapter Fifty-One

When other certain days had passed, the guide led Jesus to the Hall of Mirth, a hall most richly furnished, and replete with everything a carnal heart could wish. The choicest viands and the most delicious wines were on the boards; and maids, in gay attire, served all with grace and cheerfulness. And men and women, richly clad, were there; and they were wild with joy; they sipped from every cup of mirth.

And Jesus watched the happy throng in silence for a time, and then a man in garb of sage came up and said, Most happy is the man who, like the bee, can gather sweets from every flower. The wise man is the one who seeks for pleasure, and can find it everywhere. At best man's span of life on earth is short, and then he dies and goes, he knows not where. Then let us eat, and drink, and dance, and sing, and get the joys of life, for death comes on apace. It is but foolishness to spend a life for other men. Behold, all die and lie together in the grave, where none can know and none can show forth gratitude.

But Jesus answered not; upon the tinselled guests in all their rounds of mirth he gazed in silent thought. And then among the guests he saw a man whose clothes were coarse; who showed in face and hands the lines of toil and want. The giddy throng found pleasure in abusing him; they jostled him against the wall, and laughed at his discomfiture.

And then a poor, frail woman came, who carried in her face and form the marks of sin and shame; and without mercy she was spit upon, and jeered, and driven from the hall.

And then a little child, with timid ways and hungry mien, came in and asked for just a morsel of their food. But she was driven out uncared for and unloved; and still the merry dance went on.

And when the pleasure seekers urged that Jesus join them in their mirth, he said, How could I seek for pleasure for myself while others are in want? How can you think that while the children cry for bread, while those in haunts of sin call out for sympathy and love that I can fill myself to full with the good things of life? (Aquarian Gospel 51:1-16)

When the Raja of Chandod went to visit Gandhi, the Mahatma challenged him as to what he was doing for the welfare of the people in his kingdom. He replied he was doing nothing and did not care about the suffering of the people. Gandhiji saw into the Raja's nature and saw what even the young man did not realize was there. "That is not so," He told him. "Here is a test: Have a sumptuous meal made for yourself and put in your automobile. Then have yourself driven to one of the villages in your domain at noon time. Go right into the midst of the village and have a table set there with the food, and then you eat it with the hungry people

watching. If you can do that, you really do not care.”

“I will. It will be easy,” said the Raja. So he followed Gandhi’s instructions. “But,” He told me, “when I started to take the first bite I looked at the faces around me and my heart was shattered. I could not eat. I asked the people’s forgiveness and went home and began planning how to alleviate their suffering. Ever since then, that has been my purpose in life.”

I wish I had pictures of my walk around the town of Chandod with him to share with you. How the people loved him! They came around and spoke to him with the love of children for a loving father. He listened to all they had to say and advised them about their problems. When I went to the little bank a few days later, the workers there told me of all the things the Raja had done for them over the years, raising the level of the life of everyone living there. He had even given part of his home to house a free school for village children. He lived in utter simplicity himself, not much different from those he cared for. I saw for myself the ideals of Jesus being lived by him and by others I met in India. No wonder Jesus loved that land.

I tell you, nay; we all are kin, each one a part of the great human heart. I cannot see myself apart from that poor man that you so scorned, and crowded to the wall; nor from the one in female garb who came up from the haunts of vice to ask for sympathy and love, who was by you so ruthlessly pushed back into her den of sin; nor from that little child that you drove from your midst to suffer in the cold, bleak winds of night. (Aquarian Gospel 51:17-20)

Saint Paul said to the Athenian philosophers that God “giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:25-26). It is interesting that creation stories throughout the world insist that humanity is descended from a single set of foreparents. (For new scientific discoveries about this see: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/new-scientific-discovery-supports-bibles-adam-and-eve-story-science-writer-says.html>)

This means that humanity is one family whose external diversity cannot overshadow its fundamental unity. Each person is all of humanity in a sense, and therefore to be valued accordingly. None of us is really separate from another; the same divine life manifests in us all. What we do to others we do to all, and to ourself, as well.

I tell you, men, what you have done to these, my kindred, you have done to me. You have insulted me in your own home; I cannot stay. I will go forth and find that child, that woman and that man, and give them help until my life’s blood all has ebbed away. I call it pleasure when I help the helpless, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, and speak good words of cheer to those unloved, discouraged and depressed. (Aquarian Gospel 51:21-23)

Jesus’ identity with all people is apparent here. He did not speak fancy oratory about the dignity of humanity and its unity, and then go home to the sound of

applause. He acted upon his words and sought out the suffering and helped them.

A lot of people get maudlin about “humanity” but have no interest in a single, non-theoretical person in the flesh. Usually they have contempt for them. When we lived in a large city, our monastery gave assistance to a wonderful, caring 24/7 refuge for the poor and suffering. We gathered things they needed, and once a month went there in the evening and cooked the meal for the five hundred people who came there for food. Some people formed a little group to gather items for the shelter, and took the first batch downtown themselves. Shortly thereafter we got a letter from them saying that they had been so repulsed by what they saw that from then on they would bring everything to the monastery so we could take it to the shelter. Jesus did not have this kind of “I’ll help you, but don’t touch me” kind of compassion. And neither should we.

During our visits to the shelter we met people who had escaped addiction and criminal involvement through the loving people who were there for them at all times. The name of that place? What else but: Jesus House.

And this that you call mirth is but a phantom of the night; but flashes of the fire of passion, painting pictures on the walls of time. (Aquarian Gospel 51:24)

From childhood I have been amazed at how dreary and weary most people’s “good times” and “fun” really are, and how dreary and weary they themselves are, too, no matter how frantically they claim to be happy and enjoying themselves. Beneath the glitter all is drab and hopeless. Few things are more deadly awful than a party.

A friend of mine was visiting in New York City. One evening her host asked her: “Would you like to see the Four Hundred?” (The “Four Hundred” is a term used for those at the very top of New York City society.) Having heard of them all her life, she naturally wanted to get a look. It was Monday night, subscription night at the Metropolitan Opera where many of the Four Hundred would be seated in the Diamond Horseshoe. (The “Diamond Horseshoe” was two rows of boxes where only the wealthiest sat in their diamond-decked glory.) So about half an hour before the end of the opera, a doorman who was a friend of her host let them in, and they stood to one side to watch the Four Hundred as they left through the opera house lobby. My friend told me: “The one thing that struck me most, was how unhappy they all looked. Their eyes were so dull and their faces were masks of despair. All the jewels and fabulously expensive clothes looked like something found in a tomb. The old ones especially looked pathetic. It was an awful sight. But as we were driving through the streets afterward we saw people coming from working the late shift in factories. They were striding along, swinging their lunch boxes, whistling, talking and laughing. Their eyes were bright and smiles were on their faces even though they had just finished eight hours of hard work. The contrast was so great, I can never forget it.”

I think the two dreariest places in this country are bars and dance halls. Looking

into them is like looking into Dante's hell where all have indeed abandoned hope. There simply is no real future in phantoms of the night, flashes of the fire of passion. They really are only painted pictures of a non-existent reality.

Writing of Negendranath Bhaduri, the "levitating saint" in Chapter Seven of his autobiography, Yogananda relays this conversation:

"'Master, you are wonderful!' A student, taking his leave, gazed ardently at the patriarchal sage. 'You have renounced riches and comforts to seek God and teach us wisdom!' It was well-known that Bhaduri Mahasaya had forsaken great family wealth in his early childhood, when single-mindedly he entered the yogic path.

"'You are reversing the case!' The saint's face held a mild rebuke. 'I have left a few paltry rupees, a few petty pleasures, for a cosmic empire of endless bliss. How then have I denied myself anything? I know the joy of sharing the treasure. Is that a sacrifice? The shortsighted worldly folk are verily the real renunciates! They relinquish an unparalleled divine possession for a poor handful of earthly toys!'

"I chuckled over this paradoxical view of renunciation—one which puts the cap of Croesus on any saintly beggar, whilst transforming all proud millionaires into unconscious martyrs.

"'The divine order arranges our future more wisely than any insurance company.' The master's concluding words were the realized creed of his faith. 'The world is full of uneasy believers in an outward security. Their bitter thoughts are like scars on their foreheads. The One who gave us air and milk from our first breath knows how to provide day by day for his devotees.'"

And while the Logos spoke the white-robed priest came in and said to him, The council waits for you.

Then Jesus stood again before the bar; again no word was said; the hierophant placed in his hands a scroll, on which was writ, PHILANTHROPY.

And Jesus was a victor over selfish self. (Aquarian Gospel 51:25-27)

Chapter Fifty-Two

The sacred temple groves were rich in statues, monuments and shrines; here Jesus loved to walk and meditate. And after he had conquered self he talked with nature in these groves for forty days. (Aquarian Gospel 52:1, 2)

The Self is the basis of unity, and the ego is the basis of disunity. As the ego begins to be eliminated, we find the boundaries of our awareness continually expanding to include both sentient and insentient being. When I began attempting yoga sadhana I found myself much more aware of my surroundings. People became much more vivid and comprehensible to me, and so did physical objects, including nature. Actually everything became alive to me. From birth I had intuited the life inherent in all things, but now I perceived it clearly. One afternoon as I was heading homeward off campus, I came across a telephone pole with frost clinging to it. The elements had weathered the wood and momentarily was causing it to take on some amazing colors in very subtle gradations. It was so fragilely beautiful that I stood there quite a while just studying it. It was a real revelation. Day by day doors that had heretofore only been opened slightly opened up fully for me, and many doors unknown before began swinging open. A person who really wants to live, in the sense of being conscious, can do so through yoga; that is my experience.

And then the guide took chains and bound him hand and foot; and then cast him into a den of hungry beasts, of unclean birds, and creeping things. The den was dark as night; the wild beasts howled; the birds in fury screamed; the reptiles hissed.

And Jesus said, Who was it that did bind me thus? Why did I meekly sit to be bound down with chains? I tell you, none has power to bind a human soul. Of what are fetters made? And in his might he rose, and what he thought were chains were only worthless cords that parted at his touch.

And then he laughed and said, The chains that bind men to the carcasses of earth are forged in fancy's shop; are made of air, and welded in illusion's fires. If man will stand erect, and use the power of will, his chains will fall, like worthless rags; for will and faith are stronger than the stoutest chains that men have ever made. (Aquarian Gospel 52:3-9)

I have not mentioned it before, but I think that some of the tests described in these chapters did not take place physically, but in dreams induced by the Masters who could look into Jesus' mind and perceive his reactions to them. There is no way to know, of course, but it explains how some of these things were done as in this test.

And then the guide took chains and bound him hand and foot; and then cast him into a den of hungry beasts, of unclean birds, and creeping things. The den was dark as night; the wild beasts howled; the birds in fury screamed; the reptiles hissed. I cannot think of a more apt

description of ordinary human life. People are helpless and hopeless, surrounded by the beasts of the mind and heart, not to speak of the outer beasts that move around us on two feet. Fear and misery are the only possibilities.

When we begin to awaken to the question, “Who Am I?” then there is a chance of escaping the terrible pit of ignorance. For as we begin to discover the answer we early on come to the understanding that it is we ourselves who have bound ourselves through wrong action and thought, that none else can bind us. That being so, we realize that we can free ourselves, that we already possess the power to do so. Again, this is where yoga appears as the way to freedom. The yogi comes to see how paltry and insubstantial were the things he once both feared and desired, how meaningless that which once shaped his whole way of life. The ghosts being revealed for what they are become less than shadows and the yogi can laugh where he once cried, be fearless where he once feared, and joyful where he once suffered. Like Scrooge, he finds himself changed by the phantoms that have now passed away.

Of course, people get used to imprisonment and come to like it. There really are people who do not want to be released from prison, and I have read the accounts of people who did not want to be discharged from mental institutions. Such is the awful power of habit and false security. As a result, a lot of yogis turn back from the open doors into the “comforting” darkness, and that is that for this life.

Will and faith are the two oars that will propel the yogi’s boat toward the farther shore of liberation. Failure is impossible for him if he keeps plying those oars in steadiness of practice.

And Jesus stood erect among the hungry beasts, and birds, and said, What is this darkness that envelops me? ’Tis but the absence of the light. And what is light? ’Tis but the breath of God vibrating in the rhythm of rapid thought.

And then he said, Let there be light; and with a mighty will he stirred the ethers up, and their vibrations reached the plane of light; and there was light. The darkness of that den of night became the brightness of a newborn day. And then he looked to see the beasts, and birds, and creeping things; lo, they were not.

And Jesus said, Of what are souls afraid? Fear is the chariot in which man rides to death; and when he finds himself within the chamber of the dead, he learns that he has been deceived; his chariot was a myth, and death a fancy child. But some day all man’s lessons will be learned, and from the den of unclean beasts, and birds, and creeping things he will arise to walk in light. (Aquarian Gospel 52:10-17)

This is a perfect picturing of an awakening consciousness, especially one that knows the way of generating light through yoga practice.

And Jesus saw a ladder made of gold, on which he climbed, and at the top the white-robed priest awaited him.

Again he stood before the council bar; again no word was said; again the hierophant reached forth his hand to bless. He placed in Jesus' hand another scroll, and on this one was written, HEROISM.

The Logos had encountered fear and all his phantom host, and in the conflict he achieved the victory. (Aquarian Gospel 52:18-21)

The Self is the ladder of gold upon which we ascend.

Chapter Fifty-Three

“Man must have his mate” is the crassest delusion of a human being. It is also the grossest and most destructive. Sex addicts throughout history have defended and glorified their enslavement. The more metaphysically minded addicts have even invented the doctrine of the “soul mate.”

One of my best friend’s life was devastated by believing a man who told her he was her soul mate. I was in India at the time, and she wrote me a glowing letter telling me how she had at last found her soul mate, just like the Edgar Cayce books said would happen. But the story quickly changed, and when I came back from India I found a very different situation which she had been ashamed to write me about.

She had returned from her first trip to India some months before and had been working hard to get the money to return for a longer stay. With the money she had saved previously as the head of the art department in one of the most prestigious high schools in the Los Angeles area, she could perhaps stay in India for a year or more. But her “soul mate,” after destroying her virginity (and of course not mentioning marriage), had persuaded her to go with him to Las Vegas and there make a large fortune by the pooling of their psychic resources in winning at the casinos. Instead, when they reached there he got her addicted to drugs and alcohol and lost every cent she had at the gambling tables. When the money was all gone, he told her to drive him to the city limits so he could hitchhike to Los Angeles. When he got out of the car his farewell words were: “So long, Nance. It’s been kicks.”

But the tragedy was not over. She had to get a job just to have the gas money to leave Las Vegas, so she got work in a restaurant serving meat and alcohol. Then she discovered that she was pregnant. In fear and confusion she had an abortion, the aftermath of which almost destroyed her mentally and spiritually. Eventually she shook the drug addiction, but it was nine years before she was healed of the self-loathing and guilt resulting from the abortion. Even to this day the scars remain, and the mention of her “soul mate’s” name can throw her back into the misery of those days, although over fifty years have passed. Even before my friend’s disaster I had known highly spiritual women whose inner and outer lives were permanently wrecked by marriage.

Sex being such a terrible force in the life of a human being, it was necessary for Jesus to conquer it. His struggle was especially great because it came in the soul mate form without even a touch of carnal lust, only “romance.” For sex is not just physical, in fact it is largely psychological, rising from a profound sense of separation and lack on the part of the soul that is not in conscious union with God, its only real soul mate. When the individual is ready to make the great transition from samsara to moksha, this is the last bond that must be ruthlessly shattered.

Otherwise the goal will not be attained, and the seeker will fall back into the waves of the ocean and drown in defeat. Buddha said that the hardest foe he had to overcome was sex, and that if there had been a second obstacle as powerful as sex he would not have been able to attain enlightenment.

In all the land there is no place more grandly furnished than the Beauty Parlors of the temple of the sun. Few students ever entered these rich rooms; the priests regarded them with awe, and called them Halls of Mysteries. When Jesus had attained the victory over fear, he gained the right to enter here. The guide led on the way, and after passing many richly furnished rooms they reached the Hall of Harmony; and here was Jesus left alone.

Among the instruments of music was a harpsichord, and Jesus sat in thoughtful mood inspecting it, when, quietly, a maiden of entrancing beauty came into the hall. She did not seem to notice Jesus as he sat and mused, so busy with his thoughts. She found her place beside the harpsichord; she touched the chords most gently, and she sung the songs of Israel. And Jesus was entranced; such beauty he had never seen; such music he had never heard. The maiden sung her songs; she did not seem to know that anyone was near; she went her way.

And Jesus, talking with himself, said out, What is the meaning of this incident? I did not know that such entrancing beauty and such queen-like loveliness were ever found among the sons of men. I did not know that voice of angel ever graced a human form, or that seraphic music ever came from human lips. For days he sat entranced; the current of his thoughts was changed; he thought of nothing but the singer and her songs. (Aquarian Gospel 53:1-12)

It was not the fault of the young girl that “for days he sat entranced; the current of his thoughts was changed; he thought of nothing but the singer and her songs.” The problem is in Jesus’ mind. But his reaction to her (notice I do not say “her effect on him,” for she has nothing to do with it) is very wrong, and very perilous. If something can wipe out our good sense, the weakness is in us, not the object.

When Sri Ramakrishna warned men about Woman and Gold (just as he warned women about Man and Gold) he was not speaking of female human beings and the element gold. He was speaking of the delusion in the mind of the human male in relation to women. “Woman” is the fantasy, the addiction which draws the man to self-forgetfulness. And the same is true of “Man” in the mind of women. This is why it is so common for people to ask: “Where is the woman/man I married?” They married the fantasy, not the actual person, and when faced with the person they become disillusioned. Too late.

When the mental weakness or flaw is corrected, then neither Woman nor Man interest the man or woman, and they will see any connection with them as absurd. That is the truth. Before we can evolve beyond male and female, we must eliminate those distinctions from our mind. Then it is just as Jesus said: “The children of this

world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Luke 20:34-35). This is the teaching of Jesus, and no one can be a disciple or devotee of Jesus and not follow it.

He longed to see her once again; and after certain days she came; she spoke and laid her hand upon his head. Her touch thrilled all his soul, and for the time, forgotten was the work that he was sent to do. Few were the words the maiden said; she went her way; but then the heart of Jesus had been touched.

A love-flame had been kindled in his soul, and he was brought to face the sorest trial of his life. He could not sleep nor eat. Thoughts of the maiden came; they would not go. His carnal nature called aloud for her companionship. (Aquarian Gospel 53:13-17)

There is a great lesson here. At first sight Jesus’ attraction was to the girl’s evident culture, dignity, and beauty of mind and heart as well as face. His first captivation was very romantic and idealistic. There was nothing of lust or selfishness in it. It would seem to have even been noble. But in this second encounter the girl touched him—something that no well-bred and modest girl would ever have done at that time. So we see that the first starry-eyed encounter was but a prelude to the trap. Doing something irregular by touching him, the girl was no doubt unaware of any negative result. (I have know many spiritual women who had no idea of the very unspiritual mental reaction of men to them, including the “spiritual” men who wanted a “spiritual” relationship with them. Odd, where those men thought the women’s spirit was located.)

But the result occurred, anyway: “Her touch thrilled all his soul, and for the time, forgotten was the work that he was sent to do.... but then the heart of Jesus had been touched. A love-flame had been kindled in his soul, and he was brought to face the sorest trial of his life. He could not sleep nor eat. Thoughts of the maiden came; they would not go. His carnal nature called aloud for her companionship.” There we have it: from romance to lust in one easy step.

A great lesson is here: love often masks lust. Whether the love is real or a pretense of the mind matters little, for lust will be the result. That is why Yogananda told one of his disciples: “From eight to eighty they are dangerous,” not because of intrinsic evil, but because of a man’s inner predisposition from thousand of previous lives, human, animal and even insect. The habit of sex is the oldest conditioning found in the subconscious mind of a human being, and the romantic, “spiritual” form is the most dangerous because it appears so pure and noble to the unwary.

Just think: Jesus had come on earth to be a deliverer of humanity, to be a savior in the truest sense, and he forgot that holy destiny in a moment, overcome with selfish lust, the oldest and dirtiest trick of the mind to which humans are susceptible. If this was true of Jesus, what about us amateurs? We are being warned

by his example. If Jesus could not fulfill his destiny without rejecting this kind of “love,” neither can we.

And then he said, Lo, I have conquered every foe that I have met, and shall I now be conquered by this carnal love?

My Father sent me here to show the power of love divine, that love that reaches every living thing. Shall this pure, universal love be all absorbed by carnal love?

Shall I forget all creatures else, and lose my life in this fair maiden, though she is the highest type of beauty, purity and love?

Into its very depths his soul was stirred, and long he wrestled with this angel-idol of his heart. But when the day was almost lost, his higher ego rose in might; he found himself again, and then he said, Although my heart shall break I will not fail in this my hardest task; I will be victor over carnal love. (Aquarian Gospel 53:18-23)

See that Jesus regards the girl as “the highest type of beauty, purity and love.” He does not condemn or blame her. I well remember a novice monk once telling me: “I have never met a decent, moral woman in my life.” That told me that he was an indecent and immoral man in his heart, and no doubt would be so in body sometime in the future. The truly pure rightly see the fault only in themselves. Nevertheless, Jesus knew that he could not have both human finite love and infinite love divine. The struggle was terrible and agonizing to him, but for love of God and humanity he knew it was necessary that he win it and vanquish that of earth and ego.

And when again the maiden came, and offered him her hand and heart, he said, Fair one, your very presence thrills me with delight; your voice is benediction to my soul; my human self would fly with you, and be contented in your love; but all the world is craving for a love that I have come to manifest. I must, then, bid you go; but we will meet again; our ways on earth will not be cast apart. I see you in the hurrying throngs of earth as minister of love; I hear your voice in song, that wins the hearts of men to better things. And then in sorrow and in tears the maiden went away, and Jesus was again alone. (Aquarian Gospel 53:24-29)

When beginning the struggle of extricating himself from the world, an aspiring yogi more than once asked me: “But should you ever do anything that would hurt anyone?” He had his girlfriend in mind, of course. His compassion was not really for her but for his sexual desire for her. He persevered and in time realized his folly. And it was not long before he got an invitation to her wedding. His ego was mightily offended that she had not at least waited a few months in “hurt” and grief. Later he laughed about it, seeing the flimsiness of deluded “love.” Yet his battle had been very real at the time, even if the opponent was only a phantom.

All personal relationships are dangerous because of ego. Egoless love is

impossible for those without a high degree of spiritual evolution. And for them such relationships are very difficult to manage without a spiritual fall. That does not mean we should refuse close relationships, but that we must be wary of them. Greater than familial love is the soul-love between two pure souls, but for that very reason perilous just like anything else in this world. Attachment is always attachment: a bond resulting in bondage.

For the ultimate aim is to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37). If that is being done, where is there room for loving someone else in the same way? Jesus says: “This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:38). Then he continues: “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39). So we are to love others. The word translated “neighbor” is *plesion*, which is derived from *pelas* which means “near.” So Jesus is saying that anyone near us, anyone who comes into our life, not just family and friends, is to be loved as we love ourself. But we are not to love anyone as we are to love God. Our love for everyone else should be a secondary type of love.

“Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matthew 13:9). Others cannot and will not.

And instantly the great bells of the temple rang; the singers sung a new, new song; the grotto blazed with light. The hierophant himself appeared, and said, All hail! triumphant Logos, hail! The conqueror of carnal love stands on the heights. And then he placed in Jesus’ hands a scroll on which was written, LOVE DIVINE.

Together they passed through the grotto of the beautiful, and in the banquet hall a feast was served, and Jesus was the honored guest. (Aquarian Gospel 53:30-33)

As Saint Methodius of Olympus wrote in a hymn: “Chastely I live for Thee; and holding my lighted lamps, my Lord, I go forth to meet Thee.” Divine love is possible only when selfish, human love is transcended.

Chapter Fifty-Four

The senior course of study now was opened up and Jesus entered and became a pupil of the hierophant. He learned the secrets of the mystic lore of Egypt land; the mysteries of life and death and of the worlds beyond the circle of the sun.

When he had finished all the studies of the senior course, he went into the Chamber of the Dead, that he might learn the ancient methods of preserving from decay the bodies of the dead; and here he wrought. (Aquarian Gospel 54:1-3)

This seems very peculiar to us, but actually there was an entire esoteric side to the preparation for burial, namely the need for awareness of the present disembodied state of the departed and how to alleviate any confusion or suffering they might be undergoing. Part of this was the ability to see whether a person was truly dead, lest the embalming process kill someone who was only in deep suspension of the life functions. (This has often happened. A friend of mine knew a mortician who inserted the needles into a little boy and started the embalming fluid flowing into his veins. Instantly the child became conscious and began crying for his mother. In moments he was dead from the embalming fluid. The mortician's life and mind were permanently devastated.) The ability to look into the subtle worlds and discover where the departed had gone upon leaving the earth plane was also necessary. So Jesus was learning a kind of science of death. At the same time he was teaching those around him about the life that transcends death, as we shall now see.

And carriers brought the body of a widow's only son to be embalmed; the weeping mother followed close; her grief was great.

And Jesus said, Good woman, dry your tears; you follow but an empty house; your son is in it not. You weep because your son is dead. Death is a cruel word; your son can never die. He had a task assigned to do in garb of flesh; he came; he did his work, and then he laid the flesh aside; he did not need it more. Beyond your human sight he has another work to do, and he will do it well, and then pass on to other tasks, and, by and by, he will attain the crown of perfect life. And what your son has done, and what he yet must do, we all must do.

Now, if you harbor grief, and give your sorrows vent they will grow greater every day. They will absorb your very life until at last you will be naught but grief, wet down with bitter tears. Instead of helping him, you grieve your son by your deep grief. He seeks your solace now as he has ever done; is glad when you are glad; is saddened when you grieve.

Go bury deep your woes, and smile at grief, and lose yourself in helping

others dry their tears. With duty done comes happiness and joy; and gladness cheers the hearts of those who have passed on.

The weeping woman turned, and went her way to find a happiness in helpfulness; to bury deep her sorrows in a ministry of joy. (Aquarian Gospel 54:4-14)

First let me say something about the grief felt at the death of someone. It springs from the loss of their presence. Belief or disbelief in immortality has nothing to do with it. We have suffered a great loss, one that is even more shocking if it is someone we have known from birth, for it shatters our whole orientation in this present life. Again, the fact of the view being mistaken does not alleviate the sorrow one bit. When the departed was a loving and worthy person the pain will be even more intense. Consider the terrible loss of a holy person. Compared to that, all else is minimal. The loss of saints I have known is a great one indeed. No, I do not grieve, but I certainly long for their presence. It is especially intense in regard to Swami Sivananda, for he was infinite goodness personified, incarnate mercy and love. How I yearn for even a few moments again with him. The sadness we feel at the death of someone is a tribute to them. "Comforting words" are silly. But words of wisdom are healing, and Jesus has provided them in this passage.

An empty house. No matter that someone believes in the immortality of the soul, if they identify with their own body they will accordingly identify the body of another with that person. There is no escaping it. So when the body dies, that person is dead to them. Witness the eerie way that we treat the dead body in this culture. We embalm it, put makeup on it, dress it up in the best clothes, put it in an expensive satin-lined box, often with a mattress in it, grieve over it, and then put it in the ground to decay and dissolve, yet continue to "visit" it and put flowers on the earth above it, and sometimes talk to it. We completely ignore the real, immortal person, especially if we do not believe in prayers for the departed.

Regarding prayers for the departed. By means of prayers for the departed, a subtle bond of communication is established between them and those who remain on earth. I have usually seen the departed during rituals I performed on their behalf. As the ritual progressed I often saw them in their new astral home and perceived the effect of the energies being directed to them. Frequently their loved ones also either see or feel them near during the ceremonies. I have seen long-standing grief eradicated completely in this way. A Protestant friend of mine asked some Catholic nuns to pray for her deceased father a few years after his death. That night she saw him vividly in a dream, something that had not happened before. "Dad," she exclaimed, "you are alive!" "Well it's about time you acted like it!" He rejoined, indicating thereby that praying for the dead is acting out the fact of immortality.

The point Jesus is making is that the body is never us, it is just a place of temporary abode, and should be regarded accordingly, valuable though it is during our time of sojourn here. Just as we do not keep speaking into a telephone once the person on the other end has hung up, so it is pointless to keep relating to body as though the former tenant is still there. Burying a person where they will "have a

good view” is absolutely grotesque.

He had a task assigned to do in garb of flesh; he came; he did his work, and then he laid the flesh aside; he did not need it more. It is important to know that birth and death are not happenstances, but that the person came into birth by their choice, and left by an act of will, even if the choice was not conscious. Their soul did make the choice. God did not, and should not be blamed for it. They had a purpose in being born, and when they had fulfilled it they left, no longer needing to be here. Fate or whimsy had nothing to do with it. All happened exactly as it should, even though it seems otherwise to our earth-dimmed eyes. No one is “cut-off,” but walks out of the body as pre-arranged. No one leaves too early or too late. It is all as it should be. But until we develop our intuition and acquire a spiritual perspective this will be beyond our comprehension.

Beyond your human sight he has another work to do, and he will do it well, and then pass on to other tasks,.... More lives lie ahead for the departed, in this world and in higher worlds. There, too, others may grieve at his departures if they do not understand rightly. The departed will move on from life to life, “and, by and by, he will attain the crown of perfect life.” Part of our problem is the delusion that other people “belong” to us, that we somehow possess them and can “lose” them. This is purely ego-based and is not at all true. We belong to God alone, and the sooner we perfect our awareness of that relationship the better, for God never “comes” or “goes” but is always with and within us.

And what your son has done, and what he yet must do, we all must do. It is our work through birth and death that we must concentrate on, otherwise we only delay our progress and do not help the departed at all.

Now, if you harbor grief, and give your sorrows vent they will grow greater every day. They will absorb your very life until at last you will be naught but grief, wet down with bitter tears. Grief is as corrosive as hatred, for it is also mixed with self-pity and often with anger and resentment. It can destroy us utterly and ruin our own purpose in this life. In my small hometown there was a doctor’s wife who, when he died, shut herself up in her house and never came outside. She hired people to do shopping for her. In all my years living there I never saw her, and no one I knew had seen her after the doctor’s death. She had buried herself alive. Many do this in one form or other. One of my cousins was a dear, simple soul that everyone loved. I will never forget his guileless goodness. When he died in his teens of a rare and sudden disease, his grandmother was literally overcome. Until her death many years later, she visited his grave every single day to weep and talk with him. Her sorrow became the major factor in her life. It was a tragic choice.

Instead of helping him, you grieve your son by your deep grief. He seeks your solace now as he has ever done; is glad when you are glad; is saddened when you grieve. This is because the departed are often aware of us and see our misery, which then makes them miserable. Sometimes our grief and their anguished reaction prevents them from moving on to the next world and they become earthbound. It is not impossible that at our death we will move on and leave them behind, a ghost of grief.

Go bury deep your woes, and smile at grief, and lose yourself in helping others dry their tears. With duty done comes happiness and joy; and gladness cheers the hearts of those who have passed on. Jesus gave similar advice to his mother in the twenty-ninth chapter, and later will give much the same to cure a man of alcohol addiction. One of the most valuable aspects of the Aquarian Gospel is this principle of the therapeutic effect of helping others. By this we see that when we are told to love our neighbor as ourself, we are being given the best self-help advice. This will help the departed, for when they see our pain lessened it will allow them to pass on without regret.

Then other carriers came and brought the body of a mother to the Chamber of the Dead; and just one mourner followed; she a girl of tender years.

And as the cortege neared the door, the child observed a wounded bird in sore distress, a cruel hunter's dart had pierced its breast. And she left following the dead, and went to help the living bird. With tenderness and love she folded to her breast the wounded bird, then hurried to her place.

And Jesus said to her, Why did you leave your dead to save a wounded bird?

The maiden said, This lifeless body needs no help from me; but I can help while yet life is; my mother taught me this. My mother taught that grief and selfish love, and hopes and fears are but reflexes from the lower self; that what we sense are but small waves upon the rolling billows of a life. These all will pass away; they are unreal. Tears flow from hearts of flesh; the spirit never weeps; and I am longing for the day when I will walk in light, where tears are wiped away. My mother taught that all emotions are the sprays that rise from human loves, and hopes, and fears; that perfect bliss cannot be ours till we have conquered these. (Aquarian Gospel 54:15-25)

This lifeless body needs no help from me; but I can help while yet life is. There is real wisdom in the question the angels asked those who came to the tomb of Jesus on Easter Sunday: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke 24:5). We cannot possibly increase our life by obsessing on death and the departed. There are too many living people that we can benefit—and benefit ourselves at the same time.

Grief and selfish love, and hopes and fears are but reflexes from the lower self. This is straight fact, and we need to bite the proverbial bullet and acknowledge that all these emotions are squarely egocentric. After all, when someone dies we grieve for *our* loss, and how *we* feel about their departure. No matter how wonderful the departed were and how we loved them and they loved us, we must not allow ourselves to sink into the morass of self-pity. We must shake ourselves out of it and keep on living just as they are, though in another world. Again, the problem is the wrong desire to possess and hold on as though someone can be our property.

I knew a man who had a metaphysical church. For years he gave talks about reincarnation. Then his best friend died, and he kept calling me and asking me if I was sure that reincarnation was true, and that his friend was not "waiting for him

over there” instead of perhaps going on to be reborn. It was childish selfishness on his part, and I am glad to say that after a while he came out of it saw it for what it was.

What we sense are but small waves upon the rolling billows of a life. How many lives have we lived! This present life is just a little wave on the ocean of reincarnation. The people we obsess on and grieve for may never have known us in a previous life and may never be with us in a future life. So how silly to ruin our minds and hearts with selfish attachments and self-pity. We must choose life over death.

These all will pass away; they are unreal. Yes, and that includes our personal relationships in all lives. Death ends them most of the time.

Tears flow from hearts of flesh; the spirit never weeps; and I am longing for the day when I will walk in light, where tears are wiped away. Now we have the key: we must live in the spirit where death is no longer even a dream, but a gateway to increasing life. This should be our desire.

All emotions are the sprays that rise from human loves, and hopes, and fears; that perfect bliss cannot be ours till we have conquered these. This is truth absolute.

And in the presence of that child did Jesus bow his head in reverence. He said, For days and months and years I’ve sought to learn this highest truth that man can learn on earth, and here a child, fresh brought to earth, has told it all in one short breath. No wonder David said, O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength.

And then he laid his hand upon the maiden’s head, and said, I’m sure the blessings of my Father-God will rest upon you, child, for evermore. (Aquarian Gospel 54:26-30)

Chapter Fifty-Five

The work of Jesus in the Chamber of the Dead was done, and in the temple purple room he stood before the hierophant, and he was clothed in purple robes; and all the brothers stood. The hierophant arose and said,

This is a royal day for all the hosts of Israel. In honor of their chosen son we celebrate the great Passover Feast.

And then he said to Jesus, Brother, man, most excellent of men, in all the temple tests you have won out. Six times before the bar of right you have been judged; six times you have received the highest honors man can give; and now you stand prepared to take the last degree. Upon your brow I place this diadem, and in the Great Lodge of the heavens and earth you are The CHRIST.

This is your Passover rite. You are a neophyte no more; but now a master mind. Now, man can do no more; but God himself will speak, and will confirm your title and degree. Go on your way, for you must preach the gospel of good will to men and peace on earth; must open up the prison doors and set the captives free.

And while the hierophant yet spoke the temple bells rang out; a pure white dove descended from above and sat on Jesus' head.

And then a voice that shook the very temple said, THIS IS The CHRIST; and every living creature said, AMEN.

The great doors of the temple swung ajar; the Logos journeyed on his way a conqueror. (Aquarian Gospel 55:1-12)

Now in these last chapters we have seen the way that we all must go, and the tests (though not necessarily in such a dramatic form) we must pass. For Christhood is the destiny of all, the core of Jesus' teachings.

May the great Masters of Wisdom bless our path to that supreme goal.

The Assembly of the Masters

In every age since time began have seven sages lived. At first of every age these sages meet to note the course of nations, peoples, tribes and tongues; to note how far toward justice, love and righteousness the race has gone; to formulate the code of laws, religious postulates and plans of rule best suited to the coming age. (Aquarian Gospel 56:1-4)

We are now going to be told about the assembly of great Masters that was held at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

An age had passed, and lo, another age had come; the sages must convene. Now, Alexandria was the center of the world's best thought, and here in Philo's home the sages met. From China came Meng-ste; from India Vidyapati came; from Persia Kaspar came; and from Assyria Ashbina came; from Greece Apollo; Matheno was the Egyptian sage, and Philo was the chief of Hebrew thought. The time was due; the council met and sat in silence seven days. (Aquarian Gospel 56:5-8)

The great Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria hosted the gathering of representatives of the major religious currents of the time. (Philo's works have survived and been translated into English.) One of the ways we know the seven were Masters of Wisdom is the fact that they sat together in meditation for seven days before beginning their conference, for meditation is the basis of all spiritual insight and knowledge.

Now the sages shall each speak in turn and give their diagnosis of the spiritual situation of their lands.

And then Meng-ste arose and said, The wheel of time has turned once more; the race is on a higher plane of thought. The garments that our fathers wove have given out; the cherubim have woven a celestial cloth; have placed it in our hands and we must make for men new garbs. The sons of men are looking up for greater light. No longer do they care for gods hewn out of wood, or made of clay. They seek a God not made with hands. They see the beams of coming day, and yet they comprehend them not. The time is ripe, and we must fashion well these garments for the race. And let us make for men new garbs of justice, mercy, righteousness and love, that they may hide their nakedness when shines the light of coming day. (Aquarian Gospel 56:9-14)

The race is on a higher plane of thought. The human race is not an ant colony, but has endless diversity, and that includes levels of consciousness. Although in this part of the Aquarian Gospel there is talk about "the race" or "humanity" we must realize that they have not lost sight of the ever-present scale of human potential. When a

new age dawns and proceeds, not everyone is living on that new, higher level. Certainly the majority are able to express that potential, but not all of them do. We all know people who live beneath themselves. Jesus prayed, saying: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (John 17:9). In the same way the Masters take into consideration only those who are going to rise to the new potential.

The cherubim have woven a celestial cloth; have placed it in our hands and we must make for men new garbs. The understanding of the new age does not come from the Masters themselves, however great they may be. Rather, the highest beings in relative existence, the Cherubim, have communicated to them the full picture of humanity's present situation. It is, though, for the Masters to formulate the way in which the potential is to be actualized and to determine the ways in which people are to be taught to ascend to the new level of consciousness. Yogananda wrote about this in the thirty-third chapter of his autobiography.

The sons of men are looking up for greater light. No longer do they care for gods hewn out of wood, or made of clay. They seek a God not made with hands. Even more, they seek a God not made by the limited intellects of human beings, a God that is nothing more than a projection of themselves without limitations, a God that possesses human motives, human reactions and even human passions, one that can be influenced by human behavior just as another human would be. If we analyze carefully we will see that the God of most religion is just a cosmically powerful human being. It is natural for children to view God in this limited way, but adults certainly should not.

Frankly, Western religion is utterly erroneous and even childish in its concepts of God and its attempts to relate to God. The religion of the West has done more than any other force to darken and distort the minds and hearts of human beings, often creating monsters rather than men and women, and in many instances calling raving psychotics "prophets" and "saints." This appeals to many people, though it appalls those for whose benefit the Masters had assembled. Those of the new age seek a truly transcendent Deity, one whose contact will establish them in their own eternal transcendental reality.

They see the beams of coming day, and yet they comprehend them not. All "new age" citizens intuit that there is something more to be known, and this causes in them a divine discontent, a healthy restlessness, that impels them to seek for "something" outside/beyond their present sphere of consciousness. This causes them to keep alert and ready for the fulfilling of their inner urge. The fulfillment comes in many forms and situations, but come it certainly does to those who "watch and wait."

A friend of mine, whom everyone called "Momsey," was a disciple of Yogananda. Knowing she had been born a Texas Pentecostal who married a Pentecostal preacher, I wondered how she had become a yogi. So one day I asked her how it had come about. And she began: "Well, one day I was washin' off the refrigerator in the kitchen and all of a sudden just from nowhere I began to sing this song...." And to my surprise and delight she proceeded to sing a very lengthy song in standard Protestant hymn style that had just come out of her mouth spontaneously those

years ago. I no longer remember the words, but the theme of the song was the soul's aspiration to draw near to God, and even more, to become transformed into the divine likeness. Therefore, each verse of the song ended with the same refrain: "O might it be that I could be like Thee?"

She continued: "I just knew that something was going to happen, and sure enough that night we all went to a talk by Master, and it wasn't long until we moved to Mount Washington and lived there." (Mount Washington in Pasadena was the site of Yogananda's ashram-residence.)

The fruits of Momsey's encounter and subsequent living with her guru were very evident to all that knew her. Hers was the sanctity of quietness, the steady light that shines in the darkness needing no announcement or fanfare. Having been lighted by the Master, Momsey just shone.

Let us make for men new garbs of justice, mercy, righteousness and love, that they may hide their nakedness when shines the light of coming day. In previous ages, religion had been a matter of behavior, and for the unevolved would continue to be so, but now a religion of the spirit was to be brought forth that could embrace the spiritual traditions of the world. As we read the Aquarian Gospel we see that Jesus united all the viable spiritual traditions of the known world. He did not create a new tradition, but brought a renewal of the authentic religions that had become obscured by the passing of ages. Instead of external involvement, Jesus opened the door for conscious life in spirit, a life in which justice, mercy, righteousness, and love would be inner realities and not just outer actions. Previously it was thought that if a person did good he would be good, but now it was going to be possible for a person to become good and then be able to really do good. It was going to be a complete revolution in consciousness.

And Vidyapati said, Our priests have all gone mad; they saw a demon in the wilds and at him cast their lamps and they are broken up, and not a gleam of light has any priest for men. The night is dark; the heart of India calls for light. The priesthood cannot be reformed; it is already dead; its greatest needs are graves and funeral chants. The new age calls for liberty; the kind that makes each man a priest, enables him to go alone, and lay his offerings on the shrine of God. (Aquarian Gospel 56:15-18)

Our priests...saw a demon in the wilds and at him cast their lamps and they are broken up, and not a gleam of light has any priest for men. Even the highest wisdom can be turned into abject superstition by the passage of time and the erosion of knowledge by ignorance. One of the ways this happens is the shifting of focus from good to evil, from virtue to vice. When spirituality weakens, so does the strength of the individual, and in time he becomes vulnerable to negativity and finally comes to fear evil rather than love the good. Defense against evil becomes a priority, but since real knowledge has been lost there is no sensible way of defense. Consequently all kinds of superstitions are taken up for protection. And since evil becomes the focus, an affinity with evil is developed which makes the individual even more susceptible.

Finally the religion becomes more a preaching of evil than of good.

Only a few days ago I was listening to a sermon in which the speaker said with great force that it was the consensus of Christian theologians throughout the centuries that the vast majority of human beings are going to be damned to eternal hell. Terrible! These same people believe (or say they believe) that Jesus said: "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:28), so what are they doing to people by teaching them this superstition? What kind of faith are they giving them?

People who have heard a superficial speech of a modern super-guru and maybe read part of a couple of paperbacks on yoga or Indian philosophy, confidently talk about how Indian religion is free from the fear of hell and eternal damnation. Certainly, except for the sect of Madhavacharya, Hindus do not believe in eternal hell, but they do believe in hell in much more horrific forms than Christians. Not only that, the later scriptures such as the Puranas threaten hell far more more than the Bible, and for the most absurd things. For example, one Purana says that if a person spills the sacred water (tirtha) from worship of an image, even accidentally, he will go to hell for ten thousand years for each single drop. It is amazing how everything in modern, degenerate Hinduism carries some dire threat of prolonged torment in hell.

Fear is a dominant factor in all human life, and Hindus are human. Karma is a huge bugbear for many. There is a whole list of "offenses" for which people are supposedly going to be punished in this life and the future life. Some Hindu sects (especially the Vaishnavas) even declare that worship and chanting of divine names can be "offensive" if their particular whims are not being followed. Cultish fear is very prevalent in many groups, and of course everyone is constantly badgered about "sins" against the guru.

Fear and anxiety torment many "devotees" of East and West, because unworthy spiritual authorities in India have cast their lamps of wisdom at imagined demons and thereby destroyed the light. Most priests have "not a gleam of light" for anyone, but they certainly know how to pressure people for money, and one of their threats is putting a curse on them if they do not give them what they want. This is not rumor, I have witnessed it.

One time a brahmin priest was following us out of a Vishnu temple, screaming that he was going to put a curse on one of our friends if he did not give him money—for having done nothing. "I am a brahmin!" He yelled in English, "and I shall curse you and your whole family for insulting me!" Our friend laughed and said: "I, too, am a Brahmin and know your curse is worth nothing. So go ahead and make a fool of yourself!" Another time a "sadhu" got in our taxi and began demanding money. When nothing was forthcoming, he raised his right hand and began yelling: "I will curse you! I will curse you!" I pointed out that the nearby policeman would not bother to curse him but would lock him up, especially for harassing Western tourists. So out he got and sped away. Travelers in India are impressed when they see how respectful the people are to monks and how they feed them and even provide train and bus tickets for them. What they do not know is that the majority

are doing so because they are afraid of their curse.

The night is dark; the heart of India calls for light. India is filled with true wisdom, but professional religionists are drawing people away from it and substituting a fake dharma based on ignorance. Light can be found by casting aside the barnacles that have obscured Sanatana Dharma and turning back to the true teachings of the great sages of India found in the authentic Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, as well as in the great Masters which India has never lacked, such as Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Sivananda, and Ramana Maharshi. In the West we have access to the unparalleled wisdom of Paramhansa Yogananda.

The priesthood cannot be reformed; it is already dead; its greatest needs are graves and funeral chants. That is certainly the truth. What is needed is laying aside of a pointless situation. In authentic Sanatana Dharma every single person, including a child, can perform worship for themselves. The only thing needed is good instruction in the way to worship, and that is what books are for.

The new age calls for liberty; the kind that makes each man a priest, enables him to go alone, and lay his offerings on the shrine of God. Actually, that has always been so, not just in a “new age.” Real Sanatana Dharma has always been a purely individual matter and always will be.

And Kaspar said, In Persia people walk in fear; they do the good for fear to do the wrong. The devil is the greatest power in our land, and though a myth, he dandles on his knee both youth and age. Our land is dark, and evil prospers in the dark. Fear rides on every passing breeze, and lurks in every form of life. The fear of evil is a myth, is an illusion and a snare; but it will live until some mighty power shall come to raise the ethers to the plane of light. When this shall come to pass the magian land will glory in the light. The soul of Persia calls for light. (Aquarian Gospel 56:19-24)

People do the good for fear to do the wrong. This is not virtue, only self-serving fear. Good becomes effective only when done for the right motives. Doing good in a rote manner because we fear some negative consequence otherwise is not true goodness. Good must be done because it is good and because we wish to do what is right. Certainly there is nothing wrong in being aware that good benefits us, but good must be its own motivation. Throughout history noble people have died because they did the good thing rather than go along with evil.

The devil is the greatest power in our land, and though a myth, he dandles on his knee both youth and age. This is certainly the truth wherever the myth of dualism prevails. True religion (including original Christianity) teaches that evil does not exist, only the subversion or misapplication of good. All is good, for it proceeds from the Good. But a good thing can be misused by ignorant people. Automobiles are for beneficial transport, but irresponsible and deluded people have used them to kill themselves and others, either intentionally or unintentionally. What we call “gunpowder” was originally invented for entertainment through fireworks, but distorted minds figured out how to use it to kill others. Ordinary, beneficial objects can be misused

to harm others. As I say, evil is a corruption of good. Evil must prevail as long as ignorance prevails.

The fear of evil is a myth, is an illusion and a snare. Nevertheless, billions are caught in its trap.

It will live until some mighty power shall come to raise the ethers to the plane of light. That is the way things work, mostly on the individual level. “Movements” in human society rarely accomplish much, and it never lasts long. Evolution is a totally personal thing, and the wise know it to be so. Therefore each of us should be hoping and looking for that “mighty power” which comes into the life of every one of us in the form most needed when after long ages we are ready to consciously take up the work of self-development. Sometimes it is a chance word overheard, a meeting with someone, the reading of a book or an incident that awakens our inner awareness. Of itself that is not enough, for we must carry on the momentum if any significant benefit is to come to us. What is needed is our passage from darkness into light and our permanent establishment in the light.

Chapter Fifty-Seven

Ashbina said, Assyria is the land of doubt; the chariot of my people, that in which they mostly ride, is labeled Doubt. Once Faith walked forth in Babylon; and she was bright and fair; but she was clothed in such white robes that men became afraid of her. And every wheel began to turn, and Doubt made war on her, and drove her from the land; and she came back no more. In form men worship God, the One; in heart they are not sure that God exists. Faith worships at the shrine of one not seen; but Doubt must see her God. The greatest need of all Assyria is faith—a faith that seasons every thing that is, with certainty. (Aquarian Gospel 57:1-6)

Assyria is the land of doubt; the chariot of my people, that in which they mostly ride, is labeled Doubt. There is honest belief and honest unbelief, both of which can be found in people of intellectual integrity. But Ashbina is speaking about a kind of snide pose of fake intellectuality, a kind of genteel sneer that is not even real skepticism but a reflexive rejection of anything that would widen the horizons of the individual, increase his personal responsibility and perhaps even change his life. It is really no more than irresponsible, even cowardly, evasion of living consciously and nobly. It is the determined mental provincialism of the self-centered child that refuses to grow up and stop being the center of its universe. It particularly has no place in its life sphere for spiritual consciousness and spiritual values. Just the opposite: its only watchword is Me. If others can be found of similar ego-centeredness they gather together in tittering sessions about the ways of lesser humanity, each trying to outdo the other in sarcasm, satire and mockery of “the masses.” This moral disease pervaded the Roman Empire, was a marked trait of the Renaissance and especially the Enlightenment, and continues today in the halls of the intellectually unadventurous and the spiritually timorous, including self-styled religious liberals that are neither religious nor liberal. Being fundamentally weak and sterile, it hides behind “reason” and “science,” never showing its real face. This is the moral curse which Ashbina refers to as “doubt.”

Once Faith walked forth in Babylon; and she was bright and fair; but she was clothed in such white robes that men became afraid of her. Ashbina is talking of real faith, not mere intellectual belief or “hoping so.” Faith arises from spiritual intuition and is a mark of spiritual evolution, it is a knowing, not a believing. The hallmark of faith is conformity of life to belief, in other words: change. The unevolved detest change in general, especially change that moves the individual upward and involves the taking on of increased personal responsibility. Change is sacrifice, a leaving of something behind to move onward, to gain something better. Those who seek God must commit themselves to change from the very first step. That is, they must be willing to change at every advance in their insight and understanding. This means that they will not run with the herd around them, but will deliberately put themselves out of

step with their own situations and ideas when they gain a wider, higher, and deeper insight. The truly alive human being changes perpetually. This often entails speaking and acting absolutely contrary to former speech and action. By the lazy and unadventurous this is condemned as inconsistency and instability, not knowing one's own mind, being untrustworthy, and so forth. Such people not only do not want to pay the price for spiritual growth, they have nothing to pay with.

When people sense spiritual reality drawing near, they often bolt and run. Let me give you an example from the words of a dear friend of mine, an Indian devotee of Anandamayi Ma.

"For quite some time I had been feeling discontented with my spiritual life. Something was missing, I knew, and I began to worry that I might never find God, however much I might be doing in the way of meditation, worship and so on. This became very intense and obsessed my mind day and night. I had to gain the vision of God!

"Then word came by telephone that Mataji was passing through Delhi on her way to another place, that she would be stopping over for an hour or so in the Delhi railway station. When I learned this I rushed to the station, determined to demand of Mataji how I could see God. As I came on to the platform from which her train was to depart, I saw her walking up and down in silence. For a while I stood there hoping to catch her eye, but I could not. So great was my impatience that when she passed opposite me I just called out: 'Ma!' She stopped and looked directly at me. 'What is it?' she asked. 'Ma, I want to see God!' Mataji looked at me very intently for a few moments. Then she leaned Her head to one side, and began to smile. 'Do you *really* want to see God?' she asked me, very forcefully. In that split second I knew that if I answered 'yes,' she would tell me to become a monk! So I put my hands together in salutation and answered: 'No, Ma! I do not want to see God!' Mataji laughed and continued walking."

And every wheel began to turn, and Doubt made war on her, and drove her from the land; and she came back no more. What people choose, that they get, for human beings are at all times completely responsible for the situations in which they find themselves. Even Jesus was amazed at the power of human unbelief. When he was in the country of the Gadarenes: "He could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5, 6).

In form men worship God, the One; in heart they are not sure that God exists. We see this all the time. Let me give two examples of Catholics who rejected the changes of the Second Vatican Council and held to their traditional ways. You would expect them to be traditional believers. The first was a woman who walked out the first time the New Mass was celebrated, even though she was the music director of several parishes. She was once bitten by what she felt sure was a rabid dog. Immediately she called some people I knew, declaring that she was going to die. When they said to her that she was an immortal being, that only her body would die, she said that she believed that when you died it was the end, that you just ceased to exist. Every

Sunday and major holiday she led choirs in singing: "I believe...in the life of the age to come." But she did not, and had not. The second was the president of a traditional Catholic parish who wrote voluminous denunciations of "modernism" and "unbelief." Once he saw a very traditional painting of Jesus, walked (swaggered, actually) up to it, flicked it with his finger, and asked: "Who is this fellow?"

Faith worships at the shrine of one not seen; but Doubt must see her God. Faith worships the Unseen because its inner eye does see. But those who do not see in the spirit demand to see with the eyes of flesh, something that is an impossibility. Miracles may awe or scare or cow them for a while, but it will not be long before they lapse back into their spiritual vacuum, for they have within them the "evil heart of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:12).

The greatest need of all Assyria is faith—a faith that seasons every thing that is, with certainty. "A faith that seasons every thing that is, with certainty." That is itself a marvelous definition of faith.

And then Apollo said, The greatest needs of Greece are true concepts of God. Theogony in Greece is rudderless, for every thought may be a god, and worshipped as a god. The plane of thought is broad, and full of sharp antagonists; and so the circle of the gods is filled with enmity, with wars and base intrigues. Greece needs a master mind to stand above the gods; to raise the thoughts of men away from many gods to God the One. We know that light is coming o'er the hills. God speed the light. (Aquarian Gospel 57:7-11)

The greatest needs of Greece are true concepts of God. Although God is inconceivable, since because of our level of development we are incapable of dealing with anything but concepts and impressions, it is good for us to have some ideas about God, just as long as we remain aware that they are only tools to work with and are not themselves "The Truth" to be clung to forever. For example, we can say that God is Consciousness since we are conscious and have experience of that. Since we know things, we can say that God is Omniscient; we can do things, so we can say that God is Omnipotent; and since we are "somewhere" at all times we can say that God is Omnipresent. In other words, remove all our limitations and we get a hint of the Divine Nature. At the same time we must realize that God is beyond our limitations, that God does not become happy or sad, pleased or displeased, angry, satisfied, etc. Those are our defects, and unlike the attributes first described they are absolutely absent from God. We must also understand that although God is a Person, God is not, and does not possess, a "personality." God does not like or dislike. Furthermore, even though we can somewhat relate or interact with God, our real purpose is to unite with God completely. Anything else is just a warmup exercise.

Theogony in Greece is rudderless, for every thought may be a god, and worshipped as a god. The plane of thought is broad, and full of sharp antagonists; and so the circle of the gods is filled with enmity, with wars and base intrigues. Extremes are never good. In other parts of the world there was much narrowness and few ideas were even considered, much less

considered to be true. But in Greece the “thinkers” were always calling for new ideas. When the Athenians brought Saint Paul to the Areopagus and asked him to expound his religion, it was not because they sought any kind of truth, but because, as Saint Luke observes: “All the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21). Yogananda spoke of people who were so enamored of seeking that they had no interest in finding.

As Apollo said, ideas were the gods of the Greeks and they loved to bandy them about, becoming very antagonistic to one another, even engaging in intellectual and social war with one another. Prizing ideas above all, they forgot their worth as human beings and the equal worth of others, as well,

Greece needs a master mind to stand above the gods; to raise the thoughts of men away from many gods to God the One. Unity on all fronts was needed, but only a Master could so illumine and uplift the people that it could be achieved.

We know that light is coming o’er the hills. God speed the light. The Greek oracles, along with the Sybils, had long before prophesied the coming of a Great Teacher who would dispel confusion and bring understanding by the mere force of his greatness.

Matheno said, Behold this land of mystery! this Egypt of the dead! Our temples long have been the tombs of all the hidden things of time; our temples, crypts and caves are dark. In light there are no secret things. The sun reveals all hidden truth. There are no mysteries in God. Behold the rising sun! his beams are entering every door; yea, every crevice of the mystic crypt of Mizraim. We hail the light! All Egypt craves the light. (Aquarian Gospel 57:12-16)

Behold this land of mystery! This Egypt of the dead! It can be tiresome and frustrating to live in a culture whose motto is: “If I can’t see it I don’t believe it.” The culture I was born into just before the Second World War would not put the copy of *Autobiography of Yogi* on the shelves of the local library I donated it to in 1961. No book store in my part of the country would even carry a book on ESP. After all, it might be devil worship. And even now the embittered and frightened mediocrities that write hate mail on every possible subject will still attack anyone who believes in psychic phenomena or indicates that the dead can be seen after death. Some friends of mine were on a national news spot that included the fact that they used pyramids in some aspects of animal husbandry. Tapes and letters followed immediately, denouncing their “satanic” involvement and warning of impending possession by evil spirits.

On the other hand, since humans can ruin even the best of things, it can be even worse to live in a culture based on mystery/mysticism that sees, explains, and reacts to everything in a superstitious manner. For example, in one European country the government spends large sums of money either building roads around a group of rocks or in moving the rocks because some local “sensitive” reports that they are the domiciles of “the little people.” In a major city there is a Hilton hotel

that is sitting falling to pieces, uninhabited even by squatters, because the culture's shamans were not called in to dictate how it was to be built and where the doors were to be put. The "seers" put out the edict that the building was "wrong" and no one would agree to work in it. So it sits in decay and abandonment. And remember the recent unquestioning and slavish acceptance of "Feng Shui" throughout America. As I once heard a feisty old lady say to the officials of a monastery she was visiting: "May God give you brains!"

Egypt was just such a "land of mystery" after degenerating over centuries from a very authentic and practical understanding of psychic realities into a fear-filled and absurd superstition masquerading as religion. Its focus was on death and the dead, including the incredible belief that immortality depended on the condition of the dead body. Even today, every Friday large numbers of people go to their family tombs (built just like ordinary houses) in the necropolis of Cairo and have lunch with the dead. It does not take a great deal of thought to figure out the social and moral problems such an obsession will create in a society.

Our temples long have been the tombs of all the hidden things of time; our temples, crypts and caves are dark. One effect of death-obsession will be a continual looking back to the past, the dead past. The past will be preserved, embalmed, and stifle life in the present. Life will be overshadowed at all times by death. This is darkness, indeed. It makes for a society that appears to be stable when it is really stagnant.

In light there are no secret things. The sun reveals all hidden truth. There is a principle that should be kept in mind at all times regarding religion, esoteric practices, including yoga and meditation, politics, and even health-related issues: *Wherever there is secrecy there is charlatanry.* This includes all coy avoidance of giving exact details of anything, even prices of advertised products. We are used to "mysteries" in religion ("higher" teachings and initiations, secret ceremonies, etc.), mystical and theatrical secrecy regarding yoga meditation techniques such as mantras and pranayama (I have met a few who even kept the identity of their guru a secret), behind-the-doors cabals and deals in Congress, and refusal to reveal facts about "alternative" Health therapies if you have not slapped down your money and gotten "on the program." (The most shameless was a "doctor" and his paying clients who would not let out a peep about a supposedly successful nutritional cancer cure. I personally knew cancer sufferers who begged information from those who shamelessly let them know that since they had had to lay down the money (several hundred dollars), so would everybody else. The hard-heartedness was more incredible than the greed. The simple chemical and herbal formulas for the Hoxey Cancer Cure and Essiac were not revealed for decades under the excuse that if they were the medical establishment would deny and debunk them, something which they did anyway.

Jesus, a master teacher and yogi, said this: "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Matthew 10:26-27). There we have it.

There are no mysteries in God. That is the final nail in the coffin of sacred secrecy.

Behold the rising sun! his beams are entering every door; yea, every crevice of the mystic crypt of Mizraim. We hail the light! All Egypt craves the light. And so do all worthy seekers of truth.

And Philo said, The need of Hebrew thought and life is liberty. The Hebrew prophets, seers, and givers of the law, were men of power, men of holy thought, and they bequeathed to us a system of philosophy that is ideal; one strong enough and good enough to lead our people to the goal of perfectness. But carnal minds repudiated holiness; a priesthood filled with selfishness arose, and purity in heart became a myth; the people were enslaved. The priesthood is the curse of Israel; but when he comes, who is to come, he will proclaim emancipation for the slaves; my people will be free. Behold, for God has made incarnate wisdom, love and light, which he has called Immanuel. To him is given the keys to open up the dawn; and here, as man, he walks with us. (Aquarian Gospel 57:17-22)

The need of Hebrew thought and life is liberty. Philo was a Jewish philosopher whose writings have been preserved for us and which show an illumined side of Judaism at the time of Jesus with which nearly everyone is unacquainted, especially the thoroughly symbolic interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures which was followed later in the third century by Origen in his works on Christianity.

It is not Hebrew thought and life alone that needs liberty. All human thought and life require it. Freedom is an essential need for intellectual and spiritual growth. However, freedom does not exclude discipline, without which freedom degenerates into anarchy and chaos. But it must be a voluntary discipline taken up wisely and gladly. Freedom of mind and spirit require discipline of body and mind. Nevertheless, there must be a fearless and continuous investigation of inner and outer realities that will embrace all that is true and worthy. There must be a continuous expansion, a movement that is simultaneously outer and inner. Life must be lived as a journey of perpetual discovery until the All is attained. The smallness and dullness of "normal" worldly life and mentality must be ruthlessly cast aside as imprisonment. Again, fearlessness and optimism must be the dominant traits of the questing individual, a fearlessness and optimism based upon spiritual intuition, the conviction that Infinity awaits our discovery. To Know God is the motto of hope and courage.

The Hebrew prophets, seers, and givers of the law, were men of power, men of holy thought, and they bequeathed to us a system of philosophy that is ideal; one strong enough and good enough to lead our people to the goal of perfectness. This is certainly a Judaism vastly different from that of today, as different as original Christianity was different from contemporary Christianity, a Christianity that was progressively debilitated during the passage of the first three centuries, and which suffered a death-blow when Constantine made it the state religion of the Roman Empire. This was no triumph of truth, but a capitulation and surrender to organized ignorance, the selling of an

already enfeebled soul. That is why Jesus said so plainly: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23).

The word “knew” is a translation of *ginosko*, which means both to know and to perceive. So Jesus is saying that practically speaking he does not even know of the existence of most Christianity and Christians—they just do not exist for him since they live in the realm of death and darkness. As in all religions, Christians consider that miracles are a sign of God’s favor, but Jesus said that miracles, spiritual teaching, and even exorcism of evil spirits mean nothing, that most (if not all) are workers of iniquity, *anomia*, which means unrighteousness and active transgression of spiritual law. It also implies a contempt for the law being violated. So that is how Jesus views the situation. Philo’s next words apply to Judaism and Christianity, and to most religion throughout the world.

But carnal minds repudiated holiness; a priesthood filled with selfishness arose, and purity in heart became a myth; the people were enslaved. This covers a lot of territory in a very few words, and all true. Turning from the Real to the unreal, nothing else could take place. All valid religions start with the teachings of those who have entered into total union with God, who walk upon the earth as embodiments of Divine Consciousness. But once they leave this world (and sometimes before), those remaining begin to distort the wisdom given to them. Some do this because of inner negativity and for personal gain, but most do so just because they are not evolved enough to grasp the full import of the original teachings, and interpret and modify them in conformity with their level of understanding. Whatever the cause, the result is the same: degeneration and loss of knowledge and access to higher consciousness. Already enslaved by the world in the form of social and political structures, they now add religious enslavement to their roster. Things become increasingly hopeless as the avenues to freedom are closed against them.

The priesthood is the curse of Israel; but when he comes, who is to come, he will proclaim emancipation for the slaves; my people will be free. The situation described in the preceding section is not hopeless, for it is the nature of the human being and the cosmos itself to evolve into freedom. This results in the appearance of higher understanding in the form of both external master teachers and the spontaneous arising of intuitive spiritual understanding in the consciousness of individuals. Nothing can prevent this, since upward movement is inherent in the very fabric of creation. The only thing we have to be concerned about is how to recognize the advent of these opportunities and how to take advantage of them. I have met people who completely missed the benefits of being with great saints. Some of them just met them once or twice and wandered on by without knowing they have met a great being, and others lived with Masters for years and did nothing about it. They sat at the table and never even nibbled at the banquet. It is truly necessary for us at all

times to be Awake and Ready as Yogananda emphasized.

When the messengers of God come we will know them by the fact that their message will be Freedom, not philosophy, personality cult, “faith,” codes of merely external behavior, or God’s Latest Revelation to the World. In other words, they will be yogis showing us the path to Liberation. Those who take it will be freed.

Behold, for God has made incarnate wisdom, love and light, which he has called Immanuel. Immanuel, God With Us, is not a single person, but anyone who embodies the Consciousness that is God. Such a one truly is Wisdom, Love, and Light. I saw this in Swami Sivananda to the perfect degree, and those who are attuned to Jesus see the same in him even now.

To him is given the keys to open up the dawn; and here, as man, he walks with us. Indeed a liberated being possesses the keys to open up the dawning of higher consciousness, and as we walk with him he continues to reveal the ever-opening way.

The right response

And then the council chamber door was opened and the Logos stood among the sages of the world. Again the sages sat in silence seven days. (Aquarian Gospel 57:23, 24)

When Jesus entered the assembly of sages there was no fanfare or adulation. Rather, all present entered into the Silence for seven days. In the same way, those who truly glimpse or contact God turn within and make the Silence their temple. For “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

Chapter Fifty-Eight

Now, when the sages were refreshed they opened up the Book of Life and read. They read the story of the life of man; of all his struggles, losses, gains; and in the light of past events and needs, they saw what would be best for him in coming years. They knew the kind of laws and precepts suited best to his estate; they saw the highest God-ideal that the race could comprehend. Upon the seven postulates these sages were to formulate, the great philosophy of life and worship of the coming age must rest.

Now Meng-ste was the oldest sage; he took the chair of chief, and said, Man is not far enough advanced to live by faith; he cannot comprehend the things his eyes see not. He yet is child, and during all the coming age he must be taught by pictures, symbols, rites and forms. His God must be a human God; he cannot see a God by faith. And then he cannot rule himself; the king must rule; the man must serve. (Aquarian Gospel 58:1-9)

It is the way of the child to himself be the sole measure of anything. What the child likes and dislikes should be liked and disliked by all. What the child wants and does not want, it should be the same for everyone. What the child gets should be gotten by all, and what the child discards should be discarded by all. In other words, a child is almost pure ego. It is the same with those whose bodies grew up while their hearts and minds remained those of a child. Consequently people sneer at anything they have gone beyond, and this is true in religion. But here we see that religion must be of a character which can be grasped by those for whom it is intended. It must mirror their limitations as well as their capacities for growth.

Jesus' true mission was one of Aquarian consciousness, yet for some reason he had to prepare for it at the beginning of the Piscean Age. Even the Masters have rules they must follow. So there were to be two Christianities, or more accurately: Piscean Churchianity and Aquarian Christianity. Meng-ste had this to say about the first:

Man is not far enough advanced to live by faith; he cannot comprehend the things his eyes see not. Here we see that "faith" does not mean mere belief, but a conviction based on experience. Which is why Saint Paul wrote: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Meng-ste is speaking of the general populace, saying that most people do not have spiritual intuition.

He yet is child, and during all the coming age he must be taught by pictures, symbols, rites and forms. This is easy to recognize as the truth.

His God must be a human God; he cannot see a God by faith. The ability to intuit and understand that God is Transcendental Reality beyond the reach of conceptualization, and therefore verbal statement, was rare at that time. Therefore anthropomorphic concepts of God were very necessary, and there was little value in metaphysical abstractions for most people.

And then he cannot rule himself; the king must rule; the man must serve. The concept of self-mastery and total self-responsibility just were not for people at that time. They needed an authority to trust, follow, and obey. Without the Papacy or Patriarchs and state political authority, Western and Eastern Christianity would have come to nothing. Monarchy was necessary in both secular and religious life. The idea of an invisible God might be dimly comprehensible to people, but they needed a very visible, and externally powerful, spiritual authority.

It is important to remember that what may be pointless and even detrimental now in the Aquarian Age, was necessary for the majority of people in the Piscean Age.

The age that follows this will be the age of man, the age of faith. In that blest age the human race will see without the aid of carnal eyes; will hear the soundless sound; will know the Spirit-God. (Aquarian Gospel 58:10-11)

In other words, this will be the age of awakened consciousness, of the true mystic, the adept yogi.

The age we enter is the Preparation age, and all the schools and governments and worship rites must be designed in simple way that men may comprehend. And man cannot originate; he builds by patterns that he sees; so in this council we must carve out pattern for the coming age. And we must formulate the gnosis of the Empire of the soul, which rests on seven postulates. Each sage in turn shall form a postulate; and these shall be the basis of the creeds of men until the perfect age shall come. (Aquarian Gospel 58:12-15)

The principles about to be set forth are the basis of Aquarian understanding. Nevertheless they were formulated to be taught as much as they could be in the Piscean era, especially to those whose consciousness was more advanced than the general state of awareness. But they would only be fully comprehended in the Aquarian Age. Until then they were aspirations to complete understanding.

Then Meng-ste wrote the first: All things are thought; all life is thought activity. The multitude of beings are but phases of the one great thought made manifest. Lo, God is Thought, and Thought is God. (Aquarian Gospel 58:16, 17)

“Thought” Has two aspects: consciousness and the movement of conscious will that manifests as the power of Logos (Word), first the internal concept and then the exteriorizing ideation, and finally the external manifestation which may take the form of actual thought, word, or deed.

Looking at this principle from the first aspect we can express it this way: “All things are consciousness; all life is the activity of consciousness. The multitude of beings are but phases of the one great consciousness made manifest. Lo, God is Consciousness, and Consciousness is God.” There can be no more complete or

exact statement of Non-dual Theism. We can even paraphrase and get this: “All things are God; all life is the activity of God. The multitude of beings are but phases of the one great God made manifest. Lo, God is All, and All is God.”

Considering the principle from the second aspect we can express it this way: “All things are the thoughts of God; all life is the activity of the thoughts of God. The multitude of beings are but phases of the one great thought-power of God made manifest. Lo, God is his Thought, and his Thought is God.”

If these formulations are read slowly, carefully, and with pause for penetrative thought, no commentary is needed.

Then Vidyapati wrote the second postulate: Eternal Thought is one; in essence it is two—Intelligence and Force; and when they breathe a child is born; this child is Love. And thus the Triune God stands forth, whom men call Father-Mother-Child. This Triune God is one; but like the one of light, in essence he is seven. And when the Triune God breathes forth, lo, seven Spirits stand before his face; these are creative attributes. Men call them lesser gods, and in their image they made man. (Aquarian Gospel 58:18-23)

Eternal Thought is one; in essence it is two—Intelligence and Force; and when they breathe a child is born; this child is Love. And thus the Triune God stands forth, whom men call Father-Mother-Child.

The Eternal God is absolutely One. Yet, in his very essence he is dual, comprised of Awareness and Power, the Father-God and the Mother-God. Yet there appears between them a third Divine Aspect that draws them together and produces the Divine Projection that is Creation. This is the Child, the Divine Son, the Christ. This is symbolized by pictures of the Holy Family in which the child Jesus walks between Saint Joseph and the Virgin Mary. Though usually thought of as being no more than a historical depiction, this is really a mirroring of the Trinity within the depths of the Godhead. This is the Holy Trinity: 1) Transcendent Consciousness, 2) Immanent (Indwelling) Consciousness, and 3) Divine Creative and Evolutionary Power. These are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the Aquarian Gospel the Holy Spirit is always called “Holy Breath” since She is a breathing or moving forth of Divine Intelligence in the form of Creative Light.

The Child/Son is Love because he it is whose function is the recalling of the straying spirits that have emerged from the bosom of the Father and submerged themselves into the bosom of the Mother, losing themselves in a false consciousness of separation and materiality. For Love is not an emotion but a magnetic Force that reunites the finite with the Infinite, the many with the One. This is the Mediatorship of the Son with the Father, the Love that is God. For the Christ does not just love, he is Love. When he draw us upward and into the Bosom of the Father, he is he is being the Love extended to us from the Father. This is a profound mystery, as is the Trinity Itself, and although the intellect can never grasp it, it can, and must, be experienced by each one of us.

This Triune God is one; but like the one of light, in essence he is seven. And when the Triune

God breathes forth, lo, seven Spirits stand before his face; these are creative attributes. Light appears to be a single white “color,” but essentially it is the entire spectrum of color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. The white is Transcendent Unity, the spectrum is Immanent Diversity. For before God is Love, he is Light. When creation is to emanate from the Divine as an extension, not as a separate entity or as a creation *ex nihil* (from nothing), the emanation takes place in various stages. First there is the One that is Two; then there is the Three; then there is the Seven. (I keep saying “is” because the Unity is never lost.) These seven are the great Creator Spirits who bring about the manifestation of all things. They are the Seven Archons, primal beings that are also Aeons, levels of manifestation. They, too, are one and many simultaneously. They are mirrored more closely to us as the Seven Archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Anael, Samuel, Zaccharyl, and Cassiel. Their energies are focused on human beings both directly and through agency of the seven planets: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. They are spoken of in the Bible as “the seven Spirits of God” (Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6).

Men call them lesser gods, and in their image they made man. These Seven Spirits are the Elohim who said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). Consequently we are sevenfold in various ways, the best-known being our possession of the seven psychic centers known in the Yoga System as chakras. Each of these corresponds to a state of consciousness that is native to one of the seven “layers” or “bodies” in which our spirit is encased.

And Kaspar wrote the third: Man was a thought of God, formed in the image of the Septonate, clothed in the substances of soul. And his desires were strong; he sought to manifest on every plane of life, and for himself he made a body of the ethers of the earthly forms, and so descended to the plane of earth. In this descent he lost his birthright; lost his harmony with God, and made discordant all the notes of life. Inharmony and evil are the same; so evil is the handiwork of man. (Aquarian Gospel 58:24-28)

Man was a thought of God, formed in the image of the Septonate, clothed in the substances of soul. Again, we must understand that “thought” does not mean a simple abstract mental idea, as with us, but that with God truly “thoughts are things” in the sense that each of us is a drop of consciousness in the infinite ocean of Divine Consciousness, a spark or ray of the Divine Light. In other words, divinity is our essential nature, unity is our nature. But we have been “formed in the image of the Septonate, clothed in the substances of soul.” That is, our consciousness has been modified into a sevenfold mode and enclosed in the envelope of the soul, the soul being a complex of energies ranging from most subtle to the nearly material life-force known to the yogis as *prana*. (It is necessary to make a distinction between soul and spirit, as Saint Paul does in Hebrews 4:12.) Even though we presently function in this sevenfold mode of awareness and find ourselves confined to the soul and body, we must not identify with them, for that is the root of all our troubles, but we must know that we are the spirit. Meditation is the only process

for ending that mistaken identity.

And his desires were strong; he sought to manifest on every plane of life, and for himself he made a body of the ethers of the earthly forms, and so descended to the plane of earth. Where did those desires come from? How could they arise in a disembodied being that had no prior experience of relative existence, no experience of a separate object that *could* be desired? *Robe of Light* explains it this way:

“All conscious beings have existed eternally within the being of God—the technical term being ‘Bosom of God’—living within the heart of God, one with him, distinct though not separate. Having their essential being rooted in the infinity of God, the individual consciousnesses have within them a natural impulse to transcend their finitude and attain the boundlessness of their Origin. This, of course, is impossible, since the essential, eternal nature of a being cannot be altered. Being rooted in God, and therefore in a sense a part of God, all beings are as immutable as God—the only infinite Being. Yet the urge for transcendence is part of their essential nature.

“The solution to this dilemma is actually quite simple: the individual consciousnesses cannot alter their natural state of finitude but they can come to *share* and *participate* in the infinite Consciousness of God. That is, they cannot become infinite themselves, but they can experience the infinity of another—their divine Father-Source. This is symbolized in the Scriptures by the expressions regarding their coming to sit in the throne of the Father or becoming heirs of his kingdom (Matthew 19:28; Revelation 3:21; James 2:5; Matthew 25:34; Romans 8:16,17; Ephesians 3:6). Just as a psychically sensitive person can experience the thoughts and feelings of another by tuning in to him, yet in no way becoming that other person, so the individual consciousness can come to experience the Consciousness of God while remaining in its limited native state.

“It is necessary, however, for the individual spirit to *develop* the capacity for such a state of awareness. And this is done by *learning* to fully experience the state of existence of a being completely different from oneself—to enter into an alien mode of being altogether, while retaining the awareness of one’s true identity. In other words, the individual spirit must learn to put on a ‘costume’ of a consciousness utterly different from its own and become able not just to fully experience that other mode of consciousness, but also to develop the ability to function as that other kind of being.

“To enable the spirits to enter into this process, God breathes forth—emanates—His own Self as the Son and the Holy Spirit and manifests all the realms of relative existence, from the most subtle worlds of the Cherubim and Seraphim to the most objective worlds of atomic matter. The spirits then enter into relative existence by taking on ‘bodies’ of varying grades and patterns of vibratory energies and descend into this material world to begin working their way back up the ladder of ever-evolving forms, beginning with forms whose scope of consciousness is lesser than theirs and working their way upward, entering into higher and higher levels of awareness until they can surpass their original breadth of consciousness and begin

to partake of a life of awareness much beyond their own.

“Upward and upward they evolve until their capacity for awareness is developed to such a perfect state that they can actually experience the Being of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Then, after having perfected themselves in even that empyrean state, they can actually reenter the Bosom of the Father in full participation of his all-embracing consciousness, thenceforth to live in his infinity, his ultimate gift of love to them, thus experiencing the meaning of his ancient declaration: ‘I am... thy exceeding great reward’ (Genesis 15:1).

“As Shakespeare wrote, ‘all the world’s a stage’ with the individual spirits wearing their costumes and playing their parts. Just as actors begin with small parts and progress to bigger roles by demonstrating their skill in those smaller parts, so also do the spirits advance to higher and more complex forms of existence and consciousness through taking on and perfecting their identity and functions within the elementary forms of creation, returning at last home to God.”

This is the ideal, but:

In this descent he lost his birthright; lost his harmony with God, and made discordant all the notes of life. Have you ever been in a life-threatening situation? For many people at such a time panic takes over and all good sense is forgotten, resulting in pointless and even destructive behavior. Those who have almost drowned really know how this is. Many people who are drowning drown those who try to save them because they are utterly irrational from desperation and fear. Being completely overwhelmed by the external situation, a person totally forgets all reason and reacts in a foolish way. That is the crux of the whole thing: *forgetfulness*.

Perhaps more close to home is our reaction to motion pictures. We watch and feel fear, happiness, humor, sorrow, anxiety, pride, anger, and disappointment: all just in response to light patterns on a screen. We know that what we are seeing is not real, yet we react as though it is. We do not seem able to help ourselves. It is my experience that no matter how many times I see a dramatic motion picture and know the outcome I still feel tension or anxiety each time. This is absurd. *Knowing* that all will be well, I feel tense and anxious about *whether* it will come out well. This is akin to mental illness, and maybe not just akin!

The senses draw us into an externalized consciousness that makes us completely forget reality and come to believe thoroughly in unreality. Identification with the body and its senses, including the mind, turns us inside-out, makes us truly negative, seeing black as white and white as black. Destructive ignorance is the result.

The birthright we lose is self-awareness and self-knowledge; and once those are lost what can remain? We become like a piece of driftwood on the heaving swells of the sea, dwarfed, dominated and tossed about aimlessly. If this is not hell, what is?

Forgetting ourselves we naturally forget God, the root of our existence, the archetype of our being. No longer in sync with God we become engulfed in disharmony. Being in conflict with ourselves we are in conflict with God, and ourselves become “Satan.” Being out of harmony with God, it is inevitable that

every note of our life becomes discordant, a clashing symphony of derangement and chaos. We become deranged on all levels of our being. With our ability to accept unreality as reality, we order our insanity and call it sane and “normal.” Even worse, we become fearful or angered at any contradiction or displacement of our delusion, feeling threatened by that which would restore us to inner harmony. We mistake numbness for peace and unawareness for security. Yet the horrible truth is:

Inharmony and evil are the same; so evil is the handiwork of man. Being crazy, we raise all kinds of delusory structures, philosophical, religious, psychological, and social, to attribute evil to any other source but ourselves. We even try to make God the source of evil, or his shadow-image “the Devil.” And until we get enough sanity to acknowledge that we are the source, that it is our clinging to delusion which produces all our troubles (which we also try to not admit to), there is no hope of our emerging from this darkness into the light of truth.

When in Persepolis on his way back to Israel to begin his ministry there, Jesus spoke of this situation in this way: “Whatever God, the One, has made is good, and like the great first Cause, the seven Spirits all are good, and everything that comes from their creative hands is good. Now, all created things have colors, tones and forms their own; but certain tones, though good and pure themselves, when mixed, produce inharmonies, discordant tones. And certain things, though good and pure, when mixed, produce discordant things, yea, poisonous things, that men call evil things. So evil is the inharmonious blending of the colors, tones, or forms of good. Now, man is not all-wise, and yet has will his own. He has the power, and he uses it, to mix God’s good things in a multitude of ways, and every day he makes discordant sounds, and evil things. And every tone and form, be it of good, or ill, becomes a living thing, a demon, sprite, or spirit of a good or vicious kind. Man makes his evil thus; and then becomes afraid of him and flees; his devil is emboldened, follows him away and casts him into torturing fires. The devil and the burning fires are both the works of man, and none can put the fires out and dissipate the evil one, but man who made them both” (Aquarian Gospel 39:11-18).

However great the mess we find ourselves in, embodiment is presently necessary for us, and is a positive thing when like the Prodigal Son we “come to ourselves” and begin to live in the eternal perspective. So the next principle presents a happier (and inevitable) picture.

Ashbina wrote the fourth: Seeds do not germinate in light; they do not grow until they find the soil, and hide themselves away from light. Man was evolved a seed of everlasting life; but in the ethers of the Triune God the light was far too great for seeds to grow; and so man sought the soil of carnal life, and in the darkness of earth he found a place where he could germinate and grow. The seed has taken root and grown full well. The tree of human life is rising from the soil of earthy things, and, under natural law, is reaching up to perfect form. There are no supernatural acts of God to lift a man from carnal life to spirit blessedness; he grows as grows the plant, and in due time

is perfected. The quality of soul that makes it possible for man to rise to spirit life is purity. (Aquarian Gospel 58:29-36)

Seeds do not germinate in light; they do not grow until they find the soil, and hide themselves away from light. Man was evolved a seed of everlasting life; but in the ethers of the Triune God the light was far too great for seeds to grow; and so man sought the soil of carnal life, and in the darkness of earth he found a place where he could germinate and grow. The seed has taken root and grown full well. The tree of human life is rising from the soil of earthy things, and, under natural law, is reaching up to perfect form. Nothing can be more satanic than a philosophy or theology that convinces human beings that they are innately, naturally evil, and then condemns them for it. What else could they do, if it is their nature? What a malicious deception most “Christianity” is on this point. It is calculated to utterly confuse and torment. “Damned if you do and damned if you don’t” is *really* the condition of those who accept such a lie. But the truth is otherwise: Christhood is our nature; and since it is our nature it is the path of harmony, peace and assurance, because it is also *inevitable*. Nature itself is on our side in our spiritual development.

Equally assuring is the fact that our spiritual development occurs under natural law. This means that our evolution is precise and orderly, not skipping a single step (no, there is no “short path”), and moving forward according to law, not the whim of a cosmic tyrant who must be placated or “pleased” lest we be kicked back like a ball because of his wrath at a misstep or omission. We need not ask God for help, he has set it up for us from eternity and has spread out the vast series of worlds, causal, astral, and physical, as an “evolution machine.”

It follows, then, that our spiritual evolution can be enhanced and quickened by *spiritual methodology*, by practices based on the nature of the human complex and its capacity for openness to divine influence as well as its capacity for self-unfoldment. That spiritual methodology is yoga.

According to the Aquarian Gospel Jesus gave two method-tools for spiritual liberation: Silence and Word. Silence is meditation which centers us in the consciousness of Spirit, and The Word is the invocation of the Divine Life within ourselves. These Keys to the Kingdom, when applied in a context of morality and spiritual orientation of thought, word and deed, are infallible keys to the kingdom of Divine Consciousness. For a full exposition of these two keys given by Jesus, a Nath Yogi, see *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.

There are no supernatural acts of God to lift a man from carnal life to spirit blessedness; he grows as grows the plant, and in due time is perfected. These words do not mean that God is not with each one of us, blessing and guiding (if we will be open to his blessing and guiding). In fact, the division of life into “natural” and “supernatural” is erroneous, for all is Divine. However, it is true that Divinity is orderly and operates strictly by spiritual law. Yet, since Divinity exists on many planes (John 14:2), there are many levels of laws, some superseding or canceling out those on lesser planes. This is evident even in the physical world. The law of gravity pulls things to earth, yet birds fly by the application of laws that circumvent gravity. By “natural law” an

airplane should not fly because of its tremendous weight; but since the laws of aerodynamics have been discovered, over a million people fly every year in the United States alone. Aviation is neither an abrogation of natural law nor supernatural intervention; it is an operation of previously unknown laws.

All of the foregoing is to explain that there are indeed spiritual mechanisms that facilitate our evolution, but they are in no way the whimsical intervention of God on behalf of any “favorite sons.” So we should do our utmost to understand the ways and means of spiritual law and work accordingly rather than asking God to help us or do things for us. He is with us every moment, but the doing must be ours; otherwise there would be no progress on our part. Rather than “storming heaven” with prayers and praises we need to get busy and “work out” our own salvation (Philippians 2:12).

There is a superstitious supernaturalism that has no place in spiritual life. Saint Peter gives the exact perspective when he outlines the following work-plan for self evolution: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.... And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Peter 1:1-8). We can accelerate our evolution by conforming to the principles of inner life, but we cannot skip over even a single step. Otherwise we would not be able to “stand perfect and complete” (Colossians 4:12) in our development.

The quality of soul that makes it possible for man to rise to spirit life is purity. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). The literal translation of these words are: “Blessed are those who are clear at the center, for they shall see God.” Those whose consciousness has been cleared of all obstructions of ignorance and passion are admitted to the vision of God which is union with God. Purity of thought, word and deed are essential; and purity is not some kind of warmy, snuggy feeling and Pinocchio-type aspiration such as “I wish I was a real Christ.” To purify ourselves we have to get our physical, mental and spiritual hands calloused by deliberate, willful application of the highest moral and ethical principles.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2, 3).

Chapter Fifty-Nine

Apollo wrote the fifth: The soul is drawn to perfect light by four white steeds, and these are Will, and Faith, and Helpfulness and Love. That which one wills to do, he has the power to do. A knowledge of that power is faith; and when faith moves, the soul begins its flight. A selfish faith leads not to light. There is no lonely pilgrim on the way to light. Men only gain the heights by helping others gain the heights. The steed that leads the way to spirit life is Love; is pure unselfish Love. (Aquarian Gospel 59:1-6)

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Will was mentioned at the end of the previous section. Will is important because it is the fundamental power of the human being. Each person has five levels or "bodies" through which he functions, physical, emotional, sensory, intellectual, and will bodies, called in Sanskrit the annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, jnanamaya, and anandamaya koshas. They correspond to the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Will arises from the etheric level of our being, which is the nearest to our pure consciousness. Exercise of the will is the most "spiritual" activity of which we are capable, and self-discipline is the means for development of will. Many people think they have will-power when they are really driven by emotions and subconscious impulses alone. They think that they choose, when they are actually being impelled by blind and instinctual urges. They do not know the difference between desiring (wanting) and willing. A great deal of outright brutality is passed off as will-power.

When this Principle speaks of "will" it is referring to *intelligent* will proceeding from the inmost light of the spirit. The will is both developed and freed by correct spiritual practice, especially meditation. Meditation is the most potent means for achieving a perfectly illumined will. Will is mentioned first in the list of "steeds" to underline the fact that spiritual ascension is exclusively an individual, personal activity. No one can do it for us; we do it solely on our own. So development of will is the prime basis of spiritual growth. Here, too, "feelings" Have no meaning: gnosis and will are inseparable. The whole matter is summed up in the statement: "That which one wills to do, he has the power to do." The possession of perfectly-developed will is an infallible guarantee of spiritual success.

Faith is not belief; it is a conviction that arises from experience. Actually, faith is based on experiential *knowledge*. Some of that knowledge comes from previous lives,

so we may think that our faith is based on a feeling or an intuition, but it is not; it is a matter of subliminal knowing. Consequently, truly viable faith can be expressed intelligently: can be explained. Those who simply cite a scripture or other authority do not have faith. They have ideas and principles, but not faith. Usually what they really have is ignorance and superstition that gives birth to bigotry. ("Intolerance is ignorance matured." Aquarian Gospel 77:13) As with Will, Faith is developed through meditation, "and when faith moves, the soul begins its flight."

Helpfulness is the fulfillment of the counsel to love our neighbor as our self (Luke 10:27; Galatians 5:14; see also Leviticus 19:18,34; Matthew 19:19, 22:23; Mark 12:31; Romans 13:9; James 2:8). Two elements are involved in Helpfulness: mercy/compassion and the creation of positive karma, for whatever we sow we shall reap (Galatians 6:7; II Corinthians 9:6). If we sow kindness and assistance toward others we shall reap the same for ourselves. Another element is the understanding of our fundamental unity with all beings, not just with God. This is expressed by Saint Paul when he says: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (II Corinthians 11:29). "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15). It is not enough to care; we must act; for: "A selfish faith leads not to light. There is no lonely pilgrim on the way to light. Men only gain the heights by helping others gain the heights." Those who help others help themselves.

Love is not an emotion, it is a spiritual vision that begins to dawn as the individual enters the last stage of his evolution. Intense liking and strong affection are good, but they are not love, for love not only overreaches all feelings or instinctual response (which are based on ego), but it transmutes them into love. Love is the force that draws us into union: union with God and with all others, for all beings live rooted in God. As Swami Sivananda said: "Love begins with two and ends with One." Helpfulness leads to love, and is the practical expression of love, for love is actual not theoretical. Saint John the Beloved tells us: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.... God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (I John 4:8, 16). In sum: "The steed that leads the way to spirit life is Love; is pure unselfish Love."

Matheno wrote the sixth: The universal Love of which Apollo speaks is child of Wisdom and of Will divine, and God has sent it forth to earth in flesh that man may know. The universal Love of which the sages speak is Christ. The greatest mystery of all times lies in the way that Christ lives in the heart. Christ cannot live in clammy dens of carnal things. The seven battles must be fought, the seven victories won before the carnal things, like fear, and self, emotions and desire, are put away. When this is done the Christ will take possession of the soul; the work is done, and man and God are one. (Aquarian Gospel 59:7-12)

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mystery of all times lies in the way that Christ lives in the heart. Christ cannot live in clammy dens of carnal things. The seven battles must be fought, the seven victories won before the carnal things, like fear, and self, emotions and desire, are put away. When this is done the Christ will take possession of the soul; the work is done, and man and God are one. We say that God is Love, but in what way? This principle makes it clear. Love is not a virtue or even an abstract aspect of divinity; rather, Love is Christ the Son of God Who emanates from the Father-God and Mother-God. God is Love; Love is God: the Cosmic Christ.

The Father-God is Wisdom, infinite Consciousness; the Mother God is creative Will, infinite Power. Through their eternal union Universal Love, Christ the Son, emanates eternally. Those who ascend to Divine Consciousness first unite themselves with Christ Consciousness and thereby become Christs. The Love that is Christ then often sends them back to earth as Christs, as Sons of God, to show others the way to their destined Christhood. ("I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world" John 16:27-28.) God sends Christ to earth in the embodied consciousness of those Christed spirits who manifest in the world as beings that are simultaneously God and Man. Such a one was Jesus of Nazareth. But we must not confuse Jesus with the Infinite Christ: the common mistake of contemporary Christianity. Jesus is one with Christ, is *a* Christ; but he is not *The* Christ. Also the incarnation of various Christs is mentioned in the first sentence of this principle: its subject is the Eternal Christ, particularly his transformation of human beings into Christs. This is the real Christine Gospel whose announcing was the mission of Jesus the Christ as it has been of all sages throughout all ages.

The greatest mystery of all times lies in the way that Christ lives in the heart. Certainly the dwelling of Christ in our heart is the greatest mystery of all times, of all phases of relative existence. Because we are one with God and Christ is God, he has dwelt in us, and we in him, forever. But here the principle is speaking of that full and living advent of Christ throughout the total being of those who become Christed. How is it possible that the Infinite enters into the finite, making it infinite as well? He that is God by nature transforms the nature of the individual spirit and assumes it into Infinite Being without in any way changing its eternal status as finite. It becomes both finite and infinite, both relative and absolute. How this contradiction can come about is "the greatest mystery of all times." Regarding this mystery revealed in Christ Jesus, Saint Paul wrote: "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Timothy 3:16). The same is also to be our experience. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (I John 2:6). Since this is our destiny, what is hindering its accomplishment?

Christ cannot live in clammy dens of carnal things. "Carnal" comes from *sarkikos*, "fleshly." Sarkikos implies not only physical embodiment but a consciousness confined to the physical: turned toward temporality and away from eternity. Wherefore Saint Paul declares: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not

subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7).

“Carnal things” are all things that are seen purely in their material nature (for when illumined, the person sees those very things as spiritual), and are those thoughts, words and deeds that affirm materiality and deny or conceal the spirit. They truly are “clammy dens” for they are like caves in the depths of the earth, cold and sterile and dark. Those who dwell therein hide from the Light that is Life, choosing the darkness that is death. “Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved” (John 3:19-20). Into such willful darkness the Light of Christ never shines.

The seven battles must be fought, the seven victories won... The number seven appears in the Bible more than four hundred times. Seven is a sacred number in other religions as well, especially in Hinduism, which includes Yoga, the science of transforming consciousness. The seeming historical books of the Bible, including the gospels, are profoundly symbolic. They are based on actual events, but their presentation is intended to teach the principles of esoteric truth through symbols. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. Isaiah spoke of it in these words: “The light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days” (Isaiah 30:26). For that reason in the account of Noah’s ark we find that he was to take seven of each kind of “clean” animal on the ark, but only two of the “not clean” animals (Genesis 7:2-3). The animals represent the traits of our mind; the “clean” are those that tend toward and facilitate spiritual realization, and the “not clean” are those that either do not assist in our realization but actually work counter to it. In this instance Seven indicates the perfection of evolution, the attainment of perfected (“clean”) consciousness. On the other hand, Two represents the deluded (“unclean”) consciousness of duality.

The Ladder of Divine Ascent has seven rungs, the seven levels of relative consciousness ranging from the lowest to the highest. The “conquering” and consequent transcendence of each level (for even the highest must be transcended to attain Ultimate Consciousness) is most certainly a battle. “Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight” (Psalms 144:1). “He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms” (Psalms 18:34). “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37). “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (I Corinthians 15:53-54).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna” (Revelation 2:17).

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God” (Revelation 3:12).

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne” (Revelation 3:21).

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7).

For a symbolic outline of the seven battle-victories see the accounts given in the book of Revelation regarding the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials. These are three different ways of depicting those battle-victories. See also the seven tests passed by Jesus in Egypt as recorded in chapters forty-eight to fifty-five in the Aquarian Gospel.

...before the carnal things, like fear, and self, emotions and desire, are put away. This list is extremely interesting, especially since they are intangibles, only psychological, yet they are called *carnal*, fleshly. How is this? Because they are produced as the fruits of physical, *i.e.* material, involvement and identity. So physicality (not simple physical embodiment) is their root. Each one needs examining.

Fear. “Twice blessed are the fearless,... thrice blessed are the fearless....” (Aquarian Gospel 75:5-6). Fear covers everything from outright fear to anxiety, worry, hesitation, and self-doubt. It comes from a conviction of weakness and incapability that arises from our not realizing our true nature and its permanent link with God. In essence, fear is doubt of God, and of our selves. It comes from inexperience and is not a sin or something for us to slap ourselves around over. Because we have been so long separated in our awareness from both the Divine and our own divine nature, we have not only forgotten the truth of our selves, we have even come to *disbelieve* it. Fear, then, is denial of ourselves and of God.

“And Jesus said, Of what are souls afraid? Fear is the chariot in which man rides to death; and when he finds himself within the chamber of the dead, he learns that he has been deceived; his chariot was a myth, and death a fancy child” (Aquarian Gospel 52:15-16).

“When man comes to himself and comprehends the fact that he is son of God, and knows that in himself lies all the powers of God, he is a master mind and all the elements will hear his voice and gladly do his will. Two sturdy asses bind the will of man; their names are Fear and Unbelief. When these are caught and turned aside, the will of man will know no bounds; then man has but to speak and it is done” (Aquarian Gospel 92:11-12).

“My little flock, fear not; it is your Father’s will that you shall rule the kingdom of the soul” (Aquarian Gospel 112:2).

“Then Jesus said, Fear not, for I will be your boon companion all the way” (Aquarian Gospel 175:19).

“You are not abandoned in your struggle for the crown of life. Your Father lives, and you shall live. God has a care for every living thing. He numbers stars, and suns, and moons; he numbers angels, men and every thing below; the birds, the flowers, the trees; the very petals of the rose he knows by name, and every one is

numbered in his Book of Life; and every hair upon your head, and every drop of blood within your veins, he knows by number and by rhythm. He hears the birdling's call, the cricket's chirp, the glow worm's song; and not a sparrow falls to earth without his knowledge and consent. A sparrow seems a thing of little worth; yea, five of them are worth two farthings in the market place, and yet God cares for every one of them. Will he not care much more for you who bear his image in your soul? Fear not to make confession of the Christ before the sons of men, and God will own you as his sons and daughters in the presence of the host of heaven" (Aquarian Gospel 109:20-28).

Self. "There are two selves; the higher and the lower self. The higher self is human spirit clothed with soul, made in the form of God. The lower self, the carnal self, the body of desires, is a reflection of the higher self, distorted by the murky ethers of the flesh. The lower self is an illusion, and will pass away; the higher self is God in man, and will not pass away. The lower self is the embodiment of truth reversed, and so is falsehood manifest. The higher self is justice, mercy, love and right; the lower self is what the higher self is not. The lower self breeds hatred, slander, lewdness, murders, theft, and everything that harms; the higher self is mother of the virtues and the harmonies of life. The lower self is rich in promises, but poor in blessedness and peace; it offers pleasure, joy and satisfying gains; but gives unrest and misery and death. It gives men apples that are lovely to the eye and pleasant to the smell; their cores are full of bitterness and gall. If you would ask me what to study I would say, yourselves; and when you will have studied them, and then would ask me what to study next, I would reply, yourselves. He who knows well his lower self, knows the illusions of the world, knows of the things that pass away; and he who knows his higher self, knows God; knows well the things that cannot pass away. Thrice blessed is the man who has made purity and love his very own; he has been ransomed from the perils of the lower self and is himself his higher self. The only devil from which men must be redeemed is self, the lower self. If man would find his devil he must look within; his name is self. If man would find his savior he must look within; and when the demon self has been dethroned the savior, Love, will be exalted to the throne of power" (Aquarian Gospel 8:5-16, 21-22). These words of Jesus Himself are sufficient.

Emotions. The shortest verse in the Bible is: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). These words that show Jesus as a person of deep feeling. Eight times in the Gospels Jesus is spoken of as feeling compassion (Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34. Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2. Luke 7:13). Saint Paul wrote: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15; "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (II Corinthians 11:29); "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Hebrews 13:3). And Saint Peter: "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful" (I Peter 3:8). Obviously, then, we are not exhorted to be emotionless, unfeeling automatons, "detached" from our fellow human beings.

In this principle “emotions” refers to selfish emotions or emotions based on ignorant misperceptions. They are explained in the Aquarian Gospel thusly: “Grief and selfish love, and hopes and fears are but reflexes from the lower self; what we sense are but small waves upon the rolling billows of a life. These all will pass away; they are unreal” (Aquarian Gospel 54:21-23). Such “emotions are the sprays that rise from human loves, and hopes, and fears” (Aquarian Gospel 54:25), they are not expressions of the spirit, of the love and compassion of God, which we must feel for all. Mistaken, ego-rooted emotions arise from our forgetfulness of God and compound that forgetfulness. Moreover, they delude us into thinking that we are feeling positive, spiritual emotions, so we never grow beyond them into the emotions we should be feeling. Low emotions are really self-oriented, including such feelings as anger, hatred, resentment, greed and impatience. They must have no part in our life, for they prevent the right feelings from arising in us.

Desire. Here, too, an egocentric force is being spoken of. Jesus expressed desire that was positive, saying: “With desire I have desired” (Luke 22:15), and so do all virtuous people, what to speak of the holy. If God did not desire our welfare the cosmos would not exist. What this Principle objects to is selfish craving and desire, for “the body of desires extols the selfish self” (Aquarian Gospel 9:28).

When Jesus was reprimanded by the “good” for associating with “bad” people, his words explained this matter of negative desire: “The sin lies in the wish, in the desire, not in the act. You covet other people’s wealth; you look at charming forms, and deep within your hearts you lust for them. Deceit you practice every day, and wish for gold, for honor and for fame, just for your selfish selves. The man who covets is a thief, and she who lusts is courtesan. You who are none of these speak out” (Aquarian Gospel 27:16-19).

“The letter of the law deals with the acts of man; the spirit of the law takes note of his desires” (Aquarian Gospel 95:43).

“The letter of the law commands; you shall not kill; and he who kills must stand before the judgement seat. A person may desire to kill, yet if he does not kill he is not judged by law. The spirit of the law avers that he who shall desire to kill, or seeks revenge, is angry with a man without sufficient cause, must answer to the judge” (Aquarian Gospel 97:5-7).

“Before the eyes of law a man to steal must take a thing that can be seen with eyes of flesh, without the knowledge or consent of him to whom the thing belongs. But, lo, I say that he who in his heart desires to possess that which is not his own, and would deprive the owner of the thing without his knowledge or consent, is in the sight of God, a thief. The things that men see not with eyes of flesh are of more worth than are the things that man can see. A man’s good name is worth a thousand mines of gold, and he who says a word or does a deed that injures or defames that name has taken what is not his own, and is a thief. Upon a table of the law we also read: Thou shalt not covet anything. To covet is an all-consuming wish to have what is not right for one to have. And such a wish, within the spirit of the law, is theft” (Aquarian Gospel 98:17-23).

“The will is bridled by the flesh desires” (Aquarian Gospel 107:31).

One of the most interesting verses in the Aquarian Gospel speaks of Saint Mary Magdalene as “a courtesan who had been *cured* of her *desire* to sin” (Aquarian Gospel 104:14).

When this is done the Christ will take possession of the soul; the work is done, and man and God are one.

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20).

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (John 14:21).

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:20-26).

“And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (I Corinthians 15:28).

“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:6).

And Philo wrote the seventh: A perfect man! To bring before the Triune God a being such as this was nature made. This consummation is the highest revelation of the mystery of life. When all the essences of carnal things have been transmuted into soul, and all the essences of soul have been returned to Holy Breath, and man is made a perfect God, the drama of Creation will conclude. And this is all. (Aquarian Gospel 59:13-16)

The purpose of all “things” is the perfection of the individual. All creation is meant to be a ladder of ascent to the Creator. There is no greater miracle than the divinization of humanity. Not even creation is greater, for it is a simple matter for God to create, but for man to attain divinity is a result of incalculable effort. God is always God, but for an individual spirit to achieve infinity is simply

incomprehensible.

For centuries Christian mystics have spoken of three stages in our attainment of perfection: purgative, illuminative, and unitive. Through purgation “all the essences of carnal things [are] transmuted into soul.” Then “all the essences of soul [are] returned to Holy Breath,” assumed into the Light of the Holy Spirit. Finally, “man is made a perfect God,” no longer an image or likeness of God, but actually “god” though full participation in the Divine Nature. Then “the drama of Creation will conclude. And this is all.” Nothing more remains to occur, for perfect unity prevails. Therefore:

And all the sages said, Amen.

Then Meng-ste said, The Holy One has sent to us a man illumined by the efforts of unnumbered years, to lead the thoughts of men. This man, approved by all the master minds of heaven and earth, this man from Galilee, this Jesus, chief of all the sages of the world, we gladly recognize. In recognition of this wisdom that he brings to men, we crown him with the Lotus wreath. We send him forth with all the blessing of the seven sages of the world. Then all the sages laid their hands on Jesus’ head, and said with one accord, Praise God! For wisdom, honor, glory, power, riches, blessing, strength, are yours, O Christ, for evermore. And every living creature said, Amen. And then the sages sat in silence seven days. (Aquarian Gospel 59:17-25)

Again, the keynote is Silence.

Chapter Sixty

The seven days of silence passed and Jesus, sitting with the sages said: The history of life is well condensed in these immortal postulates. These are the seven hills on which the holy city shall be built. These are the seven sure foundation stones on which the Universal Church shall stand. (Aquarian Gospel 60:1-3)

“The immortal postulates” are worth deep investigation, for they truly are “the seven sure foundation stones on which the Universal Church shall stand.” But that Universal Church will never be an institution with all its attendant problems and—eventually—destructive aspects, but is an association of the Spirit, just as is the true Sangha of the Buddha.

Only in the Aquarian Age could this association be possible, for only in that age will there be living on the earth a sufficient number of those who can be satisfied with the dictum of Jesus: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). It is they who can also be satisfied with the declaration: “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21). Of course, humanity being what it is, there will be a lot of fakery and exclusiveness to satisfy those that lag behind in lower consciousness, but enough will “walk in the light, as he is in the light” and “have fellowship one with another” so no one will be able to extinguish that light (see I John 1:7).

In taking up the work assigned for me to do I am full conscious of the perils of the way; the cup will be a bitter one to drink and human nature well might shrink. But I have lost my will in that of Holy Breath, and so I go my way to speak and act by Holy Breath. The words I speak are not my own; they are the words of him whose will I do. (Aquarian Gospel 60:4-6)

In taking up the work assigned for me to do I am full conscious of the perils of the way; the cup will be a bitter one to drink and human nature well might shrink. One thing I learned by being around various saints, especially in India, is that genuine saints are eminently practical, level-headed and aware of all the angles. The way of the holy is the way of the wise, and as Sri Ramakrishna said: “If you can weigh salt, you can weigh sugar.” He was very insistent that his disciples be sensible and orderly in their thinking and living.

In the first part of the foregoing quotation we see that Jesus was “full conscious of the perils of the way.” There was no “happy time” nonsense and self-deluding optimism in his view of what was required of him. It is just the same with worthy followers of his wisdom: they are aware of all the possible difficulties that may arise. For Jesus has said: “Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply,

after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish" (Luke 14:28-30). This is the story of most "seekers," especially Western yogis. They set out to build the structure of higher consciousness, but they never get beyond the foundation because it is not well laid, and what they do erect eventually falls down, so they get disillusioned, and that is the end of the matter. Some become cultists of the worst sort, repressed and repressive, self-righteous in being part of "the highest path" or the "new wave" of spirituality. Their minds and lives are utter shambles, yet they stumble on in blind self-congratulation.

It is true, for the ego "the cup will be a bitter one to drink and human nature well might shrink," but we are not the ego or the mirage of human nature, and when we let our true Self, the spirit, direct our minds and lives we will shrug off the protests of ego and "humanity" and begin to manifest our divinity. Then we will find: "There is no hard way where there is a simple heart, nor any barrier where the thoughts are upright" (Odes of Solomon 34).

But I have lost my will in that of Holy Breath, and so I go my way to speak and act by Holy Breath. This is the perspective we shall have, the very state of being that shall be ours, if we strive correctly and persevere. The ego-will shall be dissolved in that of the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit Who evolves us and perfects us. Then our words and deeds will be those of God, having returned our consciousness to the depths of God where it originated.

The words I speak are not my own; they are the words of him whose will I do. This, too, will be the same for us.

Man is not far enough advanced in sacred thought to comprehend the Universal Church, and so the work that God has given me to do is not the building of that Church. I am a model maker, sent to make a pattern of the Church that is to be—a pattern that the age may comprehend. My task as model builder lies within my native land, and there, upon the postulate that Love is son of God, that I am come to manifest that Love, the Model Church will stand. And from the men of low estate I will select twelve men, who represent the twelve immortal thoughts; and these will be the Model Church. (Aquarian Gospel 60:7-10)

Man is not far enough advanced in sacred thought to comprehend the Universal Church, and so the work that God has given me to do is not the building of that Church. I am a model maker, sent to make a pattern of the Church that is to be—a pattern that the age may comprehend. The Aquarian Gospel shows that Jesus was brought up in the broadest awareness of the world's spiritual traditions, as was the custom of the Essenes, who vanished along with the right understanding of Jesus' mission and teaching. There is no denying that people like narrowness because it gives them a sense of security. "This is the best...", "This is the only...", are their favorite themes in infinite variations.

Intellectual and spiritual laziness also comes to play in this matter. Some people just do not want to bother thinking or seeking so they shrug off any impinging

reality by spouting some cliché, and that is that. The clichés go in and out of fashion. At the present time internationalism and liberalism are rising to the top, like all flotsam and jetsam, but the narrowness, selfishness, laziness and cowardice spring from the same roots as what they replace. No real thought goes into any of it, just a desire to feel comfortable, “good about” oneself and be left alone to pursue whatever they want. It is, of course, a form of hell masquerading as heaven. Nevertheless, the time is at hand when genuine openness (which must not be confused with “acceptance”) and universality will rise in human consciousness as a result of Christ’s second advent in this Aquarian Age. Until then, only the “model” is accessible to us, and that is greatly distorted and truncated. However it shows us what can be a reality rather than a mere dogma or discipline.

Passing time has hidden Jesus, replacing him with a fantasy that suits the psychology of narrowness, selfishness, laziness and cowardice. But truth cannot be hidden from those who seek it, and the Aquarian Gospel is one of its revealings in preparation for the Aquarian Age.

My task as model builder lies within my native land, and there, upon the postulate that Love is son of God, that I am come to manifest that Love, the Model Church will stand. And from the men of low estate I will select twelve men, who represent the twelve immortal thoughts; and these will be the Model Church. Jesus did not forget those among whom he had lived, even though he had spent more time in India than he had in Israel. We see how simple were the teachings he gave to the people in general, yet even the twelve disciples hardly understood what he said unless he explained it to them privately. His was the Gospel of Love: that God is Love and that those who become godlike are embodiments of love. When love is perfected in anyone then they are a Son of God. This is the goal of all human beings, whatever their present state. Love, then, is the path to God, and that all could understand. The Model Church, the Orthodox Church in the East and the Catholic Church in the West, may seldom have embodied that Gospel, but at least they handed on the words. And those who aspired to higher life followed them and became the saints who lived and breathed the Love of God.

The house of Judah, my own kindred in the flesh, will comprehend but little of my mission to the world. And they will spurn me, scorn my work, accuse me falsely, bind me, take me to the judgment seat of carnal men who will convict and slay me on the cross. (Aquarian Gospel 60:11-12)

There is an icon of the Virgin Mary called Our Lady of the Passion. It is said that it was painted by Saint Luke, and some believe that the icon known as Our Lady/Mother of Perpetual Help is that icon. The Virgin is holding the child Jesus, to whom two angels are showing the cross and the instruments of the passion. The idea presented is that Jesus knew from birth (having been born with full consciousness) what his destiny was. Nearly all those who do public work of any kind envision a rosy future filled with success, which includes the love and respect of “the people.” But the great Masters, those who come to profoundly change the

current of human development, walk another road altogether. The struggles and sufferings may differ in degree and extent, but struggle and suffer they do. The words spoken by the gypsy mother in *The Wolf Man* certainly apply to them: "The road you walked was thorny, through no fault of your own, but as the rain enters the soil, the river enters the sea, so tears run to a predestined end." Perhaps that is why they are so moving, even in such a silly movie (so much so that they open the sequel to the film). All Masters walk the way of the cross, whether mostly inwardly or mostly outwardly. Yet, being with God, their peace and joy are unmarred.

But men can never slay the truth; though banished it will come again in greater power; for truth will subjugate the world. The Model Church will live. Though carnal man will prostitute its sacred laws, symbolic rites and forms, for selfish ends, and make it but an outward show, the few will find through it the kingdom of the soul. And when the better age shall come the Universal Church will stand upon the seven postulates, and will be built according to the pattern given. (Aquarian Gospel 60:13-15)

But men can never slay the truth; though banished it will come again in greater power; for truth will subjugate the world. We, who look with such short-sighted vision, may question the truth of these words, but the Masters look down through centuries, even ages, and see in a more true manner. Perhaps Jesus had in mind the Sanskrit adage: *Satyam Eva Jayate*, Truth Alone Is Victorious. It is certainly an absolute in this uncertain world.

The Model Church will live. Though carnal man will prostitute its sacred laws, symbolic rites and forms, for selfish ends, and make it but an outward show, the few will find through it the kingdom of the soul. And those few are those we call "saints." Seeing behind the outer illusions they found in themselves the truth of "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

And when the better age shall come the Universal Church will stand upon the seven postulates, and will be built according to the pattern given. Truth shall gain the victory.

The time has come; I go my way unto Jerusalem, and by the power of living faith, and by the strength that you have given, and in the name of God, our Father-God, the kingdom of the soul shall be established on the seven hills. And all the peoples, tribes and tongues of earth shall enter in. The Prince of Peace will take his seat upon the throne of power; the Triune God will then be All in All. And all the sages said, Amen. And Jesus went his way, and after many days, he reached Jerusalem; and then he sought his home in Galilee. (Aquarian Gospel 60:16-21)

Chapter Sixty-One

It came to pass when John, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, had finished all his studies in the Egyptian schools, that he returned to Hebron, where he abode for certain days. And then he sought the wilderness and made his home in David's cave where, many years before, he was instructed by the Egyptian sage. Some people called him Hermit of Engedi; and others said, he is the Wild Man of the Hills. He clothed himself with skins of beasts; his food was carobs, honey, nuts and fruits. (Aquarian Gospel 61:1-4)

Saint John never abandoned his hermitical ways, having lived in that manner virtually from childhood. (Tradition says that an angel led him into the desert when he was only nine years of age, and he never left that mode of life.) Even though Jesus said: "Among the men of earth a greater man has never lived than John" (103:22), we see him holding absolutely to his chosen discipline.

Just as John was what he was, so people were what they were—and still are. The foolish called him a "wild man" but the sensible knew he was a holy hermit. Most important, we see that he was a pure vegetarian. This is a fundamental requisite of spiritual life. That is why in Western Christianity every time there has been a spiritual revival or movement, vegetarianism has been a prime factor.

When John was thirty years of age he went into Jerusalem, and in the market place he sat in silence seven days. The common people and the priests, the scribes and Pharisees came out in multitudes to see the silent hermit of the hills; but none were bold enough to ask him who he was. (Aquarian Gospel 61:5, 6)

Throughout the Aquarian Gospel we find sitting in silence, sometimes for days, is a prelude to speech or action. There is a great lesson for us in this: only from silence does the highest good proceed.

Although he was sitting in silence, multitudes came to see Saint John, for his holiness drew their attention. This is what the Indians call darshan, the blessing that flows to those who simply look at a saint. I have done this for hours in India, and found it quietly transforming. There really is a subtle spiritual force that enters into those that sit with a still mind, just letting a saint's presence soak into them. There is a kind of quiet awe that arises in those who behold a saint, as well. That is why no one spoke to Saint John.

It is interesting that both John the Baptist and Jesus began their active ministry in Israel at the age of thirty.

But when his silent fast was done he stood forth in the midst of all and said: Behold the king has come; the prophets told of him; the wise men long have looked for him. Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. And that

was all he said, and then he disappeared, and no one knew where he had gone. And there was great unrest through all Jerusalem. The rulers heard the story of the hermit of the hills. And they sent couriers forth to talk with him that they might know about the coming king; but they could find him not. (Aquarian Gospel 61:7-12)

But when his silent fast was done he stood forth in the midst of all and said.... Swami Sriyukteswar Giri used to say: “Too much of a good thing is no longer good.” Without speech human life, as distinct from animal life, would be impossible. Yet, it is good to “fast” from speech. For one thing, it helps the mind turn in and ponder itself as well as what we would say when we do speak. Whenever we speak, subtle life force is projected to whoever hears us. Actually, physical objects are affected, as well: their vibrations are literally changed over time. So speech expends energy, and silence recharges our subtle energy bodies. Silence is even good for health.

Behold the king has come. One who has consciously reunited his consciousness with God (Ishwara) is a Son of God and god. He is a true king, a Master. That is why in India a monk is addressed as “Maharaj, ”great king, because he seeks to reestablish his divine status on the practical level. He seeks to actualize what he presently is only in potential. Such a one deserves all respect and even reverence, for when we are in his awakened presence we are in the living presence of God.

The prophets told of him; the wise men long have looked for him. This is true, but how much better to look for our own divine Self, to ourselves become a King of Spirit.

Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. An ordinary mind cannot intelligently perceive an enlightened being. They may like such a one, and even say that “there is something” unusual about him, but it goes no further than that. It does indeed take one to know one, and only those that have cultivated their own consciousness can recognize one who has completed the endeavor. Therefore we must change ourselves completely if we would recognize a Son of God and realize our own divine nature.

And that was all he said, and then he disappeared, and no one knew where he had gone. There really was no more to be said. Wise are those who know when to speak and when to stop.

And there was great unrest through all Jerusalem. The rulers heard the story of the hermit of the hills. And they sent couriers forth to talk with him that they might know about the coming king; but they could find him not. Nothing creates unrest in the ignorant mind more than the liberating truth about who we really are. Most people ignore it, and many combat it. Few receive the news with joy and act upon it.

And after certain days he came again into the market place, and all the city came to hear him speak; he said: Be not disturbed, you rulers of the state; the coming king is no antagonist; he seeks no place on any earthly throne. He comes the Prince of Peace, the king of righteousness and love; his kingdom is within the soul. The eyes of men shall see it not and none can enter but the pure in heart. Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. Again the hermit

disappeared; the people strove to follow him, but he had drawn a veil about his form and men could see him not. (Aquarian Gospel 61:13-18)

Be not disturbed, you rulers of the state; the coming king is no antagonist; he seeks no place on any earthly throne. Nevertheless, those who are intent on this world are antagonistic to messengers of the True World, because their perspective may influence others and upset their plans. When I was seven years old I met a five-year-old boy searching the gutters for cigarette butts because he was addicted to nicotine. I saw something in him and spoke to him as best I could to explain the mistake he was making. I had gauged him correctly, and he stopped smoking permanently. The result? His mother, father, brothers and sisters were enraged and set a bunch of toughs on me with instructions to beat me up. I evaded them, but they hated me for a long time. I have known juvenile delinquents whose families became furious when they were helped by good people to reform. Two of my good friends were from a rich family which paid their way throughout the world destroying themselves with immorality and addiction. But when they came to their senses and began to lead good lives and practice meditation, their parents turned on them like raging beasts and did everything they could to force them back into their former self-destructive ways.

He comes the Prince of Peace, the king of righteousness and love; his kingdom is within the soul. The eyes of men shall see it not and none can enter but the pure in heart. Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. No spiritual quest can be begun until the quester seriously begins purifying himself. And it cannot be maintained unless he continues to do so.

Again the hermit disappeared; the people strove to follow him, but he had drawn a veil about his form and men could see him not. This is an occult power often possessed by spiritual adepts, including Jesus, as will be seen later.

A Jewish feast day came; Jerusalem was filled with Jews and proselytes from every part of Palestine, and John stood in the temple court and said,

Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. Lo, you have lived in sin; the poor cry in your streets, and you regard them not. Your neighbors, who are they? You have defrauded friend and foe alike. You worship God with voice and lip; your hearts are far away, and set on gold. Your priests have bound upon the people burdens far too great to bear; they live in ease upon the hard earned wages of the poor. Your lawyers, doctors, scribes are useless cumberers of the ground; they are but tumors on the body of the state; they toil not neither do they spin, yet they consume the profits of your markets of trade. Your rulers are adulterers, extortioners and thieves, regarding not the rights of any man; and robbers ply their calling in the sacred halls; the holy temple you have sold to thieves; their dens are in the sacred places set apart for prayer.

Hear! hear! you people of Jerusalem! Reform; turn from your evil ways or God will turn from you and heathen from afar will come, and what is left of

all your honor and your fame will pass in one short hour. Prepare, Jerusalem, prepare to meet your king.

He said no more; he left the court and no one saw him go. The priests, the doctors and the scribes were all in rage. They sought for John intent to do him harm. They found him not. The common people stood in his defense; they said, The hermit speaks the truth.

And then the priests, the doctors and the scribes were sore afraid; they said no more; they hid themselves away. (Aquarian Gospel 61:19-34)

There is really no need to comment on this. Saint John's words are easy to comprehend, as is the negative reaction of the foolish and the positive reaction of the wise.

Chapter Sixty-Two

Next day John went again into the temple courts and said, Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king. The chief priests and the scribes would know the meaning of his words; they said. Bold man, what is the purport of this message that you bring to Israel? If you be seer and prophet tell us plainly who has sent you here? And John replied, I am the voice of one who cries out in the wilderness, Prepare the way, make straight the paths, for, lo, the Prince of Peace will come to rule in love. Your prophet Malachi wrote down the words of God: And I will send Elijah unto you before the retribution day shall come, to turn again the hearts of men to God, and if they will not turn, lo, I will smite them with a curse. (Aquarian Gospel 62:1-7)

If you be seer and prophet tell us plainly who has sent you here? Spiritual fakes nearly always have an arsenal of questions or objections they throw up to cloud the issue and evade listening to wisdom. In India this really abounds. Smart-alecks spend decades going from teacher to teacher with a series of “gotcha” questions by which they hope to confuse the teacher and make him look foolish. It almost never works, but they keep right on. (In New Delhi two of them attended a talk I gave at the Yogoda Satsanga center and handed me a note asking if I could give them God’s mailing address and phone number if he really existed. See what I mean?)

One favorite, found often in the Bible, is “by what authority do you say these things?” or “who sent you?” On the surface this sounds serious and sensible, but it is not. Why cannot the questioners listen to what is being said and decide whether or not it is worth considering? Why care if there is no “authority” behind the speaker if he is presenting wisdom? Who authorized Edison to make a lightbulb? Who told Einstein to figure out the nature of relativity or energy? Yet this bit goes on and on. “Who is your guru?” “Who gave you sannyas?” “Who told you to...?” This is just the flap of empty minds. It is like book endorsements. Hack writers gather a group of equally mediocre writers (or academics) who will always endorse their books, just as they will endorse theirs in turn. This kind of intellectual inbreeding is rampant in the United States. Why a person does not just look through a book at random and determine if it is worth buying is beyond me. (I knew a university professor who went on and on about how wonderful a book was which he had not even read or looked though. His basis? It listed a book in the bibliography that he kept burbling was “a classic that makes *this* book worth reading.” Fathom that.) Right now as I write I am downloading some music. There are customer reviews on the website, but why should I have read them when I was able to preview the music itself? I listened; I liked; I bought. Life really is that simple.

The Prince of Peace will come to rule in love. And that lost his audience right there. They wanted a Messiah that would kick out the Romans, restore the monarchical

lineage of David, and eventually make the whole world subservient to their tiny country. Jesus' own disciples, moments before his departure from them asked: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). What effect had three year's teaching had on them?

Your prophet Malachi wrote down the words of God: And I will send Elijah unto you before the retribution day shall come, to turn again the hearts of men to God, and if they will not turn, lo, I will smite them with a curse. This is John's first hint to them that he was the reincarnation of Elijah. And he warns them that if their hearts are not turned about to face the Real instead of the unreal, "the retribution day" when the Romans would demolish Jerusalem and literally not leave one stone upon another will come upon them. They did not change, and the prophecy was fulfilled in forty years.

You men of Israel; you know your sins. As I passed by I saw a wounded bird prone in your streets, and men of every class were beating it with clubs; and then I saw that Justice was its name. I looked again and saw that its companion had been killed; the pure white wings of Righteousness were trampled in the dust. I tell you men, your awfulness of guilt has made a cesspool of iniquity that sends a fearful stench to heaven. Reform, O Israel, reform; prepare to meet your king. (Aquarian Gospel 62:8-11)

Ignorance not only drags to earth those who should be flying in the sky of higher consciousness, it kills them by destroying their own consciousness and so ensures that Divine Consciousness will remain far away. Saint John warns them to reverse this way of thinking and living, but he speaks in vain, except to a very few.

And then John turned away and as he went he said, In seven days, lo, I will stand at Gilgal, by the Jordan ford, where Israel first crossed into the promised land. (Aquarian Gospel 62:12-13)

We must actively seek wisdom and higher awareness. Back in my early yoga days, just about every spiritual layabout told me: "When the disciple is ready the master appears!" meaning that I should just fritter away my time like them until a "master" came in a puff of smoke and made me wise. Some hope! Others were appalled to learn that I would be so drastic as to go to India. (At that time almost no one ever did go to India if it was not a stopover on a world tour. I remember when American Express in New Delhi was only a two-foot section of a small counter in a bank, not even in its own quarters.) "India is within!" they would trumpet pityingly, and a bit annoyed at my obtuseness. Finally my best friend and I hit on a reply: "Well, when I get there I will find out if it is within or not." Somehow that would shut them up. And I can assure you that the glory I found in India could never have been within anyone but a God-realized person; that: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared" to be found in India (I Corinthians 2:9).

It is significant that John was going to that place where the Hebrews first set foot in Israel. It is a symbol of Original Consciousness which each one must

recover.

And then he left the temple court to enter it no more; but many people followed him as far as Bethany, and there he tarried at the home of Lazarus, his kin. (Aquarian Gospel 62:14)

The anxious people gathered all about the home and would not go; then John came forth and said,

Reform, O Israel, reform; prepare to meet your king. The sins of Israel do not all lie at the door of priest and scribe. O think you not that all the sinners of Judea are found among the rulers and the men of wealth. It is no sign that man is good and pure because he lives in want. The listless, shiftless vagabonds of earth are mostly poor and have to beg for bread.

I saw the very men that cheered because I told the priests and scribes of their injustice unto man, throw stones and beat poor Justice in the streets. I saw them trample on the poor dead bird of Righteousness; and you who follow after me, you commoners, are not one whit behind the scribes and priests in crime.

Reform, you men of Israel; the king has come; prepare to meet your king. (Aquarian Gospel 62:14-23)

Holy people always speak the truth or remain silent. Never will they lie or tell a partial truth to make people feel good. A bit before this I have spoken of the wonder of experiencing India, but this is not true for everyone. One time a man visited us who was walking in a mental and moral fog. When he spoke of his intention to visit India, the monk he was speaking to said: "You had better think that over carefully, because you may not like what you find." It is the same with saints, wherever they are. Saint Catherine of Siena was often sought out by curiosity-seekers who would end up hating her for her obvious holiness and her refusal to "make nice" with them. A woman who considered herself an expert on mysticism met the stigmatist Teresa Neumann and hated her intensely for her plain speaking. She spent the rest of her life defaming the saint through articles and books. Her fury was incredible, revealing her hellish state of mind and soul. Holy people are not the most comfortable to be around, and people often avoid them just as they avoid God.

With Lazarus and his sisters, John remained for certain days. In honor of the Nazarite a feast was spread, and all the people stood about the board. And when the chief men of the town poured out the sparkling wine and offered John a cup, he took it, held it high in air, and said, Wine makes glad the carnal heart, and it makes sad the human soul; it plunges deep in bitterness and gall the deathless spirit of the man. I took the vow of Nazar when a child, and not a drop has ever passed my lips. And if you would make glad the coming king, then shun the cup as you would shun a deadly thing. And then he threw the sparkling wine out in the street. (Aquarian Gospel 62:24-30)

A Nazarite was an ascetic who never touched alcohol in any form. So strict were

their vows that they would not even use vinegar made from wine or stronger alcohol. Saint John had taken the vow of a Nazarite when only a child. (So much for the nonsense about children not being old enough to make up their minds on spiritual matters. No one is too young to dedicate themselves to God.) So to give him wine was outrageous. No one in Israel was unaware of the Nazarite's rules. But this is the way of the world and it will not change. Just ask the vegetarians who are often given non-vegetarian food by people who absolutely should know better.

I met a brilliant organic gardener who had dedicated his life to helping people grow food in the right manner. He had been a vegetarian for over sixty years (he was old but very healthy, I assure you). Once some "friends" invited them to their home and served him meat, knowing that he was a vegetarian. "But we cooked it especially for you," they objected when he refused to eat. "Did you really cook it specially for me?" He asked. "Yes, we did!" "Then you are no friends of mine, because you know I am a vegetarian," he replied, and left their house to never return. I have had "friends" try to force me into eating meat, even taking me to restaurants whose menu had nothing for vegetarians, as they well knew. I will never forget how "down in the mouth" one of them got when a waitress said: "Oh! we have lots of vegetarians come in here, so we have a special 'vegetarian plate' though it's not on the menu." As I say, this is the way of the world, and they are welcome to it.

Wine makes glad the carnal heart, and it makes sad the human soul; it plunges deep in bitterness and gall the deathless spirit of the man. There we have it. Those who are animated bodies with dead souls love alcohol (and usually meat, which is equally deadly to the spirit). Alcohol directly attacks the pineal gland, the "third eye" that is the seat of spiritual intuition.

And if you would make glad the coming king, then shun the cup as you would shun a deadly thing. So say the wise who, like the holy prophet, will toss the wine into the gutter and live soberly.

Chapter Sixty-Three

And John went down to Jericho; there he abode with Alpheus. And when the people heard that he was there they came in throngs to hear him speak. He spoke to none; but when the time was due he went down to the Jordan ford, and to the multitudes he said... (Aquarian Gospel 63:1-3)

Solomon said that there is “a time to keep silence, and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7), and the wise know the difference between them. They know whom to speak to and whom to not speak to. They also know, as did Solomon, when and when not to speak. True saints exercise this wisdom and often displease the ignorant and foolish.

Reform and in the fount of purity wash all your sins away; the kingdom is at hand. (Aquarian Gospel 63:4)

Trivial and egocentric people like to hear trivial speeches oriented to ego. Consequently they often are more unhappy at a holy person’s speech than they are at his silence. But the three points in this verse give us what we need to know to begin and maintain a spiritual life.

Reform. The word mistranslated “repent” in English versions of the Bible is *metaneo*, which means to turn around completely, 180 degrees, to change totally. Dowling’s choice of “reform” is appropriate. Since we live in two modes, inner and outer, our reformation must include both our external and internal life. Our actions and situations in which we live must be thoroughly overhauled, and so must our thoughts, attitudes, and perspectives. From this we can easily see why virtually nothing of any significance takes place in the lives and minds of those that consider themselves religious or spiritual seekers. And this situation has prevailed throughout the history of the world.

At the very beginning we must sit down and meticulously analyze every aspect of our life, inner and outer, discarding what hinders higher consciousness, and taking up that which fosters it. The best framework to use for this analysis is that of yama and niyama, the “ten commandments of yoga” given in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras:

- 1) Ahimsa: non-violence, non-injury, harmlessness.
- 2) Satya: truthfulness, honesty.
- 3) Asteya: non-stealing, honesty, non-misappropriateness.
- 4) Brahmacharya: sexual continence in thought, word and deed as well as control of all the senses.
- 5) Aparigraha: non-possessiveness, non-greed, non-selfishness, non-acquisitiveness.
- 6) Shaucha: purity, cleanliness.
- 7) Santosha: contentment, peacefulness.

8) Tapas: austerity, practical (i.e., result-producing) spiritual discipline.

9) Swadhyaya: introspective self-study, spiritual study.

10) Ishwarapranidhana: offering of one's life to God.

The Five Precepts of Buddha are also a good guide.

1) no killing or injury.

2) no lying.

3) no stealing.

4) no sexual indulgence.

5) no use of intoxicants.

No cheating or fudging in our adoption of these principles should be allowed. Further, we must apply them in the broadest sense possible at all times. For example, truthfulness includes honesty and straightforwardness, abstinence from intoxicants includes avoiding activities that cloud or confuse our minds, and non-killing includes absence of hatred or ill-will. We must also clean house in relation to the way we make our livelihood, the people we associate with, the place we live, organizations we belong to: everything.

Those who do not do this complete reformation will not succeed in spiritual life, but only waste their time and even harm themselves by creating conflicts within themselves.

In the fount of purity wash all your sins away. There is no way to rid ourselves of the scars and scabs we call "sins" except through purification. Only through conscious purification on all levels of our being can we hope to live in the state of purity. Religion thinks up all kinds of remedies for sin, but self-purification is the only way. We must realize this and act upon it every moment of our lives. That is why Patanjali lists shaucha, purity, as a requisite for the mere practice of yoga. To attempt yoga practice without purity and all the other yamas and niyamas is to mock the sacred science and to waste our time.

Saint John urges us to purify all our sins, not just clean up a bit and wipe off the surface dirt, leaving plenty intact. It is easy to only work on elimination of the glaring faults, but every single defect must be expunged from every bit of us.

The kingdom is at hand. This third point is a gem of highest wisdom, for when we try to reform and purify it is easy to become discouraged, to identify ourselves with our faults and failings and accuse ourselves of being "sinners" and so on. Such a negative and hopeless attitude will defeat us at the very start. So Saint John reminds us that the kingdom of spirit, of holiness and purity, is really right here with us: is within us. It is our nature, and therefore certainly accessible to us. We can never lose it, we only need to reclaim it.

Come unto me and in the waters of this stream be washed, symbolic of the inner cleansing of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 63:5)

In India they place a great deal of importance on sankalpa, the conscious making of a serious resolve or vow. It is the setting of the sails of the will to accomplish what we intend. Rituals can be very effective sankalpas when our hearts and wills

are involved. In fact, they can often accomplish much of what we desire by the mere performance.

All things are living energy, and when we touch a sacred object its holy vibrations are imparted to us according to the degree of our receptivity (again the need for purity). Water is a potent vehicle for vibration, and since our bodies are mostly water, contact with water highly charged with spiritual energies can profoundly cleanse us inwardly. It is all a matter of vibration. Therefore Jesus, following the age-old custom of the Essenes (of whom Saint John was the Master), recommended baptism as the beginning of Life in Christ. In chapter seventy-eight he will refer to baptism as the pledge of discipleship. Although baptism does purify and uplift us, it is just the beginning. The process of purification and upliftment must be taken over by us and maintained throughout each moment of our subsequent life.

And, lo, the multitudes came down, and in the Jordan they were washed, and every man confessed his sins. (Aquarian Gospel 63:6)

According to Anna Catherine Emmerich, when Saint John baptized people they stood for a while telling him the faults and past actions from whose effect they needed to free themselves: proof that no one thought the rite took care of everything for them. She said this was why Saint Matthew made a point of recounting that “Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water” (Matthew 3:16), for he had no sins to relate to Saint John.

For many months, in all the regions round about, John pled for purity and righteousness, and after many days he went again to Bethany; and there he taught. (Aquarian Gospel 63:7)

It is interesting to see that Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, was very important in the mission of both John and Jesus.

At first few but the honest seekers came; but, by and by, the selfish and the vicious came with no contrition; came because the many came. (Aquarian Gospel 63:8)

The church I was raised in had some interesting ideas about prophecy. They believed that in the twelfth chapter of Revelation the “flood” the “serpent cast out of his mouth” to overwhelm “the woman” (whom they considered to be the Christian Church) was the flood of unfit converts that came flooding into the Church when Constantine made Christianity the state religion. They considered that this was a much worse and more effective assault on Christianity than any persecution had ever been. They thought that large numbers in an institution usually meant it was hopelessly diluted from its original status. They had a story of an evangelist who was phoned by a friend to find out how his “revival meeting” was coming on. “It is the best I have ever held,” He enthused. “How many have gotten ‘saved’?” asked the friend. “None,” replied the evangelist, but thirty people have

quit ‘professing’!” Eventually I came to disagree with their theology, but they had some attitudes I still value.

Moths cannot eat fire, but they flock to a flame and often extinguish it by flying into it. Many spiritual groups and movements have been spiritually extinguished by the moths that joined them. It is really satanic. A metaphysical teacher once told me that the most valuable piece of advice ever given him was this: “You can always struggle and hold out against the enemy that is outside your gates, but when the enemy gets inside you are completely vulnerable and helpless against them, because you no longer recognize them as the enemy.” Following through on this, in later years he closed down a very successful metaphysical church he had founded, and began to quietly teach only a few people from his home. It has been my observation that whenever anything with real spiritual potential is begun, immediately false “friends” and “seekers” gather to destroy it in some way. I knew the pastor of another metaphysical church that did not need to close it down: he just got rid of the wolves in sheep’s clothing that came snuffling around in the beginning.

There are also those that want to submerge themselves in a group and feel secure in “belonging.” And of course, where there are numbers there is power and money, and many very bad eggs join in hopes of ultimately controlling the power and the money.

And when John saw the unrepentant Pharisees and Sadducees come unto him, he said, You children of the vipers, stay; are you disturbed by news of coming wrath? Go to, and do the things that prove repentance genuine. (Aquarian Gospel 63:9-11)

This should be the rule in all spiritual groups, formal and informal.

Is it enough for you to say that you are heirs of Abraham? I tell you, no. The heirs of Abraham are just as wicked in the sight of God when they do wrong as any heathen man. (Aquarian Gospel 63:12-13)

Many aspects of human life are spoiled by the attitude that just being “the right sort” exempts anyone from the rules of right conduct, what to say of spiritual pursuits. “I am one of the ‘chosen’” is a horrendous delusion. “I belong to the true followers... the true believers,” “I am a disciple of a great master” and so forth. I know of a church that presents a very benevolent and honest image to the world, but in reality the members are taught that there is no wrong in cheating “gentiles,” those outside the church. I myself have been cheated and lied to by the “born again” who proved their loyalty to Jesus by not being honest with a “heathen” like me. They seemed to think that to treat me honestly as they would a Christian they would be recognizing me as the same or legitimate. It was literally a point of honor for them to be dishonorable in relation to a “devil worshipper.” I have heard Protestants brag about cheating Catholics and even keeping them from getting jobs. Things were so bad in my Bible Belt hometown that the Catholics had to form a credit union to keep from being either denied loans or cheated by the local banks

and finance companies. It occurs in the East, too. I know “bhaktas” in India who shamelessly say: “Devotees of Krishna do not have to tell the truth.”

So this evil of thinking that the rules do not apply to those that belong to the right group, or that they are somehow better or more favored by God than others who do not belong, prevails everywhere. Empires are built on this idea that “we are the chosen/destined ones.” Saint John is warning his hearers that the same rules apply equally to all, that being a card-carrying member of the “right” group excuses no one. Rather:

Behold the axe! and every tree that bears not wholesome fruit is cut down at the roots and cast into the fire. And then the people asked, What must we do? And John replied, Accept the ministry of helpfulness for all mankind; spend not upon your selfish selves all that you have. Let him who has two coats give one to him who has no coat; give part of all the food you have to those in need. (Aquarian Gospel 63:14-17)

Every journey starts from the exact spot where we are standing. We see in authentic spiritual teaching that all aspects are considered, and that includes our daily life and our relation to those around us. Saint John gave these four rules that all can follow:

Accept the ministry of helpfulness for all mankind. This does not mean only giving money to others to help people, though that is good, but it means actively helping those around us in a personal manner. It can take a simple form such as mowing someone’s yard who is ill or disabled, or encouraging and comforting someone in distress, or it can be more involvement, but the important thing is to help those that are at hand, and even inquire about what help is needed.

Through the years I have seen people travel long distances to supposedly help others when they were ignoring people with the same problems right in their own home town. For example, I knew people who went to Montgomery, Alabama and stirred up trouble under the guise of campaigning for civil rights. When things started to heat up, they got out fast and came back home to give talks bragging about their great “work,” when right in their town black people were shamefully and cruelly being oppressed. A university professor once stopped me on the street and bragged that he and a bus full of other teachers had gone to our state capitol and marched with placards demanding full rights for blacks. When I asked him why they did not just go downtown and picket the chamber of commerce over the refusal of local businesses to hire black people, that the highest ranking student of our high school in its more than one hundred years’ history was operating an elevator in a local department store, and a brilliant musician and artist was a male prostitute to support his mother and handicapped sister, he was disgusted at my “negativity.” The same holds true for people who give money to organizations to aid people in other countries, while never considering giving help to those in their own land that are suffering just as much.

Spend not upon your selfish selves all that you have. Let him who has two coats give one to

him who has no coat. Give part of all the food you have to those in need. It is a sad situation when people have to be told this, but such is the human condition that is gripped by ego. In Georgia (the country, not the state) they have a saying: What you keep, you lose, but what you give is yours forever. Happy are the people that know this.

And when the publicans came up and asked, What must we do? John answered them, Be honest in your work; do not increase for selfish gain the tribute you collect; take nothing more than what your king demands. (Aquarian Gospel 63:18-19)

At that time tax collectors were legally permitted to keep any money they could gather beyond the requirements of the Roman taxation system. Therefore they were hated by all. Just how they could follow Saint John's counsel I have no idea, though I do know that in India the British usually commissioned rich people to collect taxes, assuming that they would have no mercy on the poor and would not cheat the government, but some were very fair and lenient, never profiting from their collection. Anyway, these rules can be applied by all in principle.

And when the soldiers came and asked, What must we do? The harbinger replied, Do violence to none; exact no wrongful thing, and be contented with the wages you receive. (Aquarian Gospel 63:20-21)

This, too, can be followed by all, though the third counsel would not be appreciated in modern times. However, I have known people who followed that very rule. One man I knew worked in the automobile industry in Ohio. He considered that the union forced the company to pay more than was just, so every payday he gave back what he felt was not justly his. I certainly admired his integrity and honesty. Sometimes it pays to be out of step with the majority.

Among the Jews were many who had been waiting for the Christ to come, and they regarded John as Christ. But to their questions John replied, In water I do cleanse, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul; but when he comes who is to come, lo, he will cleanse in Holy Breath and purify in fire. His fan is in his hand, and he will separate the wheat and chaff; will throw the chaff away, but garner every grain of wheat. This is the Christ. Behold he comes! and he will walk with you, and you will know him not. He is the king; the latchet of his shoes I am not worthy to unloose. And John left Bethany and went again unto the Jordan ford. (Aquarian Gospel 63:22-27)

External forces can do only token good. It is the interior process that truly "saves" us. Only "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27) can do the needful. When we awaken our inner Christ-nature, then will we be purified, cleansed from evil. Only in the wisdom of the inner Christ will we be able to order our life, turning from the worthless and drawing near to the Worthy: God. But if we know not the Christ of spirit, we will not be able to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Chapter Sixty-Four

The news reached Galilee, and Jesus with the multitude went down to where the harbinger was preaching at the ford. When Jesus saw the harbinger he said, Behold the man of God! Behold the greatest of the seers! Behold, Elijah has returned! Behold the messenger whom God has sent to open up the way! The kingdom is at hand. (Aquarian Gospel 64:1-3)

Jesus is referring to the first verse of the third chapter of the prophet Malachi: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.” Jesus tells the people that John is the reincarnation of Elijah, something they had been looking for as a prelude to the appearance of the Messiah. So obliquely he is telling them that the Messiah is at hand.

When John saw Jesus standing with the throng he said, Behold the king who cometh in the name of God! (Aquarian Gospel 64:4)

Minutes before opening the computer file to begin commenting on this verse, I came across a website about the Sinai Codex, the oldest complete text of the Bible that was written over three hundred years after the birth of Jesus. The site rhapsodized about what an important text this was and how necessary it was that the complete text be made available to scholars throughout the world. One of the main reasons given for its importance was that fact that it was “heavily corrected.” What it should have said was “heavily altered”—in other words, corrupted. The Aramaic Bible, the Peshitta, is a similar result of outrageous “corrections” to hide the original teachings of Jesus. For example, in all earlier texts the Holy Spirit is referred to as “She,” but in the Peshitta the Holy Spirit gets a sex change. After all, how could God be a female? Never! The words of Emily Dickinson certainly apply to the textual vandals and their admirers: “What confusion would cover the innocent Jesus to meet so enabled a man!”

In Dostoyevsky’s story *The Grand Inquisitor* the head of the Inquisition meets Jesus, who has reappeared on earth, and tells him that it has taken centuries to correct his religion and make it acceptable and workable. Therefore he will have Jesus executed as a heretic. So it is.

Here we see that John calls Jesus “king,” but he does not mean “king” in the contemporary Christian meaning of the word when applied to Jesus. Rather, he means that Jesus is the ruler of his own inner kingdom, just as each one of us must become master of his own being, not servants or slaves of anyone. Jesus taught: “Ye are gods” (John 10:34), but “corrected” Christianity teaches: “Ye are sinners.”

And Jesus said to John, I would be washed in water as a symbol of the

cleansing of the soul. And John replied, you do not need to wash, for you are pure in thought, and word, and deed. And if you need to wash I am not worthy to perform the rite. And Jesus said, I come to be a pattern for the sons of men, and what I bid them do, that I must do; and all men must be washed, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul. This washing we establish as a rite—baptism rite we call it now, and so it shall be called. Your work, prophetic harbinger, is to prepare the way, and to reveal the hidden things. The multitudes are ready for the words of life, and I come to be made known by you to all the world, as prophet of the Triune God, and as the chosen one to manifest the Christ to men. (Aquarian Gospel 64:5-10)

I come to be a pattern for the sons of men, and what I bid them do, that I must do. If we were not all potentially gods, how could Jesus be a pattern for all humanity? Many years ago, when I was in grade school, I attended a Sunday evening “youth meeting” at my parent’s church. The subject of forgiveness came up, and when I pointed out that Jesus even forgave those who killed him, an older girl snapped at me: “Jesus was *divine*, we are *human beings*!” What a convenient rationalization for not accepting Jesus’ example. No wonder she eventually quit coming to church and indulged her “humanity.”

Jesus is our pattern because he is exactly what we are: an individual spirit. He has finished his evolution and manifested his divinity, whereas we are still working toward what he has achieved. But we will all get there eventually. That is why Jesus consistently referred to himself as “son of man” even though he had perfected his eternal status as Son of God. Saint John wrote: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (John 3:2-3).

Right now we are essentially divine, but we need to develop and manifest that divinity. When those who are disciples of the Master Jesus meet him face-to-face they will not find that he is infinitely beyond them, that he is holy and they are not, pure and they are not. No. Saint John tells us that we shall find that we have become exactly what he is, for we shall not only “see him as he is,” we will see ourselves as we are, and see we are the same. We will not be “sinners saved by grace,” we will be gods revealed by grace. That is why in the mass rite formulated by Bishop James Wedgwood, who believed in non-dual reality, the priest says: “Under the veil of earthly things now have we communion with our Lord Jesus Christ; soon with open face shall we behold him, and rejoicing in his glory be made like unto him. Then shall his true disciples be brought by him with exceeding joy before the presence of his Father’s glory.” For Jesus was acting as our example when he prayed: “O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). The “self” of God is our Self, otherwise this petition would be nonsense. We are all Christs in essence, which is why Saint Paul wrote about “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). If we were not already Christs in our inner nature, these words would be

meaningless.

All men must be washed, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul. This washing we establish as a rite—baptism rite we call it now, and so it shall be called. Immediately after his declaration that we are sons of God, just as Jesus, the Apostle John continued: “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:3). Simple washing in water is meaningless if there is no internal cleansing. The act of will which we make when choosing to be baptized itself begins the purificatory process, but it must go on long after the rite has been done. (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.) Jesus is speaking of those who shall be his disciples. Later on, in chapter seventy-eight, Jesus will refer to baptism as a pledge of discipleship. It is not discipleship itself, that is the purification we must all engage in until we are pure “even as he is pure.”

Your work, prophetic harbinger, is to prepare the way, and to reveal the hidden things. For those of us who seek the revelation of our own Christhood, this is our work as well. We must prepare the way through purification of our inner and outer life. That purification will result in a clarity of awareness in which the “hidden things” become revealed. Esoteric consciousness is dominant in the Christine (one seeking Christhood), whereas exoteric consciousness is not just secondary, it is reduced to a minimum that is always subordinate to the spirit. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Galatians 5:16, 17). The Greek word *epithumia* is better translated as “desire” or “craving,” and is the equivalent of the Sanskrit word *raga* which means intense desire and attraction for external objects. Only in the spirit are the fires of craving extinguished, for total satisfaction is to be found in the spirit alone.

I come to be made known by you to all the world, as prophet of the Triune God, and as the chosen one to manifest the Christ to men. The Trinity is not just a dogma of belief, but a principle of reality. Both God and man are triune in their nature, but human beings have lost control of their nature and need to understand just what it is if they are to regain mastery of it. Original Christianity taught that human beings have three parts to their present incarnate status: physical being, psychic being, and spiritual being. One of the reasons the Western religions are so hopeless is their dualism, the insistence that there is only spirit and matter. The theology that follows from this is simplistic, blinding and destructive. For spiritual practice to be effective we must be aware of all three aspects, and the practice must transform the physical and psychic aspects in order to reveal and liberate the spirit. So Jesus did not come to teach a doctrine but a practical understanding of both divine and human natures.

Jesus is a Christ, but his mission was “to manifest the Christ,” both the divine Christ-aspect of God and the inner Christ that is the true Self of all sentient beings. Jesus himself will explain this more fully in chapter sixty-eight. Here is the essence of what he will say: “Men call me Christ, and God has recognized the name; but Christ is not a man. The Christ is universal love, and Love is king. This Jesus is but

man who has been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform, to be the temple through which Christ can manifest to men. Then hear, you men of Israel, hear! Look not upon the flesh; it is not king. Look to the Christ within, who shall be formed in every one of you, as he is formed in me. (Aquarian Gospel 68:11-13).

Then John led Jesus down into the river at the ford and he baptized him in the sacred name of him who sent him forth to manifest the Christ to men. And as they came out of the stream, the Holy Breath, in form of dove, came down and sat on Jesus' head. A voice from heaven said, This is the well-beloved son of God, the Christ, the love of God made manifest. John heard the voice, and understood the message of the voice. (Aquarian Gospel 64:11-14)

We, too, must hear and understand.

Now Jesus went his way, and John preached to the multitude. As many as confessed their sins, and turned from evil ways to ways of right, the harbinger baptized, symbolic of the blotting out of sins by righteousness. (Aquarian Gospel 64:15, 16)

It is not enough to stop evil ways; we must live in the ways of righteousness, for spiritual life is positive good, not just an absence of evil. It is we ourselves who must blot out sin by our righteousness, by turning from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to the Light, from death to Immortality.

Chapter Sixty-Five

The harbinger had paved the way; the Logos had been introduced to men as love made manifest, and he must now begin his Christine ministry. And he went forth into the wilderness to be alone with God that he might look into his inner heart, and note its strength and worthiness. (Aquarian Gospel 65:1, 2)

This is the first time in the Aquarian Gospel that we find the term “Christine.” “Christian” literally means “little Christ,” and was a derisive term coined by the opponents of the followers of Jesus.

Although it has been common for over a century for anti-Christian elements to portray the pre-Christian religions of the Mediterranean world as sun-drenched, fun-loving, uninhibited and “natural,” the reality was quite different. Fear and greed were the two motivations of the worshippers of “the gods.” Not only were the gods fond of taking on human or animal forms and raping human women, they and the “goddesses” were jealous of one another and therefore spiteful and destructive to votaries of other gods. Often they played a kind of chess with one another’s devotees. It was even more hazardous to be a priest or priestess. It was believed that if priests of Apollo mispronounced a single word of their prescribed prayers and invocations, they would be struck and killed by lightning. Mutilation and bloodshed was frequently demanded by the deities. Drugs and drunkenness was another feature of various cults. Castration of male priests was the order of the day in other cults. Nevertheless, the enemies of Christianity insist that these “fun in the sun” religions were cruelly suppressed by “negative” and “life-denying” Christianity, and the Mediterranean world became morose and repressed. And certainly it did, and does, seem so to the morally degenerate.

The followers of the “happy” cults groveled before their gods and goddesses in apprehension and fear, assuring their deities that they were their humble and devoted slaves. Original Christianity in contrast taught that all followers of Christ were destined to become Christs themselves. This teaching brought mockery upon the first followers of Jesus, including their being called “little Christs” in disgust and derision by all others.

Dowling coined the word “Christine” since “Christian” carried with it too many negative and incorrect connotations for his contemporaries. A Christine is one who holds the original teachings of Jesus that all are destined to become Christs and “Sons of God,” and who seeks his own Christing as his spiritual fulfillment. After all, Jesus had declared: “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). This could not be done by any but “another Christ,” a perfected Christine.

The work of the Christine is essentially a spiritual, inner transformation, a purification and elevation of consciousness. For this reason, Jesus our perfect

example “went forth into the wilderness to be alone with God.” Jesus did not intend to enter upon some body-oriented ascetic labor; he sought “to be alone with God” in the core of his spirit. For that reason he engaged in meditation “that he might look into his inner heart, and note its strength and worthiness.”

“The Self resides within the lotus of the heart. Knowing this, devoted to the Self, the sage enters daily that holy sanctuary” (Chandogya Upanishad 8:3:3). Authentic self-knowledge is essential for the spiritual aspirant of all valid traditions. Although knowledge of the divine Self is the ultimate goal, knowledge of all aspects of our being is necessary for attaining that goal. That is why the master teacher, Patanjali, taught that swadhyaya, self-study, was a major element of yoga. As a yogi himself, having spent most of his life in India, Jesus knew this well.

There is no place in spiritual life for arrogance masquerading as positive thinking. Wise is the person who knows both his strengths and his weaknesses. That is why Jesus asked his disciples: “Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?” (Luke 14:28-31).

Realism is a foundation-stone of successful spiritual life.

And with himself he talked; he said, My lower self is strong; by many ties I am bound down to carnal life. Have I the strength to overcome and give my life a willing sacrifice for men? When I shall stand before the face of men, and they demand a proof of my messiahship, what will I say? (Aquarian Gospel 65:3-5)

My lower self is strong; by many ties I am bound down to carnal life. This may seem strange to us, for we think of Jesus as a most exalted being, which he is, yet he is demonstrating for us the absolute self-honesty which we must have in order to reach Christhood. If there is no acknowledgment of a problem it will never be solved. Certainly Jesus was far advanced beyond the human condition, but the mere taking on of a body entails very real risk: only God remains untouched by incarnation in the universe. Of course the awareness possessed by Jesus was itself a tremendous strength. The more pure a person is, the keener he is aware of any possible impurities within himself. If the strong are not aware of potential weakness they will not remain strong. One prevailing problem of human beings listed by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras is “clinging to life” based on both fear of death (the unknown) and addiction to worldly existence (the known). Being conversant with Patanjali’s teachings, Jesus asks himself the reasonable question:

Have I the strength to overcome and give my life a willing sacrifice for men? Is it a small thing to overturn the influences of embodiment in many creation cycles? Can it be done? And if so, how willing will I be to give up my earthly life so others may live

spiritually?

When I shall stand before the face of men, and they demand a proof of my messiahship, what will I say? What is messiahship, and how is it demonstrated? Can it be demonstrated? Jesus will learn through testing, as must all spiritual aspirants.

And then the tempter came and said, If you be son of God, command these stones to turn to bread. And Jesus said, Who is it that demands a test? It is no sign that one is son of God because he does a miracle; the devils can do mighty things. Did not the black magicians do great things before the Pharaohs? My words and deeds in all the walks of life shall be the proof of my messiahship. (Aquarian Gospel 65:6-9)

The best exposition of miracles that I know is the thirtieth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*: “The Law of Miracles” and I urge you to read it. Here it need only be noted that those who know the laws of existence can use them to produce phenomena we call “miracles,” therefore miracles are supernatural only in the sense that they result from the action of higher laws. No one thinks of flying in an airplane as a miracle, but in the Middle Ages it would who have been thought miraculous. Yogis especially have discovered the subtle laws of the cosmos and have used them to the amazement of others.

The important thing to remember is Jesus’ statement that working miracles tells us nothing about a person’s spiritual status, that even very negative people can produce miracles, either on their own or with the assistance of negative spirits. (See Chapter Eighteen, “A Mohammedan Wonder-Worker” in *Autobiography of a Yogi*.) To attempt to prove Jesus’ messiahship or Son-of-Godship by citing his miracles is invalid. Examination of his “words and deeds in all the walks of life” proves that he was indeed the Messiah, a Son of God.

Someone might think that there is no way to now experience Jesus and know his greatness, but the truth is that he has never left the world, for he said: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). “Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7), is still true.

And then the tempter said, If you will go into Jerusalem, and from the temple pinnacle cast down yourself to earth, the people will believe that you are the Messiah sent from God. This you can surely do; for did not David say, he gives his angels charge concerning you, and with their will they uphold lest you should fall? And Jesus said, I may not tempt the Lord, my God. (Aquarian Gospel 65:10-12)

Egotists never censor their thoughts, words, or deeds, In fact they decry “censorship” in any form except for the ideas of others with which they disagree. So when they want to do something they plunge right ahead, considering that the more risks they take the more “real” they are being. I have read of foolish people who caused their death because they believed that God would have to intervene and miraculously save them. But God is as prudent as wise human beings and does no

such thing. In our personal life it is “tempting” God to take spiritual risks, those things which the Catholic Church calls “the near occasions of sin,” situations in which there is danger of our falling into some form of negativity. Slackness in spiritual discipline, thinking that it will do us no harm, is an example of “tempting” God.

And then the tempter said, Look forth upon the world; behold its honors and its fame! Behold its pleasures and its wealth! If you will give your life for these they shall be yours. But Jesus said, Away from me all tempting thoughts. My heart is fixed; I spurn this carnal self with all its vain ambition and its pride. (Aquarian Gospel 65:13-15)

The “carnal self” which Jesus shows us to spurn is the false or “lower” self which is shaped solely by our experiences in material embodiment and our identity with the material which blinds us to the spiritual. Basically it is all we call the “ego,” the true “anti-Christ” which we must destroy before our Christhood can come forth from its imprisoning tomb of ignorance and ascend to Infinity, ending its long, long journey through many creation cycles. To do this we must banish all negative and foolish thoughts by permanently fixing our consciousness in God through meditation practice.

For forty days did Jesus wrestle with his carnal self; his higher self prevailed. He then was hungry, but his friends had found him and they ministered to him. (Aquarian Gospel 65:16)

We tend to think that after Jesus’ initial rejection-responses to the temptations it was all over. But here we see that the temptations were just the beginning, just the revealing of what Jesus would have to struggle against. For forty days he engaged in the life-or-death struggle against the ego. Having vanquished the ego he could later say: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

Then Jesus left the wilderness and in the consciousness of Holy Breath, he came unto the camps of John and taught. (Aquarian Gospel 65:17)

We must not just live in harmony with or according to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit (Holy Breath), we must unite our consciousness with that of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Wisdom, and live as holy spirits ourselves, one with God eternally.

Chapter Sixty-Six

Among the followers of John were many men from Galilee. The most devout were Andrew, Simon, James, and John, with Philip and his brother of Bethsaida. (Aquarian Gospel 66:1)

Many teachers have made reference to their students being divided into the inner and outer circles. Few are those in the inner circle, though many may be in the outer circle. In Jesus' case there were twelve in the inner circle even when thousands were following him. Now we are going to be told about the first six of the inner circle and how they became followers of Jesus.

One day as Andrew, Philip and a son of Zebedee, were talking with the harbinger, the Logos came, and John exclaimed, Behold the Christ! And then the three disciples followed Jesus, and he asked, What do you seek And the disciples asked, Where do you live? And Jesus answered, Come and see. (Aquarian Gospel 66:2-4)

This is a most important symbolic lesson. Those who are content to adulate and flatter a Master never get anywhere: they begin in the ego, so they end in the ego. They are the type who build an organization around the teacher and do all kinds of things to make it into a personality cult. These have no interior life whatsoever, just the opposite, and are not students at all. The worthy students are utterly different. They aspire to attain the enlightened state of a Master. Therefore when Jesus asked the three what they were seeking, they wanted to know where he "lived"—what was the state of consciousness in which he was established. They did not seek words or miracles, they aspired to enlightenment.

Sri Ramakrishna spoke of it this way: "A man kept a solution of dye in a tub. Many people came to him to have their clothes dyed. He would ask a customer, 'What color should you like to have your cloth dyed?' If the customer wanted red, then the man would dip the cloth in the tub and say, 'Here is your cloth dyed red.' If another customer wanted his cloth dyed yellow, the man would dip his cloth in the same tub and say, 'Here is your cloth dyed yellow.' If a customer wanted his cloth dyed blue, the man would dip it in the same tub and say, 'Here is your cloth dyed blue.' Thus he would dye the clothes of his customers different colors, dipping them all in the same solution. One of the customers watched all this with amazement. The man asked him, 'Well? What color do you want for your cloth?' The customer said, 'Brother, dye my cloth the color of the dye in your tub.'"

The wise student seeks the "color" of the Master—his state of consciousness. The foolish groupies go on and on about the teacher's externals, including his spoken words, but the sensible ones are intent on consciousness alone. One of Paramhansa Yogananda's beloved disciples, Brother Bimalananda, told me once that those who came to the ashram for Yogananda's personality during his lifetime would

eventually leave, but those who came for self-realization remained and persevered in their spiritual practice.

A true Master has only one message: “Come and see.”

And Andrew called his brother Simon, saying, Come with me, for I have found the Christ. When Jesus looked in Simon’s face he said, Behold a rock! and Peter is your name. (Aquarian Gospel 66:5, 6)

Two things are indicated here. The first is the fact that the moment a Master sees us he knows all about us, much more than we do ourselves, which is why he can guide us. Masters recognize their disciples from past lives. Yogananda often referred to a disciple’s past life connection with him at their first meeting. When he saw Brother Bimalananda from a distance he began laughing heartily. Later he revealed to Brother Bimalananda that he had been a kind of gymnastic clown in his previous life and Yogananda was remembering his funny antics.

Second is the connection between our name and our destiny. There is a whole esoteric science of analyzing a person’s name to discover their life pattern. A friend once pointed out to me that people who were deeply involved in Indian philosophy and yoga often had names that sounded very much like meaningful Sanskrit words. In my case, from childhood other children would sometimes call me “George” for no apparent reason, even though they knew my “real” name. Finally, a great mystic spontaneously gave me the name George. This amazed me, and I was further surprised when I found that my “real” name meant “mighty warrior skilled with a spear,” which is an exact description of Saint George!

Petros means “rock,” and Jesus is explaining that Saint Peter was given that name at birth because he was a spiritual rock. (Actually his Hebrew name was Cephas, which means rock. Peter is the Greek equivalent.)

And Philip found Nathaniel sitting by a tree, and said, My brother, come with me, for I have found the Christ! In Nazareth he abides. Nathaniel said, Can anything of good come out of Nazareth? And Philip answered, Come and see. When Jesus saw Nathaniel come he said, Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile! Nathaniel said, How can you speak about me thus? And Jesus said, I saw you as you sat beneath the fig tree over there, before your brother called. Nathaniel lifted up his hands and said, This surely is the Christ, the king, for whom the harbinger has often testified. (Aquarian Gospel 66:7-12)

Again, the Masters know all about those whom they are destined to guide toward the Kingdom. Often they refer to things in the student’s past that no one else knows. For example, we find this in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*:

MASTER [Sri Ramakrishna]: “Do you remember the great storm of the month of Aswin?”

M [the author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and “Master Mahasaya the Blissful Devotee” in *Autobiography of a Yogi*]: “Yes, sir. I was very young at that time—nine or

ten years old. I was alone in a room while the storm was raging, and I prayed to God.”

M. was surprised and said to himself: “Why did the Master suddenly ask me about the great storm of Aswin? Does he know that I was alone at that time earnestly praying to God with tears in my eyes? Does he know all this? Has he been protecting me as my guru since my very birth?”

In the thirty-fourth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Lahiri Mahasaya was told by his guru: “As you lived out your human term of womb-life, and emerged a babe, my eye was ever on you. When you covered your tiny form in the lotus posture under the Nadia sands in your childhood, I was invisibly present! Patiently, month after month, year after year, I have watched over you, waiting for this perfect day. Now you are with me!”

I knew a woman whose guru called her by a “pet name” known only to her and her mother. And here we see the same with Jesus.

And John went forth and found his brother James, and brought him to the Christ.

The six disciples went with Jesus to the place where he abode. And Peter said, We long have sought for Christ. We came from Galilee to John; we thought that he was Christ, but he confessed to us that he was not; That he was but the harbinger sent forth to clear the way, and make the pathway easy for the coming king; and when you came he said, Behold the Christ! And we would gladly follow where you go. Lord, tell us what to do. (Aquarian Gospel 66:13-17)

We see right away why Saint Peter was a leader among the apostles. He says two things that are absolutely essential for a seeker of true wisdom.

First, he vows to follow Jesus wherever that might be. Right at the beginning the seeker must determine that he will do *anything* that is required to find God. There is no place he will not go, no thing he will not do and no sacrifice he will not make. Yogananda’s first American disciple, Dr. M. W. Lewis, said in a public talk (“Attaining Inner Peace,” San Diego, January 27, 1957) that the aspirant must not make any mental reservation whatsoever, that if even mentally he holds back something, thinking “I could not do that” or “I could not give that up,” He will be sure to fail in spiritual life.

When I filled out the form to subscribe to the Self-Realization Fellowship lessons, there was a box to check if I wanted the lessons to be sent in a plain envelope with no return address, obviously so no one would know I was studying yoga. This was in 1960 and I was living in the so-called Bible Belt and my parents belonged to a very fundamentalist Protestant church, outside of which there was only the devil—or so they thought. But I realized that if I could not take the heat I should not even go into the kitchen. So I did not check that box. Every time my lessons came with the return address and the symbol of SRF right there on the outside I was happy and grateful to God, not ashamed or worried someone might

not approve. Those who cannot stand up to external opposition will certainly not survive internal opposition arising from inner ignorance and negativity. No one can join an army and ask to not wear a uniform or carry a weapon.

Second, Saint Peter asks: “ Lord, tell us what to do.” He does not ask what to believe or what to say, but what *to do*. For without following the necessary spiritual practices, among which meditation is unquestionably paramount, no one is a real seeker for higher life and consciousness. That is why Patanjali puts such an emphasis on yama and niyama, the do’s and don’ts of yoga, listing them first in the eight “limbs” of yoga. Without them there simply is no possibility of spiritual life. We do not “work up” to them, we begin with them and keep on with them until they are an inviolable part of our very nature, just as they are essential characteristics of the Divine Nature. We cannot discard them if we will be like God, of whom Saint Paul said: “He abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself” (II Timothy 2:13).

Discipleship cannot begin until these two factors are present and permanent in us.

And Jesus said, The foxes of the earth have homes, the birds have nests; I have no place to lay my head. He who would follow me must give up all cravings of the self and lose his life in saving life. I come to save the lost, and man is saved when he is rescued from himself. But men are slow to comprehend this doctrine of the Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 66:18-20)

The foxes of the earth have homes, the birds have nests; I have no place to lay my head. Jesus was not a fox or a bird, he was a son of God, and consequently no place on earth could be a resting place for him. The same is true of us, since we are also sons of God. Therefore if we would follow Jesus we must follow him into the realm of the spirit, into the Infinite Itself. This is why an esoteric creed says: “We believe in Jesus Christ, the Lord of love and wisdom, first among his brethren, Who leads us to the glory of the Father, showing us the way, the truth, and the life.”

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life as our living example. And I say “living example” because he is also the empowerer of those who worthily ask it. Jesus is a living Master present in the world and in communion with all who desire worthily that communion.

He who would follow me must give up all cravings of the self and lose his life in saving life. There are two sides to everything: positive and negative, active and passive. In spiritual life it is important to have this fact in mind. For example, it is not enough to stop negative behavior; positive behavior must be put in its place. So Jesus is telling us that all ego-based desires and impulses must be let go and in their place must come forgetfulness of ourself in the benefitting of others. We must save both ourselves and our fellow human beings. Our life must be directed toward both. This does not mean that we should become a kind of missionary and annoy everyone by preaching at them. Rather, we should do things that will benefit both ourselves and others. Some activities will involve contact with others, some will be actions that

uplift the vibrations of life in general, and some will be an unseen assistance of others. For example, prayer for others can be of great help to many people.

My maternal grandmother was a great healer, but she did all her healing in secret and people never knew she had healed them. One exception was a woman she raised from the dead. My grandmother had a hard time persuading her to not tell people about it. She was so pure and so holy that the world was blessed just by her being in it. To step inside her house was to go into another, higher dimension. There are greatly evolved souls that live in solitude yet are aware of troubles in the world and actively correct them. A man told me of visiting one such person who lived thousands of miles from him. The hermit spoke in detail of the problems my friend had been having in the past year and assured him that he had sent him blessings. And in truth the difficulties had melted away shortly after. As Saint Seraphim of Sarov and Yogananda often said: "Save yourself and you will save thousands."

I come to save the lost, and man is saved when he is rescued from himself. We are divine spirits that have been kidnapped and imprisoned by the ego. Only when we are rescued from this anti-spirit, this anti-Christ, can we become free and ascend to higher life. Again, we need to save ourself, and the saints and angels can actively help us in the process. The real "communion of saints" is when we arise hand in hand with these great beings who love and serve God through helping us.

But men are slow to comprehend this doctrine of the Christ. They certainly are, for it involves recognition and renunciation of the ego. It is hard to wake from the spell of the ego and to turn from all its lying promises and ways. Ego is a habit. Only by the awakening of our spirit can there be hope of shedding it and stepping out into freedom. Most "religious" people are intent on straightening out others. Westerners especially are always sure they are going to change society and the whole world by whatever their ideas may be. It is very sad to see how many metaphysical and even yoga groups go on and on about changing the world and bringing in a new age: sometimes even meddling in politics. This is just not the way things work, and it never has been. Just as patients in a hospital recover one by one, all on their own, and only then are released, it is the same with this world. It never happens in groups; in fact the gathering and creation of a group is just the compounding of the problem, a sure symptom of spiritual pathology. As the song says: "On the Jericho Road there is room for just two: no more and no less, just Jesus and you." God is our only companion on the path of liberation. In the beginning we may have helpers, but eventually it is just God and us.

And Peter said, I cannot speak for any other man, but for myself I speak: I will leave all and follow where you lead. And then the others spoke and said, You have the words of truth; you came from God, and if we follow in your footsteps we cannot miss the way. (Aquarian Gospel 66:21, 22)

This really merits a careful scrutiny, for it reveals both the attitude and the situation necessary for taking up viable spiritual life. Again we see why Peter was a

key disciple. Despite subsequent failings, his words in this chapter reveal that he was truly ready to follow the Christ of Infinity which was manifested in Jesus.

I cannot speak for any other man, but for myself I speak. Here, too, we see that it is all an individual matter. Others cannot speak for us and we cannot speak for others. God-seekers are not a herd, but absolute individuals. They may be friends and encourage one another, but the going to God is completely individual. Since God is on that Jericho Road with us we have all the help and strength we need. If we turn toward anything or anyone else we will lose the path and begin to wander. We see here that Saint Peter does not care what others think or do. He is intent on what he thinks and what he intends to do. It is a solo flight that has been called “the flight of the alone to the Alone.” Humans with the minds of herd animals do not even set foot on the road to God, but mill around with one another, secure and content in each other’s company. “Verily, they have their reward,” contentedly remaining outside God. Jesus has not “done it for us” nor has anyone else. We do it ourselves, for God has implanted that impulse and that capacity within us.

I will leave all and follow where you lead. Right at the beginning this must be the resolve of the aspirant because on every step of a journey everything is being left behind moment by moment. That is what progress is all about. Just as there are many people that cannot bear to grow up, and refuse to grow up, there are those who are the same spiritually. Full of nostalgia for “the way it was,” they will not move on but stay right where they were the first day they went to Sunday School and sang “Hear the Pennies Dropping.” It is only good sense to understand that growth implies change, that getting implies losing, and moving forward means leaving things behind. That is why Jesus said: “Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). Reality must be faced.

The journey is not haphazard, according to our ideas, desires or whims. It is a following: a following of God through the intermediaries sent to us until we develop enough spiritual intuition to follow God’s leading directly. There must be the resolve to go wherever we are led, “treading the thorns in the heat of day” not holding back in any way or refusing whatever is required.

You have the words of truth. Truth alone matters. Most people are satisfied with words that sound good and make them feel good, but such words cannot lead anywhere but to disillusionment and loss. This is especially true in religion. True religion is pure fact, like mathematics. That is why yoga is the only real religion. It is not philosophy or theology, it is attainment, and its ways are demonstrable as much as any scientific process, and even more so.

You came from God. Divine Life was behind the words of Jesus. Anyone can speak intellectual truth, but only the spiritually evolved have the vibration of Truth in their voice and even in their written words. Only those who have experienced God can teach about spiritual life and practice. Only those who have dived in the ocean can tell us about its depths. We should not give our attention to anyone but those, for their words alone are living and able to make us live. They alone can teach us.

That is why Jesus said: “All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers” (John 10:8). Our emotions, ideas, and desires upon which we acted, often in good faith, only stole our time. Spirit consciousness alone can guide us, and only those who are living in Spirit can show us the way to Life.

If we follow in your footsteps we cannot miss the way. If we do exactly what the Masters have done, we will definitely become what they are. They are proof of the validity of their spiritual practice. This is why it is utter folly to read books written by speculators and intellectual philosophers and think we can learn the way to truth. Only the Masters of Wisdom know the way. Theory is valueless: we need Reality. And that is known only to the liberated Masters. Further, the Masters teach us concrete methods to open our consciousness, they do not waste our time with mere words. Some of the greatest yogis I met in India never gave any talks, wrote any books, or conducted satsangs. They just showed the way and gave the “power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12). I will never forget them.

Then Jesus and the six disciples sat a long, long time in silent thought. (Aquarian Gospel 66:23)

It is not enough to chew up food and swallow it. It must then be processed internally and assimilated, otherwise it has no value at all. It is the same with spiritual teaching. The highest teaching can be in the silence. Writing about Dakshinamurti (a form of Shiva), Shankara says: “How strange! The master does not speak, yet all the disciples’ questions are answered.” In the twelfth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Yogananda gives this example:

“Sri Yukteswar related one of his own experiences in scriptural edification. The scene was a forest hermitage in eastern Bengal, where he observed the procedure of a renowned teacher, Dabru Ballav. His method, at once simple and difficult, was common in ancient India.

“Dabru Ballav had gathered his disciples around him in the sylvan solitudes. The holy *Bhagavad Gita* was open before them. Steadfastly they looked at one passage for half an hour, then closed their eyes. Another half hour slipped away. The master gave a brief comment. Motionless, they meditated again for an hour. Finally the guru spoke.

“‘Have you understood?’

“‘Yes, sir.’ One in the group ventured this assertion.

“‘No; not fully. Seek the spiritual vitality that has given these words the power to rejuvenate India century after century.’ Another hour disappeared in silence. The master dismissed the students, and turned to Sri Yukteswar.

“‘Do you know the *Bhagavad Gita*?’

“‘No, sir, not really; though my eyes and mind have run through its pages many times.’

“‘Thousands have replied to me differently!’ The great sage smiled at Master in blessing. ‘If one busies himself with an outer display of scriptural wealth, what time is left for silent inward diving after the priceless pearls?’”

My happiest memories of the Masters of India and saints of the West are the times I sat with them in holy silence.

One of them was my sannyasa-guru, Swami Vidyananda Giri, a disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda. "Don't let Swamiji fool you," some of his friends once said to me when Vidyanandaji was not around. "He has all the yoga powers. But he lives quietly and simply with us ordinary people and keeps it all inside." Their words did not surprise me because I had already figured the truth about him.

Every afternoon as evening was approaching I would sit with Swami Vidyananda on the veranda of the guru mandir. Everything would be quiet. With the faintest of sighs Swamiji would breathe out and remain in breathless samadhi. I would meditate (after the first two times when I watched the whole time to see that he did not breathe) until after an hour or so Swamiji would breathe in softly and be as usual.

More than once I was sitting in the guru mandir as Swami Vidyananda was writing letters. I was going through the Gita very slowly and pondering each verse. Sometimes I would think over a particularly difficult one and come to a conclusion regarding its meaning. All this was going on in my head; I did not speak a word. But Swamiji would put down his pen and very quietly say: "No, not exactly." And then he would explain the verse to me. "Do you understand?" he would ask, and I would answer: "Now I do." This happened so matter-of-factly, just as though it was commonplace.

Chapter Sixty-Seven

The time has now come for Jesus to begin his mission in Israel. He will enunciate the principles that he will embody for the next three years.

Now, on the morrow Jesus came again and stood with John beside the ford; and John prevailed on him to speak, and standing forth he said... (Aquarian Gospel 67:1)

Very early on in my first visit to India I learned that those with true wisdom had to have it coaxed out of them, much like you have to poke a honeycomb with your finger to get the honey to flow out. In contrast, the jackasses would corner me and expound philosophy endlessly, always referring to me as “my dear” throughout the ordeal. I would have thought them extremely over-familiar in using that expression, but I had read enough turgid nineteenth-century translations of the Upanishads to know that “my dear” was sprinkled throughout, and these nuisances had obviously read them and so were putting themselves in the role of upanishadic sages. But I was no “chela” or “shishya.” I was bored. And disgusted. Anyhow, I learned to quickly get away from the My Dears and do my best to get the quiet jnanis to impart their understanding to me. Jesus was one of them, so his first public discourse was at the request of Saint John the Baptist. As at his baptism, he is showing us how things are done.

Now we have Jesus’ first words:

You men of Israel, Hear! The kingdom is at hand. Behold the great key-keeper of the age stands in your midst; and with the spirit of Elijah he has come. Behold, for he has turned the key; the mighty gates fly wide and all who will may greet the king. Behold these multitudes of women, children, men! they throng the avenues, they crowd the outer courts; each seems to be intent to be the first to meet the king. (Aquarian Gospel 67:2-5)

The kingdom is at hand. Usually this refers to the fact that the kingdom of spirit is always with us, within our grasp, for the reaching out and taking. But in this instance Jesus is saying that the New (Piscean) Age has come, and through the teaching of John it is possible to enter in.

I say “enter in” because it is not enough to believe the New Age has come—we must intentionally step into it and begin to live in it. For an Age is not a matter of history, but of the opening of possibilities on the inner levels of being that previously were inaccessible. It is a completely interior matter that is realized by bringing it out into the outer life of the seeker. It is not automatic, but a lifetime endeavor. An Age is never a “movement,” but always an individual matter, even if many enter it. So to say: “The Aquarian Age is here” means no more than saying: “The plane has arrived” when we have no ticket, because we have no real intention

of traveling. An Age is only a potential—we must provide the actualization that is the real “coming” of the Age for us.

Behold the great key-keeper of the age stands in your midst; and with the spirit of Elijah he has come. Behold, for he has turned the key; the mighty gates fly wide and all who will may greet the king. There is always an Announcer of the coming Age. Sometimes it is the Master Teacher of the age himself, and sometimes it is a great adept who prepares the way for the teacher by helping people understand the Advent and the way to get ready for the teacher’s arrival.

John was not just a messenger of the Piscean Age, he had the power, as Master of the Essenes, to actually open the gate to the Age so people could eventually enter. (Again, it is not enough for the Age to arrive, its gate must be open and we must know how to enter.) The “key” was his own inner spiritual realization and his unique relationship with Jesus, for they were “twin” souls, although Jesus had ascended to higher evolution than John. That was as it should be, for John had been Elijah in his previous life, and Jesus had been Elisha. The reason Elisha surpassed his master is given in the book of Second Kings:

“And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

“And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

“And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

“And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

“And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

“And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

“And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

“And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

“And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

“And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there

appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

“And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

“He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

“And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

“And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him” (II Kings 2:1-15).

It is a fact that through their perfect devotion to God, great saints can bestow more than they have. That is, God gives of his infinite bounty out of his love for them when they ask it. Elisha asked for twice the spiritual development of Elijah, and it was given him, but he had to work for it, as his subsequent life revealed. Next he was born as Isaiah the great prophet of the Messiah (so he was prophesying about himself, which is understandable since great sages often know their future lives and speak of them to their close associates, as did Sri Ramakrishna and Yogananda). Isaiah was Master of the Essenes (as John was when he was Jesus). The life of Isaiah was spiritually glorious but no breeze, and he was martyred by the religious authorities, who had him sawn in half by a wooden saw! So there are no shortcuts, only incredibly intense times of development.

Through contact with John the Baptist people were made able to meet the Messiah, the King of the Inner Kingdom. Sri Ramakrishna said that saints are like matchmakers that arrange the meeting of the soul and God. John had been telling them about the coming Messiah and now the Messiah was present.

Behold these multitudes of women, children, men! they throng the avenues, they crowd the outer courts; each seems to be intent to be the first to meet the king. There is no doubt that many believed John about the coming of the Messiah and wanted very much to meet him as soon as possible. But wanting is not attaining, so Jesus continues:

Behold, the censor comes and calls, Whoever will may come; but he who comes must will to prune himself of every evil thought; must overcome desire to gratify the lower self; must give his life to save the lost. (Aquarian Gospel 67:6, 7)

In America we often say: “There is no such thing as a free lunch,” and that is absolutely true. Nothing at all is free: there is a price that must be paid for everything. Sometimes we pay before we receive and sometimes we pay after receiving, but we always pay. So Jesus gives the people some sobering information—and right at the beginning as it should be. He does not hype and peddle the spiritual life, but tells them the price to just meet the King, much less enter the

Kingdom.

The censor comes and calls. The “censor” may be a person or simply the operation of spiritual laws, but the seeker desperately needs the message:

Whoever will may come. The key word here is Will. Jesus does not say that those who wish to, realize they should, or feel like it, or “inspired” or “moved” or “called” may come, but only those who put forth their intelligent will in sustained effort can meet the King of Spirit.

I once saw a cartoon in which a drunk was lying in a gutter and asking a woman in a Salvation Army uniform: “Can you save me here, or do I have to go somewhere?” This is the attitude of many “seekers.” They want a free handout with no obligations. But it will not be given. Even the Prodigal Son had enough sense to say: “I will arise and go” (Luke 15:18). We must elevate our consciousness and then leave our present status behind and press on to the heights of spiritual realization. Swami Vivekananda’s message to the world was: “Awake! Arise! and stop not till the goal is reached!”

There are a lot of actions that accomplish very little, so Jesus now tells what must be done to meet the King of Glory.

But he who comes must will to prune himself of every evil thought. “Thought” includes all frames of reference, attitudes, and mental conditionings that perpetuate ignorance and delusion, the only real evils without which no evil words or deeds can occur. When purification of the mind, which includes the heart, is complete, then we will see for ourselves that the Kingdom and the King are truly at hand, welcoming us.

Must overcome desire to gratify the lower self. The lower self is all that we call ego. When the ego is not given even a scrap to feed on, then we will feast in the Kingdom of God. We must not placate or stifle the ego, we must banish it entirely, dissolving it forever.

Must give his life to save the lost. It is not enough to stop being selfish; we must start being charitable and merciful, doing all we can to uplift others and encourage them in their evolutionary journey, sharing what we have been given. “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

“Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luke 13:23-24).

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).

These are the simple facts. It is not that God’s standards are so high, but that man’s standards are so low. As John Oxenham’s poem “The Way” says:

To every man there openeth
A Way, and Ways, and a Way,

And the High Soul climbs the High Way,
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A High Way, and a Low.
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go.

That is the complete picture. Therefore Jesus says:

The nearer to the kingdom gate you come, more spacious is the room; the multitudes have gone. (Aquarian Gospel 67:8)

Worldly people are obsessed with numbers. ("Four out of five New York doctors recommend..." sold a lot of cigarettes when I was a child.) When they decide to play religion they either seek out a big, mega-organization or a small, elite group in which they shine as the proverbial big frog in a little pond, one in which they will be noticed and catered to. But the Forecourt of the Kingdom is very spacious because few are truly seeking what it has to offer. The world is its very effective competition, and the multitudes crowd its ways. The King is not disappointed, for he knows that it has always been this way, and always shall be, yet in time all will come and enter. This is the law of evolution. Yogananda said that when man tells God: "I have no time for You," God says: "I will wait." And so he does, knowing that after many ages we shall all enter and dwell with him. The Path will always be trodden by the blessed few, and the wise make sure they are one of those blessed.

If men could come unto the kingdom with their carnal thoughts, their passions and desires, there scarcely would be room for all. But when they cannot take these through the narrow gate they turn away; the few are ready to go in and see the king. (Aquarian Gospel 67:9, 10)

It is really the conscious choice of each person. That is why we have free will.

Behold, John is a mighty fisher, fishing for the souls of men. He throws his great net out into the sea of human life; he draws it in and it is full. But what a medley catch! a catch of crabs, and lobsters, sharks and creeping things, with now and then a fish of better kind. (Aquarian Gospel 67:11, 12)

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away" (Matthew 13:47, 48). This is a very important principle. The way of the world is to try to hang on to every single person and swell the ranks, but the way of Heaven is much different. There is a screening and testing, and "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14). This latter phrase is a play on words in Greek. Many are *kletos*—called or

invited—but few are *eklektos*—chosen. They form the *ekklesia*, the Church, the “called out.” It is up to us to make ourselves “fish of better kind.”

Behold the thousands come to hear the Wild Man of the hills; they come in crowds that he may wash them in the crystal flood, and with their lips they do confess their sins. But when the morrow comes we find them in their haunts of vice again, reviling John, and cursing God, and heaping insults on the king. (Aquarian Gospel 67:13, 14)

I wish I could say that my observation is different, but it absolutely tallies with these words of Jesus. Much of the time “seekers” end up rejecting and even reviling what they so sincerely sought in the past. Most “conversions” end up the same way, or else they become hypocrites, having reverted to their old ways, but hiding under a cover of false religiosity.

Two friends of mine had been intensely involved in drug use, including heroin. Wisely, they put themselves through a self-detoxification program and became free of their addictions. For three to four years they were drug-free and very involved in a yoga organization, both of them being Sunday School teachers. Then they went back to heavy drug use, which included blowing marijuana smoke in the faces of their little children, including an infant son. But they stayed in the yoga organization and eventually became the national directors of its Sunday School program. Today in old age they are the same, and exceedingly contemptuous of all who do not belong to their particular yoga group and follow their guru.

Most, however, just drop away and begin justifying themselves with all kinds of rationalizations and accusations of their former associations. A few times our ashram was visited by a man who had joined a yoga institution and given huge sums of money to it, even purchasing ashram and retreat facilities for them, and living as a monk in the organization. At his last visit we were amazed to find him defaming a major spiritual figure of the group who was deceased. He claimed that he had lost all respect for him because he had recently met a woman at one of their centers who revealed to him that the yogi had been an inveterate womanizer. He expressed both anger and disgust about this. We knew that the defamed man was really a saint, having met many whose lives had been changed forever by coming into contact with him. But we kept quiet, for he was obviously immovable in his opinion. After a few months we wanted to invite him to our ashram for a special event, so we called the ashram where he lived and learned that he had quit and disappeared. Through mutual acquaintances we learned his telephone number, but when one of the monks dialed his number a woman answered! And when she called him to the phone he was very sour and abrupt. He had joined the ranks of the guilty who point the finger at the innocent so no one will think of looking at them. Behind a big front is a big back. It is a good idea to run from and avoid the “I Used To Be...” types.

But blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see the king. And blessed

are the strong in heart, for they shall not be cast about by every wind that blows. (Aquarian Gospel 67:15, 16)

Purity of heart is not mere sincerity or emotional devotion. Rather, it is the very real purification that alone comes from the disciplines and practice of yoga. A lot of people “get religion” and become “earnest devotees” of this or that group or teacher, but only those who change themselves through sadhana (spiritual practice) can even see the King, much less enter into communication with him.

Most of God’s “friends” are the fair weather kind. The moment any kind of adverse or distracting “wind” blows they fall right over and crawl away. That is why Jesus said, as recorded in the Gospel of Mark:

“Behold, there went out a sower to sow: and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. And he said unto them, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

“And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word’s sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred” (Mark 4:3-10; 14-20). These last are those “strong in heart” who cannot be deflected from their quest for the Kingdom.

But while the fickle and the thoughtless have gone back to Egypt land for leeks and carnal herbs to satisfy their appetites, the pure in heart have found the king. (Aquarian Gospel 67:17)

Jesus is referring to the complaints of the Hebrews when they had escaped from slavery in Egypt and were in the wilderness on their way to the Land of Promise. “And the children of Israel also wept again, and said, We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numbers 11:4-6). Think of this! They had

escaped from slavery and were being fed on the miraculous food of heaven. As David said: "They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation: Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and had rained down manna upon them to eat, and man did eat angels' food" (Psalms 78:23-25). It is the same with "the fickle and the thoughtless." They return to slavery "to satisfy their appetites." Regarding such people, Solomon had said: "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly" (Proverbs 26:11). And Saint Peter the Apostle: "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (II Peter 2:22).

Reversion occurs for many reasons, usually absurd and equally petty. I knew a man and woman who had been born into one of the most useless and boring of fundamentalist Protestant sects and had raised their children in the same. Later in life they came to see the futility of their religion and began investigating higher pathways, progressing to increasingly metaphysical philosophies until they became authentic esotericists, both philosophically and practically. They became members of an esoteric Christian church, the husband began studying for ordination to the priesthood and at the same time headed a spiritual study group for whom he wrote marvelously wise articles, some of which were published.

One of their children was mentally retarded, though able to work in a very simple job. Considering their age, they began to encourage her to move out of the house and become fully independent. This resulted in her accusing them of no longer loving her and making quite a racket about the whole thing. So they wrote to their other children asking if they would take her in if they should die or be forced into a nursing home. One daughter wrote back that if they would "repent" and rejoin their original church, of which she was still a fervent member, they could all three come and live with her and she would look after her sister. Not only did they do so, but they began sending propaganda to their esoteric friends, trying to convert them to that church! It was bad enough that they had returned to a diet of their old vomit, but they wanted to get others to eat the same swill, including us. (They even sent us videos to convert us). For the rest of their life they ate vomit and rolled in the mud and excrement, knowing full well what they were doing. And were brazen about it. But their case is not hopeless, for Jesus continues:

But even those whose faith is weak, and who are naught but carnal manifests, will some day come again, and enter in with joy to see the king. (Aquarian Gospel 67:18)

Once an Indian yogi came to speak at the East-West Cultural Center in Los Angeles. When asked about incorrigible children, he replied that sometimes corporal punished had to be administered. When asked what to do if that did not work, he simply remarked: "Well, there is always rebirth." He meant it jokingly, but Jesus knows that in most cases it is reincarnation that will open the gates for higher life. In time everyone will "enter in with joy to see the King." However, we should

not wait for them, but get on with our pilgrimage. Who knows, perhaps in a future life we will help them enter the gates of Life—or they may help us, having travelled faster than we did. Either way, hope is assured.

O men of Israel, take heed to what this prophet has to say! Be strong in mind; be pure in heart; be vigilant in helpfulness; the kingdom is at hand. (Aquarian Gospel 67:19)

Take heed to what this prophet has to say. It is a wise thing to listen to those that have progressed further along than we have. Naturally, we must use our intelligence in deciding whether or not the words we hear or read are relevant to us and whether we will accept and act upon them or not. The same is true in relation to sacred scriptures. Sri Ramakrishna said that all things, including scriptures and other books on holy topics, contain a mixture of sugar and sand. The wise take the sugar and leave the sand. So it must be with us. Nevertheless, we must listen to the oracles of Spirit and sift through them. Just listening to ourselves, at least for a long distance along the path, will get us nowhere, for our spiritual intuition is not fully awakened and therefore not perfect.

There is more to this. Even though our intuition may not be perfect, yet it is there, and it often leads us through our “hunches” or inner feelings. In the story of the rich man and the beggar, Jesus said that the rich man, who had died, prayed to the patriarch Abraham about his brothers on earth. “Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him [the poor man who also had died] to my father’s house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:27-31). This is plain truth. If a person is not spiritually developed enough to be prompted by his intuition to listen to holy books and holy people, no miracle or sign can get the message across. History has proved this. See how Pharaoh kept renegeing on his promises no matter how astounding and even devastating the miracles were that he witnessed. So he ended up being drowned in the Red Sea, pursuing the Hebrews so he could enslave them again. Often miracles anger negative people and incite them to harm and even kill those that work the miracles.

Yogacharya Oliver Black, one of Yogananda’s most advanced disciples, told me about his ability to sense oil deposits in the earth. Consequently he was asked to find oil by being flown over areas where it was believed oil might be located. He did this many times and was always right in indicating where oil would be found. Yet, some of the people he helped in this way would not accept that he had this ability, even though they drilled where he told them and made vast fortunes from it. He told me that in one day he found nearly thirty oil deposits for a man who, at the end of the day, said: “Aw, there’s just got to be some trick to it!” Another man drilled

where Oliver Black told him and found over two dozen oil wells. But since one place did not yield oil, he told Mr. Black that he was a fake! “Did you drill in at an angle like I told you would have to be done?” asked the Yogacharya. “Well, no,” the man answered. “Then do like I told you and the oil will be there.” “No, I’m not going to.” So the foolish man kept on saying Mr. Black was a fake. As Yogananda said, “People are skillful in their ignorance,” and outright blatant, too, as in this case.

Many people have negative intuition and avoid all possibility of spiritual contact and knowledge. They will not hear divine prophets.

Be strong in mind. It takes intelligence and will power to succeed in anything, and this is especially true of spiritual life. Wishy-washy people never get anywhere at any time, but just keep waiting for a “tomorrow” that never arrives. That is why the greatest recorded spiritual teaching in history was given on a battlefield in the Bhagavad Gita. The sword of divine wisdom spoken there had two edges: “Be a yogi” (6:46), and “Fight!” (3:30).

Be pure in heart. This means to remove all obscuring elements from our consciousness, our real heart, and to fill it with the Divine Light. Then, as Jesus says, we shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

Be vigilant in helpfulness. “Love thy neighbour as thyself” is spoken many times in the Bible. We must be actively concerned with the welfare of others, helping wherever we can, manifesting Divine Love without which the world is doomed to sorrow and destruction.

The kingdom is at hand. These simple yet profound rules will open that kingdom to us, for we alone can open the kingdom, just as we alone have been keeping it closed for countless lifetimes. As Pogo said: “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

When Jesus had thus said he went his way, and with his six disciples came to Bethany; and they abode with Lazarus many days. (Aquarian Gospel 67:20)
May he abide with us, as well.

Chapter Sixty-Eight

The news soon spread abroad that Jesus, king of Israel, had come to Bethany, and all the people of the town came forth to greet the king. (Aquarian Gospel 68:1)

The readiness of people to accept that Jesus was truly the king of Israel is very significant, for except the witness of John the Baptist to him no sign of any kind had been given: he had so far worked no miracles. It is hard to comprehend in our modern, overdone society, but there is a very real intuition that is operative in the most simple people of “undeveloped” societies. I witnessed it many times.

But the people did not just accept that Jesus was king, they wanted to meet him. It is sad the number of people that believe in God and saints, but have no interest in meeting either God or his saints. Only those who seek shall find (Matthew 7:7). In the fourth chapter of Saint John’s gospel we find that those whom the Samaritan woman told about Jesus eventually came to her and said that they had come to believe in him because they had seen him for themselves, not because she or anyone else had told them he was the Messiah. This is a valuable lesson all aspirants must learn: without personal experience there is no true knowing.

And Jesus, standing in the midst of them, exclaimed, Behold, indeed, the king has come, but Jesus is not king. (Aquarian Gospel 68:2)

This is only the second time Jesus has spoken to a gathering of people, and he gives one of his most important teachings: that he is not to be confused with God, the only King of the Kingdom. Because he was one with God, wherever Jesus was God was present, and those who came near to him came near to God, which was why the good loved him and the evil hated him. Certainly Jesus was king of his own inner kingdom, but he was not the King of All. In India monastics are commonly addressed as Maharaj, great king, but this is meant only in relation to their personal state of spiritual realization. No one mistakes them for God (Ishwara). When Swami Sivananda stepped into the satsang hall, God became tangibly present, but none of us thought he was Satchidananda except in his personal consciousness. And he taught us that we could be just the same. That is what a real Christian is: one who seeks to become a Christ just as was Jesus.

Buddha said that no one was his friend who denied that he taught what he did teach, or who claimed that he taught something which he did not really teach. No one is worthy to be called a Christian who denies Jesus’ real teachings and substitutes things as doctrines which he never taught. In the main, Christianity (Churchianity) is a compound of fictions, distortions, and outright lies sprinkled with a few sublime truths that really came from Jesus. But just as good food mixed with poison is deadly, those sprinkles of truth are defiled with falsehood and ignorance. Saint Paul said (Romans 1:25) that it is possible to change the truth of

God into a lie, and modern Christianity is proof of that fact.

The kingdom truly is at hand; but men can see it not with carnal eyes; they cannot see the king upon the throne. This is the kingdom of the soul; its throne is not an earthly throne; its king is not a man.

When human kings found kingdoms here, they conquer other kings by force of arms; one kingdom rises on the ruins of another one. But when our Father-God sets up the kingdom of the soul, he pours his blessings forth, like rain, upon the thrones of earthly kings who rule in righteousness.

It is not rule that God would overthrow; his sword is raised against injustice, wantonness and crime. Now, while the kings of Rome do justice, and love mercy and walk humbly with their God, the benediction of the Triune God will rest upon them all. They need not fear a messenger whom God sends forth to earth.

I am not sent to sit upon a throne to rule as Caesar rules; and you may tell the ruler of the Jews that I am not a claimant for his throne. (Aquarian Gospel 68:3-10)

The kingdom truly is at hand; but men can see it not with carnal eyes; they cannot see the king upon the throne. This is the kingdom of the soul; its throne is not an earthly throne; its king is not a man. The kingdom is nothing but Spirit, and Spirit is Pure Consciousness. There are two aspects of the kingdom: universal and individual. God is the infinite Being and is Himself the Kingdom. Each spirit, being a part of God, a spark of pure consciousness, is a finite kingdom, and the spirit is also king of that kingdom. So we must first seek our own kingdom, for when we win that we will gain admittance to the Great Kingdom of God Consciousness and know the Great King. At present most people live in the world, but the wise seek to transfer their citizenship to the inner kingdom of spirit so they can see and know God by becoming one with him.

When human kings found kingdoms here, they conquer other kings by force of arms; one kingdom rises on the ruins of another one. But when our Father-God sets up the kingdom of the soul, he pours his blessings forth, like rain, upon the thrones of earthly kings who rule in righteousness.

When I returned from my first visit to India I experienced spiritual culture shock. One incident occurred in a doctor's office. Lying on a table was a magazine whose cover showed Billy Graham preaching. His face was twisted and his eyes sharp like knives, emanating negativity. The by-line on the cover said he had written a new book: *Peace With God*. From my soul I gave thanks to God that I need not listen to such a person, and that I knew God was not at war with me so I did not need to make peace with him or have anyone else do it for me.

When we, too, "rule in righteousness," the blessings of God will pour down on, and in, us like rain.

It is not rule that God would overthrow; his sword is raised against injustice, wantonness and crime. The sword of the spirit seeks not to touch others, but to change him who wields it. Those who would "walk in the spirit" do not seek to change the world

outside them, but seek to change their state of consciousness. And they begin that by purifying their life in all its aspects. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

Now, while the kings of Rome do justice, and love mercy and walk humbly with their God, the benediction of the Triune God will rest upon them all. They need not fear a messenger whom God sends forth to earth. I am not sent to sit upon a throne to rule as Caesar rules; and you may tell the ruler of the Jews that I am not a claimant for his throne. As an infant Jesus was taken into Egypt because Herod, the puppet-king of Israel, thought he would be a rival to his throne. Caesar in Rome was also a potential threat if he thought Jesus sought to dethrone Herod Agrippa, the Roman puppet-king of that time. And indeed the enemies of Jesus were constantly denouncing Jesus as a political threat. They had no more concept of the Kingdom of God than do the present prosperity-preachers and televangelists of today. It is not an earthly kingdom we seek, but the kingdom of the pure heart wherein God dwells.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:21-23). These are the real “promises of Christ,” of “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Colossians 1:27), “that by these ye might be *partakers of the divine nature*” (II Peter 1:4). What church today assures its members that they shall “be partakers of the divine nature”? No wonder Jesus asked: “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

Men call me Christ, and God has recognized the name; but Christ is not a man. The Christ is universal love, and Love is king. This Jesus is but man who has been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform, to be the temple through which Christ can manifest to men.

Then hear, you men of Israel, hear! Look not upon the flesh; it is not king. Look to the Christ within, who shall be formed in every one of you, as he is formed in me. When you have purified your hearts by faith, the king will enter in, and you will see his face. (Aquarian Gospel 68:11-14)

In Kabbalistic cosmology one of the highest planes of existence is called Messiah (Christ). It is inhabited by those great ones who have ascended (evolved) to become perfect reflection-embodiments of God. Anyone who attains that level is a Messiah, a Christ. Unfortunately, at the time of Jesus it was believed that “Messiah” referred to a single person and to his supposed mission which would be to drive away the Romans, free Israel and reign as king. There was nothing spiritual about it at all.

Jesus had ascended to the Messiah plane and therefore was *a* Messiah, not *the* Messiah, for Messiah also indicated an aspect of Divine Consciousness as the merciful Savior of Sentient beings. So Messiah is both a title of Divinity and

perfected humanity. “Christ” is that aspect of God which we call “the Only-begotten Son” or “Second Person of the Holy Trinity,” and it is also anyone who has attained the state of perfect union with God, the Divine Unity, and elected to return to lesser planes for the uplift of those still struggling up the evolutionary ladder. Krishna, Buddha and Jesus were all Messiah-Christes as were many others throughout the history of this world and all the higher ones. Many great Masters have passed from this world into more subtler regions where they assist others in attaining liberation—their own Christhood. That is why Yogananda often refers to liberated yogis of India as “Yogi-Christes.” Real Christianity is seeking our own Christhood, not insulting these Christes by groveling before them like slaves and depending on them to “save” us while blaspheming other Christes. Keeping this in mind we can now look at what Jesus teaches us in these four verses.

Men call me Christ, and God has recognized the name; but Christ is not a man. The Christ is universal love, and Love is king. When “a voice from heaven said, This is the well-beloved son of God, the Christ, the love of God made manifest,” God declared the correctness of calling Jesus “Christ” as had the seven great sages. In Chapter Fifty-Nine we read: “Then all the sages laid their hands on Jesus’ head, and said with one accord, Praise God! For wisdom, honor, glory, power, riches, blessing, strength, are yours, O Christ, for evermore. And every living creature said, Amen.”

Yet Jesus cautions us that Christ is not to be thought of as either man or angel, but God Who is Universal Love, the only true King of All. That is why the Beloved Disciple wrote: “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.... And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (I John 4:8, 16).

There is a great deal of talk in this unmerciful and unloving world about “love” and even “unconditional love,” but it is only talk, because love is truly rare indeed. For only those who are one with God and are established in their own divinity can really love. Only an unconditioned being is capable of unconditional love. People are capable of intense liking and attachment, which they sincerely believe is love, but only the great Masters and God really love anyone. Those who are on the way to sainthood can be “loving” in the sense that they have begun to reflect God’s love, but that is only what is known as loving-kindness: only the liberated can really love in the truest sense. Yes, it is true that “’Tis love and love alone the world is seeking” because everyone intuitively feels that they belong “back home” in the bosom of God. But when they seek love anywhere else only grief and pain result. We must not be *in* love, we must *be* Love. Otherwise we cannot love, however willing we may be to do so. How well do I remember listening to women “on the prowl” objecting to Yogananda’s chant: “In this world, Mother, no one can love me. In this world they do not know how to love me....” “That’s not true!” they would shrill, “There is love in this world!” But as a friend of mine once told someone of their type: “What you call ‘love’ can be bought on the street for money.” Do we want love? Then we must seek God alone.

This Jesus is but man who has been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform, to be

the temple through which Christ can manifest to men. There are people who are impressed with the seeming glamor of being spiritually noteworthy. They read the life of a saint who worked miracles and was sought after by thousands and they think: "Me, too." But nothing comes free: there is always a price, and few are they who even can pay it, much less are willing to do so. In the animal kingdom jackals follow lions, and it is the same in the human kingdom: two-legged jackals flock around the "lions among men." It was even so in Jesus' life: "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Matthew 20:20-23).

In order "to be the temple through which Christ can manifest to men" we must have "been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform"—and that is not at all glamorous. To build the real temple within is a lifelong and life-consuming work.

Then hear, you men of Israel, hear! Look not upon the flesh; it is not king. Look to the Christ within, who shall be formed in every one of you, as he is formed in me. Christ is with each one of us, and the only way to manifest that Christ is through cultivation of our inmost consciousness through the practice of yoga meditation. If we pursue the path of yoga with full diligence, Christ will be manifested in us just as he was manifested in Jesus. We, too, will be transformed: not *in* Christ, but *into* Christ. Jesus taught that we are all to be gods within God (see the tenth chapter of Saint John's gospel). That alone is Christianity.

When you have purified your hearts by faith, the king will enter in, and you will see his face. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:2, 3). "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

And then the people asked, What must we do that we may make our bodies fit abiding places for the king? And Jesus said, Whatever tends to purity in thought, and word, and deed will cleanse the temple of the flesh. There are no rules that can apply to all, for men are specialists in sin; each has his own besetting sin, and each must study for himself how he can best transmute his tendency to evil things to that of righteousness and love. Until men reach the higher plane, and get away from selfishness, this rule will give the best results: Do unto other men what you would have them do to you. (Aquarian Gospel 68:15-20)

There is great wisdom here. First is the principle that the body must be made fit to contain Divine Consciousness in its fullness, that mere abstract thinking cannot of itself accomplish anything. True sadhana is a practical doing on many levels. The body is itself “frozen” karma, so purification of the body through diet, discipline, and morality is as essential as is purification of the subtle psychic energies through meditation, and they all add up to purification and spiritualization of karma and therefore the personal consciousness, which can then be attuned to Cosmic Consciousness.

Purity of mind is needed, and the first step is purification of the mental energies through diet, for the mind is formed of the subtle energies of the food we eat according to the Chandogya Upanishad: “Mind consists of food. That which is the subtle part of milk moves upward when the milk is churned and becomes butter. In the same manner, the subtle part of the food that is eaten moves upward and becomes mind. Thus, mind consists of food” (Chandogya Upanishad 6.5.4; 6.6.1-2, 5). The importance of diet in spiritual life should be obvious from this. (See *Spiritual Benefits of a Vegetarian Diet* and *Christian Vegetarianism*.)

As Jesus points out, thoughts, words, and deeds also affect the body, as we know from the reality of psychosomatic disease. Pure and elevated thoughts will purify and elevate the body, spiritual thoughts will spiritualize the body and divine thoughts will divinize the body. Divine words are inseparable from Divine Consciousness, as diligent yogis come to know by their own experience. The words of spiritual power known as mantras have a special power to transmute the body when constantly intoned in and outside meditation. (Again, see *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.)

We must examine our minds and see what we need to do to change its tendencies. Different people are susceptible to different delusions, so each yogi must also tailor his mental actions accordingly. But all will benefit from following the rule: Do unto other men what you would have them do to you.

And many of the people said, We know that Jesus is the Christ, the king who was to come, and blessed be his name. Now, Jesus and his six disciples turned their faces toward Jerusalem, and many people followed them. But Matthew, son of Alphaeus, ran on before, and when he reached Jerusalem, he said, Behold the Christines come! The multitudes came forth to see the king. But Jesus did not speak to any one until he reached the temple court, and then he opened up a book and read: Behold, I send my messenger, and he will pave the way, and Christ, for whom you wait, will come unto his temple unannounced. Behold, for he will come, says God, the Lord of hosts. And then he closed the book; he said no more; he left the temple halls, and with his six disciples, went his way to Nazareth, and they abode with Mary, Jesus’ mother, and her sister, Miriam. (Aquarian Gospel 68:21-27)

Considering their level of understanding at the time, Jesus was showing his hearers that the Messiah was to appear after a messenger had prepared the way and

announced him to the people, as had already happened when John the Baptist presented him to them at the Jordan.

This is a continuation of the preceding verses concerning the individual's preparation for awakening his own Christhood, which shall occur in every sentient being within the cosmos.

Chapter Sixty-Nine

Next day as Peter walked about in Nazareth, he met the ruler of the synagogue who asked, Who is this Jesus lately come to Nazareth? And Peter said, This Jesus is the Christ of whom our prophets wrote; he is the king of Israel. His mother, Mary, lives on Marmion Way. The ruler said, Tell him to come up to the synagogue, for I would hear his plea. And Peter ran and told to Jesus what the ruler said; but Jesus answered not; he went not to the synagogue. Then in the evening time the ruler came up Marmion Way, and in the home of Mary found he Jesus and his mother all alone.

And when the ruler asked for proof of his messiahship, and why he went not to the synagogue when he was bidden, Jesus said, I am not slave to any man; I am not called unto this ministry by priest. It is not mine to answer when men call. I come the Christ of God; I answer unto God alone. Who gave you right to ask for proof of my messiahship? My proof lies in my words and works, and so if you will follow me you will not lack for proof.

And then the ruler went his way; he asked himself, What manner of a man is this to disregard the ruler of the synagogue? (Aquarian Gospel 69:1-9)

Jonathan Swift said: "When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him." It has been my observation that when anyone begins to follow a right course of action, whatever area in life it may involve, he is immediately challenged by one or more dunces about it. On the other hand, if he decides to do something completely meaningless or foolish, usually no one has any objection at all. Consequently, by the time I reached my teen years I judged my ideas and actions by who, and how many, disapproved of them. The more opposition I got from the dunces, the more on target I knew I was. This was especially so in regard to spiritual life.

When I became a yogi I was continually amazed at the number of people (mostly strangers who had only heard about my "kookiness") who felt I was obliged to defend myself against their ignorance and prejudice. They would be outraged when I would explain politely that I had the right to think and do as I thought best and so did they. It did not bother me that they thought yoga was idiotic or "of the devil," and it need not bother them that I thought otherwise.

My challengers were never people with real principles or purposes, but those who lived in a muddle of discontent and meaninglessness. Intuitively aware that I was going to "ruin the curve" by escaping from the hamster wheel they considered life. They were infuriated by my daring to imply that their way of life was not worth living. They would usually subside into resentful silence, comforting themselves with the thought that eventually I would realize I was a fool and give up yoga, or go crazy and be locked up, or continue and be damned forever at the Judgement Day. Either way they would enjoy it and be vindicated.

Anyone who embarks on the path to higher consciousness should be prepared for this phenomenon, and secure enough in his decision to not be bothered by it. Especially he must never think that there is any use in responding to these people: there can only be harm. Sri Ramakrishna said: "Worldly people say all kinds of things about the spiritually minded. But look here! When an elephant moves along the street, any number of curs and other small animals may bark and cry after it; but the elephant doesn't even look back at them.... God dwells in all beings. But you may be intimate only with good people; you must keep away from the evil-minded. God is even in the tiger; but you cannot embrace the tiger on that account."

Jesus certainly held this philosophy, for:

The people of the town came out in throngs to see the Christ, and hear him speak; but Jesus said, A prophet has no honor in his native town, among his kin. I will not speak in Nazareth until the words I speak, and works I do in other towns, have won the faith of men. Until men know that God has christed me to manifest eternal love. Good will to you, my kin; I bless you with a boundless love, and I bespeak for you abundant joy and happiness. He said no more, and all the people marveled much because he would not speak in Nazareth. (Aquarian Gospel 69:10-15)

Jesus only spoke to members of his family, and we must confine our communications to those who are our spiritual family: those whose hearts are open to the possibilities of attaining Christhood. Jesus refused to speak to those who could not perceive his status as teacher, for if they could not understand what was so evident about him, how could they receive the message that they were sleeping gods who could awaken into their own divinity?

Chapter Seventy

In Cana, Galilee, there was a marriage feast, and Mary and her sister Miriam, and Jesus and his six disciples were among the guests. The ruler of the feast had heard that Jesus was a master sent from God, and he requested him to speak.

And Jesus said, *There is no tie more sacred than the marriage tie. The chain that binds two souls in love is made in heaven, and man can never sever it in twain. The lower passions of the twain may cause a union of the twain, a union as when oil and water meet. And then a priest may forge a chain, and bind the twain. This is not marriage genuine; it is a counterfeit. The twain are guilty of adultery; the priest is party to the crime. And that was all that Jesus said.* (Aquarian Gospel 70:1-7)

Elsewhere we will see that Jesus considered that very few people were capable of marriage in the real sense, that most people were just indulging desire and ego in some form, and that they were not really married, just living together in a dishonorable manner. Here we see the first of his teachings about marriage.

There is no tie more sacred than the marriage tie. The chain that binds two souls in love is made in heaven, and man can never sever it in twain. Two basic facts about true marriage are made clear.

1) Marriage is a matter of divine love, not earthly passion, and it is undertaken only at the fiat of heaven for the purpose of fulfilling the highest spiritual karma: the furthering of the evolution of the man and woman. Married life is intended to be as dedicated and disciplined as any other aspect of the spiritual life. It is not for indulgence or whimsy, or to be lived according to the ideas of the world and society. It is to be as sacred and consecrated a mode of life as that of the monastics. For marriage is also a life of renunciation and total dedication, with no place for the desires of the ego. Who is capable of it? Very few, just as there are few able to be true monastics. Jesus is not giving this teaching for humanity in general. He is speaking only to Christines. The rest will have to muddle through until they awaken to the realization that only Christhood matters in this or any other world.

2) The marriage tie cannot be severed. Marriage can be dishonored, betrayed and sinned against, but it cannot be abrogated any more than the natural order of things, including the moral law innate in creation. We can dishonor our eternal relationship with God, but we cannot cancel it. The same is true of marriage.

The lower passions of the twain may cause a union of the twain, a union as when oil and water meet. And then a priest may forge a chain, and bind the twain. This is not marriage genuine; it is a counterfeit. The twain are guilty of adultery; the priest is party to the crime. Through the ages there has been talk about “the battle of the sexes” and men accuse women and women accuse men of being unreasonable, thoughtless, selfish and unloving. That is natural, because Jesus says that an earthly, sensual, ego-based

marriage is the joining of oil and water. The man and woman will really be at opposition to one another, two egos striving for the mastery. They can never be at one, for their marriage is based on gender and socialization, not on spirit and striving for spiritual perfection. So they will remain irrevocably separate and isolated, even though living together. The marriage will either break apart externally (for it never even existed, internally), or be maintained as a prison for them both as their aversion for one another increases with the passing of time. A religionist cleric may have “blessed” their association, but it will not be a genuine marriage, only a false appearance. “The twain are guilty of adultery; the priest is party to the crime.” This is a very severe pronouncement, but Jesus saw with a clear sight unknown to those around him. His words are true. The man and woman are just cohabiting like the lower forms of life. True humanity is also a rare thing, for it is the way to divinity.

As Jesus stood apart in silent thought his mother came and said to him, The wine has failed; what shall we do?

And Jesus said, Pray what is wine? It is but water with the flavoring of grapes. And what are grapes? They are but certain kinds of thought made manifest, and I can manifest that thought, and water will be wine.

He called the servants, and he said to them, Bring in six water pots of stone, a pot for each of these, my followers, and fill them up with water to the brims. The servants brought the water pots, and filled them to their brims.

And Jesus with a mighty thought stirred up the ethers till they reached the manifest, and, lo, the water blushed, and turned to wine.

The servants took the wine and gave it to the ruler of the feast who called the bridegroom in and said to him, This wine is best of all; most people when they give a feast bring in the best wine at first; but, lo, you have reserved the best until last.

And when the ruler and the guests were told that Jesus, by the power of thought, had turned the water into wine, they were amazed; they said, This man is more than man; he surely is the christed one who prophets of the olden times declared would come.

And many of the guests believed on him, and gladly would have followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 70:8-18)

The first of the seven postulates of the New Age pronounced by the seven sages who had gathered to proclaim the Christhood of Jesus, was this: “All things are thought; all life is thought activity. The multitude of beings are but phases of the one great thought made manifest. Lo, God is Thought, and Thought is God. (Aquarian Gospel 58:17). That is why Jesus said: “What are grapes? They are but certain kinds of thought made manifest, and I can manifest that thought, and water will be wine.” Therefore “Jesus with a mighty thought stirred up the ethers till they reached the manifest, and, lo, the water blushed, and turned to wine.”

The subtlest element is ether, called akasha in Sanskrit. To change the water into

wine Jesus attuned himself to the etheric level of water and changed it into wine since thought is the property of ether. Just as God thought the cosmos into existence, within it Jesus thought water into wine. Implied in this miracle is the truth that all things are composed of a single element: Divine Light. “God said, Let there be light: and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). Since all things are essentially one, a master yogi can seemingly change one thing into another, but it is only changed in appearance; the object remains what it always was: Light. The best exposition of this is the thirtieth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

Why did Jesus tell the servants to bring in six water pots—a pot for each of his disciples that were present? Because his intended miracle was as much a symbol as an actuality. Just as Jesus was going to change the water in the pots into wine, so his greater miracle was going to be the transmutation of the inner consciousness of each disciple from human consciousness to God consciousness, which it already was in essence. In other words, whereas Jesus merely changed the externals of the water, he was going to reveal the eternal nature of the disciples.

That which comes from the hand of God is always superior to that which comes from the hands of men, so the “wine” of Jesus was much better than any other wine that had been served. Those who have been “christed” Have changed themselves from water into wine, spiritually speaking.

Seeing something as material as water being changed into wine, “many of the guests believed on him, and gladly would have followed him,” but there is more to discipleship than belief and groupism. It is transmutation, and rare are those who can even grasp that concept, and rarer still are those who will undergo it, hearing and understand the dictum of Jesus: “Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). For the “all” that must be forsaken is much, much more than mere material possessions and externals. Those who forsake all shall gain The All.

Chapter Seventy-One

The city of Capernaum was by the sea of Galilee, and Peter's home was there. The homes of Andrew, John and James were near. These men were fishermen, and must return to tend their nets, and they prevailed on Jesus and his mother to accompany them, and soon with Philip and Nathaniel they were resting by the sea in Peter's home. The news spread through the city and along the shore that Judah's king had come, and multitudes drew near to press his hand. (Aquarian Gospel 71:1-3)

It is frustrating that we know so little of Levi Dowling and his recording of the akashic impressions that comprise the *Aquarian Gospel*. Considering that at the age of thirteen he debated a Presbyterian minister on the question of everlasting hell, began preaching at the age of sixteen and was a pastor at eighteen, we can conclude he was an intellectual as well as a spiritual prodigy. Therefore he may have known Aramaic and during his psychic investigations heard the words spoken and simply translated them. On the other hand, he may have only received the impressions of the meaning of the words he heard, and put them into his own words. This would explain the presence of such curious words as "harpsichord" and "photograph" in the text. I say this because I find it odd that people would want to shake hands with Jesus, a practice originating in northern Europe as a guarantee that someone was not holding a weapon with intent to harm the person they approached, and therefore unknown to the Jews. It seems more logical that they wanted to be touched by Jesus in blessing, something well known and practiced at the time. However that may be, here too, the people considered Jesus to be "Judah's king."

And Jesus said, I cannot show the king, unless you see with eyes of soul, because the kingdom of the king is in the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 71:4)

There is only one king, God, and one kingdom, spirit. And until we are centered in spirit-consciousness and have activated the eyes, the perceptions of spirit, there is no hope of our entering the kingdom and beholding the king. No external factor can effect this entry, it must all be initiated and carried on from within by none other than ourselves.

And every soul a kingdom is. There is a king for every man. (Aquarian Gospel 71:5)

Our individual spirit is both king and kingdom on the microcosmic level, and our entry and meeting is a preparation for entering the meeting the Cosmic Christ. The entry we must effect is done by us alone, not in a group or "body" made up of many people. In spirit each one of us is totally independent of all others except God. The path to Christhood is truly "the flight of the alone to the Alone."

This king is love, and when this love becomes the greatest power in life, it is the Christ; so Christ is king. And every one may have this Christ dwell in his soul, as Christ dwells in my soul. (Aquarian Gospel 71:6, 7)

We must not waste our time talking about love, we must *become* love, become a Christ of God. What Jesus became, we can and must become. This is the Christine gospel.

The body is the temple of the king, and men may call a holy man a king. (Aquarian Gospel 71:8)

Solomon said: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32). Holiness alone establishes us in our kingdom. Therefore Jesus continues:

He who will cleanse his mortal form and make it pure, so pure that love and righteousness may dwell unsullied side by side within its walls, is king.

The kings of earth are clothed in royal robes, and sit in state that men may stand in awe of them. A king of heaven may wear a fisher's garb; may sit in mart of trade; may till the soil, or be a gleaner in the field; may be a slave in mortal chains; may be adjudged a criminal by men; may languish in a prison cell; may die upon a cross. (Aquarian Gospel 71:9-12)

The kings of earth and the "kings" of earthly religion have to put on a show to persuade people of their worth. But the kings of heaven, *ouranos*, the infinite sky of Consciousness, are "all glorious within" as the Psalmist said (Psalms 45:13). They may be thought worthless, fools, drudges or even criminals by those who are blind in the spirit. But the awakened ones "see" them and recognize them.

My beloved Swami Sivananda was utterly devoid of any show whatsoever. He had no tilak marks on his forehead, no beads around his neck, no long theatrical hair, wore the simplest of clothes and was always unassuming and modest in his manner and guileless in his demeanor. Fools thought him a fool, crooks thought him a crook, the worldly-wise thought him ignorant, fake yogis patronizingly called him a karma yogi and the wealthy and powerful thought him simple and naïve. Those who valued their defects despised him for having none. But those who could see, saw all glories in him; they loved him and he loved them in return (he loved the others, too, but they could not know it). Every moment with him was a feast of love and joy. He was light in darkness and rest for the weary. He was a Christ and saw our inner Christ and told us of that wonder and inspired us to seek the treasure he so obviously possessed in abundance. In him I saw every possible virtue present to the maximum degree. He was a god upon earth, and yet was our humble friend.

As Jesus then said:

Men seldom see what others truly are. The human senses sense what seems to be, and that which seems to be and that which is, may be diverse in every way. The carnal man beholds the outer man, which is the temple of the

king, and worships at his shrine. (Aquarian Gospel 71:13, 14)

Then he sums it all up in these words that need no comment:

The man of God is pure in heart; he sees the king; he sees with eyes of soul: and when he rises to the plane of Christine consciousness, he knows that he himself is king, is love, is Christ, and so is son of God. You men of Galilee, prepare to meet your king.

And Jesus taught the people many lessons as he walked with them beside the sea. (Aquarian Gospel 71:15-18)

May we, too, walk with him by the seashore of this life, looking over the sea to the Farther Shore of Divinity.

Chapter Seventy-Two

The Jewish paschal feast time came and Jesus left his mother in Capernaum and journeyed to Jerusalem. And he abode with one a Sadducee, whose name was Jude. And when he reached the temple courts the multitudes were there to see the prophet whom the people thought had come to break the yoke of Rome, restore the kingdom of the Jews, and rule on David's throne. And when the people saw him come they said, All hail! behold the king!

But Jesus answered not; he saw the money changers in the house of God, and he was grieved. The courts had been converted into marts of trade, and men were selling lambs and doves for offerings in sacrifice. (Aquarian Gospel 72:1-6)

The people had no idea what Jesus really was. They thought he was going to be a political hero, and after he began working miracles, especially the multiplication of food, they figured he was going to establish a welfare state as well, with nobody having to work and earn anything. They thought he would serve their selfish, greedy and lazy egos. When he did not, then he had to die. This is the way of today in relation to religion: if it gives people what they want then it is wonderful, but if it not only does not give them everything they want, but says that some of what they want should be laid aside for their own good, they denounce it as evil. Things never really change.

As mentioned before, the temple staff was equally material and greedy. Nothing could be offered that was not purchased from the temple itself. The temple made its own money, and so everyone had to change their money into temple money at a cut-throat rate of exchange. Then if any money remained to them after their offerings, they had to change the temple money back into regular money at an even more cut-throat rate. It was shameless racketeering. Wealthy people found themselves robbed in this way, and poor people could make no offerings at all. Any person with a conscience would be outraged at this situation.

As a vegetarian Essene, Jesus was even further outraged at the slaughter of sentient beings in the name of God.

And Jesus called the priests and said, Behold, for paltry gain you have sold out the temple of the Lord. This house ordained for prayer is now a den of thieves. Can good and evil dwell together in the courts of God? I tell you, no.

And then he made a scourge of cords and drove the merchants out; he overturned their boards, and threw their money on the floor. He opened up the cages of the captive birds, and cut the cords that bound the lambs, and set them free. The priests and scribes rushed out, and would have done him harm, but they were driven back; the common people stood in his defense.

And then the rulers said, Who is this Jesus you call king? The people said, he is the Christ of whom our prophets wrote; he is the king who will deliver Israel. (Aquarian Gospel 72:7-13)

Good and evil cannot dwell together in us who are temples of the Holy Spirit lest the evil destroy the good. The Communists used to burble on hypocritically about “peaceful coexistence” and so do hypocritical religionists in relation to good and evil in the lives of their supporters. But the wise know that evil must be eliminated thoroughly from their minds, and set about to do so: not by gentle, compromising diplomacy, but by a head-on attack and expulsion of evil and folly from every aspect of their life. The ego, and those who are slaves of ego, will be horrified at this and challenge it in hope of stopping it, but the worthy will keep right on till they are purified in life and heart.

The rulers said to Jesus, Man, if you be king, or Christ, then show us signs. Who gave you right to drive these merchants out?

And Jesus said, There is no loyal Jew who would not give his life to save this temple from disgrace; in this I acted simply as a loyal Jew, and you yourselves will bear me witness to this truth.

The signs of my messiahship will follow me in words and deeds. And you may tear the temple down (and you will tear it down) and in three days it will be built again more glorious than before. Now Jesus meant that they might take his life; tear down his body, temple of the Holy Breath, and he would rise again.

The Jews knew not the meaning of his words; they laughed his claims to scorn. They said, A multitude of men were forty and six years in building up this house, and this young stranger claims that he will build it up in three score hours; his words are idle, and his claims are naught. (Aquarian Gospel 72:14-20)

These verses tell us a significant truth. “The signs of my messiahship will follow me in words and deeds” carries a very important message. Many people have a deluded idea about their spiritual status and many more simply lie, claiming to be enlightened and even incarnations of God. (The “avatars” I have met have all been mentally unbalanced but managing to not be locked up.)

A great deal of evil and foolishness is covered up by the claim that ordinary people cannot understand highly evolved beings who are beyond the comprehension of unenlightened people. “Crazy wisdom” is a term coined by the contemporary scoundrels in America who pass themselves off as enlightened “advaita” or “non-dual” teachers. But Christhood is revealed in a Christ’s words and deeds. And it must be the same with us who seek Christhood. We should examine our thoughts and actions carefully to detect our actual spiritual status. That is why Jesus said: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth

good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:15-20). And this applies to us, as well.

And then they took the scourge with which he drove the merchants out, and would have driven him away; but Philo, who had come from Egypt to attend the feast, stood forth and said, You men of Israel, hear! This man is more than man; take heed to what you do. I have, myself, heard Jesus speak, and all the winds were still. And I have seen him touch the sick, and they were healed. He stands a sage above the sages of the world; and you will see his star arise, and it will grow until it is the full-orbed Sun of Righteousness. Do not be hasty, men; just wait and you will have the proofs of his messiahship. (Aquarian Gospel 72:21-25)

Philo was the greatest of Jewish philosophers. His home was in Alexandria, which after the destruction of Jerusalem became the center of Christianity. His spiritual writings are still available in English translations. Actually, they set the tone for subsequent Christian writings in which the scriptures are seen as both historical and symbolic, the symbolic being the most important as it reveals the development of the questing consciousness and the principles to be followed in that quest.

And then the priests laid down the scourge, and Jesus said, Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king! But you can never see the king while you press sin as such a precious idol to your hearts. The king is God; the pure in heart alone can see the face of God and live.

And then the priests cried out, This fellow claims to be the God. Is not this sacrilege! away with him! But Jesus said, No man has ever heard me say, I am a king. Our Father-God is king. With every loyal Jew I worship God. I am the candle of the Lord aflame to light the way; and while you have the light walk in the light. (Aquarian Gospel 72:26-31)

Prepare, O Israel, prepare to meet your king! But you can never see the king while you press sin as such a precious idol to your hearts. The idea that preparation is necessary for sustained spiritual life and experience is not new in the Aquarian Gospel, but here we have the crux of spiritual blindness: the love and fostering of wrong. And wrong need not be some glaring faults or evil deeds, but such things as selfishness, pettiness, jealousy, material attachments and the like. Whatever clouds our inner spiritual vision is a great evil, however small it may appear to the world and our ego-moulded mind.

The king is God; the pure in heart alone can see the face of God and live. Yogananda often spoke of the absolute necessity of purifying and developing our inner consciousness and also our physical bodies. He said that just as a high voltage current will destroy a low-wattage light bulb, in the same way the body of one who is not prepared and

purified would be incinerated if God was just touched momentarily.

Sri Ramakrishna gave exalted spiritual experiences to those who were purified. One day a priest of the Kali temple where he lived demanded that he give him some experience as well. Because the priest kept insisting and would not leave him alone, Sri Ramakrishna reached out and touched him. Immediately the priest fell down and began rolling around screaming: "I'm burning! I'm burning!" Sri Ramakrishna touched him again and the priest stopped thrashing around and screaming. With a smile, Sri Ramakrishna said: "Perhaps in another life."

In Eastern Christian theology it is said that eventually God will withdraw the veil of material existence that hides the Face of God and each person will react according to his spiritual status, that the same Light that will be the rejoicing of the saints will be the fire of hell to the wicked. That God will not be punishing them at all: their torment will be entirely of their own doing.

And then the priests cried out, This fellow claims to be the God. Is not this sacrilege! away with him! But Jesus said, No man has ever heard me say, I am a king. Our Father-God is king. With every loyal Jew I worship God. Here we see the truth about Jesus. He is not God but god—as are we. When Saint Paul wrote: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:29), he was speaking spiritually, not about the resurrection of Jesus' body. All humanity sleeps "the sleep of death" (Psalms 13:3) until they awake and arise into "newness of life" (Romans 6:4) through spiritual resurrection as did Jesus. That is why Saint Paul also refers to human beings as Jesus' brothers (Hebrews 2:17).

I am the candle of the Lord aflame to light the way; and while you have the light walk in the light. Jesus, being illumined by the Light of God, shows us the way to the same enlightenment, saying: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). The Beloved Disciple said: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (I John 2:6), and said that "we walk in the light, as he is in the light" (I John 1:7). This is a high ideal, but it is really only the natural conclusion when we realize that we are essentially part of the Divine Life, as a wave is part of the ocean. This is the Christian Gospel, the Good News of Christ.

Chapter Seventy-Three

Next day the multitudes were surging through the temple courts, intent on hearing Jesus speak. And when he came the people said, All hail! behold the king!

And Jesus spoke a parable; he said, A king had vast domains; his people all were kin, and lived in peace. Now, after many years the king said to his people, Take these lands and all I have; enhance their values; rule yourselves, and live in peace. And then the people formed their states; selected governors and petty kings. But pride, ambition, selfish greed, and base ingratitude grew fast, and kings began to war. They wrote in all their statute books that might is right; and then the strong destroyed the weak, and chaos reigned through all the vast domain. A long time passed, and then the king looked out on his domain. He saw his people in their cruel wars; he saw them sick and sore distressed; he saw the strong enslave the weak, and then he said, What shall I do? Shall I send forth a scourge? shall I destroy my people all?

And then his heart was stirred with pity and he said, I will not send a scourge; I will send forth my only son, heir to the throne, to teach the people love, and peace, and righteousness. He sent his son; the people scorned him and maltreated him, and nailed him to a cross. He was entombed; but death was far too weak to hold the prince, and he arose. He took a form man could not kill; and then he went again to teach the people love, and peace and righteousness. And thus God deals with men. (Aquarian Gospel 73:1-14)

This parable is easy to understand, so I need only point out a few things.

A king had vast domains; his people all were kin, and lived in peace. First of all, this parable has a much wider and deeper meaning than the versions we get in the Bible. That seems to be speaking only of the Hebrews, but this has a much wider application. In fact, the first part is speaking of Messiah-Christ in general.

This sentence is presenting the truth that all sentient beings in creation are “kin” and children of the One Father. The divine spark in each one is a part of God. Originally all lived together in oneness and perfect communication with each other. The following is a written description by Saint Ambrose of Optina (Russia), who was the spiritual guide to untold thousands in the nineteenth century Russian Orthodox Church. This is his own account of the experience that triggered his spiritual quest.

“Suddenly, I am outside of the forest, somewhere far away, in another world, quite unknown to me, never seen by me, never imagined by me. Around me there is bright, white light! Its transcendence is so pure and enticing that I am submerged, along with my perception, into limitless depths and cannot satisfy myself with my admiration for this realm, cannot completely fill myself with its lofty spirituality. Everything is so full of beauty all around. So endearing this life—so endless the way.

I am being swept across this limitless, clear space. My sight is directed upwards, does not descend anymore, does not see anything earthly. The whole of the heavenly firmament has transformed itself before me into one general bright light, pleasing to the sight.

“But I do not see the sun. I can see only its endless shining and bright light. The whole space in which I glide without hindrance, without end, without fatigue, is filled with white light, just as is its light and beautiful beings, transparent as a ray of the sun. And through them I am admiring this limitless world. The images of all these beings unknown to me are infinitely diverse and full of beauty

“I also am white and bright as they are. Over me, as over them, there reigns eternal rest. Not a single thought of mine is any longer enticed by anything earthly, not a single beat of my heart is any longer moving with human cares or earthly passion. I am all peace and rapture. But I am still moving in this infinite light, which surrounds me without change. There is nothing else in the world except for the white, bright light and these equally radiant numberless beings. But all these beings do not resemble me, nor are similar to each other; they are all endlessly varied and compellingly attractive. Amidst them, I feel myself incredibly peaceful. They evoke in me neither fear, nor amazement, nor trepidation. All that we see here does not agitate us, does not amaze us. All of us here are as if we have belonged to each other for a long time, are used to each other and are not strangers at all. We do not ask questions, we do not speak to each other about anything. We all feel and understand that there is nothing novel for us here. All our questions are solved with one glance, which sees everything and everyone. There is no trace of the wars of passions in anyone. All move in different directions, opposite to each other, not feeling any limitation, any inequality, or envy, or sorrow, or sadness. One peace reigns in all the images of entities. One light is endless for all. Oneness of life is comprehensible to all.

“My rapture at all this superseded everything. I sank into this eternal rest. No longer was my spirit disturbed by anything. And I knew nothing else earthly. None of the tribulations of my heart came to mind, even for a minute. It seemed that everything that I had experienced before on earth never existed. Such was my feeling in this new radiant world of mine. And I was at peace and joyful and desired nothing better for myself. All my earthly thoughts concerning fleeting happiness in the world died in this beautiful life, new to me, and did not come back to life again. So it seemed to me at least, there, in that better world.

“But how I came back here—I do not recall. What transitory state it was, I do not know. I only felt that I was alive, but I did not remember the world in which I lived before on earth. This did not seem at all to be a dream. Actually, about earthly things I no longer had the least notion. I only felt that the present life is *mine*, and that *I* was not a stranger in it. In this state of spirit I forgot myself and immersed myself in this light-bearing eternity. And this timelessness lasted without end, without measure, without expectation, without sleep, in this eternal rest. Thus it seemed to me that there would not be any kind of change.”

This is a most perfect description of the state of all spirits before they entered into relativity to begin evolution unto divinity, and that is what Jesus is referring to in this first sentence of the parable. It in the context of this description that we can understand the rest.

Now, after many years the king said to his people, Take these lands and all I have; enhance their values; rule yourselves, and live in peace. Eventually the spirits were sent forth into the “world” of relative existence and took on material forms, evolving from one form to another, each one being an upward step on the ladder of evolution of consciousness. (See *Robe of Light*.) Each one was intended to be in perfect mastery of his growth and to rest in the peace of his original status. But something went wrong:

A long time passed, and then the king looked out on his domain. He saw his people in their cruel wars; he saw them sick and sore distressed; he saw the strong enslave the weak. Although human ills are described here, the entire earth was affected by ignorance and misery.

And then he said, What shall I do? Shall I send forth a scourge? shall I destroy my people all? And then his heart was stirred with pity and he said, I will not send a scourge. What a difference from “the God of the Old Testament” who supposedly “in his anger” destroyed the entire human race except for Noah and his family. There are many “flood stories” in the lore of ancient cultures, including that of India, none of which attribute vengeful anger to a peeved deity.

I will send forth my only son, heir to the throne, to teach the people love, and peace, and righteousness. In the Gita, God tells us: “Whenever dharma decreases and there is the arising of adharma, then do I manifest myself. For protection of the righteous and destruction of evildoers, for the establishing of dharma, I manifest myself from age to age. He who knows in truth my divine birth and action, leaving the body is not born again: he comes to me” (Bhagavad Gita 4:7-9). In every age God is “born” in the body of a liberated Master who, as a Son of God, appears on earth to turn people from evil back to the good: to God. Actually there are usually more than one avatar in every age. Those who draw near and learn fully from them are set on the path to liberation, to themselves becoming Sons of God. In that way the avatar’s message is continued, not through an exclusive organization but through living Masters who have understand the purpose of the avatar’s birth among humanity.

He sent his son; the people scorned him and maltreated him, and nailed him to a cross. He was entombed; but death was far too weak to hold the prince, and he arose. He took a form man could not kill; and then he went again to teach the people love, and peace and righteousness. Jesus is now speaking prophetically of his own particular future, but it is a sad truth that the avatars are hated and harassed by the evil ones whose love darkness rather than light. Rama was attacked by Ravana, the demonic king of Sri Lanka. For years the evil Duryodhana tried to kill Krishna, and before that his uncle Kansa did the same throughout his childhood. Attempts were made on the life of Buddha. Many people plotted the death of Yogananda. On occasion he refused to meet with people who came to the ashram. After they left he would tell the residents, “They were

sent to kill me.” And of course we have the example of the Lord Jesus as described here.

What was true about Jesus is true about us: we cannot die. Our life may be interrupted by the interlude called “death” but we live forever and through many births arise to the same Christhood attained by Jesus.

And thus God deals with men. For he intends their perfection and liberation in him. That is why Saint John said: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2). When after our own “resurrection” and “ascension” we meet with God again, face-to-face, we will see that we are divine parts of him, rays of his great Light.

A lawyer came and asked, What does messiah mean? and who has right to make messiah of a man?

And Jesus said, Messiah is one sent from God to seek and save the lost. Messiahs are not made by men. In first of every age Messiah comes to light the way; to heal up broken hearts; to set the prisoners free. Messiah and the Christ are one.

Because a man claims to be Christ is not a sign that he is Christ. A man may cause the streams to flow from flinty rocks; may bring storms at will; may stay tempestuous winds; may heal the sick and raise the dead, and not be sent from God.

All nature is subservient to the will of man, and evil men, as well as good, have all the powers of mind, and may control the elements. The head gives not the proof of true messiahship, for man by means of intellect, can never know of God, nor bring himself to walk in light.

Messiah lives not in the head, but in the heart, the seat of mercy and of love. Messiah never works for selfish gains; he stands above the carnal self; his words and deeds are for the universal good. Messiah never tries to be a king, to wear a crown and sit upon an earthly throne. The king is earthy, of the earth; Messiah is the man from heaven.

And then the lawyer asked, Why do you pose as king? And Jesus said, No man has ever heard me say that I am king. I could not sit in Caesar’s place and be the Christ. Give unto Caesar what belongs to him; give unto God the treasures of your heart. (Aquarian Gospel 73:15-28)

Messiah is one sent from God to seek and save the lost. People become annoyed when asked: “Are you saved?” but the question is not amiss, even though the questioner may not understand what “being saved” really means. But the “saved” know, for God has touched them through the teachings of one of his messengers, and they have heard the call: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Ephesians 5:14), the light of our own eternal Christ-nature.

Messiahs are not made by men. In first of every age Messiah comes to light the way; to heal up broken hearts; to set the prisoners free. Messiah and the Christ are one. Only a Christ can

do the things Jesus lists here. And all humanity desperately needs light, healing, and freedom. Many may call someone a Christ, an avatar, but only those who can do these things are really so. We should never take a person seriously just because he has many followers, especially among the powerful. That is usually a sign that such a one is not a Christ. Christs never head large movements or start organizations which accumulate wealth and power.

Sad to say, comparatively few people can really follow a Christ. “Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luke 13:23, 24). “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).

Because a man claims to be Christ is not a sign that he is Christ. A man may cause the streams to flow from flinty rocks; may bring storms at will; may stay tempestuous winds; may heal the sick and raise the dead, and not be sent from God. This is very important, because nearly all Christians cite the miracles of Jesus as proof of his Christhood, but he says differently. It is only those who can save souls from the ocean of samsara, of constant birth and death, by leading them to the path of enlightenment, that are Christs. Miracles should count for nothing in our eyes. Many evil and deluded people can work miracles through various means, psychic and fraudulent. There are insane people that can read minds, foretell the future, know things beyond the normal scope of knowledge, levitate, become weightless and even pass through walls or transport themselves from one point to another in an instant. I know this is true by my own experience and that of friends. I met a man who (in pre-Vatican II days) was an assistant to the official exorcist of the diocese of St. Louis. He told of astounding things he had seen possessed people do, including climbing or running up walls to escape the exorcist.

All nature is subservient to the will of man, and evil men, as well as good, have all the powers of mind, and may control the elements. Patanjali (Yoga Sutras 4:1) writes about how many yoga powers can be wielded by ignorant people through several means including drugs. Hypnosis can also be used to produce astonishing effects. We must be careful to distinguish between that which is merely psychic and that which is spiritual. Often their manifestations appear the same and it is assumed that psychically powerful people are spiritual when they are not. Truly spiritual phenomena proceed from illumined consciousness.

The head gives not the proof of true messiahship, for man by means of intellect, can never know of God, nor bring himself to walk in light. Messiah lives not in the head, but in the heart, the seat of mercy and of love. Messiah never works for selfish gains; he stands above the carnal self; his words and deeds are for the universal good. Messiah never tries to be a king, to wear a crown and sit upon an earthly throne. The king is earthy, of the earth; Messiah is the man from heaven. This only requires a careful, thoughtful reading, not a commentary.

And then the lawyer asked, Why do you pose as king? And Jesus said, No man has ever

heard me say that I am king. I could not sit in Caesar's place and be the Christ. Give unto Caesar what belongs to him; give unto God the treasures of your heart. It is the custom of the evil and foolish to make false and irresponsible accusations against those who seek higher life.

It is important for us to seriously ponder the implications of Jesus's words: "I could not sit in Caesar's place and be the Christ." Earthly power is not compatible with Christhood, especially political power, and rare are those who can possess vast earthly wealth and not be controlled by it. Wealth and power are addicting and enslaving. We must clearly perceive the demarcation between the material and the spiritual, between the earthly and the heavenly. It is not for nothing that princes and kings have renounced the wealth and power of the world in order to win the kingdom of spirit. They were wise, and we should be, too, and follow their example.

Chapter Seventy-Four

It was the Sabbath day, and Jesus stood among the surging masses of the people in the temple courts and sacred halls. The blind, the deaf, the dumb, and those obsessed were there, and Jesus spoke the Word, and they were healed. On some he laid his hands, and they were healed; to others he just spoke the Word, and they were full restored to health; but others had to go and wash in certain pools; and others he anointed with a holy oil.

A doctor asked him why he healed in divers ways, and he replied, Disease is discord in the human form, and discords are produced in many ways. The body is a harpsichord; sometimes the strings are too relaxed, and then inharmony results. Sometimes we find the strings too tense, and then another form of discord is induced. Disease is many-formed, and there are many ways to cure, to tune anew the mystic harpsichord. (Aquarian Gospel 74:1-8)

The blind, the deaf, the dumb, and those obsessed were there, and Jesus spoke the Word, and they were healed. The Divine Word was the basic factor in all of Jesus' healing, as the Aquarian Gospel indicates. When Jesus invoked the Word in the fullness of his divine consciousness his invocation possessed cosmic power.

On some he laid his hands, and they were healed. Our bodies are repositories of creative, cosmic power, and our nervous system is continually emitting waves of subtle power, including healing power. When our touch is empowered by the highest consciousness produced by meditation, it can be a mighty force for healing.

To others he just spoke the Word, and they were full restored to health. But others had to go and wash in certain pools. And others he anointed with a holy oil. A doctor asked him why he healed in divers ways, and he replied, Disease is discord in the human form, and discords are produced in many ways. To know that disease is disharmony is a major insight. When we are out of harmony with the divine pattern (which includes the divine pattern for our life), discord results, and the subsequent conflict produces disease. We can alleviate symptoms by physical means and temporarily banish disease, but if the disharmony persists, the troubles will return—even in another life. Some people carry mental and physical ills with them from life to life.

Elsewhere we see that Jesus said illness was caused by "sin," but sin is not the transgression of some arbitrary commandment by God, but rather that which is a violation of our divine spiritual nature. Sin is thought, word, or deed that is in contradiction to our innate divinity. Such a disharmony or conflict will eventually manifest as illness, defect or deficiency of some sort. And since these disharmonies are of differing types, Jesus used differing ways to heal.

The body is a harpsichord; sometimes the strings are too relaxed, and then inharmony results. Sometimes we find the strings too tense, and then another form of discord is induced. Disease is many-formed, and there are many ways to cure, to tune anew the mystic harpsichord. According to the theories of acupuncture and other biomagnetic forms of healing,

there are two basic conditions which produce illness: too much energy concentrated at a point or too little energy at a point. If the excess energy is drained away or the deficient energy is increased, healing will result through the body's innate health patterns.

Now when the Pharisees were told that Jesus healed the people on the Sabbath day they were enraged, and they commanded him to quit the place.

But Jesus said, Was man designed to fit the Sabbath, or was the Sabbath day designed to fit the man? If you had fallen in a pit and, lo, the Sabbath day had come, and I should pass your way, would you cry out, Let me alone; it is a sin to help me on the Sabbath day; I'll swelter in this filth until another day?

You Pharisees, you hypocrites! you know you would be glad to have my help upon the Sabbath day, or any other day. These people all have fallen into pits, and they are calling loud for me to help them out, and man and God would curse me should I pass along and heed them not.

And then the Pharisees returned to say their prayers, and curse the man of God because he heeded not their words. (Aquarian Gospel 74:9-15)

Here we have the picture of professional religionists: their demands far supersede doing what is good and right. Everything must be bent to facilitate their power and gain and to conform to their official theology, however foolish and degrading it may be. This is nothing new, and it will never cease to be as long as humans are ruled by ego. In our modern times irreligion and anti-religion are jumping into the swim along with religion and being just as fanatical and coercive in the attempt to force unbelief and denial upon others. Freedom of thought is the last thing any of these sociopathic coalitions desire.

Now, in the evening Jesus stood beside a pool; a playful child had fallen in, and it was drowned, and friends were bearing it away. But Jesus called the carriers to stop; and then he stretched himself upon the lifeless form, and breathed into its mouth the breath of life. And then he called aloud unto the soul that had gone out, and it returned; the child revived and lived. (Aquarian Gospel 74:16-18)

In severe cases it sometimes happens that instead of only touching someone with his hands, a healer will touch the afflicted with his entire body. In the First Book of Kings Elijah did this to bring a little boy back to life, and some Indian Masters have done the same. Intense prayer by a devotee can result in the restoration of life. My maternal grandmother once did that very thing, and there are many truthful accounts of saints and Masters responding to fervent prayer and restoring life.

And Jesus saw a wounded dog; it could not move; it lay beside the way and groaned with pain. He took it in his arms and bore it to the home where he abode. He poured the healing oil into the wounds; he cared for it as though it

were a child till it was strong and well. (Aquarian Gospel 74:19, 20)

Jesus did this because the same divine spirit was in the dog form as was in the human forms he healed. The various forms of life are only rungs in the evolutionary ladder, and eternal spirits inhabit all these body-houses for a while as they continue to move upward toward release into Spirit.

I was fortunate to have an aunt who was also a healer, but her “patients” were mostly animals. Because she loved animals and spoke to them as intelligent persons, the people in our little home town laughed and sneered. But when a beloved pet became seriously ill they would phone and ask her to pray, and never did she lose a single case. So as the years went by, less and less people laughed. As we all know, dogs and cats usually dislike each other, and neither dogs nor cats respond to music except to howl or run away. But occasionally my aunt would go out into her front yard with her accordion and start playing and singing hymns. In a short time she would be encircled by both cats and dogs who would sit there gazing at her, listening in silence, in total harmony with one another. At the end of her concert she would speak to them lovingly and tell them they could leave. And they would do so in quiet dignity, still at peace with one another. Both Saint Francis and Saint Anthony preached to animals, including fish, and they all responded to their sacred words. Once a flock of birds flew away in the form of a cross.

And Jesus saw a little boy who had no home, and he was hungry; when he called for bread the people turned away. And Jesus took the child and gave him bread; he wrapped him in his own warm coat, and found for him a home. (Aquarian Gospel 74:21, 22)

In the gospel of Luke (4:18) we find Jesus saying that God “hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted,” and here is an example. All those suffering who called out to Jesus received his help.

To those who followed him the master said, If man would gain again his lost estate he must respect the brotherhood of life. Whoever is not kind to every form of life—to man, to beast, to bird, and creeping thing—cannot expect the blessings of the Holy One; for as we give, so God will give to us. (Aquarian Gospel 74:23, 24)

No need for comment on this, only to heed Jesus’ words: “Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37).

Chapter Seventy-Five

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews, and he was earnest, learned and devout. He saw the master's signet in the face of Jesus as he talked, but was not brave enough to publicly confess his faith in him; so in the night he went to talk with Jesus at the home of Jude. (Aquarian Gospel 75:1-3)

He saw the master's signet in the face of Jesus as he talked. We can only speculate as to what the sign was which Nicodemus saw. Israel did not lack for esoteric knowledge, so perhaps Nicodemus was developed enough in spiritual clairvoyance to see into the subtle realms and recognize the status of Jesus. It is not impossible that the mastership of Jesus was revealed to Nicodemus, that his "seeing" was intuitional. The important point here is that Nicodemus knew the greatness of Jesus, that he was not going to test him nor was he wanting to become some kind of hanger-on because of admiration.

When Jesus saw him come he said, Full blessed are the pure in heart; twice blessed are the fearless, pure in heart; thrice blessed are the fearless, pure in heart who dare to make confession of their faith before the highest courts. (Aquarian Gospel 75:4-6)

Three qualities of blessedness are presented here: purity of heart, fearlessness, and courage to openly live in such a manner as to be known as a person of faith to all observers. All of them imply freedom from egotism, and the higher standards of life such freedom entails.

And Nicodemus said, Hail, master, hail! I know you are a teacher come from God, for man alone could never teach as you have taught; could never do the works that you have done. (Aquarian Gospel 75:7)

Nicodemus is not speaking as a groupie, an admirer of rhetorical skill or intellectual brilliance, but of the fact that Jesus spoke truly when he said to his disciples: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

The "flesh" of external words mean nothing and can help no one in any lasting manner, but the spirit-consciousness of a holy man or Master is conveyed directly to the hearts of his hearers, and has the power to awaken and work a permanent change in those who are capable of full response to them. For, as he said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). That is why the spies of the sanhedrin reported: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). "The people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22).

Divine light enters those who hear the words of a Master. Even the recordings of

Swami Sivananda and Paramhansa Yogananda convey their holy inspiration to those who listen with quiet and prepared minds. One time I heard a rare recording of a holy bishop who had a short time before left his body. If ever my hair has “stood on end” it was in those minutes. The room was filled with Light and Power. Listening to recordings of the holy popes Leo XIII and Pius XII produces the same experience. Seeing and hearing a holy teacher is a life-changing experience for those who are capable of it. Though he was fearful, Nicodemus was just such a qualified person.

The changes in consciousness wrought by his presence and words were Jesus’ greatest “works,” but his healings were great also, for they taught as well as restored to health. His words and works proved that Jesus was sent by God as a light in the darkness of this ignorant and deformed world. Jesus not only said of himself: “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5), he also said of his disciples: “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14).

And Jesus said, Except a man be born again he cannot see the king; he cannot comprehend the words I speak. (Aquarian Gospel 75:8)

To know God in the truest sense, a human being must experience a rebirth which enables him to perceive higher things and exert his will to live on a higher plane than previously. Such a rebirth entails the awakening of latent powers and capacities that previously he did not even dream of. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (II Corinthians 5:17; see Galatians 6:15). The word *ktisis* means both creature and creation. A reborn person is a new species altogether even though no difference may be seen outwardly. But that new creation is only potential; it must be actualized by continual, conscious application of spiritual laws and spiritual practices.

There are many rebirths that may occur to the evolving person. Some are slight in nature and some are so profound they cannot be comprehended fully until their full potential is reached. Unfortunately this truth is not realized, and various religious approaches claim that their form of rebirth is the only real one. But the aspirant must be ready to undergo many “births” and “deaths” in this very life. Only in this way can we comprehend and experience the meaning of Saint Paul when he declared: “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18). We must be able and resolved to “walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25) by means of our inner rebirths.

And Nicodemus said, How can a man be born again? Can he go back into the womb and come again to life?

And Jesus said, The birth of which I speak is not the birth of flesh. Except a man be born of water and the Holy Breath, he cannot come into the kingdom of the Holy One. That which is born of flesh is child of man; that which is born of Holy Breath is child of God. The winds blow where they please; men hear their voices, and may note results; but they know not from

whence they come, nor where they go; and so is every one that is born of Holy Breath. (Aquarian Gospel 75:9-13)

Except a man be born of water and the Holy Breath, he cannot come into the kingdom of the Holy One. In the Bible and the earliest writings of Christianity it is stated that the rebirth into Christ is begun by a twofold initiatory rite. The first part is purification by means of greatly empowered water which by its very touch drives out a colossal amount of darkness or “sin” from the physical astral and causal bodies. This is baptism of water. The second part is baptism of the Holy Spirit-Breath in which the divine awakening, empowering, and evolving Power known as the Holy Spirit is infused into every level of the initiate’s being, pervading it as the Cosmic Fire which is unlimited Cosmic Life. In the West these two processes are known as Baptism and Confirmation, and in the East they are called Baptism and Chrismation. Their effects, though, are the same even though the externals of the rites may differ. The prime requisite is possession by the initiator of the Apostolic Succession empowerment. (Again, see *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.) Otherwise the rites are mere external actions, however well-intentioned. (I am writing in the context of Christianity. The necessary rebirth processes are accomplished differently in other religious traditions.)

Through purification and empowerment the initiate is “born again” and begins to live in the spirit. That is why Jesus continues:

That which is born of flesh is child of man; that which is born of Holy Breath is child of God. What is the Holy Breath? It is the same as the Holy Spirit, but what is that? It is the primal Cosmic Vibration which manifests as the entire evolving creation and all forms within it. In Indian philosophy it is Mahashakti, the Supreme Power. The Holy Spirit-Breath is the Holy Mother aspect of Divinity. It is called “breath” because breath is life itself. In Sanskrit it is Prana, which means both life and breath. Through the Cosmic Power we are enabled to enter into and become fully established in Cosmic Consciousness, the Kingdom of God.

The winds blow where they please; men hear their voices, and may note results; but they know not from whence they come, nor where they go; and so is every one that is born of Holy Breath. To those immersed in material consciousness, the reborn are a complete mystery and often the target of their derision or malice. Understanding nothing of the nature of the world or themselves, they naturally have no idea about those who have awakened from the sleep of materialism into the light of spirit. There is no use for the awake to “dialogue” with the asleep. It is impossible and can only result in wasted time at the best and persecution at the worst. The truly alive should be contented to pass through the world as unseen as the wind, to be invisible like Jesus and pass through their midst. The fourth chapter of the Gospel of Saint Luke tells us that when Jesus angered “the righteous” by his words, they took hold of him and dragged him up a mountain in order to kill him by throwing him off. “But he passing through the midst of them went his way” (Luke 4:30), invisible and intangible to them. “So is every one that is born of Holy Breath.”

The ruler said, I do not understand; pray tell me plainly what you mean.

And Jesus said, The kingdom of the Holy One is in the soul; men cannot see it with their carnal eyes; with all their reasoning powers they comprehend it not. It is a life deep hid in God; its recognition is the work of inner consciousness.

The kingdoms of the world are kingdoms of the sight; the kingdom of the Holy One is that of faith; its king is love.

Men cannot see the love of God unmanifest, and so our Father-God has clothed this love with flesh—flesh of a son of man. (Aquarian Gospel 75:14-18)

Materially-minded Churchians have been trying for two thousand years to establish the kingdom of God on earth as a material, tangible and politically powerful institution. And they will continue to do so, no matter what Jesus had to say about it. When he told us to pray: “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. (Aquarian Gospel 94:7), he was speaking of an inner kingdom, an inner coming that is a descent of spiritual consciousness so Christines may do the will of God during their time here on earth, just as it is done in the heaven-regions by those beyond the bonds of earth.

The kingdom of the Holy One is in the soul; men cannot see it with their carnal eyes; with all their reasoning powers they comprehend it not. Being a spiritual entity, the kingdom of God cannot be seen by the eyes of flesh, but of spirit. Nor can the intellects of earthbound men and women understand the kingdom which operates by laws unlike those of this world. Only those who see and live within have entered the kingdom and understood it.

It is a life deep hid in God; its recognition is the work of inner consciousness. The kingdom of God is nothing less than life in God. And the life of the awakened, reborn person is “deep hid in God,” far beyond the perception or comprehension of outsiders. The ultimate baptism is immersion in God. When the inner consciousness is awakened and stirred up, then we can seek the kingdom, enter it and live there eternally. Therefore inner consciousness must be cultivated at every moment of our life so we will not be compelled to return to this alien, dead world any more.

The kingdoms of the world are kingdoms of the sight; the kingdom of the Holy One is that of faith; its king is love. Men cannot see the love of God unmanifest, and so our Father-God has clothed this love with flesh—flesh of a son of man. The kingdom of God is a purely intangible thing, unlike the material constructions of ignorant humanity, including their religions. God is love, far beyond the pathetic, egoic attachment and obsession the world calls “love.” Love is the very breath, the very essence of Cosmic Reality, and it is the state of conscious union with that Reality. Since human beings naturally cannot perceive this supreme Reality with their earthly senses, God continually sends his great messengers to awaken them. Although totally freed in spirit, they again clothe themselves with flesh so that just as the bright light of the lightbulb’s filament shines through the frosted glass in which it is encased, in the same way the light of spirit, of divine love, can be experienced by thirsting souls that can awaken to its wonder and themselves seek to be established in Spirit as are

those sent from God. The wonder of this cannot be conveyed in words, but it can certainly be experienced, as those who have met the Great Ones know.

And that the world may see and know this love made manifest, the son of man must needs be lifted up. As Moses in the wilderness raised up the serpent for the healing of the flesh, the son of man must be raised up. That all men bitten by the serpent of the dust, the serpent of this carnal life, may live. (Aquarian Gospel 75:19-21)

The twenty-first chapter of the book of Numbers recounts that at one point in their wanderings the Hebrews became disgusted with both God and Moses, and made vigorous complaint against them. In response to their negativity, snakes whose bite was both painful and deadly came among them and many died from their poison. When the people acknowledged their wrong and asked for alleviation, Moses was shown in a revelation that he should make an image of a snake and put in on a high pole in the midst of the camp. Anyone who was bitten by a snake and turned and looked at the image did not die. Jesus is referring to this and prophesying his crucifixion.

Many people do not like the sight of a crucifix, considering it negative, an image of death. But they do not understand that the crucifix is a projection of the incident with the serpents and the image. Humanity was dying of the affliction they called life. The mortal body caused them pain and death. But Jesus took upon himself the very thing that was afflicting them and transformed it for the healing and life of those who would turn to him throughout future ages. The crucifix is the fulfilling of the prophetic serpent upon the pole. It is a sign of life, not death, yet it appears to be an image of death to earthly eyes. (See II Corinthians 2:14-16.) To those who “see” it is a revelation of life, a demonstration of Jesus’ love for all mankind. The saints rejoice in the risen Christ, but they also love Christ crucified, understanding the profound meanings of both aspects. Therefore Saint Paul wrote: “I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (I Corinthians 2:2).

Christines must “raise up” Christ continually in their minds and hearts. Abundance of life will then be theirs, the life of the spirit.

He who believes in him shall have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he sent forth his only son to be raised up that men may see the love of God. God did not send his son to judge the world; he sent him forth to save the world; to bring men to the light. But men love not the light, for light reveals their wickedness; men love the dark. Now, every one who loves the truth comes to the light; he does not fear to have his works made manifest. (Aquarian Gospel 75:22-26)

God sends forth the Sons of God to show humanity how to regain their eternal status as immortal sons of God themselves. When these messengers are “raised up” in the consciousness of those who understand their mission, the revelation of God’s

eternal love is revealed and they are enabled to free themselves and be “saved” from the terrible sentence of continual rebirth and suffering.

Those who come to the light of the great teachers see themselves clearly and set about working to cleanse and perfect themselves: their consciousness. But those who love their egos detest that which reveals the truth about their untruth: that their lives are a degraded lie. So they turn from the light, cursing it and trying to banish it from the world. That is why throughout history all great messengers have suffered persecution and even execution at the hands of the lovers of darkness. The presence of great master teachers reveals the character of those with whom they come in contact. The good love them, the evil hate them, and the nonentities do not respond at all but keep on drifting around as usual.

The light had come, and Nicodemus went his way; he knew the meaning of the birth of Holy Breath; he felt the presence of the Spirit in his soul. And Jesus tarried in Jerusalem for many days and taught and healed the sick. The common people gladly listened to his words, and many left their all of carnal things and followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 75:27-29)

Having received the new birth, Nicodemus was aware that he was himself a temple of the Holy Breath, that God lived in him as his very Life. That is why Saint Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.... Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God.... Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; II Corinthians 6:16). Those who listened to the teachings of Jesus, turned away from material consciousness, began to live in the spirit and attained the same new life in God.

Chapter Seventy-Six

The Logos went to Bethlehem, and many people followed him. He found the shepherd's home where he was cradled when a babe; here he abode. He went up to the hills where more than thirty years before the shepherds watched their flocks and heard the messenger of peace exclaim: *At midnight in a cave in Bethlehem the Prince of Peace is born.* And shepherds still were there, and sheep still fed upon the hills. And in the valley near great flocks of snow-white doves were flying to and fro. And when the shepherds knew that Jesus, whom the people called the king, had come, they came from near and far to speak to him. (Aquarian Gospel 76:1-7)

Although Logos is usually translated as Word, it is much more than that. It is both concept and the impulse to express the concept. It arises from the deepest part of the individual consciousness. Word is secondary, an expression rather than the Thing Itself. Creation itself is an expression of Logos, not just in the sense of projected vibration, but as an idea arising from the direct, creative will of the infinite Brahman. This being so, any individual who realizes the primal idea or purpose of Brahman in sending forth creation and the sentient beings embodied within it can be called a Logos or Divine Word. It is in this sense that Jesus is called Logos in the Aquarian Gospel. Jesus is very clear in several places that he is neither God nor The Word, but rather a perfect image of God, a reflection-embodiment of Divine Perfection. He is A Christ, not The Christ, for The Christ is God. A Logos is a perfect realization of the Divine Intention for all sentient beings.

Unfortunately the New Testament was altered after the so-called Nestorian Controversy to reflect the new "orthodoxy" that had been hammered out by various gatherings of Byzantine imperial theologians. For example, in the Peshitta, the doctored Aramaic text produced at that time, the Holy Spirit not only became male rather than female, as the earlier texts had indicated, in the same way Jesus was turned into Godhead rather than a perfected Son of God. Here is an example of the confusion introduced even in the Greek text: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Hebrews 1:1-4).

First we are told that Jesus created all the worlds, even though he has been "appointed" to that post, which implies that he did not possess that power and purpose from eternity. We are also told that Jesus is a reflection, an image of God: not God. A mirror image is never the thing reflected. Further, he is on the right

hand of God, having been “made so much better than the angels” by God: and therefore not himself God. He “inherited” His glory or name. It, too, was not his by nature or from eternity. Those who wish may rationalize that these verses are a mixture of references to both Jesus’ humanity and divinity, but that is just a concession to post-Nestorian orthodoxy, a position considered absolutely heretical by the Orthodox churches of Egypt, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq, Armenia, and India (who nevertheless often engage in the same type of double-speak).

If you have a cross-reference Bible or Bible computer program, you can run the references on these verses from Hebrews and see the contradiction and confusion that result from covering up one lie with another, theologically speaking.

And Jesus said to them, Behold the life of innocence and peace! White is the symbol of the virtuous and pure! the lamb of innocence; the dove of peace; and it was meet that love should come in human form amid such scenes as these. Our father Abraham walked through these vales, and on these very hills he watched his flocks and herds. (Aquarian Gospel 76:8-11)

White is a symbol of virtue and purity because it is not a color at all, but a combination of the entire spectrum of light. It is a reflection, a shining forth of the Totality that is Infinite Being. In the same way a holy person shines with the Spirit. In such a one we do not see a limited, finite being, but Limitless Being which is Limitless Consciousness. Such a person is truly divine, a Logos.

Having been Abraham in a previous incarnation, Jesus was drawn in that life to the places where Abraham had lived and received the revelation that in the future he would himself be the Christ, the Messiah. (Again, see *Robe of Light*.)

And here it was that one, the Prince of Peace, the king of Salim, came; the Christ in human form; a greater far than Abraham was he. And here it was that Abraham gave to this king of Salim, tithes of all he had.

This Prince of Peace went forth in battle everywhere. He had no sword; no armor of defense; no weapons of offense; and yet he conquered men, and nations trembled at his feet. The hosts of Egypt quailed before this sturdy king of right; the kings of Egypt placed their crowns upon his head, and gave into his hands the sceptre of all Egypt land, and not a drop of blood was shed, and not a captive placed in chains; but everywhere the conqueror threw wide the prison doors and set the captives free. (Aquarian Gospel 76:12-18)

Here we see that Jesus considered Melchizedek, the prophet-priest mentioned in Genesis and Hebrews, to also be a Christ, just as Buddha said there had been many Buddhas preceding him. As Abraham, Jesus had been blessed by Melchizedek, and Christians have always considered him to be a foreshadowing of Jesus since he offered bread and wine on behalf of Abraham. The Christian priesthood has been called “the priesthood of Melchizedek” for this reason. We see from these verses in the Aquarian Gospel that Melchizedek was truly a “prince of peace.”

And, once again, the Prince of Peace has come, and from these blessed hills he goes again to fight. And he is clothed in white; his sword is truth, his shield is faith; his helmet is innocence; his breath is love; his watchword peace.

But this is not a carnal war; it is not man at war with man; but it is right against the wrong. And love is captain, love is warrior, love is armor, love is all, and love shall win.

And then again the hills of Bethlehem were clothed with light, again the messenger exclaimed, Peace, peace on earth, good will to men.

And Jesus taught the people; healed the sick; revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of the Holy One.

And many said, he is the Christ; the king who was to come has come; Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 76:19-26)

Here we find “the whole armor” of God listed in a more complete manner than in the book of Ephesians (chapter six), and it merits a careful pondering. The true Christian warfare is an inner war against ignorance and evil, leaving the outer world alone to muddle along as it has always done. That is why Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” (John 14:27).

Chapter Seventy-Seven

It is perfectly in the natural order of things in this world that any positive current is opposed: often bitterly and often to the death. One of the greatest evils of the twentieth century was the terrible persecution of religion in the Communist countries. Persecution of Christians continues and is increasing continually in much of the rest of the world, including the United States.

Persecution and opposition are often signs that we are on the right course. The reaction of evil people can tell us whether we are in the light or in the dark like them. In my own spiritual search I found this to be true, knowing that only when the evil ones became angered, outraged and threatening could I be sure I was going in the right direction. That is why Jesus said: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:10-12).

There are many ways to deal with such opposition. Solomon wrote: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Proverbs 25:21). And Saint Paul: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" Romans 12:20-21). Jesus shows us the right way in this chapter.

With three disciples Jesus went to Hebron where he tarried seven days and taught. And then he went to Bethany and in the home of Lazarus he taught. The evening came; the multitudes were gone, and Jesus, Lazarus, and his sisters, Martha, Ruth and Mary, were alone.

And Ruth was sore distressed. Her home was down in Jericho; her husband was the keeper of an inn; his name was Asher-ben. Now, Asher was a Pharisee of strictest mien and thought, and he regarded Jesus with disdain. And when his wife confessed her faith in Christ, he drove her from his home. But Ruth resisted not; she said, If Jesus is the Christ he knows the way, and I am sure he is the Christ. My husband may become enraged and slay my human form; he cannot kill the soul, and in the many mansions of my Fatherland I have a dwelling-place.

And Ruth told Jesus all; and then she said, What shall I do? (Aquarian Gospel 77:1-9)

In this chapter we learn about a sister of Lazarus that is not mentioned in the Bible or anywhere else as far as I know. These nine verses are self-explanatory.

And Jesus said, Your husband is not willingly at fault; he is devout; he prays to God, our Father-God. His zeal for his religion is intense; in this he is sincere; but it has driven him insane, and he believes it right to keep his home unsullied by the heresy of Christ. He feels assured that he has done the will of God in driving you away. Intolerance is ignorance matured. The light will come to him some day, and then he will repay for all your heartaches, griefs and tears. (Aquarian Gospel 77:10-14)

Your husband is not willingly at fault. Fanatics actually relish denouncing those that disagree with them as evil and demonic, calling them all sorts of defamatory things, spewing out loathing and hatred toward them. They think this proves their purity and orthodoxy when it only demonstrates that they are demons in mind and heart. Christians are especially prone to this, even though they like to talk about how Jesus prayed for his enemies. Again, they are following the motto of all ignorant sectarians: Adore the Messenger and Ignore the Message. It does not work that way, for Jesus said: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” Matthew 7:21-23). This is what awaits these Churchians at the judgment of Christ with which they so love to threaten others. What a surprise is in store for them!

But here we see the true Christ-attitude. Jesus understands that Asher’s problem is in his lack of understanding, not in negativity of will. Consequently he lists his virtues.

He is devout; he prays to God, our Father-God. His zeal for his religion is intense; in this he is sincere. He respects the dedication of Asher to truth as he understands it. Also, he is as much a devotee of God as Ruth. Only yesterday I came across a website that contained articles contending that anyone who did not belong to their particular religion did not worship God at all but a “false god” and even (of course) demons. O consternation! In a related website someone had posted a response saying in essence: “Twenty years ago I quit your church, and this brings back to me why I did. Go out for a walk and breathe some fresh air and clear your head!” I understood exactly what that poster meant.

Jesus saw value in Asher’s religious outlook, even though it was erroneous. Saint Paul said about his sincere opponents: “I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge” (Romans 10:2). That is, their zeal was godly though mistaken. Where do we see this view in any form of Christianity today, except for a few esoteric Christian groups that are despised and execrated by those who consider themselves orthodox and “mainline” and “the one true Church of Christ outside of which there is no salvation”? Oh, well, as Jesus said: “They have their reward” (Matthew 6:2, 5, 16). And we should acknowledge any good that they possess, if we would be followers of Jesus.

But it has driven him insane. Jesus is not speaking clinically, as though Asher was literally insane, but only morally so. That is, his ignorance has robbed him of all spiritual reason. It is just like the modern day “believers” and “unbelievers” that rail and rage at one another, declaring each other fools and worse—especially the new, “chic” atheists of this century. But in reality they are both crazy with ego and hatred as well as fear of one another’s views since they are equally insecure and fraught with fear. Fear and outrage are their common coin. So naturally they switch sides quite readily and post “I was an atheist” and “I was a deluded Christian” with equal facility. Hate and fear unites them in their perpetual dogfight.

He believes it right to keep his home unsullied by the heresy of Christ. He feels assured that he has done the will of God in driving you away. God Himself said to the prophet Samuel when he went to anoint David (the future Messiah, Jesus) king: “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7). So God and his messengers do not just consider a person’s words and actions, but the disposition of heart that motivated them. If Asher had acted in any other way, thinking as he did, it would have been a great moral wrong. It is tremendously important that we weigh all aspects before coming to a conclusion about someone. Seeming vice can hide very real virtue, just as seeming virtue can cloak very real vice. To see as God sees is the trait of a Christ, and though we are not yet Christs we can certainly take the example of Jesus to assist us in the path to Christhood.

Intolerance is ignorance matured. This sentence should be known by every single human being and taken to heart. The world would be a vastly different place if all people understood the truth of this and acted accordingly, uprooting from their hearts all traces of matured ignorance. We should carefully examine ourselves to make sure this has no place in us.

The light will come to him some day, and then he will repay for all your heartaches, griefs and tears. Only today I was listening to an account of the terrible death of a very evil and tremendously destructive man. It was an awful picture of incalculable suffering compounded by a monstrous ego which hated and raged against the only thing that could heal the misery. Yet, ugly as it was, I was not upset by it because I knew that in time that man would come to healing and proceed along the upward way to the Divine Vision. This is a wonderful truth. Bigots and fanatics hate the teaching expressed in an esoteric creed: “We believe in the law of good which rules the world and by which one day all his sons shall reach the feet of the Father, however far they stray.” For they want those they dislike to be damned to everlasting torment, which is proof of their own profound negativity. But in time they and those they wish ill of will say with the Prodigal Son: “I will arise and go to my father” (Luke 15:18), and step up into the light.

And Ruth, you must not think that you are free from blame. If you had walked in wisdom’s ways, and been content to hold your peace, this grief would not have come to you. (Aquarian Gospel 77:15, 16)

The Aquarian Gospel and the gospels of the official Bible show us clearly that

Jesus was a plain-speaking and straightforward man, yet always governed by wisdom and compassion. Obviously Ruth did not follow his example, but fussed and nagged at Asher for his refusal to think as she did. As I once heard a character in a movie say: "There is a difference between caring and being annoying." How true! We must cultivate wisdom and intuition in dealing with others if we would help and not injure them.

One time two people asked me what I thought about their alcohol addiction. I could feel the anxiety and fear as they waited for my answer. So I explained that I knew they were really seeking relief from life's tensions and worries, and that God understood that better than I did. Then I recommended that they stop being anxious about being "bad" and relax and pray and look into learning meditation. They went away happy, and I was happy, too, for I knew things would become better for them. And they did. Another time I met two young men whose lives were a moral shambles, and yet whose hearts were good and whose consciences were alive though troubled. When I left they followed me to the door and one of them asked in a sad, hesitant voice: "Do you think we are evil?" I put my arms around both of them together and said: "No; I know you are good. I love you and God loves you and never let anyone tell you otherwise. Do what you know is right as much as you can, and your life will be blest." I can still see the joy on their faces and feel their response. I know they have gone on the upward way even if very slowly and often imperceptibly. They will one day reign in the kingdom of heaven, however long it may take.

One of the major traits of Swami Sivananda was his great love and optimism for the spiritual future of all he met. Because he saw us as sons of God it became easy for us to believe it and try to manifest it. We knew that even a thousand failures could not make him cease to believe in us and hope for our best. That is how he changed the lives of thousands: just by knowing it was possible. He knew we could; and so we did.

What we sow we reap. If we sow kindness and good will it will manifest in time. People are too precious to treat carelessly and callously. Once I was taken by some fundamentalist Protestants to the county jail. We stood outside the bars of a kind of common room and one of the group harangued the men about sin and punishment by God. Those poor men sat there unresponding, filled with despair and unhappiness. I thought: "These people do not need condemnation, they need hope. They need the real gospel of Christ, that from death life can come forth." It is so easy to discourage people with thoughtless words and actions. Saint Theresa of Liseaux wrote that God's justice means that God understands. We all need that insight.

It takes a long, long time for light to break into the shell of prejudice, and patience is the lesson you have need to learn. The constant dropping of the water wears away the hardest stone. The sweet and holy incense of a godly life will melt intolerance much quicker than the hottest flame, or hardest

blow. Just wait a little time, and then go home with sympathy and love. Talk not of Christ, nor of the kingdom of the Holy One. Just live a godly life; refrain from harshness in your speech, and you will lead your husband to the light. And it was so. (Aquarian Gospel 77:17-22)

It takes a long, long time for light to break into the shell of prejudice, and patience is the lesson you have need to learn. The constant dropping of the water wears away the hardest stone. The dropping of the water is not a continual assault on someone, but perseverance in gentle optimism. The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna said that he “could see an ocean in a drop of good,” that he would seek out a spark of virtue in a person and fan and fan that spark until it became a flame that consumed their darkness.

This is what Jesus is speaking about. It takes time, but it must gain results for divinity is the nature of the people we are interested in helping. They do not need to be made into something, but to wake up from the illusion that they are so much less than they really are. A friend of mine only wanted a materially prosperous and carefree life. “Is that so much to ask?” she often challenged me, and I always told her: “No. It is not enough to ask. You are greater than that and destined for infinity, and until you achieve it you will never be truly happy or have any lasting peace.” This is a hard lesson to learn and it really only happens when someone’s inner consciousness awakens. Until then wait patiently and know the best is coming eventually.

The sweet and holy incense of a godly life will melt intolerance much quicker than the hottest flame, or hardest blow. Now there is a perspective for us: Are we what we should be? Have we any right to expect from others what we have not developed in ourselves? Jesus is telling us that if our consciousness is what it should be, the very vibration of purity, holiness and wisdom, will melt the ice of ignorance and prejudice and free the bound souls. That is why Yogananda said: “Save yourself and you will save thousands.” Before that Saint Seraphim of Sarov would say: “Acquire the Holy Spirit of God and thousands around you will be saved.” So we should be working on ourselves rather than on others.

Just wait a little time, and then go home with sympathy and love. Talk not of Christ, nor of the kingdom of the Holy One. Just live a godly life; refrain from harshness in your speech, and you will lead your husband to the light. What simple wisdom! Do not talk about it: live it; be it. Then, being in the presence of light, they will find the light.

And it was so. That is the best thing about truth: it works.

Chapter Seventy-Eight

And Jesus went to Jericho, and at the inn of Asher he abode. (Aquarian Gospel 78:1)

There are various ways to deal with difficult and hostile people. The best way for most of us is to avoid them as much as possible and remain at peace. But saints and Masters have the ability to heal such people through direct encounter. Jesus had this power to heal hearts and is now doing so by coming to stay at Asher's inn. Just what took place we are not told, but in chapter ninety-two we are told: "Asher was no longer hostile to the Christ."

A servant at the inn was sick, nigh unto death; the healers could not cure. And Jesus came and touched the dying girl, and said, Malone, arise! and in a moment pain was gone; the fever ceased; the maid was well. And then the people brought their sick, and they were healed. (Aquarian Gospel 78:2-4)

The girl heard the call "Arise!" and did just that. If we would be healed of all ills of whatever kind, physical or mental, the answer is to elevate our consciousness and establish our lives on a higher plane than heretofore. And that must not be the end: daily we should meditate and live in such a manner that we progressively ascend in consciousness without interruption or regression. This is the yoga life.

But Jesus did not tarry long in Jericho; he went down to the Jordan ford where John was wont to teach. The multitudes were there and Jesus said to them,

Behold, the time has come; the kingdom is at hand. None but the pure in heart can come into the kingdom of the Holy One; but every son and daughter of the human race is called upon to turn from evil and become the pure in heart. The resolution to attain and enter through the Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One will constitute discipleship, and every one must make a pledge of his discipleship.

John washed your bodies in the stream, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul, in preparation for the coming of the king, the opening of the Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One. John did a mighty work; but now the Christine gate is opened up, and washing is established as the pledge of your discipleship.

Until this age shall close this pledge shall be a rite, and shall be called, Baptism rite; and it shall be a sign to men, and seal to God of men's discipleship. You men of every nation, hear! Come unto me; the Christine gate is opened up; turn from your sins and be baptized, and you shall enter through the gate and see the king. (Aquarian Gospel 78:5-12)

But Jesus did not tarry long in Jericho; he went down to the Jordan ford where John was

wont to teach. Jesus was revealed to Israel when he was baptized at the Jordan ford where John usually taught and baptized. So he has returned there to announce the opening of the gate into the Christ(ine) Life: baptism.

The multitudes were there and Jesus said to them, Behold, the time has come; the kingdom is at hand. None but the pure in heart can come into the kingdom of the Holy One; but every son and daughter of the human race is called upon to turn from evil and become the pure in heart. The kingdom of Spirit is always right with us: at hand because it is actually within us (Luke 17:21). But just as food right next to him might as well not even exist if a starving man cannot perceive it, it is the same with the kingdom of divine awareness. Only those who turn within can find it, and it is impossible to turn within without purification on all levels of our being. Purification is so necessary that Patanjali lists it, in the form of yama and niyama, as the first step in Yoga. Meditation itself is purifying, but it must be based on external purification to have any lasting effect. The universal necessity for this is indicated by Jesus' saying: "Every son and daughter of the human race is called upon to turn from evil and become the pure in heart."

The resolution to attain and enter through the Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One will constitute discipleship, and every one must make a pledge of his discipleship. "Believing in Jesus" and joining "his Church" and jumping through various hoops of doctrine and "Christian" activity does not at all make anyone a disciple of Jesus. Only the resolution to enter into union with God, the Holy One, constitutes discipleship. First a pledge of discipleship must be made, so Jesus continues:

John washed your bodies in the stream, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul, in preparation for the coming of the king, the opening of the Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One. John did a mighty work; but now the Christine gate is opened up, and washing is established as the pledge of your discipleship. Note that baptism is the pledge of discipleship, but as Jesus made clear previously, actual discipleship is striving to enter into union with God. As he said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thessalonians 4:3). Only those who conform to the divine pattern inherent in the universe, the will of God that all sentient beings shall attain conscious and total union with Infinite Being and Consciousness, can enter the kingdom of heaven which is that Being and Consciousness.

*Until this age shall close this pledge shall be a rite, and shall be called, Baptism rite; and it shall be a sign to men, and seal to God of men's discipleship. Baptism is a rite by which we say to God and humanity that we dedicate our life to the search for God. Then real disciples get busy to attain that sacred union. (Once again: see *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.)*

You men of every nation, hear! Come unto me; the Christine gate is opened up; turn from your sins and be baptized, and you shall enter through the gate and see the king. Right away we must abandon our ignorant ways, not just "work up to it," take the pledge of baptism, enter the gate of discipleship and begin to live in spiritual awareness that

leads to the revelation of divinity within us and everywhere.

The six disciples who had followed Jesus stood a-near, and Jesus led them forth and in the Jordan he baptized them in the name of Christ; and then he said to them, My friends, you are the first to enter through the Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One. As I baptized you in the name of Christ, so you shall, in that sacred name, baptize all men and women who will confess their faith in Christ, and shall renounce their sins. And, lo, the multitudes came down, renounced their sins, confessed their faith in Christ, and were baptized. (Aquarian Gospel 78:13-16)

There are three steps to the Christine gate: renouncing all evil; inner and outer, active and practical conformity of life to the principles of Christ (for that is what faith really is); and making the pledge of baptism. Then a person can say he is a Christine, but it is only the barest beginning. Becoming a Christ is a lifetime endeavor, making that the prime motivation and goal of life. Total dedication is the secret of success in this.

Chapter Seventy-Nine

Now, John the harbinger, was at the Salim Springs where water was abundant, and washed the bodies of the people who confessed their sins. A Jewish lawyer went to John and said, Has not this man from Galilee, he whom you washed and called the Christ, become your foe? They say that he is at the Jordan ford; that he is building up a church, or something else, and that he washes people just as you have done. (Aquarian Gospel 79:1-3)

“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled” (Titus 1:15). In the same way, those that view religion as a business are always concerned about competitors. For this reason the scribe warns Saint John that Jesus is setting himself up in the same business. Like such people he is hoping to provoke anger and hostility in the saint, which is impossible, for Saint John himself said of himself in relation to Jesus: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Actually, John the Evangelist had been a disciple of Saint John, but he had sent him to become a disciple of Jesus (John 1:35-37)—something a worldling could never understand.

And John replied, This Jesus is indeed the Christ whose way I came to pave. He is not foe of mine. The bridegroom hath the bride; his friends are near, and when they hear his voice they all rejoice. The kingdom of the Holy One is bride, and Christ the groom; and I, the harbinger, am full of joy because they prosper so abundantly. I have performed the work that I was sent to do; the work of Jesus just begins. (Aquarian Gospel 79:4-7)

This Jesus is indeed the Christ whose way I came to pave. He is not foe of mine. There is no taint of ego in the Baptist; he knows his purpose, which is a great one indeed, for he is to prepare the way for the revelation of Jesus to Israel. For time beyond calculation, every year a crop of new Messiahs arose, usually at the Passover time in Jerusalem. Messiah-watchers never lacked for entertainment. But the prophets had said that before the Messiah came he would be preceded by the reincarnation of Elijah, and many did realize that John was Elijah returned and therefore was the authentic herald of the Messiah.

Elijah had a disciple: Elisha, the future Jesus: “And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

“And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

“And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

“And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

“He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him” (II Kings 2:1-15).

Because of his Master’s promise, the disciple attained twice that which his teacher had attained. In the King James translation we read that John said regarding Jesus: “This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not” (John 1:30, 31). But this not at all what the Greek text says. Rather it should read: “After me there comes a man who has become superior to me. And I did not recognize him because at first [protos] he was mine [mou],” my disciple and less than me.

Jesus was certainly not an opponent or competitor of John, for they were cousins and had grown up together until Jesus left for India and John remained in the desert. Also they had been educated together by their mothers who had been trained for that by the Essene teachers in Egypt. Further, John was the Master of the Essenes, and all of Jesus’ family were Essenes, including most of his disciples who were also his cousins. Jesus was the very purpose of John’s incarnation, and not long after announcing Jesus to Israel John was executed. Once he had fulfilled the

purpose of his birth he left this world. So Jesus was the beginning and end of his life.

The bridegroom hath the bride; his friends are near, and when they hear his voice they all rejoice. The kingdom of the Holy One is bride, and Christ the groom; and I, the harbinger, am full of joy because they prosper so abundantly. I have performed the work that I was sent to do; the work of Jesus just begins. John can now say to God as Jesus will later: “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.... And now come I to thee” (John 17:4, 13).

Then turning to the multitudes he said, Christ is the king of righteousness; Christ is the love of God; yea, he is God; one of the holy persons of the Triune God. Christ lives in every heart of purity. (Aquarian Gospel 79:8-9)

Christ is “the Son of God,” “the Only-begotten of the Father,” one of the divine Persons or Aspects of the Trinity. Christ is the creator of all and the ruler of all (Pantocrator), the Lord of Righteousness and Love. In Indian philosophy he is called Ishwara—the Lord. He is the link between the transcendent Father (Parabrahman) and the Holy Spirit (Mahashakti) Who is the Divine Light manifesting as all creation. Only the pure in heart can comprehend the Christ, for he lives in them. That is why Jesus the Christ said: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God [the Christ]” (Matthew 5:8).

Now, Jesus who is preaching at the Jordan ford, has been subjected to the hardest tests of human life, and he has conquered all the appetites and passions of the carnal man, and by the highest court of heaven, has been declared a man of such superior purity and holiness that he can demonstrate the presence of the Christ on earth. Lo, love divine, which is the Christ, abides in him, and he is pattern for the race. And every man can see in him what every man will be when he has conquered all the passions of the selfish self. In water I have washed the bodies of the people who have turned from sin, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul; but Jesus bathes for ever in the living waters of the Holy Breath. And Jesus comes to bring the savior of the world to men; Love is the savior of the world. And all who put their trust in Christ, and follow Jesus as a pattern and a guide, have everlasting life. But they who do not trust the Christ, and will not purify their hearts so that the Christ can dwell within, can never enter life. (Aquarian Gospel 79:10-18)

As I pointed out before, Buddha said that those who claimed he taught what he did not teach and denied that he taught what he did teach were not his friends but his enemies. It is the same with Jesus, and can also be extended to include claiming a status for him which he does not have and denying his real status and nature. Consequently it is no true praise to claim that Jesus is God the Creator of all, nor is it right to deny his true glory: that he has struggled up the ladder of evolution, conquering all obstacles and entered fully into his eternal, divine nature as a son of

God, having attained such a total union with the Infinite Consciousness that he participates in the omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence of God—that he is a god in the truest sense, as are we all potentially. So Saint John is explaining the truth about Jesus.

Jesus who is preaching at the Jordan ford, has been subjected to the hardest tests of human life, and he has conquered all the appetites and passions of the carnal man, and by the highest court of heaven, has been declared a man of such superior purity and holiness that he can demonstrate the presence of the Christ on earth. Having perfected himself, Jesus was witnessed to by God at his baptism and transfiguration when God spoke to those present, saying: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

Lo, love divine, which is the Christ, abides in him, and he is pattern for the race. And every man can see in him what every man will be when he has conquered all the passions of the selfish self. Jesus shows us how we, too, must live and strive for perfection, and is a living demonstration of what each one of us will be when we have completed the path to Christhood and ourselves been revealed as perfect sons of God.

In water I have washed the bodies of the people who have turned from sin, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul; but Jesus bathes for ever in the living waters of the Holy Breath. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12). Through the spiritual means Jesus has given it is possible to be constantly renewed in spirit, “bathed” in the evolving Light of the Holy Spirit. In this way we literally live in God as a part of God.

And Jesus comes to bring the savior of the world to men; Love is the savior of the world. And all who put their trust in Christ, and follow Jesus as a pattern and a guide, have everlasting life. Those who live the Christ life, not those who make a fetish of Jesus and think he will “save” them in exchange for their flattery and obsession, will enter into life eternal.

But they who do not trust the Christ, and will not purify their hearts so that the Christ can dwell within, can never enter life. So it is not a matter of Jesus, it is a matter of Christ. All Jesus can do is point us to Christ and be our example and helper, but we must make the journey ourselves. Jesus is the messenger, and Christ is the Message.

Chapter Eighty

Lamaas, priest of Brahm, who was a friend of Jesus when he was in the temple of Jagannath, had heard of Jesus and his mighty works in many lands; and he had left his home and come to Palestine in search of him. And as he journeyed towards Jerusalem he heard of John, the harbinger, who was esteemed a prophet of the living God. Lamaas found the harbinger at Salim Springs; for many days he was a silent listener to the pungent truths he taught. And he was present when the Pharisee told John of Jesus and his mighty works. He heard the answer of the harbinger; heard him bless the name of Jesus; whom he called the Christ.

And then he spoke to John; he said, Pray tell me more about this Jesus whom you call the Christ. And John replied, this Jesus is the love of God made manifest. Lo, men are living on the lower planes—the planes of greed and selfishness; for self they fight; they conquer with the sword. In every land the strong enslave and kill the weak. All kingdoms rise by force of arms; for force is king. This Jesus comes to overthrow this iron rule of force, and seat Love on the throne of power. And Jesus fears no man. He preaches boldly in the courts of kings, and everywhere, that victories won by force of arms are crimes; that every worthy end may be attained by gentleness and love just as the Prince of Peace, Melchisedec, the priest of God, won gallant victories in war without the shedding of a drop of blood. You ask where are the temples of the Christ? He ministers at shrines not made with hands; his temples are the hearts of holy men who are prepared to see the king. The groves of nature are his synagogues; his forum is the world. He has no priests dressed up in puppet style to be admired by men; for every son of man is priest of Love. When man has purified his heart by faith, he needs no middle man to intercede. He is on friendly terms with God; is not afraid of him, and he is able, and is bold enough, to lay his body on the altar of the Lord. Thus every man is priest, and is himself a living sacrifice. You need not seek the Christ, for when your heart is purified the Christ will come, and will abide with you for evermore. (Aquarian Gospel 80:1-19)

And then he spoke to John; he said, Pray tell me more about this Jesus whom you call the Christ. And John replied, this Jesus is the love of God made manifest. Talk is cheap and talk about love is particularly cheap. Few things are more tiresome than having to listen to it, so much so that when the real thing comes into our life sphere we tend to ignore or reject it. Once we were visited by a saint who truly was a heavenly man and an earthly angel. He gently put both his hands on my arms and said: “Please accept my love,” and then kissed me on both cheeks. The love he radiated was very tangible—and his humility, as well. Yet it took a few moments to adjust to meeting a sincerely (and demonstratively) loving person. So when we read that Saint John

calls Jesus “the love of God made manifest” it is not spiritual theatrics but straight truth. God is love (I John 4:8, 16), and since Jesus was in total, absolute union with God, he was truly love made manifest. And this was his continual state, not something that increased or decreased or came and went. He is not just our friend, he is our beloved friend. Churches commit a terrible evil when they make people think Jesus is adversary, judge and coming punisher of evil. Rather, his mission is to “take away the sins of the world” by showing us the path to freedom.

Lo, men are living on the lower planes—the planes of greed and selfishness; for self they fight; they conquer with the sword. In every land the strong enslave and kill the weak. All kingdoms rise by force of arms; for force is king. This Jesus comes to overthrow this iron rule of force, and seat Love on the throne of power. This will have nothing to do with political power; it will be a reign of love in the hearts of those who purify themselves so God can be enthroned in their consciousness. When this happens, their silent, invisible influence will help those around them to temper their “might is right” philosophy with a more spiritually intelligent view. This will not happen overnight, and not without a backlash from those who worship evil, but it will steadily gain ground. When Jesus comes among us for the second time it will be an assured thing. Nevertheless it will take much evolution for everyone on the earth to truly have peace in their heart. But it will come.

And Jesus fears no man. He preaches boldly in the courts of kings, and everywhere, that victories won by force of arms are crimes. We, too, must fear nothing, for that is a fundamental trait of virtue: fearlessness. Since none of us are forces in the political arena of the world we need to understand this principle as it applies to the life of an individual: anything attained by force or coercion of any kind is an evil. This is true in every situation. The only lawful coercion of any kind is that of self-discipline. We have the right to force ourselves because we own ourselves and are answerable to ourselves. But in relation to others there can be no such thing. “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law” (Romans 13:8).

That every worthy end may be attained by gentleness and love just as the Prince of Peace, Melchisedec, the priest of God, won gallant victories in war without the shedding of a drop of blood. To be “a priest after the order of Melchisedec” is to be a Master who conquers by gentleness and love. It can be done, for I have seen it in the lives of saints I have known, especially in Swami Sivananda. Yogananda, too, was such a one. More than once people who tried to rob him were transformed by his love. One mentally ill man was planning to shoot him, but Yogananda just looked at him with love and the man dropped the gun and said: “Forgive me: you have taken my evil away.” Sister Vijaya told me that many times when traveling with Yogananda she saw crude and bullying men come up and say: “Just what are you?” because of his long hair and orange clothing. She said that Yogananda would smile at them and tell them a little about himself. “They would turn away and weep like little children,” she told me, “because for the first time in their life they experienced being loved.” As the hymn says: “For his love has been so gracious, it has won my heart at last.”

You ask where are the temples of the Christ? He ministers at shrines not made with hands; his temples are the hearts of holy men who are prepared to see the king. Jesus clearly said: “My kingdom is not of this world,” but for two thousand years Churchians have refused to believe it, insisting that the Church of Christ is an earthly institution with administrators to keep people in line. Certainly those who live in Christ’s kingdom through their spiritual awakening possess physical bodies and will naturally gather with those of similar spiritual orientation to inspire one another in their devotion. They may erect buildings for their assembly, but they know the Church is an association of hearts whose rule is love not dogma. And most of all they know that no human agency can admit anyone to the Church nor can any human authority close the doors against anyone or expel them. Each person does that himself. Certainly the Church is entered and exited, but only by the disposition of the spirits of those without and within it.

Limited as its theology was, I was fortunate to be raised in a denomination that did not even keep membership records because they said the Church cannot be joined externally, but only through the life of the spirit. They accepted everyone who was “of the spirit” as their brothers and sisters. They did not care about their ideas of doctrine, but only that they should have the “life in Christ” that sets them free (Romans 8:2). And they did not expect them to join our group. As you might expect, our little denomination was small, but there were other, equally small, groups that felt the same way and followed the same way of the love of Christ.

To be a temple of Christ our hearts must be pure and prepared to “see the King” and to rise into the vision of God. The Kingdom is within and so must our life be centered within where we can live with Christ if we so will.

The groves of nature are his synagogues; his forum is the world. The whole world is “the house of God” where he can be met everywhere.

He has no priests dressed up in puppet style to be admired by men; for every son of man is priest of Love. When man has purified his heart by faith, he needs no middle man to intercede. No one speaks for God but God himself. That does not mean we should not listen to those who have experience in spiritual life and respectfully consider their words, but ultimately we are going to have to follow our spiritual intuition. Again, purification is necessary for the Christ-life.

He is on friendly terms with God; is not afraid of him, and he is able, and is bold enough, to lay his body on the altar of the Lord. Thus every man is priest, and is himself a living sacrifice. God is the last person we should fear, for the essence of spiritual life is loving communication with him. The Bible tells us that “the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11). But the requisite is the final step in yoga: *Ishwarapranidhana*: the giving of our life to God. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2). This is a high ideal, but so is friendship with God.

You need not seek the Christ, for when your heart is purified the Christ will come, and will abide with you for evermore. Yogananda often spoke of this fact, saying that when we expand our consciousness enough “God will automatically get into you” and make us his living temple.

And then Lamaas journeyed on; he came to Jesus as he taught beside the ford. And Jesus said, Behold the Star of India! Lamaas said, Behold the Sun of Righteousness! And he confessed his faith in Christ, and followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 80:20-22)

Lamaas knew who Jesus was and Jesus knew the truth of Lamaas’ being, so they were at one. To follow Jesus is to know him; to know Jesus is to follow him.

Chapter Eighty-One

When I was a child we used to sing in Sunday School:

*Jesus gave her water that was not in the well;
Jesus gave her water that others she might tell.
She went away singing, and came back bringing
Others who wanted the water that was not in the well.*

The Aquarian Gospel gives us a very different perspective on the encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman, whom Yogananda said had been a disciple of Jesus in a past life, and Jesus had come especially to awaken her spiritual consciousness which had been buried by the forgetfulness of rebirth

The Christine gate into the kingdom of the Holy One was opened up, and Jesus and the six disciples and Lamaas left the Jordan ford and turned their faces toward Galilee. Their way lay through Samaria and as they journeyed on they came to Sychar, which was near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to Joseph when a youth. And Jacob's well was there, and Jesus sat beside the well in silent thought, and his disciples went into the town to purchase bread. (Aquarian Gospel 81:1-3)

First of all, what is the Christine gate? We have been looking at quite a few passages in the Aquarian Gospel that employ this expression, but have not really defined it. It is necessary for us to understand that the gate is not any action or abstention from action. It is nothing external, but purely internal. It is the setting of the will to seek entry into the Kingdom of God-Consciousness. Unlike the superficial ways of exoteric religion, it is not a one-time, instant matter but a continual "setting of the sails" each moment. We cannot make a "decision for Christhood" and drop it from our consciousness, only taking it up when we are in the mood. It is what is known in Sanskrit as a sankalpa: "A life-changing wish, desire, volition, resolution, will, determination, or intention—not a mere momentary aspiration, but an empowering act of will that persists until the intention is fully realized. It is an act of spiritual, divine creative will inherent in each person as a power of the Atma," according to *A Brief Sanskrit Glossary*.

It is a thoroughly serious matter of will-power and carries along with it a great many essential conditions, not the least of which is an understanding of what the Kingdom of God really is, and what is required in our life, both internal and external, to bring about an entry through the gate of the Kingdom and the ability to continue the journey into the depths of Spirit. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all

that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish” (Luke 14:28-30).

A woman of the town came out to fill her pitcher from the well; and Jesus was athirst, and when he asked the woman for a drink she said, I am a woman of Samaria, and you a Jew; do you not know that there is enmity between Samaritans and Jews? They traffic not; then why ask me the favour of a drink? (Aquarian Gospel 81:4, 5)

For some reason human beings love to build walls and make separations of all kinds. They especially like considering other people inferior to themselves, either mocking or detesting them for being different. They readily sneer at people's clothes, manners, accent, place of residence and suchlike. For example one of our friends, a Protestant minister, told us that when she moved to a small town the board of the church she was to pastor told her: “You must not live anywhere south of the town square because that is ‘Catholic town,’ and we don't go there.”

Things were much worse between the Jews and the Samaritans, even though they both followed the Torah and considered it divine revelation. In the late nineteenth century a Bible scholar spent some time in Jerusalem where he rented a room from a Jewish woman. The first time he went to the market, as soon as he came in the door his landlady demanded that he take a bath immediately. When he asked why, she said: “It is possible that the shadow or even the body of a Samaritan touched you. We always bathe after going out.”

At the time of Jesus the mutual hatred of Jews and Samaritans was intense. The idea of a Jew drinking water handled by a Samaritan was unacceptable to either side, so the woman was amazed that Jesus would ask her for water. I have read several similar accounts from India regarding Hindus and Moslems.

And Jesus said, Samaritans and Jews are all the children of one God, our Father-God, and they are kin. It is but prejudice born of the carnal mind that breeds this enmity and hate. While I was born a Jew, I recognize the brotherhood of life. Samaritans are just as dear to me as Jew or Greek. (Aquarian Gospel 81:6-8)

A true spiritual teacher never accommodates the ignorance and prejudice of people. Otherwise they will stay that way. So Jesus tells the woman the plain truth: all people are children of God, and therefore of the same family. Both the Jews and the Samaritans claimed to believe that all humanity is descended from Adam and Eve, but their minds and hearts showed otherwise. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:12). It is easy to deceive ourselves as to what we really think and feel about anything, including religion.

The ego smothers the spirit, burying it beneath the rubble of “the carnal mind that breeds this enmity and hate.” And religion is a main source of this evil, as we see for ourselves every day. The bitterness of political rivalry is nothing compared to

that of religion. Those who would live in the spirit must at the very beginning commit themselves to the brotherhood of all life and strive to honor the divine life that is in all sentient beings, for “inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40), should be our constant perspective.

And then, had you but known the blessings that our Father-God has sent to men by me, you would have asked me for a drink. And I would gladly have given you a cup of water from the Fount of Life, and you would never thirst again. (Aquarian Gospel 81:9, 10)

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17). This is the mission of all holy souls here in this world. And there are many more than people suspect. Lesser teachers pass out of this world and on to higher planes to either work or progress further in their own development. Any teachings they leave behind will aid and inspire others, but they no longer have an active, effective presence in the world. Some like Buddha and Jesus are World Teachers whose influence lives on through the centuries—even millennia. They are living presences even though their bodies have disappeared from human view. Jesus told his disciples: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [aion—the age or aeon]” (Matthew 28:20).

The world is a living organism, as is the entire cosmos. Therefore it constantly changes and continually needs tending. Therefore: “Whenever dharma decreases and there is the arising of adharma, then do I manifest myself. For protection of the righteous and destruction of evildoers, for the establishing of dharma, I manifest myself from age to age” (Bhagavad Gita 4:7-8). Such great ones are virtually God walking the earth, for they are perfect vehicles of the Divine, their consciousness being absolutely one with the Divine. The only difference between them and God is one of degree: God is infinite and they are not. However they are perfect channels of Infinite Perfection, the Presence of God in the world. That is why Jesus told the woman that if she had known the blessings of God which he was conveying to humanity she would have realized he was a Fount of Life, able to grant her immortality.

The woman said, This well is deep, and you have naught with which to draw; how could you get the water that you speak about? And Jesus said, The water that I speak about comes not from Jacob’s well; it flows from the springs that never fail. Lo, everyone who drinks from Jacob’s well will thirst again; but they who drink the water that I give will never thirst again; for they themselves become a well, and from their inner parts the sparkling waters bubble up into eternal life. (Aquarian Gospel 81:11-14)

Throughout the Gospels we see that the disciples of Jesus consistently misunderstood his speaking of higher spiritual matters. When he spoke of the sword of wisdom they showed him swords of metal to assure him they were well

equipped (Luke 22:36-38). When he warned them against the “leaven” of the Scribes and Pharisees they thought he was complaining that they did not have any bread (Mark 8:15-16). Jesus was well acquainted with this mentality which caused the woman to think he was speaking of a physical well. This is one of the most important passages in the Aquarian Gospel, for it gives the right perspective on spiritual life: its source and how it is maintained.

People are always “getting high” on religion only to crash later on into depression or emptiness. The members of a small monastic foundation in the middle-west became acquainted with the wife of the local Methodist minister. She was herself also a minister, and she had attended their mass a couple of times. One Sunday their doorbell rang. It was the minister’s wife all aglow and bubbly because that morning instead of the usual church service there had been the kind of novelty “event” that Protestants occasionally stage to relieve the monotony of their religion. She went on and on about how she wanted to share her wonderful experience with them and how that had really brought about a change in her and so many of the other participants. After some time of exuberant emoting she floated out on her pink cloud, leaving them to wonder What Was That All About? They never really found out, because less than four hours later when their doorbell rang again, they opened the door to find the minister’s wife leaning against the door jamb in tears and abject misery. Without a word she shuffled in and went to their chapel where she spent half an hour or so in silent depression, then shuffled out without speaking a word. And never came again. Having a Catholic background my friends were completely flummoxed. When they asked my opinion of this event I asked them if as children they had ever blown up a balloon only to find it collapsed after a few hours or overnight. They had. That, I explained, was the character or externalized religion. Up one moment and down the other with nothing in between but the blahs. The problem: it is all external; there is no interior life of the spirit.

Jesus tells the woman an essential truth: authentic religion makes us the source of our own spiritual life, an artesian well of spirit from which Spirit flows perpetually from our inmost being into all the levels of our existence. We become true Catholics, *Kata Holos*, containing the whole, God being our sufficiency (II Corinthians 3:5; 9:8).

The woman said, Sir, I would drink from that rich well of life. Give me to drink, that I may thirst no more. And Jesus said, Go call your husband from the town that he may share with you this living cup. The woman said, I have no husband, sir. And Jesus answered her and said, You scarcely know what husband means; you seem to be a gilded butterfly that flits from flower to flower. To you there is no sacredness in marriage ties, and you affintize with any man. And you have lived with five of them who were esteemed as husbands by your friends. (Aquarian Gospel 81:15-20)

The woman said, Sir, I would drink from that rich well of life. Give me to drink, that I may thirst no more. Those of material consciousness, including Jesus’ apostles at this time

in their development, see things from their material perspective. The woman thought that Jesus could give her literal water that would quench her physical thirst forever. I knew a very dedicated and virtuous minister who visited a sick woman and prayed for her recovery, which took place instantly. Before praying, he had anointed her on the forehead with oil as Saint James the apostle directed (James 5:14). The next day she telephoned and asked if she could have some of that oil to keep on hand in the medicine cabinet in case any of her family got sick. She did not realize that the virtue was in that righteous man's prayers linked up with the love Jesus has for all humanity.

And Jesus said, Go call your husband from the town that he may share with you this living cup. Yogananda said that Jesus was testing the woman to see if she would be truthful with him. Sri Ramakrishna often said that a person could realize God if they absolutely spoke only the truth throughout their life.

The woman said, I have no husband, sir. So she passed the test. And in time became a saint of the Christian Church, known as Saint Photini.

And Jesus answered her and said, You scarcely know what husband means; you seem to be a gilded butterfly that flits from flower to flower. To you there is no sacredness in marriage ties, and you affintize with any man. And you have lived with five of them who were esteemed as husbands by your friends. Jesus spoke so plainly out of love to shake her awake, but it must have been a shock to her. There are vital lessons here for us, as well.

In the Aquarian Gospel we find two truths about marriage: people rarely comprehend the nature and purpose of marriage, and very few people are capable of true marriage. We will be considering the second point later on so I will let the bare mention suffice here.

Those who have no self-respect have no respect for their personal or social life or for society in general. Consequently their marriages amount to virtually nothing, without substance. One time I went to court with a yoga student who had no one else for moral support. The first item in that session was the granting of a divorce to a woman who was at least sixty-five. There was such sorrow on her face and discouragement in her manner. It was mentioned that she had been married over forty years, and now it had evaporated. "Till death do us part" had referred to the death of personal and moral sense. And now she stood alone.

Men and women damage their subtle bodies terribly through promiscuity. They laugh at "old-fashioned" ideas of morality and conduct, but they reap a great deal of old-fashioned misery and confusion in their life. They go out seeking the death of their souls.

Feeling the turmoil of the Samaritan woman's heart, Jesus had come to offer healing and peace, though he had to point out that she had been false to her friends regarding the truth of her relationships. I remember well when a young woman showed up at her parents' home in my little hometown back in the nineteen-forties with a "husband" named Jack. Her parents and townspeople were happy to see them, and they stayed there for over a month until Jack got drunk (not only were her parents teetotalers, the entire town was "dry") and revealed that they were not

married. The resulting whirlwind of social shock and disgust lasted several months. The girl's parents loved her and never reprimanded her, but what a wrong way to repay their love and patience. Eventually she became a chronic drunkard with a successions of "Jacks" until her death that certainly was a merciful release. Her family felt much pain at her suffering, though she pushed them all away. But the Aquarian Gospel tells us a happier ending to such a situation.

The woman said, Do I not speak unto a prophet and a seer? Will you not condescend to tell me who you are? And Jesus said, I need not tell you who I am, for you have read the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms that tell of me. (Aquarian Gospel 81:21, 22)

No matter how poor her background might have been, the woman's inner eyes and ears are opened and she realizes that she speaks to a seer-prophet. Notice how respectfully she speaks to Jesus. This is evidence of her inner awakening and her understanding of the supernatural character of Jesus. Obviously her inner mind remembers her previous life contact with him and that former spiritual relationship begins to live anew.

A person's valuation of another is really an index of their own value as a person. They cannot see that which is not in themselves. So her words to Jesus reveal her inner value that had been hidden, even to herself, until Jesus resurrected it. This is the work of the Masters: awakening others to their own divine potential. As Jesus told his disciples: "I call you not servants, but friends" (John 15:15).

Now Jesus tells her why he has come to her and all humanity.

I am one come to break away the wall that separates the sons of men. In Holy Breath there is no Greek, no Jew, and no Samaritan; no bond, nor free; for all are one. (Aquarian Gospel 81:23)

That is why, great as her philosophical and esoteric knowledge was, Blavatsky said that the prime purpose of the Theosophical Society was the manifestation of Universal Brotherhood. All else was secondary. For Saint John had written: "How can a man love God whom he hath not seen, if he loveth not his brother whom he hath seen?" (I John 4:20). How can we presume to call God our Father if we refuse to acknowledge all humanity as our brothers?

But Jesus is not speaking of a social-political kind of union, but a spiritual *unity*. For in saying that in truth there are no Greeks, Jews, Samaritans, bond or free, he is affirming the eternal reality of the spirit, our only nature. As Shankara wrote in his Stanzas on Nirvana:

I am not the mind, intellect, thought, or ego;
Not hearing, not tasting, not smelling, not seeing;
I am not the elements—ether, earth, fire, air:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

I am neither Prana, nor the five vital airs;
Nor the seven components of the gross body;
Nor the subtle bodies; nor organs of action:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

I have no aversion, clinging, greed, delusion;
No envy or pride, and no duty or purpose;
I have no desire, and I have no freedom:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

I have no merit or sin, nor pleasure or pain;
No mantra, pilgrimage, Veda or sacrifice;
Not enjoying, enjoyable, or enjoyer:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

I have no death or fear, no distinction of caste;
Neither father, nor mother, nor do I have birth;
No friend or relation, guru or disciple:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

I am without attributes; I am without form;
I am all-pervading, I am omnipresent;
By senses untouched, neither free, nor knowable:
I am the form of Conscious Bliss: I am Spirit!

Rare is the person that can understand this. Most resist it. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* Max Heindel wrote of his experience of teaching this.

“Yet, though the world is advancing and though, for instance, it has been comparatively easy for the writer to secure a hearing for his views in the different cities where he has lectured, the daily papers sometimes devoting to his utterances whole pages (and front pages at that) so long as he confined himself to speaking of the higher worlds and the post mortem states, it has been very noticeable that as soon as the theme was Universal Brotherhood his articles have always been consigned to the waste-basket.”

If we would follow Jesus we must see ourselves and everyone else with the eye of spirit, the eye of unity.

The woman asked, Why do you say that only in Jerusalem man ought to pray, and that they should not worship in our holy mount? (Aquarian Gospel 81:24)

It is incredible how desperate human beings are to create differences and erect barriers. Why? Ego. Religion is perhaps the most virulent haven of prejudice and oppression, for it is done in the Name of God. The Jews hated the Samaritans and

the Samaritans hated the Jews. The Jews loathed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerazim and the Samaritans loathed the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. So the woman reasonably asked this question.

And Jesus said, What you have said, I do not say. One place is just as sacred as another place. The hour has come when men must worship God within the temple of the heart; for God is not within Jerusalem, nor in your holy mount in any way that he is not in every heart. Our God is Spirit; they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (Aquarian Gospel 81:25-27)

“The Lord lives in the heart of every creature” (Bhagavad Gita 18:61). True religion is all a matter of spirit-consciousness. The Bhagavad Gita, well-known to Jesus, speaks of “Those whose minds are absorbed in That, whose Selves are fixed on That, whose foundation is That, who hold That as the highest object, whose evils have been shaken off by knowledge” (Bhagavad Gita 5:17).

The woman said, We know that when Messiah comes that he will lead us in the ways of truth. And Jesus said, Behold the Christ has come; Messiah speaks to you. (Aquarian Gospel 81:28, 29)

How easily and simply the Lord Jesus makes himself known to her, for he knows that she is already awakened inwardly and can now understand outwardly the fact of his Messiahship. Every step in spiritual life is an advance in consciousness.

Chapter Eighty Two

While Jesus yet was talking to the woman at the well, the six disciples came from Sychar with the food. And when they saw him talking to a woman of Samaria, and one they thought a courtesan, they were amazed; yet no one asked him why he spoke with her. (Aquarian Gospel 82:1-2)

In reading the Bible, and even the Aquarian Gospel, we miss many aspects because we do not know the social and religious customs of the time. For example, in the account of the miracle at Cana in the gospel of Saint John, Jesus calls his mother “Woman.” Today, this would be very rude, even insulting, for a son to address his mother so, but at the time of Jesus it was actually more respectful than calling her “Mother” because of the public setting.

Even more puzzling is the incident in Matthew when a man addresses Jesus as “Good Master,” and Jesus replies: “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17). When I was twelve or thirteen, the mother of one of my friends cited this to prove that Jesus was a sinner! I thought that was silly, but could not really give an adequate answer. Years later when I was a novice in an Orthodox monastery it was explained to me that at the time of Jesus, and among the strict Greek Orthodox Christians of today, the word “good” is never applied to anyone but God. And since the man did not believe Jesus was God, it was sacrilegious flattery on his part, so Jesus reprimanded him. The great compendium of mystical Christian writings known as the *Philokalia* reflects this. Though it literally means “the love of the Good” it exclusively means the love of God, for God alone is good (*kalo*).

In this instance, the disciples are doubly shocked. First, because Jesus is speaking with a woman. Rabbis, especially, never spoke in public with a woman, not even their own wives. Second, she seemed to them to be a prostitute, so the impropriety was greatly compounded. So astonishing was it, that they did not even question him about it. Earlier (66:20) Jesus had told them: “I come to save the lost,” but their social sensibilities rendered them silent. Sri Ramakrishna said that no one could progress in spiritual life if they were afflicted with fear or shame. They were afflicted, but the Master Jesus was not. That was why he was a savior and they were not.

The woman was so lost in thought and so intent on what the master said, that she forgot her errand to the well; she left her pitcher and ran quickly to the town. (Aquarian Gospel 82:3)

Blessed concentration and blessed forgetfulness. Absorbed in the words of Jesus, she forgot all about the water of earth, left her pitcher and ran to tell others of this amazing teacher.

She told the people all about the prophet she had met at Jacob's well; she said, he told me every thing I ever did. (Aquarian Gospel 82:4)

Jesus will say later in the Aquarian Gospel: "The shepherd calls his sheep by name; they hear his voice and follow him; they enter through the gate into the fold. The sheep know not a stranger's voice; they will not follow him; they flee away" (139:15-16). This, too, is not uncommon with authentic seekers: when they hear the voice of a Master they know what they are hearing and act accordingly.

In *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Yogananda recounts that in his first conversation with Swami Sri Yukteswarji, the great Master "unobtrusively wove into his conversation an intimate knowledge of my nature." This is often so. I once lived with a yogi who knew everything I was thinking and doing—often before I thought or did it. I have heard several of Yogananda's disciples tell of how he knew their past, present and future, especially on the mental and spiritual levels. Two of Yogananda's disciples knew my mind to its depths, and if I hesitated in taking their advice they would make it clear that their counsel was based on their deep knowledge of my past and personality. Sometimes it was very comforting and reassuring, and at other times equally uncomfortable and embarrassing. Swami Sivananda had total knowledge of everything, including me, and did not keep from me a glimpse of his cosmic reality.

And when the people would know more about the man, the woman said, Come out and see. And multitudes went out to Jacob's well. (Aquarian Gospel 82:5)

Photini (the Samaritan Woman) shows real spiritual insight. She does not expect anyone to believe what she has said or to accept her experience. She knows that each person must experience spiritual realities for himself and be able to say with Saint John: "That... which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled,... declare we unto you" I John 1:1, 3).

When Jesus saw them come he said to those who followed him, You need not say, It is four months before the harvest time; behold, the harvest time is now. Lift up your eyes and look; the fields are golden with the ripened grain. Lo, many sowers have gone forth to sow the seeds of life; the seed has grown; the plants have strengthened in the summer sun; the grain has ripened, and the master calls for men to reap. And you shall go out in the fields and reap what other men have sown; but when the reckoning day shall come the sowers and the reapers all together will rejoice. (Aquarian Gospel 82:6-9)

I once belonged to a spiritual group that was rapidly becoming a destructive cult (they succeeded, I am sorry to say). They were extremely neglectful on all levels, and if any of the leaders was asked about when some pressingly necessary thing was going to be done (and why it had not been done), they would flutter their eyes (literally) and breathe in their most mystic manner: "When the world is ready." For some reason this always silenced the inquirers. I got the idea and quit.

We must not keep waiting for “the right time,” but do here and now that which needs to be done. This is especially true in matters of the spirit. As Jesus said: “Your time is always ready” (John 7:6). In so many lives so many teachers have sown the good seed of wisdom in the hearts of their hearers, and at all times those seeds are sprouting, growing and coming to fruition. We are not to be telling everyone about life in the spirit, but only those whose time has come.

A friend of mine met Yogananda in the nineteen-twenties, not long after the Master had purchased the Los Angeles ashram. One of his friends had become a student of Yogananda and was eager for him to do the same. So he took my friend to the ashram and introduced him to Yogananda. Of course the Master knew the purpose of this meeting, and he took hold of my friend’s hand and forcefully repeated his name three times. Then he released his hand, looked at him, smiled and said: “Perhaps later.” End of interview. But thirty years later he did become a faithful yogi. So some do have to wait, and our intuition should help us in determining who is ready to see and enter the door of the Kingdom on their own initiative. In higher worlds there will be great celebration for those who diligently seek out those whose hearts are bearing the seeds of Life. To them the Master of masters will say: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples” (John 13:35).

And Philip said to Jesus, Stay now your work a time and sit beneath this olive tree and eat a portion of this food; you must be faint for you have eaten naught since early day. But Jesus said, I am not faint, for I have food to eat you know not of. (Aquarian Gospel 82:10-11)

It is not at all uncommon for guru and disciple to switch roles, practically speaking. I cannot count the number of disciples that have succeeded in running the guru’s life while not letting his influence enter their life even a jot. The guru has become the abject slave of the disciples who blind him with empty adulation, flattery, and a bit of insincere groveling occasionally, along with giving him things (often a lot of things), including money. Running his organization (which they created) they satisfy their sociopathy and often plunder the organization and become rich themselves. I knew one “disciple” whose wealth numbered into the millions until he came to a bad and well-deserved end.

Moreover, I have seen this “You have to eat now, Master,” “You have to leave now, Master,” “You have an appointment now, Master,” and similar nonsense played out in various ashrams. One guru was made chronically ill through the disciples deliberately forcing her to eat food that several doctors had said would make her ill. When a specialist told them that if she did not get exercise daily she would become paralyzed, the head of the organization called every ashram and told them to purchase a wheelchair for her use and not let her walk. When she finally left the body, how shocked they were that they did not become the spiritual lights of the world, since all along they thought she was drawing attention away from them and suppressing recognition of their greatness. Now they sit in empty ashrams, grumbling that she ruined their lives.

Another guru was once having a very serious conversation with several Christian ministers who sincerely wanted to understand more of Indian spiritual philosophy. Right in the middle a “disciple” stalked in and brayed: “Swamiji, it’s time for you to go!” and terminated the interview. The same dictator-disciple once called me on the phone to blast away at me because the guru would not be able to “eat on schedule” since he would be in an airplane enroute to our ashram. He wanted me to “do something about it.” I did. I spoke straightforwardly about his bullying absurdity, and he got the idea very well. But the guru remained a dancing monkey for the “disciples” until the end of his life.

Some of these false disciples are evil Judases and some are braying jackasses, but neither have even a hint of a true Master’s state of evolution and consciousness. But such foolishness did not work with Jesus. He let Philip know that he lived in a totally different level of being than they did. He did not play “gentle Jesus, meek and mild,” and give in to their silly demands (oh, excuse me: *service*).

Then the disciples said among themselves, Who could have brought him aught to eat? They did not know that he had power to turn the very ethers into bread. (Aquarian Gospel 82:12, 13)

They knew he could turn water into wine, did they not? The history of the twelve is one of complete miscomprehension of Jesus—both his teachings and his nature. They continually misunderstood when he spoke in symbols. Why does the Bible tell us all this? It certainly proves that the authors of the Gospels were completely truthful in their accounts, not keeping anything back no matter who might be offended or embarrassed. But the main reason was to show the contrast between these men before the teaching given them by Jesus between his resurrection and ascension and their empowerment on Pentecost. From backward-minded dunderheads they became transformed into something beyond ordinary humanity.

“They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them” (Acts 5:15). “And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them” Acts 19:11-12). Earlier, Peter and Paul could both miss the point, but after Pentecost and the road to Damascus the mere shadow of Saint Peter could heal and cloth touched by Saint Paul could heal and exorcise. This is proof of the reality of Jesus and his divine power which he passed on to them through baptism and confirmation (chrismation). I have met Christian wonderworkers, and lived with one for nineteen years. They were living proof that Jesus is as much in the world, dwelling among us, as he was two thousand years ago. Our problem is that we would like to work the miracles but we do not seek the total transformation that Jesus came to work in those that would be his disciples, following him with total commitment, taking up the cross daily and pressing onward to the revelation of life eternal, even before

physical death to resurrect as did Jesus, and do his works and even greater (John 14:12).

And Jesus said, The master of the harvest never sends his reapers forth and feeds them not. My Father who has sent me forth into the harvest field of human life will never suffer me to want; and when he calls for you to serve, lo, he will give you food, will clothe and shelter you. (Aquarian Gospel 82:14, 15)

There is a vital principle in these words. When we truly act in accordance with the divine plan, the cosmos itself will clear the way before us. Many good people have undergone terrible hardships, but if we look closely at their life we will see that they were not in perfect harmony with the divine order, whether in word, thought or deed. This is especially true of those who were working to spread ignorant, exoteric religion.

The living proof of Jesus' assertion was Yogananda. God miraculously provided for him all through his life, often in astonishing ways. See the eleventh chapter in *Autobiography of a Yogi*: Two Penniless Boys in Brindaban. Consider how many dwellers in the desert had food brought to them every day by a supernatural agency. Many people have told me of remarkable material blessings given them because they truly were "in the center of God's will." If we will make sure that we are in that same center, then we need fear nothing, for:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Psalms 23).

Then turning to the people of Samaria, he said, Think not it strange that I, a Jew, should speak to you, for I am one with you. (Aquarian Gospel 82:16)

This is one of the marks of a savior: a feeling of total unity with all humanity. By experience I know that the more evolved a person is, the more this is manifested in his life. Swami Sivananda was awesome, a god walking the earth, and yet we knew that he was our nearest and dearest. His love for us and our love for him was uppermost at all times. Though he was such a great Master, every person was so at ease with him. He was our beloved friend.

The universal Christ who was and is, and evermore shall be, is manifest in me; but Christ belongs to every man. (Aquarian Gospel 82:17)

Christ is Divinity immanent in all creation, Ishwara, the Only-begotten of the Father, the extension of God into relative existence. Jesus was one with Christ, Who

was so perfectly manifested in him that we can correctly call him "Jesus Christ." And we can also say "Krishna Christ" and "Gautama Christ," looking forward to the day when we, too, shall be Christ. For Christ does in truth belong to every one of us as our inmost life and our outermost destiny.

"For to me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21).

"Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

"Christ in you, the hope of glory... Christ, who is our life" (Colossians 1:27; 3:4).

"Ye are of God, little children" (I John 4:4).

This is the true Gospel of Christ.

God scatters forth his blessings with a lavish hand, and he is not more kind to one than to another one of all the creatures of his hand. I just came up from Judah's hills, and God's same sun was shining and his flowers were blooming, and in the night his stars were just as bright as they are here.

God cannot cast a child away; the Jew, the Greek and the Samaritan are equal in his sight. And why should men and women fret and quarrel, like children in their plays? The lines that separate the sons of men are made of straw, and just a single breath of love would blow them all away. (Aquarian Gospel 82:18-22)

If we draw near to God Who is love, all lines of separation will disappear from our hearts. As long as those lines remain it is a sign of our separation from God. When we erase one kind, the other will vanish. This is the path to blessedness.

The people were amazed at what the stranger said, and many said, The Christ that was to come has surely come. And Jesus went with them into the town, and tarried certain days. (Aquarian Gospel 82:23-24)

When the understanding of Jesus' teachings in this chapter dawns in our minds, then surely the Christ will have come to us and will dwell within us, and we shall also be Christ in the world.

Chapter Eighty-Three

In Sychar Jesus taught the people in the market place. (Aquarian Gospel 83:1)

Egotists, especially sociopathic egotists, yearn to be possessors of secret knowledge which they can dispense to those whom they wish to control by promising them further, advanced knowledge and practices or by threatening to cut them off and bar them from further knowledge and “power.” Some of them are the kind of teachers that offer “teacher training” to all and sundry with no background whatsoever being required. This attracts those like them who plan to get to the top without taking a step so they can begin to control others as well. At the close of his life Buddha insisted on two important things: 1) he had no secret teachings; and 2) he never spoke in symbols, but in words that could be taken literally and at face value.

Jesus lived in the major Buddhist center of Kapilavastu and also in various Buddhist monasteries, including the Himis monastery in the Ley district of Ladakh. (See *The Christ of India*, *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, and *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*.) So it is not surprising that we find him sitting in the market place to teach, not in some secret place with only a chosen handful. At his trial, he said to the high priest of the Jerusalem temple: “I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing” (John 18:20). It is true that he told his disciples earlier: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John 16:12). He taught them for forty days after his resurrections, and had previously told them: “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops” (Matthew 10:27). And so they did.

A man obsessed was brought to him. The wicked spirit that possessed the man was full of violence and lust, and often threw his victim to the ground. (Aquarian Gospel 83:2)

There is no need to argue with those who think that those Jesus exorcised were just mentally ill. The Gospels make a clear distinction between those that were insane and those that were possessed by spirits. “They brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick [insane], and those that had the palsy; and he healed them” (Matthew 4:24).

Although Dowling uses the words “obsessed” and “possessed” synonymously, they are really quite different, though they are both forms of victimization by spirits.

The most common is obsession: mental and behavioral influence by degraded earthbound spirits that either cannot or will not pass on to the astral regions after the death of their body (which they often deny, insisting that they are alive and

normal). Obsession is very common and is increasing constantly. A friend of mine visited a yogi in Kashmir who had great power over evil spirits, so much so that evil occultists were continually trying to destroy him. So intense was the psychic bombardment of the yogi's ashram, he would not allow any visitor to stay there at night. He told my friend: "Please do not think I am speaking against your country [the United States], but most of the people there are obsessed to some degree." One of the reasons is the widespread use of drugs, including marijuana, for they weaken the user's aura and attune them to negative psychic influences. Alcohol is another gateway for obsessing entities. Many other negative factors of modern society constantly erode the spiritual and psychic immune systems of the people. What the yogi said no doubt applies to the whole earth, actually. He did not say that the United States was oppressed more than any other county.

Obsession is a terrible oppression, but much worse is possession, when a spirit enters and completely takes over a person's body, either ejecting them from the body or pushing them down into utter helplessness as the spirit lives through the body as though it were its own. On occasion the spirit snaps all connection with the body's rightful owner, actually killing him. This is very rare, but does happen. I have spoken with quite a few people who had performed exorcisms and have seen some cases of both obsession and possession myself. I know the Gospels are true because of experience, not mere belief.

There are many reasons that spirits obsess or possess people. Mostly it is an attempt to regain a physical body to keep on fulfilling their earthly desires. Sometimes it is a deliberate attempt to spiritually and morally subvert their victims and others they can influence through embodiment. The spirit spoken of here in the Aquarian Gospel was a violent and lustful personality. Not being fully integrated with the brain and central nervous system of its victim, its attempts at control resulted in seizures during which he fell to the ground.

And Jesus spoke aloud and said, Base spirit, loose your hold upon the vitals of this man, and go back to your own. And then the spirit begged that he might go into the body of a dog that stood near by. (Aquarian Gospel 83:3-4)

The spirit belongs in an astral world that reflects its nature and karma. Since such a psychically criminal being would most likely pass into an astral hell, it naturally does not want to go to its "own" place. So it tries to evade that by asking to possess an animal living on the earth. Such a request is in complete keeping with the spirit's selfish, greedy and egocentric nature. The world is filled with people who have utter disregard for the lives and hearts of others. They know only one law: Look Out For Number One, and often boast of it. If they compound this from life to life they may eventually come to also be an obsessing or possessing spirit.

Jesus told those around him: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He wished to save both the possessed man and the possessing spirit, for they are part of the cosmic Life, images of God that have

become covered over with the mire of ignorance and evil. But their essential nature as spirit has not been changed, only hidden and hindered. As a first step in saving it, Jesus explains the truth of things to the spirit.

But Jesus said, Why harm the helpless dog? Its life is just as dear to it as mine to me. (Aquarian Gospel 83:5)

The first lesson is for the spirit to take its mind off itself and think of the dog. No life form can be despised or disregarded, because its life is a fragment of the One Life, God. When Jesus said: “Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40), he was speaking from a heart that was one with all sentient beings. If we would be his disciples, we must realize that what we do to any of his “brethren” we are ultimately doing to him since he is one with God Who is all things.

It is not yours to throw the burden of your sin on any living thing. By your own deeds and evil thoughts you have brought all these perils on yourself. You have hard problems to be solved; but you must solve them for yourself.. (Aquarian Gospel 83:6, 7)

The first step in viable spiritual development is to recognize that we, and we alone, are responsible for our life. We can blame no other person. I think we all know people that try to make others miserable when they are disgruntled. This is a sure path to making more misery for themselves. Those they do make miserable are simply reaping what they sowed in the past when they did the same to others. Nothing that happens to us is really done to us by anyone but ourselves. Those involved in the karmic reaction are instruments of our own past deeds returning to us. Until we realize that we are in the swamp because we jumped in on our own, there is no hope of our getting out. We may indeed have hard problems to be solved, but they are to be solved, not evaded or pushed off onto someone else. The consequences of our actions are inescapable and we must face them squarely. Those who do so will find that the divine assistance will come to their aid and they will overcome all obstacles, finding it much easier than they thought it would be. The whole purpose of life is the learning of wisdom, and coping with troubles is part of the learning process.

By thus obsessing man, you make your own conditions doubly sad. Go back into your own domain; refrain from harming anything, and by and by, you will yourself be free. The wicked spirit left the man and went unto his own. The man looked up in thankfulness and said, Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 83:8-9)

Saint Therese of Liseaux said that God’s justice means that he understands. Few Christians ascribe to this principle, but Jesus certainly does, for he does not curse the possessing entity, call him evil, and banish him to outer darkness. Rather, he explains his situation and then counsels him to leave the man he is obsessing

without having to be expelled forcefully. This exercise of right action will be the first step in the spirit's healing. Next, he should pass on into the astral realm where he should have gone at his physical death. Even a hell is not for punishment, but is intended to help the soul reap its karma and learn the way to evolve out of its present condition. And the major part of that will be restraining its impulse to do harm in any form. Holding to this resolve, slowly it will become purified and freed to pass on to higher worlds or return to earth for a positive birth. All is meant to help and heal the suffering, ignorant soul. This incident is an example of his merciful work in the world, a work that continues even today.

Fortunately for its own welfare, the spirit left the man and passed on from the earth plane. The fact that the possessed man gave thanks to God shows that he had been aware of the possession.

And many of the people brought their sick, and Jesus spoke the Word, and they were healed. (Aquarian Gospel 83:10)

Seeing the example of the possessed man, people began bringing the sick for healing, which Jesus did through the power of the Word.

The ruler of the synagogue and all the priests were much disturbed when told that Jesus from Jerusalem was preaching in the town. They thought that he had come to proselyte and stir up strife among Samaritans. And so they sent an officer to bring him to the synagogue that he might give a reason for his presence in the town. (Aquarian Gospel 83:11-13)

Those who turn religion into a business naturally want to protect their interests, cloaking it under the guise of righteousness and preservation of true religion. Feeling that Jesus was competition, the Samaritan religionists were disturbed, not because he was teaching any error, but because they were afraid he was competition and would take the customers from them. In their arrogance they sent an official to command Jesus to appear before them to justify his presence in the town.

This reminds me exactly of a time when I was doing secretarial work for an abbot who showed me a high-handed demand from a bishop that he appear at the headquarters of the local diocese of a church he did not even belong to. "The purpose of this meeting will be revealed to you then," the letter concluded. When he asked me what he should do, I told him: "First, this letter is nothing more than a 'Come on out in the alley,' so you can get beat up. Its purpose is to get you to show up at a 'spiritual court' which will illegally suspend and and start calling you 'the defrocked Abbot N.'" "But I have never belonged to their diocese!" He protested. "Exactly. But they lie. You know that. Also, if you go to their headquarters they will say it is an acknowledgment of their jurisdiction over you." He was amazed, but ignored the letter and that was that.

But Jesus said to him who came, Go back and tell the priests and ruler of the synagogue that I am not engaged in crime. I come to bind up broken

hearts, to heal the sick, and cast the evil spirits out of those obsessed. Tell them their prophets spoke of me; that I come to break no law, but to fulfill the highest law.

The man returned and told the priests and ruler of the synagogue what Jesus said. The ruler was amazed, and with the priests went to the market place where Jesus was. (Aquarian Gospel 83:14-18)

The words of a righteous man usually do confound the unrighteous, as all of America saw when Judge Clarence Thomas told the political thugs of the Senate just why and what they were doing in their defamatory “confirmation” hearing regarding his nomination to the Supreme Court. One righteous man really can “put ten thousand to flight” (Leviticus 26:8; Deuteronomy 32:30), as both sacred and profane history has demonstrated many times.

And when he saw them, Jesus said, Behold the honored men of all Samaria! the men ordained to lead the people in the way of right. And I am come to help, and not to hinder in their work. (Aquarian Gospel 83:19-20)

I doubt if the leaders of the Samaritans believed this at first, but Jesus continued.

There are two classes of the sons of men; they who would build the human race upon the sure foundation stones of justice, truth, equality and right, and they who would destroy the holy temple, where the Spirit dwells, and bring their fellows down to beggary and crime. (Aquarian Gospel 83:21-22)

Observant people could hardly dispute this, especially in the political arena. It is good for us to keep Jesus’ words in mind. Humanity really is divided into the builders and the destroyers on all levels of life. We should always scrutinize and see for ourselves which class those we encounter belong to, both as individuals and as groups.

The holy brotherhood of right must stand united in the stirring conflicts of the hour. No matter whether they be Jews, Samaritans, Assyrians, or Greeks, they must tramp down beneath their feet all strife, all discord, jealousy and hate, and demonstrate the brotherhood of man. Then to the ruler of the synagogue he spoke: he said, United in the cause of right we stand; divided we will fall.”

And then he took the ruler by the hand; a love light filled their souls; and all the people were amazed. (Aquarian Gospel 83:23-26)

Many, many years ago a very wise woman quoted these words to me, and I memorized them on the spot:

He drew a circle that shut me out:
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win:

We drew a circle that took him in.

Chapter Eighty-Four

The Christines turned their faces toward the land of Galilee; but when they reached the city of Samaria, the multitudes pressed hard about them, begging them to tarry in their city for a while. And then they went up to the synagogue, and Jesus opened up the book of Moses, and he read: In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blest.

And then he closed the book and said, These words were spoken by the Lord of hosts unto our father Abraham, and Israel has been blessedness to all the world. We are his seed; but not a tithe of the great work that we were called to do has yet been done. The Lord of hosts has set apart the Israelites to teach the unity of God and man; but one can never teach that which he does not demonstrate in life. (Aquarian Gospel 84:1-6)

Jesus told his hearers: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Usually readers of the gospel think of people living far from Israel and practicing other religions. That is so, but he also had in mind the despised Samaritans right next door who believed exactly what the Hebrews did, but were not part of official Judaism. Jesus demonstrated his words by actually entering into a Samaritan synagogue as a rabbi, reading the scriptures, and teaching the people, making no difference between them and the Hebrews, apparently including them when he spoke of "Israel" and "Israelites."

Abraham was from Mesopotamia, but some anthropologists believe that his ancestors were the Yadava clan (gotra) from India, the family of Krishna who left India thousands of years ago and disappeared from world history. The descendants of Abraham were considered "chosen," but chosen for what purpose? Not for the propagation of monotheism, because that was well known in the Mediterranean world. The purpose of separating them into a special nation was to prepare them to eventually produce two special people: a perfect, holy virgin who would be able to supernaturally conceive and give birth to the Messiah, the Christ, "the hope of the nations." The woman was Mary the mother of Jesus the Messiah, who was the other. These two were Essenes, not "normal" Israelites, for those who followed the exoteric corruption of the Mosaic Law were spiritually alien to their ancestry and purpose. Many people do not realize that Jesus was an Essene, so they wonder how he could be considered the pinnacle of exoteric Judaism. He was not. He was the pinnacle of the Essenes.

Saint Paul wrote: "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;... but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly" (Romans 2:28-29), spiritually. The Essenes were not just physically descended from Abraham; they were his spiritual descendants as well and therefore "the people of the promise." For that reason comparatively few non-Essenes accepted him as Messiah, and even those few insisted on forcing Jesus and

his teachings into conformity with exoteric Judaism, as the majority of Christians do also today, thereby corrupting the person and teaching of Jesus.

Jesus was not referring to the majority of Hebrews, but the Essenes when he said: "Israel has been blessedness to all the world; but not a tithe of the great work that we were called to do has yet been done. The Lord of hosts has set apart the Israelites to teach the unity of God and man." We certainly do not think of the unity of God and man as a cornerstone of exoteric Jewish belief. For it is not. But it was a foundational doctrine of the Essenes in common with the religions of the Far East whose scriptures they assiduously studied to the chagrin of their neighbors who, in modern parlance, definitely considered them not Jews but "a cult." This was manifested in the following incident:

"It was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not:...I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode" (John 10:22-25, 30-40). The picture is quite clear.

Equally clear is the fact that Jesus and his true disciples believed fundamentally in the oneness of God and man, but today his false disciples say that is true only of Jesus, and to say otherwise is blasphemy. But they are the blasphemers of both man and God by denying this truth.

It is still the mission of Christians to teach the unity of the human and the divine: not that man is God, but that God is man in a manner past understanding, but not past knowing in mystic vision. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). Only when this is taught to the world by the disciples of Jesus will "Israel" Have fulfilled its destiny.

"But one can never teach that which he does not demonstrate in life," concludes Jesus. So to be a faithful Christian is to strive to manifest in one's own life the principle "I and my Father are one," just as did Jesus. What is needed is Christians who are really Christs.

Our God is Spirit, and in him all wisdom, love and strength abide. In every

man these sacred attributes are budding forth, and in due time they will unfold; the demonstration will completed be, and man will comprehend the fact of unity. (Aquarian Gospel 84:7-8)

Even though only glimmers of the divine attributes show forth in most people, that is the evidence of their true spiritual nature. And as life after life progresses, those qualities will increase until the point is reached in which they can consciously take charge of their evolution and accelerate it until “the demonstration will completed be, and man will comprehend the fact of unity.” This is the Christian (Christine) Gospel.

And you, ruler of the synagogue, and you, these priests, are honored servants of the Lord of hosts. All men are looking unto you for guidance in the ways of life; example is another name for priest; so what you would that people be, that you must be. (Aquarian Gospel 84:9, 10)

Jesus does not say that the ruler of the synagogue and the priests are not legitimate because they are “not with the Jews.” Just the opposite: he says they are honored servants of the Lord.

Then he sets forth the fact that a teacher must be an example of what he teaches. Actually the teacher himself should be a teaching.

Jesus sets the seal on this wisdom by saying:

A simple godly life may win ten thousand souls to purity and right. And all the people said, Amen. Then Jesus left the synagogue, and at the hour of evening prayer he went up to the sacred grove, and all the people turned their faces toward their holy mount and prayed. And Jesus prayed. (Aquarian Gospel 84:11-14)

Jesus followed up his words of mutual respect by going to pray with the Samaritans at the time of their evening prayer, not facing Jerusalem but toward the Samaritan temple.

And as he sat in silent mood a voice of soul spoke to his soul imploring help. And Jesus saw a woman on a couch in sore distress; for she was sick nigh unto death. She could not speak, but she had heard that Jesus was a man of God, and in her heart she called on him for help. (Aquarian Gospel 84:15-17)

Such was the spiritual status of Jesus that he could hear even a thought imploring help. I can believe this account because I have experienced the same myself with more than one saint in India. My beloved Swami Sivananda often went rushing to help someone. One time in the midst of a satsang he jumped up and raced out the door followed by some disciples. He ran out of the ashram and down to a residential area, through some streets, and entered a house where a woman was in labor, all alone. He delivered the baby (he was a physician), saw that all was well with the mother, and returned to the ashram.

Jesus said: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). So were they not more truly his disciples than most Christians?

And Jesus helped; he did not speak; but like a flash of light, a mighty virtue from his soul filled full the body of the dying one, and she arose, and joined her kindred while they prayed. Her kindred were astonished and they said to her, How were you healed? And she replied, I do not know; I simply asked the man of God in thought for healing power, and in a moment I was well. (Aquarian Gospel 84:18-20)

For great Masters space does not exist; they can be present to anyone who calls for them. The divine Light healed the woman, for Jesus and the Father were one (John 10:30).

The people said, The gods have surely come to earth; for man has not the power to heal by thought. But Jesus said, The greatest power in heaven and earth is thought. God made the universe by thought; he paints the lily and the rose with thought. Why think it strange that I should send a healing thought and change the ethers of disease and death to those of health and life?. (Aquarian Gospel 84:21-24)

Everything is thought because everything is Intelligence. Jesus’ healing thought was an extension of his healing will. We have the same power sleeping within us, and if we awaken it then our thoughts will communicate their character to others. That is why Jesus said: “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14).

Lo, you shall see far greater things than this, for by the power of holy thought, my body will be changed from carnal flesh to spirit form; and so will yours. When Jesus had thus said he disappeared, and no one saw him go. (Aquarian Gospel 84:25-26)

The path of transmutation is that of thought, Divine Thought. This takes many forms, but meditation is the one uppermost in value and effect. If through self-purification and meditation we will “walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25), we, too, shall be changed from flesh to spirit.

To prove that he was not carnal flesh, Jesus instantly disappeared, proving that he was really invisible spirit, that his body was spirit manifesting as flesh, as is our situation, also, but we do not realize it.

His own disciples did not comprehend the change; they knew not where their master went, and they went on their way. But as they walked and talked about the strange event, lo, Jesus came and walked with them to Nazareth of Galilee. (Aquarian Gospel 84:27, 28)

May Jesus come and walk with us even though we may not yet fully understand his truth and glory.

Chapter Eighty-Five

Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Paraca and of Galilee, was dissipated, selfish and tyrannical. He drove his wife away from home that he might take as wife Herodias, the wife of one, a near of kin, a woman, like himself, immoral and unjust. The city of Tiberius, upon the shores of Galilee, was Herod's home. Now John, the harbinger, had left the Salim Springs to teach the people by the sea of Galilee; and he rebuked the wicked ruler and his stolen wife for all their sins. Herodias was enraged because the preacher dared accuse her and her husband of their crimes; and she prevailed on Herod to arrest the harbinger and cast him in a dungeon in the castle of Machaerus that stood beside the Bitter Sea. And Herod did as she required; then she lived in peace in all her sins, for none were bold enough to censure her again. The followers of John were warned to speak not of the trial and imprisonment of John. By order of the court, they were restrained from teaching in the public halls. They could not talk about this better life that Herod called the Heresy of John. (Aquarian Gospel 85:1-10)

This is basically a business-as usual-picture of life in this world.

First, Herodias is the type of guilt-ridden person who denies his inner misery and insists, hysterically and even violently, that he is not guilty. These are the types that continually say: "I have never done anything of which I am ashamed." They are psychotic narcissists and sociopaths of the worst sort, because every normal person has done something which they regret and know was a mistake and even wrong. But they do not stop there. They hate anyone who believes that their actions were wrong, insisting that those people are "harsh," "hate-filled," "bigoted," "judgmental," "oppressive," "divisive" and "repressive." Religion is their pet hate in this diatribe, especially "Judeo-Christian morality" which they sometimes try to escape by joining or identifying themselves with some other religion, especially Hinduism and Buddhism. Their delusion is that what they are doing is not wrong if no one says or even thinks that it is. So the only way to not be guilty is to silence or destroy anyone who says or thinks their actions are wrong. As we read in the gospel: "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:20). There we have it.

Second, religious people dare not speak the truth about the evils and foibles of government, especially wrongs that are committed against them. This was classically so in the Soviet Union, but is common today throughout the world, including covert interference in religious affairs.

Third, religious people are denied freedom of expression by the types I have just described. This is especially true in politics where the morally degraded insist on "separation of church and state" unless the churches are speaking or keeping silence in their favor.

When it was known that John had been imprisoned by the tetrarch court, the friends of Jesus thought it best that he should not remain in Galilee. But Jesus said, I have no need of fear; my time has not yet come; no man can stay me till my work is done. (Aquarian Gospel 85:11, 12)

In the Bible we find this: “They sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come” (John 7:30). “Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:11). “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53).

These citations are very dramatic, but this is true of us as well—at least the first two are. All things in the universe operate by precise laws. Until the law of karma, of cause and effect, so directs, nothing whatsoever can happen, not even the dropping of a pin. This is why there are “freak accidents” that kill people and “freak survivals” in which people live that normally would have died. Here are two interesting examples. A man shot at a tree, and the bullet was embedded deep in it. Years later lightning struck the tree and the bullet flew out and struck and killed the man. Even stranger is this following incident. During the Civil War a hospital tent had been set up on a battleground. During an operation, a bullet from the Confederate side pierced a side of the tent, passed through the testicle of the doctor doing the operation, and penetrated into the ovary of the assisting nurse. The nurse conceived and gave birth to a child. Obviously a soul needed her and the doctor as its parents and this was only way to manage it at that time. There is perfect order in the universe, even when it produces seeming chaos.

The lesson here is for us to be fearless, as well. As an esoteric Christian creed says: “We believe in the law of good which rules the world,” so only good can happen to us whatever the outer appearance may be. Even misfortune is an impelling toward good fortune. Without this understanding the world is ever unstable and human society a madhouse. The twin laws of karma and rebirth alone make things clear. Those who do not know and accept these laws can have no reliable ideas about their life and themselves. A religion that does not teach them is incompetent in practical matters, and usually in spiritual ones, as well. Telling people that God is doing everything to them because he wills it, is not only untrue, it is a defamation of God and a denigration of man.

And when they asked why God permitted Herod to imprison John, he said, Behold yon stalk of wheat! When it has brought the grain to perfectness, it is of no more worth; it falls, becoming part of earth again from which it came. John is a stalk of golden wheat; he brought unto maturity the richest grain of all the earth; his work is done. If he had said another word it might have marred the symmetry of what is now a noble life. And when my work is done the rulers will do unto me what they have done to John, and more. All these events are part of God’s own plan. The innocent will suffer while the wicked

are in power; but woe to them who cause the suffering of the innocents. (Aquarian Gospel 85:13-18)

This continues the previous subject: all is according to Divine Law, not Divine Whimsy but Divine Order in which we are all participating, for we and we alone create our karma.

The death of holy people naturally causes us pain as does the death of those we hold dear. But our pain is purely ego-based, therefore we speak of “our loss.” The ancient monks of Egypt used to say: “Grieve for others when they are born and rejoice for them when they die” because what we think is birth is really entry into the realm of perpetual death, and what we call death is really re-entry into the realm of everlasting life. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Psalms 116:15). “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Revelation 14:13). The festivals of Christian saints, East and West, are usually observed on the day of their passing from this world. But they are called their “birth days” because they were born into a higher world than this.

No one suffers if it is not a result of his own will and the karma it created for him. So no one is really innocent absolutely, but the wicked oppress them even though there is no rational justification for it externally, and in this way create for themselves the same karma those they oppress are now reaping. It all moves on in a perpetual cycle. That is why Solomon said: “That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past” (Ecclesiastes 3:15). When we pair this with Saint Paul’s assertion: “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7), we have karma in a nutshell. So karma is a part of authentic Jewish and Christian doctrine, as is reincarnation. (See *May a Christian Believe in Reincarnation?*.)

“All these events are part of God’s own plan.”

Chapter Eighty-Six

Jesus, a Levite

The Christines were in Nazareth. It was the Sabbath day, and Jesus went up to the synagogue. (Aquarian Gospel 86:1)

All males of the tribe of Levi are considered priests in the Mosaic Law, simply by birth in that tribe. To provide further priests, if the firstborn child is a male, whatever the tribe, he is considered a Levite and has a right to function as a priest. “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, it is mine” (Exodus 13:2). Jesus was a Levite under this prescription. “When the days of her [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord” (Luke 2:22-23).

Since he was a Levite, Jesus was also called Rabbi (John 1:38, 49; 3:26; 6:25). According to ancient records (See *The Unknown Lives of Jesus and Mary*), Jesus refused to learn from a teacher engaged for him because the man had no esoteric spiritual knowledge. Rather, he learned from his mother, Mary, all the spiritual lore of the Essenes, as we have already seen in chapter sixteen of the Aquarian Gospel. Nevertheless, in the Gospel of John we find: “Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” (John 7:14, 15).

But even the Samaritans acknowledged Jesus’ Levitical status, and so do the elders of the synagogue in Nazareth.

The keeper of the books gave one to Jesus and he opened it and read: The Spirit of the Lord has overshadowed me; he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; to set the captives free; to open sightless eyes; to bring relief to those oppressed and bruised, and to proclaim, The year of jubilee has come. When he had read these words he closed the book and said, This scripture is fulfilled before your eyes this day. The year of jubilee has come; the time when Israel shall bless the world. (Aquarian Gospel 86:2-5)

Here is the full section from the book of Isaiah, a previous incarnation of the Lord Jesus: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified” (Isaiah 61:1-3).

Isaiah is known as the Messianic Prophet because he was going to be the Messiah. So the prophet was not only read, he was present as Jesus the Christ, the fulfillment of the prophecy. Through that fulfillment the entire world would be blessed, and still is blessed, for Jesus said: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

And then he told them many things about the kingdom of the Holy One; about the hidden way of life; about forgiveness of sins. (Aquarian Gospel 86:6)

Spiritual life is essentially a hidden, secret life, though its symptoms may be observed by others and it obviously will manifest in our outer life in various ways. "Jesus said, The kingdom of the Holy One is in the soul; men cannot see it with their carnal eyes; with all their reasoning powers they comprehend it not. It is a life deep hid in God; its recognition is the work of inner consciousness. (Aquarian Gospel 75:15-16).

Those who live that life are equally incomprehensible. As Jesus told Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). And Saint Paul: "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man" (I Corinthians 2:15). Jesus also spoke of "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 13:11). Earlier, as David he had said: "The secret of the Lord is with them that revere him" (Psalms 25:14).

When we follow the hidden way of spirit then alone will we be freed from sin: ignorance and bondage. For only through cultivation of the interior life can we be purified even on the outer levels of our life. That is why Jesus tells us: "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21).

Now, many people knew not who the speaker was: And others said, Is not this Joseph's son? Does not his mother live on Marmion way? And one spoke out and said, This is the man who did such mighty works in Cana, in Capernaum, and in Jerusalem. And then the people said, Physician heal yourself. Do here among your kindred all the mighty works that you have done in other towns. (Aquarian Gospel 86:7-9)

When I was a child we played a game in which we divided into two even sides. At the beginning of the encounter of the two teams, the challengers would say: "Get to work and show us what you can do." In the same way childish people are always wanting to challenge and test those of spiritual development, always with the assumption that they really know nothing and can do nothing, that "this religion stuff" is all fantasy or fraud. Even in India I have seen people demand to see miracles just for their entertainment or proof that the yogi really cannot do anything. My dear friend Sri Dattabal, a thoroughly miraculous person, was constantly encountering this kind of smart-aleck cynicism and outright mockery. He

always handled it gently and kindly, offending no one, but the challengers always smirked and concluded that he was just an ordinary person. As Yogananda said: “If you believe you will see; if you don’t believe you won’t see.” It is actually a matter of personal choice, not at all dependent on the one challenged.

And Jesus said, No prophet is received with honor by the people of his native land; and prophets are not sent to every one. Elijah was a man of God; he had the power and he closed the gates of heaven, and it did not rain for forty months; and when he spoke the Word, the rain came on, the earth brought forth again. And there were many widows in the land; but this Elijah went to none but Zarephath, and she was blessed. And when Elisha lived, lo, many lepers were in Israel, but none were cleansed save one—the Syrian who had faith. You have no faith; you seek for signs to satisfy your curious whims; but you shall see not till you open up your eyes of faith. (Aquarian Gospel 86:10-14)

On of my yogi friends, Anand Maharaj, whom I first met at Sivanandashram in Rishikesh in January of 1969, left home to be a monk and yogi during his early teens. After a short while he realized that the great honor paid to any monk by the majority of Indians could be harmful to him and arouse egotism. Thinking about where he might go to escape this very real danger, he realized that he should return to his home village where he would be regarded as a fool, an idler and a parasite by those who had known him all his life. He returned and encountered exactly what he had anticipated, but that was what he desired. So for some years he lived outside the village, often starving because no one would give him food. Only after a long time did a few people begin to realize that he was a genuine monk and yogi. Ironically, wherever he went in India the great saints loved him and called him Yogiraj: King of Yogis. But when he returned home, contempt to an equal degree was awaiting him. After some time he became a wandering sadhu and when I met him had no fixed abode. Later he had a very small, simple ashram on the main road between Hardwar and Rishikesh.

By saying: “Prophets are not sent to every one,” Jesus was indicating that prophets are only sent to those who are karmically intended to meet and profit from their teaching.

As Sri Dattabal could have, Jesus told the Nazarenes: “You have no faith; you seek for signs to satisfy your curious whims; but you shall see not till you open up your eyes of faith.” Faith is not mere belief based on either reason or feeling, but the result of actual spiritual experience. So the only way to open our eyes of faith is to cultivate spiritual consciousness. “Therefore become a yogi” (Bhagavad Gita 6:46).

And then the people were enraged; they rushed upon him, bound him down with cords, and took him to a precipice not far away, intent to cast him down to death; but when they thought they held him fast, he disappeared;

unseen he passed among the angry men, and went his way. The people were confounded and they said, What manner of a man is this? And when they came again to Nazareth, they found him teaching in the synagogue. They troubled him no more for they were sore afraid. (Aquarian Gospel 86:15-19)

The only thing we need to consider in closing is the spiritual implication of “when they thought they held him fast, he disappeared; unseen he passed among the angry men, and went his way.” God and his saints cannot be held on to by those whose hearts are dark and enslaved. Many claim to believe in God, but does God believe in them? Many claim to be ‘Gods’ people,’ but is he their God? It is all on his side. Despite the claims of religion throughout the world we cannot influence or direct God, no can we claim him as “ours.” We can, however seek to be influenced and directed by God, and to hear, as did Jesus: “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:11).

Chapter Eighty-Seven

In Nazareth Jesus taught no more; he went with his disciples up to Cana, where, at a marriage feast, he once turned water into wine. And here he met a man of noble birth whose home was in Capernaum, whose son was sick. The man had faith in Jesus' power to heal, and when he learned that he had come to Galilee he went in haste to meet him on the way.

The man met Jesus at the seventh hour, and he entreated him to hasten to Capernaum to save his son. But Jesus did not go; he stood aside in silence for a time, and then he said, Your faith has proved a healing balm; your son is well.

The man believed and went his way toward Capernaum and as he went he met a servant from his home who said, My lord, You need not haste; your son is well. The father asked, When did my son begin to mend? The servant said, On yesterday about the seventh hour the fever left.

And then the father knew it was the healing balm that Jesus sent that saved his son. (Aquarian Gospel 87:1-10)

These verses tell us some very important things, far beyond the usual interpretation that they are proof of Jesus' divinity and Messiahship.

Jesus did not need to go to Capernaum to heal the man's son, because space, like time, is a fundamental illusion of relative existence, of Maya whose very name means "the measurer" of time and space. Therefore subtle energies pass through "space" unhindered. To Jesus the sick man was present, as anyone who has practiced "distance healing" has experienced. Many vibrational and biomagnetic energy healing methods that are usually thought to require the physical presence of someone can really be done at a distance by a sensitive practitioner. In the West this has been done for over a century, yet is still unknown (or unbelieved) to most. All that is needed is conscious attunement. Since this is so for us, think how much more it was for Jesus. Healing requires two things: the will of the healer to heal and the will (receptivity) of the one to be healed.

In Cana Jesus tarried not; he went his way with his disciples to Capernaum, where he secured a spacious house where, with his mother, he could live, where his disciples might repair to hear the Word. He called the men who had confessed their faith in him to meet him in his home, which his disciples called, The school of Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 87:11, 12a)

We know that Saint Joachim, the grandfather of Jesus, was the wealthiest man in Israel, which means that upon his death the Virgin Mary became the wealthiest person in Israel. So the image of Jesus as a penniless, homeless wanderer living free as the birds and as simply as a beggar is just not true. Certainly, when warranted he lived in extreme simplicity, but never poverty. As Yogananda sometimes said: "Saint

Francis loved Lady Poverty, but I love Lady Simplicity.” This is the ideal of the Royal Sages (rajarishis) of the Bhagavad Gita, as well. Not many people at that time could walk into a town and buy a house at will, but Jesus could. His motivation was to provide his mother with a worthy place to live. Perhaps he was thinking of his birth when she had to live in a stable. He also intended for it to be a place where those who had accepted him as their master-teacher could come and be taught by him. They it were who called it The School of Christ, the school of the way to attain Christhood. Even today The School of Christ is open in the spirit and those who seek may enter and learn.

And when they came he said to them, This gospel of the Christ must be proclaimed in all the world. This Christine vine will be a mighty vine whose branches will comprise the peoples, tribes and tongues of all the earth. I am the vine; twelve men shall be the branches of the stock, and these shall send forth branches everywhere; and from among the people who have followed me, the Holy Breath will call the twelve. (Aquarian Gospel 87:12b-16)

This gospel of the Christ must be proclaimed in all the world. It is the true Gospel, the Good News of each person’s inner Christhood. Jesus is not thinking of an earthly empire of religion, but the spreading of the truth of the Divine Self in every sentient being. Whoever proclaims this Gospel, not matter what title or name they bear, is teaching the Gospel of Christ. Whether Buddha, Lao Tzu, Krishna or Jesus is named as master-teacher, the result is the same: freedom of the bound spirit. The “Church” of Jesus Christ contains all the consciously questing souls of the earth, whatever they may call themselves. Sectarianism and cultism simply have no part in it, or in Jesus, for that imprisons people and do not show them the way to enlightenment and freedom. There are many false churches worshipping false Christs in the world, but the Church of Christ stands apart from them all. And so should we. Otherwise Jesus will say to us: “I do not know you.”

This Christine vine will be a mighty vine whose branches will comprise the peoples, tribes and tongues of all the earth. It is not a world religion Jesus envisions, but the manifestation of universal brotherhood in the Light of God as the Father of all. His disciples will help to bring that about, but so will the disciples of the other great teachers of humanity. As Swami Nikhilananda, a Vedanta missionary to the West, wrote, we cannot accept Christ and reject Krishna, nor can we reject Christ and accept Krishna. For they are One.

I am the vine; twelve men shall be the branches of the stock, and these shall send forth branches everywhere. And so it has been.

Go now and do your work as you have done your work; but listen for the call. Then the disciples went unto their daily tasks, to do their work as they had done, and Jesus went alone into the Hammoth hills to pray. Three days and nights he spent communing with the Silent Brotherhood; then, in the power of Holy Breath he came to call the twelve. (Aquarian Gospel 87:17-19)

Here again we have the example of Jesus: activity must be balanced with meditation.

Further we see that the mission of Jesus was not just his personal endeavor, but that it was part of the age-embracing plans of the great Brotherhood of Master souls who work together for the betterment of humanity. Those who would honor Jesus will also honor them, whether their names are known or not.

The *Autobiography of a Yogi* gives us some indication of Jesus' connection with this association. Moreover, Yogananda said that he had been sent to the West by Mahavatar Babaji (Babaji Brahmananda) at the specific request of Jesus. One day when we were speaking together in the Hollywood Self-Realization Church, Brother Bimalananda pointed to the front of the church and said to me: "One Sunday as he stood right there, I heard Master tell the congregation that Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, and Sri Yukteswar were the Three Wise Men." As we see from his autobiography, while living in Sri Yukteswar's ashram Yogananda was thoroughly taught the Bible and its true meaning, for his commission in coming to the West was to show that the teachings of Jesus and the Bhagavad Gita were identical. In his first weekly lectures in Boston he would speak for half an hour on the Gita, half an hour on the Gospels and then another half hour demonstrating their fundamental unity.

There is no better way to learn the authentic teachings of Jesus than studying everything Yogananda wrote on the subject, especially *The Second Coming of Christ*. We should not forget that although he always wore his orange Swami robes when speaking in his centers, Yogananda also always wore a cross, as did all the ministers of Self-Realization Fellowship.

Chapter Eighty-Eight

Beside the sea of Galilee the Christine master walked, and multitudes of people followed him. The fishing boats had just come in, and Peter and his brother waited in their boats; their helpers were ashore repairing broken nets. And Jesus went into a boat and Peter pushed it out a little ways from shore; and Jesus standing in the boat spoke to the multitude. He said,

Isaiah, prophet of the Lord of hosts, looked forward and he saw this day; he saw the people standing by the sea, and he exclaimed, The land of Zebulon and Naphtali, land beyond the Jordan and toward the sea, the Gentile Galilee, the people were in darkness, knowing not the way; but, lo, they saw the Day Star rise; a light streamed forth; they saw the way of life; they walked therein.

And you are blest beyond all people of the earth today, because you first may see the light, and may become the children of the light. (Aquarian Gospel 88:1-7)

Isaiah, prophet of the Lord of hosts, looked forward and he saw this day. Someone like Jesus is usually shown his future births so he can understand the nature of his age-embracing mission. So as Isaiah he saw his own future life and spoke of it though not revealing it was his own. In that life he was martyred by being sawn in half with a wooden saw. Regarding him, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, one of the greatest of Church Fathers wrote that Isaiah “knew more perfectly than all others the mystery of the religion of the Gospel.” And with good reason as we have seen. Saint Jerome wrote: “He was more of an Evangelist than a Prophet, because he described all of the Mysteries of the Church of Christ so vividly that you would assume he was not prophesying about the future, but rather was composing a history of past events.” Since highest consciousness transcends time, this is no surprise.

They saw the way of life; they walked therein. Here we find the two essentials of successful spiritual life. We must “see” the Way of Life in the sense of really grasping its total nature. Just hearing from others is of no use at all, nor can we intellectually figure it out. We must intuitively perceive and comprehend it. Having done that, we must live our vision and “walk therein.” Without gnosis, direct knowing, we will not be able to enter into Life and “live” it.

You first may see the light, and may become the children of the light. Essentially we are all the sons of God from eternity. But practically speaking, here in this world we must first “see” God before we can become his children in any realistic manner.

Both of the foregoing sentences bring home the necessity for personal spiritual experience as the prerequisite and basis of authentic spiritual life.

Then Jesus said to Peter, Bring your nets aboard, and put out in the deep. And Peter did as Jesus bade him do; but in a faithless way he said, This is a useless trip; there are no fish upon this shore of Galilee today; with Andrew I

have toiled all night, and taken naught.

But Jesus saw beneath the surface of the sea; he saw a multitude of fish. He said to Peter, Cast out your net upon the right side of the boat. And Peter did as Jesus said, and, lo, the net was filled; it scarce was strong enough to hold the multitude of fish.

And Peter called to John and James, who were near by, for help; and when the net was hauled to boat, both boats were well nigh filled with fish.

When Peter saw the heavy catch, he was ashamed of what he said; ashamed because he had no faith, and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and said, Lord, I believe!

And Jesus said, Behold the catch! from henceforth you shall fish no more for fish; you shall cast forth the Christine net into the sea of human life, upon the right side of the boat; you shall ensnare the multitudes to holiness and peace. (Aquarian Gospel 88:8-16)

The external, historical meaning of these verses is obvious, but I want to look at it in a deeper way, for the lives of great Masters are living scriptures, and often symbolic of spiritual truths.

But Jesus saw beneath the surface of the sea. We are all immersed in the "sea of samsara" and occupied with the surface appearances. But to cross that sea and not drown in it we must, like Jesus, see beneath the surface and understand what we are seeing. Once again we are told that insight, true gnosis, is absolutely necessary. We must see things as they are, not just as they appear, and that applies to our own minds and lives. We must see with the eyes of spirit and hear with the ears of spirit. Every moment of our daily life we should be looking deeply into everything. The hidden side is the reality of anything.

Cast out your net upon the right side of the boat. This is a reference to the right brain/left brain polarity in each one of us. The right brain is that of intuition and insight, whereas the "practical" left brain is one of external perception and action. Both are needed in this world, but the left must always be subordinate to the right. Meditation especially cultivates and increases right brain awareness and dominance. Therefore we should continually cast the net of our consciousness into the "right side" of spiritual awareness. That is where the "fish" of spiritual perception and wisdom "swim." We must "catch" them and draw them out onto the conscious level of awareness.

Lord, I believe! When we "fish" on the right side of our "boat" we will then come to believe, to *know*. Until then we only speculate and have no real basis for the way we see ourselves, the world and our lives in it.

You shall cast forth the Christine net into the sea of human life, upon the right side of the boat; you shall ensnare the multitudes to holiness and peace. By faithful meditation we shall transform human life into divine life, gathering in all our faculties and potentials so we can direct them into the ways of holiness and peace.

Now, when they reached the shore the Christine master called to Peter,

Andrew, James and John and said, You fishermen of Galilee, the masters have a mighty work for us to do; I go, and you may follow me. And they left all and followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:17, 18)

The masters have a mighty work for us to do. This is a most significant statement. Jesus is not just acting on his own, nor is he claiming that he is only a messenger of God. He informs us that he is fulfilling his mission at the direction of the Masters of Wisdom, the Silent Brotherhood, spoken about in the previous chapter. It is the same with all who would be his disciples, which is why they should, like Jesus, study the wisdom scriptures of the East and heed them carefully. Throughout the world in all eras of history and within all spiritual traditions the “mighty work” of the Masters has been carried forth. Jesus was one in a chain of great souls who have illumined the world around them, and until the end of the world they shall not cease to appear and teach those with ears and eyes to hear and see. Spiritual awakening and liberation is the work of God and Masters, and of us as well.

I go, and you may follow me. Jesus did not order them to follow him, he merely gave permission. Spiritual life is a matter of free will. Wherever there is any form of coercion whatsoever spiritual life is not possible. Freedom is a prime requisite for the questing soul. The Masters do not drag us along like captives. They move on and we may or may not follow. The decision is ours alone.

And they left all and followed him. The wise follow the Masters; but to do so they must leave all behind that does not foster and enable the search for divine consciousness. As Saint Paul wrote: “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). We cannot follow the Masters with a load of baggage hanging on us. Everything that slows us down in our progress on the path to freedom must be laid aside along with those failings (“sins”) that are so easy to get used to and become attached to. Just running the race is not enough: “So run, that ye may obtain” (I Corinthians 9:24). Spiritual life is a science and must be pursued methodically and precisely to be effective. That is why Saint Paul further said: “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air” (I Corinthians 9:26).

And Jesus walked along the shore, and seeing Philip and Nathaniel walking on the beach he said to them. You teachers of Bethsaida, who long have taught the people Greek philosophy, the masters have a higher work for you and me to do; I go and you may follow me; and then they followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:19, 20)

This is most interesting. We are used to thinking of Jesus and his disciples being from a simple, country-bumpkin though pious, background. But Jesus was from a renowned family, the richest in Israel, and here we find that two of his disciples were instructors in Greek philosophy. That means that they wrote and spoke Greek and subscribed to the ethical and spiritual principles of Greek philosophy—hardly a picture of devout, orthodox, provincial Hebrews. When we read the Aquarian

Gospel we find a very different picture from that presented by official Christianity which wanted its adherents to be simple-minded “faithful” untainted by any kind of sophistication, and to believe that Jesus and the Apostles were the same.

A little farther on there stood a Roman tribute house, and Jesus saw the officer in charge; his name was Matthew, who once abode in Jericho; the youth who once ran on before the Lord into Jerusalem and said, Behold the Christines come. And Matthew was a man of wealth, and learned in wisdom of the Jews, the Syrians and the Greeks.

And Jesus said to him, Hail, Matthew, trusted servant of the Caesars, hail! the masters call us to the tribute house of souls; I go and you may follow me. And Matthew followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:21-24)

Here, too, we find a very different picture from that of the official accounts. Jesus was no stranger to Matthew; he had run before Jesus to announce his arrival in Jerusalem. Matthew, too, was wealthy and highly educated, aware of the culture and philosophy beyond the borders of Israel.

The masters call us to the tribute house of souls. We are not in this world without a purpose, and only a fool says: “It is my life, I will do with it as I please.” To such a one Saint Paul says: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s (I Corinthians 6:19, 20). True religion is “the tribute house of souls” where we “render unto God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21). And what is God’s? “Ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (I Corinthians 3:23).

Ischariot and his son, whose name was Judas, were employed by Matthew and were at the tribute house. And Jesus said to Judas, Stay your work; the masters call us to a duty in the savings bank of souls; I go and you may follow me. And Judas followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:25-26)

Jesus gives the same invitation to Judas that he did to Matthew, yet how differently will their discipleship end. Jesus knew that end, for we find in Saint John’s Gospel: “Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve” (John 6:67-71). If you read *The Unknown Lives of Jesus and Mary* you will learn that Jesus knew Judas when they were children and that Judas had tried to kill Jesus at that time. It was Jesus’ karma to be betrayed and Judas’ to betray, so the drama unfolded with Jesus’ conscious cooperation.

And Jesus met a lawyer who heard about the Christine master and had come from Antioch to study in the school of Christ. This man was Thomas,

man of doubt, and yet a Greek philosopher of culture and of power. But Jesus saw in him the lines of faith, and said to him, The masters have a need of men who can interpret law; I go, and you may follow me. And Thomas followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:27-29)

We continue to discover major differences in what we know about the Apostles only from the Bible. But first, notice that Thomas “had come from Antioch to study in the school of Christ.” This was the large house that Jesus had bought in Capernaum to be a learning center of spiritual wisdom. This was both very overt and very formal. Our image of Jesus is of someone wandering around at random, teaching in fields and village squares and the occasional synagogue, doing everything in a hit-or-miss fashion, unorganized and impoverished. But here we see that people came and enrolled in a real center of instruction. The idea of the illiterate but “faith-filled” Christian has no place here.

Further, Thomas was “a Greek philosopher of culture and of power,” not a daft intellectual dreamer. And immediately Jesus indicates that he is to be a teacher of others, saying: “The masters have a need of men who can interpret law.” By “law” He did not mean the Torah, but the Divine Law, the underlying principles and purpose of the cosmos and man’s existence within it. Without the formal instruction Jesus intended to give, Thomas could not have done so. “The simple shepherd of the simple sheep” may appeal to our sentimental side, but it has no place in real spiritual life and discipleship.

And when the evening came and Jesus was at home, behold, there came his kindred, James and Jude, the sons of Alpheus and Miriam. And these were men of faith, and they were carpenters of Nazareth.

And Jesus said to them, Behold, for you have toiled with me, and with my father Joseph, building houses for the homes of men. The masters call us now to aid in building homes for souls; homes built without the sound of hammer, axe, or saw; I go, and you may follow me. And James and Jude exclaimed, Lord, we will follow you. (Aquarian Gospel 88:30-33)

At last we have two disciples of the simple life, but since both were Jesus’ relatives they were well-instructed Essenes and not uneducated. The Masters have a destiny for them, too: “to aid in building homes for souls; homes built without the sound of hammer, axe, or saw.” For the work of the spirit is an inner work, done in the silence of consciousness. Jesus did not say they would build those “homes,” but *aid* in building them. For each aspirant must build his own spirit-abode. The worthy teacher aids, but the student builds.

And on the morrow Jesus sent a message unto Simon, leader of the Zelotes, a strict exponent of the Jewish law.” And in the message Jesus said, The masters call for men to demonstrate the faith of Abraham; I go, and you may follow me. And Simon followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 88:34, 35)

Here is a leader and a teacher, but one who taught the outer Law. Jesus does not

call him to prove the Law, but the faith of Abraham, and not to verbally expound it, but to show it to the world by his own spiritual attainment. For Abraham did not “believe” but rather “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10). That is, he sought to be established in Divine Consciousness which transcends the petty things and ways of earth. Jesus called Simon to realize and reveal that Consciousness. And he calls us to the same.

Chapter Eighty-Nine

Now, on the day before the Sabbath day, the twelve disciples who had received the call were met with one accord in Jesus' home. And Jesus said to them, This is the day to consecrate yourselves unto the work of God; so let us pray. Turn from the outer to the inner self; close all the doors of carnal self and wait. The Holy Breath will fill this place, and you will be baptized in Holy Breath. And then they prayed; a light more brilliant than the noonday sun filled all the room, and tongues of flame from every head rose high in air. The atmosphere of Galilee was set astir; a sound like distant thunder rolled above Capernaum, and men heard songs, as though ten thousand angels joined in full accord. And then the twelve disciples heard a voice, a still, small voice, and just one word was said, a word they dared not speak; it was the Sacred name of God. (Aquarian Gospel 89:1-7)

It was considered from the very first that the four Gospels were to be approached symbolically, even though they were basically historical fact. It is the same with the Aquarian Gospel when a lesson can be drawn from an incident or statement when considered from a symbolic or spiritual sense.

Now, on the day before the Sabbath day, the twelve disciples who had received the call were met with one accord in Jesus' home.

The day was Friday, the day on which Jesus would give his life to renew and revivify the world and humanity. Friday also corresponded to the "day" of the creation of humanity. (The seven "days" of creation and the seven days of Holy Week also have a spiritual, symbolic connection.) Therefore it was a day for opening a door to inner renewal, but only to those "who had received the call." This is a fact that religionists never seem to comprehend. Spiritual life being an interior life, it is a matter of internal urging of the spirit, never of any exterior force. So all the missionarying in the world can only result in little good and much hypocrisy and disillusionment. Only those whose inner faculties are awakened to at least some degree can perceive the urgings of the spirit toward higher life and consciousness. Those disciples were of "one accord" in their spiritual aspirations and were gathered in the home of Jesus, not in any worldly locale. They had come for the words of life (John 6:63, 68) and were to receive The Word of Life that day.

And Jesus said to them, This is the day to consecrate yourselves unto the work of God; so let us pray. Turn from the outer to the inner self; close all the doors of carnal self and wait. The Holy Breath will fill this place, and you will be baptized in Holy Breath.

Spiritual life is not a palliative to make earthly life bearable, nor is it an amusement to relieve the tedium of mundane life. It is a total consecration to spiritual awakening: "the work of God." Jesus outlines the process of this consecration. We turn from the outer self to the inner self, the spirit, as our only true being and existence. Through meditation we close "all the doors of carnal self,"

physical, astral and causal. Then we enter into our spirit-conscious so the Holy Spirit can fill our awareness and immerse us in her deifying Life.

And then they prayed; a light more brilliant than the noonday sun filled all the room, and tongues of flame from every head rose high in air. The atmosphere of Galilee was set astir; a sound like distant thunder rolled above Capernaum, and men heard songs, as though ten thousand angels joined in full accord.

It is interesting that Thai Buddhist images show flames emanating from the crown of Buddha's head, from that point the yogis call the brahmarandhra. In correct meditation the life force rises into the head, the Thousand-petalled Lotus or Sahasrara.

Often when there is a manifestation of great spiritual power the very air is "set astir." Once I was visiting with some yogi friends and one of their children became deathly ill with a fever. It was a weekend and no medical help was near. Her father telephoned to an experienced yogi. At his direction we all went into the bedroom and sat around the little girl and meditated. In about fifteen minutes or so, the stuffy, hot air in the overheated room (it was winter) become instantly cool and fresh and the child's fever broke, she fell asleep and later awoke perfectly well.

The Voice of God heard with the ears of the spirit is described often in various traditions as being like thunder or a roaring wind. (In the Bible see I Samuel 7:10; II Samuel 22:14; Job 40:9; Psalms 18:13; 77:18, 104:7; John 12:29; Revelation 14:2.) The phenomenon of angelic singing is not unknown even now. It may take various forms, but its unearthly sound is unmistakable. Once a man told me that he and his wife heard such singing while driving at night. They followed the sound and came to a place where a holy woman had left her body at the exact time they first heard the singing.

And then the twelve disciples heard a voice, a still, small voice, and just one word was said, a word they dared not speak; it was the Sacred name of God.

God has many names, but for the ultimate name of God which is also the Consciousness of God, see *Soham Yoga*.

And Jesus said to them, By this omnific Word you may control the elements, and all the powers of air. And when within your souls you speak this Word, you have the keys of life and death; of things that are; of things that were; of things that are to be. Behold you are the twelve great branches of the Christine vine; the twelve foundation stones; the twelve apostles of the Christ. As lambs I send you forth among wild beasts; but the omnific Word will be your buckler and your shield. And then again the air was filled with song, and every living creature seemed to say, Praise God! Amen!. (Aquarian Gospel 89:8-12)

And Jesus said to them, By this omnific Word you may control the elements, and all the powers of air.

Omnific means "doing all." When I was little, I often heard over the radio that the laundry and dishwashing soap "Duz does everything." Even as a child I did not

believe that about a detergent, but as an adult I came to believe and then experience that Word (in Sanskrit: Vak) really can do everything. This is the basis of mantra and mantric power. But mantras are limited to doing only one or a few things, while the Divine Word does everything that accords with the Divine Will and the Divine Plan.

And when within your souls you speak this Word, you have the keys of life and death; of things that are; of things that were; of things that are to be.

This Name Above All Names will also do everything internal that should be done. We can invoke spiritual life and banish spiritual death. The holy Word embraces past, present and future and transcends them all. A person's destiny can be entirely ordered by the Word. For: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

Behold you are the twelve great branches of the Christine vine; the twelve foundation stones; the twelve apostles of the Christ. As lambs I send you forth among wild beasts; but the omnific Word will be your buckler and your shield. And then again the air was filled with song, and every living creature seemed to say, Praise God! Amen!

Christians have a profound connection with the Twelve Apostles, though that is usually not realized. Prayer addressed to them will be of great assistance to us, for they are part of the very spiritual fabric of the Church.

Although the sleepwalkers on the earth hardly realize it except in time of war or plague, this world is a dangerous place with many people and influences truly being "wild beasts." The Omnific Word is our strength and our shield against them all, whether internal or external. When we continually invoke and meditate on that Word then we, too, will be "filled with song" and our life will be a praise to God, a Seal of immortality.

The next day was the Sabbath day; and Jesus went with his disciples to the synagogue, and there he taught. The people said, he teaches not as do the scribes and Pharisees; but as a man who knows, and has authority to speak. As Jesus spoke, a man obsessed came in; the evil spirits that obsessed the man were of the baser sort; they often threw their victim to the ground, or in the fire. And when the spirits saw the Christine master in the synagogue they knew him, and they said, You son of God, why are you here? would you destroy us by the Word before our time? we would have naught to do with you; let us alone. (Aquarian Gospel 89:13-17)

He teaches not as do the scribes and Pharisees; but as a man who knows, and has authority to speak. Jesus reveals to us a most important esoteric fact: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Luke 6:45; see Matthew 12:34). The speaking voice conveys to its hearers more than words of communication. It also conveys to them the vibrations of the inner mind of the speaker. I think we have all heard people whose voices either shocked or made our skin crawl in revulsion. The more

fortunate among us have also heard speech that uplifted and enlivened our hearts at the hearing. There are false spiritual teachers who just make sound because their hearts are empty, and no matter what they say we gain no benefit. In contrast there are those whose speech empowers the hearers to reach out for higher awareness. I have met such persons in both East and West. The very hearing of Jesus was a new experience for those in the synagogue at Capernaum, for his voice conveyed to them on the inner level that what he said was true and that he knew by experience and attainment what he was saying. His very voice was truth and his words were spirit and life (John 6:63). Even the recorded voice of a Master can elevate the mind and heart of the listeners, enabling them to say with the apostles: "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

Evil spirits often endanger the lives of those they obsess or possess, causing them to do or undergo destructive situations as they try to control them more fully or expel them completely so they can take over their body unopposed. Such entities are unsettled by the presence of a holy person, and one such as Jesus is of great torment to them. Evil spirits used to cry out and call Saint Sergius of Radonez "iron-eater." They know that in time they must leave their victims and that they shall suffer the consequences of their evil invasion. That is why they asked Jesus if he intended to expel them right away. The important thing is their own declaration that the Word can vanquish them utterly.

We would have naught to do with you; let us alone. Many human beings are demonic even if not (yet) disembodied demons. A man once told me that he had asked his father if he believed in God; the father replied: "I leave him alone and he leaves me alone." That itself is the state of "hell" worse than any fire. These words of the demons, "We would have naught to do with you; let us alone," are the motto of most human beings, including the ones that think they are religious because of external acts that supposedly indicate their "fidelity" to God. But see how they live their lives: as if God did not even exist. This is the sacrilege of the ego, the antichrist within.

But Jesus said to them, By the omnific Word I speak; Come out; torment this man no more; go to your place. And then the unclean spirits threw the man upon the floor, and, with a fiendish cry, they went away. (Aquarian Gospel 89:18, 19)

The Holy Word expels demons, actual entities that are demons, and also demonic vibrations, influences, thoughts and habits we have picked up through our many lifetimes. So although we hope we never need to drive away actual demons, we certainly do need to expel demonic elements from our minds and hearts, and it is the invocation and meditation of the Word that will do it.

And Jesus lifted up the man and said to him, If you will keep your mind fully occupied with good, the evil spirits cannot find a place to stay; they only

come to empty heads and hearts. Go on your way and sin no more. The people were astonished at the words that Jesus spoke, the work he did. They asked among themselves, Who is this man? From whence comes all this power that even unclean spirits fear, and flee away?. (Aquarian Gospel 89:20-23)

If you will keep your mind fully occupied with good, the evil spirits cannot find a place to stay. The subject of psychic defense is a most important one and its necessity increases continually, because we are living in a sea of negative and destructive energies and consciousnesses that seem to be unrestrained in their growth. There are many forms of defense and it is good to know them. Especially valuable is the book *Psychic Self-Defense* by the Christian esotericist Dion Fortune, for it gives a great deal of information on how to detect psychic attack and disturbance and ways to deal with them.

Jesus, however, is giving us the simplest and best way to expel and keep negative intelligences and entities at a distance: fill the mind with good: with God.

They only come to empty heads and hearts. This is not a sarcastic or satirical remark, but solid fact. Only when the gates and doors are unguarded and the “house” is empty do these forces enter. This is because they are innately weak, though they can draw upon the energies of their victims and seem to be very powerful, even invincible. But that is an illusion they create. Discarnate entities are, as I say, innately weak and must draw on other sources for power to work their will. So never fear them, but know that Jesus spoke practical truth when he said: “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them [oppressing spirits]: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (I John 4:4). Within us is our immortal, divine spirit, and at the core of that holy spirit is God himself. Therefore no outer force is greater than that which is ever-present within us. Not knowing this, however, we become fearful and are defeated by forces that are as nothing compared to our own spiritual strength.

Go on your way and sin no more. Purity of thought and deed is the way to prevent the invasion of evil. When we weaken ourselves by transgression of spiritual and moral principles we become defenseless. “Sin” is failing to manifest our true nature as eternal, immortal spirits.

The people were astonished at the words that Jesus spoke, the work he did. They asked among themselves, Who is this man? From whence comes all this power that even unclean spirits fear, and flee away? If they had been listening carefully to either the spirits or Jesus they would have known that “all this power” came from the Omnific Word.

The Christ master left the synagogue; with Peter, Andrew, James and John, he went to Peter’s house where one, a near of kin, was sick. And Peter’s wife came in; it was her mother who was sick. And Jesus touched the woman as she lay upon her couch; he spoke the Word; the fever ceased and she arose and ministered to them. The neighbors heard what had occurred, and then brought their sick, and those obsessed, and Jesus laid his hands on them, and

they were healed. (Aquarian Gospel 89:24-27)

From this we see that the Omnific Word can also heal. It also shows that it is good for the sick to be touched while the healer mentally intones the Word.

In this chapter, then, we see that the Sacred Word can be used to benefit all the levels of ourselves and those around us.

Chapter Ninety

Leaving Capernaum

The Christine master disappeared; no one saw him go, and Peter, James and John set forth to search for him; they found him at his trysting-place out on the Hammoth hills. And Peter said, The city of Capernaum is wild; the people crowd the streets and every public place is filled. The men, the women and the children everywhere are asking for the man who heals by will. Your home and our homes are filled with people who are sick; they call for Jesus who is called the Christ. What will we say to them? And Jesus said, A score of other cities call, and we must take the bread of life to them. Go call the other men and let us go. (Aquarian Gospel 90:1-5)

However uninstructed the people might have been in theology or philosophy, they intuited a most important fact: Jesus' healing was done by his conscious, intelligent will. Jesus was commonly known among the people of Israel as being the Messiah. The entire nation knew of him. Some believed, some did not, and others were indifferent. but no one had not heard of him. From one end of the country to the other people were walking around whom he had healed or blessed in some way. Thousands had witnessed his miracles.

What is my point? That no one can really follow the Masters whose own hearts, minds and lives have not been prepared by spiritual evolution. Otherwise like the multitudes of old they shout "Hosanna" on Palm Sunday and "Crucify him" on Good Friday. It is all a matter of evolution of consciousness.

Writing these words I see so clearly in my mind the beautiful ashram of Sri Maitri Devi in northern Delhi. Located on a major road, it was passed by every day by literally thousands of people, none of whom entered and found the tangible peace that pervaded the entire place. When I was in Delhi I would go every night for the wonderful worship, the beautiful devotional music and the wisdom of Maitri Devi. Yet I was the only "outsider;" all the rest were members of the ashram—and they were few. Recalling it I am absolutely astounded that it was so. That holy place was a fount of life, flowing so freely. Those holy hours I spent there are a treasure no time can take from me. But a heedless world (no matter that it was "spiritual" India) rushed by and never knew the wonder a few steps would have revealed. Many times I have sat in the presence of gods upon the earth, sometimes completely alone with them and sometimes with a handful of others, but rarely in a large number "because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

And Jesus and the twelve went to Bethsaida where Philip and Nathaniel dwelt; and there they taught. The multitudes believed on Christ, confessed their sins and were baptized, and came into the kingdom of the Holy One.

The Christine master and the twelve went everywhere through all the towns of Galilee, and taught, baptizing all who came in faith, and who confessed their sins. They opened up blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, drove forth the evil ones from those obsessed, and healed disease of every kind. (Aquarian Gospel 90:6-9)

This tells us some very interesting and vital things. It is so easy to dwell on abstractions and subtle theories and leave real, practical spiritual life aside. Although we long to be freed into spirit consciousness, at the moment we are very much integrated into body, mind and intellect; and unless we work with them and turn them into instruments of enlightenment we will never manage. So this account of how the people at Bethsaida began their spiritual life can be of great value to us, for it shows the steps that lead to success.

First, they listened. It is a great thing to be able to listen and learn and apply wisdom. Not a great percentage of people can, because they are so busy and restless with the demands of ego. The only remedy for this is for a person to focus on spiritual practice and keep on moving, not wasting a moment.

Second, they believed on Christ: not Jesus the man, the teacher, but their own inner Christ and the possibility of manifesting that Christ.

Third, they acknowledged their faults and failings and realized that they were in great spiritual need. They knew they needed drastic change and continual vigilance to safeguard the attainment produced by wise change.

Fourth, they were cleansed and empowered by the initiatic rite of baptism to consciously enter "the kingdom of the Holy One" that was their real home.

Then they were ready to engage in real spiritual evolution. It was not the end, only the beginning. Seeker for higher consciousness are like certain kinds of fish: if they do not keep moving onward they will suffocate and die. As the hymn says: "I cannot be idle, no time for repose."

And they were in Tiberius by the sea, and as they taught a leper came a-near and said, Lord, I believe, and if you will but speak the Word I will be clean. And Jesus said to him, I will; be clean. And soon the leprosy was gone; the man was clean. And Jesus charged the man, Say naught to anyone, but go and show yourself unto the priests and offer for your cleansing what the law demands. The man was wild with joy; but then he went not to the priests, but in the marts of trade, and everywhere he told what had been done. And then the sick in throngs pressed hard upon the healer and the twelve, imploring to be healed. And they were so importunate that little could be done, and so the Christines left the crowded thoroughfares, and went to desert places where they taught the multitudes that followed them. (Aquarian Gospel 90:10-15)

If you will but speak the Word I will be clean. This shows us that the afflicted man understood the power of Jesus.

Say naught to anyone. Jesus usually asked that his miracles not be reported, and just as usually his request was ignored. And this is why:

The sick in throngs pressed hard upon the healer and the twelve, imploring to be healed. And they were so importunate that little could be done, and so the Christines left. Healing is a thankless task in the long run. The only thing that results is the healer being overwhelmed by demands—not requests—for healing, so he can do little else.

If anything demonstrates the fact that illness and injury come from inner negativity it is the way that most people demand healing and callously disregard the feelings or even the welfare of the healer. Here is but one example. A healer I knew freely granted private healing sessions to whoever asked. Many people came whose needs were slight and many others were not even ill—they just wanted a jolt to “feel good.” One woman (whom I knew) came every week whining and demanding, though she really had nothing wrong with her. During one session the healer suddenly fell to the floor unconscious with blood gushing out of his ears, nose and mouth. An ambulance was called, and as he was being carried out this woman was coming up the walk for her appointment. She saw he was covered in blood and unconscious. Her reaction? She turned to his assistants and barked: “Does this mean I don’t get my treatment?” My maternal grandmother was a great healer, but she did everything in secret. I learned the wisdom of this when I was in my early teens. I prayed for a very dear and holy woman. She was immediately healed and started telling others about it. Imagine my parents’ reaction when they started getting phone requests for me to heal others! Fortunately I was able to stop the incursion right away so things continued peacefully. But I had learned the lesson well.

The Christines left the crowded thoroughfares, and went to desert places where they taught the multitudes that followed them. The Four Gospels are of a very special character: they are both historical and symbolic. The Aquarian Gospel is straightforward history, so usually the only teaching is in the words of Jesus or other teachers. However there is a symbolic character to this that we should not miss. Spiritual teaching is best given in “desert places,” in the peace and clarity of an uncrowded mind and heart. To truly learn the way of life eternal we must withdraw our attention from external things and fix our attention on the wisdom of the great Masters of the spiritual life. The truth is, those who aspire to discipleship must isolate themselves outwardly from all that would distract them or waste their time. I do not mean they need to be antisocial, but they need to be much less social than most people are in modern society. There is a great lesson in Jesus’ words: “Come ye apart into a desert place” (Mark 6:31).

Now, after many days the Christines came back to Capernaum. When it was noised around that Jesus was at home, the people came; they filled the house till there was no more room, not even at the door. And there were present scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law from every part of Galilee, and from Jerusalem, and Jesus opened up for them the way of life. Four men brought one, a palsied man upon a cot, and when they could not pass the door they took the sick man to the roof, and opened up a way, then

let him down before the healer's face. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the palsied man, My son, be of good cheer; your sins are all forgiven. And when the scribes and Pharisees heard what he said, they said, Why does this man speak thus? who can forgive the sins of men but God? And Jesus caught their thought; he knew they questioned thus among themselves; he said to them, Why reason thus among yourselves? What matters it if I should say, Your sins are blotted out; or say, Arise, take up your bed and walk? But just to prove that men may here forgive the sins of men, I say, (and then he spoke unto the palsied man) Arise, take up your bed, and go your way. And in the presence of them all the man arose, took up his bed, and went his way. The people could not comprehend the things they heard and saw. They said among themselves, This is a day we never can forget; we have seen wondrous things today. (Aquarian Gospel 90:16-26)

Here we have clear indication from Jesus that illness is a result of transgression of or disharmony with the laws of life, for that is what sin is. He also shows that an enlightened person can with an act of will neutralize the effects of sin and restore someone to a better state. When Yogananda met his first American disciple, Dr. M. W. Lewis, he said to him: "Your sins are forgiven." For nearly thirty-two years such a great Master lived here with us. And still lives.

And when the multitudes had gone the twelve remained, and Jesus said to them, The Jewish festival draws near; next week we will go to Jerusalem, that we may meet our brethren from afar, and open up to them the way that they may see the king. The Christines sought the quiet of their homes, where they remained in prayer for certain days. (Aquarian Gospel 90:27-29)

Meditation is the necessary preparation for activity of any kind. That is why Jesus set the example and continually went into solitude throughout his public ministry.

Chapter Ninety-One

The feast time came and Jesus and the twelve went to Jerusalem. Upon the day before the Sabbath day they reached Mount Olives and they tarried at an inn before Mount Olives on the north. And in the early morning of the Sabbath day they went in through the sheep gate to Jerusalem. The healing fountain of Bethesda, near the gate, was thronged about with people who were sick; for they believed that at a certain time an angel came and poured a healing virtue in the pool, and those who entered first and bathed, would be made whole. (Aquarian Gospel 91:1-5)

Water is extremely sensitive to psychic energies and will take on their vibration, which is why we have holy water and why baptism is based on water. (Regarding both of these, see *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.) When water has been magnetized by prayers and blessings it becomes a repository of powerful spiritual energies which will be imparted to whomever it touches. Angels also are able to convey sacred powers to water. For example, Saint German of Alaska, who was not a priest, would see an angel blessing the water around Kodiak Island at the Epiphany. This world is the world of human beings, but angels can play a great part in human life if they are requested to do so. (See *Living With Angels*.) Having themselves been human, and presently being just one rung above humans on the evolutionary ladder, they are naturally very close to us and part of their evolutionary endeavor can include helping human beings in various ways, healing being a major activity along with protecting. The Gospel of John implies that an angel came and infused the water of Bethesda with healing power, making it a long-established healing center.

And Jesus and the twelve were standing near the pool. And Jesus saw a man near by who had been stricken eight and thirty years; without a hand to help he could not move. And Jesus said to him, My brother, man, would you be healed? The man replied, I earnestly desire to be healed; but I am helpless and when the angel comes and pours the healing virtues in the pool, another who can walk, steps in the fountain first and I am left unhealed. (Aquarian Gospel 91:6-10)

It is apparent from this that the healing energies imparted by the angel only sufficed to cure one person. Consequently there was a rush to be first in the water. We can be sure that a lot of very inappropriate conduct occurred all the time. One of the most appalling examples of this is the rush to be first into the water at the auspicious time during a Kumbha Mela in India. Many people die in the press or are trampled or drowned. Furthermore, there are false “sadhus” that violently prevent non-sadhus from entering the water. They also knock the containers out of the hands of those that have gathered up to water to take home for the benefit of those who could not come themselves. This is what happens when superstition reigns on

the throne of ego.

And Jesus said, Who sends an angel here to potentize this pool for just a favored few? I know it is not God, for he deals just the same with every one. One has no better chance in heaven's healing fountain than another one.

The fount of health is in your soul; it has a door locked fast; the key is faith; and every one can have this key and may unlock the door and plunge into the healing fount and be made whole. (Aquarian Gospel 91:11-15)

Jesus reveals that healing is for all. The Tao Teh King says in Section 35: "The Great Tao flows everywhere, (like a flood) It may go left or right. The myriad things derive their life from It, and *It does not deny them.*" (See *The Tao Teh King* for Awakening.) Jesus said: "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7). The question is how to seek effectively. Faith is an awakened intuition, not mere hope or belief. When we are fully attuned or aligned with God, then everything is available to us. How to attune and align? Deep meditation supported by the yoga life. (See *Perspectives on Yoga.*)

And then the man looked up in hopeful mood and said, Give me this key of faith. And Jesus said, Do you believe what I have said? According to your faith it shall be done. Arise, take up your bed and walk. The man at once arose and walked away; he only said, Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 91:16-18)

For a paralyzed man to simply get up and walk is a great act of faith. Therefore, he asked Jesus for faith because it is possible for a highly evolved person to impart something of his consciousness and insight to another by either word or look. So it was in this case. Jesus freed his mind and therefore his body. Faith is contagious. I saw this during my time with Swami Sivananda. Because he believed totally in our ability to attain higher consciousness, we believed it too and acted upon it. His many great disciples proved the possibility of this.

We might prefer that the man would thank Jesus, but he had the wisdom to know that God had healed him through Jesus, so he gave God alone the glory.

And when the people asked, Who made you whole? the man replied, I do not know. A stranger at the pool just spoke a word and I was well.

The many did not see when Jesus healed the man, and with the twelve he went his way up to the temple courts. And in the temple Jesus saw the man and said to him, Behold you are made whole; from henceforth guard your life aright; go on your way and sin no more, or something worse may fall on you. And now the man knew who it was who made him whole. (Aquarian Gospel 91:19-23)

All misfortune is a manifestation of negative karma, so if we keep on accumulating such karma there will be no end to our misfortune. It is not at all uncommon for people to be cured of a disease and then get it back after some time. That is because they persisted in the kind of thought and deed that caused the

illness in the first place. I have known of several instances where people were miraculously healed by prayer or blessing, but in time the old trouble came back. Doubters said this was proof of their not having really been healed, but they were wrong. They had been healed, *but they had not been corrected*. They kept on doing what brought about the problem. A person could be cured a dozen times of cancer, but if he continues eating carcinogens the cancer will reappear. In the same way, if a difficult situation is relieved after prayer, we should look into the roots of the problem and eliminate them. Then the situation will not return; that is the law.

Therefore Jesus told the man to watch his life and see that no evil or foolish thing would be there to manifest as future difficulties that might be even worse than his paralysis. Ultimately, we are the source of everything that happens to us.

He told the story to the priests and they were much enraged; they said, The law forbids a man to heal upon the Sabbath day. But Jesus said, My Father works on sabbath days and may not I? He sends his rain, his sunshine and his dew; he makes his grass to grow, his flowers to bloom; he speeds the harvests just the same on Sabbath days as on the other days. If it is lawful for the grass to grow and flowers to bloom on Sabbath days it surely is not wrong to succour stricken men. (Aquarian Gospel 91:24-27)

It is a terrible thing when doctrinaire principles cancel out good sense and condemn right thought and action. But that is the way of any dogmatism, religious or otherwise. Imagine being angered by someone's healing. Jesus certainly knew how to address this nonsense and did so. The question is: Will we be like God or ignorant humanity? The choice is ours, but our nature is on the side of the godlike.

And then the priests were angered more and more because he claimed to be a son of God. A leading priest, Abihu, said, This fellow is a menace to our nation and our laws; he makes himself to be a son of God; it is not meet that he should live. (Aquarian Gospel 91:28, 29)

Well, there we have it: exoteric religion speaks the same way throughout history. Such ignorance loves sin and hates perfection, and even more hates the aspiration to higher consciousness and life. The yogi and the mystic, like truth itself, is their worst enemy.

But Jesus said, Abihu, Sir, you are a learned man; you surely know the law of life. Pray tell who were the sons of God we read about in Genesis, who took to wife the daughters of the sons of men? Our father Adam; who was he? From whence came he? Had he a father? or did he fall from heaven as a star? We read that Moses said, he came from God. If Adam came from God pray, was he offspring, was he son? We are the children of this son of God; then tell me, learned priest, Who are we if not sons of God? (Aquarian Gospel 91:30-33)

That says it all.

The priest had urgent business and he went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 91:34)

Indeed! If they cannot silence truth they run away from it. I cannot count the number of times I witnessed this from childhood. Such people flee the light. That is why Jesus said: "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:19-20). This is the way of bullies, including religious ones.

And Jesus said, All men are sons of God and if they live a holy life they always are at home with God. They see and understand the works of God, and in his sacred name they can perform these works. The lightnings and the storms are messengers of God as well as the sunshine, rain and dew. The virtues of the heavens are in God's hands, and every loyal son may use these virtues and these powers. (Aquarian Gospel 91:35-38)

Along with most religion Churchianity thrives on the disempowerment of the true person and the exaltation of the ego and ignorance. But these words of Jesus tell us what being a Christian is all about: mastery through Christhood, and Christhood through mastery. It is all interrelated. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and... when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

Man is the delegate of God to do his will on earth, and man can heal the sick, control the spirits of the air, and raise the dead. Because I have the power to do these things is nothing strange. All men may gain the power to do these things; but they must conquer all the passions of the lower self; and they can conquer if they will. (Aquarian Gospel 91:39-40)

One of the reasons exoteric Christians insist that Jesus is unique is their total disinterest in being like him. "He 'paid the price' but we get the goods!" That is the Doctrine of the Atonement as they really mean it. They pretend to be defending the honor of Jesus, but they are really defending their spiritual laziness and degradation. Why? Because they revel in their passions and the pig-wallow of the lower self. Those things are their friends, so how could they want to conquer them? As Jesus said, they "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." It is all a matter of choice, and ours must be different.

So man is God on earth, and he who honors God must honor man; for God and man are one, as father and the child are one. (Aquarian Gospel 91:41)

It is not easy to always keep this perspective because, as Yogananda said, people are so skillful in their ignorance. They can completely fool themselves and others into thinking that they are helpless sinners. Then they need do nothing else but

wait for God to save them and enjoy sinning in the meanwhile. What responsibility does a hopeless case have? But Jesus tells us otherwise, and we must act on that: first in our life and then in seeing others as sleeping gods. This is not positive thinking, it is the positive truth.

Behold, I say, The hour has come; the dead will hear the voice of man, and live, because the son of man is son of God. You men of Israel, hear! you live in death; you are locked up within the tomb. (There is no deeper death than ignorance and unbelief.) But all will some day hear the voice of God made plain by voice of man, and live. You all will know that you are sons of God, and by the sacred Word, may do the works of God. When you have come to life, that is, have come to realize that you are sons of God, you who have lived the life of right, will open up your eyes on fields of life. (Aquarian Gospel 91:42-46)

This is the glorious future of all human beings, however much they may drag their feet on the path. They may delay this blessed resurrection into life and light, but they cannot avoid it. One day they will hear and respond to the call: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Ephesians 5:14). Then they in turn will spread the light they have received "and by the sacred Word, may do the works of God," just as did Jesus, who said: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). This is the real Good News (Gospel) of Christ.

But you who love the ways of sin will, in this resurrection, stand before a judgment bar, and be condemned to pay the debts you owe to men and to yourselves. For whatsoever you have done amiss must be performed again, and yet again, until you reach the stature of the perfect man. But in due time the lowest and the highest will arise to walk in light. (Aquarian Gospel 91:47-49)

No one is condemned eternally by God, but all must pay their immediate karmic debts and purify themselves from the others. Rebirth is a chance for perfection. We face the same things and situations again and again until we solve the problems correctly and get passed on to a higher grade. The great sinner of today is the great saint of tomorrow. That is why Yogananda said a saint is a sinner who never gave up.

Shall I accuse you unto God? No, for your prophet, Moses, has done that; and if you hear not Moses' words you will not hearken unto me, for Moses wrote of me. (Aquarian Gospel 91:50)

The same words can be addressed to the Bible-worshipping Churchians. The Bible itself proves their theology to be demonology in action, for it denies men's eternal status as sons of God and the eventual, sure revelation of this divine sonship

in every human being.

However that may be, we have a great deal to rejoice in, as they will also in time.

Chapter Ninety-Two

Now, Lazarus was at the feast and Jesus and the twelve went with him to his home in Bethany. And Lazarus and his sisters made a feast for Jesus and the twelve; and Ruth and Asher came from Jericho; for Asher was no longer hostile to the Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 92:1, 2)

In Chapter seventy-seven we first encountered Ruth and—by his reputation—her husband Asher. Asher was a committed Pharisee and so intensely hostile to Jesus that he had driven Ruth out of their home in Jericho when she professed her faith in Jesus as the Messiah. When she came to Bethany and told Jesus of these things he told her: “Just wait a little time, and then go home with sympathy and love. Talk not of Christ, nor of the kingdom of the Holy One. Just live a godly life; refrain from harshness in your speech, and you will lead your husband to the light. (Aquarian Gospel 77:20-21).

The validity of Jesus’ advice is now proven, for Asher has come from Jericho with Ruth to be with Jesus.

And while the guests sat at the board behold a cry, The village is a-fire! and all rushed out into the streets, and, lo, the homes of many neighbors were in flames. And in an upper room an infant lay asleep, and none could pass the flames to save. The mother, wild with grief, was calling on the men to save her child. Then, with a voice that made the spirits of the fire pale and tremble, Jesus said, Peace, peace, be still! And then he walked through smoke and flame, climbed up the falling stair, and in a moment came again, and in his arms he brought the child. And not a trace of fire was on himself, his raiment, or the child. Then Jesus raised his hand, rebuked the spirits of the fire, commanding them to cease their awful work, and be at rest. And then, as though the waters of the sea were all at once poured on the flames, the fire ceased to burn. (Aquarian Gospel 92:3-8)

What we must keep in mind regarding miracles of this type is the fact that all creation is a manifestation of God, the dream of the Cosmic Dreamer. Those who know this truth by having realized it through their enlightenment can produce any change in the world that they wish simply through willing and *seeing* it so. These miracles were not signs of Jesus’ “favor” with God, but his union with God, a god within God. This is what he meant in the following:

“Jesus saith unto him [Thomas], I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest

thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me” (John 14:6-11). Not understanding Jesus’ meaning, exoteric Christianity has formulated errors regarding the nature of Jesus for two thousand years.

Another very important fact that is vigorously denied by exoteric Christianity is that there are spirits, known as elementals, which are attached to the elements of earth, water, fire and air. Those who through their illumined consciousness are able to command those spirits can consequently control all manifestations of their respective elements. It is true that “magicians” occasionally evoke and direct these spirits, but that has nothing to do with the ways of the sons of God, and is ultimately to their detriment.

And when the fury of the fire was spent the multitudes were wild to see the man who could control the fire, and Jesus said, Man was not made for fire, but fire was made for man. When man comes to himself and comprehends the fact that he is son of God, and knows that in himself lies all the powers of God, he is a master mind and all the elements will hear his voice and gladly do his will. (Aquarian Gospel 92:9-11)

Everything that exists has a single purpose: the evolution of sentient beings. This includes even perilous elements such as fire. When we realize this there is nothing that cannot be mastered—not by the mere wishing or believing, but by the cultivation of our innate divine consciousness.

Two sturdy asses bind the will of man; their names are Fear and Unbelief. When these are caught and turned aside, the will of man will know no bounds; then man has but to speak and it is done. (Aquarian Gospel 92:12)

Humans can be asinine in many ways. Fear and unbelief paralyze our intellect and our will. Unbelief is the worst because at least Fear acknowledges realities. Max Heindel, the great Rosicrucian writer, says in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* that unbelief is the most negative state of which the human being is capable. He considers it the greatest evil that can grip a person. Both have the same effect: nothing is possible. The human being will never move forward as long as they are present in his heart and mind. They cannot be tamed or transmuted, they are to be laid hold of and cast out utterly. Then unlimited potential can become unlimited actualization. Jesus does not mean ordinary “speaking” is needed, but the Word spoken from the depths of illumined consciousness.

And then the guests returned and sat about the board. A little child came in and stood by Jesus’ side. She laid her hand on Jesus’ arm and said, Please, Master Jesus, hear! my father is a drunken man; my mother toils from morn till night and when she brings her wages home my father snatches them away and squanders every cent for drink, and mother and us little ones are hungry

all the night. Please, Master Jesus, come with me and touch my father's heart. He is so good and kind when he is just himself; I know it is the wine that makes another man of him. (Aquarian Gospel 92:13-15)

One of the greatest evils in the world is the use of alcohol. It truly is a soul killer. There is no aspect of a human being that it does not attack and ultimately destroy. See *The Four Soul Killers*.

And Jesus went out with the child; he found the wretched home; he spoke in kindness to the mother and the little ones, and then upon a bed of straw he found the drunken man. He took him by the hand and raised him up and said, My brother, man, made in the image of our Father-God, will you arise and come with me? Your neighbors are in sore distress; they have lost all they had in this fierce fire, and men must build their homes again and you and I must lead the way. (Aquarian Gospel 92:16-18)

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:39). We think of this as a high ideal, a kind of noble aspiration, but in this incident we are shown that it is really therapeutic. Selfishness and self-pity compound our problems and sink us deeper into darkness and hopelessness. But if we will turn our attention away from "us" and outward to those we can benefit, these two monsters can no longer grip us. Further, the merit (good karma) we create for ourselves will ensure a better future condition for us. So we help both others and ourself.

Jesus showed trust and confidence to a man that doubtless had long ago abandoned any trust and confidence in himself, being caught in the despair of alcoholic slavery. We cannot even imagine what the man's feelings were when the famous teacher and healer, Jesus, wanted him to be a co-worker with him in helping others.

And then the man arose; the two went arm in arm to view the wrecks. They heard the mothers and the children crying in the streets; they saw their wretchedness. And Jesus said, My friend, here is work for you to do. Just lead the way in helpfulness; I'm sure the men of Bethany will furnish you the means and help.

The spark of hope that so long had been smoldering in the man was fanned into a flame. He threw his ragged coat aside; he was himself again. And then he called for help; not for himself, but for the homeless ones; and everybody helped. The ruined homes were built again. (Aquarian Gospel 92:19-23)

Such power is always sleeping in each one of us. It only needs to be roused, and self-forgetfulness in mercy is one of the best ways to do so.

And then he saw his own poor den; his heart was stirred into its depths. The pride of manhood filled his soul; he said, This wretched den shall be a home. He worked as he had never wrought before, and everybody helped.

And in a little while the den became a home indeed; the flowers of love bloomed everywhere. The mother and the little ones were filled with joy; the father never drank again. A man was saved, and no one ever said a word about neglect or drunkenness, nor urged him to reform. (Aquarian Gospel 92:24-28)

This is extremely important. It is not enough to resolve: "I will not lie." We must resolve: "I will speak the truth." If all we think about are the things we should not do, even if we succeed we will just be a bundle of "don'ts." Rather, we must think of what we should do, the things that are opposite of the wrongs to be avoided. We will not just succeed in shedding the wrong, but more importantly we will fill our life with goodness.

I grew up in religion that thought virtue consisted in not doing wrong. Many people I knew were spiritual mediocrities that never did wrong, but did very little that was right. Consequently they were useless to both themselves and others. Making no progress, they were stagnant like the man in the following parable.

"The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the 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 in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth 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 unto him, Well done, thou 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. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other 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 which had received the 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: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

"His lord answered and said unto 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 mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him" (Matthew 25:14-28).

Chapter Ninety-Three

Another Sabbath day had come and Jesus and the twelve walked through a field of ripened wheat. And they were hungry and they took the heads of wheat and in their hands threshed out the grain and ate. Among the men who followed them were Pharisees of strictest sect, and when they saw the twelve thresh out the wheat and eat, they said to Jesus, Sir, why do the twelve do that which is not lawful on the Sabbath day?

And Jesus said, Have you not heard what David did when he and those who followed him had need of food? How he went to the house of God and from the table in the Holy Place took of the presence bread and ate, and gave to those who followed him? I tell you, men, the needs of man are higher than the law of rites. And in our sacred books we read how priests profane the Sabbath day in many ways while they are serving in the Holy Place, and still are free from guilt. (Aquarian Gospel 93:1-8)

It is only natural, and even inevitable, that those who focus their attention on external things will adopt a religion with the same focus. Such people usually have very few if any true beliefs, but rather are interested in the material aspects of the religion and rules of external behavior. For example, they will quite happily cultivate defilement of mind, but be obsessed with ceremonial purity. Such people, being merely physical, practically speaking (Origen called them “somas”—bodies), will interpret everything in material terms and will on occasion be incredibly insistent on extremely minor things.

Jesus was faced with these people all the time, and here he encounters them among those who were following him—not in mind, but physically. Such people are always watching for lapses and transgressions in the externals that are the only righteousness they are aware of. The more external their involvement, the more fervent and even rabid is their reaction to transgressions of what they think are spiritual principles.

The Sabbath day was made for man; man was not made to fit the Sabbath day. The man is son of God and under the eternal law of right, which is the highest law, he may annul the statute laws. The law of sacrifice is but the law of man, and in our law we read that God desires mercy first; and mercy stands above all statute laws.

“The son of man is Lord of every law. Did not a prophet sum the duties of the man when in the book he wrote: In mercy follow justice and walk humbly with your God?. (Aquarian Gospel 93:9-12)

True religion is not for God’s benefit or glory, but for the purification and upliftment of humanity. Therefore that which elevates us is godly and necessary, and that which does not elevate, or even degrades us, is ungodly and to be shunned.

Religion is not about pleasing or placating God, for that implies a lack on his part. Rather, it is about our healing and restoration to the divine image inherent in each one of us. Only when approached in this way will religion be a benefit to mankind and not the curse that so many religions have become. As Jesus indicates in this last verse: the purpose of religion is communion, and ultimately union, with God.

Then Jesus and the twelve returned to Galilee, and on the day before the Sabbath day they reached the home of Jesus in Capernaum. And on the Sabbath day they went up to the synagogue. The multitudes were there and Jesus taught.

Among the worshippers was one, a man who had a withered hand. The scribes and Pharisees observed that Jesus saw the man, and then they said, What will he do? Will he attempt to heal upon the Sabbath day?

And Jesus knew their thoughts and he called to the man who had the withered hand and said, Arise, stand forth before these men. And Jesus said, You scribes and Pharisees, speak out and answer me: Is it a crime to save a life upon the Sabbath day? If you had sheep and one of them fell in a pit upon the Sabbath day would you do wrong to take it out? Or would it please your God to let it suffer in the mire until another day? But his accusers held their peace. (Aquarian Gospel 93:13-21)

We need to occasionally ask ourselves: Do I belong to and serve God, or do I belong to and serve a religion? Am I a good member of a religion or a consciously living and growing son of God? Here we see the difference between Jesus who is living in, and as, God, and those that are servants of their own spiritual narcissism.

The true and the false

And then he said to them, Are sheep of greater value than a man? The law of God is written on the rock of Right; and Justice wrote the law, and Mercy was the pen.

And then he said, Man, raise your hand and stretch it forth. He raised his hand; it was restored. (Aquarian Gospel 93:22-24)

Nothing is more valuable than a conscious, living being. Any religious, philosophical, social or political system that puts anything whatsoever, including itself, above a single conscious being is evil and should certainly be avoided and even opposed if need be.

The Law of God is not a book or document, but the Truth (Satya) and Right (Ritam) that is the fabric of the creation itself, for it, too, is made in the image of God. We look to reality, not a card-house of ideas thought up by human beings. God alone inscribes the Law. If human laws are in accord with the universal Law, that is good, but if they conflict with it, then they are bad. Right, Justice and Mercy are the three aspects of Divine Law, and we should order our lives according to those qualities. That law is the true knowledge, the true science. All else is speculation, and usually harmful or foolish.

The Pharisees were filled with rage. They called in secret council the Herodians, and they began to plot and plan how they might bring about his death. They were afraid to publicly accuse, because the multitudes stood forth in his defense.

And Jesus and the twelve went down and walked beside the sea, and many people followed them. (Aquarian Gospel 93:25-27)

Just see this! The Pharisees were not only unwilling to help an afflicted human being, they wanted to kill his healer. Hatred was their response to mercy. Evil people are always cowards unless they have numbers, money or political authority on their side. So they plot their evil in secret, even cooperating with those they hate so they can harm those they hate even more. (The Pharisees loathed the Herodians, but joined with them to harm Jesus.) Such people try to keep the truth from being known about their intentions and ways. Things have not changed. Just look at the contemporary political scene around the world and see what thuggery and hypocrisy is going on behind closed doors until exposed. And then they just regroup and keep right on.

In contrast, the righteous do not fear their enemies, but keep on doing that which is right and teaching others to do the same. Good lives in the light and evil lives in the dark. That is why Jesus said to his accusers: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple; and in secret have I said nothing" (John 18:20).

Chapter Ninety-Four

Next morning ere the sun had risen Jesus and the twelve went to a mountain near the sea to pray; and Jesus taught the twelve disciples how to pray. He said, Prayer is the deep communion of the soul with God. (Aquarian Gospel 94:1, 2)

This is a major principle of the Aquarian Gospel, and is indicated other other places, as well. Prayer in its highest form is not ceremony or words, but direct communication with God, finite being with Infinite Being. This is a transcendental state and not to be equated with anything in ordinary experience. Nor is it experienced through our normal faculties. Prayer, then, is the path to God. In other words, it is yoga: meditation.

The lesser forms of prayer are not to be disdained, but should be understood as only helps to the attainment of real prayer.

So when you pray do not deceive yourselves as do the hypocrites who love to stand upon the streets and in the synagogues and pour out many words to please the ears of men. And they adorn themselves with pious airs that they may have the praise of men. They seek the praise of men and their reward is sure. (Aquarian Gospel 94:3-4)

One of the problems of public religious exercises is their tendency to turn into crowd-pleasing and theater. I well remember when the Catholic Church was gearing up to commit spiritual suicide (mission accomplished!). There was an avalanche of talk about how the Mass had to be geared for the “needs” of “modern man” and thereby become “meaningful.” “Man” became the center of the (Novus Ordo) Mass and proved the statement of Saint Paul that “by man came death” (I Corinthians 15:21).

But when you pray, go to the closet of your soul; close all the doors, and in the holy silence, pray. You need not speak a multitude of words, nor yet repeat the words again and then again, as heathen do. (Aquarian Gospel 94:5, 6)

Although it is lengthy, I think it would be profitable for us to again look at the part of the fortieth chapter of the Aquarian Gospel which deals in detail with this subject of the Divine Silence that is true prayer.

“Jesus said, There is a Silence where the soul may meet its God, and there the fount of wisdom is, and all who enter are immersed in light, and filled with wisdom, love and power.

“The Silence is not circumscribed; is not a place closed in with wall, or rocky steeps, nor guarded by the sword of man. Men carry with them all the time the secret place where they might meet their God. It matters not where men abide, on

mountain top, in deepest vale, in marts of trade, or in the quiet home; they may at once, at any time, fling wide the door, and find the Silence, find the house of God; it is within the soul.

“One may not be so much disturbed by noise of business, and the words and thoughts of men if he goes all alone into the valley or the mountain pass. And when life’s heavy load is pressing hard, it is far better to go out and seek a quiet place to pray and meditate.

“The Silence is the kingdom of the soul, which is not seen by human eyes. When in the Silence, phantom forms may flit before the mind; but they are all subservient to the will; the master soul may speak and they are gone.

“If you would find this Silence of the soul you must yourself prepare the way. None but the pure in heart may enter here. And you must lay aside all tenseness of the mind, all business cares, all fears, all doubts and troubled thoughts. Your human will must be absorbed by the divine; then you will come into a consciousness of holiness.

“You are in the Holy Place, and you will see upon a living shrine the candle of the Lord aflame. And when you see it burning there, look deep into the temple of your brain, and you will see it all aglow. In every part, from head to foot, are candles all in place, just waiting to be lighted by the flaming torch of love. And when you see the candles all aflame, just look, and you will see, with eyes of soul, the waters of the fount of wisdom rushing on; and you may drink, and there abide.

“And then the curtains part, and you are in the Holiest of All, where rests the Ark of God, whose covering is the Mercy Seat. Fear not to lift the sacred board; the Tables of the Law are in the Ark concealed. Take them and read them well; for they contain all precepts and commands that men will ever need. And in the Ark, the magic wand of prophecy lies waiting for your hand; it is the key to all the hidden meanings of the present, future, past.

“And then, behold the manna there, the hidden bread of life; and he who eats shall never die. The cherubim have guarded well for every soul this treasure box, and whosoever will may enter in and find his own. (Aquarian Gospel 40:3-24).

Just say, Our Father-God who art in heaven; holy is thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us this day our needed bread; help us forget the debts that other people owe to us, that all our debts may be discharged. And shield us from the tempter’s snares that are too great for us to bear; and when they come, give us the strength to overcome. (Aquarian Gospel 94:7-11)

The meaning of this is extremely clear, and expresses a perspective far more comprehensible than that of ordinary explanations of the traditional form of the Lord’s Prayer. The last part is especially practical, for there is no doubt that temptations will arise all along the path of our life, since a totally placid existence is impossible in this world. Rather than seeking to avoid the testings (for that is what “temptations” mean), we should strive to strengthen ourselves so that when they

do come we can overcome them and be stronger than before. From what has gone before in this chapter, it is obvious that we need to continually draw on our inner, spiritual resources that are opened and cultivated by the practice of meditation.

If you would be discharged from all the debts you owe to God and man, the debts you have incurred by willfully transgressing law, You must pass by the debts of every man; for as you deal with other men your God will deal with you. (Aquarian Gospel 94:12, 13)

Ego makes this very hard to do, which is another reason to practice meditation, for that alone gives us the sensible, practical perspective on our life. What Jesus sets forth is not some high and noble idea, but just the simple facts of the law of karma, of action and reaction. We mirror God and God mirrors us. That is the way things work. There is no way around it.

And when you fast you may not advertise the deed. When fast the hypocrites they paint their faces, look demure, assume a pious pose, that they may seem to men to fast. (Aquarian Gospel 94:14, 15)

This applies to all spiritual practice. Ostentatious religiosity is a mark of the worst type of person. Sri Ramakrishna said: "A devotee who possesses [true devotion] meditates on God in absolute secret, perhaps inside his mosquito net. Others think he is asleep. Since he is late in getting up, they think perhaps he has not slept well during the night." "Devotees meditate in a secluded corner or in a forest, or withdraw into the mind." Yogananda told of meeting a great American saint that no one guessed was even interested in spiritual life. One of the greatest Indian saints I met was actually considered worldly and thoroughly unspiritual. Religious people often shook their heads when speaking of him, commenting on how sad it was that he had not maintained the spiritual ways of his family. (His great-grandfather was a renowned yogi, as were his grandfather and father.) But he was a supreme yogi with many secret disciples who, like him, appeared to be completely uninterested in spiritual life. The life of the spirit is a hidden life, just as God is hidden from the world.

A fast is deed of soul, and like a prayer, it is a function of the silence of the soul. God never passes by unnoticed any prayer, or fast. He walks within the silence, and his benedictions rest on every effort of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 94:16-17)

Again, this is true of all spiritual practices. "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:6).

Deception is hypocrisy, and you shall not assume to be what you are not. You may not clothe yourselves in special garb to advertise your piety, nor yet assume the tone of voice that men conceive to be a holy voice. (Aquarian Gospel 94:18, 19)

Indeed so, but what if the person is so deluded as to believe that he is what he pretends to be? Liars often become the victims of their lies. A Methodist minister from my hometown used to speak of ministers who cultivated a “stained glass voice,” and I met a few myself. The idea here is that anything which advertises us as special and spiritual is not just egotism, but something that will make us much worse than we presently are. It really is poison. I saw a lot of this in India during my many visits, and though it was often quite funny, even hilarious, it was no less deadly.

And when you give to aid the needy ones, blow not a trumpet in the street, nor synagogue to advertise your gift. He who does alms for praise of men has his reward from men; but God regardeth not. In giving alms do not let the right hand know the secret of the left. (Aquarian Gospel 94:20-22)

This is extremely important for all who would do genuine good deeds out of a genuinely good motivation. Otherwise creeping ego will overwhelm them and they will become a mere husk-appearance of good. Jesus summed it up by saying: “Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it?” (Mark 9:50). Then he gives the safeguard in the next sentence: “Have salt in yourselves....”

Inner life is the secret of success in both outer and inner life.

Chapter Ninety-Five

Jesus and the twelve went to the mountain top. (Aquarian Gospel 95:1)

In all religions with a solar orientation, seeking expansion of consciousness and continual upward evolution, mountain tops are favorite places of worship and contemplation. In India the entire Himalayan Mountain Range is revered as the best place for yoga practice, and as the age-long dwelling-place of great Masters of the spiritual life. Although this is a historical narrative it has a great symbolic message. Not just Jesus, but his disciples as well, had to be in exalted consciousness to receive and assimilate his teachings. This is why three years of constant travel and teaching throughout Israel culminated in very little of lasting worth. The people were not evil or stupid, they just were not in the right state of consciousness to “hear” the words of Jesus. This is why yoga is so crucial. Without the development produced by yoga it is impossible to comprehend even the alphabet of spiritual life.

And Jesus said, Twelve pillars of the church, apostles of the Christ; light-bearers of the sun of life and ministers of God to men. (Aquarian Gospel 95:2)

In these words Jesus defines what an apostle really is. But if we think about it, it is also a definition of a true Christian (Christine). So we should examine them in that light, considering if this is reflected in us who claim to be his disciples.

Pillars of the church. The Church of Christ is not an external institution set up in the manner of political and economic enterprises (though many false churches certainly are), but rather is a free association of spiritual seekers who consider themselves disciples of Jesus. You cannot “join” the Church, which is a spiritual entity, but you can be incorporated into it through the Sacraments, much as a person is born into a family. Baptism, Confirmation and the Mass are rituals which produce very real and intentional changes in the Christian initiate. (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.) Participation in the Divine Life imparted through them imparts a continual infusion of the Christ Life to the initiates, for it is Jesus who operates in the Sacraments, though they are administered by human ministers. It takes a marked degree of spiritual development to maintain the life of the Church in the way Jesus intended, and very few spiritual groups have managed to do so. Jesus said: “My kingdom is not of this world” and “I am not of this world” (John 18:36; 8:23). The Church, then, cannot possibly be an earthly “kingdom” that way the Churchians want it. In the West we not only cannot accept this, we denounce it as impossible, but the three great religions of the East, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism, prove it to be very possible.

To be a pillar of the Church is to be a living influence for spiritual upliftment to the community of believers, not to be a taker but a giver, not to depend on “God’s representatives” but to be a representative of Christ oneself.

Apostles of the Christ. To be a pillar of the Church is to be a living influence for spiritual upliftment to the community of believers—not to be a taker but a giver, not to depend on “God’s representatives” but to be a representative of Christ oneself, an Apostle.

Light-bearers of the sun of life. Filled with the Divine Light through the Christ-Life, a true Christian bears that light into the world. That is why Jesus said: “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14).

Ministers of God to men. This is a ministry to which all Christians are called: not to annoy people through aggressive propagandizing, but through radiating that divine Presence. As Swami Sivananda said: Be Good, Do Good. First we must be what we should be, then we can help others do the same.

In just a little while you must go forth alone, and preach the gospel of the king, first to the Jews and then to all the world. (Aquarian Gospel 95:3)

Go forth alone. Few things are as damaging as dependency in any area of life, including the spiritual. For this reason, Swami Sivananda often told a person who had been staying with him for two or three months: “Now I have told you everything you need to know to attain liberation; so go somewhere and make something of yourself on your own.” This is real empowerment of the individual.

Therefore, having been taught carefully by Jesus, his disciples will be sent by him to help others as they have been helped. Jesus was not like one contemporary Indian guru in the West about whom a friend of mine remarked: “He has slaves, not disciples.” Rather, Jesus give them confidence in his message and his inner awakening of them, and sent them forth, saying: “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

Preach the gospel of the king. The Gospel is not about a material kingdom, a place, and certainly not about somewhere power over others is exercised. Rather it is the gospel of the King: Satchidananda Brahman. And Brahman is Infinite Reality, Infinite Consciousness, and Infinite Bliss—in other words, *our own Divine Self*. The only true gospel is the way to attain Self-realization. Everything else is empty philosophy and speculation. As God said through the prophet: “My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water” (Jeremiah 2:13). Only the search for Divine Conscious is the search for God. Everything else is emptiness and death.

First to the Jews and then to all the world. There is an order in these matters. For centuries the Hebrew people had been praying for the advent of the Messiah. Naturally they would be the first to be told when the many prophecies were fulfilled. For this reason the apostles first preached to the people of Israel and went throughout the Mediterranean world seeking out the Jews in diaspora and telling them of the promised fulfilled. Then they turned their attention to the rest of the known world, going as far as India.

The message for us is that we should first concern ourselves with those who are

prepared for the truths of the spirit, who already know of higher life and consciousness, even if only in theory. Without some background or some degree of inner awakening, it is impossible for anyone to understand, much less accept, higher truths. This fact should be the guide of those who seek to uplift others through speaking to them of the eternal verities. There is no point in wasting our time in a hopeless endeavor, no matter how noble or worthy it may appear to be.

And you shall go, not with a scourge of cords to drive; you cannot drive men to the king; but you shall go in love and helpfulness and lead the way to right and light. Go forth and say, The kingdom is at hand. (Aquarian Gospel 95:4-6)

One day I went into the business section of the small town where I was attending college. Suddenly I saw a woman marching down the walk toward me. She had a sheaf of what turned out to be fundamentalist Protestant literature. She was shoving one in each person's hand as she barked at them with a sour, hostile face: "MAKE A DECISION FOR CHRIST!!!" Two or three years later I was walking in downtown Los Angeles. I saw a man standing on a corner with a face filled with hate, yelling at the passersby about believing in Jesus. All I remember of his rant (I did not stop to listen) are the words: "...and when you are dying with cancer...." That was nobody's Good News—the literal meaning of Gospel (Evangelion).

How terrible that in the name of Jesus people try to coerce others into "accepting" His message. They promise reward and threaten punishment to force people to "believe." Few are those that lovingly and quietly open the door and leave it up to their hearers to pass through or not. And first of all having demonstrated what they teach by living it out in their lives and showing that it really works. They let people know that the kingdom is right at hand for the entering, but they leave them free to choose to enter or pass on. Otherwise only hypocrites and frightened cowards will populate their churches.

Now Levi Dowling's spiritual clairvoyance relays to us the fully accurate teaching of Jesus in what are popularly called the Beatitudes, "the Blesseds." Here we see that Jesus really was speaking of those that are *worthy*. I am sure that the word he was thinking of was the Sanskrit term *adhikari*, that occurs often in the practical spiritual texts of India. A *Brief Sanskrit Glossary* defines *adhikari* as "an eligible or qualified person; a worthy person; implying both fitness and capability." So Jesus is telling us what are the necessary spiritual qualifications for entering into and possessing the kingdom of God within. Being a purely spiritual state of being, only spiritual development enables us to attain and live in it.

Worthy are the strong in spirit; theirs the kingdom is. (Aquarian Gospel 95:7)

Our English word "virtue" comes from the Latin *virtus* which means power. Morality is not something arbitrarily demanded by a dictatorial deity, as most religions think, but rather a mode of thought and deed that empowers us. Celibacy

is a prime example. Through the years I have heard uncomprehending people speak of “sex power,” but they did not realize that *sex power expressed is by nature depletion of power*. As the Talmud says: “There is a small organ in the human body which is always hungry if one tries to satisfy it, and always satisfied if one starves it.” And Gandhi wrote: “The scientists of old have put great value upon the vital fluid and they have insisted upon its strong transmutation into the highest form of energy for the benefit of society.” Gandhi was not alone in his opinion. Plato, Leonardo daVinci, George Bernard Shaw, Sir Isaac Newton, Immanuel Kant, Ludwig von Beethoven, and Freud held—and practiced—the same principle. Those who feel the same way are therefore in the company of the great.

Freud taught that neurasthenia, a nervous disorder popularly known as “nervous breakdown,” could be caused by frequent sexual activity. Yet “Freudians” falsely claim he said the opposite. It is not commonly (and inconveniently) known, but Sigmund Freud was a strict celibate. He held the opinion, based on his personal experience and observation, that sexual activity was incompatible with the accomplishing of any great work. Since he felt that the great work of creating and establishing psychotherapy was his destiny, he told his wife that they could no longer engage in sexual relations. From the age of forty until his death Freud was absolutely celibate “in order to sublimate the libido for creative purposes,” according to his biographer Ernest Jones.

Strength of spirit is absolutely necessary for those seeking to succeed in the true alchemy of transmuting the “base metal” of human consciousness into the “gold” of Divine Consciousness. Morality and self-discipline make us strong. Therefore the yogic principles of Yama and Niyama are adopted by those who wish to succeed in the quest for union with the Divine.

Worthy are the meek; they shall possess the land. (Aquarian Gospel 95:8)

We are to be strong, but not arrogant bullies. In fact, we are not to be using any force or pressure to get others to act in accordance with our ideas. We are to be firm and clear in our thought and deed, and there is no reason why we cannot speak calmly and intelligently to others about our position. But we must not impose on anyone. If a person does not have freedom to be foolish he will not be free to be wise. I have seen this over and over in India, where moral busyboddiness is virtually unknown. Therefore real virtue can be readily found in that land. Meekness being a virtue, the meek shall actually be strong and therefore shall “possess the land” in the sense of being in total control of their life. Leaving others alone, the wise man is in perfect control of himself and cannot be coerced by others. That is his secret.

Worthy they who hunger and thirst for right; they shall be satisfied. (Aquarian Gospel 95:9)

“Right” is not just correct thinking and behavior, it is the awareness of truth on all levels and the corresponding mode of life that reflects truth at all time. This is the true wisdom (jnana) that alone liberates the mind and intellect from their

delusions. Those who both know the divine purpose and conform to it alone can be at peace and fulfilled. They alone are truly satisfied and not just drugged with illusion.

Worthy are the merciful; and mercy shall be shown to them. (Aquarian Gospel 95:10)

What we sow, that we reap. Although mercy is spoken of here we can apply the principle to anything.

Worthy they who gain the mastery of self; they have the key of power. (Aquarian Gospel 95:11)

This is a far cry from the groveling before God and whining that we are poor, miserable sinners, prone to evil by nature and nothing but dust, which Churchianity wishes to brainwash us into. Jesus is telling us that we can master every aspect of our being, and that when we do so all power will be ours to ascend to our divine destiny as heirs of the kingdom. Remember: the kingdom of God is not creation or some heavenly place, but the very *Consciousness* of God Himself. Attainment of this alone is entering the kingdom of God and becoming a Son of God.

Worthy are the pure in heart; and they shall see the king. (Aquarian Gospel 95:12)

When the inner consciousness is cleared of all shadows, all taints, then the individual sees God, because he is himself divine by nature.

Worthy they who are maligned and wronged because they do the right; their persecutors they shall bless. (Aquarian Gospel 95:13)

Going against the current of “the world” is sure to bring about slander and even persecution by those who live in and for the dark. There is no way to placate those inimical to spiritual aspiration, because it is a matter of vibration going far deeper than mere surface actions. Jesus says that opposition from the ignorant and negative is a sign of being in the upward stream of evolution. Those who persevere in pursuing higher life and consciousness bless their opponents in two ways: they pray for and consciously bless them; and by merely thinking of those aspirants the persecutors begin to be attuned to them and start absorbing some of their positive energies. In time, even if not until a future life, they will be rescued from their negativity and also enter the upward path.

Worthy is the trustful child of faith; he shall sit in the throne of power. (Aquarian Gospel 95:14)

Jesus said: “All things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:23). And: “With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27). True faith is not mere belief or hope, but a profound intuition based on both past experience and the opening of inner awareness. This is especially true of the faithful meditator. Right

meditation cannot but unfold the yogi's inner powers and consciousness.

Be not discouraged when the world shall persecute and call you curst; but rather be exceeding glad. The prophets and the seers, and all the good of earth, have been maligned. If you are worthy of the crown of life you will be slandered, vilified and curst on earth. Rejoice when evil men shall drive you from their ways and cause your name to be a hiss and by-word in the street. (Aquarian Gospel 95:15-18)

This material universe is the lowest of all worlds. Even the astral hells are superior to it because those who are temporarily there know exactly why they are there, whereas most people have no understanding of why they are here, so they invent foolish and dangerous reasons they then live out, and ultimately harm themselves and perpetuate the cycle of ignorant births in the earth plane. Actually it takes a degree of spiritual evolution to go to hell. Most people fall asleep and come to when they are born in their next life.

Ignorant this world may be, but on the subconscious level there is great perversion and evil conditioning. Consequently those who deny the value of this world's ways, and begin cultivating the consciousness that will free them from future rebirths, set up vibrations in complete conflict with "normal" life and thought. Most people around them will not be aware of this, but a goodly number will, and they will react with shock, outrage, anger, hatred and/or malice and will actively engage in opposing those that seek a higher life. Persecution results in the degree to which the aspirant's karma leaves them open. Sometimes it is merely petty, verbal abuse, but it often goes beyond that and there are attempts to suppress them, bring some form of injury to them, and even to kill them. History bears this out. Saint Stephen, the first Christian martyr, said to the religious leaders: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52). And they killed him for saying it. Of course the pinnacle of evil was the murder of Jesus by those who not only should have known better, but *did* know better. Every religion and every nation of this earth has seen the same thing throughout their recorded history.

Unlike false religionists that promise people the "good things" of earth right now, and after death heaven, Jesus taught the truth that those who are succeeding in spiritual life will be disliked, hated and opposed to some degree. Saint Paul simply said: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). So we have to be ready for it, but we should not fear it. Even more to the point, intense meditation often dissolves our persecution karma and we live outwardly in peace most of the time, and inwardly all the time. As Jesus said to his disciples: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

In sum: when negative people dislike you, and of course accuse *you* of being negative, be glad, give thanks to God and keep right on, happy and confident. After a while you will have left them behind and be in peace.

I say, rejoice; but deal in mercy with the doers of the wrong; they are but children at their play; they know not what they do. Rejoice not over fallen foes. As you help men rise from the depth of sin, so God will help you on to greater heights. (Aquarian Gospel 95:19-20)

It is essential that we cultivate a positive attitude and response to our opponents, realizing that the divine spirit lives in them as much as in the greatest Masters. They are ignorant and self-destructive, therefore they need mercy. We should always send thoughts of love and healing to them, for in previous lives we were just like them, otherwise we would not be having “persecution karma” now. We can bless them and pray for them, and they will be helped. I have seen this in many instances, even witnessing those who hated spiritual seekers coming to love them and themselves become seekers. But it took a lot of “blood, sweat, toil and tears,” so do not expect overnight transformation, though it is possible. So sow “blessing karma” always and you will be blessed by those both beneath and above you on the evolutionary ladder.

Jesus has told us those things that make us worthy and strong in spiritual life. Now he is going to list what will make us unworthy and weak—even spiritual deadened. He is not pointing the finger and condemning, but warning us who strive upward in the spirit so we will not be hindered in our endeavor.

Woe to the rich in gold and lands; they have temptations multiform. (Aquarian Gospel 95:21)

Jesus’ grandfather, Saint Joachim, was the richest man in Israel, and after his death Saint Anna became the richest woman in Israel, and after her death Jesus’ mother became the richest woman in Israel. Jesus was not “the lowly carpenter” of popular imagination. He came from a family of wealthy saints. So why would he speak the words of this verse? He spoke from his knowledge of human nature: it is the way of human beings to get caught and possessed by possessions.

Here was Saint Joachim’s prosperity plan: Every year he calculated his present total wealth, not just profit from the previous year. He then divided it into three equal parts. One part was given to the poor and those who needed assistance. One part was given to the Essene religious centers. One part he kept for himself and his family. He did this every year, and his wealth increased yearly. This is not an impossible or cracked idea. One of my most valued spiritual friends came from a very wealthy family, but married a man who became an incorrigible alcoholic. Though without any financial experience she realized that she would have to support herself and her husband. (He had a monthly income, but spent every bit of it on alcohol.) So she started a business in the small town in which they lived. From its beginning, here was her financial plan: All gross income (not net) was divided into two equal parts. One part was God’s, and she gave it directly to religious institutions. The other part was hers, but she took out a tithe (one tenth) of that and gave it to religious organizations. The rest was for her and her husband. She did not become wealthy, mostly because she did a tremendous amount of legal work on

behalf of destitute people, including some Native American tribes that had been shamelessly cheated of their land and assets. But she did survive and never needed for anything. If I ever met a person in my life that was “blessed” in the sense of the Beatitudes it was Bobbie Edwards, and I am blessed to write this in her memory. Both Saint Joachim and my friend knew the truth: “In the hand of God is the prosperity of man” (Ecclesiasticus 10:5). But those who do not know this have nothing but anxiety and harm from whatever they have, whether much or little.

There is no end to the troubles of those who have or accumulate much and keep it for themselves. The Dead Sea is dead because water flows into it, but nothing flows out. Consequently it is so salty that nothing can live in it. So dense is the water that people who cannot swim are able float in it without danger of sinking. And when they emerge from the water they find themselves encrusted with salt. There is nothing wrong in having wealth, but holding on to it selfishly is the problem. Neither of the two people I have mentioned gave everything away, and they did not live in poverty. But they did give half to two-thirds away. If helping others in some form is not done, the minds of those with wealth become obsessed with it and become literally possessed by their possessions. Anyone who has much experience with “rich kids” know that money seems to drain any real personality away from them, leaving them vapid and void of purpose. Often if they are not obnoxious, greedy and selfish they are invisible. Their parents are often the same, but even more tangled, and it is almost a tradition that rich parents either neglect or ruin their children. They especially like to ship them away, often to expensive schools in Europe (especially Switzerland for some reason) for “problem children” so they will not have to deal with them. It is supremely tragic.

On the other hand, truly spiritual-oriented people are just the opposite, and not only are not hindered by their possessions, but make progress in things of the spirit. For example, two of Yogananda’s three most advanced male disciples were multimillionaires. One of them told me how it was his yoga practice that enabled him to make tens of millions of dollars at a time. He had just concluded a transaction that had netted him sixty million dollars, and that was incidental to his other financial successes. He was a powerful yogi, and at that time surely the most advanced yogi in America. Though a financial genius, he was a completely normal person, emanating kindness and concern for others.

In conclusion I would like to point out that “upper middle class” people often suffer in the same way because, not being wealthy, they think they need give nothing to others. This is a grave mistake.

Woe unto men who walk at will in pleasure’s paths; their ways are full of snares and dangerous pits. (Aquarian Gospel 95:22)

Saint Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle John, wrote of those who “sweetly drink in their death” through the pursuit and indulgence of pleasure. Frankly, I cannot think of where to start explaining the ultimate miseries of pleasure-seeking. When Jesus speaks of “pleasure” He is not speaking of ordinary

enjoyment, but the addiction to sensual and material experience that blinds us to higher life.

The Bhagavad Gita tells us: “Truly, pleasures born of contact with the senses are wombs of pain, since they have a beginning and an end. The wise man is not satisfied with them. He who is able to endure here on earth, before liberation from the body, the agitation that arises from desire and anger is steadfast, a happy man. He whose happiness is within, whose delight is within, whose illumination is within: that yogi, identical in being with Brahman, attains Brahmanirvana” (Bhagavad Gita 5:22-24). Of course those who are not interested in nirvana (moksha: liberation) will not find any sense in this. And as a consequence they will sow the seeds of ignorance, addiction and suffering. Then at the end of life they are just a heap of ashes with regrets and frustrating memories of that which cannot be repeated. They prove the truth of the prophet Ezekiel’s declaration: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4, 20). “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), said Saint Paul.

Now this is not a threat or condemnation of “sinners” but a stating of simple fact, a merciful warning: there are actions that dull and even kill the consciousness of a human being. As the Bhagavad Gita further says: “Evil-doers, the lowest of men, bereft of knowledge by maya, do not seek me, being attached to (existing within) a demonic mode of existence” (Bhagavad Gita 7:15). This is definitely true, though tragic. All my life I have seen people devastating their lives through the pursuit of enjoyment and “the good things of life” that like serpents only sting and kill them.

A cousin of mine lived heedlessly and indulgently, mocking religion and any idea of self-control. After some decades she wrote a pathetic letter to one of our aunts begging her to teach her how to pray, because she felt her life was fading away. Before the aunt could reply the message came that she was dead.

In the early days of television, visits from the repairman were often needed. One afternoon my father brought home an elderly man to look at our set. When he was done, he noticed the organ at one end of the room and asked my father play it for him. My father started playing a hymn, and the man, who had a history of heart attacks, stopped him and said: “You can save that for when I am ‘laid out.’” Within the week he was “laid out.” He lived and died unaware of the only reality: God.

Fortunately life is eternal, and such people will return to this world again and again until their innate spiritual consciousness will awaken. But how much suffering will be endured until then in experiences that will leave heavy scars (samskaras) in their inner minds, scars that will hinder them from that awakening. Just as scar tissue has no feeling, just so scarred minds and hearts are numb to the higher realities of the spirit. So they are subject to the “snares and pits” Jesus speaks of.

**Woe to the proud; they stand upon a precipice; destruction waits for them.
(Aquarian Gospel 95:23)**

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall,” says the book of Psalms (16:18). Few things are as self-destructive as pride. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is all about the way pride leads to utter disaster, at first seeming to gain benefit, power and security, and then crumbling into nothing. The Nazi movement is a classic example of political arrogance, as are the many empires of world history. The English poet Shelley wrote about this phenomenon in his poem “Ozymandias.”

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Those that visit the ruins of such empires and cultures fail to grasp the lesson: “Woe to the proud; they stand upon a precipice; destruction waits for them.” This is as true of individuals as of groups and nations.

Woe to the man of greed; for what he has is not his own; and lo, another comes; his wealth is gone. (Aquarian Gospel 95:24)

Greed is folly for many reasons, ego being the root, but it is also disregard of simple fact: nothing can ever be ours. For a time we may possess and control or use something, but it must eventually be lost to us, for we are spiritual beings in essence, not material, and the fact that this world is ever-changing ensures that nothing can be permanent for us. We suffer from this until we learn the real facts of life, of spirit, and cease to scramble after that which we can never have permanently and which will torment us with anxiety for its maintenance as long as we have it. Presently we must become involved with material things to some degree, but we must also right from the beginning understand their ephemeral nature and be prepared for their loss or dissolution, being grateful for the time we do have them, and making sure we do not exploit or misuse them.

Woe to the hypocrite; his form is fair to look upon; his heart is filled with carcasses and dead men’s bones. (Aquarian Gospel 95:25)

Hypocrisy is so common and so destructive and painful in its effects that I do

not think anyone in the world who has lived very long is not aware of it and loathes it—except for the hypocrites, of course. Deception and manipulation is its purpose. Surely nothing is more truly from the “father of lies” (John 8:44) than hypocrisy.

Woe to the cruel and relentless man; he is himself the victim of his deeds. The evil he would do to other men rebounds; the scourger is the scourged. (Aquarian Gospel 95:26, 27)

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matthew 26:52). The malicious and violent, the persecutor, shall find himself undergoing all he does (or attempts to do) to others. Here, as in the foregoing, we see that essentially evil is moral stupidity and folly.

Woe to the libertine who preys upon the virtues of the weak. The hour comes when he will be the weak, the victim of a libertine of greater power. (Aquarian Gospel 95:28)

Those who bamboozle the weak and foolish into carrying out their evil wishes shall in turn become slaves of those more cunning than they. Back and forth they go from being victimizer or victim. This is a terrible cycle that is hard to break, as past life recall often demonstrates. Victims are often victimizers in training, that is why they put up with such horrid treatment and abuse: they are awaiting their own turn at the torture chamber. (This is usually not conscious.) They know what they are doing. If they are not incorrigible, then our blessing and good will can work to their benefit. But we should not worry or torment ourselves over them.

Woe unto you when all the world shall speak in praise of you. The world speaks not in praise of men who live within the Holy Breath; It speaks in praise of prophets false, and of illusions base. (Aquarian Gospel 95:29)

Elsewhere in the Aquarian Gospel Jesus states there is a direct correlation between the foolishness and negativity of something and its praise and valuation by the world. When Jesus speaks of “the world” He does not mean the natural world which is a manifestation of God, but the artificial, delusive and destructive “world” of human ignorance and society in general. Saint John the Beloved Disciple wrote the following about the rift between those that are of the spirit and those that are of “the world.”

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error” (I John 4:4-6). Not “inclusive” or “non-judgmental,” but very true.

You men who walk in Holy Breath are salt, the salt of earth; but if you lose

your virtue you are salt in name alone, worth nothing more than dust. And you are light; are called to light the world. A city on a hill cannot be hid; its lights are seen afar; and while you stand upon the hills of life men see your light and imitate your works and honor God. (Aquarian Gospel 95:30-32)

This is a great calling indeed. If we will uncover our true spirit-self which is light, then we will be a light in the world. But if we offer only theology and mummery, we will be part of the world's darkness.

Men do not light a lamp and hide it in a cask; they put it on a stand that it may light the house. You are the lamps of God; must not stand in the shade of earth illusions, but in the open, high upon the stand. (Aquarian Gospel 95:33-34)

For two thousand years those that have had a wider and deeper esoteric and mystical understanding of Jesus' teachings have been told to keep quiet and not "confuse" people of lesser understanding with the truth. But the truth in its fulness was all Jesus had to offer. Buddha said that anyone who denied that he taught what he did teach or claimed that he taught something he did not teach was not his friend. It is the same with Jesus. There is not a "secret, inner" teaching in original Christianity: original Christianity itself is the public teaching of what heretofore was secret because it was unknown.

Saint Matthew declares that Jesus came "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 13:35). And Jesus himself told his disciples: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Matthew 10:27). Contemporary Christianity is mostly fabrication and mythology about both Jesus and his teachings, which is why the Aquarian Gospel is of such tremendous value. And those that would be true disciples of Jesus must openly and uncompromisingly teach the truth about Jesus and his true Gospel, both which are totally esoteric in nature.

I am not come to nullify the law, nor to destroy; but to fulfil. The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms were written in the wisdom of the Holy Breath and cannot fail. (Aquarian Gospel 95:35-36)

There is no doubt that in past ages various revelations were given which were truth, but not the whole truth. The purpose was to begin leading people toward the complete truth. Those who followed the truth they knew were given more truth to follow, and again they were given more. Jesus was the pinnacle of these various messengers. He told the entire truth of God in fulfillment, but later generations conspired to suppress his truth and substitute their own "truth" which was really falsehood. Sometimes this was done in sincere misunderstanding and ignorance, and sometimes it was done consciously and cold-bloodedly with a desire to deceive and manipulate others.

The heavens and earth that are will change and pass away; the word of God is sure; it cannot pass until it shall accomplish that where-unto it hath been sent (Aquarian Gospel 95:37)

Grains of wheat thousands of years old were discovered in ancient Egyptian tombs. When they were sown, they sprouted and grew into healthy plants. In the same way, the divine law, the divine truth, however long it languishes, will grow in vigor in the hearts of men when it is brought forth into the light of day. Truth never changes, it abides forever. The old adage is true: Truth Will Out.

Whoever disregards the law of God and teaches men to do the same, becomes a debtor unto God and cannot see his face until he has returned and paid his debt by sacrifice of life. But he who hearkens unto God and keeps his law and does his will on earth, shall rule with Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 95:38-39)

If we have denied the truth and turned others from it, we must compensate for that by dedicating our life to spreading the truth. This is the “sacrifice of life” Jesus means, not physical death, though sometimes, as in the case of martyrs, that is required. Those who keep and share the law of Christ shall reign with him, having themselves also become a Christ as did he. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Revelation 3:21).

The scribes and Pharisees regard the letter of the law; they cannot comprehend the spirit of the law; and if your righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of scribe and Pharisee you cannot come into the kingdom of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 95:40-41)

Many times people learn words or sentences in a language they do not know. So although they “speak” the language, they have no idea what they are saying. For example, when Coca-Cola was introduced into Japan, the slogan that was being used everywhere in the world was: “Coke Adds Life.” Apparently the Japanese advertising company Coca-Cola hired did not have a staff that completely understood English, because all the billboards said in Japanese: “Coke Brings Your Ancestors Back From The Dead!” Words are not enough. Understanding is required, and that understanding is fully esoteric, mystical. So the outer husk of the seed of truth is not enough; the inner life must manifest in us. Otherwise we cannot find our way into the world of the spirit and know the truth that itself is spirit. For Jesus said: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

It is not what man does that gives him right to enter through the gates; his pass word is his character and his desire is his character. The letter of the law deals with the acts of man; the spirit of the law takes note of his desires. (Aquarian Gospel 95:42, 43)

Only those who aspire to live in God, and know God and be known by him (I Corinthians 13:12), will succeed in entering the Gate of Life. For as God told Samuel: “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7). Those who seek God shall find God—nothing less. For David (Psalms 37:4) sang: “Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart”—God Himself, who told Abraham: “I am thy exceeding great reward” (Genesis 15:1).

Chapter Ninety-Six

God gave the Ten Commandments unto men; upon the mountain Moses saw the words of God; he wrote them down on solid rock; they cannot be destroyed. These Ten Commandments show the justice side of God; but now the love of God made manifest brings mercy on the wings of Holy Breath. (Aquarian Gospel 96:1, 2)

The Ten Commandments are not abrogated by Jesus, but are made new by a better and higher understanding, just as Jesus came to “fulfill” the Law by transforming our understanding of it, rather than by mere conformity to it. When Jesus appeared to “break” the Law it was only if judgment was made according to the old perspective. But when viewed in the new, truer perspective he was actually keeping it and showing us the way to do so as well.

Upon the unity of God the law was built. In all the world there is one force; Jehovah is Almighty God. Jehovah wrote upon the heavens and Moses read, I am Almighty God and you shall have no God but me. (Aquarian Gospel 96:3-5)

This commandment is not the demand of a testy autocrat, jealous of his power and therefore insecure, but a statement of absolute non-duality: *nothing exists but God*. All this multiplicity of our experience is an illusion; behind it all is the Divine Unity. In his confusion and ignorance Poe asked: “Is all that we see or seem but a dream within a dream?”

There is one force, but many phases of that force; these phases men call powers. All powers are of God; and they are manifests of God; they are Spirits of the God. (Aquarian Gospel 96:6-7)

It is certainly true that in religion sometimes the various powers or aspects of God are personalized and turned into actual individual beings, but Jesus is reminding us that in many cases these are really only the rays of the Divine Sun, extensions of God’s providence toward us. On the other hand, certain highly evolved intelligences are often assigned to preside over those “rays” and after a while become identified with them. For example, Archangel Raphael supervises the healing powers in the cosmos, but it would be a mistake to say that there is no Archangel, just divine healing power. So it works both ways, and chances are it does not matter much how we see these things, just as long as we keep on working at ascension in consciousness.

If men could seem to find another force and worship at its shrine, they would but court illusion, vain, a shadow of the One, Jehovah, God, and they who worship shadows are but shadows on the wall; for men are what they

court. (Aquarian Gospel 96:8, 9)

It cannot be denied that deluded human beings run after everything but God, and even adopt or create substitutes for God. One favorite activity is deifying some part of God's creation or power and worshipping that rather than the one and only God. Jesus says that people who are themselves illusions (shadows) worship illusions; and further that the worship of illusions increases our own illusory ideas about ourselves.

And God would have all men to be the substance, and in mercy he commanded, You shall seek no God but me. (Aquarian Gospel 96:10)

God wishes us all to come to the knowledge of him, for that is eternal life (John 17:3). But first we must come to know the reality of our spirit-self, then we can expand our consciousness to know the Infinite Spirit-Self.

"You shall seek no God but me" is not a stick to beat us into placating the ego of a cosmic dictator, but the loving and merciful warning that we will never really know anything until we know God. And certainly peace and joy can never be ours outside of God. Yes, there are shadows we call peace and joy, but they are only hints of the real things, and themselves are doomed to fade away into the opposites of peace and joy, leaving us worse off than we were before.

And finite men can never comprehend infinite things. Man cannot make an image of the Infinite in force. And when men make a God of stone or wood or clay they make an image of a shade; and they who worship at the shrine of shades are shades. So God in mercy said, You shall not carve out images of wood, or clay, or stone. Such idols are ideals, abased ideals, and men can gain no higher plane than their ideals. (Aquarian Gospel 96:11-14)

It is impossible to depict the invisible God, so any attempts must be foolish. What is missed by many who believe this is the fact that symbols of divine powers or aspects may certainly be made, as can images of holy beings such as great saints, angels, etc. Naturally, these would not be worshipped, but would certainly be kept and respected to remind those who saw them of the ones depicted, because a picture certainly is worth a thousand words. Moreover, there is a subtle connection between a depiction and the one depicted, and their spiritual presence and power can manifest through those images.

The God is Spirit, and in spirit men must worship if they would attain a consciousness of God. (Aquarian Gospel 96:15)

There is no other process of doing this than meditation. Ritual can be helpful, but true worship is in the inmost consciousness of the individual.

But man can never make a picture or an image of the Holy Breath. The name of God man may not speak with carnal lips; with Holy Breath alone can man pronounce the name. In vanity men think they know the name of God;

they speak it lightly and irreverently, and thus they are accursed. If men did know the sacred name and spoke it with unholy lips, they would not live to speak it once again. But God in mercy has not yet unveiled his name to those who cannot speak with Holy Breath. But they who speak the substitute in idle way are guilty in the sight of God, who said, You shall not take the name of God in vain. (Aquarian Gospel 96:16-22)

There is a Divine Name which is a translation into sound of the Consciousness that is God. Perhaps it might be more proper to say that the Divine Name is a sound that leads to and reveals that Consciousness. Whichever we prefer to think, that sound cannot be spoken by the speech apparatus of the human being. Rather, a verbal sound is given to the initiate, and by mentally sounding that Divine Word in the depths of his own awareness, it permutes into its inmost form and works the work of transforming the invoker's consciousness, preparing him for the Divine Vision and the Divine Union. That is all I want to say about this here, but as before I recommend the books *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham*.

The number of the Holy Breath is seven, and God holds in his hands the sevens of time. In forming worlds he rested on the seventh day, and every seventh day is set apart as Sabbath day for men. God said, The seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; remember it and keep it wholly set apart for works of holiness; that is, for works not for the selfish self, but for the universal self. Men may do work for self upon the six days of the week; but on the Sabbath of the Lord they must do naught for self. This day is consecrated unto God; but man serves God by serving man. (Aquarian Gospel 96:23-27)

Going right to the heart of this: consciousness possesses seven levels, corresponding to the seven chakras of the yoga system. The book of Revelation in the Bible speaks of these chakras in various symbols. The idea is the necessity for the human being to ascend from level to level until he reaches and is established in the highest level, the Sabbath, the Seventh Day of Eternal Rest. Then he passes beyond that into the Eighth Day of Resurrection which transcends even the Seventh. Then his union with God is complete, and nothing more remains to be done. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Revelation 3:12).

Chapter Ninety-Seven

God is not force alone; for wisdom is his counterpart. (Aquarian Gospel 97:1)

Because of our materialistic perspective we are more impressed by power (strength) than by any other quality. Further, in human society “might is right” often becomes the settled fact, power winning out over ethics and intelligence again and again. Consequently there is emphasis on God’s power in most religions, often being the sole reason given for worshipping God or heeding his revelations. It is only natural that those who seek power should assume they can find it in God, for they conceive of God as being just like themselves, only without limitation. This is why in religion we find such perversions as divine tyranny, anger, retribution, jealousy and destruction on the part of God, and the demand for placation and patronage from the obedient, faithful and fearful. But Jesus tells us that Divine Wisdom is equal to Divine Power, that all things are done in Wisdom-Truth by God, that everything God does is preceded and dictated by Wisdom. Therefore the idea that God can be angered or placated and thereby provoked to punish or reward human beings is utter blasphemy.

When cherubim instructed man in wisdom’s ways they said that wisdom is the Mother of the race, as force is Father of the race. The man who honors the almighty and omniscient God is blessed, and in the tables of the law we read, Pay homage to your Father and Mother of the race, that your days may be prolonged upon the land that they have given you. (Aquarian Gospel 97:2-4)

When human beings first appeared on the earth they were not alone, but accompanied by highly evolved intelligences who taught them the ways of human life, which included the ways of divine life and wisdom. All that is good is born from wisdom, not raw power. In fact, power must always be subordinated to wisdom. That is why Divine Order is often depicted as being feminine. Without a father there is no conception, but without a mother there is neither conception, birth or growth. So Wisdom is both the beginning and the fruition of evolution. Therefore we must honor our divine Father and Mother by elevating ourselves to the highest levels of power and knowledge. In this way we become their worthy children and live in harmony with the Divine Order.

Now Jesus is going to speak of misuse of power which results from the lack of wisdom on the part of the transgressor.

The letter of the law commands; you shall not kill; and he who kills must stand before the judgement seat. A person may desire to kill, yet if he does not kill he is not judged by law. The spirit of the law avers that he who shall desire to kill, or seeks revenge, is angry with a man without sufficient cause,

must answer to the judge. (Aquarian Gospel 97:5-7)

There are four aspects of killing in relation to the divine law.

1) The prohibition of killing is an absolute of the divine law or divine order (ritam).

2) Whoever kills will indeed come into judgment for it by means of the laws of karma, of action and reaction.

3) If a person wishes to kill but for some reason does not, he is not a murderer and is not judged to be one. For him there is no karma from killing, since no killing actually took place.

4) However, those who wish to kill, seek revenge on another, or are angry with someone without any real provocation are creating negative mental karma by their negative and destructive feelings and will. Such feelings tremendously darken and twist the mind and are a potent force of self-destruction. Those who harbor such feelings attack themselves and spiritually maim or even slay themselves.

And he who calls his brother soulless vagabond shall answer to the council of the just; and he who calls his brother a degenerate, a dog, fans into life the burning fires of hell within himself. (Aquarian Gospel 97:8-9)

Every human being is our “brother” and is so intimately linked with us on invisible levels that our brother truly is our self. Therefore if we insult or harm anyone we harm both that person and ourself. These two insults are examples of the transgression in speech that Jesus is warning us against.

Now, in the higher law we read that if your brother is aggrieved by something you have done, before you offer unto God your gifts, go forth and find your brother and be reconciled to him. It is not well to let the sun go down upon your wrath. If he will not be reconciled when you have laid aside all selfish pleas, have waived all selfish rights, you will be guiltless in the sight of God; then go and offer unto God your gifts. (Aquarian Gospel 97:10-12)

It is evident from Jesus’ words that since God is present in the heart of all people, to be estranged from another can cause a corresponding estrangement from God.

It is an absolute necessity that we do not permit ill-will to remain in our hearts for even a short time, and we must strive to never let it be retained from one day to the next. For both our sakes and those that we are in conflict with, everything must be done to resolve the situation. Even if the other person is completely in the wrong and we are blameless, still we should seek reconciliation in all humility. Often people are bound by their anger or displeasure and cannot free themselves, so the “other side” must attempt to heal the situation. Although a person should not engage in falsehood, if possible it is sometimes necessary to make apology to the person who is in the wrong, keeping in mind that perhaps we do not realize the effect our words or deeds may have had on them.

However, if the person is incorrigible and clings to his ill-will for whatever reason, if we have done our best then we are free of all blame, no longer have any responsibility for the situation, and nothing is impeding our communication with God.

If you owe aught to any man and cannot pay; or if a man shall claim a greater sum than is his due, it is not well that you dispute his claims. Resistance is the sire of anger; there is no mercy and no reason in a wrathful man. (Aquarian Gospel 97:13, 14)

These words were spoken long before the days of written, legal contracts, so they are not as compelling as they were. In these times the wise thing is to have a contract with others in all matters involving money or commitments. If, however, the situation is not clear-cut and we do not have a clear, indisputable contract, then we should be willing to go ahead and give what is demanded. In such situations we should never be adversarial if someone mistakenly or intentionally demands something not really owed to them. Instead we should give what is demanded and go on in peace. Often “standing up for our rights” gets us nowhere but deeper in the swamp.

I tell you it is better far to suffer loss than go to law, or call upon the courts of men to judge of right and wrong. (Aquarian Gospel 97:15)

At the beginning of the sixth chapter of First Corinthians, Saint Paul censures those that take a fellow Christian to the secular courts rather than appealing to the local congregation to assist in their reconciliation. But Jesus advises that no recourse should ever be made to the civil courts. However, the courts of today in modern democracies are utterly different from those of the Roman Empire, so whether this applies to us is to be considered by each person.

Nevertheless, we should at all times seek to follow the counsel of Saint Paul: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). And: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). This certainly conforms with Jesus’ later words: “Behold, I send you forth as sheep among a pack of wolves; and you must be as wise as serpents and as harmless as the doves” (122:20).

The law of carnal man would say, Eye for eye and tooth for tooth; resist encroachment on your rights. But this is not the law of God. The Holy Breath would say, Resist not him who would deprive you of your goods. He who would take your coat by force is still a brother man and you should gain his heart, which by resistance cannot be done; give him your coat and offer him still more and more; in time the man will rise above the brute; you will have saved him from himself. (Aquarian Gospel 97:16-19)

Again, this was spoken in a very different era of history. It is up to us to decide what is appropriate to our modern times when many conflicts can be decided

legally, whereas when Jesus was speaking it was a matter between two people and could involve great bitterness and even violence. The principle, though, to not push back if it is at all possible (and sensible) is always the best. Love and patience do not reform the incorrigible and we must be aware of that and judge our “adversary” accordingly.

Refuse not him who calls for help and give to him who asks to borrow aught. (Aquarian Gospel 97:20)

Again, good sense must be used here, otherwise there was no reason for Jesus to tell us to be wise, not just harmless.

And if a man shall strike you in a fitful, or an angry way, it is not well to smite him in return. Men call him coward who will not fight and thus defend his rights; but he is much the greater man who is assailed, is smitten and does not smite; who is maligned and answers not, than he who smites the smiter and reviles the one who slanders him. (Aquarian Gospel 97:21-23)

This is a very important spiritual principle, and it should not be a matter only of conduct but of attitude and disposition of heart. But notice that this is not speaking of criminal behavior, but of personal conflict of a normal social kind. It is certainly better to be wise and *thought* a fool, but there is no virtue in *being* a fool.

It has been said in olden times that man shall love his friend and hate his foe; but, lo, I say, be merciful unto your foes; bless those who slander you; do good to those who do you harm and pray for those who trample on your rights. Remember, you are children of the God who makes his sun to rise alike upon the evil and the good, who sends his rain upon the unjust and the just. (Aquarian Gospel 97:24-26)

This is the only way to be like God, who is bountiful to both the good and the bad. It is not easy to follow this, but it is part of our “high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:4).

If you do unto other men as they do unto you, you are but slaves, but followers in the way to death. But you, as children of the light, must lead the way. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. When you do good to those who have done good to you, you do no more than other men; the publicans do that. If you salute your friends and not your foes, you are like other men; the publicans have set the pace.

Be perfect as your Father-God in heaven is. (Aquarian Gospel 97:27-32)

The first paragraph is completely clear, though not as easy to practice as it is to read. The last sentence of this chapter conveys the whole idea: we must become perfect image-likenesses of God because we are a part of God and the manifestation of that truth is our only purpose for existing.

Chapter Ninety-Eight

The law forbids adultery; but in the eyes of law adultery is an overt act, the satisfaction of the sensuous self outside the marriage bonds. (Aquarian Gospel 98:1)

Jesus is going to explain that there is such a thing as adultery in the external state of marriage, because true marriage must be spiritual, not just the product of religious or civil rites. Then he will expound the nature of spiritual adultery. So he begins with the definition of adultery in the Hebrew Law.

Now, marriage in the sight of law is but a promise made by man and woman, by the sanction of a priest, to live for aye in harmony and love. No priest nor officer has power from God to bind two souls in wedded love. (Aquarian Gospel 98:2,3)

This is a very serious statement. Even a religious marriage rite is but an agreement between two human beings even if a religious official is present. If we look at the ancient documents of Christianity we will find no marriage ritual. Why is this? History tells us that unmarried converts to Christianity did not marry and that those married before becoming Christians lived together in celibacy. This was the main reason for the persecution of Christianity from the beginning. The civil authorities waged intense persecution because it is true that the family is the basic unit of a society. Abolish marriage and what do you have? “The kingdom of God,” said the early Christians, but “disintegration and destruction” said the non-Christians.

It seems strange and hard to believe that the first Christians held the belief that both those who were unmarried and those who were married should live in celibacy, yet history bears this out. But when Christianity became a state religion it was only to be expected that marriage would be declared a sacrament and the civil authorities placated and assured by this new doctrine. So in the fourth-century there was a compromise that was really a capitulation.

What is the marriage tie? Is it comprised in what a priest or officer may say? Is it the scroll on which the officer or priest has written the permission for the two to live in marriage bonds? Is it the promise of the two that they will love each other until death? Is love a passion that is subject to the will of man? Can man pick up his love, as he would pick up precious gems, and lay it down, or give it out to any one? Can love be bought and sold like sheep?

Love is the power of God that binds two souls and makes them one; there is no power on earth that can dissolve the bond. The bodies may be forced apart by man or death for just a little time; but they will meet again. (Aquarian Gospel 98:4-11)

This is an extraordinarily high ideal, and unfortunately many, if not all, would pretend that their marriage conforms to these words of Jesus. But it is almost never so. I have observed through the years that men who go on and on to me about how wonderful and special their (always absent) wife is, are really married to hellish, destructive harpies. Interestingly, I have never had a woman lie to me about her husband by making such claims. They are either completely open about their character or stolidly silent. But if pressured I have no doubt many would reluctantly lie to cover up the truth about their marriage. Having said this much, I might as well go ahead and say that marriage can be the most abusive relationship a human being can enter into. Spiritual aspirants should take this to heart and never form that bond unless they are absolutely sure it will not be to their detriment. Only those who are spiritually advanced should consider marriage, and then they must be positive that their contemplated spouse is their equal in evolution. Otherwise disaster and grief will fill their life.

Now, in this bond of God we find the marriage tie; all other unions are but bonds of straw, and they who live in them commit adultery. The same as they who satisfy their lust without the sanction of an officer or priest. (Aquarian Gospel 98:12, 13)

This is an awesomely terrible statement, but ignoring or defying it is an equally awesomely terrible mistake. I well remember meeting a very unbalanced woman and marveling at how she fitted the definition of a classical dingbat-trouble just waiting to happen. But one of the men who was also present married her in less than a month, telling one of the members of our monastery that he did so: "Because God told me to marry her." Well, God proved to be a bad matchmaker, because he divorced her in six months because she was so crazy. And I expect he went on to make another match, not just made in heaven but ordained by God. Such "bonds of straw" easily catch fire and disfigure lives.

But more than this; the man or woman who indulges lustful thoughts commits adultery. (Aquarian Gospel 98:14)

Sri Ramakrishna frequently said: "Mind is everything." That being true, negative thoughts are a form of negative action and accrue negative karma—not as much as the external acts, but negative karma, nevertheless.

Whom God has joined together man cannot part; whom man has joined together live in sin. (Aquarian Gospel 98:15)

Divinely-ordained marriage—not merely formal "sacramental" marriage—is indissoluble. All other is adultery. So says Jesus.

Upon a table of the law, the great lawgiver wrote, Thou shalt not steal. Before the eyes of law a man to steal must take a thing that can be seen with eyes of flesh, without the knowledge or consent of him to whom the thing

belongs. But, lo, I say that he who in his heart desires to possess that which is not his own, and would deprive the owner of the thing without his knowledge or consent, is in the sight of God, a thief. (Aquarian Gospel 98:16-18)

Having introduced the fact of mental karma, Jesus applied it to theft.

The things that men see not with eyes of flesh are of more worth than are the things that man can see. (Aquarian Gospel 98:19)

Anyone with a bit of spiritual awakening knows this is bedrock truth.

A man's good name is worth a thousand mines of gold, and he who says a word or does a deed that injures or defames that name has taken what is not his own, and is a thief. (Aquarian Gospel 98:20)

This is a very severe matter, indeed, and must be carefully avoided.

Upon a table of the law we also read: Thou shalt not covet anything. To covet is an all-consuming wish to have what is not right for one to have. And such a wish, within the spirit of the law, is theft. (Aquarian Gospel 98:21-23)

Now Jesus completes what he said just previously about theft.

We all should give tribute from the depths of our hearts to Levi and Eva Dowling for giving us the real teachings of Jesus in the *Aquarian Gospel*, including those on these matters. Such spiritual honesty is far more rare than it should be in the field of religion. Levi Dowling proved himself worthy of "the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

Chapter Ninety-Nine

The law has said: Thou shalt not lie; but in the eyes of law a man to lie must tell in words what is not true. Now, in the light of spirit law, deceit in any form is nothing but a lie. A man may lie by look or act; yea, even by his silence may deceive, and thus be guilty in the eyes of Holy Breath. (Aquarian Gospel 99:1-3)

It is a sad but true fact that many people like to create their own definitions of moral principles, and the more they want to cheat the narrower they make the definition. The more honest the person the broader is the definition of the principle. Jesus, being a teacher of righteousness, defines lying and other transgressions in the broadest manner. Not because he was strict, but because he had perfect understanding of the law of cause and effect and wanted to impart that understanding to us. Otherwise he would have been an unworthy teacher—something avidly desired by unworthy “seekers.”

The words of this passage need no elucidation as they are very straightforward. The only thing I would comment is that most people’s lives are themselves lies. For example, when we live like we are mortal rather than immortal, we are living a lie. The same is true when our lives hide or deny any principle of truth.

It has been said in olden times: Thou shalt not swear by thine own life. But, lo, I say, Swear not at all; not by the head, the heart, the eye, nor hand; not by the sun, the moon, nor stars; not by the name of God, nor by the name of any spirit, good or bad. You shall not swear by anything; for in an oath there is no gain. A man whose word must be propped up by oath of any kind is not trustworthy in the sight of God or man. By oath you cannot make a leaf to fall, nor turn the color of a hair. (Aquarian Gospel 99:4-9)

This, too, is extremely clear. Jesus said: “Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:37). Our words should themselves be sufficiently worthy of belief. We must strive to be trustworthy persons known to be so by others. Our very words should be a guarantee of truth. Therefore Jesus continues:

The man of worth just speaks and men know that he speaks the truth. The man who pours out many words to make men think he speaks the truth, is simply making smoke to hide a lie. (Aquarian Gospel 99:10-11)

We all know the truth of this.

And there are many men with seeming double hearts; men who would serve two masters at a time—two masters quite adverse. Men feign to worship God upon the Sabbath day and then pay court to Beelzebub on every other

day. No man can serve two masters at a time no more than he can ride two asses at a time that go in different ways. The man who feigns to worship God and Beelzebub is foe of God, a pious devil and a curse of men. (Aquarian Gospel 99:12-15)

Saint James the apostle wrote: "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. ...purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 1:8; 4:8). Nearly everyone is a schizophrenic in mind and heart. But healing is possible for those who seek it.

And men cannot lay treasures up in heaven and earth at once. Then, lo, I say, Lift up your eyes and see the safety vaults of heaven, and there deposit every gem. Where moth and rust cannot corrupt; where thieves cannot break in and steal. There are no safety vaults on earth; no place secure from moth, and rust and thieves. The treasures of the earth are but illusive things that pass away. Be not deceived; your treasures are the anchor of the soul, and where your treasures are your heart will be. (Aquarian Gospel 99:16-21)

This is why Saint Paul exhorts us to "walk in the spirit" (Galatians 5:16, 25).

Fix not your heart upon the things of earth; be anxious not about the things to eat, or drink or wear. (Aquarian Gospel 99:22)

This can only be done when our consciousness is centered in spirit rather than matter. For this there is only one way: meditation. No amount of studying or affirmation will do it. The consciousness must be purified and fixed in the Divine Reality.

God cares for those who trust in him and serve the race. (Aquarian Gospel 99:23)

This is speaking of a spontaneous awareness of God, not the acceptance of dogmatic teaching or theology about God. Furthermore, it leads to a dedication to active service of the divine in humanity.

Jesus told his disciples: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16). And Saint John the Beloved: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20). Jesus further said: "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God... and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27).

Since Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10), his disciples must do the same.

Behold the birds! They praise God in their songs; the earth is made more glorious by their ministry of joy; God keeps them in the hollow of his hand, and not a sparrow falls to earth without his care; and every one that falls shall rise again. Behold the flowers of earth! they trust in God and grow; they make

the earth resplendent with their beauty and perfume. Look at the lilies of the field, the messengers of holy love. No son of man, not even Solomon in all his excellence, was ever clothed like one of these. And yet they simply trust in God; they feed from out his hand; they lay their heads to rest upon his breast.

If God so clothes and feeds the flowers and birds that do his will, will he not feed and clothe his children when they trust in him?. (Aquarian Gospel 99:24-29)

The Dead Sea is dead because water flows into it but not out of it. In the same way those who only receive God's bounty for themselves and never give of themselves or their resources to help others as God has helped them, will become stagnate. People who are "in need" think only of their lack, not realizing that if they would share what little they have they would break through their limitations and needs.

During a visit to Hawaii I was told by a man that he knew of two elderly people on the big island that continually helped others, though themselves of small means. Some years back the volcano erupted and the lava flowed through Hilo where they lived. Everyone whose home was in the path of the lava flow fled, but they remained, even though their property was a dish shape which the lava would actually fill. When the lava reached the borders of their property, it flowed completely around it and continued on to the sea. This was the doing of the goddess Pele herself in response to their kindness and generosity.

Many such incidents have been told me throughout my life by people who either witnessed or themselves were the subject of such events.

Seek first the kingdom of the soul, the righteousness of God, the good of men, and murmur not; God will protect, and feed, and clothe. (Aquarian Gospel 99:30)

Professional religion is happy with the first two ingredients, but "the good of men" in the sense Jesus is using it is of no interest to them. People are supposed to benefit them and give them their time and money, not the other way around as Jesus meant it. Any organization or group that puts its welfare before that of an individual member is negative and therefore harmful, and that includes those of a religious nature.

Anyhow, we must tend to our own spiritual life and follow the counsel of Jesus, seeking above all the kingdom of the soul, the righteousness of God, and the good of men. And this is to be done cheerfully and gratefully, not with complaining or feeling put upon, pressured or coerced. If that is our feeling, then there are only two possible reasons: our religion is negative, not positive; or we ourselves are being negative and not positive. We need to make an honest assessment and either change ourselves or our affiliations. This is the path of spiritual success.

Chapter One Hundred

There is a rule that carnal man has made, and which he rigidly observes: Do unto other men as they do unto you. As others judge, they judge; as others give, they give. (Aquarian Gospel 100:1, 2)

There are two types of people in this world: those that live centered in material experience, immersed in the material world and its appearances and values, and those that live centered in spiritual experience, immersed in the spiritual world and its realities and values. Actually, they are the same world in essence, the difference is only in the perspective, the centering of the individual consciousness.

This being so, it is absolutely crucial for us to understand that significant and permanent external change can only be brought about by change in consciousness. Such a change is brought about most efficiently, effectively and lastingly by the practice of meditation. This is why the essence of the Bhagavad Gita is simply: "Become a yogi" (6:46). That being said, let us look at these two verses.

Those who know themselves only as physical ("carnal") beings, despite any philosophical or religious convictions to the contrary, will think and act on the premise that physical life alone is real. Such persons believe that any action opens the actor to a response from others, an "equal and opposite reaction" in keeping with material laws. On a certain level this is true, but the laws are not material but karmic, rooted in the consciousness of the actor, not just his actions.

Really what Jesus is pointing out is the error of the "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" assumption that people deserve to be treated as they treat others. According to that, it is perfectly just for human beings to pay back in kind any deed on the part of others: injure those who injure you, help those who help you. "You deserve it" is the justification. "You asked for it, so you are going to get it." Children are raised on this philosophy, so naturally society through the ages has reflected it.

In chapter ninety-seven Jesus told his disciples: "The law of carnal man would say, Eye for eye and tooth for tooth; resist encroachment on your rights. But this is not the law of God.... And if a man shall strike you in a fitful, or an angry way, it is not well to smite him in return.... Be merciful unto your foes; bless those who slander you; do good to those who do you harm and pray for those who trample on your rights.... If you do unto other men as they do unto you, you are but slaves, but followers in the way to death. But you, as children of the light, must lead the way. (Aquarian Gospel 97:16-17, 21, 25, 27-28). This is the real divine Law which those who wish to manifest their divine nature will have to follow. There is no way around it.

Now, while you walk with men as men, judge not, and you shall not be judged. For as you judge you shall be judged, and as you give it shall be given to you. If you condemn, you are condemned. (Aquarian Gospel 100:3, 4)

I had the incredible blessing of meeting Saint John Maximovitch of the Russian Orthodox Church more than once. One of his cardinal principles throughout his life was observation of Jesus' teaching given here. Consequently he was often accused of being in collaboration with dishonest people. At one time he was even taken to court based on such accusations. Finally some people figured out the situation and he was exonerated. At the same time he very clearly could tell right from wrong, and would uncompromisingly point it out to those who sought "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). But those who did not so seek he left alone. He lived in the divine kingdom right here on earth, and only those who lived in the same awareness, or sought for it, were real to him. We should not be spiritual snobs and think ourselves better than others, but many (most) people should just be ignored. They must go their way and we must go God's way, which we must make *our* way. C. S. Lewis wrote that there are two kinds of people in this world: Those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom *God* says: "Thy will be done." He has eternity to await our awakening and turning to him.

When you show mercy, men are merciful to you, and if you love in such a way that carnal man can comprehend your love, you will be well beloved. And so the wise man of this world does unto other men as he would have them do to him. (Aquarian Gospel 100:5, 6)

Again, it is a matter of spiritual karma, and I have experienced it in my own life and observed it in those of others. It is the only right and wise way to live.

The carnal man does good to other men for selfish gain, for he expects to have his blessings multiplied and then returned; he does not stop to note the end. (Aquarian Gospel 100:7)

If we simply act from selfish motives, people will act toward us from selfish motives. In other words, we will be in a contest to mutually loot one another, not to do good or help one another. So we will sink together into the mire of misfortune, blaming each other rather than ourselves. Consequently we will never get the right idea and stop the folly, at least in this life.

Man is himself the field; his deeds are seeds, and what he does to others grows apace; the harvest time is sure. Behold the yield! If he has sown the wind, he reaps the wind; if he has sown the noxious seeds of scandal, theft and hate; of sensuality and crime, the harvest is assured and he must reap what he has sown; yea, more; the seeds produce an hundred fold. (Aquarian Gospel 100:8-10)

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7, 8). Can it be put any better? I do not think so. However Jesus adds another dimension to this: "He must reap what he has sown; yea, more; the seeds produce an hundred fold." This is a sobering fact.

The fruit of righteousness and peace and love and joy can never spring from noxious seeds; the fruit is like the seed. And when you sow, sow seeds of right, because it is the right, and not in the way of trade, expecting rich rewards. (Aquarian Gospel 100:11, 12)

Jesus is returning us to the perspective he set forth in verse seven. We must do the right simply because it is the right—not because it gives good return (which it certainly does). We are neither servants nor employees with God: we are the children of God, part of Infinite Life. And that Life must be expressed here and now in this present life. That is the passing from death to life. As Buddha constantly pointed out, it is our motives and attitudes that determine the ultimate results.

The carnal man abhors the spirit law, because it takes away his liberty to live in sin; beneath its light he cannot satisfy his passions and desires. He is at enmity with him who walks in Holy Breath. The carnal man has killed the holy men of old, the prophets and the seers. And he will buffet you; will charge you falsely, scourge you and imprison you, and think he does the will of God to slay you in the streets. (Aquarian Gospel 100:13-15)

Well that is extremely clear and to the point! There is an important principle that seekers of God should know. Certainly the light of spiritual consciousness reveals the shabbiness and folly of wrongdoing and robs the miscreants of their attempts to justify themselves, but there is another fact that is a positive blessing: When the light of God, the light of our own spirit, shines in our hearts and minds we will find that passions and desires with which we formerly tantalized and titillated ourselves can no longer do so, much less satisfy us. Just as an adult is bored with and disinterested in childish toys and pastimes, in the same way we will lose all taste and interest for the lower things that once so attracted and even enslaved us. We will be indifferent to them, uninfluenced by them in any way. Freedom will be ours effortlessly once true consciousness dawns. What a blessed prospect.

However, those who are not fully “on the Lord’s side” may react differently. When they find they no longer respond to their old habits and ways, and are losing interest in them, they may panic and fear losing their identity and what they heretofore thought was life itself. I have known people who vigorously rejected spiritual life (particularly meditation) when they saw their taste for earthly addictions beginning to fade away. “It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (II Peter 2:22). “As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly” (Proverbs 26:11).

But you may not prejudice nor censure him who does you wrong. Each one has problems to be solved, and he must solve them for himself. The man who scourges you may have a load of sin to bear; but how about your own? A little

sin in one who walks in Holy Breath is greater in the sight of God than monster sins in him who never knew the way. (Aquarian Gospel 100:16-19)

This is a sobering thought. Certainly when there is conflict, karma is producing it on both sides. Our karmas draw to us those who will assist us in working it out. If it is our karma to be stolen from it will bring a thief into our life. It is so easy to complain about those who wrong us, but we ourselves draw them to us. In fact, they are helping us clear away the karmic tangles. So they are our benefactors, even if it is unintentional on their part. Everything is a manifestation of the divine plan for our purification and ultimate release from all bonds.

The last sentence is true: the brighter the light the greater the shadow, and the less sins we have the worse they are in a sense. Sri Ramakrishna said that a single spot on a perfectly clean cloth looks much worse than many spots. The purer we are the stricter we must be with ourselves. “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Luke 12:48). It is obvious that those who will succeed in their spiritual quest must revolutionize their perspective on just about everything.

How can you see the splinter in your brother’s eye while you have chunks within your own? First take the chunks from out your eye and then you may behold the splinter in your brother’s eye and help him take it out, and while your eyes are full of foreign things you cannot see the way, for you are blind, and when the blind lead forth the blind, both lose the way and fall into the slough. If you would lead the way to God you must be clear in sight, as well as pure in heart. (Aquarian Gospel 100:20-24)

This is not an exhortation to leave others alone. Rather, when we see that all of humanity is one family, and we can sincerely consider those around us to be our brothers and sisters, then the openness we feel in our hearts entitles us to at least desire to help them and even to offer help, though we should not coerce anyone at any time. We can freely share what understanding we have, always making sure that we have real understanding, true insight. Then we can help others in various practical aspects of living. In time, having purified our understanding and heart, we may even help others along the way to God, walking with them as children returning to the Father together in peace and joy.

Chapter One Hundred One

The fruitage of the tree of life is all too fine to feed the carnal mind. (Aquarian Gospel 101:1)

Jesus told Nicodemus: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). That is a very simple principle, even though professional religion not only ignores it but denies it in their fervor to make and keep converts and members. Jesus, however, came to give the truth, and therefore makes it very clear that the world is divided into those that are fleshly (carnal) and those that are spiritual. It is simply impossible for the fleshly-minded to find anything meaningful in that which is spiritual. Why? Because that which is spiritual is subtle and refined while the mind of the earthly-minded is literally made of coarse, heavy energies.

Born into Protestant Fundamentalism, from childhood I was urged to “witness for Christ” and “bring people to the Lord.” Every single person I met supposedly was a possible convert and I was responsible for their “getting saved” or not. Or so they told me, but I never believed it, intuiting that many people were simply not capable of understanding spiritual matters, much less being interested in them. Because of this I got into a lot of trouble, but I held to my insight. Many years later I became friends with a minister of the Congregationalist Church. I respected her greatly, and despite theological differences we shared common attitudes. Therefore she was quite pleased when I gave her a sign to put in her church office that read: “Never try to teach a pig to sing. It only wastes your time and annoys the pig.” Considering that Jesus referred to some people as being spiritually pigs and dogs (Matthew 7:6), it did not seem “unchristian” to either of us.

Origen often said that most people are *somas*—mere animated bodies. Saint John the apostle wrote about those religionists that are popular with the somas in contrast with those that are spiritual and therefore unpopular: “They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error” (I John 4:5-6). Jesus simply said of such people: “He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth” (John 3:31). All you have to do is read their books and listen to their sermons.

Perhaps we should consider what the mind really is. The mind, like everything else in relative existence, is a field of energies. If the mind consists of subtle and fluid energies, it moves rapidly and perceives that which is subtle. Further, it is attracted to the subtle and either indifferent to or repelled by the gross. When the mind’s energies are heavy and unrefined, it moves slowly and perceives mostly only that which is gross. Unlike the subtle mind it is attracted to the coarse and dense and either cannot perceive the subtle or finds it insipid and often offensive. The coarse mind can hate and even seek to destroy the subtle and the refined, just as the

barbarians that devastated Rome were enraged by the very sight of civilization.

There are barbarian and civilized adherents of religion, as well. Their religions are barbaric or civilized to the degree that corresponds to their intellectual barbarity or sophistication. In general the religions of the East are philosophically subtle and expressed through rich cultural means. The religions of the West are in general just the opposite: philosophically simplistic, crude, even brutish—as are their concepts of God—and culturally barren. Christianity, born in the East and transplanted to the West, is often an unfortunate amalgam of both qualities. But Jesus was purely of the East, and so was original Christianity. That is why he was killed in the West and returned to the East after his resurrection. (See *The Christ of India*.)

Just walking upright and possessing a flexible thumb is no guarantee of true humanity, only the potential for it. Many are those who choose not to exercise the option of humanity.

If you would throw a diamond to a hungry dog, lo, he would turn away, or else attack you in a rage. The incense that is sweet to God is quite offensive unto Beelzebub; the bread of heaven is but chaff to men who cannot comprehend the spirit life. (Aquarian Gospel 101:2, 3)

It has rightly been said that a common dog sees an object in three basic ways: 1) Can I eat it? 2) Can I have sex with it? 3) Can I urinate on it? That just about covers their range of response. If people of low development are confronted with spiritual religion, it seems utterly useless, stupid and unsettling. Their most positive response is to run from it, but they very often attack it with truly animal fury, feeling that they are the ones being attacked.

Saint Paul wrote: “We are unto God a sweet savour [smell] of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life” (II Corinthians 2:15, 16). In other words, to the living, righteous religion and its adherents smell like life, and to the spiritually dying they stink like the dead. Their reaction proves the truth about them, not the truth about those they are reacting to.

Bread is made of the kernel of grain, the inner part, and true religion is also inner, spiritual, in its essence. But because the dull of heart cannot perceive what is inner, they think genuine religion is nothing but external “stuff and nonsense.” Such people look at all the righteous are required to do and “give up” and reject it as life-denying, unreasonable and even destructive. They have no idea of the inner wealth to be gained in real faith and the following of Christ. In my mid-teens I talked with a close friend about the basic observances of real religion. To me our disciplines were a throwing off of the yoke of inevitable bondage and misery. But he protested: “What you are describing is like living in a prison!” The result? Within a few more years he was addicted to alcohol, drugs, and sex, and was even expelled from the very “liberal” university he was attending. And that was no easy feat! Even though he lamented to me about his chaotic, painful life, he never once considered retracing his steps and turning to the way of light. Instead he sank into the morass

until life was extinguished in his soul. Death for him will truly be a “merciful release,” but the old habits will persist in his next life, and into how many other future incarnations?

The master must be wise and feed the soul with what it can digest. If you have not the food for every man, just ask and you shall have; seek earnestly and you shall find. (Aquarian Gospel 101:4, 5)

One of the worst aspects of common religion is the “one size fits all” approach. Viewing truth as a purely mechanical, almost material thing, religionists insist that everyone must see everything in the same way and react to everything in the same way. Since they know The Only Truth, it is an affront to them to even consider taking into consideration the background, intelligence and aptitude of an individual.

As I have said, even when very young I got into trouble if I dared to suggest that some people were simply not capable of a spiritual perspective, that they were not interested in religion because it was just not part of their psychological makeup. This resulted in high indignation on the part of the “true believers.” How dare I suggest that “the Gospel” was not both clear and easy to understand by everyone—and for everyone. All they needed was to be told. Then if they did not accept it they were under the power of the devil and either needed to be prayed over (loudly) or turned from in contempt with the knowledge that everlasting hell was their only possible destiny.

But Jesus says otherwise. The worthy spiritual teacher first gauges an individual’s level of development and their spiritual capacity, and then begins to teach—if they want to be taught, but not otherwise. Sometimes it is hard to know what will be meaningful to a person, but Jesus says that if we seek understanding it will come to us.

However, true religion is never a matter of sales. Jesus is not advocating the modern practice of finding out what a person merely wants and giving it to them, tailoring the religion to suit them and make them the center rather than God. This is rampant, especially in independent, non-denominational churches that aggressively advertise themselves in order to bring in people attracted by the possibility of feeling good, feeling wanted and being continually entertained. The list of enticements is too large and too awful to recount. Just look in the newspapers and phone books to see what I mean.

Just speak the Word and knock; the door will fly ajar. (Aquarian Gospel 101:6)

This verse has two meanings, both meaningful for the qualified spiritual teacher.

The first is that if a teacher speaks the truth to a person he will find himself inspired to say the right thing. Jesus spoke of this principle when instructing his disciples about facing persecutors, saying: “Whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost” (Mark 13:11). It also applies when speaking to spiritual inquirers.

The second is that when a worthy teacher speaks to a worthy seeker or student, the hearer's heart will open to the wisdom being spoken to him and will know its truth and value. This is according to the same principle spoken by the centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant: "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Matthew 8:8). In this instance it is the soul that will receive healing through the word. As David sang: "He sent his word, and healed them" (Psalms 107:20).

Jesus guarantees our inspiration when he continues:

No one has ever asked in faith and did not have; none ever sought in vain; no one who ever knocked aright has failed to find an open door. (Aquarian Gospel 101:7) All spiritual teachers and students should keep this assurance in mind.

Blessed are the merciful," said Jesus (Matthew 5:7) Spiritual mercy is the most blessed form of mercy. So he further says: "When men shall ask you for the bread of heaven, turn not away, nor give to them the fruit of carnal trees. If one, a son, would ask you for a loaf, would you give him a stone? If he would ask you for a fish, would you give him a serpent of the dust?. (Aquarian Gospel 101:8-9)

Here, too, there are two meanings. One is that we must not give pleasing and easy words of worldly ignorance just to please someone, even though that is what we know they really want to hear. Even though they will resist and reject what we know to be the truth, we must still be honest with them and speak it. It may neither be pleasant for either us or them, but the way of the cross is never easy (Matthew 16:24).

What you would have your God give unto you, give unto men. The Measure of your worth lies in your service unto men. (Aquarian Gospel 101:10)

It is great service to speak truth; a great disservice to speak lies.

There is a way that leads unto the perfect life; few find it at a time. It is a narrow way; it lies among the rocks and pitfalls of the carnal life; but in the way there are no pitfalls and no rocks. (Aquarian Gospel 101:11-12)

There is a way that leads unto the perfect life. There is only one purpose for the Christ Life: perfection of consciousness which is perfection of spirit-being. Many lesser things are needed to accomplish this purpose, but we must not mistake them for the goal or assume they are evidence of the goal being reached. The only reliable description of perfected consciousness I have found is in the Bhagavad Gita. Throughout the Gita there are indications of the perfected state, but the main one is as follows in the second chapter.

"Arjuna said: What is the description of him who is steady of insight, of him

who is steadfast in deep meditation, of him who is steady in thought? How does he speak? How does he sit? How does he move about?

“The Holy Lord said: When he leaves behind all the desires of the mind, contented in the Self by the Self, then he is said to be steady in wisdom.

“He whose mind is not agitated in misfortunes, freed from desire for pleasures, from whom passion, fear and anger have departed, steady in thought—such a man is said to be a sage.

“He who is without desire in all situations, encountering this or that, pleasant or unpleasant, not rejoicing or disliking—his wisdom stands firm.

“And when he withdraws completely the senses from the objects of the senses, as the tortoise draws in its limbs, his wisdom is established firmly.

“Sense-objects turn away from the abstinent, yet the taste for them remains. But the taste also turns away from him who has seen the Supreme.

“The troubling senses forcibly carry away the mind of even the striving man of wisdom.

“Restraining all these senses, he should sit in yoga, intent on me. Surely, he whose senses are controlled—his consciousness stands steadfast and firm.

“For a man dwelling on the objects of the senses, attachment to them is born. From attachment desire is born. And from thwarted desire anger is born.

“From anger arises delusion; from delusion, loss of memory; from loss of memory, destruction of intelligence. From destruction of intelligence one is lost.

“However, with attraction and aversion eliminated, even though moving amongst objects of sense, by self-restraint the self-controlled attains tranquility.

“In tranquility the cessation of all sorrows is produced for him. Truly, for the tranquil-minded the buddhi immediately becomes steady.

“For the undisciplined there is no wisdom, no meditation. For him who does not meditate there is no peace or happiness.

“When the mind is led about by the wandering senses, it carries away the understanding like the wind carries away a ship on the waters.

“The intelligent, buddhic awareness of him whose senses are withdrawn from the objects of the senses on all sides will be found firmly established.

“The man of restraint is awake in what is night for all beings. That in which all beings are awake is night for the sage who truly sees.

“Like the ocean, which becomes filled yet remains unmoved and stands still as the waters enter it, he whom all desires enter and who remains unmoved attains peace—not so the man who is full of desire.

“He who abandons all desires attains peace, acts free from longing, indifferent to possessions and free from egotism.

“This is the divine state. Having attained this, he is not deluded. Fixed in it even at the time of death, he attains Brahmanirvana” (Bhagavad Gita 2:54-72).

As you can see, *the state of enlightenment is totally interior*. No one can tell whether a person has this state or not. This is very important to realize so we will not think any outer actions or words will indicate someone is enlightened. As Yogananda

used to say: “He who knows—he knows. None else knows.”

Most important is this passage from the Kena Upanishad:

“If you think that you have understood Brahman well, you know it but slightly, whether it refers to you [the individual Self] or to the gods. So then is it to be investigated by you [the pupil] [even though] I think it is known.

“I do not think that I know it well; nor do I think that I do not know it. He who among us knows it, knows it and he, too, does not know that he does not know.

“To whomsoever it is not known, to him it is known: to whomsoever it is known, he does not know. It is not understood by those who understand it; it is understood by those who do not understand it.

“When it is known through every state of cognition, it is rightly known, for [by such knowledge] one attains life eternal. Through one’s own Self one gains power and through wisdom one gains immortality.

“If here [a person] knows it, then there is truth, and if here he knows it not, there is great loss. Hence, seeing [or seeking] [the Real] in all beings, wise men become immortal on departing from this world” (Kena Upanishad 2:1-5)

The Four Aryan Truths enunciated by the Buddha were actually revolutionary at the time, especially the statement: “There is a way to end suffering.” It is not a matter of goodness or religiosity or of some higher power or intelligence doing it. It must be done by us, and there is a specific, precise step-by-step way to do it. This is why until Westerners invented the word “Buddhism” throughout Asia the teachings of Buddha were called Buddha Tao—the Way of the Buddha. Jesus, as a student of Buddhism in the Essene communities of Egypt and later in India, tells us the same truth: There is a way that leads unto the perfect life.

Few find it at a time. There is no such thing as a mass worldwide spiritual awakening, at least not one that is genuine, though “movements” Have been occurring throughout the world’s history, and that is all they have eventually amounted to: history. Of course, the word “few” is used in the context of the world’s population. For example, a million people are hardly few, but if there was a global disaster and only a million people survived that would certainly be only a few. So we need not feel pessimistic about this statement of Jesus. At the same time we have to be prepared to be numbered with the wise few, and often to be the only wise one around as far as we know.

One thing is for sure: those who wish to successfully pursue the higher life cannot have a herd mentality and want to run with the crowd. Misery may love company, but wisdom does not.

Once a bishop told me of his first exposure to esoteric sacramental Christianity. He had seen in the newspaper of a major city a notice about Sunday Mass being conducted there, so he decided to investigate. When he arrived at the address he found it was in a seedy part of town in a business district where bums slept off their previous night’s drunk in the doorways. Apparently the church met upstairs over one of the rundown businesses on the ground floor, so up he went walking over and between drunks and empty booze bottles. When he got to the top, he found a man

and two little children sweeping out a bare room, the littered hallway and then the stairs (not disturbing the derelicts, though). “The only thing that kept me there was my ego,” the bishop confided to me. “I felt that if I ran away it would put me in a bad light—at least to myself. So I stayed.”

After a bit the man unlocked a closet and brought out a curtain which he hung on one wall. Then from the same closet he wheeled out an altar which he positioned in front of the curtain. Eventually he set up a makeshift chapel. Then the four of them had Mass which included a sermon for my friend and the two children. At its conclusion the man invited him to return and then he and his children put everything back in the closet.

Down on the street the future bishop told himself that this was not for him: a man from a wealthy and well-known local family who himself was not without reputation and respect. “But again my ego intervened and I realized that if I rejected what I had just witnessed only because it was in a bad part of town and without any congregation but us three, I would be a pretty poor fellow indeed. So I came back.”

In time he became a priest and through his efforts a church was established in that town and several other leading cities, and he was made a bishop. So he well knew the meaning of Jesus’ words: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

And it usually is a little flock. Jesus was renowned throughout Israel and beyond, but at the end there were just twelve disciples at that first Mass. Those who fear to be the only ones or part of something small will not enter the kingdom, for it is entered one by one, each one alone.

It is a narrow way. It has become a cliché for some years now that nearly every religious group announces at the very offset that it is “inclusive” and “non-judgmental.” But that was, and is, not the way of Jesus. The Way is for those who want to reach the End. Those not interested need not enter. That is no more snobbish and unreasonable than to say that a bookstore is a place for people interested in books. Those wanting shoes should go elsewhere. (Some fanatics have even claimed that having a price tag on merchandise is discriminating against those who cannot afford them. I myself heard one of that ilk declaim that charging admittance to state and federal parks was discrimination.)

However the unwise and the perverse may wish it to be, the Way of Christ is wholesomely narrow, ensuring that the aspirant leaves all negative, foolish and useless things behind, paring down all that in which spirit-consciousness is not paramount and unhindered. “Wherefore..., let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1–2)—a destiny to which we should aspire, as well.

It lies among the rocks and pitfalls of the carnal life; but in the way [itself] there are no pitfalls and no rocks. The direct and purposeful wisdom of Jesus as recorded in the

Aquarian Gospel is a continual delight and inspiration. We need not go away to the mountaintops or (even more drastically) die to pursue the “the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:14). Rather, we need only keep walking through the very midst of this world which is covered with “the rocks and pitfalls” of the materially-oriented (carnal) life, but firmly walking on the narrow way which has absolutely no pitfalls or rocks. In other words, we will be walking a totally different path of life right in the very place where those not on the narrow path are stumbling, falling and wounded. The life of those seeking Christhood is utterly different from those around them. I often think of my spiritually clairvoyant and miracle-working grandmother who lived surrounded by scoundrels and ignoramuses yet walked in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6) with God, completely unknown to them. She was so different from them that she was never even mocked or persecuted by them; they could not even see her.

There is a way that leads to wretchedness and want. It is a spacious way and many walk therein. It lies among the pleasure groves of carnal life. (Aquarian Gospel 101:13)

Now *that* is inclusive! And the whole world, seemingly, crowds toward it, even fighting and competing to enter and travel it. “This is living!” they exult as they rush down the way to death. For “there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25), as they learn all too soon when it is too late—at least for this lifetime. Yogananda once said in a talk to those living in the ashram: “This life is not easy, but the way of the world is much harder.”

Wretchedness and want is the only fruit to be reaped from pursuing the broad way. Throughout the world are people having everything they want and getting more, driven on and on because in their souls they are “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17). It is easy to walk such a way, though, because it is really a falling down into increasing depths. “Pleasure groves” indeed; the irony of the wasted life.

Beware, for many claim to walk the way of life who walk the way of death. But they are false in word and deed; false prophets they. They clothe themselves in skins of sheep, while they are vicious wolves. They cannot long conceal themselves; men know them by their fruits; You cannot gather grapes from thorns, nor from the thistles, figs. The fruit is daughter of the tree and, like the parent, so the child; and every tree that bears not wholesome fruit is plucked up by the roots and cast away. (Aquarian Gospel 101:14-18)

This should be obvious. If not, there is really nothing I can say to make it comprehensible. The word “beware” means “be wary,” and this is what Jesus is counseling us in relation to every aspect of life, but especially religion (with politics coming in a close second). Basically he is saying: Keep your eyes open and your intelligence analyzing to understand the true nature of things in this world

dominated by false appearances.

Because a man prays long and loud is not a sign that he is saint. The praying men are not all in the kingdom of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 101:19)
That is certainly being proved every day, every moment.

The man who lives the holy life, who does the will of God, abides within the kingdom of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 101:20)

The holy life is the life in conformity with the divine plan of spiritual evolution, the life that reflects the truth of spirit. Those who live such a life will automatically live in spirit-consciousness.

It is interesting that Buddha had no ceremony whatsoever for aspirants becoming monks. Rather, they would assemble wearing the prescribed monastic clothing and he would simply say to them: "Come, bhikkhus, and lead the holy life." And that was that; nothing more was needed. It is a blessed thing to comprehend the essence of spiritual life.

The good man from the treasures of his heart sends blessedness and peace to all the world. The evil man sends thoughts that blight and wither hope and joy and fill the world with wretchedness and woe. Men think and act and speak out of the abundance of the heart. (Aquarian Gospel 101:21-23)

Jesus is not just speaking of leaders and influential people in society, he is speaking of every single one of us. Thought and will is a mighty force, and positive people continually radiate positive vibrations that uplift and bless the world. Negative people, despite their claims to rightness, stream forth cursing to the world. Especially they would destroy all hope and joy from the hearts of humanity. Just look at the various political systems that enslave and degrade entire nations. Especially virulent are those that have "the People's" somewhere in their title.

If we fill our hearts with divine truth and consciousness, especially through meditation, we will be benefactors of the whole world, for relative existence is a single entity appearing as many. Every one of us affects every other person on the earth. Only the most deluded sincerely say: "It is *my* life...." We are responsible for our part in the welfare of all the living of the earth.

And when the judgement hour shall come a host of men will enter pleadings for themselves and think to buy the favor of the judge with words. And they will say, Lo, we have wrought a multitude of works in the Omnic name, have we not prophesied? Have we not cured all manner of disease? Have we not cast the evil spirits out of those obsessed? And then the judge will say, I know you not. You rendered service unto God in words when in your heart you worshipped Beelzebub. The evil one may use the powers of life, and do a multitude of mighty works. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. (Aquarian Gospel 101:24-28)

Throughout our evolutionary journey there are points where the truth of things is clearly revealed to us. This often happens at points in our various lifetimes, but it always happens sometime after we leave our bodies at the time of death, except for those too unevolved to undergo it. This is the “last judgment” when the previous life is reviewed and summed up karmically. No evasion of the truth is possible. Naturally those who lied and deceived in their earthly life will try to keep on doing so. But it will not work, for the judgment will not be handed down by our “peers,” but by our own Self.

The awesomely fearsome message of these four verses is that miracles of healing and exorcism—or any kind of seemingly supernatural phenomena—count for absolutely nothing in the light of Reality. This is a primary truth and all who seek spiritual evolution must understand it. The laws governing the universe are little known to those on the human rung of the evolutionary ladder, so it is not possible to say that only good people can produce amazing or seemingly beneficial effects in the world. This is the entire subject of the book *All-Hallows’ Eve* by the esoteric Christian writer Charles Williams. In the book of Revelation we read: “I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:13-14). This is a serious reality. That is why Saint John wrote: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I John 4:1).

For some reason healers are considered especially reliable spiritually, when almost the opposite is true. Many people have bodies charged with biomagnetic energies, far more than those of normal people. They can give a kind of electric shock by their touch, and if they know how to do it they can knock people unconscious by putting their hands on their heads. (This is very popular with “holy roller” types.) By simply touching people they can convey such a powerful charge that any illness caused by depletion of energy is cured, as are physical problems stemming from toxic energies. The healer’s energies “exorcise” those energies and replace them with healthy energies. Many illnesses are a result of trauma, even if unknown, and the trauma of a huge jolt of biomagnetism can reverse the condition. Anton Mesmer frequently cured in this way. Some healers are accompanied by many spirits who are able to produce at least temporary healings. (Again, see *All-Hallows’ Eve*.) Both these types of healers are often, if not usually, privately addicted to alcohol, sex and sometimes drugs.

The basic situation is revealed in the single sentence: “You rendered service unto God in words when in your heart you worshipped Beelzebub.” It is the disposition of the heart alone that matters. Unhappily, some people “worship” evil without knowing it. But in the final judgment it will be revealed to them in the hope that they will not make that mistake in future lives. Nothing ever happens to us as punishment or condemnation, but only for our ultimate benefit.

The man who hears the words of life and does them not is like the man who builds his house upon the sand, which when the floods come on, is washed away and all is lost. But he who hears the words of life and in an honest, sincere heart receives and treasures them and lives the holy life, is like the man who builds the house upon the rock; the floods may come, the winds may blow, the storms may beat upon his house; it is not moved. Go forth and build your life upon the solid rock of truth, and all the powers of the evil one will shake it not. (Aquarian Gospel 101:29-32)

It is all a matter of doing or not doing. "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first" (Matthew 21:28-31).

And Jesus finished all his sayings on the mount and then he, with the twelve, returned unto Capernaum. (Aquarian Gospel 101:33)

Chapter One Hundred Two

The twelve apostles went with Jesus to his home, and there abode for certain days. (Aquarian Gospel 102:1)

We, too, must live with Jesus if we are truly to learn the spiritual life. How do we do that? It is simple: through meditation and japa. This involvement must extend through our entire waking life if we would effect the necessary transformation outlined by Saint Paul when he wrote: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2). "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thessalonians 4:3). "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:16).

It is possible to act on and realize this in our own life. That is why Jesus told his disciples: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). Jesus' intention is for us to be Christs, just as is he: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out...To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:12, 21).

This is Christianity: nothing less.

And Jesus told them many things about the inner life that may not now be written in a book. (Aquarian Gospel 102:2)

There are many things about interior development that cannot be comprehended until a person has gained some experience of his own through prolonged spiritual practice. Until then much will seem like nonsense or even insanity because that is how far most of us are from reality. When I was a novice yogi I heard and read many things about interior experience that I thought were complete fabrications. Then after a while I began discovering that they were precise facts. So through the ages yogis have felt it wise to either say nothing or give only obscure hints about many things.

Now, in Capernaum, there lived a man of wealth, a Roman captain of a hundred men, who loved the Jews and who had built for them a synagogue. A servant of this man was paralysed, and he was sick nigh unto death. The captain knew of Jesus and had heard that by the Sacred Word he healed the

sick, and he had faith in him. He sent a message by the elders of the Jews to Jesus, and he pled for help.

And Jesus recognized the captain's faith and went at once to heal the sick; the captain met him on the way and said to him, Lo, Lord, it is not well that you should come unto my house; I am not worthy of the presence of a man of God. I am a man of war, my life is spent with those who oftentimes take the lives of fellow men. And surely he who comes to save would be dishonored if he came beneath my roof. If you will speak the Word I know my servant will be well.

And Jesus turned and said to those who followed him, Behold the captain's faith; I have not seen such faith, no, not in Israel. Behold, the feast is spread for you; but while you doubt and wait, the alien comes in faith and takes the bread of life. Then turning to the man he said, Go on your way; according to your faith so shall it be; your servant lives.

It came to pass that at the time that Jesus spoke the Word the palsied man arose, and he was well. (Aquarian Gospel 102:3-16)

There is a remarkable Danish motion picture, *Ordet* (The Word), about the power of the Word to give health and even life. I recommend you seek it out and watch it. The original "Word" is Divine Consciousness Itself. The Roman captain understood this and believed in Jesus' power to heal with It.

It is not generally known, but historical documents show that in the early days of Christianity no one could become a Christian who had anything to do with killing. This specifically included soldiers, hunters, and sellers of meat. Considering Jesus' Essene background, that is no surprise. Notice that Jesus does not say it makes no difference, though he honors the man's faith. So those who aspire to spiritual life without being vegetarians should ponder this seriously.

Perhaps the most important point of this incident is that fact that it is inner disposition alone that really matters in our spiritual life. This Roman was an "alien" and in the eyes of most orthodox Israelites "unclean." But he had greater faith than anyone of the chosen people in the entire country. And faith is an indication of interior, intuition knowing, a sign of spiritual awakening and consciousness. So the essential thing in spiritual life is to truly be alive, capable of spiritual awareness and attainment. If we focus on that we will be assured of success.

And then the Christines went abroad to teach. And as they came to Nain, a city on the Hermon way, they saw a multitude about the gates. It was a funeral train; a widow's son was dead, and friends were bearing out the body to the tomb. It was the widow's only son, and she was wild with grief. And Jesus said to her, Weep not, I am the life; your son shall live.

And Jesus raised his hand; the bearers of the dead stood still. And Jesus touched the bier and said, Young man, return. The soul returned; the body of the dead was filled with life; the man sat up and spoke.

The people were astonished at the scene, and every one exclaimed, Praise

God. A Jewish priest stood forth and said, Behold a mighty prophet has appeared; and all the people said, Amen. (Aquarian Gospel 102:17-24)

Jesus, too, was a widow's son; but he was much more: through his realization he was the embodiment of the Living God: life itself. At his word he called back the departed spirit. We can look to him to restore to us the spirit with which we have lost contact, to make us live. That is why he told his disciples: "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

The Christines journeyed on; they taught, and healed the sick in many towns of Galilee, and then they came again unto Capernaum. (Aquarian Gospel 102:25)

True Christians are living proof of Jesus' declaration: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly [inmost being] shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38).

Chapter One Hundred Three

The home of Jesus was a school where in the early morning hours the twelve apostles and the foreign priests were taught the secret things of God. And there were present priests from China, India, and from Babylon; from Persia, Egypt and from Greece, who came to sit at Jesus' feet to learn the wisdom that he brought to men, that they might teach their people how to live the holy life.

And Jesus taught them how to teach; he told them of the trials of the way, and how to make these trials serve the race. He taught them how to live the holy life that they might conquer death; he taught them what the end of mortal life will be, when man has reached the consciousness that he and God are one.

The after midday hours were given to the multitudes who came to learn the way of life and to be healed; and many did believe and were baptized. (Aquarian Gospel 103:1-7)

The home of Jesus was a school. Because Christianity has after the first century of its existence become a vague (though sometimes dogmatic and ritualistic), meandering, hit-or-miss (usually miss) wandering about, rarely touching the things of the spirit and utterly lacking in spiritual order and method, it is assumed today that the ministry of Jesus was just the same.

So nebulous and lacking in result has the religion become, that some Christians of today do not even believe in the miracles recorded in the Gospel. Rejection of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection are staples of modern sophisticated "Christian" unbelief. And few really believe in the principles Jesus taught, because nothing they have encountered in Christianity has really worked. Ironically, "the just shall live by faith" is all they have left as a principle even though they really have little or no faith. This is why the churches are welfare centers and clearing houses, crippling along on the Social Gospel, far more akin to socialism than religion. But it was not so originally.

In the early morning hours the twelve apostles and the foreign priests were taught the secret things of God. Jesus taught systematically because the basis of his entire message was the methodology of yoga which he had learned and mastered in India. Specifically, he was a member of the Nath Yogi Order, the original yogis of India among whom Patanjali himself was numbered. Among them he was known as Isha Nath. (See *The Christ of India*.) "The secret things of God" were not secret teachings kept from everyone but the elite few, but the unknown things of God, secret only because human beings did not choose to seek them out and learn them.

And there were present priests from China, India, and from Babylon; from Persia, Egypt and from Greece. Before the apostles spread out to preach the Gospel, many sought out Jesus from distant lands. Most of them learned of Jesus when earlier he was either

living in or passing through their countries on his way to and from India. Returning home, they became the first “Christian” missionaries.

Who came to sit at Jesus’ feet to learn the wisdom that he brought to men, that they might teach their people how to live the holy life. They did not come to learn a new cosmology or a new philosophy, but rather “how to live the holy life.” “The holy life” was the term used by the Buddha for the mode of life (dharma) that led to enlightenment. Certainly, so they could understand the rationale and purpose of the holy life Jesus explained both the practical and philosophical aspects of the universe and the evolution of sentient being within it. But such ideas were secondary, only helps to understanding the heart of his teaching. The focus of everything was the holy life: the yoga life. Not only were the students of this school intending to live the holy life, they were going to teach it to others back in their homelands.

And it must not be overlooked that they were called “priests.” The true Christian priesthood is the living and teaching of the holy life. That is why Saint Peter wrote that true Christians are “lively [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (I Peter 2:5, 9). This ideal is not found in today’s Christianity is it? Called into the Light of God: into the very Being of God! This is not a priesthood of ritualism but of ascent to divine consciousness. In Revelation those who have attained this Light sing: “[Jesus Christ] hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:6). This is no mere positive thinking, but positive *being* “unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10.” “They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him” (Revelation 20:6). This is the Way of Christ.

And Jesus taught them how to teach. “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7: 28-29). Jesus taught his disciples that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matthew 12:34; Luke 6:45). That is, the vibration of our inner mind and heart is conveyed through the vibration of our voice when we speak. The consciousness of a worthy teacher is pervaded by the divine light, with insight and experience gained by spiritual experience. When such a teacher speaks that inner light is conveyed to the hearers to the degree they are receptive to it. So Jesus did not teach them clever ways of speaking, but rather how to be living embodiments of what they were teaching. Then their students would be able to also ascend to higher awareness and knowledge. When I was still in my teens I heard a minister say that people who wanted to understand a religion should not have to read books about it but only study the lives of those who professed it. When I met yogis a few years later, especially in India, I realized the truth of his words.

He told them of the trials of the way, and how to make these trials serve the race. It has

always intrigued me that of all the great teachers of the world, even though the others certainly set forth what was needed to achieve higher consciousness, Jesus alone really expounded all the struggles and trials that his followers would have to undergo. He outlined the high price that must be paid for high spiritual attainment. It is very important for spiritual aspirants to understand that difficulties and unpleasantness can be valuable steps of spiritual ascent, of great benefit to us and to others that we may later help along the way. Usually we want to avoid such things, but it is wise to greet them as welcome teachers.

He taught them how to live the holy life, for it is a life of practical methodology, discipline, sacrifice and self-purification. It is the way of self-evolution.

It is necessary *that they might conquer death*. Death must be annihilated; only then will life be ours. "Death" is not mere physical mortality, but the bondage of ignorance and the darkness of consciousness it produces. Truly, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). For "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7, 8). This is simply the law of karma which governs all levels of evolving life.

He taught them what the end of mortal life will be, when man has reached the consciousness that he and God are one. This is the Christian Gospel, not the superstition of Churchianity. Like Jesus we can come to say with full understanding and in the power of demonstration: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). And as part of that demonstration: *the after midday hours were given to the multitudes who came to learn the way of life and to be healed*. Jesus removed the disharmony of mind and body, healing and divinizing both. This is why no religion is real that does not possess the power to heal as well as impart intellectual truth. We are mind and body, and real religion purifies and corrects both. "The days of miracles are past" only for those who have no true religion.

Now, in his prison by the Bitter Sea the harbinger had heard of all the mighty works that Jesus did. His prison life was hard, and he was sore distressed, and he began to doubt. And to himself he said, I wonder if this Jesus is the Christ of whom the prophets wrote! Was I mistaken in my work? Was I, indeed, one sent from God to pave the way for him who shall redeem our people, Israel?

And then he sent some of his friends, who came to see him in his prison cell, up to Capernaum that they might learn about this man, and bring him word. The men found Jesus in his home, and said, Behold the harbinger sent us to ask, Are you the Christ? or is he yet to come?

But Jesus answered not; he simply bade the men to tarry certain days that they might see and hear. They saw him heal the sick, and cause the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see; they saw him cast the evil spirits out of those obsessed; they saw him raise the dead. They heard him preach the gospel to the poor.

Then Jesus said to them, Go on your way; return to John and tell him all that you have seen and heard; then he will know. They went their way. (Aquarian Gospel 103:8-18)

The Aquarian Gospel is unique among documents about Jesus because of its abundant and brilliant way of presenting the eternal truths that were the real teachings of Jesus. Equally remarkable is its utter practicality and its fearless presentation of the aspects of spiritual life and philosophy that we prefer to ignore. This is one instance. It is not easy to be full of faith and dedication when things have fallen into the pits, especially the cesspits. Even Jesus called out at his crucifixion: “why hast thou forsaken me?” (171:3.) And here we see that John the Baptist underwent the same agony.

His prison life was hard, and he was sore distressed, and he began to doubt. This is one of the fundamental struggles of the human being. When our outer situation is to our liking we are full of faith and confidence, but when things change and confusion, deprivation, troubles and even suffering descend upon us (or we descend into them), things can change drastically. A Catholic priest wrote a book in which he had a chapter about the difference between theology in the comfort of air conditioning in a luxurious library in a culturally rich major city and theology in one hundred and twenty degrees in the miserable heat, discomfort and deprivation of the blasted plains of north-central India (Brindaban, actually) where through a window he could see a starving beggar literally drowning in the sewage of a gutter just outside. Suddenly the Favored of God status and assurance that All Is Right With The World and that All Is The Perfect And Beneficial Will of God are not so obvious; not at all. I have experienced this myself. When the beautiful UCLA library, replica of an exquisite church in Genoa, was half a world away from the hellish heat and squalor of a Brindaban dharmashala that looked exactly like a concentration camp of Nazi Germany (not to speak of another dharmashala-oven in Kurukshetra we all called The Dachau Palace), the noble words of the ancient sages of India were not the same comfort and inspiration they had been back in that magnificent library. Sitting in the gold-cushioned comfort of an exquisite Hollywood yoga center was not the same as sitting in the dusty, dreary, bone-chilling winter damp of a primitive ashram in the Himalayan foothills in the grip of dysentery. More than one pilgrim of my acquaintance, drawn by the timeless wisdom of the Gita and Upanishads, left India in disgust and outrage, denouncing the land, the people and the philosophy. And when they got back “home” they refused to even discuss their experience. One I knew became “an agnostic,” more than one became “Christians” (two entered seminaries) and another immersed himself in studying Plato in the original Greek. All were agreed in their disillusion with India and its scriptures and sages. Others fared better, much better. India completely rendered any ghastly situations I encountered there as nothing in comparison to its Glory, no more than the shadow of a gnat’s wings in the blaze of the midday sun.

But John the Baptist did not have the advantage of being imprisoned in India. (A

friend of mine had a friend whose visa to India expired, so he was arrested. He refused to purchase a ticket to leave India and—inexplicably—was “imprisoned” at the Delhi airport. During the day he wandered around the airport accompanied by two policemen, and at night he was handcuffed to two other policemen and slept between them. He loved it! After a few months some kind of official visited him and asked him if he was unhappy about the situation. “NO!” He said, “I am in India where I want to be!” So the government gave him a permanent visa and as far as I know he is still there, free to go wherever he pleases in his true and blessed home.)

And to himself he said, I wonder if this Jesus is the Christ of whom the prophets wrote! Was I mistaken in my work? Was I, indeed, one sent from God to pave the way for him who shall redeem our people, Israel? So he began to doubt both Jesus and himself. Was it all an illusion, an assumption without basis? Were the two of them deluded as to their nature and destiny? This is a serious lesson for us. If he whom Jesus declared was greater than anyone who had yet been born on earth (Matthew 11:11; Luke 7:28) could be tormented by doubt, so might we. We must become so firmly established in the inner kingdom that nothing can shake our confidence in God and our divine destiny.

John sent some people who *found Jesus in his home, and said, Behold the harbinger sent us to ask, Are you the Christ? or is he yet to come?*

But Jesus answered not; he simply bade the men to tarry certain days that they might see and hear. This is the way of true teachers and true religion. They are themselves the proof of their validity and reality. Jesus himself said: “If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me” (John 5:31-36). Consequently: *They saw him heal the sick, and cause the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see; they saw him cast the evil spirits out of those obsessed; they saw him raise the dead. They heard him preach the gospel to the poor. Then Jesus said to them, Go on your way; return to John and tell him all that you have seen and heard; then he will know.*

The multitudes were there, and Jesus said to them, Once you were crowding Jordan’s fords; you filled the wilderness. What did you go to see? The trees of Juda, and the flowers of Heth? Or did you go to see a man in kingly garb? Or did you go to see a prophet and a seer? I tell you, men, you know not whom you saw. A prophet? Yea, and more; a messenger whom God had sent to pave the way for what you see and hear this day. Among the men of earth a greater man has never lived than John. (Aquarian Gospel 103:19-22)

I tell you, men, you know not whom you saw.... a messenger whom God had sent to pave the

way for what you see and hear this day. It is no surprise if we do not realize the spiritual status or significance of someone who is of very high evolution and purpose. After all, we have never met people like them before and we do not have the psychic scope to comprehend or “see” them. In my experience, Swami Sivananda was a veritable god upon earth. In him I saw every possible virtue developed to the maximum degree. As the years go by my reverence for him has continually grown, especially when I compare him with other renowned spiritual figures. Yet I met people who literally would say: “He is just like someone’s grandfather.” One miracle-working yogi told me that Sivananda was just “a great karma yogi.” This man could read people’s minds and cure their diseases, but he could not see the supreme power and knowledge which Sivananda possessed.

However, it often does not matter whether a person knows the spiritual stature of a highly developed individual if eventually they are helped by that great one. After all, if a Master is of no benefit to us they might just as well not be a Master, at least as far as our life is concerned. Many times people meet a true mahatma (great soul) and think they are nobody special or even maybe a fool. But after a while they come to appreciate and value them and be uplifted by them, *a messenger whom God had sent to pave the way for what you see and hear this day.*

Behold I say, This man whom Herod bound in chains and cast into a prison cell is God’s Elijah come again to earth. Elijah, who did not pass the gate of death, whose body of this flesh was changed, and he awoke in Paradise. (Aquarian Gospel 103:23, 24)

So great was John/Elijah, yet the evil, weak and foolish Herod murdered him to please an even more evil and worthless person: Herodias. He who in his previous life had worked so many astonishing miracles and was even spared undergoing death, was bound and slain by one of Israel’s worst historical figures.

Once Saint Teresa of Avila, when very ill, fell into the freezing water of a river. When she demanded of God why it had happened, God actually spoke, saying: “I always treat my friends like this.” “Well, no wonder you have so few!” she replied. So it is: to fulfill the purpose of God the holy agree to undergo tremendous suffering and injustice. Sacrifice and self-denial is an essential part of genuine love. Those who want ease and smooth sailing have no idea what spiritual life is all about.

In my early teens I attended the American Passion Play in Bloomington, Illinois, which at that time was the largest indoor stage production in the world. An important part was the singing of an unseen choir in the background at special points throughout the play. The scene of Jesus carrying the cross was overwhelming. As the actor neared the far end of the stage, the choir began softly singing:

Must Jesus bear the cross alone
And all the world go free?

As the actor half-fell and stumbled off stage, the choir suddenly swelled up and loudly sang:

No; there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me.

It was a truth I never forgot. Jesus was being neither morbid nor poetic when he said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). He was stating simple, practical fact, even though "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness" (I Corinthians 1:18).

When John came forth and preached the gospel of repentance for the cleansing of the soul, the common folks believed and were baptized. The lawyers and the Pharisees accepted not the teachings of this man; were not baptized. (Aquarian Gospel 103:25, 26)

Here we see that the "men of God" Had no use for God's messenger, much less his Messiah.

Behold, neglected opportunities will never come again. Behold, the people are unstable as the waters of the sea; they seek to be excused from righteousness. (Aquarian Gospel 103:27-28)

This is one of the saddest passages of the Aquarian Gospel, and it is tragically true.

Through the years I have been astounded at the way people think the opportunity to take up spiritual life will just lie around at hand until (and if) they decide to interest themselves in higher matters. I saw many times that everything moves in cycles, and that neglecting and ignoring spiritual possibilities always result in loss of the offered chance. I have seen a little carelessness be the end of a person's spiritual chances for the rest of their life. Like a lightning strike it was all over.

Another thing I saw was that the forces of delusion will offer an aspirant something that will conflict with their newly-begun spiritual life. If they turn from their spiritual quest to embrace the offered bribe, they will in a short time lose their new acquisition utterly. And I have never seen even one turn back and resume spiritual life. The loss is total and lifelong.

The reason is stated clearly: *Behold, the people are unstable as the waters of the sea; they seek to be excused from righteousness.* Sri Yukteswar, the guru of Paramhansa Yogananda, said: "Human conduct is ever unreliable until anchored in the Divine." But you can rely on it being unreliable! Nothing about us is assured if our consciousness is not unshakably fixed in spirit. This is an unalterable fact. This is the reason Saint John wrote that even though many people at one time came to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, he "did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and

needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man” (John 2:24-25). And he knew what was not in man, too. Therefore when dealing with people we should not be cynical, but we should be both aware and wary.

Some people are simply inimical to goodness and will reject it whatever the situation.

John came and ate no bread, and drank no wine. He lived the simplest life apart from men, and people said, he is obsessed. Another comes who eats and drinks and lives in homes like other men, and people say, he is a glutton, an inebriate, a friend of publicans and those who sin. (Aquarian Gospel 103:29-30)

This is so common I have long ago ceased to even take notice of it. If a person lives frugally they are declared fanatical and if he lives in moderate comfort he is labeled self-indulgent and materialistic. I have seen people who raved about the hypocrisy of religious people hate those that were not hypocritical even more when they met them. One time a man was holding forth on how greedy for money the churches were and how they were always taking up collections. When I told him I knew of a church that never took up a collection or asked for money, but had a little box at the back of the church with a slot in the top, he instantly said they must be fools since everything takes money to keep going. And he griped about them for a while. In the American South they say: “Dog if you touch it, and dog if you don’t.” Unless they don’t mind saying “damned” instead of “dog.”

There is no pleasing those who have decided to be displeased.

Woe unto you, you cities of the vale of Galilee, where all the mighty works of God are done! Woe to Chorazan and Bethsaida! If half the mighty works that have been done in you were done in Tyre and in Sidon they would have long ago repented of their sins, and sought the way of right. And when the judgement day shall come, lo, Tyre and Sidon will be called more worthy than will you. Because they slighted not their gifts, while you have thrown away the pearl of greatest price. (Aquarian Gospel 103:31-34)

Later Jesus will say: “Take up your cross and follow me through Christ into the path of true discipleship; this is the path that leads to life. *This way of life is called the pearl of greatest price.*” (Aquarian Gospel 142:13-14).

Woe unto you Capernaum! Behold, you are exalted now, but you shall be abased; for if the mighty works that have been done in you had but been done within the cities of the plain—of Sodom and Zeboim—they would have heard and turned to God; would not have been destroyed.

They perished in their ignorance; they had no light; but you have heard; you have the evidence. The light of life has shown above your hills and all the shores of Galilee have been ablaze with light; the glory of the Lord has shown in every street and synagogue and home; but you have spurned the light.

And, lo, I say, The judgment day will come and God will deal in greater mercy with the cities of the plains than he will deal with you. (Aquarian Gospel 103:35-40)

It is all a matter of karma; not punishment or God's displeasure. If he could be displeased he would not be God. We simply reap what we sow.

Chapter One Hundred Four

And Jesus looked upon the multitudes who pressed about for selfish gain. The men of learning and of wealth, of reputation and of power, were there; but they knew not the Christ. Their eyes were blinded by the tinsel glitter of their selfish selves; they could not see the king. And though they walked within the light, they groped about in dark—a darkness like the night of death. (Aquarian Gospel 104:1-4)

And Jesus looked upon the multitudes who pressed about for selfish gain. Nearly all human beings are fundamentally addicted to ego and materialism. Me and Mine are the real gods humanity worships. So whenever someone appears in the world who possesses supernatural powers people flock to them, clamoring for all the things that Me and Mine demand insatiably. When this happens, the besieged get a reputation for being major spiritual personalities and religious leaders. But this is total nonsense, because the crowds are not wanting anything of spirit or religion, though they are utterly willing to use God and the saints to get more of the world for their ego's use.

In India this is rampant, giving rise to the illusion of Spiritual India as contrasted with all other countries that are quite straightforwardly material. But if we visit the popular “spiritual” figures in India we find that although they truly are centered in God, the multitudes are coming to them for the same old world-binding commodities. This was my own experience. Anandamayi Ma especially was hounded day and night by Gimmes. Once several people traveled with me to India and Ma set aside an entire morning to speak with each one individually. Toward noon, when the interviews were all over, Ma came out where a lot of people were waiting. I was struck at the expression of quiet joy in Ma's eyes, a radiation more than usual. I wondered what it meant, and then realized in the same moment that it was because every person she had spoken to that morning had asked only about the realization of God and spiritual practice—nothing else. Usually Ma was asked about everything else but that, so her busy morning had been a kind of spiritual vacation for her. I could tell quite a few stories, some funny, about the mundane things people came to Ma seeking.

Sri Ramakrishna said that his throat cancer was to get rid of such people so only those interested in God would come around him. He further said that it especially kept away those that were afraid they might be asked to give money for the expenses of his treatment and lodging! Finally no one came to him except those seeking God. At the end of his life Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh stopped giving any talks at satsangs, but just told jokes and asked riddles. So the “serious seekers” after gain and advantage decided he had become senile and stopped coming around. O! what joy and blessing he bestowed on us who remained. For this reason many of God's holy ones throughout the world stay hidden, revealing themselves only to a

few whom they swear to secrecy. Once someone wrote a pamphlet denouncing Sri Ramana Maharshi as immoral and dishonest. When he saw it, he was very pleased and commented that it should be sold right outside the ashram gates so people could read it and not come in.

The men of learning and of wealth, of reputation and of power, were there; but they knew not the Christ. Their eyes were blinded by the tinselled glitter of their selfish selves; they could not see the king. Those who are big in their own eyes are not able to see others, including the holy ones of God, what to say of God himself. As Jesus said: “Verily they have their reward”—themselves (Matthew 6:2, 5, 16).

And though they walked within the light, they groped about in dark—a darkness like the night of death. What a sad picture, but as true as it is tragic. Walking in the aura of the saints, literally in the Light of God but blind in their inner eyes, such people wander around in the darkness that is death, the death of unawareness and unknowing. “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17). This is why Saint John tells us: “Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man” (John 2:23-25).

And Jesus cast his eyes to heaven and said, I thank thee, Holy One of heaven and earth, that while the light is hidden from the wise and great, it is revealed to babes. (Aquarian Gospel 104:5, 6)

In the Gospel of Saint Luke we find: “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein” (Luke 18:17). This does not mean that we are to be simple-minded and simplistic. Rather, we are to be as sensitive and intuitive as a child can be, and as open as they are, ready to accept the invisible realities and the powers that adults so pathetically deny. One of the most accomplished yogis I met in India said to me: “The devas [beings of light] are always around children up to the age of three.” If only children could have the company of such yogis to tell them, as did Jesus: “Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you” (John 12:35).

Then turning to the multitudes he said, I come to you not in the name of man, nor in a strength my own; the wisdom and the virtue that I bring to you are from above; they are the wisdom and the virtue of the God whom we adore. The words I speak are not my words; I give to you what I receive. (Aquarian Gospel 104:7-9)

The wisdom of the Masters does not come from mortal teachers, but from the higher reaches of consciousness where the divine insight comes directly to them in meditation. Those who listen to their teaching and take them to heart will have the

beginning of a subtle connection to those highest worlds occur in their own subtle bodies. If they foster this, they will begin to access those realms of higher consciousness. This is how it is possible for Masters of all ages to become our living teachers. They live in the light and we reach up to that light. This is why in Mahayana Buddhism they say that the moment a person resolves to seek higher consciousness a multitude of buddhas and bodhisattvas become aware of their resolve and come to help them. Through these great ones we receive wisdom from God. Then in time we, too, shall communicate directly with the Highest.

Come unto me all you who labor and pull heavy loads and I will give you aid. Put on the yoke of Christ with me; it does not chafe; it is an easy yoke. Together we will pull the load of life with ease; and so rejoice. (Aquarian Gospel 104:10-12)

I will give you aid. God and the Masters give us assistance, but we must put forth our will in spiritual effort. Otherwise we will not evolve or progress in our development. This is a positive fact. The egotistic and materialistic insist that God do everything for them as well as ensure that they will not reap what they have sown. Otherwise they will declare that he is “not a God of love.” Is that supposed to devastate God? Shame him into compliance? Not likely.

Put on the yoke of Christ with me. Long before we began to even conceive of spiritual life, much less live it, Jesus took up the yoke of Christ and trod the way to Christhood. He has done it successfully and so can we.

It does not chafe; it is an easy yoke. At least it is so for those who wish to walk the Way of Christ. Otherwise it is intolerable and impossible. It is all determined by the will.

Together we will pull the load of life with ease; and so rejoice. Let us join his company and win the kingdom as he did. He will be with us each step of the way. That is what discipleship is all about.

A Pharisee, whose name was Simon, made a feast, and Jesus was the honored guest. And as they sat about the board, a courtesan who had been cured of her desire to sin by what she had received and seen in Jesus’ ministry, came uninvited to the feast. She brought an alabaster box of costly balm and as the guests reclined she came to Jesus in her joy, because she had been freed from sin. Her tears fell fast, she kissed his feet, and dried them with her hair, and she anointed them with balm. And Simon thought, he did not speak aloud, This man is not a prophet or he would know the kind of woman that approaches him, and would drive her away. (Aquarian Gospel 104:13-17)

Two interesting and significant things are told us about the main figure-subject of this account: she *had been cured of her desire to sin*, and *came uninvited*.

It is a blessed thing to abhor all forms of wrong and to be resolved to never engage in any of them, but the inner desire to do wrong may remain and be a shame

and torment to the aspirant. It is much more blessed to have no desire, no attraction to wrong. The desire for wrong is a terrible and perilous spiritual disease, and as long as it remains the person is in grave danger. Most people are so immersed in actual wrongs that they only think of those things as the problem, but when they correct their outer behavior they then come face to face with the real monster of evil: the affinity and desire for wrong. Some moral cowards give in to such attraction, rationalizing that to do otherwise would be hypocritical, but the noble of heart struggle with the beast, slay it as Saint George did the dragon, and become free. This woman had been cured of the desire for evil through her own efforts and the blessing of Jesus through whom she had become a “worker together with him” (II Corinthians 6:1).

Simon was a rich and powerful Pharisee, very “righteous” indeed, yet this woman came into his house uninvited and going into the dining room anointed Jesus’ feet with her tears and fragrant ointment. This was against all convention. No man, especially a rabbi as was Jesus, would even speak with a woman in public, so think what a shock this was for Jesus to allow her action. It was supremely scandalous. But it tells us about the fervency and sincerity of her repentance and her devotion.

“One cannot be spiritual as long as one has shame or fear,” said Sri Ramakrishna. In the devotional scriptures of India shame and fear are considered two of the eight fetters of delusion which prevent someone from attaining spiritual realization. Therefore Sri Ramakrishna counseled a devotee, Sri Vijay Krishna Goswami: “Surrender yourself completely to God, and set aside all such things as fear and shame.”

Love had erased all fear and shame from the woman’s heart, as it must from ours.

But Jesus knew his thoughts, and said to him, My host, I have a word to say to you. And Simon said, Say on. And Jesus said, Sin is a monster of iniquity; it may be small; it may be large; it may be something left undone. Behold, one person leads a life of sin and is at last redeemed; another, in a careless mood, forgets to do the things he ought to do but he reforms and is forgiven. Now, which of these has merited the higher praise? And Simon said, The one who overcame the errors of a life. (Aquarian Gospel 104:18-22)

Methodius of Olympus who lived in the last part of the third century wrote a book modeled on the dialogues of Socrates. The question was: Who is the more virtuous: those who do no wrong because they are not tempted to wrong, or those who do no wrong even though they struggle against great temptation and desire to do wrong? The conclusion is that those who struggle are the most virtuous. Here we find the same principle applied: those who cleanse themselves after long years of wrongdoing merit great praise.

And Jesus said, You speak the truth. Behold this woman who has bathed

my feet with tears and dried them with her hair and covered them with balm! For years she led a life of sin, but when she heard the words of life she sought forgiveness and she found. But when I came into your house as guest you gave me not a bowl of water that I might wash my hands and feet, which every loyal Jew must do before he feasts. Now, tell me, Simon, which of these, this woman or yourself, is worthy of most praise? But Simon answered not. (Aquarian Gospel 104:23-28)

What converted the sinful woman? Hearing about the punishments of hell? Learning of the retribution reaped through karma? Wanting the rewards of heaven? Meeting a charismatic person and becoming a follower out of personal adoration? Finding a group of people that made her feel at home and part of a spiritual family? Feeling she needed some kind of direction in her life? No; even though these are the reasons most people today “get religion” and are the motives that promoters of religion work on to get members.

“Conversion” is an outdated term in contemporary religion. In the past, change of heart and life was the fundamental cause of taking up some form of spiritual life. Now, unfortunately, it is all a matter of what the seeker can get out of it on a very mundane, selfish and ego-centered level. And continuous entertainment and diverting novelty are an absolute requisite. A church that cannot put on a good show will lag far behind the megachurches whose budget for stage equipment, lighting, musical instruments and performers is more than the entire income of the churches they outdistance. People no longer are changed: they become confirmed satisfied consumers and joiners.

Jesus tells us the secret of the woman’s transformation: *she heard the words of life*. The Gospel of Christ by its eternal message of the fundamental truths of unfolding life in the spirit, of the path to becoming the sons of God and Christs, opened her intellectual understanding, but the life-giving vibration that pervaded the very voice of Jesus was the main force in her hearing the inner voice: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!” (Ephesians 5:14).

Then to the woman Jesus said, Your sins are all forgiven; your faith has saved you; go in peace. And then the guests who sat around the board, began to say within themselves, What manner of a man is this who says, Thy sins are all forgiven? (Aquarian Gospel 104:29, 30)

Jesus told her the secret as well: *Your faith has saved you*. She saved herself by intuiting that higher life was possible and searching for it. Salvation comes from within, from our essential being: the spirit at whose core God dwells eternally. “The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings.... Fly unto him alone for refuge with your whole being. By that grace you shall attain supreme peace and the eternal abode” (Bhagavad Gita 18:61-62).

Those who heard Jesus speak the words of assurance to the woman asked themselves what kind of man would tell another that their sins were forgiven. But

they never found the answer. Like Simon, their false righteousness blinded them to the saving holiness that dwelt in Jesus and in all who would follow him back to the Father-God.

Chapter One Hundred Five

There are many advantages to abandoning exoteric Christianity, especially fundamentalism. Yet there are certain aspects of fundamentalist Christianity that can be very valuable in any religion. One such aspect is the sense of spiritual urgency because of the fact that today's opportunity may be gone tomorrow never to return, that "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2). As a fundamentalist I heard several sermons on the words of Jeremiah 8:20: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," and they were all to my good. There is nothing positive about thinking that we can dawdle and fiddle around without endangering our spiritual future. That is why Saint Paul wrote: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as foolish, but as wise, *redeeming the time*" (Ephesians 5:15, 16; Colossians 4:5). The word translated "redeem" is *exagorazo* which means to turn something to our advantage, especially to our gain.

Jesus underlined the need to seize the present opportunity in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1-12). It has nothing to do with the whim and the pleasure or displeasure of a peevish God, but with the fact that the universe is always in motion and there are tides in the subtle energy levels that absolutely affect the lives of human beings. Astrology is based on this fact, and so is divination. Karma manifests according to the inner tides as well

I think most of us have thought of obtaining something but delayed, only to find out that later on it was no longer available. We had lost it. "The chance of a lifetime" is a very real possibility, not just a commercial slogan. In this chapter of the Aquarian Gospel there are two instances relating to redeeming the present time, so I have put in these words of introduction.

Now, many women who possessed much wealth, and abode in other towns of Galilee, implored that Jesus and the twelve, together with the masters from the foreign lands, would thither go and preach and heal. Among these anxious ones were Mary Magdalene, who was obsessed by seven homeless spirits of the air, which had been driven out by the Omnific Word which Jesus spoke; Susanna, who owned vast estates at Caesarea-Philippi; Johanna, wife of Chuza, one of Herod's court; and Rachel from the coast of Tyre; and others from beyond the Jordan and the sea of Galilee. (Aquarian Gospel 105:1-6)

Because of social snobbery and the supposedly picturesque character of rustic folk, through the centuries Jesus' followers have been portrayed as poor, uneducated and unimportant people: a ragtag lot. The Gospels have been interpreted as extolling poverty and personal insignificance and even oppression by the moneyed and the powerful. Having nothing, being nothing and being kicked around by society was presented as a sure sign of readiness for the teachings of

Jesus. This is silly. We have already seen that Jesus was very wealthy since his grandparents had been the richest people in all Israel and his mother had inherited everything. We have already seen that he could buy great houses in which to establish spiritual schools. And where did the money come from that enabled him to travel widely before beginning his ministry?

Jesus was no hillbilly preacher, no Jewish Will Rogers. The rich and powerful were as attracted to him as were the poor and the weak. He had come for them all. Consequently many affluent women sponsored his missionary endeavors that did not consist of a few barefoot, beggarly young men wandering about in a hit-or-miss fashion, but rather the incursion of teams of trained missionaries, many of them from other countries. Think how impressive this would be when foreign men of sophistication and prominence also traveled the roads of Galilee, spreading the universal teachings of Christ. Over and over we see that Jesus was the most renowned person in Israel and of great effect and influence. His teaching was not done off in a corner somewhere to only a few nobodies. Everyone in Israel was at least once touched by his presence.

Consider the list given here. Among them was Mary Magdalene who had been obsessed by seven wandering spirits, the type known in the Far East as “hungry ghosts,” but who had been freed by Jesus speaking the Word. She was extremely rich, as was Susanna who possessed immense estates. Political influence was here as well, for Johanna was the wife of one of Herod’s stewards (Luke 8:3). This is one of the reasons Herod knew so much about Jesus and very much wanted to meet him (Luke 23:8). Many other women of prominence subsidized the preaching of Jesus and his disciples.

And they provided ample means and three times seven men went forth. They preached the gospel of the Christ and they baptized the multitudes who made confession of their faith; they healed the sick and raised the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 105:7, 8)

This must have been impressive, for they did not just speak, they demonstrated the reality of their teachings by healing bodies and souls. A religion without healing is no religion at all.

And Jesus wrought and taught from early morn until the day had gone, and then into the night, he did not stop to eat. His friends became alarmed lest he should fail from loss of strength, and they laid hold of him and would, by force, have taken him away to a place of rest. But he rebuked them not; he said, Have you not read that God will give his angels charge concerning me? That they would hold me fast and suffer not that I should come to want?. (Aquarian Gospel 105:9-12)

Those who look after the spiritual work they are involved in will find that God and his saints and angels will look after them in turn. I have been witnessing this all my life. Those who put God first are put first by God. They will live in the

miraculous. I have experienced this myself and have met many people who did so as well. One man I knew lived continually in angelic contact and interaction. I wish he had written a book on his life with angelic helpers. As Jesus said: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

I tell you, men, while I am giving out my strength unto these anxious, waiting throngs I find myself at rest within the arms of God, whose blessed messengers bring down to me the bread of life. (Aquarian Gospel 105:13, 14)

Jesus was speaking from his own experience when he promised: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29). The angels were constantly ascending and descending upon Jesus (John 1:51) because he was doing the work of the Father. Living in the strength of the Holy Spirit, "he said unto them, I have food to eat that ye know not of" (John 4:32). The lives of saints demonstrate that those who dedicate their lives to God will always have strength and sustenance. And so will we. (See Chapter Eleven, "Two Penniless Boys in Brindaban" in *Autobiography of a Yogi*.)

There is a tide just once in human life. These people now are willing to receive the truth; their opportunity is now; our opportunity is now, and if we do not teach them while we may, the tide will ebb; they may not care again to hear the truth; then tell me, who will bear the guilt? And so he taught and healed. (Aquarian Gospel 105:15-19)

I have seen the truth of this over and over: the tragedy of neglected spiritual opportunity. Both young and old have let the offered life slip away. Some of them realized it but did nothing about it, and others did not even know they had lost the call of God. Spiritually speaking, willful death was their choice. Certainly, they will make the right response in future lives, but what suffering may lie in between?

Two classical examples are given in the book of Acts. One man to whom Saint Paul spoke "trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25), but never did. Another said: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 24:25), and that was the end of that.

It is significant that Jesus says, "These people now are willing to receive the truth." He was not advising that people who were not willing should be bullied or cajoled. Those people should be left alone. Without the exercise of free will nothing can be accomplished spiritually. So only those who show themselves ready and willing should be dealt with. And the moment they lose interest we should pass on. But we do have a responsibility for those who wish to know the things of the spirit.

Among the multitudes were men of every shade of thought. They were divided in their views concerning everything that Jesus said. Some saw in him

a God, and would have worshipped him; and others saw in him a devil of the nether world and would have cast him in a pit. (Aquarian Gospel 105:20, 21)

This is the way of the world. No matter what it might be, every thing is loved and hated at the same time. With spiritual matters this is very obvious, and the bitterness and violence often aroused is antithetical to every aspect of authentic spiritual life. In regard to spiritual teachers and teaching the divide is very simple: negative people like who and what are negative and dislike who and what are positive; positive people like who and what is positive and dislike who and what are negative.

I learned this in relation to religion and spiritual life even before I got into my teens. I could easily tell if a person or thing was good or bad by who accepted and who rejected them. So I would know if I was on the right track if negative people opposed me and positive people supported me—and vice versa. It is true: you can tell about someone as much by the character of their enemies as of their friends.

Saint Paul wrote: “We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life” (II Corinthians 2:15, 16). That which is alive and leads to greater and higher life has the fragrance of death to the living and the stench of death to the dead. The same principle applies to what is death-bearing and dead: to the living it stinks and to the dead it smells wonderful.

Jesus assured his true disciples: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” John 15:18-19). It could not be clearer. And things were the same at the time of Jesus. When he was only forty days old and taken to be dedicated in the temple, the prophet Simeon said to his mother: “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:34, 35).

It was not Jesus who was on trial, but those that saw and heard him.

And some were trying hard to lead a double life; like little lions of the ground that take upon themselves the color of the thing they rest upon. These people without anchorage of any sort, are friends or foes as seemed to serve them best. (Aquarian Gospel 105:22, 23)

“Little lions of the ground” means chameleons. The Greek words *khamailéōn* and *léōn* together mean “ground lions.” Some people waver back and forth because their minds are unstable, others because they are anxious to look out for what will benefit them. Both are called “double minded” by Saint James the Apostle, who wrote of them: “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.... purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 1:8; 4:8).

Double minded people also try to be two things at the same time, no matter how contradictory and impossible this might be. In the Soviet Union there were people who swore they could be both dedicated Communists and dedicated

Christians. Some of them would even say: "Communism is Christianity without Christ." (I knew some in America.) Of course these were the Christmas-and-Easter Christians, not real Orthodox Christians: *they* were being persecuted, imprisoned and even executed by those Communist "Christians without Christ."

And Jesus said, No man can serve two masters at a time. No man can be a friend and foe at once. (Aquarian Gospel 105:24)

Often countries will not officially declare war on another country, but will still provoke and engage in war with them. I remember Harry Truman on the radio telling us Americans that we were not at war in Korea, we were only engaging in "a police action." Heaven knows what the police must have been like in *his* hometown!

Some people are the same with God. They are absolutely opposed to God, but would never say so. "I leave God alone and he leaves me alone," they say, not realizing (or wanting to) that God is the very basis of their existence, much less their life and function in this world. Of course we have the "I am an agnostic" people who really mean: "I don't care." At least until they get in trouble.

All men are rising up, or sinking down; are building up, or tearing down. If you are gathering not the precious grain, then you are throwing it away. (Aquarian Gospel 105:25-26)

This is a really severe truth, but no less the truth for that. As I wrote at the beginning, the universe is in constant flux. Nothing, absolutely nothing stands still. A friend of mine used to say: "I am not impressed when someone says, 'I've been changing a lot lately.' But I would be impressed if they said 'I haven't gone through any changes,' since only God does not change."

No one stands still; we are either rising in consciousness or sinking in consciousness. One or the other is inevitable, so we must examine ourselves and see which it is, and hopefully determine to rise, not sink, and keep on rising. In the same way we are either building ourselves up in the spirit or we are tearing ourselves down. We may try to blame everything but ourselves, but the truth is we alone are the masters of our fate. We sow the karma that will be reaped later. Therefore Jesus says: "If you are gathering not the precious grain, then you are throwing it away." Just doing nothing is not being neutral; it, too, is negative: negative inaction. Spiritual laziness and neglect are active self-destruction.

He is a coward who would feign to be a friend, or foe, to please another man. You men, do not deceive yourselves in thought; your hearts are known; hypocrisy will blight a soul as surely as the breath of Beelzebub. An honest evil man is more esteemed by guardians of the soul than a dishonest pious man. (Aquarian Gospel 105:27-29)

Now Jesus addresses the chameleons and those who pretended to be interested in his teachings so they could report his words and deeds to his enemies and get on their good side. In this way they thought to be safe in an oppressive era created by

both Herod and Rome. But “hypocrisy will blight a soul,” and there is no safety in that.

An honest evil man is more esteemed by guardians of the soul than a dishonest pious man. We respect a criminal who confesses his crime and despise one who denies it. Sri Ramakrishna said that a person who always spoke the truth would realize God.

If you would curse the son of man, just curse him out aloud. A curse is poison to the inner man, and if you hold and swallow down a curse it never will digest; lo, it will poison every atom of your soul. (Aquarian Gospel 105:30-31)

Truthfulness is so absolutely necessary that Jesus then makes this intense statement, saying that it is better for an enemy of Christ and God to curse them outright, because hypocrisy is more destructive than blasphemy and enmity to God and righteousness. To liars by either speech or silence, Jesus said: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44). So hypocrites, liars and all that traffic in falsehood are demons in human bodies, “delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment... to whom the mist of darkness is reserved” (II Peter 2:4, 17).

And if you sin against a son of man, you may be pardoned and your guilt be cleansed by acts of kindness and of love. (Aquarian Gospel 105:32)

Here is a message of hope in the midst of censure. The negative karma of our transgressions against others can be wiped out by acts of kindness and love to the same degree that we have sinned against others.

But if you sin against the Holy Breath by disregarding her when she would open up the doors of life for you; by closing up the windows of the soul when she would pour the light of love into your hearts, and cleanse them with the fires of God; your guilt shall not be blotted out in this, nor in the life to come. An opportunity has gone to come no more, and you must wait until the ages roll again.

Then will the Holy Breath again breathe on your fires of life, and fan them to a living flame. Then she will open up the doors again, and you may let her in to sup with you for evermore, or you may slight her once again, and then again. You men of Israel, your opportunity is now. (Aquarian Gospel 105:33-39)

The sin against the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit, is not done by speaking disrespectfully of her or even denying her existence, but by ignoring and wasting the opportunities she gives for emerging from darkness into the light, from bondage into freedom, clinging to defilement and resisting purification. The effect of this karma is not blotted out. “An opportunity has gone to come no more, and you must

wait until the ages roll again.” That is how the karma of non-doing is reaped.

But that is only half of the story. The opportunity will come again and the choice can again be made—hopefully the right one. Eventually it will be, but whenever it may be, the truth still is: “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

Your tree of life is an illusive tree; it has a generous crop of leaves; its boughs hang low with fruit. Behold, your words are leaves; your deeds the fruit. Behold, for men have plucked the apples of your tree of life, and found them full of bitterness; and worms have eaten to the core. (Aquarian Gospel 105:40-42)

In fiction we encounter the undead, but in real life every day we meet with the unalive. It is a horrible sight. People moving through life without living unless they have some crisis and a faint spark of life arises in them. In spiritual classics we read of many noble and insightful reasons for turning from this world of human society and seeking refuge in God. But I will tell you the truth: I turned away because worldly life is so dreary, a burden beyond bearing. Those who distract themselves in such effective ways that they don’t consider their lives dreary are committing mental, moral and spiritual suicide, and are on a veritable collision course when at last they will have to face the emptiness and squalor of not just their lives, but their minds and hearts.

When a friend of mine learned I wanted to be a monk he asked in all sincerity: “You mean you can give up all this?” How paltry his “all this” really was. In *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Paramhansa Yogananda relays this from the wisdom of Sri Nagendranath Bhaduri:

“Master, you are wonderful!” A student, taking his leave, gazed ardently at the patriarchal sage. “You have renounced riches and comforts to seek God and teach us wisdom!” It was well-known that Bhaduri Mahasaya had forsaken great family wealth in his early childhood, when single-mindedly he entered the yogic path.

“You are reversing the case!” The saint’s face held a mild rebuke. “I have left a few paltry rupees, a few petty pleasures, for a cosmic empire of endless bliss. How then have I denied myself anything? I know the joy of sharing the treasure. Is that a sacrifice? The shortsighted worldly folk are verily the real renunciates! They relinquish an unparalleled divine possession for a poor handful of earthly toys!”

Infinity is ours for the grasping, and look at what we prefer to the Infinite. As Jesus says, it is an illusion, and a very poor one, too. People run through their lives heedlessly, as the song says: “Busy but idle if only they knew.” Emptiness all around, within and without.

Behold that fig tree by the way so full of leaves and worthless fruit! Then Jesus spoke a word that nature spirits know, and lo, the fig tree stood a mass of withered leaves.

And then he spoke again, Behold, for God will speak the Word, and you

will stand a withered fig tree in the setting sun. You men of Galilee, send forth and call the pruner in before it is too late, and let him prune away your worthless branches and illusive leaves, and let the sunshine in. The sun is life, and it can change your worthlessness to worth. (Aquarian Gospel 105:43-47)

The tree was revealed as dead by shriveled leaves. The outer condition revealed the inner state. So it is with all that invest in the external life, leaving the inner life to wither away. Eventually all will face this awful truth. The wise indeed call on God and seek to cast from them all that is worthless and illusive. To them “shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings” and they “shall go forth, and grow” in the grace and glory of God (Malachi 4:2) “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13), possessing “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8).

“Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:38-42).

Your tree of life is good; but you have nurtured it so long with dews of self, and mists of carnal things that you have shut the sunshine out. I tell you, men, that you must give account to God for every idle word you speak and every evil deed you do. (Aquarian Gospel 105:48-49)

The essential goodness and rightness of every life cannot be marred, only hidden and subverted by selfishness and materiality. The consciousness is plunged in darkness, and every word and every deed spoken or done in that state creates karma that must be reaped or neutralized (this second option is not any easier than the first). The longer this reaping is put off the longer the reaping will take. Lifetimes can be required. So now is the time to begin clearing the way for our liberation.

Chapter One Hundred Six

Magdala is beside the sea, and here the teachers taught. A man obsessed, and who was blind and dumb, was brought, and Jesus spoke the Word, and lo, the evil spirits went away; the man spoke out, his eyes were opened and he saw. This was the greatest work that men had seen the master do, and they were all amazed. (Aquarian Gospel 106:1-3)

A man obsessed, and who was blind and dumb, was brought. Impairment of the faculties are sometimes the effect of spirits trying to invade and possess someone. Since that body was made specifically for the incarnating soul, possession is very difficult, almost impossible. But obsession is quite common. Still, since there is an incompatibility between the obsessing spirits and the person being obsessed, conflict is set up in the brain and central nervous system and various neurological problems can result such as in this instance.

Jesus spoke the Word, and lo, the evil spirits went away. Evil spirits find spiritual light and high vibrations intolerable, even painful. So the right form of exorcism is to fill the place with holy vibrations and they will leave. Abjuring and cursing the spirits is absolutely the wrong way to go about it. First, it is negative, and since the obsessing entities are negative they will feel right at home and enjoy making the exorcist sweat and fume to no effect. But when the healing power of God is invoked they will leave because they do not like it or because it has healed them of their delusions and they no longer wish to obsess anyone but pass on to higher realms for their own evolution. This is the best, because both the oppressed and the oppressors are freed.

The Pharisees were there, and they were full of jealous rage (yes, full of jealous rage); they sought a cause whereby they might condemn. They said, Yes, it is true that Jesus does a multitude of mighty works; but men should know that he is leagued with Beelzebub. He is a sorcerer, a black magician of the Simon Cerus type; he works as Jannes and as Jambres did in Moses' day. For Satan, prince of evil spirits, is his stay by night and day and in the name of Satan he casts the demons out, and in his name he heals the sick and raises up the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 106:4-7)

The Pharisees were there, and they were full of jealous rage; they sought a cause whereby they might condemn. This goes on all the time. People who claim to be the only true believers are frustrated and angered when someone else does well, especially if it is miraculous. Exoteric religionists do not understand the psychic nature of things, so they claim that their miracles are signs of God's favor and the others' miracles proceed from demons. A friend of mine discovered a biomagnetic therapy using the polarity of the hands to heal. The local religious hucksters were infuriated with her because their healing by "laying on of hands" was all purely biomagnetic, and she

was unintentionally showing that their healing was no sign of God-contact, much less divine favor.

Accusing competitors of being in league with evil spirits is a very ancient practice. When Christianity became a politically powerful force, if anyone in the church machinery wanted to get rid of a rival or enemy they would accuse them of heresy, which of course is “of the devil.” That gave them clear path to burn their targets at the stake, for murder alone could satisfy such bloodthirsty monstrosities. The false Christians had learned from the Pharisees with whom they had much more of an affinity than they did with Jesus. I knew a minister who was faced with the miraculous things being done by churches other than his one-and-only-true church. Since these churches prayed to Jesus and frequently prayed: “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” and addressed evil spirits “in the name of Jesus,” He solemnly declared to a group that included me: “Did you know that there is a demon named Jesus? These people are invoking him and he is working miracles to deceive them!” People will go to any lengths to preserve their wrong ideas that simple reality is proving false. Such were the Pharisees of past and present.

There is no way to know who “Simon Cerus” was. He was obviously well-known, and might have been the famous Samaritan magician later encountered by the apostles (Acts 8:9-24). It is interesting to see how much faith the Pharisees had in Satan and company: more than they seem to have had in God. Today this is a prime trait of exoteric Christians.

But Jesus knew their thoughts; he said to them, You men are masters, and you know the law; whatever is arrayed against itself must fall; a house divided cannot stand; a kingdom warring with itself is brought to naught. If Satan casts the devil out, how can his kingdom stand?

If I, by Beelzebub, cast devils out, by whom do you cast devils out?

But if I, in the holy name of God, cast devils out, and make the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the dumb to speak, has not God’s kingdom come to you?

The Pharisees were dumb; they answered not. (Aquarian Gospel 106:8-13)

You know the law; whatever is arrayed against itself must fall; a house divided cannot stand; a kingdom warring with itself is brought to naught. This is a principle well worth our scrutiny because understanding it can help us both recognize and avoid pitfalls in spiritual life. It can be applied to both individuals (including ourselves) and groups. The spiritual aspect is the most important.

It is no news that human beings can be in conflict with themselves, since most are to some degree. The classical depiction of this torment is found in the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans: “We know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal [*sarkikos*: fleshly], sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.... Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.... for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I

would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?...So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Romans 7:14-15, 17-24). “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Galatians 5:17). It is a terrible thing to find yourself living the lower life virtually automatically despite your sincere aspiration to live the higher life.

What is the solution to this dilemma? I know only one: yoga meditation. I knew many Christians who were like the description of Saint Paul and suffered great agony of soul with no apparent way out. Fortunately for me I read the Bhagavad Gita and found the way: “Arjuna said: By what is a man impelled to commit evil, against his own will, as if urged by some force? The holy Lord said: This force is desire and anger born of the rajo-guna, the great consumer and of great evil. Know this to be the enemy” (Bhagavad Gita 3:36-37).

A Brief Sanskrit Glossary defines rajoguna in this way: “Activity, passion, desire for an object or goal.” This is a subtle force in the mind, a conditioning from our many lifetimes. It originates in the need to survive and develops into egoic impulses that impel us to harmful actions.

“As fire is enveloped by smoke, as mirrors are covered by dust, as wombs cover embryos, in the same way knowledge is covered by this, the constant enemy of the wise, having the form of desire which is like insatiable fire. The senses, mind, and intellect are said to be its abode. With these it deludes the embodied one by veiling his innate wisdom. Therefore, controlling the senses at the outset, kill this evil being, which destroys ordinary knowledge and supreme knowledge. They say that the senses are superior to the body, the mind is superior to the senses, the intellect is superior to the mind. And much superior to the intellect is the supreme intelligence. Having learned this, sustaining the lower self by the higher Self, kill this difficult-to-encounter enemy which has the form of desire” (Bhagavad Gita 3:38-43).

Everything that exists is formed of energies vibrating at different rates. It is the rate of vibration that determines how a field of energy such as the mind will behave. Since it is a matter of subtle energy beyond the intellect, external religion and piety are useless. Yoga alone deals methodically and directly with all the energies of our inner and outer makeup. When these energies are at first controlled and then thoroughly purified, we become free from the conflict between our inner impulses. “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6). “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:17), concludes Saint Paul. And Krishna: “Therefore, be a yogi” (Bhagavad Gita 6:46).

If I, in the holy name of God, cast devils out, and make the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the dumb to speak, has not God's kingdom come to you? Because religion in the West has been so ineffective for centuries no one really expects it to do anything tangible, much less miraculous. In fact, most people become afraid when something happens that they cannot explain. This is a serious impediment to any kind of awakening. I was fortunate to be brought up in a church that believed in miracles, especially healing, and I saw actual miracles in and out of church. In India I experienced and witnessed even more amazing things. Just before going to India I was told by a friend of mine about a group of esoteric students in which an exoteric Christian asked an Indian woman why Christianity did not make more converts in India. "My dear sir," she replied, "when there are people walking the streets of India that can do everything Jesus did, why would you expect them to think Christianity had anything special to offer them?" The truth is, Jesus worked his miracles because of what he learned in India.

Anyhow, the idea is that the physical and the metaphysical are intertwined, and a physical change indicates a psychic change, since the subtle astral and causal energies are the basis of the more objective material energies and phenomena. As Above, So Below. Therefore miracles are inseparable from true religion. The miracles Jesus lists are the correction or elimination of conditions that spring from negative karmas or "sins." When those karmic sins are expunged, their physical manifestations cease. Jesus proved this by the following incident.

"Behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house" (Matthew 9:2-7). Such things occur when the kingdom of God manifests on earth.

The Pharisees were dumb; they answered not. As usual.

As Jesus spoke a messenger approached and said to him, Your mother and your brothers wish to speak with you. And Jesus said, Who is my mother? and my brothers, who are they?

And then he spoke a word aside unto the foreign masters and the twelve; he said, Behold, men recognize their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers here in flesh; but when the veil is rent and men walk in the realms of soul, the tender lines of love that bind the groups of fleshly kin in families will fade away.

Not that the love for anyone will be the less; but men will see in all the motherhood, the fatherhood, the sisterhood, the brotherhood of man. The family groups of earth will all be lost in universal love and fellowship divine.

Then to the multitudes he said, Whoever lives the life and does the will of God is child of God and is my mother, father, sister, friend.

And then he went aside to speak to mother and his other kindred in the flesh. (Aquarian Gospel 106:14-22)

Men recognize their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers here in flesh; but when the veil is rent and men walk in the realms of soul, the tender lines of love that bind the groups of fleshly kin in families will fade away.

This might be the most unpopular and willfully ignored passage in the Aquarian Gospel because people are obsessed with “Will We Know Each Other Over There?” There is even a song called “Will The Circle Be Unbroken?” Pat Boone made a fortune singing:

Will the circle be unbroken
By and by, by and by?
In a better home awaiting
In the sky, in the sky?

People are determined that the departed will be theirs for eternity. I knew a man that had a very successful metaphysical church where he continually preached reincarnation and soul evolution. But when his best friend and coworker died, he called me and asked me if his friend was waiting for him “over there” or would be be reincarnating. “When I die, won’t Thomas be there waiting for me?” he asked, obviously hoping I would assure him Tom would be sitting there for the next forty years or so wondering when he would arrive. When I told him that of course Tom would be going on to better things through rebirth, he did not want to accept it. What crass selfishness. It was love all right: love of his own ego to whom Tom was just a possession, a prop. Later I showed Tom’s photo to Anandamayi Ma, who said that Thomas was a highly developed person who attained to a very high level after death. She seemed to imply that he might never be coming back to earthly birth. I did not tell my friend who was grieving for himself, not Tom.

Till Death Do Us Part is the law. After that it is time for newer, bigger and hopefully better things. Certainly we may meet again in future lives, but not because we own one another. Once I was hounded by a woman who demanded that I tell her where her husband had been reborn. I certainly did not tell her where he was reborn because she had been the literal bane of his life and those of their two children. Most (not all) human love is completely predatory and instinctual. Jesus would agree with me, but not many others on this earth would.

Not that the love for anyone will be the less; but men will see in all the motherhood, the fatherhood, the sisterhood, the brotherhood of man. The family groups of earth will all be lost in universal love and fellowship divine. Here Jesus describes the attitude of those who have put God first in all things and ascended to higher awareness. Why speak of Divine Unity while really only running in the hamster wheel in which we were born? We have to expand our horizons if we would really love, for love is the nature of God (I

John 4:8, 16). So only those who are one with God really love perfectly and unconditionally. Others do not have the ability, and it is unfair to expect it from them.

Whoever lives the life and does the will of God is child of God and is my mother, father, sister, friend. Those who have dedicated themselves to God above all are the real family of Jesus, the saints and Masters. “What A Friend We Have In Jesus” is a very popular song, but how many aspire to be themselves a friend of Jesus and God? In our usual selfish, egocentric way we expect God to be our unfailing friend and give us his undivided attention. But who aspires to be God’s faithful friend and give him undivided and constant attention?

And then he went aside to speak to mother and his other kindred in the flesh because he loved them, too, some of them being embryonic saints, and his mother being more than any human mother, but the mother of his heart and soul because she was perfect in every way. She, too, was involved in Jesus’ saving mission. That is why the Roman Catholic Church gave her the title Co-Redemptress of the World.

But he saw more than these. The maiden who once thrilled his very soul with love; a love beyond the love of any fleshly kin; who was the sorest tempter in the temple Heliopolis beside the Nile, who sung for him the sacred songs, was there. (Aquarian Gospel 106:23-24)

We should go back to the fifty-third chapter where Miriam appears who was a virtual soul-mate of Jesus, obviously close to him in previous lives. In the great temple of Heliopolis where Jesus was completing his preparation for Christhood he saw Miriam for the first time when she sang.

“And Jesus was entranced; such beauty he had never seen; such music he had never heard.... And Jesus, talking with himself, said out, What is the meaning of this incident? I did not know that such entrancing beauty and such queen-like loveliness were ever found among the sons of men. I did not know that voice of angel ever graced a human form, or that seraphic music ever came from human lips.

“For days he sat entranced; the current of his thoughts was changed; he thought of nothing but the singer and her songs. He longed to see her once again; and after certain days she came; she spoke and laid her hand upon his head. Her touch thrilled all his soul, and for the time, forgotten was the work that he was sent to do. Few were the words the maiden said; she went her way; but then the heart of Jesus had been touched. A love-flame had been kindled in his soul, and he was brought to face the sorest trial of his life. He could not sleep nor eat. Thoughts of the maiden came; they would not go. His carnal nature called aloud for her companionship.

“And then he said, Lo, I have conquered every foe that I have met, and shall I now be conquered by this carnal love? My Father sent me here to show the power of love divine, that love that reaches every living thing. Shall this pure, universal love be all absorbed by carnal love? Shall I forget all creatures else, and lose my life in this fair maiden, though she is the highest type of beauty, purity and love? Into its very depths his soul was stirred, and long he wrestled with this angel-idol of his

heart. But when the day was almost lost, his higher ego rose in might; he found himself again, and then he said, although my heart shall break I will not fail in this my hardest task; I will be victor over carnal love.

“And when again the maiden came, and offered him her hand and heart, he said, Fair one, your very presence thrills me with delight; your voice is benediction to my soul; my human self would fly with you, and be contented in your love; but all the world is craving for a love that I have come to manifest. I must, then, bid you go; but we will meet again; our ways on earth will not be cast apart. I see you in the hurrying throngs of earth as minister of love; I hear your voice in song, that wins the hearts of men to better things. And then in sorrow and in tears the maiden went away, and Jesus was again alone.

“And instantly the great bells of the temple rang; the singers sung a new, new song; the grotto blazed with light. The hierophant himself appeared, and said, All hail! triumphant Logos, hail! The conqueror of carnal love stands on the heights. And then he placed in Jesus’ hands a scroll on which was written, LOVE DIVINE.”

The recognition was of kindred souls, and Jesus said, Behold, for God has brought to us a power men cannot comprehend, a power of purity and love; to make more light the burdens of the hour, to be a balm for wounded souls; to win the multitude to better ways by sacred song and holy life.

Behold, for Miriam who stood beside the sea and sung the song of victory when Moses led the way, will sing again. And all the choirs of heaven will join and sing the glad refrain: Peace, peace on earth; good will to men!

And Miriam stood before the waiting throngs and sang again the songs of victory, and all the people said, Amen. (Aquarian Gospel 106:25-32)

Because both Jesus and Miriam had renounced personal, egoic “love” they were capable of loving God with all their heart, soul and mind (Matthew 22:37). Therefore they had gained “a power men cannot comprehend, a power of purity and love” which enabled them “to make more light the burdens of the hour, to be a balm for wounded souls; to win the multitude to better ways by sacred song and holy life.” If they had not done so, then the world would never have known Jesus the Christ. Nikos Kazantzakis was quite intuitive when he wrote in *The Last Temptation of Christ* that the final, great temptation would be to come down the from cross and become a mere mediocrity with house, wife and children—and very little else.

Chapter One Hundred Seven

A Pharisee elated with himself stood forth among the multitudes and said to Jesus, Sir, we would have you demonstrate. If you are truly Christ who was to come, then you can surely do what black magicians cannot do. Lo, they can talk, and hold the multitudes with words of power; and they can heal the sick and drive the demons out of those obsessed; they can control the storms; and fire and earth and air will hear and answer when they speak. Now, if you will ascend and from that tower fly across the sea, we will believe that you are sent from God. (Aquarian Gospel 107:1-5)

A Pharisee elated with himself.... There is a certain type of self-satisfied egotist that likes to go around spiritual groups and teachers and ask questions and make challenges meant to discount their target and make themselves seem wiser and worthy of a following. (Often their supposed questions are merely expositions of their “wisdom.”) They usually know very little and have very little real intelligence, being mediocrities with a need to shine and display themselves. As one teacher used to say: “There is nothing worse than a hick that thinks he has an ‘inside track’!” Usually these people have read one book and decided they are an authority on the subject. (This is not sarcastic, I speak from experience.) Quite some time back I read an essay on the shift in the contemporary yoga world. Back in the sixties and after people went to hear a teacher to learn. If they asked a question they wanted information. But today many consider themselves experts, and when they ask questions they are either testing the teacher to see if he knows as much as they know or are challenging him on the basis of their superior knowledge. The intention is still the same: self-display and self-glorification. As we see here, Jesus had them too. As Solomon said: “There is no new thing under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

This Pharisee is a real ignoramus, otherwise he would know that black magicians absolutely cannot heal the sick, but they certainly can fly.

Sickness is the result of negative karma and transgression of the natural laws. Only positive correction can heal sickness and set the physical situation right. The forces of black magic are in total conflict with this. It was well known for centuries in Europe that some gypsies would curse people or animals and make them sick, then show up and offer to cure them for money. When they withdrew the curse the trouble went away. But they had no power to really cure normal illness. There are people who are dynamos of raw physical energy, and if they project it to someone in sufficient quantities they will be cured of illnesses that are really energy deficiencies rather than actual diseases. This is a legitimate way to heal, but has nothing spiritual or supernatural about it as they claim.

In the book of Acts we find this: “There was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria,

giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries” (Acts 8:9-11). Early Christian histories say that in Rome this man gave a lot of trouble to Saint Peter who had confronted him before as the latter part of the eighth chapter of Acts recounts. Simon was being worshipped by some of the Romans who had erected his statue by the Tiber and on the base put the words: “Simon the Holy God.” (This image was discovered by archeologists in the twentieth century.) Simon often gave public demonstrations of flying. One time Saint Peter saw this and made the sign of the cross toward him and prayed. Immediately Simon fell into the river.

And Jesus said, No black magician ever lived a holy life; you have a demonstration of the Christ-life every day. But lo, you evil and adulterous scribes and Pharisees, you cannot see a spirit sign, because your spirit eyes are full of carnal self. You seek a sign to please your curiosity. You walk the very lowest planes of carnal life and cry, Phenomena! show us a sign and then we will believe. (Aquarian Gospel 107:6-8)

Certain blessings such as miraculous healings only come from a pure spiritual source. Holiness and healing are inseparable. I know this because I grew up with a remarkable healer whose main character was her incredible purity and holiness.

Jesus is saying that the Christ-life is the greatest miracle of all, the very purpose of Jesus’ incarnation. “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”(John 10:10). But holiness means nothing to those who walk in the darkness of ego and ignorance, and the religious ones are the worst. That is why today we have these televangelists and megachurches whose focus is prosperity and the assertion that God wants all of us to be rich, despite what Jesus said about material possessions being troublesome and even a bar to spiritual life. The Christ they preach is an obvious antiChrist. They desire the glorification of material existence and immersion in material life. “They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them” (I John 4:5).

I was not sent to earth to buy up faith as men buy fish and fruit and rubbish in the streets. Men seem to think it quite a favor done to me when they confess their faith in me and in the holy Christ. What does it matter unto me as man if you believe or disbelieve? Faith is not something you can buy with coin; it is not something you can sell for gold. Once Mart, a beggar, followed me and cried, Give me a silver piece; then I will believe in you. And you are like this beggar man; you offer to exchange your faith for signs. (Aquarian Gospel 107:9-14)

I was not sent to earth.... Those who have no realistic concept of spiritual development think that to evolve is to develop wisdom and powers and to use them as one pleases or sees fit, that to be a Master is to determine one’s role in the many worlds as one pleases. But this is not true. Jesus showed himself to be the servant

of humanity, because he was firstly the servant of God, its Master. Here are his own words about it:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19).

“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30).

“I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things” (John 8:28).

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).

“I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak” (John 12:49).

Then it must be the same with us. But it is impossible to be someone’s servant without knowing them. So to know God is to be a servant of God, and yet at the same time a son of God. Outside this relative existence (samsara), in the transcendent world, we are gods with God (Psalms 82:6; John 10:34), but when we come back into this creation, whatever the level, we are servants of God as was Jesus. Jesus possessed non-dual consciousness, but that consciousness taught him that his very existence depended on God, that he did not exist apart from God. He was one with God yet with a distinction: God was infinite, he was finite. We certainly shall sit in the throne of God (Revelation 3:21) with God, but we will not be God. There is no place there for the childish egotism of most modern Advaita teachers and their customer-dupes. Far from them are these words of Jesus to his true disciples: “When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10). Many want to be teachers, but “how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Romans 10:15); and only servants are sent.

...to buy up faith as men buy fish and fruit and rubbish in the streets. Nothing to do with God is cheap, and almost everything in this world of human “civilization” is only cheap. Faith is not acquired by medicine show techniques, though they are the only way to get a following in today’s spiritual carnival. “Faith [is] not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). But the pseudo-faith of ordinary mankind is nothing but “fish and fruit and rubbish in the streets.”

Men seem to think it quite a favor done to me when they confess their faith in me and in the holy Christ. But the contemporary “sinners saved by grace” are not even that, because the faith they profess is in a mythological Christ, the supposed creator of the world who became a blood sacrifice to appease the psychotic rage of an offended God. Such a being has never existed; their faith is based on falsehood. For notice that Jesus speaks of those that would have faith in him “*and in the holy Christ.*” For as Jesus explains in the Aquarian Gospel he is the messenger of Christ but not The Christ himself. He is indeed *a* Christ, but not *The* Christ, who is God. A perfected

being is a perfect image and likeness of God, but certainly not God. Since he has been sent by God, those who have faith in his teachings are having faith in God, not just in an individual, and that faith elevates them. Certainly Jesus should be honored supremely and given highest praise, but with the right perspective. Claiming that Jesus is something he is not is to deny what he really is, to cancel the truth. No one who does so can be justly considered his disciple.

What does it matter unto me as man if you believe or disbelieve? Being the servant-messenger of God, his words and deeds are meant to open the way to God; there is nothing personal in it for Jesus. Such is his perfect humility, a humility that is truly divine.

Faith is not something you can buy with coin; it is not something you can sell for gold. An elderly friend of mine told me that one time a man came up to his father, who was a minister, and said: "Mister Bozarth, I will be a good Christian for two dollars and fifty cents!" Inflation has changed the figure quite a bit, surely. Another friend of mine told me of an old man who boasted to her: "I've been a member of the Christian Church for twenty-five years and it only cost me a quarter!" A penny a year is not bad. But the faith of Christ is something drastically different.

Once Mart, a beggar, followed me and cried, Give me a silver piece; then I will believe in you. And you are like this beggar man; you offer to exchange your faith for signs. How many conditions we put on our "faith"! No wonder Jesus asked: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). When Jesus incarnates again he will no doubt find a lot of Churchianity, but will there be any Christianity left?

But I will give to all the world one sign as surety that the Christ abides with me. You all have read the parable of Jonah and the fish, wherein it is recorded that the prophet spent three days and nights within the stomach of the mighty fish, and then came forth. The son of man will spend three days and nights within the heart of earth and then come forth again, and men will see and know. (Aquarian Gospel 107:15-17)

Again Jesus makes clear his relationship with the Christ. Then he tells of his burial and resurrection which will be the only sign these religionists will be given. And that sign they will not believe.

Behold, the light may be so bright that men cannot see anything. The Spirit light has shown so brightly over Galilee that you who hear me now are blind. You may have read the words of prophet Azrael; he said, The light shall shine out brightly in the darkness of the night, and men shall comprehend it not. That time has come; the light shines forth; you see it not. (Aquarian Gospel 107:18-21)

Many years ago I heard a yogi speaking about responses to the divine light and how we sometimes hear people say: "It was so bright I couldn't see anything," when in reality they did see: they saw the light. Just as there are some colors that are beyond our normal sight and sounds that are beyond our normal range of

hearing, so if people are not used to spiritual vibrations they don't perceive anything and mistakenly decide that there is nothing to perceive. Skepticism often comes from simple non-perception, not intellectual acumen. On the other hand, sometimes people see so much they cannot distinguish anything, so they think they did not see. And of course there are those who really do see and claim they do not because they want to avoid the responsibility that goes along with spiritual awakening.

The Queen of Sheba sat in darkest night and still she yearned for light. She came to hear the words of wisdom from the lips of Solomon, and she believed; and she became a living torch, and when she reached her home, lo, all Arabia was filled with light. A greater far than Solomon is here; the Christ is here; the Day Star has risen, and you reject the light. (Aquarian Gospel 107:22-25)

I used to get very tired of hearing people say: "When the student is ready the teacher appears" to justify the fact that they were not seeking (or even peeking) to find higher truth. The idea was that when they advanced enough without doing a thing some teacher would come to them. But since they had the habit of doing nothing, would they respond to the teacher's coming? Not likely. Jesus did not say: "Sit around and it will come to you," but: "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7).

Jesus cites the Queen of Sheba who came so far and endured such hardship to learn wisdom from Solomon. I knew a yogi who read a book about yoga and *walked* to India from Europe to learn yoga. It took a long time, but he got there and benefitted from the company and teaching of many great yogis. And he remained there the rest of his life, I am glad to say.

Actually, in the present condition of the world the greater the light, the more likely it will be missed or outright denied and rejected.

And you remember Nineveh, the wicked city of Assyria, which God had marked to be destroyed by shock and flame unless the people turned and walked in ways of right. And Jonah raised his voice and said, In forty days shall Nineveh be razed, and her wealth shall be destroyed. The people heard and they believed; and they reformed and turned to ways of right, and lo, their city was not razed; was not destroyed. You men of Galilee, I tell you that Arabia and Nineveh will testify against you in the judgment day. (Aquarian Gospel 107:26-29)

One of the reasons spiritual slackers resent those who are actively cultivating the spiritual is that they show them up as spiritual idlers. The undisciplined always get indignant and hostile toward the disciplined. What they do not realize is the fact that it is their indolence and not the diligence of the dedicated which reveals their lack.

Behold, for every one to whom I speak has in him all the fires of God; but

they are lying dead. The will is bridled by the flesh desires, and it brings not the ethers of the fires to vibrate into light. Look, therefore, to your soul and note, Is not the light within you dark as night? (Aquarian Gospel 107:30-32)

Behold, for every one to whom I speak has in him all the fires of God; but they are lying dead. Jesus is saying that every single human being has within him the full potential for attaining the vision of God. Yet as long as it is not kindled but only potential it is the same as if it did not exist.

The will is bridled by the flesh desires, and it brings not the ethers of the fires to vibrate into light. This is sad truth, and must be faced by those who mean business with God and themselves. Within the last fifty years I have seen a tremendous change in outlook. When I was a child everybody knew that to accomplish anything, including in spiritual life, dedication, discipline and real endeavor was required. Today nearly everyone thinks that they can get anything for the mere wanting. They are like people who think they can become artists by buying brushes and paint or musicians by just buying an instrument. This is incredibly unrealistic. I have no idea where it arises from, but I know absolutely that nothing but hypocrisy, self-delusion and self-destruction can come from it. Everything has a price that must be paid.

I say all this because it is carnality, impure and simple, that blinds and binds the spiritual dilettantes of today. If that is too technical: I mean sex and usually drugs, including marijuana. Those who are enslaved by the body with its whims and demands (masquerading as “needs” and “drives”) cannot kindle the fires of divine realization. They can only subvert and pervert the ancient wisdom they supposedly profess.

Look, therefore, to your soul and note, Is not the light within you dark as night? Yes; though they cannot see it, just as they cannot see and recognize the dark.

There is no breath but Holy Breath that e’er can fan your fires of life into a living flame and make them light. And Holy Breath can raise the ethers of the fires to light in none but hearts of purity and love.

Hear, then, you men of Galilee, Make pure the heart, admit the Holy Breath, and then your bodies will be full of light. And like a city on a hill, your light will shine afar, and thus your light may light the way for other men. (Aquarian Gospel 107:33-36)

True spiritual teaching is always practical. There is a very interesting and helpful article posted at several sites on the internet called “The False Guru Test.” It lists twenty-six traits that can indicate an untrustworthy teacher or group. The fourth trait is this: “Focuses on enlightenment itself rather than teaching the path leading to it: It is amazing how much false gurus have to say about enlightenment. They argue their points in the same way that the scholars in the middle ages argued how many angels could sit on the head of a pin. Any fool can talk about the end goal because what is said is irrefutable to most of your listeners. What is skillful is guiding those listeners to having awakening within themselves. The real teacher focuses on the path and strictly avoids only talk on enlightenment.” The vital

question is always: “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 18:18). And why the Gita says: “Become a yogi” (Bhagavad Gita 6:46). So now Jesus sums up his teaching given in this chapter.

There is no breath but Holy Breath that e’er can fan your fires of life into a living flame and make them light. And Holy Breath can raise the ethers of the fires to light in none but hearts of purity and love. Contact with God is both the goal and the way. The Light of the Holy Spirit alone can bring us to life in the kingdom of divine Light. But it is not just for the asking or wishing. The heart must be purified through spiritual practice.

Hear, then, you men of Galilee, Make pure the heart, admit the Holy Breath, and then your bodies will be full of light. And like a city on a hill, your light will shine afar, and thus your light may light the way for other men. Through meditation we breathe in the Holy Breath and fill our bodies with light, raising their vibration to such a rate that our presence in the world is a blessing to all we come near in hope that they, too, will be uplifted and hear the call: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Ephesians 5:14).

Chapter One Hundred Eight

The multitudes were wild with selfish thought; none recognized the rights and needs of any other one. The stronger pushed the weak aside, and trampled on them in their haste to be the first to get a blessing for himself. (Aquarian Gospel 108:1, 2)

You do not need to get into a time machine and go back to the time of Jesus to see this shocking spectacle. Just go to India and find a well-known spiritual figure and you will see it every day. During my first trip to India I attended the birthday celebrations of Anandamayi Ma in Agarpara, a city about twenty to thirty minutes by train from Calcutta. My host told me that when Ma had come there a little over ten years before the crowds had trampled an elderly woman to death. Ma publicly stated that she considered the people of that area no better than wild animals and since then had consistently refused all invitations to return. Naturally, there was some apprehension as to how the people would behave this time, so an entire division of the Calcutta police was stationed there every day to shield Ma from the surge of the rabid crowd. One time when Ma came walking toward where I was standing, the people began pushing forward, shoving the police backward and almost into Ma. At one moment, Ma put up her hand and turned away with an expression of intense pain on her face. Obviously the bestial vibrations were striking and paining her. When I told about this to a devotee some time later he told me that in previous years the Calcutta area people often came to see Ma carrying scissors with which they cut off pieces of her clothing and even tried to cut off some of her hair!

What kind of blessing could such people possibly receive? It is like Swami Brahmananda, also of Calcutta, said: "We have jewels to give away, but people only want eggplant and potatoes." As the Aquarian Gospel makes clear, these people do not have spiritual fervor, but ego fever.

And Jesus said, Behold the cage of beasts untamed; a den of stinging vipers, maddened by their fiendish greed of selfish gain! I tell you, men, the benefits that come to men who see no further than themselves are baubles in the morning light; they are unreal; they pass away. The selfish soul is fed today; the food does not assimilate; the soul grows not, and then it must be fed again, and then again. (Aquarian Gospel 108:3-5)

It has been the fashion from time immemorial for people to blame religion for all the wrongs done in the name of God and religion, but anyone who examines the situations carefully will see that it is not religion but the sociopaths who join those religions with the purpose of exploiting it to their own ends that are to be blamed. Religion does not make people crazy, but crazy people make crazy religion.

The people described here were thronging around Jesus. Was he at fault? Of

course not. The problem was with the selfishness and greed of the crowd that was based squarely on ego.

It is a terrible fact that today more than ever before religion is touted as Big Benefit for greedy materialists who after a while find out it is Big Business for those who are running it. Wherever there is power and money there the wolves come flocking. I have seen entire religious groups and movements pulled down and ravaged by such wolves.

But Jesus does not just censure them, he gives wisdom for us who want it.

The benefits that come to men who see no further than themselves are baubles in the morning light; they are unreal; they pass away. This is very serious and should be pondered by every aspirant lest they become such hopeless cases or lest they waste their time and expect anything from such people but the dissolution of any good that comes to them. These people are self-condemned, having put themselves in such a virtually hopeless situation.

Certainly there is always hope, but it will take a great deal of inner healing before this kind of person can be benefitted even by the presence of God. In the end it all comes down to the individual's will, not the will of others. Only those who wish to rise can do so. Furthermore, the apparent progress of this kind of person is just that: appearance only.

The selfish soul is fed today; the food does not assimilate; the soul grows not, and then it must be fed again, and then again. There is a certain type of spiritual sociopath that continually appears to be improving only to suddenly re-emerge in the negative state they were beforehand. They play a kind of game of Gotcha! with those who really do care about them. They fool a great deal of well-meaning people who have their welfare at heart. But being well-meaning does not protect anyone from exploitation. Nor is "nice" in relation to such people real virtue. We are told that Saint John the Baptist "saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7). He had no other words for them, though he had called many to repentance. God through the prophets directed that no one should bother with the intentionally self-destroying. "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hosea 4:17). "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Psalms 81:12).

Jesus counseled his disciples regarding religious hypocrites: "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:14). When Pilate questioned Jesus, "he answered him never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly" (27:14). In Revelation he says: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11). It is all up to them, not us. The good and the wise certainly help others, but they never interfere; and they can tell the difference correctly. Compassion is only worthwhile if it does good. If it does nothing, then it is nothing. In summation: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you” (Matthew 7:6).

Behold, a selfish man obsessed by just one spirit of the air; by the Omnific Word the spirit is cast out; it wanders through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. And then it comes again; the selfish man has failed to close and lock the door; the unclean spirit finds the house all swept and cleaned; it enters in and takes with it full seven other spirits more unclean than [it] is itself; and there they dwell. The last state of the man is more than sevenfold more wretched than the first.

And so it is with you who snatch the blessings that belong to other men. (Aquarian Gospel 108:6-11)

One spirit of the air. A spirit of the air is a wandering spirit that should be in the astral world but has somehow gotten into the earth plane either intentionally or unintentionally.

By the Omnific Word the spirit is cast out; it wanders through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. And then it comes again; the selfish man has failed to close and lock the door. It is not enough to empty ourselves of evil; we must fill ourselves with good. When we have been freed of any kind of negativity we must immediately begin replacing it with positive thoughts and actions, and especially meditation. Otherwise we are open to evil again occupying our hearts.

The unclean spirit finds the house all swept and cleaned; it enters in and takes with it full seven other spirits more unclean than [it] is itself; and there they dwell. The last state of the man is more than sevenfold more wretched than the first. This is no idle warning; it is law. Sometimes we think people merely revert to their former wrong behavior or thought, but in time we will see that they have become much worse because of their increased susceptibility to negative forces. No one just falls back to where they were before. It may not be manifest right away, but each fall puts us deeper into the morass. No one spends their life moving back and forth between a fixed point of good and bad. Rather, it is a steady though subtle sinking ever downward. The descent is slow, but deadly. Evil increases with each lapse; always be sure of that.

And so it is with you who snatch the blessings that belong to other men. Of course stolen blessings are no longer blessings but curses compounding the miserable state of the thief. Those who push and shove either outwardly or inwardly to get ahead of others and take all they can for themselves become increasingly emptier. As Jesus said of them: “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17).

Through the years, when I was with Anandamayi Ma I would see people (usually Westerners) that apparently thought they had a Mother Meter in their head, and that the more clock time they put in being in her physical presence the more merit they had as devotees and the closer they were to her in spirit. They would actually sit with one another and compare the number of hours they had on their Mother Meters and then sneak around and try to get more time on their own in order to

outdo the others. I have seen them try to keep their rivals from knowing when and where Ma would be so they alone would be accumulating the most time. Of course none of them ever really even “met” Mother, and the time they spent trying to pull in her vibrations and blessings counted for nothing, if they were lucky and it did not create evil karma. I say this because they would sit and stare at Ma like a wolf at a rabbit or a vampire at a prospective victim. One woman always looked as though at any moment she was going to leap onto Ma. This was all because inside they knew they had no relation to Ma and were missing her completely.

On the other hand there was Yogananda’s great disciple, Sister Gyanamata, who attained total liberation before leaving her body. One time Brother Mokshananda, the last monk to come during the Master’s lifetime, told some of us that just the night before several of the longtime disciples of Yogananda, including Sri Dayamata, were remembering Sister Gyanamata and together they calculated that except for public appearances where there were many other people, Sister Gyanamata had not been with Yogananda physically more than about eight hours in the all years she was a disciple! They concluded that her secret was simple: she had always been with him, for he was in her heart and she was in his.

While Jesus spoke a certain woman who stood near exclaimed, Most blessed is the mother of this man of God! And Jesus said, Yes, blest is she; but doubly blest are they who hear, receive and live the word of God. (Aquarian Gospel 108:12-13)

A similar passage in the eleventh chapter of the gospel of Saint Luke is often cited a proof that the Virgin Mary should not be called Blessed, but here Jesus says that she is indeed blessed, but then gives the major reason for her blessedness: she heard, accepted and lived the holy will of God for her life. When the archangel Gabriel told her that she was to be the mother of Jesus by conceiving in a miraculous manner, she answered: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38). And so it was. It is still the path to blessedness that we can walk.

A Pharisee of wealth prepared a feast, and Jesus and the twelve, together with the masters from afar, were guests. And Jesus did not wash his hands according to the strictest Pharisaic rules, before he ate; when this the Pharisee observed he marvelled much. And Jesus said, My host, why do you marvel that I did not wash my hands? The Pharisees wash well their hands and feet; they cleanse the body every day when, lo, within is every form of filth. Their hearts are full of wickedness, extortions and deceit. Did not the God who made the outside of the body make the inside, too?. (Aquarian Gospel 108:14-19)

Here we have the problem with exoteric, externalized religion: it leaves out the essence of a person’s life, the immortal spirit, and thereby misses the point entirely and ends up being nothing of consequence and often a hindrance. I well remember

reading a Letter to the Editor some years ago in which the writer called the Bible “God’s Rule Book.” Yet Jesus said: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). As Saint Paul exhorts us, we should “walk in the spirit” (Galatians 5:25) because “God is a spirit” (John 4:24), and we are also spirits. A viable religion is concentrated on the spirit, considering material existence is to be subordinate and subservient to the spirit. “Spirit is life” (Romans 8:10).

And then he said, Woe unto you, you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue, and every herb, and pass by judgment and the love of God. Woe unto you, you Pharisees! you love the highest seats in synagogues and courts, and bid for salutations in the market place. Woe unto you, you tinselled gentry of the land! no man would ever think you servants of the Lord of hosts by what you do.

A lawyer sitting near remarked, Rabboni, your words are harsh, and then in what you say you censure us; and why?

And Jesus said, Woe unto you, you masters of the law! you heap great burdens on the sons of men, yea, loads by far too great for them to bear, and you will never help to bear a feather’s weight yourselves. Woe unto you! you build the tombs of prophets and of seers; they whom your fathers killed; and you are parties to the crimes. (Aquarian Gospel 108:20-25)

You tithe mint and rue, and every herb, and pass by judgment and the love of God. Exoteric religion can be very insistent on the smallest observances but completely overlooks (and sometimes avoids) spiritual wisdom and its application to spiritual life, especially in the form of spiritual discipline. But most of all it has no understanding of what the love of God really is, or how to attain it or manifest it in daily life. The idea of knowing and becoming one with God is vigorously rejected and denounced by them as evil and blasphemy.

You love the highest seats in synagogues and courts, and bid for salutations in the market place. Exoteric religion insists upon being respected by the world and boasts of the good will it wins by its earthly endeavors. Often political figures and celebrities are invited to their important functions and telegrams are read from even more politicians and suchlike with no regard to their personal worthiness.

No man would ever think you servants of the Lord of hosts by what you do. Actions do speak louder than words. In the seventh chapter of Saint Mark’s gospel we find another encounter Jesus had with Pharisees of the same type. “Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me” (Mark 7:5-7). That pretty well sums up exoteric religion and religionists.

And now behold, for God has sent again to you his holy men—apostles,

prophets, seers; and you are persecuting them. The time is near when you will plead against them in the courts; will spurn them on the streets; will cast them into prison cells, and kill them with a fiend's delight. I tell you, men, the blood of all the holy men of God that has been shed from righteous Abel down to that of Zacharias, father of holy John, who was struck down beside the altar in the Holy Place; the blood of all these holy men has made more red the hands of this ungodly generation. (Aquarian Gospel 108:26-30)

The hypocrites who so carefully washed their hands in water would in time like wild beasts bathe their hands in the blood of Jesus and his disciples. This is where exoteric religion ultimately leads: persecution, blasphemy, violence and even murder. Just this morning I was thinking of one of the first European Protestant bishops who had formerly been a Catholic bishop. As a Catholic bishop he condemned people to death for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation, but as a Protestant bishop he condemned people to death for believing in transubstantiation! This is where such ignorance leads.

Woe unto you, you masters of the law! you snatch the keys of knowledge from the hands of men; you close the doors; you enter not yourselves, and suffer not the willing ones to enter in.

“His words provoked the Pharisees, the lawyers and the scribes, and they, resenting, poured upon him torrents of abuse. The truths he spoke came like a thunderbolt from heaven; the rulers counseled how they might ensnare him by his words; they sought a legal way to shed his blood. (Aquarian Gospel 108:31-34)

You snatch the keys of knowledge from the hands of men; you close the doors; you enter not yourselves, and suffer not the willing ones to enter in. This is the worst aspect of exoteric religion: it destroys the hearts and souls of those who adhere to it and seek to destroy those who have enough awakening to see that it is false and spiritually dangerous. This is the ultimate indictment against them.

They, resenting, poured upon him torrents of abuse. The truths he spoke came like a thunderbolt from heaven; the rulers counseled how they might ensnare him by his words; they sought a legal way to shed his blood. And they succeeded, to their eternal shame.

Chapter One Hundred Nine

Now, when the feast was finished, Jesus, with the foreign masters and the twelve, with Mary, Miriam and a band of loyal women who believed in Christ, went to a place apart to pray.

And when their silence ended Jesus said, Be on your guard; the leaven of the Pharisees is being thrown in every measure of the meal of life. It is a poison that will taint whatever it may touch; and it will blight the soul as sure as the fumes of Diabolos; it is hypocrisy. (Aquarian Gospel 109:1-3)

Jesus says that hypocrisy is completely pervading human life. It was most evident in the Pharisees, but it was a universal blight. Mahendranath Gupta, the author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and who was written about in *Autobiography of a Yogi* as “Master Mahasaya,” often said: “The entire world is filled with insincerity.” And so it is. In religion this is usually the rule: The higher they talk the lower they live. The Hallelujah Trail leads downward, deep downward. Real religion keeps us aware of the need to reach the Goal, not to brag about how we have made it. The Upanishad says: “He who tells knows it not. He who knows, tells it not.” And: “If a man says ‘I know,’ he does not know. But if a man says ‘I do not know’—perhaps he knows.” The Tao Teh King says: “He who knows does not speak; he who speaks does not know.”

The Pharisees seem fair in speech, but they are diabolical in heart. And then they seem to think that thought is something they can lock within themselves. (Aquarian Gospel 109:4, 5)

This is a perfect picturing of Fundamental Protestantism. So many people are fooled by their extravagant claims of how close to God they are. They speak “great swelling words” (II Peter 2:18; Jude 16), but have very little to show for it once the public display is over and real life resumes. “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (I John 3:7). Jesus tells us: “When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10). He does not tell us to brag about how much we know and how much we have attained.

In his autobiography Paramhansa Yogananda tells of meeting a great Master, Ram Gopal Mazumdar. After telling Yogananda about his nearly half a century of intense spiritual practice in the Himalayas: “You are asking illumination from me,” the yogi continued musingly, “while I am wondering—inconsiderable as I am, and with the little meditation I have done—if I have succeeded in pleasing God, and what worth I may find in his eyes at the final reckoning.... God is Eternity Itself. To assume that one can fully know him by forty-five years of meditation is rather a preposterous expectation.” This is how the Masters speak.

They do not seem to know that every thought and wish is photographed and then preserved within the Book of Life to be revealed at any time the masters will. That which is thought, or wished, or done in darkest night shall be proclaimed in brightest day; that which is whispered in the ear within the secret place shall be made known upon the streets. (Aquarian Gospel 109:6-8)

Karma is the foundation of evolutionary existence along with rebirth which is brought about by karma. Karma comes first, then rebirth, and they keep reacting on and in each other until they are almost inseparable. Therefore a religion that does not have karma and reincarnation as cardinal tenets is no religion at all, but a superstitious speculation. Anyone who has escaped from such a religion into the light of true religion is very aware of this fact. All religions do not lead to the same place. Ignorant religions lead to more ignorance and True (wisdom) religions lead to more truth. One plunges into darkness, the other lifts into the light. This is no exaggeration but simple fact.

So spiritual Pharisees understand nothing about themselves, having no idea where they came from, where they are going and why they are here at the present moment. Confusion is the result, and a stubborn, dedicated confusion at that. Separating such a person from his delusion is impossible. Only his own innate nature will manage that when it finally begins to surface in his consciousness and lead him out of fantasyland. For the life of the spirit which is within shall certainly reveal itself in time.

And in the judgment day when all the books are opened up, these men, and every other man, shall be a-judged, not by what they've said or done, but by the ways in which they used the thoughts of God, and how the ethers of eternal love were made to serve; for men may make these ethers serve the carnal self, or serve the holy self within. (Aquarian Gospel 109:9-11)

I never heard this in the revival meetings we used to have twice a year back in the fundamentalist church! It was just sin, hell and damnation—and all at the whim of God.

The judgment day spoken of here is not at the end of the world but at the end of each life we live when the cloud lifts and we have to face the truth about ourself and the life we have just completed. Words and deeds will mean nothing. The only consideration will be the ways we either used, distorted or suppressed the “thoughts of God,” the seed-patterns inherent in us from the very beginning of our entry into relative creation. If we recognized and followed them, then all is well. If we twisted them to conform to our distorted understanding, then things are not well. And if we suppressed them, then we have lived in vain; our life is literally nothing in the great summing up. The question at the end of each life is: What have we done with it? Have we progressed toward the realization of God or not? If we have progressed, how much did we progress? God will be the measure of judgment.

This is a serious matter and dangerous to take lightly or ignore.

Behold, these men may kill the body of this flesh; but what of that? the flesh is but a transitory thing, and soon, by natural law, will pass; their slaughter only hastens nature's work a little time. And when they kill the flesh, they reach their bounds of power; they cannot kill the soul. But nature is the keeper of the soul as of the flesh, and in the harvest time of soul, the trees of life are all inspected by the judge; and every tree that bears no fruit of good is plucked up by the roots and cast into the flames. (Aquarian Gospel 109:12-16)

As the Gita says, "Of the born, death is certain" (2:27). Therefore the question is only when death will come, not if it will come. But that which is beyond the body, the subtle levels which include the mind, the will and the destiny (karma) they create, must be taken much more seriously than the body which is only one in a series of rebirths. The subtle bodies persist through many lives, though they are continually changing in response to our experiences in the physical and subtle worlds as we move between earthly incarnation and astral or causal incarnation.

When we leave this world and enter the subtler worlds we undergo a profound evaluation which determines what will be our experience in those worlds as well as when we will be returning to this world and what will happen to us there. In other words, our karma is examined and those karmas are selected which are to be dealt with. All the good karma ("fruits" of life) is preserved and the negative karma-fruits are scheduled to be dissolved in the purifying fires of life itself. So the "flames" spoken of here are the purifications necessary to eliminate our bad karma. They are not punishment. They are blessing. For all things exist solely for good.

Who then shall you regard? Not him who has the power to kill the flesh, and nothing more. Regard the mighty one who has the power to dissolve both soul and body in the flames of nature's fire. (Aquarian Gospel 109:17, 18)

Jesus tells us to regard, not fear, the divine power of purification and balancing and take it seriously. Factors that kill the physical body are of little consequence, but those which destroy the subtle bodies that are distorted beyond repair and purification are certainly to be taken into account and respected. They are for our benefit. Our English translations of the Bible make the corresponding passages sound like Jesus is telling us to not fear people but fear God. This is not the message at all. God and all that he has provided for our evolution are not to be feared but cooperated with. If pain must come it should be welcomed, but if we become "workers together with him" (II Corinthians 6:1) we will not be creating situations that will result in pain. Any future suffering will be from old, earlier misdeeds.

So we must respect and act in accordance with the laws of cause and effect, and the moral and spiritual principles we have been given. And we must be sure we understand them fully and know how to apply them. Then peace and happiness will

be our assured future.

Notice Jesus speaks of “the flames of nature’s fire,” not fires of hell and retribution. There are cosmic laws whose violation kindles the fires of suffering. They do not cause the suffering; that is the reaction to the true causes: ignorance and transgression of the laws. We must become truly rational and wise. Then we will live life as it should be lived.

But man is king; he may direct his thoughts, his loves, his life, and gain the prize of everlasting life. (Aquarian Gospel 109:19)

Jesus does not say humans *shall be* king or Master, but that they are such *right now*. It is common for human beings to have no idea of the inner powers they possess, and nearly every aspect of society, including religion, reinforces that unawareness and even actively denies those abilities. Nevertheless, we can indeed direct all our faculties and open up the gates of everlasting life and pass through into immortality.

And you are not abandoned in your struggle for the crown of life. Your Father lives, and you shall live.

God has a care for every living thing. He numbers stars, and suns, and moons; he numbers angels, men and every thing below; the birds, the flowers, the trees; the very petals of the rose he knows by name, and every one is numbered in his Book of Life; and every hair upon your head, and every drop of blood within your veins, he knows by number and by rhythm.

He hears the birdling’s call, the cricket’s chirp, the glow worm’s song; and not a sparrow falls to earth without his knowledge and consent. A sparrow seems a thing of little worth; yea, five of them are worth two farthings in the market place, and yet God cares for every one of them.

Will he not care much more for you who bear his image in your soul? (Aquarian Gospel 109:20-27)

You are not abandoned in your struggle for the crown of life. At all times God and all the forces of good and truth are present to help us. It is just our limitation that keeps us from perceiving this. This is revealed in an incident from Jesus’ previous life as the prophet Elisha. The king of Syria learned that Elisha was able to tell the king of Israel everything the Syrian king said in his own tent. So: “[The king of Syria] said, Go and spy where [Elisha] is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire

round about Elisha” (II Kings 6: 13-17).

We should never think that we are alone. God and his saints and angels are ever ready to help us. Sometimes because of past karma we have to wait to experience that, but we will in time. We shift back and forth and change like a weathervane, but God, “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17), is not like us. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear” (Psalms 46:1-2).

Your Father lives, and you shall live. Why? Because we are ONE. No, we are not the same—God is infinite and we are finite—but we are all divine consciousness, divine light. God is the whole and we are the parts. There is a distinction between us and God, obviously, but there is no essential difference. An individual wave is not the ocean, but the ocean is the wave.

Our life is God’s life, and God’s perfection is potentially ours. There is no spiritual level we cannot attain, because we share in God’s all-encompassing being. Just as God cannot go against his own nature or cancel it, neither can we, though we can avoid expressing our innate divinity for a while. But eventually it must surface. God cannot “deny himself” (II Timothy 2:13), and neither can we. But we can try to and thereby cause ourselves immeasurable suffering. The choice is ours.

God has a care for every living thing.... and every one is numbered in his Book of Life. Everyone and everything is rooted in the infinite Life that is God. We can lose awareness of that fact, but it cannot be weakened or changed. We are all predestined to attain the knowledge: “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30).

Will he not care much more for you who bear his image in your soul? “Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God,” (Romans 8: 38-39). And this is not a mechanical thing, but the result of God’s eternal, personal love for each thing that exists. The Bhagavad Gita expresses this very clearly:

“Among those who are purified by their good deeds, there are four kinds of men who worship me: the world-weary, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for happiness and the man of spiritual discrimination. The man of discrimination is the highest of these. He is continually united with me. He devotes himself to me always, and to no other. For I am very dear to that man, and he is dear to me. Certainly, all these are noble: but the man of discrimination *I see as my very Self*. For he alone loves me because I am myself: the last and only goal of his devoted heart” (Bhagavad Gita 7:16-18).

“My devotees dwell within me always: I also show forth and am seen within them. Though a man be soiled with the sins of a lifetime, let him but love me, rightly resolved, in utter devotion: I see no sinner, that man is holy” (Bhagavad Gita 9:29-30).

Fear not to make confession of the Christ before the sons of men, and God will own you as his sons and daughters in the presence of the host of heaven.

If you deny the Christ before the sons of men, then God will not receive you as his own before the hosts of heaven. And more I say, Fear not when men shall bring you up before the rulers of the land to answer for your faith. Behold, the Holy Breath shall teach you in your hour of need what you should say, and what is best left unsaid. (Aquarian Gospel 109:28-31)

Jesus is not speaking of us going about making a nuisance of ourselves by “witnessing for Christ” and expounding the Christ as a mere theological abstraction. Rather, he is speaking of our confessing–affirming–the truth of “Christ in you the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27), the Christhood of all sentient beings and of ourselves. If we unwaveringly bear witness to this sublime reality, then we shall be revealed as the children of God. But if we deny it and label others and ourselves as sinners, corrupt and depraved by nature, then our divine sonship shall not manifest and we will not awaken from the dream of sin into the reality of holiness. So it is and shall be.

And then the Christines went again to teach the multitudes. (Aquarian Gospel 109:32)

Chapter One Hundred Ten

And Miriam stood before the surging crowd, and casting up her eyes to heaven she sung anew the song of victory:

Bring forth the harp, the vina and the lyre; bring forth the highest sounding cymbal, all ye choirs of heaven. Join in the song, the new, new song.

The Lord of hosts has stooped to hear the cries of men, and lo, the citadel of Beelzebub is shaking as a leaf before the wind.

The sword of Gideon is again unsheathed.

The Lord, with his own hand has pulled far back the curtains of the night; the sun of truth is flooding heaven and earth;

The demons of the dark, of ignorance and death, are fleeing fast; are disappearing as the dew beneath the morning sun.

God is our strength and song; is our salvation and our hope, and we will build anew a house for him;

Will cleanse our hearts, and purify their chambers, every one. We are the temple of the Holy Breath.

We need no more a tent within the wilderness; no more a temple built with hands.

We do not seek the Holy Land, nor yet Jerusalem.

We are the tent of God; we are his temple built without the sound of edged tools.

We are the Holy Land; we are the New Jerusalem; Allelujah, praise the Lord! (Aquarian Gospel 110:1-12)

And Miriam stood before the surging crowd, and casting up her eyes to heaven she sung anew the song of victory. Spiritual song was her exalted ministry. This was only possible because she was totally dedicated to God—none other. If she and Jesus had failed in the test in the temple (Chapter Fifty-three) and become mythical “soulmates,” neither of them could ever have accomplished their true missions in life. Think of a world devoid of the saving example, power and living presence of Jesus! So it would have been if he and Miriam had shamefully loved themselves more than God. Then the world would have another guilty pair mired in materiality and sensual life, resenting monastics and celibates and shrilly holding forth on how they had done the right thing in “loving” and “being like others.” Just two more mediocrities to eventually fade away and be forgotten by the world they clung to and served. We can profitably look once more on the triumph of Jesus and Miriam:

“Then [Jesus] said, Lo, I have conquered every foe that I have met, and shall I now be conquered by this carnal love? My Father sent me here to show the power of love divine, that love that reaches every living thing. Shall this pure, universal love be all absorbed by carnal love? Shall I forget all creatures else, and lose my life in this fair maiden, though she is the highest type of beauty, purity and love?

“Into its very depths his soul was stirred, and long he wrestled with this angel-idol of his heart. But when the day was almost lost, his higher ego rose in might; he found himself again, and then he said, Although my heart shall break I will not fail in this my hardest task; I will be victor over carnal love.

“And when again the maiden came, and offered him her hand and heart, he said, Fair one, your very presence thrills me with delight; your voice is benediction to my soul; my human self would fly with you, and be contented in your love; but all the world is craving for a love that I have come to manifest. I must, then, bid you go; but we will meet again; our ways on earth will not be cast apart. I see you in the hurrying throngs of earth as minister of love; I hear your voice in song, that wins the hearts of men to better things.

“And then in sorrow and in tears the maiden went away, and Jesus was again alone. And instantly the great bells of the temple rang; the singers sung a new, new song; the grotto blazed with light. The hierophant himself appeared, and said, All hail! triumphant Logos, hail! The conqueror of carnal love stands on the heights. And then he placed in Jesus’ hands a scroll on which was written, LOVE DIVINE” (Aquarian Gospel 53:18-32).

What a glorious victory—a victory that lives on in the hearts and lives of his true disciples. As I pointed out, even Nikos Kazantzakis in *The Last Temptation of Christ* understood what the Aquarian Gospel declares to us.

Bring forth the harp, the vina and the lyre; bring forth the highest sounding cymbal, all ye choirs of heaven. Join in the song, the new, new song. Yes; the song of God’s eternal love is the ever-new song.

The Lord of hosts has stooped to hear the cries of men, and lo, the citadel of Beelzebub is shaking as a leaf before the wind. In Jesus the love of God for mankind was blazing forth and liberating those who took refuge in him from the deadly prison of the world.

The sword of Gideon is again unsheathed. “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). Yet it was conquering the world. The spirit always vanquishes the material, just as in the following account of Gideon.

“And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host. And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

“And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of

all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

“So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled” (Judges 7:13-21).

The Lord, with his own hand has pulled far back the curtains of the night; the sun of truth is flooding heaven and earth; the demons of the dark, of ignorance and death, are fleeing fast; are disappearing as the dew beneath the morning sun. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). The Only-begotten of the Father is both Word and Will. Abiding in the heart of all things he produces the cosmic drama of evolution and devolution. He both pulls back and draws the curtains of Light according to what phase of evolution the creation is entering. In the advent of Jesus Christ the Light that is Life was being made manifest. As a magnifying glass focuses the rays of the sun, in the same way a perfected son of God relays the holy Light to all within creation, shining from within, from the core of their being. There is no way the Light can be forever resisted for it is coming from within all things.

God is our strength and song; is our salvation and our hope, and we will build anew a house for him; will cleanse our hearts, and purify their chambers, every one. We are the temple of the Holy Breath. God “dwelleth not in temples made with hands” (Acts 7:48; 17:24). But true temples of God, purified by the Divine Presence within, can now be raised to the glory of God. All those who live in the Light shall be living temples. For “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). God has no houses, only sons. Being ourselves spirits, he can dwell in us.

We need no more a tent within the wilderness; no more a temple built with hands. We do not seek the Holy Land, nor yet Jerusalem. We are the tent of God; we are his temple built without the sound of edged tools. We are the Holy Land; we are the New Jerusalem; Allelujah, praise the Lord! “With my spirit within me will I seek thee” and find thee within, for thou, “my Father, and I are one” (Isaiah 26:9; John 10:30).

And when the song was done the multitudes exclaimed, Praise God.

And Jesus said, Behold the way! The sons of men have groped for ages in the darkness of Egyptian night. The Pharaohs of sense have bound them with their chains. But God has whispered through the mists of time and told them of a land of liberty and love. And he has sent his Logos forth to light the way.

The Red Sea rolls between the promised land and Egypt’s sands. The Red Sea is the carnal mind. Behold, the Logos reaches out his hand; the sea divides; the carnal mind is reft in twain; the sons of men walk through dry shod. The Pharaohs of sense would stay them in their flight; the waters of the sea return; the Pharaohs of sense are lost and men are free.

For just a little while men tread the wilderness of Sin; the Logos leads the way; and when at last men stand upon the Jordan's brink, these waters stay, and men step forth into their own" (Aquarian Gospel 110:13-24)

The sons of men have groped for ages in the darkness of Egyptian night. The Pharaohs of sense have bound them with their chains. Material consciousness both blinds and binds us.

But God has whispered through the mists of time and told them of a land of liberty and love. In the form of intuition the subtle whisper of God from the eternal core of our being has awakened us to higher possibilities of life.

And he has sent his Logos forth to light the way. From without God has sent master-teachers, themselves embodiments of Light, to speak to our intellects and to show us the way by their example.

The Red Sea rolls between the promised land and Egypt's sands. The Red Sea is the carnal mind. The mind both separates us from our divine heritage and leads to it.

Behold, the Logos reaches out his hand; the sea divides; the carnal mind is reft in twain; the sons of men walk through dry shod. But when the truth brought by the master teachers enters our mind, it opens before us and no longer impedes us but becomes itself the path.

The Pharaohs of sense would stay them in their flight; the waters of the sea return; the Pharaohs of sense are lost and men are free. The freed and illumined intelligence dissolves the bonds of sense and ignorance, setting us free.

For just a little while men tread the wilderness of Sin; the Logos leads the way; and when at last men stand upon the Jordan's brink, these waters stay, and men step forth into their own. Our own enlightened mind leads us into and out of the ways of spiritual endeavor until it, too, parts and passes away and we enter into pure spirit consciousness that is our true Self and we are free.

Chapter One Hundred Eleven

And Jesus taught the multitudes; and while he spoke a man stood forth and said, Rabboni, hear my plea: My father died and left a large estate; my brother seized it all, and now refuses me my share. I pray that you will bid him do the right, and give what is mine. And Jesus said, I am not come to be a judge in such affairs; I am no henchman of the court. (Aquarian Gospel 111:1-4)

There is no doubt that ethics which enable us to act in a right way is very important, yet a religion or philosophy that only concentrates on right and wrong activity (and maybe a bit on right and wrong thought) is only of value to those who have not yet awakened inwardly and opened that level of spiritual intuition that includes what we call the conscience. A person perfect in ethics still is subject to illusion, birth and death. What he needs is a higher form of religion: the path to the realization of his own divine Self and God, the Self of his Self.

Christianity has become degraded into a system of Do This/Do Not Do That, and Believe This/Do Not Believe That. Jesus certainly knew what was right, but he did not come to speak in an elementary way that his hearers had already heard, even if they had not heeded it. Jesus came to tell people that they had one problem: ignorance of themselves and God, and that their one problem had one solution: knowledge of themselves and God. This is the Path of the Masters: the pathway to God. There is a lot of talk in some religions about loving God, but how can we love someone we do not know?

In my early teens I saw a remarkable series that was broadcast by an interdenominational church association early on Sunday mornings. In it, Saint Paul suddenly materialized outside a town and began encountering what people thought was Christianity but was childish superstition. At one point Saint Paul gave a group of people little images that they all cooed and oohed over and caressed and “loved” like a little girl with her “baby doll.” They were all feeling so happy and—yes—even fulfilled, when Saint Paul knocked the tiny idols out of their hands and told them: “None of that is God. They are only your ideas of God which you love because you love your egos! Turn to God and leave this all behind!

So what we need is very simple: the experience of God which includes knowing God. And the way to that is simple: yoga meditation.

God sent me not to force a man to do the right. In every man there is a sense of right; but many men regard it not. The fumes that rise from selfishness have formed a crust about their sense of right that veils their inner light, so that they cannot comprehend nor recognize the rights of other men. This veil you cannot tear away by force of arms, and there is naught that can dissolve this crust but knowledge and love of God. (Aquarian Gospel 111:5-8)

God sent me not to force a man to do the right. Consider how coercive traditional forms of Christianity have been for two thousand years. Hell and damnation is the fuel they run on. But Jesus says he had not come for anything like that. God does not want prisoners or slaves, he wants sons of God that seek him because they want to know him. They do not need to be promised anything else and cajoled or threatened into seeking God. His true children cannot be stopped from seeking him!

In every man there is a sense of right; but many men regard it not. The essential nature of each person is a divine spirit, and the true heart of each person is like the compass needle that always points north. Every single person knows in a deep inner level what needs to be done. But just as the compass will not point north if it gets clogged or covered over with mud, so each of us must purify himself so our inmost heart can feel and respond to God. Meditation basically is purification and attunement. When the right degree of purification and attunement is attained, then the path to God lies clearly before us. Until then even God does not expect human beings to know and do the right. That is what divine mercy is all about. As Saint Teresa of Avila said, God's justice is his understanding of us.

The fumes that rise from selfishness have formed a crust about their sense of right that veils their inner light, so that they cannot comprehend nor recognize the rights of other men. This being so, we should not expect people to even care about, much less seek, God.

This veil you cannot tear away by force of arms, and there is naught that can dissolve this crust but knowledge and love of God. And that knowledge and love is realized by each person for himself. No one else can do it for us, nor can anyone adequately motivate us. Spiritual life is totally self-initiated because is really an expression of our nature. Like the sun behind thick clouds, it need only be revealed and permitted to shine.

While men are in the mire, the skies seem far away; when men are on the mountain top, the skies are near, and they can almost touch the stars.

Then Jesus turned and to the twelve he said, Behold the many in the mire of carnal life! The leaven of truth will change the miry clay to solid rock, and men can walk and find the path that leads up to the mountain top. You cannot haste; but you can scatter forth this leaven with a generous hand. When men have learned the truth that bears upon its face the law of right, then they will haste to give every man his dues (Aquarian Gospel 111:9-13)

While men are in the mire, the skies seem far away; when men are on the mountain top, the skies are near, and they can almost touch the stars. Often external things and situations are reflections of our own minds and predispositions. The most obvious is the childish habit of saying that something is objectively and absolutely good merely because we like it. We project our ideas and experience on the object rather than see it in its true nature. So here Jesus is saying that when our consciousness is mired in materiality and ignorance, the heights of heaven—high levels of consciousness—seem far away and impossible to attain. But when our consciousness has risen and become freed from materiality then we feel that higher consciousness and ascent to

the higher evolutionary planes can definitely be accomplished, and we get busy and do it. We could express it another way: When mired in the mud, faith is weak or absent; when we have ascended in consciousness, faith really is: “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

Then Jesus turned and to the twelve he said, Behold the many in the mire of carnal life! The leaven of truth will change the miry clay to solid rock, and men can walk and find the path that leads up to the mountain top. This is marvelously optimistic, and best of all it is the truth. In time all will encounter truth, comprehend, accept and apply it. When that is done, what now hinders them will be the stepping stones that take them to the heights of opening consciousness.

You cannot haste; but you can scatter forth this leaven with a generous hand. When men have learned the truth that bears upon its face the law of right, then they will haste to give every man his dues. We cannot force the opening of anyone’s awareness, but we can broadcast the leaven of truth generously and await its fruition. It may be right away or far in the future, but its effect will be inevitable and inescapable.

Then to the people Jesus said, Take heed, and covet not. The wealth of men does not consist in what they seem to have—in lands, in silver and in gold. These things are only borrowed wealth. No man can corner up the gifts of God. The things of nature are the things of God, and what is God’s belongs to every man alike.

The wealth of soul lies in the purity of life, and in the wisdom that descends from heaven (Aquarian Gospel 111:14-17)

The wealth of men does not consist in what they seem to have—in lands, in silver and in gold. These things are only borrowed wealth. No man can corner up the gifts of God. The things of nature are the things of God, and what is God’s belongs to every man alike. Saint Paul expressed it very simply: “We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (I Timothy 6:7). So, as Jesus says, everything we think we possess in this world is only borrowed. Nothing in this or any world is ours but God, who is our essential being. Therefore we possess infinity. Anything else is much less, and a denial of our true nature as part of Infinite Life.

The wealth of soul lies in the purity of life, and in the wisdom that descends from heaven. The acquisition of these two things are all that should be the central focus of our mind. To gain purity of life and divine wisdom is the occupation of a lifetime. Every other pursuit should be both peripheral and minimal. This is not fanaticism, it is simple good sense. Furthermore, it must be realized that yoga alone is the means of acquiring these two necessary things.

Behold, a rich man’s ground brought forth abundantly; his barns were far too small to hold his grain, and to himself he said, What shall I do? I must not give my grain away; I must not let it go to waste; and then he said, This will I do; I will tear down these little barns and build up larger ones; there I will store away my grain and I will say, My soul take now your ease; you have

enough for many years; eat, drink and fill yourself and be content. But God looked down and saw the man; he saw his selfish heart and said, You foolish man, this night your soul will quit its house of flesh; then who will have your garnered wealth? (Aquarian Gospel 111:18-23)

The key to this man's character is found in the telling words: "I must not give my grain away." Sri Ramakrishna said that there are people who will refuse if you ask them to urinate in a particular spot, because they fear you might get some gain from it. Selfishness is the firstborn of ego, so close they are virtually one.

I have known such terrible people. A very wealthy and landed man who lived near my hometown was the owner of a cemetery. He hated selling even an inch of earth, and so every time he sold a cemetery plot (and he sold many) he would sit and weep loudly and curse, saying: "These G-D fools are taking over my cemetery!" I knew a man who had a very successful popcorn stand. He used up a great many metal containers of popcorn oil and usually just put them out for trash collection. My father had a use for one such container and asked him if he could have one. Naturally the man agreed and I went with my father to get it. As we were walking away, from inside the house I heard his son who was ten or eleven years old start crying and wailing: "Go get it back, Dad! Go get it back!" He preferred to send it to the dump rather than have someone get use from it. This is a true spiritual psychosis.

In his greed this man of the parable made plans to hoard every grain he could. He apparently planned to eat all of it himself! At least his words imply this. As I say: psychosis. And shortsightedness, for he lost it all through death. Foolish, indeed.

You men of Galilee, lay not up treasures in the vaults of earth; accumulated wealth will blight your soul. God does not give men wealth to hoard away in secret vaults. Men are but stewards of God's wealth, and they must use it for the common good. To every steward who is true to self, to other men, to every thing that is, the Lord will say, Well done. (Aquarian Gospel 111:24-26)

There is nothing wrong with making money, even lots of money. What is wrong is holding on to it and not sharing it willingly and gladly. It is that kind of accumulated wealth that will blight the soul. Money is essentially life energy, and there is a whole esoteric side to money and the way it is handled. Very few people have the interior strength to possess great wealth. Instead of possessing the wealth, the wealth begins possessing them.

I suppose many of us have met "rich kids" who seemed completely intellectually, morally and socially paralyzed by their parents' money. Once a friend of mine commented regarding a banker's son: "If he wasn't a 'rich kid' he would be nothing." Actually, I think he was wrong. If he had not been a rich kid the money would not have been draining away his life energy. For it does just that. Money possesses a magnetism that can totally overpower a person and drain him of all but

minimal energy, physical and mental.

One of the characteristics of the kshatriya ruling caste is the ability to handle tremendous amounts of wealth without being in the least affected by it. I have known several (maha)rajas and (maha)ranis, and without exception they could easily keep above the potential destructive power of money and possessions. And when they turned to spiritual life, especially yoga, they made marked progress. They were natural conquerors and rulers of the conquered.

Chapter One Hundred Twelve

And Jesus left the multitudes and went with his disciples up to Mary's home; and as they sat about the board to dine he said, My little flock, fear not; it is your Father's will that you shall rule the kingdom of the soul.

A ruler in the house of God is servant of the Lord of Hosts, and man cannot serve God except by serving men. (Aquarian Gospel 112:1-3)

My little flock, fear not; it is your Father's will that you shall rule the kingdom of the soul. Here we have one of so many indications that Levi Dowling is conveying to us the actual teachings of Jesus as compared to the official Gospels that have been filtered through the minds of imperial servants of a state religion.

The kingdom we are to inherit and rule is not the external "heaven" that exoteric religion throughout the world promises its followers, but our own soul, our complete psychic makeup which comprises our individual existence within God. We are to rule ourselves. Only in that way will we be truly free sons of God, living consciously within God.

A ruler in the house of God is servant of the Lord of Hosts, and man cannot serve God except by serving men. Yet in our freedom we are servants of God. How can that be, since God needs nothing from us? We are servants of God in two ways. First, we follow his plan of evolution and liberation for us. Second, we serve his other divine sons who are struggling upward along with us. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

A servant in the house of God cannot be servant in the house of wealth; nor in the synagogue of sense. If you are tied to lands, or bonds, or wealth of earth, your hearts are knit to things of earth; for where your treasures are there are your hearts.

Dispose of all your wealth, distribute it among the poor, and put your trust in God, and you nor yours will ever come to want. This is a test of faith, and God will not accept the service of the faithless one. (Aquarian Gospel 112:4-7)

A servant in the house of God cannot be servant in the house of wealth; nor in the synagogue of sense. Many people do good to others from egotistical, selfish motives. So it is not enough to just serve others, the proper mindset must prevail in the servers. Those who are centered on material gain and sense-enjoyment cannot serve in the house of God because they cannot enter the house of God, which is not a building but a state of consciousness that reflects the divine in all things.

If you are tied to lands, or bonds, or wealth of earth, your hearts are knit to things of earth; for where your treasures are there are your hearts. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and

despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). Mammon means treasure or riches. As Jesus says, if we are intent on earthly acquisitions our heart will be centered on earthly things rather than heavenly. Whatever we may say, our hearts will be turned from God and fixed on earth. For: “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8). Therefore: “purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 4:8).

Dispose of all your wealth, distribute it among the poor, and put your trust in God, and you nor yours will ever come to want. This is a test of faith, and God will not accept the service of the faithless one. This is the way to be single-minded, though few like the idea and fewer still will follow it.

The time is ripe; your Master comes upon the clouds; the eastern sky is glowing with his presence now. Put on reception robes; gird up your loins; trim up your lamps and fill them well with oil, and be prepared to meet your Lord; when you are ready, he will come.

Thrice blessed are the servants who are ready to receive their Lord. Behold, for he will gird himself, and will prepare a sumptuous feast for every one, and he himself will serve.

It matters not when he shall come; it may be at the second watch; it may be at the third; but blessed are the servants who are ready to receive. You cannot leave your door ajar and go to sleep, and wait in blissful ignorance of the fleeting time; for thieves will surely come and take away your goods and bind and carry you away to robbers’ dens.

And if you are not carried forth, the Master when he comes will not regard a sleeping guard as friend, but as a foe. Beloved, these are times when every man must be awake and at his post, for none can tell the hour nor the day when man shall be revealed. (Aquarian Gospel 112:8-16)

“When [Jesus] was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Luke 17:20-21). Therefore the preceding verses cannot be literal or material, but purely spiritual, a matter of the inner disposition of each individual.

The time is ripe; your Master comes upon the clouds; the eastern sky is glowing with his presence now. Nothing happens before the time. However incomprehensible or chaotic the world around us may seem, it is at all times really a manifestation of precise laws. Again, evolution is the bedrock reality. So when the aspirant has ripened, has evolved enough, the Master approaches. Now the Master can take many forms: direct revelation from Spirit, a wise or fully illumined teacher, finding a needed teaching from some source or even from personal intuition: whatever will move us along the evolutionary path. It may be amazing and glamorous or it may be completely mundane. Many years ago a woman told me about how her husband who seemed devoid of any spiritual awareness was instantly awakened and transformed just by hearing a single word, “eternity,” from a conversation as he was

walking down a street. His life was totally revolutionized and he became an active spiritual teacher for the rest of his life. There is no knowing what treasure is buried in the field of our subconscious just awaiting the right trigger or Master.

The eastern sky of our spiritual awareness begins to be activated within us. That is the presence of the Master. Again, that takes many forms. One person heard the words spoken out of the air: “Christ comes today!” and that day she met Yogananda. Another one of Yogananda’s disciples told me that one morning she began singing a song spontaneously about enlightenment. The words just emerged of themselves. That evening she met Yogananda.

Put on reception robes; gird up your loins; trim up your lamps and fill them well with oil, and be prepared to meet your Lord; when you are ready, he will come. Do not just sit and wait for the Master. You must prepare yourself.

Put on reception robes. First you must clothe yourself in those states of mind and heart that will make you ready and able to receive the Master. Without them you may not even know he has come.

Gird up your loins. Then you must discipline yourself and make yourself capable of real and far-reaching changes.

Trim up your lamps and fill them well with oils. Your mind and senses must be purified, empowered and oriented toward subtle perception through the development of interior awareness.

When you are ready, he will come. His advent will not be the Master’s choice, it will be yours. The moment you are truly ready, then he will come. The only choice that enters into it is yours. That is why Swami Sri Yukteswar once told an erudite ignoramus: “I recommend an unheard-of experiment. Examine your thoughts unremittingly for twenty-four hours. Then wonder no longer at God’s absence.”

Thrice blessed are the servants who are ready to receive their Lord. Behold, for he will gird himself, and will prepare a sumptuous feast for every one, and he himself will serve. When we are ready, everything will be supplied to us. Nothing will be lacking.

It matters not when he shall come; it may be at the second watch; it may be at the third; but blessed are the servants who are ready to receive. It does not matter if the Master comes early or late: just as long as he comes. Then only blessedness prevails for those who have prepared themselves. Those not so prepared might as well not meet the Master for they will either not recognize him or have no interest in him. This I have seen repeated over and over. The great Masters will be met and the unprepared will wander off without having any idea of what they are leaving behind, and which is now lost to them for this incarnation.

Over and over I have been equally amazed at the mercy and generosity of the Masters and at the utter incomprehension and disregard for them of those that considered themselves sincere (even fervent) seekers. I have seen Masters open the door and offer all that was needed, only to have their bounty unseen or ignored as the seekers drifted off into the mists of ignorance. This is a terrible and tragic thing indeed.

I once met a woman who complained to me that she had spent three years in

India searching and not finding a single worthy teacher. When I questioned her I found that she had met many great saints and Masters but had not “seen” them. One of the most surprising phenomena I have encountered was the ability of so many people to shrug off their contact with Swami Sivananda, saying he was just a sweet old man but nothing more.

You cannot leave your door ajar and go to sleep, and wait in blissful ignorance of the fleeting time; for thieves will surely come and take away your goods and bind and carry you away to robbers’ dens. That is, the supposed seekers will only find thieves and robbers and become their disciples, sinking further into the mire of ignorance and evil. This I have witnessed also.

And if you are not carried forth, the Master when he comes will not regard a sleeping guard as friend, but as a foe. I have seen many that did not have the misfortune to be duped by a false teacher be absolutely stonewalled by real Masters. Many saints were so kind as to be open to people I brought to meet them, though nothing came of it. But other times when I brought obvious duds to meet the saints, they were adamant in their refusal to even speak with them. As one saint asked me about a man I had brought to him: “Why carry around empty space?” Whoops!

Beloved, these are times when every man must be awake and at his post, for none can tell the hour nor the day when man shall be revealed. No wonder Yogananda used to come out on the platform and call out to the people: “How do you feel?” And have them call back: “Awake and ready!” Awake and ready is what we must be at all times.

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching:... Be ye therefore ready also” (Luke 12:(35-37, 40).

And Peter said, Lord is this parable for us, or for the multitudes? And Jesus, Why need you ask? God is not a man that he should show respect for one and cast another off. Whoever will may come and gird himself, and trim his lamp, and find a turret in the tower of life where he may watch, and be prepared to meet the Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 112:17-19)

And Peter said, Lord is this parable for us, or for the multitudes? And Jesus, Why need you ask? God is not a man that he should show respect for one and cast another off. This is very different from what we find in the Bible. There it is presented that Jesus deliberately blinded people by teaching in parables they would not understand so only the “elect” or the chosen would learn the truths of the kingdom. Here we see that was not so. Jesus’ teaching was for anyone who would—and could—listen and follow. Acceptance and rejection is never on God’s part, but on ours.

Whoever will may come and gird himself, and trim his lamp, and find a turret in the tower of life where he may watch, and be prepared to meet the Lord. Those who will elevate their consciousness and be vigilant in preparing and watching for the Lord will not be disappointed.

But you, as children of the light, have come, and you have learned the language of the court, and may stand forth and lead the way.

But you may wait, and think that you are ready to receive the Lord, and still he does not come.

And you may grow impatient and begin to long for carnal ways again, and may begin to exercise your rule; to beat, and otherwise maltreat the servants of the house, and fill yourselves with wine and meat. (Aquarian Gospel 112:20-23)

But you, as children of the light, have come, and you have learned the language of the court, and may stand forth and lead the way. But you may wait, and think that you are ready to receive the Lord, and still he does not come. And you may grow impatient and begin to long for carnal ways again, and may begin to exercise your rule; to beat, and otherwise maltreat the servants of the house, and fill yourselves with wine and meat.

This is extremely important since most people in the West who take up Eastern spiritual life usually abandon it eventually or settle down to a pointless mediocrity (usually with a statue of the Dancing Shiva somewhere in their house being the only memento of their past involvement) and get absolutely nowhere. This, too, I have been observing for over half a century.

Most people revert to the ways of their childhood and youth, retaining not a speck of oriental wisdom or ways. "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (II Peter 2:22). This is often very much the case. Returning to alcohol, meat, nicotine and sometimes other drugs, they erase whatever opening their minds ever underwent, and trivialization of every aspect of of their life usually results. The senses and powers of the mind that were once their servants are now neglected and abused as they fill themselves with wine and meat—unless they choose to become dedicated vegetarians and vegans solely for the purposes of health.

The philosophy and disciplines of the East evaporate very quickly when left aside. Such people rarely even engage in an "I used to be" reminiscence of their Eastern past unless it be to imply that someone presently with an Eastern involvement is childish, ridiculous or ignorant.

And what will say the Lord when he shall come? Behold, for he will cast the faithless servant from his house; and many years will come and go before he can be cleansed, and be thought worthy to receive his Lord.

The servant who has come into the light, who knows the Master's will and does it not; the trusted guard who goes to sleep within the turret of the tower of life, shall feel the lash of justice many times, while he who does not know his Master's will and does it not, will not receive the graver punishment. (Aquarian Gospel 112:24-27)

And what will say the Lord when he shall come? Behold, for he will cast the faithless servant

from his house; and many years will come and go before he can be cleansed, and be thought worthy to receive his Lord.

The servant who has come into the light, who knows the Master's will and does it not; the trusted guard who goes to sleep within the turret of the tower of life, shall feel the lash of justice many times, while he who does not know his Master's will and does it not, will not receive the graver punishment.

This is not because God is vengeful or miffed, but because it is a very strong act of will to turn from spirit back to darkness. Such an action is called a *sankalpa* in Sanskrit, a life-changing wish, desire, resolution or intention: an empowered act of will that persists in its effect. The opportunity tossed aside so easily is regained only with great effort and often great suffering. The waves of karma can rise and engulf such a person, carrying them far away from any hope of a quick or easy return. This is just how it is. We should not be afraid, but we should be cautious and prudent. It is true that ignorance and unawareness can mitigate the effects of spiritual folly, but not to such a degree that it is worth chancing the effects of turning from the pursuit of higher life and consciousness.

The man who comes and stands before the open door of opportunity and does not enter in, but goes his way, will come again and find the door made fast, and when he calls, the door will open not, the guard will say, you had the pass-word once, but you threw it away and now the Master knows you not; depart.

And verily I say to you, To whom much has been given, much is required; to whom a little has been given, a little only is required. (Aquarian Gospel 112:28-31)

The man who comes and stands before the open door of opportunity and does not enter in, but goes his way, will come again and find the door made fast, and when he calls, the door will open not, the guard will say, you had the pass-word once, but you threw it away and now the Master knows you not; depart. This is a terrible statement and I wish it was an exaggeration, but it is not. I have seen more than one person in this condition: wanting to return but finding the way blocked—by their own action.

Oh, what an awful picture!
To some it will come true;
And, oh, my brother, sister,
Shall it be I or you?

And verily I say to you, To whom much has been given, much is required; to whom a little has been given, a little only is required. This is true as well; it is a matter of totally precise karmic reaction. Life is a precious thing, but it is also a perilous thing to trifle with it.

Chapter One Hundred Thirteen

This chapter is concerned with the subject of peace, its true nature and the way it is attained by those of spiritual orientation. Before we begin it, I would like you to read the following from *Against False Union* by the Greek Orthodox writer Alexander Kalomiros. These words are very familiar to me, as I went through the entire text of the book word-by-word at least five times before it was printed by the monastery where I was a novice. A great deal was done to prevent the publishing of the book because its message is in opposition to the cheap and easy “jolly good fellowship” that characterized the early years of the ecumenical movement. At that time people who knew or cared little of their own religious background were busy having “ecumenical encounters” with others of equal ignorance and indifference. Naturally they found a great deal of common ground and unity, none of it actually real. But a lot of paper got written on and quite a number of hot dogs consumed. For as I say, things were cheap and easy, and ecumenical picnics and parties were not uncommon, though the academics with high degrees in theology were usually not involved. It was a kind of “upstairs-downstairs” situation where only the common clergy and laity got the hot dogs and potato salad, while the academics munched on sparse snacks as they sat around long tables in the hosting universities. But both were equally unrealistic and unfruitful. Today those who hold forth against ecumenism are clinging on to their first impressions of the movement, hurling fomentations and condemnations where a few mild snorts and giggles would be more appropriate. Those who thunder against the danger of a “MegaChurch” are as mistaken as are those who inveigh against the United Nations as the forerunner of a One World Government. Human nature by its perversity will prevent it.

Here is the entire first chapter of *Against False Union*, perhaps the only part of the book that is relevant today.

I. PEACE WITHOUT TRUTH

The tragic experience of recent generations has brought to humanity an intense thirst for peace. Peace is now considered a good higher than many ideals for which people formerly gladly shed their blood. Contributing very much to this is the fact that war is not what it often was in the past, that is, a conflict between injustice and justice, but has become a conflict without meaning between which the injustice of various parties has used to appear just in the eyes of its followers, has caused people to lose faith in the existence of justice and to fail to see anything before them that is worthy of defending. Thus war, in any form, seems to be something completely absurd.

This reluctance on the part of humanity for any kind of conflict would have been something admirable if it were the offspring of spiritual health. If injustice, hatred, and falsehood had ceased to exist, then peace would have been the

consummation of human happiness. Unity would have been a natural and not an artificial result. But something totally different is noticeable. Today when everyone is speaking of peace and unity, self-love and hatred, injustice and falsehood, ambition and greed, are at their zenith. All—everyone in his own way—speak of love for man, of love for humanity. But there has never existed a greater hypocrisy than that so-called love. Because love towards something theoretical, for something imaginary, such as the concept “humanity,” is equally theoretical and imaginary. It has no relation to love for the particular man we have before us. This love for a particular person, when it exists, is the only real love. It is the love for our neighbor that Christ asked.

This particular man with his imperfections and weaknesses, instead of being loved, has been hated in our time more than in any other age. Not only has he been hated, but he has been scorned and humiliated; he has been regarded as a “thing” without any particular value, a means for the attainment of “high goals,” a particle of the mass. Those who speak the most of love towards man and humanity, of peace and union, are precisely those who hate their neighbor, their acquaintance, the most. They love man the creation of their own imagination; they do not love man the reality. This worship of the idol “man” is in reality narcissism; it is the worship of the ego.

It would be naive, therefore, if one were to believe that the pacifist disposition that characterizes humanity today proceeds from love. These words about love are hypocrisy and self-deception. The desire for peace proceeds from the loss of ideals, from fear, and from the love of comfort. It is the desire to be left in peace to enjoy the good things of this earth. It is the conventional cooperation for the acquisition of goods which each person separately would not be able to acquire. It is a universal understanding upon something which has become the passion of the whole earth: sensualism and materialism. It is a product of necessity.

The peace of which the world speaks is an unconditional capitulation of everything good and sacred and great, and the dominance of pettiness, mediocrity, and lukewarmness. It is the blotting out of the personality of individuals and of peoples. It is a marmalade of compromises and calculations, a sea of hypocrisy, indifference for the truth, the betrayal of everything holy and sacred.

War is a terrible thing, a result of the fall of man, and no one is about to praise it. But the peace for which the world is haggling is something infinitely more fearful. A fever is a very unpleasant thing, but it shows at least that the organism is reacting against something bad which has entered it. The peace which they wish to bring is not, unfortunately, that which comes from the victory over evil, but that which comes from defeat. It is the feverlessness of a corpse.

At bottom, the peace which men pursue is not only a peace of weapons. It is the peace of conscience. They wish to reconcile good with evil, justice with

injustice, virtue with sin, truth with falsehood, in order to be able to make peace with their conscience.

Now we are ready for the Aquarian Gospel's teaching on peace.

Now, after they had dined, the guests and Jesus all were in a spacious hall in Mary's home. And then Lamaas said, Pray, tell us Lord, is this the dawn of peace? Have we come forth unto the time when men will war no more? Are you, indeed, the Prince of Peace that holy men said would come?

And Jesus said, Peace reigns today; it is the peace of death. A stagnant pool abides in peace. When waters cease to move they soon are laden with the seeds of death; corruption dwells in every drop.

The living waters always leap and skip about like lambs in Spring.

The nations are corrupt; they sleep within the arms of death and they must be aroused before it is too late. (Aquarian Gospel 113:1-9)

Are you, indeed, the Prince of Peace that holy men said would come? Even in childhood I was amazed at the "Prince of Peace" theme at Christmas time. Whether it was from past lives or I had listened at church when very small, I knew that Jesus had come to upset the whole evil order of things and conquer before peace could come to the individual, much less the world. And I intuited that the world did not want what Jesus came to do—just the opposite.

Peace reigns today; it is the peace of death. A stagnant pool abides in peace. When waters cease to move they soon are laden with the seeds of death; corruption dwells in every drop. This is the peace that pleases the world. As Jesus says, it is death, not life. That is why he told his disciples: "Peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27).

The living waters always leap and skip about like lambs in Spring. Activity and change—evolutionary activity and evolutionary change—are the characteristics of life. Yet there is stability because the actions and results are moving toward a single purpose: spiritual unfoldment. Higher consciousness is the polestar toward which the awakened soul journeys, the true north of Spirit. Sometimes the activity is outer and sometimes it is inner, but it never stops until perfection is reached. When we read the lives of saints we find them full of action and development. Even those living a hermitic life are in constant interior movement. Certainly peace is there as well, but a peace of steady inner growth, not the stagnation that prevails in the world of ignorance. The saints and sages live in a perpetual springtime of the spirit.

The nations are corrupt; they sleep within the arms of death and they must be aroused before it is too late. For they "sleep the sleep of death" (Psalms 13:3). Since life is in the spirit alone, their awakening must be spiritual, must come from within.

In life we find antagonists at work. God sent me here to stir unto its depths the waters of the sea of life. Peace follows strife; I come to slay this peace of death. The prince of peace must first be prince of strife. This leaven

of truth which I have brought to men will stir the demons up, and nations, cities, families will be at war within themselves.

The five that have been dwelling in a home of peace will be divided now, and two shall war with three; the son will stand against his sire; the mother and the daughter will contend; yea, strife will reign in every home.

The self and greed and doubt will rage into a fever heat, and then, because of me, the earth will be baptized in human blood. (Aquarian Gospel 113:9-14)

In life we find antagonists at work. God sent me here to stir unto its depths the waters of the sea of life. There are forces of spiritual inertia, spiritual unconsciousness, that would keep us in the stagnation of death, and if we are to live we need more than a little upheaval: we need a total stirring from top to bottom. Nothing must remain unmoved.

Peace follows strife; I come to slay this peace of death. The prince of peace must first be prince of strife. After the battle, then comes peace: but at a great price. Much must die and much must be changed forever. Even that which remains must be completely repolarized. That is why Saint Paul wrote: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). This is a great deal more than John Wesley's "strangely warmed" heart when he heard some hymns being sung. Rather: "be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). As Saint John put it symbolically: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" of samsara (Revelation 21:1). First there must come a total revolution, a complete turnaround, a shaking up from top to bottom with a great deal that is shaken being eliminated. It is no wonder that ignorant people often accuse those who have gone through this spiritual reworking of either being crazy, taking drugs or brainwashed.

This leaven of truth which I have brought to men will stir the demons up, and nations, cities, families will be at war within themselves. The presence of the truth which Jesus embodies will, when imparted to humanity, cause a reaction from the forces of evil which will then attack all that is good, which in turn will retaliate and war with evil. That is obvious. But there are two points that really must be considered if we are to intelligently engage in spiritual purification: 1) Truth stirs up demons. 2) This stirring results in inner warfare: conflict within the individual.

The peddlers of both religion and yoga present the same false prospect: When good and truth enter the life then all is at peace and everything is happy and assured. Of course none of their dupes really have this occur in their lives, though they may fantasize it just as worldlings daydream that their lives are fulfilled and ideal. Actually, when truth begins to vibrate within the aspirants, opposition arises and they experience the fact that they are a composite of positive and negative elements, that they are divided in their impulses and desires. Conflict results. If the negative elements are more numerous then a great turmoil occurs and tremendous upset. If the positive elements are more numerous then the conflict is not so severe. But whichever it may be, only one side is going to survive. The deciding factor will

be the insight and will of the individual. Sometimes there is great war and great victory. Other times there is moderate or little war and yet there is great defeat. It all lies in the intelligence and the will. This is a serious matter and it must be kept in mind.

Until the runner crosses the finish line he has not won; until the aspirant has attained perfection he is not illumined and free. This *must* be kept in mind. Failure is always possible until our attainment makes it impossible. And that is the last step. A lot of people have deluded themselves into thinking that they have attained Self-realization and liberation when they have been far, far from any such thing. I have known of many who held this delusion and they all ended up very badly, not just mediocre fools. A few were personally known to me. None of them ever woke up and saw their true state, but all crumbled away steadily until for them death was truly a merciful release.

The five that have been dwelling in a home of peace will be divided now, and two shall war with three; the son will stand against his sire; the mother and the daughter will contend; yea, strife will reign in every home. This is mostly about the subtle energy makeup of the individual. Each one of us has five bodies, from the physical to the most subtle light energy body; and each of these is formed of the five basic elements from which all creation is manifested. Because of conditionings from actions and emotions they have gotten into a state of disharmony. When the sadhaka begins the inner work of yoga meditation to bring these bodies into higher vibration it is only natural that conflict will result until he resolves it through devoted sadhana. Once he realizes that yoga has the power to correct all situations, his former conflict will develop into confidence and courage that his progress is assured.

The self [ego] and greed and doubt will rage into a fever heat, and then, because of me, the earth will be baptized in human blood. This is both individual and worldwide. The degree of this is determined by the yogi's karma and level of evolution, though it is seldom as awful as "baptism in blood" sounds. But on the level of the world and the nations, history proves that it is indeed terrible in its destruction and misery.

But right is king; and when the smoke is cleared away the nations will learn war no more; the Prince of Peace will come to reign.

Behold, the signs of what I say are in the sky; but men can see them not. When men behold a cloud rise in the west they say, A shower of rain will come, and so it does; and when the wind blows from the south they say, The weather will be hot; and it is so. Lo, men can read the signs of earth and sky, but they cannot discern the signs of Holy Breath; but you shall know.

The storm of wrath comes on; the carnal man will seek a cause to hale you into court, and cast you into prison cells. And when these times shall come let wisdom guide; do not resent. Resentment makes more strong the wrath of evil men. There is a little sense of justice and of mercy in the vilest men of earth.

By taking heed to what you do and say and trusting in the guidance of the

Holy Breath, you may inspire this sense to grow. You thus may make the wrath of men to praise the Lord.

The Christines went their way, and came unto Bethsaida and taught. (Aquarian Gospel 113:15-24)

But right is king; and when the smoke is cleared away the nations will learn war no more; the Prince of Peace will come to reign. Behold, the signs of what I say are in the sky; but men can see them not. When men behold a cloud rise in the west they say, A shower of rain will come, and so it does; and when the wind blows from the south they say, The weather will be hot; and it is so. Lo, men can read the signs of earth and sky, but they cannot discern the signs of Holy Breath; but you shall know. Whether “the Prince of Peace” will be a person, a spiritual presence, an awakening within humanity or the reappearance on earth of Jesus himself is not sure. But whoever is around for it can gain great blessing. The awakened souls will be intuitively aware of this future, even if only in a general way. The earthly, though, will understand nothing of it but will continue to sleep the sleep of death.

The storm of wrath comes on; the carnal man will seek a cause to hale you into court, and cast you into prison cells. This, too has certainly come about and continues.

And when these times shall come let wisdom guide; do not resent. Resentment makes more strong the wrath of evil men. There is a little sense of justice and of mercy in the vilest men of earth. This is extremely important: in a world of turmoil and evil we must continually sow the seeds of forgiveness and mercy as did Jesus when he prayed for those causing his death (Luke 23:34). Here Jesus tell us that resentment makes evil stronger and reminds us that even the worst of human beings yet retains a touch of justice and mercy. And for the sake of that we should forgive and love. As a result they may be awakened. It has been said of Sri Ramakrishna that he would search for a single spark of goodness in a person and would then fan it diligently until it became a flame of goodness. “He would see an ocean in a drop of good,” according to his associates. We should be the same.

By taking heed to what you do and say and trusting in the guidance of the Holy Breath, you may inspire this sense to grow. You thus may make the wrath of men to praise the Lord. This is not a promise, but a principle of fundamental truth revealed to us by Jesus. It is not easy to follow, but the results will be virtually infinite. Each one of us can begin to change the world if we first purify and change ourselves. Then we, too, can teach and “work the works of God” (John 6:28).

Chapter One Hundred Fourteen

As Jesus taught, a man stood forth and said, Rabboni, may I speak? And Jesus said, Say on. And then the man spoke out and said, A storm upon the sea last night wrecked many fishing boats, and scores of men went down to death, and lo, their wives and children are in need; what can be done to help them in their sore distress? (Aquarian Gospel 114:1-4)

Jesus came with a spiritual message; but spiritual life and physical life go hand in hand, so Jesus asked the man to speak and tell of the need of the families of those who had drowned. For we are to love God above all, but our neighbors as ourselves secondly.

“A lawyer asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:35-40).

And Jesus said, A worthy plea. You men of Galilee, take heed. We may not bring again to life these men, but we can succor those who looked to them for daily bread. You stewards of the wealth of God, an opportunity has come; unlock your vaults; bring forth your hoarded gold; bestow it with a lavish hand. This wealth was laid aside for just times as these; when it was needed not, lo, it was yours to guard; But now it is not yours, for it belongs to those who are in want, and if you give it not you simply bring upon your heads the wrath of God. It is not charity to give to those who need; it is but honesty; it is but giving men their own. (Aquarian Gospel 114:5-9)

You stewards of the wealth of God, an opportunity has come; unlock your vaults; bring forth your hoarded gold; bestow it with a lavish hand. This wealth was laid aside for just times as these; when it was needed not, lo, it was yours to guard; but now it is not yours, for it belongs to those who are in want, and if you give it not you simply bring upon your heads the wrath of God. The chance to help others is a great benefit hardly paralleled by other advantages, yet people can be slow to take advantage of it, and how many others pass it by, blinded by greed and ego. Only those who are awakened to a good extent can understand the great value of extending a hand to others. My maternal grandmother was a great healer and of great humility, yet she often said to me: “I believe I have ‘the gift of giving.’” And so she did. “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” are the words of Jesus himself quoted in the book of Acts (20:35) by Saint Paul.

Jesus is telling us here that our giving must be generous; that first it was ours to accumulate, but then it belongs to those who need it. To withhold it is to rob them

and to accumulate negative karma; to give it is to win tremendous wealth of spirit.

It is not charity to give to those who need; it is but honesty; it is but giving men their own. Where this negative practice of rejecting “charity” comes from is unknown to me, but it is my speculation that it has risen from Protestantism, the religion of the merchant class which insists that everyone work and make their own way, ignoring the economic realities that have always prevailed. At the time of the “Reformation” all the charities that were a part of Catholic Christian culture were suppressed and the resulting misery was beyond anything war had ever brought to Europe. “Vagrants” were driven out of the towns and formed wandering bands of robbers that terrorized the countryside. Many lay in the streets suffering and dying that before that had been clothed, fed and cared for by devout Catholics.

I well remember attending a feeding of the poor in Varanasi. Hundreds were fed and given money and clothing. As they left, the man and woman who had arranged all this stood respectfully with joined hands and said “Thank you” to every one. This was dharma in living manifestation. As my friend Haridatta Vasudeva once said to me: “This is the glory of India.”

Then Jesus turned to Judas, one of the twelve, who was the treasurer of the band, and said, Bring forth our treasure box; the money is not ours now; turn every farthing to the help those in such distress.

Now, Judas did not wish to give the money all to those in want, and so he talked with Peter, James and John. He said, Lo, I will save a certain part and give the rest; that surely is enough for us, for we are strangers to the ones in want; we do not even know their names. But Peter said, Why, Judas, man, how do you dare to think to trifle with the strength of right? The Lord has spoken true; this wealth does not belong to us in face of this distress, and to refuse to give it is to steal. You need not fear; we will not come to want.

Then Judas opened up the treasure box and gave the money all. And there was gold and silver, food, and raiment in abundance for the needs of the bereaved. (Aquarian Gospel 114:10-18)

This incident shows us why Saint John in his Gospel says that Judas was a thief. Even worse, he tried to make other disciples participate in his unmerciful ways and brazenly defy the wishes of Jesus their Master. Just think of the great store of karma that was won when “there was gold and silver, food, and raiment in abundance for the needs of the bereaved,” yet Judas gave not a drop of it because of his hard heart. And it was even more outrageous because the money was never his. So he did not even have a bad excuse for his ways. It is any wonder that he would betray Jesus for money?

A lawyer said, Rabboni, if God rules the worlds and all that in them is, did he not bring about this storm? did he not slay these men? Has he not brought this sore distress upon these people here? and was it done to punish them for crimes?

And we remember well when once a band of earnest Jews from Galilee were in Jerusalem, and at a feast and were, for fancied crimes against the Roman law, cut down within the very temple court by Pontius Pilate; and their blood became their sacrifice.

Did God bring on this slaughter all because these men were doubly vile?

And then we bring to mind that once a tower called Siloam graced the defenses of Jerusalem, and, seemingly, without a cause it tottered and it fell to earth and eighteen men were killed.

Were these men vile? and were they slain as punishment for some great crime? (Aquarian Gospel 114:19-25)

People continually take a fact, make it into a misleading half-truth and run with it eagerly without restraint. This is a clear example. "If God does everything, then isn't he responsible?" What do they expect to be told? That God is guilty of all evil? I have been told that in Thailand when people are told that desire creates the troubles and miseries of humanity, the usual response is: "Well, isn't the desire for Nirvana a desire?"

And Jesus said, We cannot look upon a single span of life and judge of anything.

There is a law that men must recognize: Result depends on cause.

Men are not motes to float about within the air of one short life, and then be lost in nothingness. They are undying parts of the eternal whole that come and go, lo, many times into the air of earth and of the great beyond, just to unfold the God-like self.

A cause may be a part of one brief life; results may not be noted till another life.

The cause of your results cannot be found within my life, nor can the cause of my results be found in yours.

I cannot reap except I sow and I must reap whate'er I sow.

The law of all eternities is known to master minds: Whatever men do unto other men the judge and executioner will do to them. (Aquarian Gospel 114:26-34)

We cannot look upon a single span of life and judge of anything. If a person does not understand or at least know about the two principles of karma and reincarnation he can have no intelligible understanding of life. Without the perspective of these two basic facts, he can neither view nor live life in a comprehensible way. Unless we understand that our life is created by us we will assume that it is imposed on us by happenstance or by a whimsical dictatorial God that wills our confusion, suffering and despair. Believing that we are driven helplessly like a leaf before a blind and uncomprehending wind, we will undergo life rather than live it. The life situations of others will be equally misunderstood. This is a terrible situation, and one that ignorant religion in the West propagates with zeal.

There is a law that men must recognize: Result depends on cause. That is the law of

karma. Nothing can happen except as a reaction to previous action. Therefore the present is a mirror of the past and a forecast of the future. Without this understanding we flounder in darkness from life to life.

Men are not motes to float about within the air of one short life, and then be lost in nothingness. They are undying parts of the eternal whole that come and go, lo, many times into the air of earth and of the great beyond, just to unfold the God-like self. Here Jesus adds the third truth that completes the picture: evolution of consciousness as the purpose of our very existence. No religion or world-view is true that does not present these three truths: karma, reincarnation and evolution of consciousness. These are the very substance of our life which must be understood as the result of them together.

A cause may be a part of one brief life; results may not be noted till another life. No one escapes the consequences of thought, word and deed. And when we do not see the cause of a situation in this life we must realize it is the result of action in a previous life, or lives.

The cause of your results cannot be found within my life, nor can the cause of my results be found in yours. No one creates the situations of another's life. Often we think that our life and those of others are directed or caused by other persons, that we are "innocent victims" of other's actions. But that is not at all so. Others may be instruments of our karma, but the karma was produced by us. The whole world is a reflection of our face.

I cannot reap except I sow and I must reap whate'er I sow. Karma is the substance of our life situation. There is nothing we experience that is not karmic creation and reaction. We make our fate—none other. Our life is in our hands and we must live in that perspective. But we can become masters of our destiny. That is the purpose of yoga.

The law of all eternities is known to master minds: Whatever men do unto other men the judge and executioner will do to them. Once someone remarked how sorry they felt for a young man who had a crippled foot. Yogananda responded: "He kicked his mother in a previous life. That is why he is a cripple now." Masters have compassion and feel our pain, but they also know that it is all our doing. Therefore they urge us to be yogis.

We do not note the execution of this law among the sons of men. We note the weak dishonored, trampled on and slain by those men call the strong.

We note that men with wood-like heads are seated in the chairs of state; are kings and judges, senators and priests, while men with giant intellects are scavengers about the streets. We note that women with a moiety of common sense, and not a whit of any other kind, are painted up and dressed as queens, becoming ladies of the courts of puppet kings, because they have the form of something beautiful; while God's own daughters are their slaves, or serve as common laborers in the field. The sense of justice cries aloud: This is a travesty on right.

So when men see no further than one little span of life it is no wonder that

they say, There is no God, or if there is a God he is a tyrant and should die. (Aquarian Gospel 114:35-42)

Basically this is saying that fools rule foolishly and everyone suffers—including the fools. Furthermore, since karma and rebirth are not taken into account (or even accepted), when this mess is seen people are quick to say that God is not just or that there is no God. The only solution is for knowledge of karma and rebirth to pervade society in a practical manner and for everyone to understand that no one is exempt from these laws.

If you would judge aright of human life, you must arise and stand upon the crest of time and note the thoughts and deeds of men as they have come up through the ages past.

For we must know that man is not a creature made of clay to turn again to clay and disappear. He is a part of the eternal whole. There never was a time when he was not; a time will never come when he will not exist.

And now we look; the men who now are slaves were tyrants once; the men who now are tyrants have been slaves. The men who suffer now once stood aloft and shouted with a fiend's delight while others suffered at their hands.

And men are sick, and halt, and lame, and blind because they once transgressed the laws of perfect life, and every law of God must be fulfilled.

Man may escape the punishment that seems but due for his mis-doings in this life; but every deed and word and thought has its own metes and bounds, is cause, and has its own results, and if a wrong be done, the doer of the wrong must make it right.

And when the wrongs have all been righted then will man arise and be at one with God. (Aquarian Gospel 114:43-51)

If you would judge aright of human life, you must arise and stand upon the crest of time and note the thoughts and deeds of men as they have come up through the ages past. Only those of highest consciousness can really do this, so the message is that if we cannot do so, then we should be careful about forming an opinion regarding the external situations of ourselves and others. And we should keep the facts of karma and rebirth in mind as well as their purpose: evolution of consciousness.

For we must know that man is not a creature made of clay to turn again to clay and disappear. He is a part of the eternal whole. There never was a time when he was not; a time will never come when he will not exist. The truth that we are part of the Eternal should never be lost sight of, otherwise nothing can be understood by us about ourselves and the purpose of our many lives. Being part of the eternal, we have never come into being nor can we cease to exist. Jesus is echoing the verse of the Bhagavad Gita: "Truly there never was a time when I was not, nor you, nor these lords of men—nor in the future will there be a time when we shall cease to be" (Bhagavad Gita 2:12).

And now we look; the men who now are slaves were tyrants once; the men who now are tyrants have been slaves. The men who suffer now once stood aloft and shouted with a fiend's delight while others suffered at their hands. And men are sick, and halt, and lame, and blind

because they once transgressed the laws of perfect life, and every law of God must be fulfilled. All of our misfortunes originated in us, in our minds and hearts. What is being done to us was done by us to others in past lives. We are only experiencing our own deeds echoing back to us.

Man may escape the punishment that seems but due for his mis-doings in this life; but every deed and word and thought has its own metes and bounds, is cause, and has its own results, and if a wrong be done, the doer of the wrong must make it right. And when the wrongs have all been righted then will man arise and be at one with God. This is not a message of condemnation, but a presentation of the truth that has at its core the hope of ascension into higher life and consciousness. Karma is not punishment or blind reaction, but a leading into purification of mind and heart. When all the karmic forces have been manifested “then will man arise and be at one with God.” This is the message of supreme hope and of confidence in man and in God’s plan for him. This is Christianity.

Chapter One Hundred Fifteen

And Jesus stood beside the sea and taught; the multitudes pressed close upon him and he went into a boat that was near by and put a little ways from shore, and then he spoke in parables; he said,

Behold, a sower took his seed and went into his field to sow. With lavish hand he scattered forth the seed and some fell in the hardened paths that men had made, and soon were crushed beneath the feet of other men; and birds came down and carried all the seeds away. Some seed fell on rocky ground where there was little soil; they grew and soon the blades appeared and promised much; but then there was no depth of soil, no chance for nourishment, and in the heat of noonday sun they withered up and died. Some seed fell where thistles grew, and found no earth in which to grow and they were lost; but other seed found lodgement in the rich and tender soil and grew apace, and in the harvest it was found that some brought forth a hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. They who have ears to hear may hear; they who have hearts to understand may know. (Aquarian Gospel 115:1-9)

The meaning of this parable will be given presently so there is no need for it to be analyzed now. The point to be considered is how we can gain ears to hear and hearts to understand. For God and his messengers intend to speak to us directly; yet we must be able to receive the messages from on high. Purification of life and the practice of meditation are the ways to open our ears and minds to the divine words.

Now, his disciples were beside him in the boat, and Thomas asked, Why do you speak in parables?

And Jesus said, My words, like every master's words, are dual in their sense. To you who know the language of the soul, my words have meanings far too deep for other men to comprehend. The other sense of what I say is all the multitude can understand; these words are food for them; the inner thoughts are food for you. Let every one reach forth and take the food that he is ready to receive. (Aquarian Gospel 115:10-14)

Here again we see that the Gospels in the Bible do not convey the true meaning, but give the impression that Jesus wanted to blind people to his message, letting only the elite understand the truths he spoke. Wisely Jesus spoke in simple stories so his hearers could receive teaching according to their capacity for understanding and responding. Jesus had only blessings to give and withheld nothing from anyone. It is only our own limitations that determine our level of understanding and following of his words.

And then he spoke that all might hear; he said, Hear you the meaning of the parable:

Men hear my words and understand them not, and then the carnal self purloins the seed, and not a sign of spirit life appears.

This is the seed that fell within the beaten paths of men.

And others hear the words of life, and with a fiery zeal receive them all; they seem to comprehend the truth and promise well; but troubles come; discouragements arise; there is no depth of thought; their good intentions wither up and die.

These are the seeds that fell in stony ground.

And others hear the words of truth and seem to know their worth; but love of pleasure, reputation, wealth and fame fill all the soil; the seeds are nourished not and they are lost.

These are the seeds that fell among the thistles and the thorns.

But others hear the words of truth and comprehend them well; they sink down deep into their souls; they live the holy life and all the world is blest.

These are the seeds that fell in fertile soil, that brought forth fruit abundantly.

You men of Galilee, take heed to how you hear and how you cultivate your fields; for if you slight the offers of this day, the sower may not come to you again in this or in the age to come. (Aquarian Gospel 115:15-25)

Men hear my words and understand them not, and then the carnal self purloins the seed, and not a sign of spirit life appears. This is the seed that fell within the beaten paths of men. Because of immersion in the world and its materialistic focus, hardly a word of spiritual teaching is comprehended by much of the population. If they do think about what they hear, they usually come to utterly wrong and often absurd conclusions. In short: there is just no hope for those at that stage, but since it will not last forever, there is hope for their future.

And others hear the words of life, and with a fiery zeal receive them all; they seem to comprehend the truth and promise well; but troubles come; discouragements arise; there is no depth of thought; their good intentions wither up and die. These are the seeds that fell in stony ground. Meteors speed through space that is devoid of atmosphere because there is no substance to slow them down. But when they hit the earth's atmosphere the friction causes them to burn up and that is their end. Many people are like that, especially those of higher intelligence. Taking spiritual teaching on a purely theoretical level they are like the meteors in outer space. But once the "atmosphere" of practice (or attempted practice) comes into the picture, then they vaporize. Any kind of reality impinging upon their purely intellectual response tends to that end. Lack of depth is the main factor.

It must also be realized that some people deliberately burn themselves out by jumping in and overdoing everything. In this way they avoid spiritual life but can claim they tried and gave it a chance, so the fault is not theirs—or so they imply or claim. This is not uncommon, either. As Yogananda said, people are so skillful in

their ignorance—including preserving it.

And others hear the words of truth and seem to know their worth; but love of pleasure, reputation, wealth and fame fill all the soil; the seeds are nourished not and they are lost. These are the seeds that fell among the thistles and the thorns. This, too, is common. The hearts may be good and open, but desires, ambitions and the pending karmas distract and draw them away from the path. This is extremely sad to see, for real potential is there.

But others hear the words of truth and comprehend them well; they sink down deep into their souls; they live the holy life and all the world is blest. These are the seeds that fell in fertile soil, that brought forth fruit abundantly. This is a beautiful picture, only too rarely seen. Perseverance is the key, perseverance based on genuine understanding and valuation. And the secret is *living* the holy life. Here Jesus is speaking in the context of the actual words of Buddha regarding Nirvana: “Birth is ended, the holy life has been lived, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.”

You men of Galilee, take heed to how you hear and how you cultivate your fields; for if you slight the offers of this day, the sower may not come to you again in this or in the age to come. This is not meant to frighten anyone, but to awaken them to sober realities. Not that anyone is “lost forever,” but that creation cycles can pass before we again have the spiritual opportunities we so foolishly turn away from or let slip from our grasp. It is true that we have eternity in which to attain liberation, but that also means that we have eternity to fritter away in heedlessness and neglect. The wise hear the exhortation: “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (II Corinthians 6:2).

Then Jesus spoke another parable; he said: The kingdom I may liken to a field in which a man sowed precious seed; but while he slept an evil one went forth and sowed a measure full of darnel seed; then went his way. The soil was good, and so the wheat and darnel grew; and when the servants saw the tares among the wheat, they found the owner of the field and said, You surely sowed good seed; from whence these tares? The owner said, Some evil one has sown the seed of tares. The servants said, Shall we go out and pull up by the roots the tares and burn them in the fire? The owner said, No, that would not be well. The wheat and tares grow close together in the soil, and while you pull the tares you would destroy the wheat. So we will let them grow together till the harvest time. Then to the reapers I will say, Go forth and gather up the tares and bind them up and burn them in the fire, and gather all the wheat into my barns. When he had spoken thus, he left the boat and went up to the house, and his disciples followed him. (Aquarian Gospel 115:26-36)

Since the meaning of this parable is given in the next chapter we can consider it there.

Chapter One Hundred Sixteen

The Christines were in Philip's home and Peter said to Jesus, Lord, will you explain to us the meaning of the parables you spoke today? The one about the wheat and tares, especially?

And Jesus said, God's kingdom is a duality; it has an outer and an inner form. As seen by man it is composed of men, of those who make confession of the name of Christ. For various reasons various people crowd this outer kingdom of our God. The inner kingdom is the kingdom of the soul, the kingdom of the pure in heart.

The outer kingdom I may well explain in parables. Behold, for I have seen you cast a great net out into the sea, and when you hauled it in, lo, it was full of every kind of fish, some good, some bad, some great, some small; and I have seen you save the good and throw the bad away. This outer kingdom is the net, and every kind of man is caught; but in the sorting day the bad will all be cast away, the good reserved. (Aquarian Gospel 116:1-8)

God's kingdom is a duality; it has an outer and an inner form. The kingdom of God also includes the Church of God: Christianity. For some reason people either consider it an external entity or an internal one. Those of exoteric orientation consider it the visible, earthly institution, and those of esoteric bent consider it spiritual, immaterial. It is, of course, both, and those who understand it that way have the fullest view. To have the partial view of the others is to inevitably mistake the nature and purpose of the kingdom and the Church. And the worst of all is to consider that one aspect or segment is all there is to the kingdom and to declare that all outside it cannot be part of the kingdom. "God is one; so his Church is one" they trumpet. But the one God is the source of the many. This is but one of the reasons why only those with an Eastern perspective comprehend both the material and spiritual aspects of the living kingdom of the living God. The East alone has the complete picture on everything. Without it a person is half blind at best.

As seen by man it is composed of men, of those who make confession of the name of Christ. For various reasons various people crowd this outer kingdom of our God. Naturally human beings see the kingdom as composed of other humans. Although they may identify with Jesus and his teachings to a greater or lesser degree, they have a vast range of motives for wishing to be part of the holy kingdom. Some are correct, some are not, and some are a mixture of right and wrong.

The inner kingdom is the kingdom of the soul, the kingdom of the pure in heart. The inner kingdom, however, is populated only by the pure in heart, those in whom spiritual consciousness—and identity with that consciousness—is always dominant. Many can crowd into the earthly institution, including those unfit and insincere and those with selfish motives. But only the pure in heart are in the inner kingdom—not because they pushed their way into it, but because their purity of heart

automatically transferred them into it. It was a matter of nature, not intellectual assent or choice.

The miracle-working stigmatist, Teresa Neumann of Bavaria, said to a acquaintance of mine, a monastic disciple of Yogananda: "I am so glad you are a Catholic." When he protested that he was not a Catholic, she told him: "You do not understand what I mean. There are people who go to Mass every Sunday, but their hearts are closed to God. They are not Catholics. And there are people in the world who have never even heard the Name of Jesus, but their hearts are open to God. They are Catholics. And you are a Catholic!" She certainly had the perspective of Jesus.

The outer kingdom I may well explain in parables. Behold, for I have seen you cast a great net out into the sea, and when you hauled it in, lo, it was full of every kind of fish, some good, some bad, some great, some small; and I have seen you save the good and throw the bad away. This outer kingdom is the net, and every kind of man is caught; but in the sorting day the bad will all be cast away, the good reserved. Who does the sorting? It is my observation that there are three sorters: 1) the holy angels, 2) those in the Church, both clergy and laity, and 3) the unfit themselves who choose to separate from the Church. As Saint John wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19).

Hear, then, the meaning of the parable of the wheat and tares: The sower is the son of man; the field, the world; the good seed are the children of the light; the tares, the children of the dark; the enemy, the carnal self; the harvest day, the closing of the age; the reapers are the messengers of God. The reckoning day will come to every man; then will the tares be gathered up, and cast into the fire and be burned. Then will the good shine forth as suns in the kingdom of the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 116:9-12)

This is very clear, but we must realize that this does not teach the doctrine of hell, but rather the fires of karmic purification that come to all the unpurified, who kindle the fires themselves.

And Philip said, Must men and women suffer in the flames because they have not found the way of life? And Jesus said, The fire purifies. The chemist throws into the fire the ores that hold all kinds of dross. The useless metal seems to be consumed; but not a grain of gold is lost. There is no man that has not in him gold that cannot be destroyed. The evil things of men are all consumed in fire; the gold survives. (Aquarian Gospel 116:13-16)

This is a cardinal principle: goodness is in all, and sometimes the fire of karma is the necessary means to bring that good to the surface. There are such places as astral hells in which the people suffer, but not as punishment but the reaction of their actions, physical and mental. In those regions people know why they are there and what their experiences mean. So they learn. The laws of karma and rebirth are

manifestations of the love and mercy of God. They may bring us pain, but ultimately they open the way to the blessed kingdom.

The inner kingdom of the soul I may explain in parables:

The son of man goes forth and scatters seeds of truth; God waters well the soil; the seeds show life and grow; first comes the blade, and then the stalk, and then the ear, and then the full wheat in the ear. The harvest comes and, lo, the reapers bear the ripened sheaves into the garner of the Lord.

Again, this kingdom of the soul is like a little seed that men may plant in fertile soil. (A thousand of these seeds would scarcely be a shekel's weight.) The tiny seed begins to grow; it pushes through the earth, and after years of growth it is a mighty tree and birds rest in its leafy bowers and men find refuge 'neath its sheltering boughs from sun and storm.

Again, the truth, the spirit of the kingdom of the soul, is like a ball of leaven that a woman hid in measures, three, of flour and in a little time the whole was leavened.

Again, the kingdom of the soul is like a treasure hidden in a field which one has found, and straightaway goes his way and sells all that he has and buys the field. (Aquarian Gospel 116:17-24)

Here we have symbols of the inner kingdom, of our own minds and hearts, not the world.

1) The great messengers of God such as Jesus sow the seeds of truth in us and God blesses them to come to fruition. It is progress in stages, not a cosmic leap or something that happens overnight. Rather it is methodical. Specifically it is the science of yoga broadly speaking. Spiritual practices are the reapers that gather the harvest unto God.

2) The little seed of spiritual consciousness, of spiritual awakening, has been planted in us by God (is actually inherent in us from eternity), and it grows silently and unobserved, reaching upward from earth to heaven until it manifests as a great force which nourishes and guides our evolution, and in time we may even help others to their awakening.

3) Spirit consciousness like leaven, when heated by the practice of spiritual discipline (tapasya) pervades our entire being, leaving nothing untouched or untransformed until our whole consciousness is divine consciousness.

4) Our inner glory, our inner divinity, is our ever-present treasure which, when we discover its presence, inspires us to "sell" all that is outside us and turn all our spiritual powers inward to fully possess it and then manifest it both inwardly and outwardly.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

When Jesus had thus said he went alone into a mountain pass near by to

pray. (Aquarian Gospel 116:25)

We may not be able to teach like Jesus, but we can learn to pray (meditate) like him.

Chapter One Hundred Seventeen

A royal feast was held in honor of the birthday of the tetrarch in fortified Machaerus, east of the Bitter Sea. The tetrarch, Herod, and his wife, Herodias, together with Salome were there; and all the men and women of the royal court were there. And when the feast was done, lo, all the guests and courtiers were drunk with wine; they danced and leaped about like children in their play. Salome, daughter of Herodias, came in and danced before the king. The beauty of her form, her grace and winning ways entranced the silly Herod, then half drunk with wine. He called the maiden to his side and said, Salome, you have won my heart, and you may ask and I will give you anything you wish.

The maiden ran in childish glee and told her mother what the ruler said. Her mother said, Go back and say, Give me the head of John, the harbinger. The maiden ran and told the ruler what she wished. And Herod called his trusty executioner and said to him, Go to the tower and tell the keeper that by my authority you come to execute the prisoner known as John. The man went forth and in a little while returned and on a platter bore the lifeless head of John, and Herod offered it unto the maiden in the presence of the guests.

The maiden stood aloof; her innocence was outraged when she saw the bloody gift, and she would touch it not.

Her mother, steeped and hardened well in crime, came up and took the head and held it up before the guests and said, This is the fate of every man who dares to scorn, or criticize, the acts of him who reigns.

The drunken rabble gazed upon the gruesome sight with fiendish joy. (Aquarian Gospel 117:1-14)

And when the feast was done, lo, all the guests and courtiers were drunk with wine; they danced and leaped about like children in their play. It is interesting to see that very corrupt people like to pretend they are innocent and even childlike. It is of course an absurdity, and it fools no one because their evil is so blatant. A lot of these people make me think of ravaged old prostitutes out in a field making daisy crowns for one another and dancing around in a circle holding hands and singing some children's ditty.

So beware of the "childlike." They never are; for no normal adult is a child. When Jesus said: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mark 10:15), he was speaking of the direct and open attitude of a child, the magical consciousness of the child that readily accepts the supernatural and the reality of the miraculous, and especially the intuition of a child and the continuing echo of the higher astral realms from which he has just descended. An adept yogi one time remarked to me in India: "For the first three years of their lives children are always surrounded by devas." That is the

childlikeness of the holy, not naivité based on ignorance and lack of experience.

Salome, daughter of Herodias, came in and danced before the king. The beauty of her form, her grace and winning ways entranced the silly Herod, then half drunk with wine. He called the maiden to his side and said, Salome, you have won my heart, and you may ask and I will give you anything you wish. Here we see the terrible effects of lust: loss of all good sense and total susceptibility to evil. “For a man dwelling on the objects of the senses, attachment to them is born. From attachment desire is born. And from thwarted desire anger is born. From anger arises delusion; from delusion, loss of memory; from loss of memory, destruction of intelligence. From destruction of intelligence one is lost” (Bhagavad Gita 2:62, 63).

The maiden stood aloof; her innocence was outraged when she saw the bloody gift, and she would touch it not. Here we see that Salome was not some depraved monster as legend has sought to make her. Eugene Sue’s novel, *The Wandering Jew*, and Wagner’s opera, *Parsifal*, claim that Salome wanders the earth under a curse because of her evil. But it is not so. Again we see how the Aquarian Gospel alone gives us the true picture.

Her mother, steeped and hardened well in crime, came up and took the head and held it up before the guests and said, This is the fate of every man who dares to scorn, or criticize, the acts of him who reigns. This is the way the foul often justify their moral insanity.

The drunken rabble gazed upon the gruesome sight with fiendish joy. “Evil-doers, the lowest of men, bereft of knowledge by maya, do not seek me, being attached to (existing within) a demonic mode of existence” (Bhagavad Gita 7:15).

The head was taken back unto the tower. The body had been given unto holy men who had been friends of John; they placed it in a burial case and carried it away. They bore it to the Jordan, which they crossed just at the ford where John first preached the word; and through the passes of the Judean hills they carried it. They reached the sacred grounds near Hebron, where the bodies of the parents of the harbinger lay in their tombs; and there they buried it; and then they went their way.

Now, when the news reached Galilee that John was dead the people met to sing the sonnets of the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 117:15-20)

John’s father, Zachariah, was also a martyr, having been slain by the order of Herod’s father because he would not reveal the whereabouts of the infant John whom Herod feared was the Messiah who would take over his kingdom.

In every viable religion there are rituals and prayers for the welfare of the dead. It was the custom in Israel for mourners to compose extemporaneous verses in praise and lamentation of the departed. Since poetic skill is not possessed by everyone, it was common to hire professional mourners who would learn about the life of the departed and compose verses regarding them. This is still the practice in certain of the Eastern Christian churches, especially among the Greek Orthodox. On Good (Great) Friday among all the Eastern churches there is a Lamentation Service consisting of many verses relating to Jesus and his death.

And Jesus and the foreign masters and the twelve took ship to cross the sea of Galilee. A scribe, a faithful friend of John, stood by the sea; he called to Jesus and he said, Rabboni, let me follow where you go.

And Jesus said, You seek a safe retreat from evil men. There is no safety for your life with me; for evil men will take my life as they have taken John's. The foxes of the earth have safe retreats; the birds have nests secure among the hidden rocks, but I have not a place where I may lay my head and rest secure. (Aquarian Gospel 117:21-25)

This is one of those wonderful revolutionary passages in the Aquarian Gospel that give a totally different perspective than that of Churchianity. People usually seek out a religion to give them security, to make them feel safe spiritually. Some want to be sure they will not go to hell, some want to belong to a supportive and reassuring church, some want to be sure that they believe the truth and not any mistaken ideas, some want all their questions answered and some want all their fears and insecurities dispelled. Basically they want stability and confidence.

But Jesus says: "There is no safety for your life with me." Why? Because "our" life is the life of mortality, bondage and ignorance. That life must be given up, cast aside, if we would enter into the true life of the spirit, our real life. Now we are wandering in the maze of illusion and delusion, literally out of our mind, not having the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16). Therefore Jesus says: "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:38-39). "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 16:24-25). Those who cling to their egoic life will lose the life of the spirit, the Christ-life; but those who let go of the egoic life ("lose" it) will receive the true life in Christ: their own Christhood.

Those who follow Christ are committed to eternal life beyond all relative existence, therefore here on this world they have no place where they truly rest and are secure. They enter peace and life by ascending to the highest worlds and becoming one with the Cosmic Christ as did Jesus before them.

Then an apostle said, Lord, suffer me to tarry here a while, that I may take my father, who is dead, and lay him in the tomb. But Jesus said, The dead can care for those who die; the living wait for those who live; come, follow me. (Aquarian Gospel 117:26, 27)

This is the world of the dead-alive, and when we spiritually die to it we will resurrect into the spirit and be truly living in the true world of God-consciousness. Here we move among the spiritually dead, but in the higher worlds the living await our coming that they may receive us "into everlasting habitations" (Luke 16:9).

The evening came; three boats put out to sea and Jesus rested in the

foremost boat; he slept. A storm came on; the boats were tossed about like toys upon the sea. The waters swept the decks; the hardy boatmen were afraid lest all be lost.

And Thomas found the master fast asleep; he called, and Jesus woke. And Thomas said, Behold the storm! have you no care for us? The boats are going down.

And Jesus stood; he raised his hand; he talked unto the spirits of the winds and waves as men would talk with men. And, lo, the winds blew not; the waves came tremblingly and kissed his feet; the sea was calm.

And then he said, You men of faith, where is your faith? for you can speak and winds and waves will hear and will obey.

36) And the disciples were amazed. They said, Who is this man that even winds and waves obey his voice? (Aquarian Gospel 117:28-36)

And Jesus stood; he raised his hand; he talked unto the spirits of the winds and waves as men would talk with men. And, lo, the winds blew not; the waves came tremblingly and kissed his feet; the sea was calm. It is considered primitive to believe that everything is alive and even populated by a multitude of spirits. But it is primitive to not so believe. Great Masters see spirits of all sorts and on occasion converse with them. Here we see that Jesus did the same.

Water seeking to touch the feet of Masters is not at all unknown. For example, when the father of Lord Krishna, Vasudeva, was carrying the newborn Krishna in a basket as he waded through the Jumna River, taking him to safety, the waters kept rising higher and higher. Finally Vasudeva realized that the sacred river was trying to touch the feet of the divine child, so he lowered the basket, the water touched his feet and then subsided so Vasudeva could easily bear him across.

When the bearers of the Ark of the Covenant stepped into the waters of the Jordan, they parted and the bearers walked through with dry feet, just as all of Israel had crossed the Red Sea. (See the third chapter of Joshua.) When Elisha touched the waters of the Jordan with the mantle of Elijah they parted and Elisha went over (II Kings 2:14).

I have been told by those who were present of incidents like this in India when Masters touched the water of streams with their feet during flood time so people could cross to safety.

And then he said, You men of faith, where is your faith? for you can speak and winds and waves will hear and will obey. And the disciples were amazed. They said, Who is this man that even winds and waves obey his voice? How interesting that they marveled at his ability and not at his assertion that they could do the same. This is the mentality of the dedicated follower who has no interest in being a leader, or of rising to the level of the great teachers. The purpose of Jesus was to make people Christs, but they preferred to be worshippers and adorers with him as the only Christ. They asked "Who is he?" rather than "Who are we?" Self-realization, self-knowledge, did not interest them.

Once there was a great Sufi Master who knew he was one with God. The king's

son had died so messengers came and brought him to the palace to bring the prince back to life. Such was their faith, but not their wisdom. He came in and put his hand on the child, and seeing and understanding the mentality of the people standing around, he said: "In the Name of God return to life." Nothing happened. So he said: "In *my* name I tell you to live." The boy instantly came to life. But the Master was executed for having blasphemed. There is a lesson there for the wise and wary.

This incident can be interpreted symbolically as well. The Christ-nature lie asleep in the heart of each one of us as the sea of life rages around us the threatens us. But in time we are awakened, arise and master the tides of life and our life becomes tranquil and radiant. Then we realize the divinity within all humanity and share the wondrous news with those so inclined to hear and do likewise. The only savior we can ever have is our inner Christ-nature.

Chapter One Hundred Eighteen

The morning came; the Christines landed in the country of the Geracenes. They went to Gadara, chief city of the Peracans, and here for certain days they tarried and they taught. Now, legends hold that Gadara is sacred to the dead, and all the hills about are known as holy ground. These are the burial grounds of all the regions round about; the hills are full of tombs; and many dead from Galilee are here entombed. Now, spirits of the lately dead that cannot rise to higher planes, remain about the tombs that hold the flesh and bones of what was once their mortal homes. They sometimes take possession of the living, whom they torture in a hundred ways. And all through Gadara were men obsessed, and there was no one strong enough to bring relief. (Aquarian Gospel 118:1-7)

Now, spirits of the lately dead that cannot rise to higher planes, remain about the tombs that hold the flesh and bones of what was once their mortal homes. The phenomenon of earthbound spirits is prevalent throughout the world and throughout all recorded eras of history. It is extremely easy for a person to be so bound by psychic cords with things of earth that they either cannot or will not move on to an astral world to prepare themselves for their next earthly birth. They can spend centuries and even millennia either tied to one place or wandering the earth. Many of them do not even realize they are dead. In some places soldiers have been fighting a single battle continuously for the same amounts of time. It is said that the battle of Thermopylae begun in 480 BC is still going on. Many psychically sensitive people have seen it at sunrise and sunset. Certain places are filled with earthbound souls and others have virtually none. It may have something to do with the magnetism of the earth in those places.

They sometimes take possession of the living, whom they torture in a hundred ways. The first teaching of Yogananda I learned was that the individual soul guides the growth of its new body from conception to birth. Since this is so, the body is as unique to that person as a thumbprint. For another soul to possess and completely control such a body is almost impossible. Some control is possible, but there will be a great deal of the body that cannot be directed. The result can be paralysis of body parts or malfunctioning of various organs. For example, blindness or deafness can result from possession by an alien spirit. We can only imagine the horror this is for the rightful owner of the body. It truly is torture in a multitude of ways.

And all through Gadara were men obsessed, and there was no one strong enough to bring relief. Obsession is not the same as possession. Rather it is a strong degree of influence and interference, but the obsessing spirit is mostly external to the body, whereas a possessing spirit is really inside the body, having pushed the owner to one side, so to speak. A friend of mine was told by a powerful yogi in Kashmir that nearly everyone in the West was obsessed to some degree. When we realize that

alcohol and drugs have from time immemorial produced favorable conditions for obsession and possession, we can understand how this can be so, especially since so many Western people live on medicinal drugs, especially psychotropic ones, even if they have nothing to do with illegal drugs. It is nearly impossible to dislodge “tramp spirits” from the obsessed or possessed if one does not have either the psychic/esoteric knowledge or the mind power required to drive them out with pure force of will.

That they might meet these hidden foes and learn the way to dispossess the evil ones the master took the foreign masters and the twelve into the tombs.

And as they neared the gates they met a man obsessed. A legion of the unclean ones were in this man, and they had made him strong;

And none could bind him down, no, not with chains; for he could break the stoutest chains, and go his way.

Now, unclean spirits cannot live in light; they revel in the dark.

When Jesus came he brought the light of life, and all the evil spirits were disturbed.

The leader of the legion in the man called out, Thou Jesus, thou Immanuel, we beg that thou wilt not consign us to the depths. Torment us not before our time.

And Jesus said, What is your number and your name?

The evil spirit said, Our name is legion, and our number is the number of the beast.

And Jesus spoke; and with a voice that shook the very hills, he said, Come forth; possess this man no more. (Aquarian Gospel 118:8-16)

That they might meet these hidden foes and learn the way to dispossess the evil ones the master took the foreign masters and the twelve into the tombs. This is the mark of a master teacher: he not only can do many things impossible to ordinary people, he can teach others how to do the same. Within the human being lie the powers to control all of nature, but the ability to awaken and wield them is rare. But Jesus was a true Master who could show the way to mastery to his disciples.

And as they neared the gates they met a man obsessed. A legion of the unclean ones were in this man, and they had made him strong; and none could bind him down, no, not with chains; for he could break the stoutest chains, and go his way. Supernormal strength is a common trait of the obsessed and possessed. So are great powers of endurance. I knew a man that had experience with exorcism, and he told me of one case in which a man could break anything with which he was tied and who would turn on all the burners of a gas stove and sit on them without his clothing even being scorched. I met a Roman Catholic man who had assisted the official exorcist of the Saint Louis Diocese. He told me that he had seen more than one person literally climb up walls and over ceilings like human flies.

Now, unclean spirits cannot live in light; they revel in the dark. When Jesus came he brought

the light of life, and all the evil spirits were disturbed. “Light” and “dark” are psychic and spiritual conditions. Often the approach of a holy person causes great agitation in obsessed and possessed people. And the approach of an evil person can cause great happiness and fawning by such people.

The leader of the legion in the man called out, Thou Jesus, thou Immanuel, we beg that thou wilt not consign us to the depths. Torment us not before our time. And Jesus said, What is your number and your name? The evil spirit said, Our name is legion, and our number is the number of the beast. And Jesus spoke; and with a voice that shook the very hills, he said, Come forth; possess this man no more.

From this passage and from many in the regular Gospels we see how little “confessing Christ” is of any real value. Negative spirits often call out and acknowledge the holiness of someone, even begging them to leave because they feel pain at their presence. Evil spirits used to call Saint Sergius of Radonezh “iron-eater.” “And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matthew 8:29) So “confessing Jesus as Son of God” is no sign or guarantee of salvation, as many Protestants think!

The basic unit of the Roman army was a legion, which consisted of from three to six thousand men. So the man is claiming that thousands of spirits were obsessing or possessing him. But since spirits continually lie, there is no real basis for accepting that number. Possessing spirits often claim to be of large numbers and to be famous villains of history—even Judas. Like all evil people those spirits are cheap, trivial and dishonest. So nothing they say should be accepted. Even if they speak truth, they do so to eventually deceive.

With the full power of a liberated spirit, one with the omnipotent God, Jesus commanded the spirits to come forth.

Now, all the hills were filled with unclean animals that fed, and carried forth and spread the plague among the people of the land. And when the evil spirits begged that they might not be driven forth without a home, the master said, Go forth and take possession of the unclean quadrupeds. And they, and all the evil spirits of the tombs went forth and took possession of the breeders of the plague, Which, wild with rage, ran down the steepes into the sea, and all were drowned. And all the land was freed of the contagion, and the unclean spirits came no more. (Aquarian Gospel 118:17-22)

This is another incident that is similar to those of the Gospels, and yet is very different. Whether the unclean animals were swine is not specified, but they were not just unclean from ritual or dietary reasons, for they carried a plague and infected human beings. The unclean spirits asked to possess the unclean animals, as they often possess unclean people, and Jesus agreed. Since the animal bodies were not made to be inhabited by earthbound human spirits the result was that all of them went berserk and rushed into the water and were drowned. In this way “the land was freed of the contagion, and the unclean spirits came no more.” Great good

came from this.

But when the people saw the mighty works that Jesus did they were alarmed. They said, If he can free the country of the plague, and drive the unclean spirits out, he is a man of such transcendent power that he can devastate our land at will.

And then they came and prayed that he would not remain in Gadara. And Jesus did not tarry longer there, and with the other masters and the twelve, he went aboard the boats to go away.

The man who had been rescued from the unclean legion stood upon the shore and said, Lord let me go with you. But Jesus said, It is not well; go forth unto your home and tell the news that men may know what man can do when he is tuned with God.

And then the man went forth through all Decapolis and told the news.

The Christines sailed away, re-crossed the sea and came again into Capernaum. (Aquarian Gospel 118:23-30)

Evil people do not hesitate to project their own evil onto God and his holy ones. So these people who obviously matched the unclean beasts that had destroyed themselves believed that Jesus could wreak great harm on them. So they asked him to leave and he did.

When the exorcised man wanted to go with Jesus and his disciples he was told to remain and “tell the news that men may know what man can do when he is tuned with God.” Jesus is saying very plainly that any human being who attunes and unites their consciousness with the divine consciousness can do whatever Jesus did. “The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). Such is the potential glory of all humanity. This was the real Gospel of Christ which Jesus was bringing to all who would heed it.

Chapter One Hundred Nineteen

The news soon spread through all the land that Jesus was at home and then the people came in throngs to welcome him.

And Matthew, one of the twelve, a man of wealth, whose home was in Capernaum, spread forth a sumptuous feast, and Jesus and the foreign masters and the twelve, and people of all shades of thought, were guests. And when the Pharisees observed that Jesus sat and ate with publicans and those of ill repute they said, For shame! This man who claims to be man of God, consorts with publicans and courtesans and with the common herd of men. For shame!

When Jesus knew their thoughts he said, They who are well cannot be healed; the pure need not be saved. They who are well are whole; they who are pure are saved. They who love justice and do right need not repent; I came not unto them, but to the sinner I am come. (Aquarian Gospel 119:1-7)

Just as a drunk, as he staggers along, often stops and sways as he looks at others who are sober and says: "You're drunk," in the same way the hypocrites riddled with secret vices are always seeing the virtuous as evildoers and proclaiming them so. This is worse in the realm of religion than anywhere else.

Jesus could read the hearts of everyone, and he knew who could be touched by contact with him and enabled to turn from darkness to the light. So no matter what their present state was he freely associated with them and shepherded them into the ways of God. But the smug and self-satisfied hypocrites he avoided, so they were insulted and continually accused him publicly.

One time a resident of the Anandamayi Ashram in Varanasi was very disruptive and offensive to everyone else living there. So the next time Anandamayi Ma came to Varanasi all the ashramites complained to her vociferously about the man, who was present. Ma asked him to come over to her. When he did so, she leaned forward, embraced him and said: "When no one else wants you, how could I send you away?" And that was the end of his bad behavior.

Once when there was a festival in the same ashram. An alcoholic attended, resolving not to touch alcohol the whole time. But his addiction was raging and he decided that he must go out and find some alcoholic drink. At that very moment someone knocked at his door. When he opened it he found one of Ma Anandamayi's most respected devotees standing there. The devotee, who was a strict Brahmin that considered touching a container of alcoholic drink to be ritually defiling, handed him a bottle of whisky saying: "Ma sent me to buy this and bring it to you." Naturally the man was in shock. When he realized that out of love for him both Ma and this man were violating fundamental principles (for Ma also was a Brahmin of the strictest order) and exposing themselves to ridicule and censure, he was so moved that never again did he drink alcohol.

Such is the healing power of love and mercy, as Jesus well knew. Another time a man came to the Varanasi ashram and began complaining about several of the residents. Finally Ma quietly said to him: “An ashram is a hospital for the spiritually sick. If you are not sick yourself, then you need not come here.” He definitely got the idea.

A band of John’s disciples who had heard that John was dead were wearing badges for their dead; were fasting and were praying in their hearts, which when the Pharisees observed they came to Jesus and they said, Why fast the followers of John and your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said, Lo, you are masters of the law; you ought to know; perhaps you will make known your knowledge to these men. What are the benefits derived from fasts? The Pharisees were mute; they answered not. (Aquarian Gospel 119:8-12)

This is very significant, for it contradicts the standard Gospels. Jesus is challenging the value of fasting, not saying that when he departs from this world his disciples will become perpetual fasters as we find in Matthew 9:14-15. Nor does he seem to consider that fasting gives one powers over evil spirits as stated in Matthew 17:14-21. Of course the reader must decide which he accepts as authentic.

Then Jesus said, The vital force of men depends on what they eat and drink. Is spirit-life the stronger when the vital force is weak? Is sainthood reached by starving, self imposed? A glutton is a sinner in the sight of God, and he is not a saint who makes himself a weakling and unfitted for the heavy tasks of life by scorning to make use of God’s own means of strength.

Lo, John is dead, and his devoted followers are fasting in their grief. Their love for him impels them on to show respect, for they have thought, and have been taught that it is sin to lightly treat the memory of the dead. To them it is a sin, and it is well that they should fast. (Aquarian Gospel 119:13-18)

In the Bhagavad Gita it is said: “Those who practice extreme austerities not ordained by the scriptures, accompanied by hypocrisy and egotism along with the force of desire and passion, senselessly torturing in the body the entire aggregates of the elements, and me within the body, know them to be of demonic resolves” (Bhagavad Gita 17:5-6). Jesus is saying the same, and presents the right perspective. Mere fasting has absolutely no value as a spiritual discipline, for it does not elevate the consciousness.

In my early yoga days when I was still deeply dyed in the foolish ideas of the church I was raised in, I decided not to eat all day and thus prepare myself for an extremely important spiritual event that was to take place that night. So the result was that I sat through this most sacred event thinking of the big salad I was going to eat when I got home! It never happened again. That was one mistake I most certainly did learn from.

When men defy their consciences and listen not to what they say, the

heart is grieved and they become unfitted for the work of life; and thus they sin.

The conscience may be taught. One man may do in conscience what another cannot do. What is a sin for me to do may not be sin for you to do. The place you occupy upon the way of life determines what is sin.

There is no changeless law of good; for good and evil both are judged by other things. One man may fast and in his deep sincerity of heart is blest. Another man may fast and in the faithlessness of such a task imposed is cursed.

You cannot make a bed to fit the form of every man. If you can make a bed to fit yourself you have done well.

Why should these men who follow me resort to fasting, or to anything that would impair their strength? They need it all to serve the race.

The time will come when God will let you have your way, and you will do to me what Herod did to John; and in the awfulness of that sad hour these men will fast.

They who have ears to hear may hear; they who have hearts to feel may understand. (Aquarian Gospel 119:19-29)

When men defy their consciences and listen not to what they say, the heart is grieved and they become unfitted for the work of life; and thus they sin. “To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). It is also true that if a person sincerely believes that a harmless thing is a sin and yet does it in defiance because of desire or some other influence, that person does wrong, not by the overt act but by the negative disposition of the heart.

For example, I knew a man who as a child was taught that it was a sin to ride a bicycle on Sunday. Of course it was not, but he truly did believe it was a sin. Therefore when one Sunday he surreptitiously took his bicycle and rode it, the mere riding was no sin, but the disposition of his heart was sinful. This is a most important principle to understand. We must try to have the perspective of God: “for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7).

The conscience may be taught. One man may do in conscience what another cannot do. What is a sin for me to do may not be sin for you to do. The place you occupy upon the way of life determines what is sin. This last sentence embodies the principle of swadharma as found in the Bhagavad Gita. “Better is one’s swadharma, though deficient, than the swadharma of another well performed. Better is death in one’s own swadharma. The swadharma of another brings danger” (Bhagavad Gita 3:35). (See the Glossary for the meaning of Swadharma.)

There is no changeless law of good; for good and evil both are judged by other things. One man may fast and in his deep sincerity of heart is blest. Another man may fast and in the faithlessness of such a task imposed is cursed. This is not “situation ethics.” This is ethics according to an individual’s profound personal makeup rather than according to society or environment. It is crucial for this to be understood.

You cannot make a bed to fit the form of every man. If you can make a bed to fit yourself you have done well. We need not figure out what other people should or should not do. Rather we must determine our own swadharma and follow it. Then we shall have done very well indeed.

Why should these men who follow me resort to fasting, or to anything that would impair their strength? They need it all to serve the race. Indeed so. Further, a knowledge of real, interior life takes care of the mind and heart. Essentially, those who do not know yoga have very little chance of spiritual success to any marked degree.

The time will come when God will let you have your way, and you will do to me what Herod did to John; and in the awfulness of that sad hour these men will fast. This indicates the appropriate times for fasting, but overindulgence in mourning is itself a wrong.

They who have ears to hear may hear; they who have hearts to feel may understand. Here it all is. Even Jesus can do nothing with the deaf and the heartless.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty

Now, Nicodemus, who once came to Jesus in the night to learn the way of life, was one among the guests. And standing forth he said, Rabboni, it is true that Jewish laws and Jewish practices do not agree. The priesthood needs to be reformed; the rulers should become more merciful and kind; the lawyers should become more just; the common people should not bear such loads. But could we not gain these reforms and not destroy the service of the Jews? Could you not harmonize your mighty work with that of Pharisee and scribe? Might not the priesthood be a benefit to your divine philosophy? (Aquarian Gospel 120:1-5)

Ancient texts reveal that from the beginning of Christianity there were two opinions: 1) that the teachings of Jesus were a complete break with Judaism, an entirely different religion altogether; and 2) that Christianity was really a reformation of Judaism, a kind of evolutionary development which at least spiritually was organically one with Judaism. We can tell from the question of Nicodemus that Jesus was plainly advocating the first idea: that his teachings were a break with Judaism. Yet Nicodemus pleads for “harmony” and for Jesus to “change the system from the inside.”

I have heard this type of plea from childhood, usually in religion but in some other institutions as well. This I have observed: it is only a plea for compromise with a broken system that cannot be repaired, and it can only end in a loss of integrity and failure for those being pled with. Many spiritual movements have foundered on this rock. “Making nice” has never accomplished anything but moral paralysis. Intelligence and reason alone accomplish good; emotion just deflects people from their purpose. I cannot count the time I have heard the words: “If good people like you leave then there will be no hope.” But there has been no hope anyway because the institution has drifted too far to really return to the right ways. However you dress it up, the “change from within” idea is just compromise, cowardice and endangerment of conscience and spiritual life: wanting the easy way out by staying in.

In a very relevant article on the present situation of the Roman Catholic Church which has resulted from the changes and policies introduced by the Second Vatican Council, Bishop Donald Sanborn simply concludes: “Time has told that working from within is a failed strategy.” And this is in complete agreement with the words cited by Saint Paul from Isaiah: “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (II Corinthians 6:17).

Unfortunately the second opinion about Christianity prevailed and Christian theology was drastically reshaped to accommodate the compromisers whose egos could not sustain a break with their pre-Christian religion. This is what caused the

rupture between them and those known as Gnostics (Sanskrit: jnanis). Obviously Jesus' teachings were a complete spiritual break with Judaism, though not in an inimical way, and a complete reorientation toward the East, toward India and those "other sheep not of this fold" of whom Jesus spoke (John 10:16) with the intention that the crossing over of the Mediterranean Christians to them would ensure that there would "be one fold and one Shepherd" (John 10:16) in accordance with the teachings and intentions of Jesus that were his "voice" in the world.

But Jesus said, You cannot put new wine in ancient skins, for when it purifies itself, lo, it expands; the ancient bottles cannot bear the strain; they burst, and all the wine is lost. Men do not mend a worn-out garment with a piece of cloth unworn, which cannot yield to suit the fabric, weak with age, and then a greater rent appears. Old wine may be preserved in ancient skins; but new wine calls for bottles new. This spirit-truth I bring is to this generation new, and if we put it in the ancient skins of Jewish forms, lo, it will all be lost. It must expand; the ancient bottles cannot yield and they would burst. Behold the kingdom of the Christ! it is as old as God himself, and yet it is as new as morning sun; it only can contain the truth of God. (Aquarian Gospel 120:6-11)

But Jesus said, You cannot put new wine in ancient skins, for when it purifies itself, lo, it expands; the ancient bottles cannot bear the strain; they burst, and all the wine is lost. First we must realize that "new" and "old" are meant spiritually.

"Old" means a spiritual tradition that has run its course and has no more development ahead. That may mean that it is "dead" or just that it will never grow and evolve, but will be quite viable for those who need such a religion. This is no aspersion on Judaism which has produced many great saints and Masters since the time of Jesus. However, it has continued to basically be for these two thousand years what it was at the time of Jesus.

"New" means a vital spiritual movement whose purpose is movement ahead and expansion on all fronts for tremendous evolution. Such was Christianity, though because of the wrong orientation its energies have been channeled into ways much inferior to the divine intention. Jesus was a reincarnation of Moses. Moses became disgusted with the Jewish people, but when God wanted to abandon them and get another people to take their place Moses begged that it not be so and even said: "If thou wilt forgive their sin, forgive it; and if not, blot me out of thy book, which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32, Septuagint Version). And so things continued as they were. When Moses appeared as Jesus, though it was after Jesus' return to India when the decision was made to keep on in identity with Judaism (it was only persecution that really made Christians separate, as almost happened with the Hasidim later), Jesus let things be, though in India Saint Thomas followed exactly the purpose of Jesus and formed Christianity into a religion that was an integral part of Sanatana Dharma: Hinduism Such is Saint Thomas Christianity in its pure, original form.

Men do not mend a worn-out garment with a piece of cloth unworn, which cannot yield to suit the fabric, weak with age, and then a greater rent appears. “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2). Unless a new religion moves ahead and is constantly being renewed in the sense Saint Paul means in this quotation, it will be a failure. At the same time, its very dynamism will alienate it from “old” religion. Often a religion has both “new” and “old” adherents who by their very nature will have conflict with one another. If it is a new religion and the “new” prevail and the “old” depart, all will be well and spiritual progress will be the order of the day. But if the “old” prevail the religion will stagnate and not fulfill its destiny. And if the “new” remain in it they will stagnate and suffocate along with it and waste an entire incarnation. That is why the conflict is often so bitter: both sides intuit that they are struggling for survival. One side is death and the other side is life.

Old wine may be preserved in ancient skins; but new wine calls for bottles new. This is the age-long principle and it must be acknowledged. It does not mean that tradition is to be disregarded and even despised, but in a “new” religion tradition must become the foundation, the springboard, for progress, not stagnation. So attachment to tradition can be either positive or negative according to the situation and destiny of a religious group.

This spirit-truth I bring is to this generation new, and if we put it in the ancient skins of Jewish forms, lo, it will all be lost. Notice that Jesus says his teachings were new “to this generation” which included both the Mediterranean people as well as the Hebrews. It was not new to the Essenes in Israel and it certainly was not new to India where it had originated and existed for countless ages as the Eternal Dharma, the Ever-New Truth. Time has shown that you cannot take some of the timeless truths of India—such as karma and reincarnation—and mix them into a basically traditional, exoteric Christian mold that ignores both India and much of Sanatana Dharma. Such an attempt will fail eventually, even if the group continues to exist. It will be soulless, fundamentally contentless and spiritual ineffectual.

It must expand; the ancient bottles cannot yield and they would burst. Expansion in the sense of true growth and expansion of consciousness is an absolute necessity for those awakened souls who are destined to attain liberation. For them the “new” religion is absolutely necessary and the “old” is a threat to the realization of their destiny.

Behold the kingdom of the Christ! it is as old as God himself, and yet it is as new as morning sun; it only can contain the truth of God. I cannot think of a more appropriate way to speak of the Eternal Dharma. Many times in India I have told exoteric Christians, including missionaries, about the ways of the “heathen” Hindus and contrasted them with their ideas of Christians. “Now which is the real Christian?” I asked. And they just sat there and looked at me. But they did not learn.

We must always ensure that we are in the kingdom of The Christ, the kingdom of Cosmic Consciousness that Jesus pointed toward. That kingdom is eternal.

And as he spoke a ruler of the synagogue, Jairus by name, came in and bowed at Jesus' feet and said, My master, hear my prayer! My child is very sick, I fear that she will die; but this I know that if you will but come and speak the Word my child will live. (She was an only child, a girl twelve years of age.) And Jesus tarried not; he went out with the man, and many people followed them. (Aquarian Gospel 120:12-15)

This will be returned to shortly.

And as they went a woman who had been plagued with hemorrhage for many years, had been a subject of experiment of doctors near and far, and all had said, She cannot live, rose from her bed and rushed out in the way as Jesus passed. She said within herself, If I can touch his garment, then I know I will be well. She touched him, and at once the bleeding ceased and she was well.

And Jesus felt that healing power had gone from him, and speaking to the multitude, he said, Who was it touched my coat? And Peter said, No one can tell; the multitudes are pressing you; a score of people may have touched your coat. But Jesus said, Some one in faith, with healing thought, did touch my coat, for healing virtues have gone forth from me. And when the woman knew that what she did was known, she came and knelt at Jesus' feet and told it all. And Jesus said, Your faith has made you whole, go on your way in peace. (Aquarian Gospel 120:16-24)

There is great power in the will of the individual person, and we see it in action here. Hardly anyone believes it when Jesus says the person's faith has healed them, but it is true. Their faith opened the way for healing and their act of will which expressed their faith became a power of healing that cooperated with that of Jesus. It always takes two: God and man.

The body of Jesus and everything he touched vibrated with divine life force. Therefore the simple touch of his clothing imparted tremendous healing power to the woman. Jesus, being totally conscious, was aware of the power going forth. Of course he knew who had touched him, but he asked so everything would be revealed. We find a similar instance in the Gospel of John: "And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 11:41-42).

Now, as he spoke, a servant from the home of Jairus came and said, My master, Jairus, trouble not the Lord to come; your child is dead.

But Jesus said, Jairus, man of faith, do not permit your faith to waver in this trying hour. What is it that the servant said? The child is dead? Lo, what is death? It is the passing of the soul out of the house of flesh. Man is the master of the soul and of its house. When man has risen up from doubt and

fear, lo, he can cleanse the empty house and bring the tenant back again.

Then taking with him Peter, James and John, Jairus and the mother of the child, he went into the chamber of the dead. And when the doors were closed against the multitude, he spoke a word that souls can understand, and then he took the maiden by the hand and said, Talith cumi, child, arise! The maiden's soul returned and she arose and asked for food. (Aquarian Gospel 120:25-32)

Lo, what is death? It is the passing of the soul out of the house of flesh. The body dies, but the true person, the spirit-soul, never dies. As the ancient texts of the Mass for the Departed says: "Unto thy faithful, O Lord, life is changed, not taken away...." I have referred to this already in the commentary on Chapter Sixty One. As a child I heard a kind of folk poem about a very virtuous Christian doctor who moved his office from the ground floor of a building to the second floor. So he put up a fairly large sign that read: "Doc Brown has moved upstairs." And when he died that sign was used for his grave marker. He had truly moved upstairs. So "death" is only a change of residence.

Man is the master of the soul and of its house. When man has risen up from doubt and fear, lo, he can cleanse the empty house and bring the tenant back again. It is all a matter of consciousness. This is why yoga is so essential.

He spoke a word that souls can understand.... The maiden's soul returned and she arose and asked for food. How normal!

And all the people of the city were amazed, and many would have worshipped Jesus as a God. But, like a phantom of the night, he disappeared and went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 120:33-34)

The people wanted to worship Jesus for a completely wrong reason, so he left. God, too, only accepts our worship when it is done in the right way and with the right understanding: insight, actually.

Jesus could appear and disappear at will because his body was almost immaterial, of a higher, ethereal vibration than others. (After his resurrection it was totally Divine Light.) That is why the Gnostics said his body was "unreal" They meant it like the yogis of India would have meant it. They were Jesus' authentic disciples, true Christians, and had a far deeper comprehension of Jesus and his teachings than did the ordinary followers.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty One

It was a gala day in Nazareth. The people there had met with one accord to celebrate some great event. And Jesus and the foreign masters and the twelve, and Mary, mother of the Lord, and Miriam were there. And when the people were assembled in the great hall of the town, the graceful singer, Miriam, stood and sang a song of praise. But few of all the multitude knew who the singer was; but instantly she won all hearts. For many days she sang the songs of Israel, and then she went her way.

The Sabbath came and Jesus went into the synagogue. He took the book of Psalms and read: Blest is the man who puts his trust in God, respecting not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies. O Lord, my God, the works that thou hast done for us are wonderful; and many are thy thoughts for us; we cannot count them all, Thou dost not call for sacrifice, nor offerings of blood; burnt offerings and offerings for sin thou dost not want; and lo, I come to do thy will, O God, thy law is in my heart, and I have preached the word of righteousness and peace unto the thronging multitudes; I have declared the counsel of my God in full. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and grace. I have not kept thy loving kindness and thy truth away from men; I have declared them to the multitudes. O Lord, make wide my lips that I may tell thy praise; I do not bring the sacrifice of blood, nor yet burnt offerings for sin. The sacrifices I would bring to thee, O God, are purity in life, a contrite heart, a spirit full of faith and love, and these thou wilt receive. (Aquarian Gospel 121:1-15)

The sacrifices I would bring to thee, O God, are purity in life, a contrite heart, a spirit full of faith and love, and these thou wilt receive. For many centuries the prophets (all of whom were persecuted and many of them martyred) had taught that blood sacrifice was wrong and not part of the authentic Law of Moses. The Essenes held this view, also. Here we see the real sacrifices: purification of the entire person in order to fit them for the highest spiritual experience and realization. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thessalonians 4:3).

And when he had thus read, he gave the book back to the keeper of the books, and then he said, Upon these ends of earth these messages of God have come. Our people have exalted sacrificial rites and have neglected mercy, justice and the rights of men. You Pharisees, you priests, you scribes, your God is surfeited with blood; God does not heed your prayers; you stand before your burning victims; but you stand in vain. Turn you unto the testimonies of the law; reform and turn to God, and you shall live. Let not your altars be accursed again with smoke of innocence. Bring unto God as sacrifice a broken and a contrite heart. Lift from your fellow men the burdens

that you have imposed. And if you hearken not, and if you turn not from your evil ways, lo, God will smite this nation with a curse. (Aquarian Gospel 121:16-24)

Our people have exalted sacrificial rites and have neglected mercy, justice and the rights of men. Ritual is a part of every viable religion, but ritualism is a sign of degeneration. Spiritual laziness prevails in a ritualistic system, and right living and thinking are neglected. And there is no idea of esoteric or mystical viewpoints. The religion becomes a husk, a dead or dying form without soul or life. This sometimes happens under persecution. Under the Communist persecutions the Russian Orthodox Church withdrew into ritualism with the clergy rarely giving any kind of spiritual teaching. The free Russian Church seems to be recovering from that and returning to its former spiritual vigor.

You Pharisees, you priests, you scribes, your God is surfeited with blood; God does not heed your prayers; you stand before your burning victims; but you stand in vain. To violate the commandment against killing and declare it pleasing to God and even required by him is a demonic evil. (And killing to eat what is killed is doubly demonic.)

In *The Idyll of the White Lotus* Mabel Collins wrote of her past life memories in Egypt when an evil being “possessed” a temple of Isis. So this is not an unusual situation, and therefore is something we should always be on guard about. Therefore Jesus continues: *Let not your altars be accursed again with smoke of innocence.*

Although exoteric Christians do not engage in blood sacrifice, they have created a theology based on the blood sacrifices of the Temple, claiming that such sacrifices are no longer needed because Jesus was a totally innocent being who was sacrificed on the cross for the guilty.

A friend of mine took a course in theology at a local Presbyterian seminary. In one class the teacher (a minister) said that God had been angered with humanity and planned to condemn them all to everlasting hell, but that Jesus offered himself as an atoning sacrifice, *and when the smell of the blood of Jesus rose into God’s nostrils his anger was appeased.* My friend said to him: “Frankly, what you have just said makes me sick! To think that God is such a monstrous being is itself hellish.” And it is thoroughly based on the practices Jesus himself condemned. (My friend got an A in the class, by the way.)

It is my observation that Christianity in general has gotten the personalities of Satan and God confused—even switched. Much ordinary Christian theology is blasphemy against God and Jesus. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23). Miracles are no proof of righteousness or God’s power.

And if you hearken not, and if you turn not from your evil ways, lo, God will smite this nation with a curse. Certainly we see that the Jewish people have suffered horribly,

and often at the hands of Christians. But note that Jesus says “God will smite this nation with a curse” if they do not abandon blood sacrifice and religious repression in the form of social injustice. He does not say they will be cursed because they were going to “kill” Him. The belief that the Jewish people are guilty of Jesus’ death is completely insane. That is like saying that because some Americans engineered the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, all Americans since then, including us, are guilty of his death.

And when he had thus said he stood aside, and all the people were astonished, and they said, Where did this man get all his knowledge and his power? From whence did all this wisdom come? Is not this Mary’s son, whose home is out on Marmion Way? Are not his brothers, Jude and James and Simon, known among our honored men? Are not his sisters with us here? But they were all offended by the words he spoke. And Jesus said, A prophet has no honor in his native land; he is not well received among his kin; his foes are in his home. And Jesus wrought not many mighty works in Nazareth, because the people had no faith in him. He did not tarry long. (Aquarian Gospel 121:25-31)

At the beginning of my first trip to India I met a man who was an influential person because of his great religiosity and charity. In our conversations, more than once he described some social or religious folly and remarked: “That is the way of the world!” Here we see the way of the world. The people know Jesus is extraordinary, but they are offended by him. Little, cowardly and corrupt people are always getting offended about something. At least they had the sense not to demand an apology from him as their modern equivalents do.

But as he passed from thence two blind men followed him and cried, Thou son of David, hear! Have mercy, Lord, and open up our eyes that we may see. And Jesus said, Do you believe that I can open up your eyes and make you see? They said, Yea, Lord, we know that if you speak the Word then we can see. And Jesus touched their eyes and spoke the Word; he said, According to your faith so will it be. And they were blest; they opened up their eyes and saw. And Jesus said, Tell not this thing to any one. But they went forth and told the news through all the land.

As Jesus walked along the way a man who was obsessed, and who was dumb, was brought to him. And Jesus spoke the Word; the unclean spirit came out of the man; his tongue was loosed; he spoke; he said, Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 121:32-40)

It seems strange to me that nowhere in the introductory material found in the printed Aquarian Gospel is there an explanation of what is meant in the text by “the Word” though it occurs over forty times. At the time of Jesus “word” often meant a discourse as well as a single word. And of course even now we have the saying: “A word to the wise is sufficient,” where “a word” may mean several or many words.

The Christ is called The Word because God the Father “spoke” and emanated him as the inner controller and guide of all creation. So it seems to me that “the Word” can mean any word or statement or affirmation that is spoken in the fullness of spiritual consciousness. In India there are many words and formulas of powers called mantras that can produce various intended effects, including healing and exorcising. What is required for effective use of a mantra is the power of “mantra siddhi” which can be gained by intense disciplines to empower the speech of the individual. I know of people who became able to produced beneficial effects by means of the personal mantra which they repeated in their meditations and during their daily activities. In this case it was the prolonged practice that empowered the mantra through their will.

The people were amazed; they said, This is a mighty deed; we never saw that done before. The Pharisees were also much amazed; but they cried out and said, You men of Israel, take heed; this Jesus is a tool of Beelzebub; he heals the sick and casts the spirits out in Satan’s name. But Jesus answered not; he went his way. And with the foreign masters and the twelve he went up to the town where he once turned the water into wine, and tarried certain days. (Aquarian Gospel 121:41-45)

Jesus ignored the nonsense spoken by the Pharisees, who actually knew they were speaking nonsense but wanted to prejudice the simple, ordinary people and turn them against Jesus. Instead he went about his Father’s business (Luke 2:49). And so should we.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Two

The Christines prayed in silence seven days; then Jesus called the twelve aside and said, Behold, the multitudes have thronged about us everywhere; the people are bewildered; they wander here and there like sheep without a fold. They need a shepherd's care; they want a loving hand to lead them to the light. The grain is ripe; the harvest is abundant, but the harvesters are few. The time is also ripe, and you must go alone through all the villages and towns of Galilee and teach and heal. And then he breathed upon the twelve and said, Receive the Holy Breath. And then he gave them each the Word of power, and said, By this Omnific Word you shall cast spirits out, shall heal the sick and bring the dead to life again.

And you shall go not in the way of the Assyrians, nor Greek; you shall not go into Samaria; go only to your brethren of the scattered tribes. And as you go proclaim, The kingdom of Christ has come. (Aquarian Gospel 122:1-9)

The kingdom of Christ has come. It is a mistake to look to the future rather than the present, yet this is a mistake of most religions. Finding themselves inadequate in the present they predict a coming era in which all shall be perfect. But if perfection is not present, at least in a potential form, it will never manifest in the future. Consider how some Buddhists are obsessed with the future Maitreya Buddha rather than focusing on their own Buddha nature that is right at hand. Yet it is the revelation of this eternal nature that will give them nirvana, not the advent of someone else who has attained Buddhahood. Gautama and Maitreya Buddha are external to all of us. Their teachings can show us the way that we can follow and become established in our own Buddha nature, but we must apply them ourselves.

It is the same with Jesus. Looking to a future advent, many Christians neglect the present reality and opportunity. After all, Jesus has never left the world, for he said: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). And Saint Paul wrote: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2). This is the whole idea and purpose of Christianity.

You have abundantly received, and freely you shall give. But you must go in faith; provide yourselves no crutch to lean upon. Give all your gold and silver to the poor; take not two coats, nor extra shoes; just take your wands [staffs]. You are God's husbandmen and he will never suffer you to want. In every place you go search out the men of faith; with them abide until you go from hence. You go for me; you act for me. They who receive and welcome you, receive and welcome me; and they who shut their doors against your face, refuse to welcome me. (Aquarian Gospel 122:10-16)

In every place you go search out the men of faith; with them abide until you go from hence. History bears out the fact that Christians did not go and stand on street corners and

harangue the passers-by as many do today. Nor did they rent rooms and advertise for people to come attend meetings. Rather, they went to a place and stayed there watching the people individually and only approaching privately those they saw already possessed some degree of spiritual awakening and qualification. Those people in turn introduced them to others of like mentality. And so a circle of disciples would be established there.

For example, Saint Mark went to Alexandria and spent many days there just walking through the city and observing whomever he saw. One day he was walking by the stall of a shoemaker who at that very moment pierced his hand with an awl and cried out: "O! one and only God!" This indicated to Saint Mark that the man was no doubt an initiate of a mystery school which worshipped the one God. So he approached him very carefully and began a conversation. Eventually he discovered that the man was an initiate of marked spiritual development, so he began teaching him about Christianity. In this way the church began in Alexandria. There was none of this Come One, Come All business that is just that: *business*, not religion.

There is a practical aspect to only staying with people of true faith. My grandmother told me that one time a very famous preacher came to where she lived and crowds flocked to hear him because he was a brilliant speaker. Being a Fundamentalist, his interest was for people to "get saved." One evening a married couple came to his meeting and got saved. In their gratitude they asked him to come and stay at their house for the night. He agreed and went home with them. In the depths of the night he heard shouting and banging that indicated they were having a terrific fight and striking one another! He prudently dressed, opened the window of his room and got out and went to the house of people he knew well.

If you are not received in kindness in a town, bear not away an evil thought; do not resist. An evil thought of any kind will do you harm; will dissipate your power. When you are not received with favor, go your way, for there are multitudes of men who want the light. (Aquarian Gospel 122:17-19)

Note that there is nothing here about shaking off the dust of your feet in rebuke of those who reject you, or an assurance that they will fare badly in "the judgment." Yet such things are in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The regular Gospels are filled with such distortions and interpolations. I know an Eastern Christian bishop who did such a thing when he walked out of the house of a family I knew very well as devout and worthy just because they would not go along with his ideas on church politics. It is indicated here that we should respect people's disinterest as much as their interest. Respect of others is a keynote of worthy teachers.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep among a pack of wolves; and you must be as wise as serpents and as harmless as the doves. In all your language be discreet, for Pharisees and scribes will seek a cause for your arrest in what you say. And they will surely find a way by charges false to bring you into court. And judges will declare that you are guilty of some crime, and sentence

you to scourgings and to prison cells. But when you come to stand before the judge, be not afraid; be not disturbed about the way to act, the words to speak. The Holy Breath will guide you in that hour, and give the words that you shall speak. Of this be full assured; It is not you who speaks; it is the Holy Breath that gives the words and moves the lips. (Aquarian Gospel 122:20-26)

Pharisees and scribes will seek a cause for your arrest in what you say. And they will surely find a way by charges false to bring you into court. And judges will declare that you are guilty of some crime, and sentence you to scourgings and to prison cells. Jesus hid nothing from his disciples, including the unpleasant things that awaited them. He is also informing them that reason and justice rarely come into religious controversy, just coercion and persecution.

The gospel that you preach will not bring peace, but it will stir the multitudes to wrath. The carnal man abhors the truth, and he would give his life to crush the tender plant before the harvest time. And this will bring confusion in the homes that were the homes of stagnant peace. And brother will give brother up to death; the father will stand by and see men execute his child; and in the courts the child will testify against the sire, and gladly see its mother put to death. And men will hate you just because you speak the name of Christ. Thrice blessed is the man who shall be faithful in this coming day of wrath! (Aquarian Gospel 122:27-32)

The gospel that you preach will not bring peace, but it will stir the multitudes to wrath. Perfectly calm and sensible people can suddenly erupt into indignation or anger when confronted with the gospel of the Christ. Many times this phenomenon has amazed me. Even more so were the times when in response to words of Jesus read or quoted to them very religious people exploded: “Only a fool would say that!” Calling Jesus a fool! Obviously rational thought did not come into the matter.

I well remember a venerable minister coming to our church when the regular minister was away for a couple of weeks. She spoke so reasonably and with humor, never censure, but the entire congregation—except for myself and a few others—became enraged and demanded that she leave. But she became one of my best friends subsequently.

The carnal man abhors the truth, and he would give his life to crush the tender plant before the harvest time. This sounds extreme, but it is the truth about extreme rejection of spiritual truth.

And this will bring confusion in the homes that were the homes of stagnant peace. Dead souls in a dead world are at peace and rest, but even a hint of life stirs them to the depths and produces intense reactions against that hint of life. This is always a surprise, but not to those who know the teachings of Jesus in the Aquarian Gospel.

And men will hate you just because you speak the name of Christ. I wish this was an exaggeration, but it is not. The words “Jesus” and “Christ” can elicit tremendous negativity in people that seem completely sensible and balanced. The inner demons

are being revealed.

Go now; when you are persecuted in a place, go seek another place. And when you meet a foe too great for you, behold, the son of man is at your door, and he can speak, and all the hosts of heaven will stand in your defense. But do not hold your present life in great esteem. The time will come when men will take my life; you need not hope to be immune, for they will slay you in the name of God. Men call me Beelzebub and they will call you imps. Be not afraid of what men say and do; they have no power over soul; they may abuse and may destroy the body of the flesh; but that is all. They do not know the God who holds the issues of the soul within his hands, who can destroy the soul. (Aquarian Gospel 122:33-39)

Go now; when you are persecuted in a place, go seek another place. This is the pacifism of the true Christian. “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16). “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15).

The time will come when men will take my life; you need not hope to be immune, for they will slay you in the name of God. Men call me Beelzebub and they will call you imps. Once more Jesus reveals the trials that his disciples will face, trusting them to face such things with confidence in God to strengthen them against all trials. Of course, things will not be as intense as they were during the three centuries of persecution of Christianity and in the Soviet era in the twentieth century. Often it will be merely social pressure. It will be according to our individual karma. But resistance and opposition do come, especially in the beginning of our spiritual journey. If we are centered in spiritual life we will come through it all and find it has benefitted us.

The Christ is king today, and men must recognize his power. He who loves not the Christ, which is the love of God, before all else, can never gain the prize of spirit consciousness. And they who love their parents or their children more than they love the Christ can never wear the name of Christ. And he who loves his life more than he loves the Christ cannot please God. And he who clings to life shall lose his life, while he who gives his life for Christ will save his life. (Aquarian Gospel 122:40-44)

The idea indicated here is quite simple: Those who do not prize God and union with God above all else cannot rise in evolution, but will stagnate and degenerate.

When Jesus had thus said he sent the twelve away by twos, and bade them meet him in Capernaum. And they went out through all the towns of Galilee and taught and healed in spirit and in power. (Aquarian Gospel 122:45, 46)

But the disciples of Jesus who do love the Divine above all else will not only elevate themselves, but will uplift others.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Three

The Christine master spent a time in prayer and then he called the foreign masters, and he said to them, Behold, I sent the twelve apostles unto Israel, but you are sent to all the world. Our God is one, is Spirit, and is truth, and every man is dear to him. He is the God of every child of India, and the farther east; of Persia, and the farther north; of Greece and Rome and of the farther west; of Egypt and the farther south, and of the mighty lands across the seas, and of the islands of the seas. If God would send the bread of life to one and not to all who have arisen to the consciousness of life and can receive the bread of life, then he would be unjust and that would shake the very throne of heaven. So he has called you from the seven centers of the world, and he has breathed the breath of wisdom and of power into your souls, and now he sends you forth as bearers of the light of life, apostles of the human race. Go on your way, and as you go proclaim the gospel of the Christ. And then he breathed upon the masters and he said, Receive the Holy Breath; and then he gave to each the Word of power. And each went on his way, and every land was blest. (Aquarian Gospel 123:1-9)

It is only logical that at first Jesus sent his disciples only to their homelands, for no one else would be as qualified to teach in those places. Later in Chapter One Hundred Eighty he tells them to go to the whole world, which will be after Pentecost when a universal empowerment was given to them all. Yet we see that even in his lifetime the Gospel of the Christ was spread throughout the world at his direction.

Then Jesus went alone across the hills of Galilee and after certain days he reached the coast of Tyre, and in the home of Rachel he abode. He did not advertise his coming for he did not come to teach; he would commune with God where he could see the waters of the Mighty Sea. But Rachel told the news and multitudes of people thronged her home to see the Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 123:10-12)

Again and again Jesus withdrew from teaching and immersed himself in silent meditation. Many people have liked to meditate near water. In *Autobiography of a Yogi* we find that Sri Ramakrishna told Mahendranath Gupta to meditate for a while by every body of water he saw, including small ponds. Daddy Bray, the master Kahuna, told a group of us about how he could rise above every problem just by going to the seashore, contemplating the waves and then beginning to dance with them. Here Jesus is looking at the vast expanse of the sea as an exercise in expansion of consciousness.

A Grecian woman of Phoenecia came; her daughter was obsessed. She

said, O Lord, have mercy on my home! My daughter is obsessed; but this I know, if you will speak the Word she will be free. Thou son of David, hear my prayer! But Rachel said, Good woman, trouble not the Lord. He did not come to Tyre to heal; he came to talk with God beside the sea. And Jesus said, Lo, I was sent not to the Greek, nor to Syro-phenicians; I come just to my people, Israel. And then the woman fell down at his feet and said, Lord, Jesus, I implore that you will save my child. And Jesus said, You know the common proverb well: It is not meet that one should give the children's bread to dogs. And then the woman said, Yea, Jesus, this I know, but dogs may eat the crumbs that fall down from their master's board. And Jesus said, Such faith I have not seen, no, not among the Jews; she is not serf, nor dog. And then he said to her, According to your faith so let it be. The woman went her way and when she came unto her child, lo, she was healed. (Aquarian Gospel 123:13-22)

In the usual Gospels there is a very real implication that this woman was spiritually a dog, but not here, though it is her reaction of humility that prompts Jesus to praise her.

And Jesus tarried many days in Tyre; and then he went his way and dwelt a time in Sidon by the sea. And then he journeyed on. In Lebanon hills and vales, and in its groves he walked in silent thought. His earthly mission fast was drawing to a close; he sought for strength, and what he sought he found. Mount Hermon stood beyond, and Jesus fain would kneel beside that mountain famed in Hebrew song. And then he stood upon Mount Hermon's lofty peaks, and lifting up his eyes to heaven he talked with God. And masters of the olden times revealed themselves and long they talked about the kingdom of the Christ; about the mighty works that had been done; about the coming conquest of the cross; about the victory over death. (Aquarian Gospel 123:23-29)

Here we find that many great Masters came to Jesus to prepare him for his world-changing death and resurrection. And they are called Masters, not prophets, so they were not just from the Hebrew spiritual tradition. This is logical, since Jesus' true teachings were universal truth beyond the confines of all religion except that of India which was the source of his teachings.

Then Jesus journeyed on; he went to Caesarea-Philippi, and in Susanna's home he tarried certain days. And then he went through all Decapolis to give encouragement to those who knew him as the Christ, and to prepare them for the day of Calvary. (Aquarian Gospel 123:30, 31)

Again we see how Jesus revealed everything to his followers.

And then he went to Gadara, and many friends were there, to welcome him. And Chuza, steward of the house of Herod Antipas, was there, and Jesus

went aboard the royal ship with him and crossed the sea, and came unto Capernaum. And when the people knew that Jesus was at home they came to welcome him. In just a little while the twelve apostles came and told the master all about their journey over Galilee. They said that by the sacred Word they had done many mighty works; and Jesus said to them, Well done. (Aquarian Gospel 123:32-36)

Even before the triumph of his resurrection and the mighty empowerment of Pentecost great blessing came through the agency of Jesus' disciples.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Four

The twelve apostles now had reached the stage of spirit consciousness, and Jesus could reveal to them the deeper meanings of his mission to the world. Next week the great feast of the Jews would be observed, and Matthew said, Shall we not gird ourselves and go unto Jerusalem? But Jesus said, We will not go up to the feast; the time is short and I have many things to say to you; come you apart into a desert place and rest a while. And then they took their boats and crossed the sea, and came into a desert place near Julius Bethsaida. The people saw them go, and in vast multitudes they followed them. And Jesus had compassion on the anxious throng, and he stood forth and taught them all the day, because they sought a light and were like sheep without a fold. (Aquarian Gospel 124:1-6)

The twelve apostles now had reached the stage of spirit consciousness, and Jesus could reveal to them the deeper meanings of his mission to the world. Origen the great writer and teacher of the third century said that there are two kinds of people in this world: bodies and spirits. Most live the life of the body in the consciousness of the body, but there are those whose consciousness has developed beyond the body into the spirit. Much of religion is only a matter of ideas and observances, but it is mistaken for spiritual life so we rarely find religions whose avowed purpose is to awaken the spirit. Jesus the yogi understood and helped his disciples to awaken into spirit consciousness. Only then could they comprehend his mission in this world.

And Jesus had compassion on the anxious throng, and he stood forth and taught them all the day, because they sought a light and were like sheep without a fold. The people were not just without a shepherd, a teacher, they were without a religion, a fold. What they thought was religion was misinterpretation and superstition, a power structure empty of real spiritual knowledge. According to the *Bhavishya Mahapurana*, a Sanskrit history of Kashmir, when Jesus met the king of Kashmir in the Himalayas after having returned to India, he told the king: "I come from a land far away, where there is no truth, and evil knows no limits." (See *The Christ of India*.) So we cannot doubt that Jesus considered the people of Israel in general at that time to be without any real religion. And this passage of the Aquarian Gospel bears it out. This may seem very harsh, but at the time Jesus was speaking the Essenes had left Israel and gone into Egypt to escape the Roman destruction that they knew would come upon the land. So with the esoteric element absent from Israel it really was devoid of truth and susceptible to all forms of evil. For that reason Jerusalem was later literally overthrown and not a single stone remained on top of another.

And as the night came on the twelve were doubting what the multitudes would do, and Thomas said, Lord, we are in a desert place; the multitudes have naught to eat and they are faint from lack of food; what shall we do?

And Jesus said, Go to and feed the multitudes. And Judas said, Shall we go down and buy two hundred pennies' worth of bread for them to eat? And Jesus said, Go look into our larder and see how many loaves we have. And Andrew said, We have no bread, but we have found a lad who has five barley loaves and two small fish; but this would not be food enough for one in ten. But Jesus said, Command these people all to sit upon the grass in companies of twelve; and they all sat down in companies of twelve. Then Jesus took the loaves and fish, and looking up to heaven he spoke the sacred Word. And then he broke the bread and gave it to the twelve; he also gave the fish unto the twelve, and said, Go to and feed the multitudes. And all the people ate and were refreshed. There were about five thousand men, a company of little ones, and women not a few. And when the people all were filled the master said, Let not a crumb be lost; Go to and gather up the pieces of the bread and fish for others that may want. They gathered up the fragments and they filled twelve baskets full. The people were bewildered by this wondrous act of power; they said, And now we know that Jesus is the prophet that our prophets said would come; and then they said, All hail the king! (Aquarian Gospel 124:7-21)

Then Jesus took the loaves and fish, and looking up to heaven he spoke the sacred Word. Multiplication of food and other resources is not unknown in India. For example, at the tomb-shrine of Ram Jwala Baba in Western India, every day enough food for three hundred people is cooked for the devotees who come there. But at least five hundred people, and often much more, are fed every day to their fill. An Indian friend who had witnessed this many times told me about it. I visited an ashram whose founder once told a disciple to feed a goodly number of people who had arrived late at night. When the disciple protested that there was nothing in the kitchen, not even uncooked items, the saint took her into the kitchen and showed her a cooking pot that had fragments of rice and vegetables sticking to the side. "Dish it up," the saint said and sat in a corner watching. To the woman's astonishment as she kept scraping and scraping she took abundant food from the pot and fed the entire group. Once I went on an overnight trip with some friends. The driver was very generous and filled the car with gas from his own pocket. When we got back home another friend offered to fill up the car with gas. But the gas gauge showed that the tank was still full! When the friend insisted, saying the gauge must be stuck, we went to the gas station where not even a cup more could be put into the tank. All that driving had not used up a drop. Such things happen throughout the world where people have the right consciousness.

When Jesus heard them say, All hail the king! he called the twelve and bade them take their boats and go before him to the other side; and he went all alone into a mountain pass to pray. (Aquarian Gospel 124:22, 23)

Jesus shows us just how little we should value or respond to the praise of the worldly, especially when it is based on their material gain. People seem to always

have loved the idea of a welfare state that would take care of their needs and relieve them of all responsibility, even though it never works.

The twelve were on the sea and hoped to reach Capernaum in just a little time, when all at once a fearful storm arose, and they were at the mercy of the waves. And in the fourth watch of the night the wind became a whirling wind, and they were filled with fear. And in the blinding storm they saw a form move on the waves; it seemed to be a man, one spoke out and said, It is a ghost, a sign of evil things. But John discerned the form and said, It is the Lord. And then the wind blew not so hard, and Peter, standing in the midst, exclaimed: My Lord! my Lord! If this be truly you, bid me to come to you upon the waves. The form reached forth his hand and said, Come on. And Peter stepped upon the waves and they were solid as a rock; he walked upon the waves. He walked until he thought within himself, What if the waves should break beneath my feet? And then the waves did break beneath his feet, and he began to sink, and in the fearfulness of soul he cried, O save me, Lord, or I am lost! And Jesus took him by the hand and said, O you of little faith! why did you doubt? And Jesus led the way unto the boat. The storm had spent its force; the winds were still, and they were near the shore, and when they landed they were in the valley of Gennesaret. (Aquarian Gospel 124:24-35)

But John discerned the form and said, It is the Lord. Though the figure was only dimly seen, the beloved disciple recognized the vibration of Jesus, for such beings have powerful and vast-reaching auras.

And Peter stepped upon the waves and they were solid as a rock; he walked upon the waves. This indicates that matter is not as it seems, but at the will of Masters can behave completely different from its usual state.

He walked until he thought within himself, What if the waves should break beneath my feet? And then the waves did break beneath his feet, and he began to sink. “According to your faith be it unto you” (Matthew 9:29) is a principle that applies to unbelief, too. Once the great saint Kabir who lived in Varanasi (Benares) sent his son to visit another saint, the poet Tulsidas. He sent a letter with his son asking Tulsidas to teach him wisdom. So Tulsidas worked many miracles invoking the holy name of Rama. When Kabir’s son was to return home, the Ganges was in flood and no boats could cross it. So Tulsidas tied something in a corner of the boy’s clothing and told him to walk over the water! The boy did so, to his amazement. But when he was almost at the other side of the Ganges, he began to wonder what magical object Tulsidas had tied in his cloth. So he untied it and found a sacred tulsi (basil) leaf with the name of Rama written on it. “What’s this?” He exclaimed, “Just the name of Rama!” Immediately he sank in the water, but managed to thrash his way to the shore and crawl out. There is certainly a lesson in that.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Five

The news soon spread through all the valley of Gennersaret that Jesus and the twelve had come, and many people came to see. They brought their sick and laid them at the master's feet, and all the day he taught and healed. The multitudes upon the other side who had been fed the day before and other multitudes, went down to see the Lord; but when they found him not they sought him in Capernaum. And when they found him not at home, they went on to Gennesaret. They found him there and said, Rabboni, when came you to Gennesaret? And Jesus said, Why are you come across the sea? you came not for the bread of life; you came to gratify your selfish selves; you all were fed the other day across the sea, and you are after more of loaves and fish. The food you ate was nourishment for flesh that soon must pass away. (Aquarian Gospel 125:1-7)

Sometimes a teacher has to speak very plainly and reveal what it really happening with seekers, especially when they do not want what the teacher has to offer, as in this case. Years ago I heard a recording of a spiritual leader in south India in which he said: "When I do what you want, you love me. When I don't do what you want, you dislike me." There is no room in spiritual life for dishonesty masquerading as diplomacy.

You men of Galilee, seek not for food that perishes, but seek for food that feeds the soul; and, lo, I bring you food from heaven. You ate the flesh of fish, and you were satisfied, and now I bring the flesh of Christ for you to eat that you may live for evermore. Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; and then they ate the flesh of quail, and drank the waters of a flowing spring that Moses brought out from the rock; but all of them are dead. The manna and the quail were symbols of the flesh of Christ; the waters of the rock were symbols of the blood. But, lo, the Christ has come; he is the bread of life that God has given to the world. Whoever eats the flesh of Christ and drinks his blood shall never die; and he will hunger nevermore; and he will thirst no more. And they who eat this bread of heaven, and drink these waters from the spring of life cannot be lost; these feed the soul, and purify the life. Behold, for God has said, When man has purified himself I will exalt him to the throne of power. (Aquarian Gospel 125:8-15)

You men of Galilee, seek not for food that perishes, but seek for food that feeds the soul; and, lo, I bring you food from heaven. You ate the flesh of fish, and you were satisfied, and now I bring the flesh of Christ for you to eat that you may live for evermore. The spirit is pure consciousness, but the soul consists of the subtle bodies that connect the spirit with the physical body. They are formed of subtle energies. Earthly food is also formed of energies, gross and subtle, so it can affect the soul. As the Chandogya

Upanishad says: “That which is the subtlest part of curds rises, when they are churned and becomes butter. In the same manner, that which is the subtlest part of the food that is eaten rises and becomes mind. The subtlest part of the water that is drunk rises and becomes prana. Thus, the mind consists of food, [and] the prana consists of water” (Chandogya Upanishad 6.6.1-3,5; the same is confirmed in 6.7.1-6). So that which is eaten can have a spiritual effect.

Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; and then they ate the flesh of quail, and drank the waters of a flowing spring that Moses brought out from the rock; but all of them are dead. The manna and the quail were symbols of the flesh of Christ; the waters of the rock were symbols of the blood. But, lo, the Christ has come; he is the bread of life that God has given to the world. Whoever eats the flesh of Christ and drinks his blood shall never die; and he will hunger nevermore; and he will thirst no more. And they who eat this bread of heaven, and drink these waters from the spring of life cannot be lost; these feed the soul, and purify the life. The body and blood of Christ have a symbolic and a literal meaning. The symbolic flesh of Christ is the external way of life that leads to Christhood, and the symbolic blood of Christ is the Christ Consciousness that arises in those who follow the path of Christhood. The literal flesh and blood of Christ are the sacred elements that are consecrated in the holy eucharist (Mass or Liturgy) and infused with Christ Consciousness which is then absorbed by those who receive them if they are sufficiently prepared and purified. Jesus came to bring both forms. Although his teachings were exactly those of classical Sanatana Dharma in India, the sacramental system of which the eucharist is a major part was the distinctive aspect of the Christian (Ishanni) sampradaya which for over a thousand years was considered a part of Hindu Dharma. (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.)

Behold, for God has said, When man has purified himself I will exalt him to the throne of power. Purification is the essence of spiritual life. And it is in our hands. God’s power transforms us, but unless we are purified it cannot work the needed transformation. That is why Saint Paul said we are “workers together with him” (II Corinthians 6:1). Purity is accomplished by observance of strict moral principles and practices, the most important of which is yoga meditation.

Then Jesus and the twelve went to Capernaum; and Jesus went into the synagogue and taught. And when the Jews, who heard him in Gennesaret, were come they said, This fellow is beside himself. We heard him say, I am the bread of life that comes from heaven; and we all know that he is but a man, the son of man, who came from Nazareth; we know his mother, and his other kin. And Jesus knew their thoughts; he said to them, Why murmur you, and reason thus among yourselves? The Christ is everlasting life; he came from heaven; he has the keys of heaven, and no man enters into heaven except he fills himself with Christ. I came in flesh to do the will of God, and, lo, this flesh and blood are filled with Christ; and so I am the living bread that comes from heaven; and when you eat this flesh and drink this blood you will have everlasting life; and if you will, you may become the bread of life.

(Aquarian Gospel 125:16-22)

The Christ is everlasting life; he came from heaven; he has the keys of heaven, and no man enters into heaven except he fills himself with Christ. Christ comes into the world through those liberated souls who are completely one with God in his aspect of Christ Consciousness: Ishwara, the Only-Begotten, the archetypal Son of God that is of course the Father in extension for the creation of the world. To attain the highest we must become one with this Christ, be filled with Christ. So our liberation will be an internal matter of transformation. For everything comes from within and happens from within.

I came in flesh to do the will of God, and, lo, this flesh and blood are filled with Christ; and so I am the living bread that comes from heaven; and when you eat this flesh and drink this blood you will have everlasting life; and if you will, you may become the bread of life. The stated purpose of the eucharist is for us to become Christs like Jesus, filled with the Christ, with God. But it must be supported by the Christ life in the world.

And many of the people were enraged; they said, How can this man give us his flesh to eat, his blood to drink? And his disciples were aggrieved because he said these things, and many turned away and followed him no more. They said, This is a fearful thing for him to say, If you eat not my flesh and drink my blood, you cannot enter into life. They could not comprehend the parable he spoke.

And Jesus said, You stumble and you fall before the truth; What will you do when you shall see this flesh and blood transmuted into higher form? What will you say when you shall see the son of man ascending on the clouds of heaven? What will you say when you shall see the son of man sit on the throne of God? The flesh is naught; the spirit is the quickening power. The words I speak are spirit; they are life. (Aquarian Gospel 125:23-30)

The things Jesus speaks of here are the signs of a totally transmuted being. They are purely spiritual phenomena and incomprehensible to those devoid of spiritual awakening. Such people will go on and on about “disgusting cannibalism” and suchlike, not realizing the nature of this transforming mystery.

When Jesus saw the many who had been so loud in their professions of their faith in him, turn back and go away, he said unto the twelve. Will you desert me in this hour and go away? But Peter said, Lord, we have no place else to go; you have the words of everlasting life; we know that you are sent to us from God. (Aquarian Gospel 125:31-33)

Although not yet fully aware of the divine mysteries, the apostles’ intuition told them that Jesus was a teacher of truth, a messenger of eternal life come from God for their liberation into Spirit.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Six

A company of scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem to learn wherein the power of Jesus lay. But when they learned that he and his disciples heeded not the custom of the Jews, regarding washing of the hands before they ate, they were amazed. And Jesus said, Hypocrisy is queen among you scribes and Pharisees. Of you Isaiah wrote: This people honor me with lips; their hearts are far away. In vain they worship me; their doctrines are the dogmas and the creeds of men. You men who pose as men of God, and still reject the laws of God and teach the laws of men, stand forth and tell when God gave unto men the ceremonial laws that you observe; and tell these people how the spirit life is sullied if one washes not before he eats. (Aquarian Gospel 126:1-6)

The power of Jesus which interested the scribes and Pharisees was not spiritual power nor even miraculous power, but what they considered was his power over others. This is always true of such people. They never give ordinary people any credit for either good sense or will power. So they are always holding forth about discovering who has influenced or deceived them, looking for someone to blame for their losing their grasp on those people. This is especially the way of religion. I encountered it early on in life.

It cannot be denied that much of religion is purely from the human ego and ignorance. Few teach the true laws of God, but only externals and externally-directed doctrines. Obsession with ceremonial purity has been a curse of religion through the ages.

His critics answered not, and then he said, Hear me, you men of Israel! Defilement is a creature of the heart. The carnal mind lays hold of thought, and makes a monstrous bride; this bride is sin; sin is a creature of the mind. (Aquarian Gospel 126:7, 8)

Defilement is a matter of the mind and heart. When there is something wrong in a person's life there is something wrong in their mind. Just as Edison could not have invented a light bulb if the idea was not first in his mind, so no one does any act that does not come from his mind. Action is the fruition of seeds sown in the mind in this or past lives. So unless we start with the mind we will never be able to correct our behavior.

That which defiles a man is not the food he eats. The bread and fish and other things we eat, are simply cups to carry to the cells of flesh material for the building of the human house, and when their work is done as refuse they are cast away. The life of plant and flesh that goes to build the human house is never food for soul. The spirit does not feed upon the carcasses of animal, or plant. God feeds the soul direct from heaven; the bread of life comes from

above. The air we breathe is charged with Holy Breath, and he who wills may take this Holy Breath. The soul discriminates, and he who wants the life of Christ may breathe it in. According to your faith so let it be. (Aquarian Gospel 126:9-14)

That which defiles a man is not the food he eats. This does not contradict the teaching of the upanishad I cited. The energies from food that attach themselves to the mind are of two qualities: light and fluid and heavy and inert—not good or bad. However, since we are working for self-transformation, the light energies make this possible, whereas the heavy energies often cannot even be moved by our will in spiritual practices. Thus, the light energies are a help and the heavy are a hindrance. For this reason yogis are always careful about their diet. They do not avoid things because they are evil or eat that which they think is good or virtuous, but those that make purification and refinement of our mental energies possible. It is not a matter of pure and impure, spiritually speaking. Yet we must be aware of the effect different foods have on the mind. For example, when I first began teaching yoga I wondered how important vegetarianism was for them. So rather than just parrot that they should be vegetarians, I broke my discipline and ate a single hamburger. It hindered my meditations for over a week! My mind just would not go upward as it did before. The heavy vibrations of the meat was like ballast to a balloon. So I did not hesitate to advise the adoption of a vegetarian diet. (See *Spiritual Benefits of a Vegetarian Diet*.)

The life of plant and flesh that goes to build the human house is never food for soul. The spirit does not feed upon the carcasses of animal, or plant. We do need to realize that although the spirit is never affected by diet, the subtle bodies that make up the soul are made out of the energies of the food we eat. The soul is not defiled but it is either made light or heavy. So for the yogi diet is a practical matter, not a moral one. Nevertheless there is the karma involved in killing a sentient being for its flesh, and that is very much a hindrance to spiritual life.

God feeds the soul direct from heaven; the bread of life comes from above. But we have to look above and seek the bread of heaven, and if the energies of the mind are heavy and inert we will either not look up and ask for the bread of life, or will not be able to receive it when it is offered to us. This is simple fact.

The air we breathe is charged with Holy Breath, and he who wills may take this Holy Breath. The soul discriminates, and he who wants the life of Christ may breathe it in. Now we have gotten to an extremely important subject: the of breath as a means to fill ourselves with the light of the Holy Spirit. Pranayama, work with the breath, is a vital part of yoga and meditation practice because the breath directly affects the mind and the subtle faculties in the soul-bodies. Everything alive breathes, for the breath is a direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Breath, who is also called the Spirit of Christ. The pranayama of spiritual yoga should not be equated with the breathing exercises of hatha yoga. These are solely for health and can be very valuable when done properly. Yoga pranayama consists of observing the breath and integrating certain mantric sounds with the process of inhalation and

exhalation. I have written elsewhere:

“The reason why breath plays such an important part in the technique of classical Yoga lies in the close relation existing between breath and mind. ‘Breath and mind arise from the same source’—the Self—according to Sri Ramana Maharshi in *Day By Day With Bhagavan*. One of the most profound texts on the philosophy behind yoga, the Shiva Sutras, says: ‘The connection of pure consciousness with breath [prana] is natural’ (Shiva Sutras 3:43). Breath is the meeting place of body, mind, and spirit.

“The breath and the *body* are completely interconnected and interrelated, as is seen from the fact that the breath is calm when the body is calm, and agitated or labored when the body is agitated or labored. The heavy exhalation made when feeling exhausted and the enthusiastic inhalation made when feeling energized or exhilarated establish the same fact.

“The breath and the *emotions* are completely interconnected and interrelated, as is seen from the fact that the breath is calm when the emotions are calm, and agitated and labored when the emotions are agitated or out of control. Our drawing of a quick breath, when we are surprised, shocked, or fearful, and the forceful exhalation done when angry or annoyed demonstrate this.

“The breath and the *mind* are completely interconnected and interrelated, as is seen from the fact that the breath is calm when the mind is calm, and agitated, irregular, and labored when the mind is agitated or disturbed in any way. Our holding of the breath when attempting intense concentration also shows this.

“Breath, which exists on all planes of manifestation, is the connecting link between matter and energy on the one hand and consciousness and mind on the other. It is necessary for the vitalization and functioning of all vehicles of consciousness, physical or superphysical.

“We start with awareness of the ordinary physical breath, but that awareness, when cultivated correctly, leads us into higher awareness which enables us to perceive the subtle movement behind the breath. Ultimately, we come into contact with the breather of the breath, our own spirit.

“In many spiritual traditions the same word is used for both breath and spirit, underscoring the esoteric principle that in essence they are the same, though we naturally think of spirit as being the cause of breath(ing). The word used for both breath and spirit is: In Judaism, *Ruach*. In Eastern Christianity (and ancient Greek religion), *Pneuma*. In Western Christianity (and ancient Roman religion), *Spiritus* (which comes from *spiro*, ‘I breathe’). In Hinduism and Buddhism, *Atma* (from the root word *at* which means ‘to breathe’), and *Prana*.”

See *Soham Yoga* and *Light of Soham* for instruction in the highest spiritual form of pranayama, the true Raja Yoga.

Man is not a part of his abiding place; the house is not the man. The lower world builds up the house of flesh, and keeps it in repair; the higher world provides the bread of spirit life. The loveliest lilies grow from stagnant ponds

and filthiest muck. The law of flesh demands that one should keep the body clean. The law of spirit call for purity in thought and word and deed. (Aquarian Gospel 126:15-19)

The lowest part of our life, the body, is also the highest part, according to its degree of purity. And the degree of purity of our thought, word and deed determines how much or how little we are living and embodying the Christ-life.

Now, when the evening came and they were in the house, the twelve had many things to say, and many questions to propound. Nathaniel asked, Was what you said about the house of flesh a parable? If so, what does it mean? And Jesus said, Can you not yet discriminate? Do you not yet perceive that what a man takes in his mouth defiles him not? His food goes not into his soul; it is material for flesh and bone and brawn. To spirit everything is clean. That which defiles a man wells up from carnal thoughts; and carnal thoughts spring from the heart, and generate a host of evil things. From out the heart comes murders, thefts and foolishness. All selfish acts and sensual deeds spring from the heart. To eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man. (Aquarian Gospel 126:20-27)

This is so clear that it needs no comment.

And Peter said, Lord, What you said today has grievously offended scribe and Pharisee. And Jesus said, These scribes and Pharisees are not the scions of the tree of life; they are not plants of God; they are the plants of men, and every foreign plant shall be plucked up. Let all these men alone; they are blind guides; they lead a multitude of people who are blind. The leaders and the led together walk; together they will fall into the yawning pits. (Aquarian Gospel 126:28-31)

It is a mistake to become upset and mentally involved with false religion, false teachers and their followers. They are a part of the human situation, and only evolution enables a person to perceive them for what they are. So we should pay attention to fostering our own spiritual lives, part of which is cultivating good will and blessing for all, including such people. They, too, will one day take the upward path and attain Christhood.

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Seven

Now, Jesus took the twelve and with them crossed the sea at night and came unto the borders of Decapolis, that he might find a secret place where, all alone, he could reveal to them the things to come. They went into a mountain pass and spent three days in prayer.

Then Jesus said, Behold, the time is near when I will walk with you in flesh no more. Lo, I have taught that he who counts his life of so much worth that he would give it not in willing sacrifice to save his brother man, is worthy not to enter into life. Lo, I am come as pattern for the sons of men, and I have not refrained from helpfulness. When I had passed the seven tests in Heliopolis, I consecrated life and all I had, to save the world. In the Judean wilderness I fought the strongest foes of men, and there I reaffirmed my consecration to the service of my fellow man. In troubles and in trials I have wavered not; when false accusers came, I answered not.

God gave the saving Word to me, and I have often spoken it and healed the sick, drove unclean spirits out, and raised the dead. And I have shown you how to speak the Word; and I have given you the Word; in just a little while we turn our faces toward Jerusalem, and one of you who hear me now will then betray me into wicked hands. The scribes and Pharisees will bring false charges up and hale me into court, and, by consent of Rome, I will be crucified.

Then Peter said, My Lord, it shall not be. The Roman soldiers will tread on twelve dead men before they reach our Lord. But Jesus said, A savior of the world cannot resist. I came to save the world and I have taken up your names before the highest courts of heaven, and you have been confirmed as saviors of the world. And not a name, excepting that of him who shall betray, will ever be disgraced.

I go my way, and though my flesh shall pass, my soul will stand beside you all the way to guide and bless. And wicked men will seize you in the streets, and as you kneel in prayer; will charge you with some legal crime, and think they serve their God by putting you to death.

But falter not; the load will heavy be, but with the consciousness of duty done, the peace of God will lift the load, dispel the pain and light the way. And we will meet where carnal executioners come not; there we will serve the cruel men, who in their ignorance had tortured us to death. Can we prevent this outrage and this slaughter of our lives? If not we are but creatures of the ebb and flow of carnal things. It would not be a sacrifice of life. But we are masters of the things of time. Lo, we can speak, and all the spirits of the fire, water, earth and air will stand in our defense. We can command and many legions of the angel world would come and strike our enemies to earth. But it

is best that not a power of heaven or earth should come to our relief. And it is best that even God should veil his face and seem to hear us not.

As I am pattern unto you, so you are patterns for the human race. We show by non-resistance that we give our lives in willing sacrifice for man. But my example will not end with death. My body will be laid within a tomb in which no flesh has lain, symbolic of the purity of life in death. And in the tomb I will remain three days in sweet communion with the Christ, and with my Father-God and Mother-God. And then, symbolic of the ascent of the soul to higher life, my flesh within the tomb will disappear; will be transmuted into higher form, and, in the presence of you all, I will ascend to God.

Then Jesus and the twelve went to a village by the sea. (Aquarian Gospel 127:1-31)

Lo, I have taught that he who counts his life of so much worth that he would give it not in willing sacrifice to save his brother man, is worthy not to enter into life. Lo, I am come as pattern for the sons of men, and I have not refrained from helpfulness. When I had passed the seven tests in Heliopolis, I consecrated life and all I had, to save the world. In the Judean wilderness I fought the strongest foes of men, and there I reaffirmed my consecration to the service of my fellow man. In troubles and in trials I have wavered not; when false accusers came, I answered not. God has projected this entire creation consisting of many worlds and grades of energy and has sent us forth to evolve and return unto him in perfection. God is both the supreme Master and devoted servant. So those who would become godlike and return to him must be devoted to the welfare of others. This is the secret of holiness: selfless service. Obviously there is no place for ego in such a condition of heart. We must not only love God above all, we must love all sentient beings above ourselves. The only thing that makes this possible is our eternal, essential oneness with God. Perfection is our nature, only waiting to be revealed.

God gave the saving Word to me, and I have often spoken it and healed the sick, drove unclean spirits out, and raised the dead. And I have shown you how to speak the Word; and I have given you the Word. Obviously the Divine Word is at the heart of our spiritual endeavor, both for our own welfare and for the upliftment of others.

In just a little while we turn our faces toward Jerusalem, and one of you who hear me now will then betray me into wicked hands. The scribes and Pharisees will bring false charges up and hale me into court, and, by consent of Rome, I will be crucified. Then Peter said, My Lord, it shall not be. The Roman soldiers will tread on twelve dead men before they reach our Lord. But Jesus said, A savior of the world cannot resist. When ego has been dissolved there is no self-interest at all nor is there ever any resistance to destiny. The divine plan must unfold.

I came to save the world and I have taken up your names before the highest courts of heaven, and you have been confirmed as saviors of the world. And not a name, excepting that of him who shall betray, will ever be disgraced. Jesus is the archetypal savior, our example, but those who would be his disciples must also in time become saviors in their own right. How different this viewpoint is from the selfishness and ego-centeredness that is at the heart of most people's involvement in religion. Self-service is the watchword.

What a tremendous ideal is set before us by Jesus who was and is the perfect example.

I go my way, and though my flesh shall pass, my soul will stand beside you all the way to guide and bless. For two thousand years, ever since Christianity became exoteric in character, people have been obsessed with the Second Coming and the End of the World. "Jesus is coming back!" they trumpet, but Jesus has never left. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20). These are his words. The word translated "lo" is *idou*, which means "see this is so." We are to experience that Jesus is right here, not even a step away. "Amen" is used in the sense of a solemn vow or assurance. So if we are attuned with Jesus, we will experience the truth of his perpetual presence.

And wicked men will seize you in the streets, and as you kneel in prayer; will charge you with some legal crime, and think they serve their God by putting you to death. But falter not; the load will heavy be, but with the consciousness of duty done, the peace of God will lift the load, dispel the pain and light the way. And we will meet where carnal executioners come not; there we will serve the cruel men, who in their ignorance had tortured us to death. I have seen that truly spiritual people sometimes meet those who did them great wrong in previous lives and bring them great benefit, that somehow the negative karma has become positive. I knew a yogi that met an alcoholic drug addict whom he recognized as a tormentor from a past life. Just keeping company with the man cured him of alcoholism and addiction. Others have had the same experience. Lead has been turned into gold.

Can we prevent this outrage and this slaughter of our lives? If not we are but creatures of the ebb and flow of carnal things. It would not be a sacrifice of life. But we are masters of the things of time. Lo, we can speak, and all the spirits of the fire, water, earth and air will stand in our defense. We can command and many legions of the angel world would come and strike our enemies to earth. But it is best that not a power of heaven or earth should come to our relief. And it is best that even God should veil his face and seem to hear us not. Our view of things is usually not in harmony with the higher purpose of God. Even if unpleasant things can be avoided it is better to let what comes come and give thanks to God.

As I am pattern unto you, so you are patterns for the human race. We show by non-resistance that we give our lives in willing sacrifice for man. But my example will not end with death. My body will be laid within a tomb in which no flesh has lain, symbolic of the purity of life in death. And in the tomb I will remain three days in sweet communion with the Christ, and with my Father-God and Mother-God. And then, symbolic of the ascent of the soul to higher life, my flesh within the tomb will disappear; will be transmuted into higher form, and, in the presence of you all, I will ascend to God. Then Jesus and the twelve went to a village by the sea. If Jesus had not agreed to the cross and death he would not have gained such a glorious victory, both for himself and for us. Things may be painful and dark, but if we go through them with tranquillity we will find light and joy awaiting us on the other side. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Eight

Now, in the night while the disciples slept, lo, Jesus rose and went alone into a mountain pass, six miles away, to pray. And in the morning when the twelve awoke they could not find the Lord, and all the people of the village sought, and when the sun had passed its highest point they found him in the mountain pass.

And multitudes of people came and brought their sick, and Jesus taught and healed. And when the night came on the people would not go; they slept upon the ground that they might be a-near the Lord. Three days and nights the multitudes remained, and none had aught to eat.

And Jesus had compassion and he said, If I should send the multitudes away they might not reach their homes, for they are faint, for some have journeyed many miles. And his disciples said, Where shall we get enough of food to feed them all? There are four thousand men, besides the women and the little ones. And Jesus said, How many loaves have you? They answered, Seven, and some little fish. And Jesus said, Go to, and seat the people as you seated them the other day when all the multitudes were fed, in companies of twelve.

And when the people were sat down in companies of twelve the loaves and fish were brought. And Jesus looked to heaven and spoke the Word; and then he broke the seven loaves in little bits, and likewise cut the fish. And every bit of bread became a loaf, and every piece of fish became a fish. The twelve went forth and gave to every one; the people ate and they were filled; and all the fragments that were left were gathered up, and there were seven baskets full. And then the people went their ways, and the twelve took boats and came to Dalmanatha by the sea. (Aquarian Gospel 128:1-15)

What we see as matter is really the light of the Holy Spirit manifesting in that form. And since the Holy Spirit is infinite, so matter is potentially so. Therefore anything can be multiplied when a person's consciousness is also infinite—as was that of Jesus.

Here they remained for many days, and Jesus told the twelve about the inner light that cannot fail; about the kingdom of the Christ within the soul; about the power of faith; about the secret of the resurrection of the dead; about immortal life, and how the living may go forth and help the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 128:16, 17)

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Here Jesus is revealing the true life, the inner life, to his disciples. All higher spiritual realities are invisible to the world and those who see with worldly eyes. So much so that they continually declare that those realities do

not exist, that they are fantasies. Some go so far as to call those who believe in the interior life insane. This was a common charge in the heyday of the Soviet Union, and people were institutionalized and tortured by the government. Even now there are people who declare that belief in God is a symptom of mental illness. Yet those people are swept away by time and the believers remain strong in numbers. The living move among the dead and do their best to help them awaken into life.

And then they went into their boats, and came unto the northern coast of Galilee, and in Chorazin where the kin of Thomas lived, they left their boats and journeyed on. They came to Merom, where the crystal waters seem to catch the images of heaven and to reflect the glory of the Lord of hosts. And here they tarried certain days in silent thought. And then they journeyed on, and came into the land of Caesarea-Philippi.

And as they walked and talked among themselves, the master said, What do the people say about the son of man? Who do they think I am? And Matthew said, Some say that you are David come again; some say that you are Enoch, Solomon, or Seth. And Andrew said, I heard a ruler of the synagogue exclaim, This man is Jeremiah, for he speaks like Jeremiah wrote. Nathaniel said, The foreign masters who were with us for a time, declared that Jesus is Gautama come again. James said, I think that most the master Jews believe you are the reappearance of Elijah on the earth. And John spoke out and said, When we were in Jerusalem I heard a seer exclaim, This Jesus is none other than Melchizedek, the king of peace, who lived about two thousand years ago, and said that he would come again. And Thomas said, The Tetrarch Herod thinks that you are John arisen from the dead; but then his conscience troubles him; the spirit of the murdered John looms up before him in his dreams, and haunts him as a specter of the night.

And Jesus asked, Who do you think I am? And Peter said, You are the Christ, the love of God made manifest to men. And Jesus said, Thrice blessed are you, Simon, Jonas' son. You have declared a truth that God has given you. You are a rock, and you shall be a pillar in the temple of the Lord of hosts. And your confession is the cornerstone of faith, a rock of strength, and on this rock the Church of Christ is built. (Aquarian Gospel 128:18-34)

Certainly we see here that the people of Israel believed in reincarnation, believing that Jesus was one of the old prophets. Those from further east considered Jesus a Buddha. In the earlier chapters of the Aquarian Gospel we find that many thought him the Maitreya Buddha. All these were opinions, but Peter spoke of what he had perceived spiritually in revelation from higher realms. The Church of Christ is founded on two things: direct revelation and the affirming of that revelation while acting and speaking accordingly.

Against it all the powers of hades and of death cannot prevail. Behold, I give to you the keys to open up the doors of safety for the sons of men. The

Holy Breath will come upon you and the ten, and in Jerusalem you shall stand before the nations of the earth, and there proclaim the covenant of God with men. And you shall speak the words of Holy Breath, and whatsoever God requires of men as earnest of their faith in Christ, you shall make known. (Aquarian Gospel 128:35-38)

No matter how much the powers of evil may war against spiritual truth, it always prevails. As they say in Sanskrit: *Satyam eva jayate*: Truth alone conquers (prevails). In the end those who side with right and truth remain. Many years ago I read a poem about someone who went into a blacksmith's business. There he saw many broken and worn hammers. He asked how many anvils had been worn out. "None," the blacksmith told him, "through the years I have worn out a lot of hammers, but never an anvil. The anvil you see there is the only one I have ever had." The poet then reflected that faith, like an anvil, had encountered many blows from many enemies throughout recorded history, yet its foes eventually faded away and those with faith remained. Faith and its practice indeed are "the doors of safety for the sons of men."

Then turning to the twelve he said, What you have heard this day tell not to any man. Then Jesus and the twelve went up and were Susanna's guests for many days. (Aquarian Gospel 128:39-40)

Chapter One Hundred Twenty Nine

The news soon spread that Jesus and the twelve were come, and many people came to see. And Jesus said, Behold, you come to see, but that means naught. If you would have the benedictions of the Christ, take up your cross and follow me. If you would give your life for selfish self, then you will lose your life. If you will give your life in service of your fellow men, then you will save your life. This life is but a span, a bauble of today. There is a life that passes not. Where is your profit if you gain the world and lose your soul? What would you take in payment for your soul? If you would find the spirit life, the life of man in God, then you must walk a narrow way and enter through a narrow gate. The way is Christ, the gate is Christ, and you must come up by the way of Christ. No man comes unto God but by the Christ. The kingdom of the Christ will come; yea, some of you who hear me now will not pass through the gates of death until you see the kingdom come in power. (Aquarian Gospel 129:1-9)

Behold, you come to see, but that means naught. If you would have the benedictions of the Christ, take up your cross and follow me. We are not just always with God, we are always one with him. Yet that has no meaning if our life is not ordered in such a way that we can ascend in consciousness within him.

All the food in the world is worthless if we cannot access and eat it. So God's omnipresence means little to those whose life is shut away from God's action in the heart. It is not enough to just *be*: we must *do* as well. "If you would have the benedictions of the Christ, take up your cross and follow me." Nothing less will do.

Christians love the cross because it is not just a sign of life, it is a means for life to come to us, especially when we make that holy sign and invoke the fullness of Godhead: the Holy Trinity. It is not a mere symbol, it is as real as taking a breath in order to live. Where the cross is, there is Christ. This is why negative people do not like the cross. Even as a child I knew how to find a Catholic church in any town: *just look for the cross*. Protestant churches with steeples had weathervanes (what a perfect symbol of spiritual instability) or balls that represented the world, the focus of their materialistic religion. You could almost never find a cross in a home unless the owners were either Catholic or Eastern Orthodox.

When I was eight or nine I went into a used furniture store. The elderly man who ran it had just bought an antique sewing machine. He was going through the drawers and clearing them out. In one drawer he found a crucifix about four inches long. Immediately he handed it to me, and I kept it as a treasure. But when the people I lived with learned that I was keeping it beneath my pillow and holding it at night, they took it away from me. No Catholic idolatry in their home!

There are many ways to confess Christ, and the cross is prime. Of course merely having a cross and even wearing one means little if the Christ life is not being

pursued. Our personal life is the cross we must take up and follow in the way of Christ. Then we will be blessed and changed. Sacred imagery is a major factor in conscious spiritual life. The good thief said to Jesus: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). And Jesus says to us: "Remember me if you wish to come into my kingdom." Holy objects, especially holy depictions or images, are of great value in keeping our minds on God.

If you would give your life for selfish self, then you will lose your life. If you will give your life in service of your fellow men, then you will save your life. Here we find the bodhisattwa ideal which Jesus certainly learned in India through his Buddhist contacts.

This life is but a span, a bauble of today. There is a life that passes not. Where is your profit if you gain the world and lose your soul? What would you take in payment for your soul? People take just about anything in exchange for their soul. They have no idea of the "life that passes not" away. So constant rebirth in ignorance is their age-long fate.

If you would find the spirit life, the life of man in God, then you must walk a narrow way and enter through a narrow gate. The only true spiritual life is the one lived in God. But to do so requires intense focus which the world will look upon as being narrow. But it is necessary just to enter the gate to eternal life. Then the work really begins and certainly requires total dedication and constant attention. It is a small price to pay for Eternity.

The way is Christ, the gate is Christ, and you must come up by the way of Christ. No man comes unto God but by the Christ. Certainly the way of Christ involves material disciplines and action, but we have not really begun until we are awakening in Christ and experiencing higher consciousness. No church or teaching is the way, nor is any practice unless it opens us directly to the Light of Christ. It is the result that counts, not devotion or emotional dedication. First we come to the light of the Only-Begotten of the Father, the Christ, the Son of God; then we can begin ascending to the Father.

The kingdom of the Christ will come; yea, some of you who hear me now will not pass through the gates of death until you see the kingdom come in power. This was especially fulfilled on Pentecost and in the empowered Christian community in Jerusalem. "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one" (Acts 5: 12-16).

For seven days the master and the twelve remained in Caesarea-Philippi. Then Jesus, taking Peter, James and John, went forth unto a mountain top to pray. And as he prayed a brilliant light appeared; his form became as radiant

as a precious stone; his face shone like the sun; his garments seemed as white as snow; the son of man became the son of God. He was transfigured that the men of earth might see the possibilities of man.

When first the glory came the three disciples were asleep; a master touched their eyes and said, Awake and see the glory of the Lord. And they awoke, and saw the glory of the Lord; and more, they saw the glory of the heavenly world, for they beheld two men from thence stand forth beside the Lord. And Peter asked the master who awakened them, Who are these men who stand beside the Lord? The master said, These men are Moses and Elijah, who are come that you may know that heaven and earth are one; that masters there and masters here are one. The veil that separates the worlds is but an ether veil. For those who purify their hearts by faith the veil is rolled aside, and they can see and know that death is an illusive thing. And Peter said, Praise God! And then he called to Jesus and he said, My master and my Lord, this is the gate of heaven, and it is well that we remain. May we go down and bring three tents; a tent for you, a tent for Moses, and for Elijah one? But Jesus answered not.

And Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus on the mount. They talked about the coming trial of the Lord; about his death, his rest within the tomb; about the wonders of the resurrection morn; the transmutation of his flesh, and his ascension on the clouds of light; and all symbolic of the path that every man must tread; symbolic of the way the sons of men become the sons of God.

The three disciples were amazed, and suddenly the ethers were surcharged with song, and forms as light as air moved all about the mountain top. And then from out the glory of the upper world they heard a voice that said, This is the son of man, my chosen one to manifest the Christ to men. Let all the earth hear him. When the disciples heard the voice they were afraid; they fell upon the ground and prayed. And Jesus came; he touched them and he said, Arise, fear not; lo, I am here. Then they arose, and as they looked about they saw no one; the men had gone. The master only stood with them. (Aquarian Gospel 129:10-30)

And as he prayed a brilliant light appeared; his form became as radiant as a precious stone; his face shone like the sun; his garments seemed as white as snow; the son of man became the son of God. He was transfigured that the men of earth might see the possibilities of man. Jesus did not become a son of God at this moment; rather, he had appeared as a son of man and then revealed himself as a son of God, which he had been before taking that incarnation. His purpose was to show his disciples what every human being is destined to be. Over and over again Jesus insists that he is not unique, is not a “one and only” but is exactly what we are potentially and shall become eventually.

The master said, These men are Moses and Elijah, who are come that you may know that heaven and earth are one; that masters there and masters here are one. In my early yoga days I was occasionally pestered by a member of a very narrow sect from India who thought their guru was the only true guru on earth. They kept canting on and on

about the need for “a living master.” Finally one day I asked him: “Is there a *dead* master?” That stymied him because even he realized that a Master was immortal and beyond the reach of death. A Master is one by reason of his state of consciousness. Being in or out of a physical body is irrelevant. Here the idea is taken further: A Master is everywhere in all worlds at all times. Heaven and earth are not two different places, distant from one another. They are one; and their perception is a matter of the degree of evolution each one of us possesses. All the Masters that have ever lived are in all the worlds simultaneously, because they share in the omnipresence of God.

The veil that separates the worlds is but an ether veil. For those who purify their hearts by faith the veil is rolled aside, and they can see and know that death is an illusive thing. Here and now we can walk in the limitless heavens. It is all according to our state of conscious development. As Emily Dickinson put it: “Instead of getting to Heaven, at last—I’m going, all along.”

And Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus on the mount. They talked about the coming trial of the Lord; about his death, his rest within the tomb; about the wonders of the resurrection morn; the transmutation of his flesh, and his ascension on the clouds of light; and all symbolic of the path that every man must tread; symbolic of the way the sons of men become the sons of God. Masters do not come to earth alone. They are assisted by other Masters as well as by saints and angels. Throughout their time here on earth they are in communion with the godlike just as much as they are in communion with God. This is also true of the saints to a great extent. I have been with holy people in both East and West who obviously were not alone. I met one saint in a Carmelite convent. Before she opened the curtain behind the grille, I could feel the presence of many sacred beings surrounding her.

Peter, James and John heard the conversation of Jesus with Moses and Elijah. From this they learned all that was planned in the salvific life-drama of Jesus. So to them, nothing that took place later was surprising. They understood that it had to be, despite the fact that Peter tried to prevent those events when they happened.

All the things they spoke about literally took place, yet at the same time they were profound symbols revealed in the mystery-drama that was the life of Jesus. Whatever happened to Jesus must take place in the life of every single human being. Jesus came to reveal the path of spiritual transmutation which each one of us must tread. Just as Jesus knew all that would await him in his earthly career, so can we by studying his life. The externals of some of the incidents may be different according to our purpose and karma, but their essence will be the same as those of Jesus. So there need be no surprises for us, either.

As Jesus and the three came from the mountain top they talked about the meaning of the scene, and Jesus told them all; and then he said, Till I have risen from the dead tell not to any one what you have seen. But the disciples could not comprehend the meaning of the words, Till I have risen from the dead. And Jesus told them once again about his death, and rising from the

grave; about the kingdom of the soul that was to come in glory and in power. But Peter said, The scribes have taught that e'er the king shall come Elijah must appear. And Jesus said, Elijah has already come; but scribes and Pharisees received him not; and men reviled him, bound him, cast him in a prison cell, and shouted with a fiend's delight to see him die. What men have done to him, that they will do to me. Then the disciples understood that Jesus spoke of John whom Herod slew. (Aquarian Gospel 129:31-39)

It is interesting that although the three disciples had heard the conversation of Jesus with Moses and Elijah, they somehow did not get the idea. Jesus had to explain it all over to him. This often happens when we encounter ideas that possess a vibration higher than that of our present mental energies. We either have no idea what has been said or it slips away from our mind and we forget it or only retain a partial memory. That is why Jesus told his disciples: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, *and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*" (John 14:26).

Chapter One Hundred Thirty

When Jesus, Peter, James and John were come unto the city's gates a multitude of people thronged the way. The nine apostles who went not with Jesus to the mount, had tried to heal an epileptic child who was obsessed, and they had failed; the people waited for the coming of the Lord. When Jesus came the father of the child knelt down before him and implored his help. He said, My master, I beseech that you will look in pity on my son, my only child; he is an epileptic child and suffers grievously. Sometimes he falls into the fire and is burned; again he falls into the water and is like to drown; and many times a day he falls, he grinds his teeth, the foam pours from his mouth. I took my child to your disciples, and they failed to give relief. And as he spoke a servant brought the child before the Lord (the child spoke not, for he was dumb), and instantly he fell upon the ground, he foamed, he writhed in agony. (Aquarian Gospel 130:1-7)

Three points are to be noted here. First, that someone can be obsessed by spirits from birth. Second, that being mute may be a sign of obsession. Third, that coming into the presence of a holy person may agitate the obsessing entity and cause it to produce some kind of seizure or manifestation of its presence.

And Jesus said, How long has he been troubled thus? The father said, From infancy; and we have sought in many lands for help, but found it not; but I believe that you can speak the Word and heal my son. And Jesus said, Faith is the power of God. All things are possible for him who in his heart believes. The father cried, in tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. And Jesus spoke the Word of power; the epileptic child lay in a swoon; he did not breathe, and all the people said, The child is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and said: Arise; and he arose and spoke. The people were amazed, and many said, This surely is a man of God, for no such power was ever given to man. (Aquarian Gospel 130:8-14)

I believe that you can speak the Word and heal my son. And Jesus said, Faith is the power of God. All things are possible for him who in his heart believes. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" Faith, real supernatural faith that is not mere intellectual belief, is the direct action of God upon the individual. It is an opening; an awakening. So a person who follows through on their faith is linking himself with God so the limitless power of the divine can flow through or into him and accomplish whatever he desires. Certainly, Jesus was the source of the healing power, but through the man's faith it became possible for it to work effectively.

The father cried, in tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. This often happens: faith is not perfect or complete, but God's mercy fills up that which is lacking and

brings about the desired effect.

Then Jesus and the twelve went to the house, and after they had taken food and been refreshed, the nine disciples said, Lord, why could we not heal this child? We spoke the Word; but even that was powerless. And Jesus said, Your great success in all your former work has made you careless, and you forgot to recognize the power of God. Without the spirit of the Word, the Word is like an idle tale; and you forgot to pray. There is no faith without the prayer of faith. Faith is the wings of prayer; but wings alone fly not. By prayer and faith you can bring down the mountain peaks, and cast them in the sea; the little hills will skip about like lambs at your command. This failure may be well for you. The great lessons that are learned in life come through the failures that are made. (Aquarian Gospel 130:15-21)

Often those who know ritual or yogic practices that are effective forget that God is the power behind all things, and come to regard the ritual and practices as mere energy devices that are effective completely within themselves, that the heart and mind need not be engaged in their application, but only a mechanical use. And especially they forget to open their hearts to God in prayer, as though they by themselves could obtain what they desire. Humility and a sense of dependence on God are necessary. Our entire life must be a reaching out toward God, and that includes our spiritual practices. Everything must first be an offering to God, a dependence on the divine will.

As the disciples sat in thoughtful meditation Jesus said, Let these words sink into your hearts: The time has nearly come when you must bear your load alone; that is, without my presence in the flesh. For I will fall into the hands of wicked men, and they will slay me on a mount beyond Bezetha wall. And men will lay my body in a tomb where, by the sacred Word, it will be guarded and preserved three days; then I will rise again. The twelve were sad; they did not understand, and yet they feared to ask him to reveal the meaning of his word. Next day the Christine master and the twelve began their journey of return, and soon were in Capernaum. (Aquarian Gospel 130:22-27)

For some reason the East is quite capable of thinking and living in two different directions without it being either contradictory or inconsistent, whereas the West is usually not. Here we see a classical example. Jesus has told the disciples to be aware of their dependence on God, and now tells them that they must learn to manage on their own. Both are true and necessary. Of course without experience the disciples do not fully comprehend all that he says, but that will come in time, especially after the awakening and empowerment of Pentecost.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty One

As Jesus and the twelve were resting in the house, the tax collector came to Peter saying, Man, do Jesus and yourself pay this half-shekel tax? And Peter said, We pay whatever is assessed. And Jesus said, From whom do publicans collect this special tax? from strangers or from native sons? And Peter said, The strangers only are supposed to pay this tax. Then Jesus said, We all are native sons and we are free; but lest we cause contention we will pay the tax; but neither had the shekel wherewithal to pay. And Jesus said, Go to the sea; cast in a hook and catch a fish and you will find within its inner parts a shekel, which take up and pay the tax for you and me. And Peter did as Jesus said; he found the shekel and he paid the tax. (Aquarian Gospel 131:1-7)

There is symbolism here. When we need anything, material, mental or spiritual, we should go to the “sea” of the mind, intuition or infinite intelligence. Then we should “cast in a hook” by praying deeply and sometimes actually setting a question in mind that we need the answer to. That is, we should meditate deeply and set our question before both our inner mind and the divine. Then we should dismiss it. (Some recommend that we should do this three times, preferably on three different days, but less if the time element requires it.) If our prayer or inquiry has merit we will “catch” the answer by an eventual response either outwardly or inwardly. How long should we wait? That is up to our intuition. In this way the inner and outer realities are seen as an inexhaustible source of benefit or wisdom.

It is said that whatever a Master needs will be provided, usually without a need for any prayer being made. But since we are not Masters, there is often a need for us to signal the universe in the way described above. It wise to know one’s limitations and act accordingly.

Now Jesus heard the twelve dispute among themselves. The spirit of the carnal self was moving in their hearts, and they were questioning among themselves who was the greatest in the sight of God and man. And Jesus said, You men, for shame! The greatest is the servant of the rest. And then he called to him a little child; he took it in his arms and said. The greatest is the little child, and if you would be great at all you must become as is this child in innocence, in truth, in purity in life. Great men scorn not the little things of earth; he who regards and honors such a child, regards and honors me, and he who scorns a child, scorns me. If you would enter through the kingdom gate you must be humble as this little child. (Aquarian Gospel 131:8-12)

And Jesus said, You men, for shame! The greatest is the servant of the rest. I knew an animal trainer who said that it was easy when looking at a herd of animals to tell which was the leader or head. In the animal kingdom the biggest and strongest rule.

There is no exception to this. Having come up from animal forms in our many lives before reaching the human condition we naturally have subconscious, reflexive animalistic attitudes. The “bigger is better” and “might is right” attitude is ingrained in those who have not yet opened themselves fully to higher knowledge which proceeds from spirit, not our past. Therefore we think a tall, strong and striking person is superior and possesses merit. There is an example of this principle in the choosing of David to be king of Israel.

“And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. And [Samuel]... called them to the sacrifice. And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord’S anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this. Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in.... And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward” (I Samuel 16:1, 5-13).

Oftentimes we despise those who are the servants of others, serving them and putting their needs before their own. But does God not do the same? He has need of nothing yet he has provided the entire cosmos from gross to subtle worlds just for the sake of the souls evolving within it. Jesus, being a son of God, his whole life was for others, too.

I have what I consider a funny example. The most powerful business man in the entire area from Delhi to the far reaches of the Himalayas always showed me great respect, every day asking me if there was anything he could do for me and even once offering to build me an ashram if I would move to India. I could not figure out why, for what was special about me? But after some years, in conversation he revealed that he considered a fat man who was in charge of others a superior person because he sat and got fat issuing orders while they got thin doing his bidding! At last the mystery was solved. I was fat, the other members of our monastery were thin, so I was superior! It was not flattering to my ego, but we all to have to roll with the punches.

And then he called to him a little child; he took it in his arms and said.

This was not just some anonymous child. It was the future Saint Ignatius of Antioch, who would become a disciple of John the Apostle. His writings are still

studied by Eastern Christians, and they used to be read in the churches as equal to the epistles of Saint Paul. (I read them when I was in my teens and thought they were much more inspired than those of Saint Paul. And I still do.) So great was he that he was called “Ignatius Theophorus” during his lifetime, which means “Ignatius the God-bearer” in the sense of being so united with God that you met God when you met him. So there is a bit more to this than Jesus talking about children in general. Great Masters know the spiritual evolution of even infants. Yogananda once was given a child to hold and almost dropped it because he saw that it had been a mass murderer in its previous life.

The greatest is the little child, and if you would be great at all you must become as is this child in innocence, in truth, in purity in life. We must not let our concept of “child” be formed by those too old or we will mistake the meaning here, for they will already be conditioned by contact with adults, though still childlike.

Both infants and very young children (usually three or under according to one of my yogi friends in India) reflect a great deal of the Self. For example, they are swept with waves of joy (ananda) that is the eternal trait of the Self and the Supreme Self. I have watched this especially with infants, those who cannot walk and who remain still enough for another to observe it. Very recently a grandmother sent me an online video link of her two grandchildren, one of them a little over a year old and the other four or five years of age. The video is brief but this flooding of joy is clearly seen in both of them.

Children have a magical, mystical consciousness that manifests in a conviction (I think it is much stronger than a belief) that anything is possible, that anything can and eventually will happen. Because of this children believe anything they are told, unless they have a past-life bias against something. They also speak directly without any sense of diplomacy. I always feel regret for parents who become embarrassed when their children point at me and ask: “Mommy, what is that?” or “Mommy, why is he doing that”—referring to my orange Indian-style clothing and shaven head. Of course there was the little child in Calcutta who followed me down the street pointing and calling out to passersby: “Thakur, Thakur!” meaning “God, God!” Some years later a tiny child barely able to speak kept pointing at me throughout the liturgy in a Russian Orthodox church and saying: “Bogu, Bogu,” which also means “God, God!”

Children also look at the world in a very direct and honest way because they have no conscious preconceptions about what they are encountering in their new incarnation. We can learn a great deal about the nature of things by watching their responses.

It is the simplicity and consistency of children that all seekers of the divine truly need. So they can tell us a great deal if we not only watch but question them in the right way. I have known children who offhandedly would tell about their past lives. I once went into a mortuary with a four-year-old boy. As we approached a casket, he said in amazement: “Why look! That is where they put *me* when I died.”

Great men scorn not the little things of earth; he who regards and honors such a child,

regards and honors me, and he who scorns a child, scorns me. One of the things I experienced right away in India was the universal regard and even respect for children. I saw adults take very seriously what we in the West call “the meaningless ramblings” of children. At one ashram I saw about thirty yogis gather to hear the visionary experiences of a little boy eight or nine years old. When his account was finished, they told him his experience was real and that he should act on it. I was impressed.

Few things indicate a psychological and spiritual defect more than the dislike of children, especially in men who obviously feel a child is a rival for the attention they want fixed only on themselves. Authentic yogis and monks always have a strong love for children and like being around them, mostly because of their transparency of thought and feeling. Also, there is a very pure and refined atmosphere surrounding them.

If you would enter through the kingdom gate you must be humble as this little child. Again, I think it is their readiness to believe and openness to ideas that is their main quality, and that is a form of humility. Also, they do know that they are small in this vast universe. A lot of adults have lost that very reasonable perspective.

Hear me, you men, This child, as every other child, has one to plead its cause before the throne of God. You scorn it at your peril, men, for lo, I say, its counterpart beholds the face of God at every moment, every day.

And hear me once again, he who shall cause a little one to stumble and to fall is marked, accursed; and it were better far if he had drowned himself.

Behold, offences everywhere! Men find occasions for to sin and fall, and they grow strong by rising when they fall; but woe to him who causes other men to stumble and to fall. Be on your guard, you men of God, lest you constrain another man to fall; beware lest you fall into sinful ways yourselves. (Aquarian Gospel 131:13-18)

Hear me, you men, This child, as every other child, has one to plead its cause before the throne of God. You scorn it at your peril, men, for lo, I say, its counterpart beholds the face of God at every moment, every day. Whether this means the guardian angel or the higher self of the child is unknown. Perhaps it means both and therefore is expressed this way. However it may be intended, the idea is that every single human being must be respected because of such “friends in high places.”

The traditional teaching of the Christian Church was that every dawn and sunset our guardian angel goes before the Throne of God. Whether they do so as a reward for such a boring, inane task and thankless as looking after us, or because they make some kind of report is as far as I know not indicated.

And hear me once again, he who shall cause a little one to stumble and to fall is marked, accursed; and it were better far if he had drowned himself. Behold, offences everywhere! Men find occasions for to sin and fall, and they grow strong by rising when they fall; but woe to him who causes other men to stumble and to fall. Be on your guard, you men of God, lest you constrain another man to fall; beware lest you fall into sinful ways yourselves. This a very

clear and understandable warning, but we should realize that people with a dull conscience often do things that harm and hinder other people without realizing it or while thinking that they are doing what is just and right (see John 16:2).

Now, if your hands cause you to sin, you better cut them off; for it is better far to have no hands and not be guilty in the sight of God and men, than to be perfect in your form and lose your soul. And if your feet should cause offence, you better cut them off; for it is better far to enter into life without your feet than fall beneath the curse. And if your eyes, or ears, cause you to sin, you better lose them all than lose your soul. (Aquarian Gospel 131:19-21)

No one with a modicum of experience and sense believes the physical hands, feet, eyes and ears cause a person to do wrong. But the senses which operate through and motivate them can. Also, the faculties of the soul which correspond to them can certainly be causes of wrongdoing when distorted or corrupted. Therefore those things should be cut off functionally speaking, not literally, and subjected to the superior powers of our intelligent will.

Your thoughts and words and deeds will all be tried by fire. Remember that you are the salt of earth; but if you lose the virtues of the salt, you are but refuse in the sight of God. Retain the virtues of the salt of life and be at peace among yourselves. The world is full of men who have not in themselves the salt of life, and they are lost. I come to seek and save the lost. (Aquarian Gospel 131:22-25)

The fire which ultimately ties all our thoughts, words and deeds is the fire of spiritual wisdom and discernment as well as enlightened experience. Our saltiness, our redeeming character, is our true nature as spirit. On a lesser level it is our empowerment and transformation that results from drawing near to God, the Divine Light that dispels all darkness and error, giving us perfect insight as well as intellectual understanding.

These verses condemn no one; they affirm that Jesus has come for the salvation of all. This alone is the purpose of God.

How think you? if a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, will he not leave the ninety and the nine, and go out in the desert ways and mountain tops to seek the one that went astray? Yes, this you know; and if he finds the one that went astray, lo, he is glad, and he rejoices over it far more than over all the ninety and the nine that did not go astray. And so there is rejoicing in the courts of heaven when one of human birth who has gone forth into the ways of sin is found and brought back to the fold; yea, there is joy, more joy than over all the righteous men who never went astray. (Aquarian Gospel 131:26-30)

Such is the great love and intention of God for man! Any differing or lesser view is not of Christ and true Christianity.

And John said, Master, who may seek and save the lost? and who may heal the sick, and cast the demons out of those obsessed? When we were on the way we saw a man who was not one of us cast demons out and heal the sick. He did it by the sacred Word and in the name of Christ; but we forbade him, for he did not walk with us. And Jesus said, You sons of men, do you imagine that you own the powers of God? And do you think that all the world must wait for you to do the works of God? God is not man that he should have a special care for any man, and give him special gifts. Forbid not any man to do the works of God.

There is no man who can pronounce the sacred Word, and in the name of Christ restore the sick, and cast the unclean spirits out, who is not child of God.

The man of whom you speak is one with us. Whoever gathers in the grain of heaven is one with us.

Whoever gives a cup of water in the name of Christ is one with us; so God shall judge. (Aquarian Gospel 131:31-40)

And John said, Master, who may seek and save the lost? and who may heal the sick, and cast the demons out of those obsessed? When we were on the way we saw a man who was not one of us cast demons out and heal the sick. He did it by the sacred Word and in the name of Christ; but we forbade him, for he did not walk with us. The religious world is filled with insistence that only one way is right, that only a certain group of people out of the entire human race is legitimate. It really does not matter if we look at India or America, the situation is the same: people are insistent that they alone are qualified to give authentic, legitimate spiritual teaching.

There are a great number of gurus that claim to be the one and only Master for the entire world, and their disciples eagerly insist on the same, all having miraculous stories to establish their claim or accounts of how their guru alone is the successor to a previous “one and only” Master. Who is authorized by some superior authority to be the world’s one “perfect Master” obsesses people, and everyone has stories of how marvelous their guru is and how rotten his rivals are. “Disciplic succession” is an explosive topic. On a train in India I once met an attorney who had spent over twenty years employed in a lawsuit between two men who claimed to be the successor of the world’s only guru—and it was still dragging on. Only the death of one of the claimants put an end to it, and their successors and their disciples are still wrangling on with astonishingly defamatory words against the rival one.

In the West we have had bitter strife and even military violence between Popes and Antipopes, and claimants to be the “one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church” abound. Protestantism has countless denominations that are the “one, only, true Church of Christ.” Although ecumenism enjoyed a vogue some decades ago, the universal bitterness and accusation still prevail. The early days of Christianity in which non-Christians often marveled at “how these Christians love one another” is

long, long gone. “With us” and “not with us” are the characterizations of legitimacy and illegitimacy. Here even the Beloved Disciple is seen to have been afflicted with this mentality.

And Jesus said, You sons of men, do you imagine that you own the powers of God? And do you think that all the world must wait for you to do the works of God? God is not man that he should have a special care for any man, and give him special gifts. Forbid not any man to do the works of God.

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:12-14), the true One and Only. Those of the previously described mentality make a big todo of their righteousness and rightness, but these verses reveal they really are Luciferic in their minds and hearts.

Many groups believe that only their activities, including, are of God. All the rest is the deceptions of demons. What ugly, evil minds. I remember a Liberal Catholic bishop saying to me: “The error of most religion is trying to tell God what he can and cannot do.” Another time he said about such groups: “They are afraid of making a mistake because they are infallible!” Heavy is the head that wears the crown.

There is no man who can pronounce the sacred Word, and in the name of Christ restore the sick, and cast the unclean spirits out, who is not child of God. The man of whom you speak is one with us. Whoever gathers in the grain of heaven is one with us. Whoever gives a cup of water in the name of Christ is one with us; so God shall judge. This is the viewpoint of Jesus. It is so broad it embraces the entire spiritual world, not just Christianity, for Christ is universal, the Only Begotten of the Father as understood in the much higher understanding found in the Aquarian Gospel, not sectarian Christianity.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Two

A multitude of people thronged the streets. The officers were on the way to court with one, a man accused of stealing bread.) And in a little while the man was brought before the judge to answer to the charge. And Jesus and the twelve were there. The man showed in his face and hands the hard drawn lines of toil and want. A woman richly clad, the accuser of the man, stood forth and said, I caught this man myself: I know him well, for yesterday he came to beg for bread. And when I drove him from my door, he should have known that I would harbor not a man like him; and then today he came and took the bread. He is a thief and I demand that he be sent to jail. The servants also testified against the man; he was adjudged a thief, and officers were leading him away.

But Jesus standing forth exclaimed, You officers and judge, be not in haste to lead this man away. Is this a land of justice and of right? can you accuse and sentence men to punishment for any crime until they testify themselves? The Roman law will not permit such travesty on right, and I demand that you permit this man to speak.

And then the judge recalled the man and said, If you have any tale to tell, say on. In tears the man stood forth and said, I have a wife and little ones and they are perishing for bread, and I have told my story oft, and begged for bread; but none would hear. This morning when I left our cheerless hut in search of work my children cried for bread, and I resolved to feed them or to die. I took the bread, and I appeal to God, Was it a crime? This woman snatched the loaf away and threw it to the dogs, and called the officers and I am here. Good people, do with me whate'er you will, but save my wife and little ones from death.

Then Jesus said, Who is the culprit in this case? I charge this woman as a felon in the sight of God. I charge this judge as criminal before the bar of human rights. I charge these servants and these officers as parties to the crime. I charge the people of Capernaum with cruelty and theft, because they heeded not the cries of poverty and want, and have withheld from helpless ones that which is theirs by every law of right; and I appeal unto these people here, and ask, Are not my charges based on righteousness and truth?

And every man said, Yes. The accused woman blushed for shame; the judge shrank back in fear; the officers threw off the shackles from the man and ran away.

Then Jesus said, Give this man what he needs and let him go and feed his wife and little ones. The people gave abundantly; the man went on his way.

And Jesus said, There is no standard law to judge of crime. The facts must all be stated e'er a judgment can be rendered in a case. You men with hearts;

go forth and stand where stood this man and answer me, What would you do? The thief thinks every other man a thief and judges him accordingly. The man who judges harshly is the man whose heart is full of crime. The courtesan who keeps her wickedness concealed by what she calls respectability, has not a word of pity for the honest courtesan who claims to be just what she is. I tell you, men, if you would censure not till you are free from sin, the world would soon forget the meaning of the word, accused. (Aquarian Gospel 132)

This is an example of the social justice advocated by Jesus. It is perfectly clear and practical, so I think it needs no comment. I would only point out that the statement: "The man who judges harshly is the man whose heart is full of crime," is definitely true and often a means of telling what is really in a seemingly righteous person's heart. As Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful" because their hearts are filled with the mercy that abides in God and the heart of Christ and all true saints of God.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Three

The harvest feast drew near; the twelve went to Jerusalem, but Jesus did not go with them; he tarried in Capernaum. Among the multitudes that followed him were many who went not up to the feast; they were not Jews. And Jesus called three-score-and-ten of these disciples unto him and said, The kingdom of the Christ is not for Jews alone; it is for every man. Lo, I have chosen twelve to preach the gospel, first unto the Jews; and they are Jews. Twelve is the number of the Jew and seven the number of the all, including every man. God is the ten, the holy Jod. When God and man are multiplied we have three-score-and-ten, the number of the brotherhood of man. (Aquarian Gospel 133:1-7)

Here we see that there is a sacred Christian numerology and may assume that there is sacred measurement, as well. Western and Eastern Christians differ somewhat in those things. For example, in the East numbers that relate to years in Jesus' life or events from his life are considered sacred, but I have not found this to be so in the West even among esoteric Christians. Altars in the East are traditionally thirty-eight-inch cubes. These are considered to be formed of eight nineteen-inch cubes. This is based on the fact that there are nineteen possible dates for Pascha (Easter). The eight cubes represent the eight levels of existence: the seven levels of the relative creation and the eighth transcendent level of Spirit. In the West, on the other hand, there is no special measurement for the width or depth of an altar, but forty inches is by far the most usual height, and the number forty occurs very many times in the Bible.

And now I send you forth by twos and twos; not to the Jews alone, but unto every nation under heaven; to Greek and to Assyrian; to the Samaritan; to those beyond the seas; to every man. You need not go afar, for men of every land are here and in Samaria. Arise and go your way; but go in faith; and take no gold nor silver in your purse; no extra coat or shoes. Go in the sacred name; trust God and you will never come to want. And let this be your salutation everywhere, Peace be to all; good will to all. And if the son of peace be in the house, the door will open wide and you will enter in; and then the holy peace will rest upon that house. (Aquarian Gospel 133:8-13)

Go in the sacred name; trust God and you will never come to want. Those who invoke the Holy Name of God with faith will always come through ultimately, even if there are tests and setbacks along the way.

And let this be your salutation everywhere, Peace be to all; good will to all. And if the son of peace be in the house, the door will open wide and you will enter in; and then the holy peace will rest upon that house. This makes me think of the number of times I have seen preachers in church and on street corners shouting and threatening judgment on

their hearers. But Jesus' message is peace and good will to *all*. Respect for all their hearers and not aggressiveness is required of those who would truly represent him.

There is no place for coercion in Christ's Gospel, for the exercise of free—not frightened, bamboozled or brainwashed—will is necessary every step of the way. If someone has not awakened to the need for spiritual life, they should be blessed, treated kindly and allowed to go on their way. We all passed through that condition in the past and they will emerge from it in the future. All In Good Time: in God's Time.

Those who are able to receive the wisdom of God will do so. Those who do not, are not ready, and it is unjust to demand anything of them. Freedom is an essential in spiritual life.

The seventy in twos went forth; they went into Samaria, and as they went they said, Peace be to all; good will to all! Repent and turn from sin, and set your house in order, for a son of man who bears the image of the Christ, will come, and you may see his face. They entered every village of Samaria; they preached in Tyre and in Sidon by the sea. Some went to Crete, and others into Greece, and others went to Gilead and taught. (Aquarian Gospel 133:14-16)

The seventy in twos went forth. This is a matter of practical wisdom. If no one accepts their message at least one person is there to support them, and if any problems develop are there to help them.

Repent and turn from sin, and set your house in order, for a son of man who bears the image of the Christ, will come, and you may see his face. This is of extraordinary importance for it shows the basis for the observance of all the rules of spiritual life: the purification needed for refinement of the aspirant's bodies so he can directly experience truth for himself. If it takes one to know one, then it takes one to recognize a saint or avatar. Anyone who is attracted to a holy person is themselves holy, otherwise there would be no attraction. It is a matter of magnetism, and magnetism is a matter of sympathetic vibration. There is an entire field of magic based on this simple truth. "Hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5) presupposes an affinity (even identity) of nature with the divine messenger.

And Jesus, all alone, went to the feast by the Samaria way; and as he went through Sychar on the way, the lepers saw him and a company of ten called from afar and said, Lord Jesus, stay and speak the Word for us that we may be made clean. And Jesus said, Go forth and show yourselves unto the priests. They went, and as they went their leprosy was healed. One of the ten, a native of Samaria, returned to thank the master and to praise the Lord. And Jesus said to him, Lo, ten were cleansed; where are the nine? Arise, and go your way; your faith has made you whole. You have revealed your heart and shown that you are worthy of the power; behold the nine will find again their leprous hands and feet. (Aquarian Gospel 133:17-22)

Virtue is its own reward in a manner not usually comprehended by people.

Gratitude is not just a noble response, it is a locking in of benefit received, without which the benefit will be eventually lost. It is totally pragmatic, though certainly virtuous. For Jesus was not censuring or cursing the ungrateful lepers when he said: "The nine will find again their leprous hands and feet." He is just stating a simple law of the universe, of relative existence itself.

So those who seek healing or any other benefit must cultivate the virtue of gratitude if they wish to receive and retain what they desire.

And Jesus went his way, and while the feast was on he came into Jerusalem, and went into the temple courts. And he rebuked the scribes and Pharisees, the priests and doctors of the law for their hypocrisy and selfishness. The common people were amazed; they said, From whence has come the wisdom of this man? He speaks as speaks a sage. And Jesus said, I did not learn the wisdom of the Holy One within the schools of men; my teaching is not mine; I speak the words of him who sent me here to do his will. If any man would know whereof I speak, lo, he must do the will of God. No man can know except he enters into life and does the will of God. Now, Moses gave the law; but none of you have kept the law; how can you judge the worthiness of any man? Once in these courts I healed a man upon a Sabbath day, and in a rage you sought to take my life; and now because I tell the truth you seek again to take my life. A scribe spoke out and said, You foolish man, you are obsessed; who wants to take your life? The common people said, Is this not Jesus whom the rulers long have sought to kill? and now he comes and teaches in the temple courts. If he is guilty of such monstrous crimes, why do they not take him away in chains? And Jesus said, You all know me, and know from whence I came; but you know not the God who sent me here, whose words I speak. (Aquarian Gospel 133:23-33)

I did not learn the wisdom of the Holy One within the schools of men; my teaching is not mine; I speak the words of him who sent me here to do his will. And this would not be possible if we were not like the Holy One in nature, having uncovered that divine essence within ourself by inner evolution of consciousness.

If any man would know whereof I speak, lo, he must do the will of God. No man can know except he enters into life and does the will of God. The holy life spoken of by Buddha so often is absolutely necessary. Such a life is a perfect extension of our own holiness and perfection. The great Masters have found liberation through practical means and have passed them on to us. If we do not apply them as they did, nothing of value will result. It is all in our hands.

You all know me, and know from whence I came; but you know not the God who sent me here, whose words I speak. But to truly follow Jesus we must start refining and elevating our consciousness so we, too, can know the Father. For Jesus cannot convey the truth of the Father by words or emotions. We must gain direct experience of God ourselves. Only by discovering our own Christhood will we recognize, know and follow the Christ in any other great soul (mahatma).

The multitudes again stood forth in his defense; they said, if this is not the Christ whom God has promised to reveal to men, will he do greater works when he shall come than does this man? The Pharisees and ruling priests were angered and they sent their officers to take him e'er he went away. The officers were filled with fear; they seized him not. And Jesus said, lo, I am here but for a little time and then I go my way to him who sent me here to do his will. You seek me now and you can find me now; the time will come when you will seek and will not find, for where I go you cannot come. The people said, Where will he go that men can find him not? Will he go forth to Greece and teach the Greeks? or will he go to Egypt or Assyria to teach? But Jesus answered not; unnoticed by the multitudes he left the temple courts and went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 133:34-38)

So it always is.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Four

Now, on the last day of the feast when multitudes were in the courtways, Jesus said, Whoever is athirst may come to me and drink. He who believes in me and in the Christ whom God has sent, may drink the cup of life, and from his inner parts shall streams of living waters flow. The Holy Breath will overshadow him, and he will breathe the Breath, and speak the words, and live the life.

The people were divided in their views concerning him. Some said, This man is prophet of the living God. And others said, he is Messiah whom our prophets said would come. And others said, he cannot be the Christ, for he came down from Galilee; the Christ must come from Bethlehem where David lived. (Aquarian Gospel 134:1-7)

He who believes in me and in the Christ whom God has sent, may drink the cup of life, and from his inner parts shall streams of living waters flow. Since there is a very definite distinction made between Jesus and Christ, we may reasonably infer that those who confuse the two are not really perfect disciples of Jesus or Christians. Their Christology is erroneous and misleading and cannot lead to spiritual benefit. Further, those who do accept this view and act upon it by the transmuting power of meditation, will themselves become sources of the water of life to others. They, too, will be Christs, which is the original purpose of Christianity as a spiritual system. They will be both awakened and awakeners.

The Holy Breath will overshadow him, and he will breathe the Breath, and speak the words, and live the life. Saint John of Kronstadt spoke many times of the fact that the saints, the “just men made perfect” (Hebrews 12:23), breathe the Holy Spirit, are eternally established in the Holy Spirit, one with her. Therefore they “speak the words and live the life” of the Holy Spirit. They are indeed gods.

He cannot be the Christ, for he came down from Galilee; the Christ must come from Bethlehem where David lived. Here we see how it is possible to cite valid spiritual authority such as the scriptures to prove a false view. Just look at all the “Bible-based” churches around us, including many called “Bible Churches.” There is no substitute for spiritual evolution and God-knowledge (Brahmajnana).

Again the priests and Pharisees sent officers to bring him into court to answer for his life; but when the officers returned and brought him not, the rulers were enraged and said, Why did you not arrest this man and hale him into court? The officers replied, We never heard a man speak like this man speaks. In rage the Pharisees stood forth and said, Have you gone mad? Have you been led astray? Are you disciples of this man? Have any of the rulers, or the Pharisees believed on him? The common people! yes, they may believe; they are accursed; they know not anything. But Nicodemus came before the

rulers and he said, Can Jewish judges judge a man and sentence him until they hear his plea? Let Jesus stand before this bar and testify himself. The rulers said, This Jesus is a wily man, and if we suffer him to speak, he will rebuke us face to face, and then the multitudes will laugh and stand in his defense. And then you know, as well as we, that prophets do not come from Galilee. The rulers felt the force of what the officers and Nicodemus said, and they said nothing more. (Aquarian Gospel 134:8-16)

The fact that henchmen of the Sanhedrin could recognize there was something rare and even awesome about Jesus, whereas the priests and Pharisees could not, shows that religious belief can blind the mind to spiritual realities. We also see how only ignorant and deluded people think that the proof of a spiritual teaching is in “the right people” accepting it. See how religion traffics in endorsements from renowned people as though the religion is toothpaste, a mere commodity. It is amazing the number of celebrities, scientists, and politicians that are attracted by outrageous cults. That tells us something.

In the final sentence of this section we see that the enemies of Jesus knew in their hearts that what the officers and Nicodemus said to them was true. This we always find, too. The most virulent enemies of holy teachers and teachings in their hearts know they are holy and hate them for it. Their rejection is totally and consciously evil.

And then the people went their way, each to his home; but Jesus went unto Mount Olives where he spent the night in prayer. But in the morning when the sun had scarcely risen, Jesus came again, and many people came to see him in the temple courts, and he sat down and taught the multitudes. The Pharisees and scribes were still alert to find a cause whereby they might condemn him by the words he spoke.

The officers had taken in the very act of crime, a courtesan. As Jesus taught, they brought this woman and set her in the midst and said, Rabboni, this vile woman has been taken in adultery. The law of Moses says that such as she shall die, be stoned to death; what do you say should be her punishment? And Jesus stooped and made a figure on the ground and in it placed the number of a soul, and then he sat in silent thought. And when the priests demanded that he speak, he said, Let him who has no sin stand forth and be the first to cast a stone at her. And then he closed his eyes, and not a word was said. When he arose and saw the woman all alone he said, Where are the men who brought you here? they who accused? The woman said, They all are gone; no one was here who could condemn. And Jesus said, And I condemn you not; go on your way in peace, and sin no more. (Aquarian Gospel 134:17-27)

The Pharisees and scribes were still alert to find a cause whereby they might condemn him by the words he spoke. This is always the way with conscious, intentional enemies of truth: they hate and plot to destroy. They do not misunderstand: they know they are

destroying truth—or attempting to. I can cite a particularly telling example. Beyond Calipatria, California, there is an area colloqually called Slab City. In that area there is a mountain known as Salvation Mountain that has been turned into a kind of spiritual sculpture (yes; the whole mountain) by a man we became close friends with. Genuinely devoted to Jesus and pure of heart, he was dearly loved by us. Interestingly, although our understanding of Christianity was vastly different from his, which was simple Fundamentalism, we got along with him perfectly, whereas other Fundamentalists were always picking little, nitty disagreements with him. In fact, we were his only true friends, and he sometimes remarked in surprise about the wonderful harmony we had. On one visit he told us that the enemies of God and Christ continually were thinking up reasons why the mountain should be destroyed. (It was really a big dirt hill and could with effort be leveled.) Naturally they used their favorite deity, The Environment, as a lever, but testing always proved the mountain was not a hazard in any way. Finally a big push was made in the California legislature, *which before any investigation voted one hundred forty-five thousand dollars to dismantle Salvation Mountain*—and this despite the fact that many artistic associations and museums in both America and Europe, who considered it a national treasure, had written in the mountain’s defense. (Many art books had been made of photographs of the mountain here and abroad.) Once again the enemies of right were defeated, but the motives were clear: hatred of God and believers.

Jesus stooped and made a figure on the ground and in it placed the number of a soul, and then he sat in silent thought. Just what this figure and the number were is unknown. In Chapter One Hundred Thirty Three it is said that Seven is the number of the human being. Considering there are seven chakras corresponding to the seven levels of the creation, this is a viable speculation. Whichever it may be, Jesus is setting before himself the divine, eternal nature of the person in contrast to the “big sinner” attitude of the woman’s accusers. And he dealt with the matter in this perspective, as must we if we would not do harm. It is not easy to look at any of us and think of the divine image, much less see it, but nevertheless it is the only right viewpoint.

The Bhagavad Gita says: “The Lord lives in the heart of every creature” (Bhagavad Gita 18:61). So when we deal with a human being we are dealing with God himself. He is seated right inside there, experiencing everything that person is experiencing. When we speak to anyone we are also speaking to God, and when we do something to a person we are doing it to God, as well. No wonder Jesus, who was one with the Father, said: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). And to Paul who was persecuting the Christians, Jesus said: “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest” (Acts 9:5).

I condemn you not; go on your way in peace, and sin no more. This incident does not prove that sin is inconsequential and its reality to be denied. Otherwise Jesus would not have told the woman: “Sin no more.” His mercy healed her soul and cured her of the impulse to sin—if she strove to fulfill his counsel. It was up to her to make it

effective by her response. The same is true of us all through our spiritual life from the beginning to the end.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Five

The feast was done and Jesus, Peter, James and John were sitting in the temple treasury. The nine had gone back to Capernaum. The people thronged the temple courts and Jesus said,

I am the lamp; Christ is the oil of life; the Holy Breath the fire. Behold the light! and he who follows me shall not walk in the dark, but he shall have the light of life. (Aquarian Gospel 135:1-2)

Here is the true attainment of Jesus. He was a lamp, a vessel of the divine. Christ, the Only-begotten of the Father, the creator of the world known in Indian philosophy as Ishwara the Lord, was that which blazed within him as pure divinity. The fire which set the lamp alight was the Holy Spirit who brought about the conception of Jesus by the Virgin Mary. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). It is the Christ Consciousness within each one of us, just as it was in Jesus, that is the Light of Life.

A lawyer said, You witness for yourself, your witness is not true. And Jesus said, If I do witness for myself I speak that which is true, for I know whence I came and where I go. And no one else in flesh can testify for me, for none know whence I came, nor where I go. My works bear witness to the truth I speak. As man I could not speak the words of Holy Breath; and then my Father testifies for me. (Aquarian Gospel 135:6-8)

I know whence I came and where I go. We came from God and go to God. So a knower (jnani) knows God.

And no one else in flesh can testify for me, for none know whence I came, nor where I go. For none surrounding him knew God.

As man I could not speak the words of Holy Breath. Only those who have transcended humanity can speak directly from the Holy Spirit. Therefore we should be very slow to believe that someone's words are the very words of God. I made this mistake for many years and it was detrimental to me and others. It is hard to realize that a god is not at all God. This is especially true within Indian religion because in popular Hinduism there is a tremendous amount of mythology that is just that: fantasy and superstition. This, too, is very hard to face. The spiritual knowledge of India produces a great deal of advancement in awareness and energy, and yoga even more. So just because a person has supernormal knowledge and radiates an amazing, even miraculous, energy is no reason to believe that they possess perfect spiritual realization. One of the most powerful spiritual deceivers I have ever met possessed incredible power, including the ability to transport himself from one point to another in a moment, know the future, heal and (according to a very truthful

disciple of his I knew) raise the dead. The terrible harm this man worked in the world is still going on. I am speaking of Evil.

Compared to us the gods (karmadevas) really are gods. But they are not God. I have seen people in India that I fully believed were not human, but not being human is not the same as being God. Because of the amazing atmosphere that pervades India things happen there that never could happen outside India. I am convinced that very highly evolved beings from other worlds occasionally (if not often) take physical birth in India and are mistaken for liberated Masters and avatars. Often they have tremendous powers and live and move in a miraculous aura. But they are still samsarins: of a far higher order than us, but subject to samsara just like us. And in full sincerity on their part (and often not not sincerely) they can ruin the lives of those who revere them thinking they are so much more than they really are.

Saint Seraphim of Sarov, a Russian Orthodox saint, revealed that archangels can create entire worlds. Think of that! How awesome their mere presence must be. Yet they are only on the third rung of the evolutionary ladder. (See *Robe of Light*.) So if they somehow get into earthly incarnation they will almost certainly be considered incarnations of God when they are not. Please remember this: evolution of itself is not wisdom. I have met highly evolved human beings that were in utter delusion. The same is true of any being however evolved until they are established in perfect realization. Until then it is chancy. Swami Ramdas of Anandashram said that a person can evolve to the final step of evolution and then fall back. Beware!

(By the way, certain nature spirits do occasionally take birth. See *The Secrets of Doctor Taverner* by Dion Fortune. Also insane people often have supernatural powers and supernatural knowledge. They are crazy nevertheless.)

The lawyer said, Where does your father live? And Jesus said, You know me not or you would know my Father, and if you knew the Father you would know the son, because the Father and the son are one. I go my way and you shall find me not; for where I go you cannot come, because you do not know the way. You cannot find the way because your hearts are gross, your ears are dull, your eyes are closed. The light of life cannot shine through the murky veil that you have drawn about your hearts. You do not know the Christ and if the Christ be not within the heart there is no light. I come to manifest the Christ to men and you receive me not, and you will dwell in darkness and in the shadow of the grave till you believe the words I speak. But you will vilify the son of man, and lift him up and laugh to see him die. But then a little light will come and you will know that I am what I am. The people did not comprehend the meaning of the words he spoke. (Aquarian Gospel 135:9-18)

Where does your father live? It is not impossible that the scribe (lawyer) meant this literally, as a mockery. I once spoke to a large group of yogis in New Delhi. Before the time came for me to speak I was handed a piece of paper. On it I read something like this: "Dear honored guest. If God exists, can you tell us his postal address?"

What is his telephone number?....” The two men it came from obviously thought they were incredibly clever and putting me in my place. As someone once said: “The problem with ignorance is that it picks up confidence as it goes along.” So this kind of snide silliness is common among the deniers of God.

You know me not or you would know my Father, and if you knew the Father you would know the son, because the Father and the son are one. You cannot find the way because your hearts are gross, your ears are dull, your eyes are closed. The light of life cannot shine through the murky veil that you have drawn about your hearts. The Bhagavad Gita says: “One acts according to one’s own prakriti—even the wise man does so. Beings follow their own prakriti; what will restraint accomplish?” (Bhagavad Gita 3:33). Prakriti is the energy constitution of a person, his bodies gross and subtle, among which is the mind and intellect. The quality of these energies determines the way they behave and function. It is inescapable. Those with undeveloped and unrefined energies will have little if any spiritual perceptions, or else distorted perceptions. Only those who have evolved to a certain point can recognize higher truth, higher teachings and higher teachers. There is no way you can teach this: it either happens or it does not. That is why Jesus spoke of “eyes to see” and “ears to hear.”

You do not know the Christ and if the Christ be not within the heart there is no light. Of course Christ the Indwelling Light is always within the heart; Jesus means if he is not perceived as present there. This sentence also conveys a very important truth: no amount of outer religious experience means anything; we must be aware of the God Within. Otherwise we are in the dark spiritually and intellectually speaking.

I come to manifest the Christ to men and you receive me not, and you will dwell in darkness and in the shadow of the grave till you believe the words I speak. “In darkness and in the shadow of the grave” is a perfect description of life on this earth without God-consciousness. Once after many years I visited my former home and family. Afterward I told my aunt that had given me the gift of spiritual teaching even as little child (she first started when I was only two): “In case you wonder how I feel seeing all my cousins whose way of life I turned from long ago, I will tell you. They are all sitting in their graves waiting to die outwardly since they are already dead inside.” At that time I had not read these words of the Aquarian Gospel.

But you will vilify the son of man, and lift him up and laugh to see him die. But then a little light will come and you will know that I am what I am. The “little light” was the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost! Jesus meant that for them it would be only a little light. They would realize that Jesus was not crazy or deluded, but a supernatural personality, and that would be the end of it. For those in tune, these three events illumined and changed their lives and consciousness forever. Christianity in its right and positive aspects is still running on the power of every moment of Jesus’ earthly life, and especially those three. Every year the Church is renewed in the holy Liturgy (Mass) on the anniversary of those days, as well as others. The Church is still just as it came from the hands of Christ nearly two thousand years ago by means of the Liturgy and the Sacraments. Its life has not diminished at all—it is all a matter of being able to access that abundant life (John

10:10). (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.)

And then he spoke unto the people who believed in him and said, If you abide in Christ, and Christ abide in you, and if you keep my words within your heart, you are the way, you are disciples in the way, and you shall know what is the truth, and truth shall make you free. (Aquarian Gospel 135:19, 20)

Everyone is willing to believe that Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5), but not that they, too, are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). They do not want the responsibility and obligation to become Christs themselves. Like Jesus we must all be for the world the way, the truth and the life (John 14:16). This is “the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

And still the people did not understand; they said, We are the seed of Abraham and are already free; we never were the slaves of any man; why do you say, We shall be free? And Jesus said, Do you not know that every one committing sin is slave of sin? abides in bondage unto sin? If you sin not then you are free; but if you sin in thought, or word, or deed, then you are slaves, and naught but truth can set you free; if you are free through Christ, then you are free indeed. You are the seed of Abraham, and yet you seek to kill me just because I speak the truth of Abraham. You are the children of the flesh of Abraham; but, lo, I say, There is a spiritual Abraham whom you know not. In spirit you are children of your father, and your father is Diabolos; you hang upon his words and do his will. He was a murderer from the first; he cannot tell the truth, and when he tells a lie he speaks his own; he is himself a lie, and he is father of himself. If you were children of my Father-God, then you could hear the words of God; I speak the words of God, but you can hear them not. (Aquarian Gospel 135:21-28)

Do you not know that every one committing sin is slave of sin? abides in bondage unto sin? If you sin not then you are free; but if you sin in thought, or word, or deed, then you are slaves, and naught but truth can set you free; if you are free through Christ, then you are free indeed. In the Bible the Greek word for sin is *amartano*, which means to fall short, to fail. The idea of never failing is incredible, but it must be striven for and attained at some point in our evolution. In the highest perspective, that which is less than true, less than just and less than an expression of love and mercy is a sin. It is likely that absolute perfection is attained after this life in other worlds, but we must live as though it can happen here and now if we put forth the effort.

The only real freedom comes when we begin consciously living fully in God, in Christ.

You are the seed of Abraham, and yet you seek to kill me just because I speak the truth of Abraham. You are the children of the flesh of Abraham; but, lo, I say, There is a spiritual Abraham whom you know not. “The truth of Abraham” is the reality of the coming of Jesus and the transformation he would bring about in those who were ready and

able: even until right now, this very moment. Abraham was a great initiate, a disciple of the Master Melchisedec. In Chapter Ten we read: "In Chaldea, Brahm was known. A pious Brahm named Terah lived in Ur; his son was so devoted to the Brahmic faith that he was called A-Brahm; and he was set apart to be the father of the Hebrew race" (Aquarian Gospel 10:6). Abraham was a Brahmin a scion of the Yadava Clan of India, the family of Krishna which afterward emigrated into the Middle East. This is the spiritual Abraham who was destined to be born as Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah.

In spirit you are children of your father, and your father is Diabolos; you hang upon his words and do his will. He was a murderer from the first; he cannot tell the truth, and when he tells a lie he speaks his own; he is himself a lie, and he is father of himself. If you were children of my Father-God, then you could hear the words of God; I speak the words of God, but you can hear them not. (Aquarian Gospel 135:26-28)

If you were children of my Father-God, then you could hear the words of God; I speak the words of God, but you can hear them not. This is not a condemnation, but a statement of fact: Those not sufficiently evolved to intuit spiritual realities, or who are but through their own actions have silenced or dulled their inner faculties, are incapable of realizing those realities. The first group is not at all responsible; they cannot reasonably be expected to understand and follow. The second group is fully responsible and is creating even more negative karma for themselves. Both groups should be left alone: the first until they evolve sufficiently and the second until their hearts are purified enough to resume intelligent spiritual life of their own volition. We should just keep on doing what we know to do, refining and purifying ourselves through the holy life and meditation.

A Pharisee stood forth and said, This fellow is not one of us he is a curst Samaritan and is obsessed. But Jesus heeded not the words of Pharisee or scribe; he knew that all the people knew he was a Jew. And then he said, Whoever keeps my words shall never die. A lawyer said, And now we know he is obsessed. Our father Abraham is dead; the prophets all are dead, and yet this fellow says, Whoever keeps my words shall never die. Is this man greater than our Father Abraham? Is he above the prophets? and all of them are dead. And Jesus said, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad. The lawyer said, You simple man; you are not fifty years of age; have you seen Abraham? And Jesus said, Before the days of Abraham I am. Again the scribes and Pharisees were in a rage; they took up stones to cast at him, but, like a phantom of the night, he disappeared; the people knew not where he went. (Aquarian Gospel 135:29-37)

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad. Abraham was shown his spiritual destiny as the coming Messiah, Jesus, and rejoiced in it.

Before the days of Abraham I am. Jesus is denying the present doctrine of nearly all

Churchianity that the soul comes into existence at the moment of conception. Those who heard him understood or intuited that he was declaring his own eternity, and since they believed that only God was eternal they considered he was blaspheming. When Jesus had said: "I and my Father are one," His hearers actually took up stones to kill him. "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:32-36). Saying we are one with God is not saying we are the same as God in the sense of being the infinite God. Rather, we are a part of God, living eternally in his eternal Being, drawing our total existence from him. In that way we and God are one. We are god; not God.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Six

And Jesus stood again within the temple courts and taught. A master of the law was sent to question him that he might find a cause to censure and accuse him of a crime. He said, Lord, tell me what to do that I may have eternal life? And Jesus said, You know the law; what does it say? The lawyer answered, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. And Jesus said, Lo, you have answered well; this do and you shall live. The lawyer said, My neighbor, who is he?

And Jesus said, A man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho, and lo, he met with robbers on the way, who beat him, robbed him of his goods, and left him bleeding by the way. A Pharisee was going down that way; he saw the wounded man; but then he had no time to lose; he passed by on the other side. A Levite came and saw the man; but he was loath to soil his sacerdotal robes, and he passed by. A lawyer on his way to Jericho observed the dying man, and then he said, If I could make a shekel I might help the man; but he has nothing left to give, I have no time for charity; and he passed on. And then a stranger from Samaria came that way; he saw the wounded man; his heart was touched with pity, and he stopped, dismounted from his horse, revived the man, and placed him on his horse and took him to an inn and charged the keeper of the inn to nurse him back to strength. He gave the keeper all the money that he had and said, Your charges may be more than this, but care for this unfortunate, and when I come again I will pay all; and then he went his way.

Now, master of the law, which of these four was neighbor unto him who fell among the thieves? The lawyer said, The man who showed him mercy; he who cared for him. And Jesus said, Go on your way and likewise do, and you shall live. (Aquarian Gospel 136:1-17)

The only thing to note distinctive to this Aquarian Gospel account is the motivations of the four people who saw the wounded man.

The Pharisee was too busy and told himself he had no time. I have encountered this more than once in the East, for some reason, and each time the person who said: "I can't, I am too busy," was a selfish, self-centered hypocrite.

The priest did not want to dirty his vestments with the man's blood and sweat. Ceremonial purity, obsession with clothes and aversion to any extra effort involved in cleaning them was his motive. Trivial and selfish.

The scribe did nothing because there was no advantage in it for him. He was one of those who Look Out For Number One at all time. That was the crassest motive of all.

The Samaritan had a sensitive heart, not just an intellectual idea of right and

just behavior. Moved from deep within he helped the man. This was the motivation of a worthy human being

Now, Jesus, Peter, James and John went out to Bethany where Lazarus lived. And Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard him speak the words of life while Martha served. And Martha called, but Mary would not leave the Lord to help her serve. And Martha said to Jesus, Do you not care that Mary makes me bear the burdens of the serving all the day? I beg that you will bid her help. And Jesus said, You are too anxious, Martha, for your guests; you need not trouble so about the things of life. You grow a-weary by your care for little things and slight the one thing needed most of all. Your sister here has chosen far the better part, a part that none can take away. (Aquarian Gospel 136:18-24)

We are always hearing: "We need Marthas as much as Marys," but Jesus did not seem to feel so. Might he have known something the "needers" do not? Yes. "You grow a-weary by your care for little things and slight the one thing needed most of all." This should never be forgotten.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty-Seven

Now, in the evening Jesus, Peter, James and John, with Lazarus, went out beyond the village gates to pray. And Lazarus said, Teach me to pray. And Jesus said, The prayer I taught the twelve to pray while we were up in Galilee is one acceptable to God; and when you pray just say,

Our Father-God who art in heaven; holy is thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven; give us this day our needed bread; help us forget the debts that other people owe to us, that all our debts may be discharged; and shield us from the tempter's snares that are too great for us to bear; and when they come, give us the strength to overcome. (Aquarian Gospel 137:1-7)

Regarding forgetting debts. In a sense, God is our higher Self, so what we do in our lower self can be reflected in the higher Self just as much as the other way around. Though hardly controlled by us, there is a level on which God reacts to us as we react to him. In fact he told Saint Catherine of Siena: "Think of me and I will think of you." Obviously with God this occurs on much higher levels than human tit-for-tat. Anyhow, since we are in the image of God we should approximate God as much as possible, creating an affinity-unanimity through which God can communicate with us and help us.

There is an extremely realistic view expressed by the words: "And when they come, give us the strength to overcome." For they will come and we need to be strong enough to turn them to our benefit. A great deal of human experience may be unpleasant, but much of it is necessary for our growth, if we react to it in the right way.

And Jesus said, The answer to your prayer may not appear in fullness in a little time. Be not discouraged; pray again and then again, for God will hear.

And then he spoke a parable; he said, A housewife was alone at night and, lo, some guests arrived, and they were hungry, having had no food for all the day. The housewife had no bread, and so at midnight she went forth and called a friend and said, Loan me three loaves of bread, for guests have come, and I have naught for them to eat. The friend replied, Why do you trouble me at midnight hour? My door is shut; my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise to give you bread; tomorrow you can be supplied. The housewife asked again, and then again, and then because she pled, and would not be refused, the friend arose and gave her bread. Behold, I say to you, Ask firmly and you shall receive; seek trustingly and you shall find; knock earnestly, the door will open up. (Aquarian Gospel 137:8-14)

Perseverance is the key to success in just about everything. To overcome karmic force we need to generate karmic force of the opposite character in a greater degree

than the force that is blocking us. The moment that occurs the situation is reversed. It is the law of God and has nothing to do with what God wills or does not will. He does not live our life, we do. We must control it; and Jesus is telling us one of the ways to do so. This does not mean that we break God down by pestering him, but that we keep building positive karmic force in the ether by prayer. When the balance tips, the result comes.

There is another aspect to this that the East understands very well, but not the West for some reason: the power of making vows. Vows made with full sincerity and the intention to fulfill them can of themselves generate enough karmic force to change a situation. However, if they are not fulfilled the situation reverts to the original one: not because God is miffed, but because sufficient long-lasting karmic force has not been generated. The positive karmic force is actually weakened by the failure to follow through on the vow. In the Christian East they say: "Do not make promises you do not intend to keep either to children or God. They both never forget." God does not get angry, but a vow unfulfilled in relation to God creates negative personal karma.

Vows often have to be increased until they are large or intense enough to generate the needed karmic force. So if you make a vow and nothing happens, consider increasing it. And also consider if you might be vowing for something it is better for you to not attain. But do not readily accept that possibility. Keep on vowing until you have reached the limit you can really fulfill. Then think about it.

All things are yours, and when you ask, not as a begging man would ask, but as a child, you shall be satisfied. A son may ask his father for a loaf of bread; the father will not give to him a stone; or he may ask him for a fish; he will not give a crab; or he may ask him for an egg; the father will not give a pebble from the brook. Behold, if men of flesh know how to give abundantly to children of the flesh, will not your heavenly Father give abundantly to you when you shall pray? (Aquarian Gospel 137:15-18)

God our beloved Father and Mother is our very own. None is closer or dearer. In India they say: "Nearer than the near; dearer than the dear." So ask God in that way, not like he is a mighty king or rich and powerful human being that has to be convinced or whose attention has to be gotten. Ask him/her as your very own loving parent. Sometimes, if you sincere and really mean it in love, you can even say: "Father/Mother, I am your child. I demand this." I used to sometimes say: "Mother, I am your child so I am not asking you, I am telling you what I want, and you *must* give it to me." It always worked. But I did not make it a lifetime habit. It must be done in love and a willingness to not be heard. (This is important.)

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7. 8).

Chapter One Hundred Thirty-Eight

The Lord with Peter, James and John were in Jerusalem; it was the Sabbath day. And as they walked along the way they saw a man who could not see; he had been blind from birth. And Peter said, Lord, if disease and imperfections all are caused by sin, who was the sinner in this case? the parents or the man himself?

And Jesus said, Afflictions all are partial payments on a debt, or debts, that have been made. There is a law of recompense that never fails, and it is summarized in that true rule of life: Whatsoever man shall do to any other man some other man will do to him. In this we find the meaning of the Jewish law, expressed concisely in the words, Tooth for a tooth; life for a life. He who shall injure any one in thought, or word, or deed, is judged a debtor to the law, and some one else shall, likewise, injure him in thought, or word or deed. And he who sheds the blood of any man will come upon the time when his blood shall be shed by man.

Affliction is a prison cell in which a man must stay until he pays his debts unless a master sets him free that he may have a better chance to pay his debts. Affliction is a certain sign that one has debts to pay. Behold this man! Once in another life he was a cruel man, and in a cruel way destroyed the eyes of one, a fellow man. The parents of this man once turned their faces on a blind and helpless man, and drove him from their door. (Aquarian Gospel 138:1-13)

Afflictions all are partial payments on a debt, or debts, that have been made. Some troubles are full payment and some are partial. But when it is over, the karmic debt has been reduced. That is the important thing.

There is a law of recompense that never fails, and it is summarized in that true rule of life: Whatsoever man shall do to any other man some other man will do to him. Exactly what is done shall be done to us: the very same thing. If I steal, I will be stolen from; I will not just lose something of equal value to what I stole. Another human being will take it from me. This is very important. It is exact, like an echo: only what you say will come back to you, not something merely similar. Sometimes more than one karma will be neutralized by a single thing that will reflect their general character. But, as I say, it is mostly an exact reaction.

And let us never forget that karma is not punishment or retribution but a simple reaction. Negative karma and positive karma are not “bad” and “good.” They are just of differing polarities: movements or mechanisms of cosmic energy. That is why karma is so inevitable. It is universal life force manifesting in our life sphere. God is not dispensing our karma, nor are there any mythical “Lords of Karma” like a court of judges administering “justice.” Karma is just because it is simple cosmic reaction, nothing more. God being pleased and displeased is an outrageous myth. We must

avoid putting human labels on divine action and divine labels on human action. Clear-sightedness is absolutely essential for living the holy life.

In this we find the meaning of the Jewish law, expressed concisely in the words, Tooth for a tooth; life for a life. He who shall injure any one in thought, or word, or deed, is judged a debtor to the law, and some one else shall, likewise, injure him in thought, or word or deed. And he who sheds the blood of any man will come upon the time when his blood shall be shed by man. Here we see that karma is precise. And that is because it is perfect like everything else God has provided for our evolution.

Affliction is a prison cell in which a man must stay until he pays his debts unless a master sets him free that he may have a better chance to pay his debts. Affliction is a certain sign that one has debts to pay. “Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing” (Matthew 5:26). A Master can alter or even wipe out our karma, but only for a higher purpose: to free us and make us able to either repay or expunge our karmic debts on our own. This is a step toward our becoming Masters ourselves. As the last sentence says: difficulties and troubles are infallible signs of the presence of karma. Nothing arises in our life that does not have a cause, and that cause is almost always karma.

Behold this man! Once in another life he was a cruel man, and in a cruel way destroyed the eyes of one, a fellow man. The parents of this man once turned their faces on a blind and helpless man, and drove him from their door. Here we find out exactly why the man was born blind and why his parents had a blind child. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. That is karma. I learned that principle in junior-high science class, but only the Bhagavad Gita made it known to me as a force in everyone’s life.

Then Peter asked, Do we pay off the debts of other men when by the Word we heal them, drive the unclean spirits out, or rescue them from any form of sore distress? And Jesus said, We cannot pay the debts of any man, but by the Word we may release a man from his afflictions and distress, and make him free, that he may pay the debts he owes, by giving up his life in willing sacrifice for men, or other living things. Behold, we may make free this man that he may better serve the race and pay his debts.

Then Jesus called the man and said, Would you be free? would you receive your sight? The man replied, All that I have would I most freely give if I could see. And Jesus took saliva and a bit of clay and made a salve, and put it on the blind man’s eyes. He spoke the Word and then he said, Go to Siloam and wash, and as you wash say, Jahhevahe [Jehovah]. This do for seven times and you shall see. The man was led unto Siloam; he washed his eyes and spoke the word, and instantly his eyes were opened and he saw.

The people who had seen the man for many years sit by the way and beg, were much surprised to see him see. They said, Is not this man the Job that was born blind, who sat beside the way and begged? He heard them talk among themselves; he said, Yes I am he. The people asked, How were you healed? who opened up your eyes? He said, A man whom men call Jesus,

made a salve of clay and put it on my eyes, and bade me say a word and wash in Siloam seven times; I did as he commanded me, and now I see. (Aquarian Gospel 138:14-27)

We cannot pay the debts of any man, but by the Word we may release a man from his afflictions and distress, and make him free, that he may pay the debts he owes, by giving up his life in willing sacrifice for men, or other living things. Occasionally I have heard people use the phrase “interfere with others’ karma.” Such a thing is impossible. You cannot interfere with karma because it is a law woven into the fabric of the universe. Here Jesus explains how karmic force may be worked with to ensure its positive results, but no more.

A certain scribe was passing, and he saw the man and heard him say that Jesus, by the Word, had opened up his eyes. He therefore took the man up to the synagogue, and told the story to the priests, who asked the man about the miracle. The man replied, I never saw the light until today, for I was blind from birth. This morning as I sat beside Siloam, a man I never knew put on my eyes a salve that people say he made of clay; he bade me say a word and bathe my eyes in water seven times; I did as he commanded and I saw.

A lawyer asked the man, Who was it opened up your eyes? The man replied, Some people say, his name is Jesus and that he came from Galilee; but others say, he is the son of God

A Pharisee came up and said, This is the Sabbath day; a man who does a work like this, regarding not the Sabbath day, is not from God.

Some of the priests were much amazed and said, A wicked man could never do a miracle like this; he must possess the power of God. And so they strove among themselves.

They asked the man, What do you think about this man from Galilee? He said, he is a prophet sent from God. (Aquarian Gospel 138:28-37)

A wicked man could never do a miracle like this; he must possess the power of God. A connection between righteousness or between spiritual wisdom and healing does not necessarily exist. There is a connection with spiritual healing that proceeds from the highest Source and is the direct and intended action of either great Masters or God. Only a spiritual person can do spiritual healing. However, there are lesser, natural forms of healing that any person may do who either knows the ways or has enough personal bio-energy to infuse it into another person and stimulate the body to heal itself. Such a person may also be psychic and thought to possess divine inspiration, but it is fully natural, not supernatural.

For example, biomagnetic healing is purely natural and not in the least spiritual. Yet many people who possess such a power are believed by others to be gifted by God and therefore godly. My friend Ina Bryant practiced biomagnetic healing and wrote a whole book on the subject. Many “spiritual healers” in her home town became very angry with her for revealing the actual nature of their healing abilities. Especially the fact that everybody has the ability to do it!

So we must be very slow to assume that a healer has a closer relationship with God than other, ordinary people. Healing can come from many sources and levels, some spiritual and some virtually material. Caution is always wise.

Now, many of the Jews did not believe the man was blind from birth; they said, There is no power to open up the eyes of one born blind. And then they brought the parents of the man before the Pharisees that they might testify. They said, This is our son who was born blind; we do not know how he received his sight; he is of age and he can tell; ask him. They were afraid to say what they believed, that Jesus is the Christ who came to manifest the power of God, lest they offend the priests and be cast from the synagogue. (Aquarian Gospel 138:38-41)

No manner of inquiry or testimonial will influence those who have made their minds up, especially if they are negative and spiteful bigots. These people's attitude and behavior illustrate the detrimental effect of belonging to a small-minded and willfully limited group of any kind, especially a religious one. This we can say: if Jesus returned today he would be denounced throughout the world as antiChrist by Christians!

Again the rulers said, This Jesus is a wicked man. The man who had been healed stood forth again and said, This Jesus may be sinner or be saint, I do not know; but this one thing I know; I once was blind, but now I see. And then the scribes and Pharisees reviled the man and said, You are a follower of this man from Galilee. We follow Moses, but this man, we know him not, and know not whence he is. The man replied, It is a marvel that you know not whence he is, and yet he opened up my eyes. You know that nothing but the power of God can do such things. God hears not sinners pray, and you must know that he is not a wicked man who can employ the power of God. The Pharisees replied, You wretch! you were begotten and were born in sin, and now you try to teach the law to us. And then they cast him from the synagogue. (Aquarian Gospel 138:42-48)

Business as usual.

Chapter One Hundred Thirty Nine

When Jesus heard what had been done and how the priests had cast the man whom he had healed, out of the synagogue, he found the man and said to him, Do you believe in God and in the son of God? The man replied, I do believe in God; but who is he, the son of God, of whom you speak? And Jesus said, The son of God is he who speaks to you.

The man inquired then, Why do you say, The son of God? Is there but one? And Jesus said, All men are sons of God by birth; God is the Father of the race; but all are not the sons of God by faith. He who attains the victory over self is son of God by faith, and he who speaks to you has overcome, and he is called son of God, because he is the pattern for the sons of men. He who believes and does the will of God is son of God by faith. The man in joy exclaimed, Lord, I believe in God, and in the son of God. (Aquarian Gospel 139:1-9)

All men are sons of God by birth; God is the Father of the race; but all are not the sons of God by faith. God being the creator of all is the Father of all. All human beings are the children of God by virtue of that, but as Jesus points out, besides the mechanical side of sonship only those who have faith are fully the sons of God, and only they will aspire to or attain the state of divine consciousness. This is why there is no lasting or effective virtue to be found in an atheist however ethical and sincere they might be.

He who attains the victory over self [ego] is son of God by faith, and he who speaks to you has overcome, and he is called son of God, because he is the pattern for the sons of men. Simple faith is not enough to fully be a child of God; ego must be conquered since God himself is totally without ego. So for the divine image to be revealed the ego must be dissolved. This was the case with Jesus. It is interesting that this is the fundamental requirement for fully operative divine sonship rather than so many noble-sounding traits and ways.

He who believes and does the will of God is son of God by faith. Those who truly believe act on what they believe. Otherwise it is not faith at all.

And Jesus said, I came to open prison doors, to make the blind to see; but, lo, the Pharisees are blind from birth. And when I put the salve of truth upon their eyes, and bid them go and wash, and speak the sacred Word they will not go; they love the dark. (Aquarian Gospel 139:10, 11)

It all comes down to free will in the end. We are masters of our destiny because we create it through our will.

A multitude of people pressed about the Lord, and he stood forth and said, You men of Israel, I say to you, The fold of God is large; its walls are strong, it

has a gateway in the east, and he who does not enter by the gate into the fold, but climbs into the fold some other way, is thief and comes to rob.) The shepherd of the sheep stands by the gate; he gives the secret sign; he knocks; the watchman opens up the gate. And then the shepherd calls his sheep by name; they hear his voice and follow him; they enter through the gate into the fold. The sheep know not a stranger's voice; they will not follow him; they flee away.

The people did not understand the parable that Jesus spoke; and then he said, Christ is the gateway of the fold; I am the shepherd of the sheep, and he who follows me through Christ shall come into the fold where living waters flow, and where rich pastures are. False prophets come and go; they claim to be the shepherds of the sheep; they claim to know the way; but they know not the word of power; the watchman opens not the gate; the sheep heed not their call. The shepherd of the sheep will give his life to save the sheep. A hireling flees to save his life when wolves infest the fold; and then the tender lambs are snatched away, the sheep are scattered everywhere.

I am the shepherd of the sheep; I know the sheep of God; they know my voice, as God knows me and I know him. The Father loves me with a deathless love, because I lay my life down for the sheep. I lay my life down when I will, but I may take it up again; for every son of God by faith has power to lay his mortal flesh aside and take it up again. These words I have received from God. (Aquarian Gospel 139:12-24)

The fold of God is large; its walls are strong, it has a gateway in the east, and he who does not enter by the gate into the fold, but climbs into the fold some other way, is thief and comes to rob. We are all in the fold of God, but there is an inner fold that we must consciously choose to enter. And we must do so through the "eastern" gate of spiritual consciousness developed by spiritual practice. Otherwise we are thieving children of God, not loving children of the Father.

The shepherd of the sheep stands by the gate; he gives the secret sign; he knocks; the watchman opens up the gate. There is a hierarchy in the universe by means of which those of higher evolution assist those of lesser evolution to ascend by the divine ladder. Therefore we all need a shepherd to guide us. Great liberated Masters with universal powers such as Krishna, Amitabha Buddha, Gautama Buddha and Jesus are true shepherds. They alone know the secret signs so the gate becomes opened to their true disciples.

And then the shepherd calls his sheep by name; they hear his voice and follow him; they enter through the gate into the fold. The sheep know not a stranger's voice; they will not follow him; they flee away. We can apply Jesus' words to this. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). Literally every true world savior (jagadguru) has a world of his own where his faithful disciples go after death (if their affinity with the Master is strong enough) and work there to go on to

higher consciousness and even liberation. The most renowned is the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha. The concept of the Pure Land, or Sukhavati, is long established in India where it is also considered that each deity has a personal realm in at least the astral world.

Christ is the gateway of the fold; I am the shepherd of the sheep, and he who follows me through Christ shall come into the fold where living waters flow, and where rich pastures are. Jesus is not the gate; the Only-Begotten of the Father, the archetypal Son of God, the Creator or Ishwara, is the gate. Jesus is the shepherd whom The Christ recognizes and opens the gate to. Jesus is not the goal: Christ Consciousness, oneness with The Christ, is the goal, the source of living waters and rich pastures.

True disciples will listen to none but their shepherd, for their intuition will alert them if an alien voice comes to them.

The shepherd of the sheep will give his life to save the sheep. A hireling flees to save his life when wolves infest the fold; and then the tender lambs are snatched away, the sheep are scattered everywhere. The true teacher devotes his life to his disciples, not the other way around. He belongs to them, not they to him. It is just as it is with God and us.

I am the shepherd of the sheep; I know the sheep of God; they know my voice, as God knows me and I know him. So speaks a real Master.

The Father loves me with a deathless love, because I lay my life down for the sheep. I lay my life down when I will, but I may take it up again; for every son of God by faith has power to lay his mortal flesh aside and take it up again. These words I have received from God. This is an awesome affirmation of divine fiat.

Again the people strove among themselves; they were divided in their views concerning Christ. They could not comprehend the words that Jesus spoke. Some said again, he is obsessed, or he is mad; why listen to his words?) And others said, his words are not the words of one obsessed. Can unclean spirits open up the eyes of one born blind? Then Jesus left Jerusalem and with Massalian he tarried certain days. (Aquarian Gospel 139:25-28)

Chapter One Hundred Forty

The time had come for the return of the three score and ten whom Jesus sent abroad to preach. And Jesus, Peter, James and John began their journey back to Galilee. They went up through Samaria; they passed through many villages and towns, and everywhere the people thronged the ways to see the man the seventy had told about; and Jesus taught and healed the sick. And when they reached Capernaum the seventy were there; and they were filled with joy; they said,

The Spirit of the Lord of hosts was with us all the way, and we were filled. The power of the sacred Word was manifest in us; we healed the sick; we caused the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see. The very devils trembled when we spoke the Word, and they were subject unto us.

And Jesus said, As you were going on your way, the heavens were bright with light, the earth was bright, they seemed to meet and be at one; and I beheld, and Satan fell as lightning from the heavens. Behold, for you have power to tread on serpents and on scorpions, and these are symbols of the enemies of men. You are protected in the way of right, and naught can harm. And as you went I heard a master say, Well done.

But you may not rejoice because you have the power to heal the sick and make the devils tremble by the Word; for such rejoicing is from carnal self. You may rejoice because the nations of the earth have ears to hear the Word, and eyes to see the glory of the Lord, and hearts to feel the inner breathing of the Holy Breath. And you may well be glad because your names are written in the Book of Life.

Then Jesus looked to heaven and said, I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast revealed thyself to babes, and taught them how to light the path and lead the wise to thee. What thou hast given to me, lo, I have given to them, and through the sacred Word I have bestowed on them the understanding heart, that they might know and honor thee through Christ, who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

And then he said aside, unto the seventy and twelve, Most blessed are your eyes because you see the things you see; and blessed are your ears because they hear the things they hear; and blessed are your hearts because you understand. In ages that are gone the wise of earth, the prophets, seers and kings, desired to hear and see and know what you have heard and seen and known; but they had not attained and could not hear, and see and know. (Aquarian Gospel 140:1-20)

Thou hast revealed thyself to babes, and taught them how to light the path and lead the wise to thee. This is the work we should be doing. Showing the way that others can light the path for themselves and awaken them to the reality of God and the possibility of

knowing God.

What thou hast given to me, lo, I have given to them, and through the sacred Word I have bestowed on them the understanding heart, that they might know and honor thee through Christ, who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

What Jesus received from God we have received from him, and others should be receiving it from us. The most important things are not miracles but the opening of “the understanding heart” that will become our infallible guide to the Infinite. Our knowing will come through The Christ, the Only-Begotten of the Father, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity whose messenger was Jesus. We must always distinguish between the two Christs.

In ages that are gone the wise of earth, the prophets, seers and kings, desired to hear and see and know what you have heard and seen and known; but they had not attained and could not hear, and see and know. Blessed are we who can see, know and attain. If we do not, then we are not disciples of Jesus and of Christ.

And Jesus said again, Lo, I have gone before you many moons, and I have given to you the bread of heaven and the cup of life; have been your buckler and your stay; but now that you have learned the way, and have the strength to stand alone, behold, I lay my body down and go to him who is the All. In forty days then we will turn our faces toward Jerusalem where I will find the altar of the Lord and give my life in willing sacrifice for men. Let us arise and go through all the coasts of Galilee, and give a salutation of good cheer to all the sons of God by faith. (Aquarian Gospel 140:21-24)

There is no gloom or sadness here, for every single disciple of Jesus must walk the way of sacrifice. Jesus is not a “man of sorrows” but the Lord of Joy. Of course, if we are “of the earth, earthly” (John 3:31), we will not see it like that. But if we have “the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16), we most certainly will. This is basic truth.

And they arose and went; they entered every town and village on the coast, and everywhere they said, The benedictions of the Christ abide with you for evermore.

Now, in a certain town they went up to the synagogue upon the Sabbath day, and Jesus taught. And as he spoke, two men brought on a cot a woman bent near double with disease; she had not risen from her bed for eighteen years without a helping hand. And Jesus laid his hand upon the woman, and he said, Arise, be free from your infirmity. And as he spoke the Word the woman found that she was straight and strong, and she arose and walked and said, Praise God.

The ruler of the synagogue was filled with wrath because the healer healed upon the Sabbath day. He did not censure Jesus face to face, but turning to the multitudes he said, You men of Galilee, why do you break the laws of God? There are six days in every week when you may bring the afflicted to be

healed. This is the day that God has blessed, the Sabbath day in which men may not work.

And Jesus said, You inconsistent scribes and Pharisees! Upon the Sabbath day you take your beasts of burden from their stalls, and lead them forth to eat and drink; is this not work? This daughter of your father Abraham, who has been bound for eighteen years, has come in faith to be made free. Now, tell me, men, is it a crime to break her bonds and set her free upon the Sabbath day? The ruler said no more; the people all rejoiced and said, Behold the Christ! (Aquarian Gospel 140:25-37)

The benedictions of the Christ abide with you for evermore. Once again, this is not the mythical “salvation” of exoteric Christianity. This is the communication of the Cosmic Christ, the Creator of the Universe with us and a sharing in his glorious life and consciousness. “And that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

Since there is such a fuss being made about Jesus “working” on the Sabbath we need to know the definition of “work” in Orthodox Judaism. It is simply this: to produce a change in anything in any form. So if a person is sick and then becomes well, the healer has engaged in work by this definition. Of course this is foolish when the healer wields the power of God because it is effortless. Yet an esoteric process of some sort may be engaged in, even if it is only tuning in to the divine power. But since God does not break his laws, obviously neither does a knower of God. As Jesus told his accusers: “Ye do err, not knowing the power of God” (Matthew 22:29).

And Jesus spoke a parable; he said, The kingdom of the Christ is like a little seed that one put in the ground; it grew and after many years became a mighty tree, and many people rested in its shade, and birds built nests and reared their young among its leafy boughs. (Aquarian Gospel 140:38, 39)

Such is the kingdom of Christ upon the earth and in the higher worlds as well. All the worlds—from the highest, most subtle causal realms right down through the astral regions and into this material earth—are subject to time. But the kingdom of Christ transcends time and transfers its citizens into Eternity here and now. This is the great wonder in which human beings are invited to share.

Chapter One Hundred Forty One

And Jesus went into another town upon the coast and spoke good words of cheer to those who followed him. And one stood forth and said, Lord, are there few that enter into life? And Jesus said, The way is rough that leads to life; the gate is narrow and is guarded well; but every one who seeks in faith shall find the way, and they who know the Word may enter in. (Aquarian Gospel 141:1-3)

Jesus did not come to a town and preach about the end of the world and judgment and eternal heaven or hell. He did not show people they were sinners and deserving of divine punishment. He did not frighten them, he gave them hope, telling them of their true nature and true destiny as sons of God.

Yet he tells the truth that the way which leads to life is hard because of our weakness and ignorance. Once we gain some genuine spiritual experience it still requires discipline and effort, but it is no longer hard because of the wonder of what we know awaits those that persevere.

Those who intuit that the Goal is real are those that really have faith. They will persevere. But yoga is needed to enter in, not devotion or intellectuality or good works.

But many seek the way for selfish gain; they pound upon the gate of life; but it is fast. The watchman from the turret says, I know you not; your speech is that of Ashdod, and your robes are those of sin; depart and go your way. And they will go their way with weeping and with gnashing of the teeth. And they will be enraged when they see their father Abraham with Isaac, Jacob and the prophets, resting in the kingdom of the Christ, and they themselves debarred. (Aquarian Gospel 141:4-7)

This is a most instructive passage and it will be good to extract the principles and lay them out where we cannot mistake them.

1) We must be seeking God, and God alone. Anything else is selfish and ego-based. This is why most religion is utterly useless: its very basis is wrong.

2) We cannot force our way in divine matters. It is not possible to wear God down. On the other hand, positive persistence can eventually bring about the desired result. The difference is in the involvement of the ego in forcing and the spirit in persisting. Learn to tell which is which for you.

3) "The Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the

ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god. So they sent and gathered together all the Lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people” (I Samuel 5:1-4, 7, 11).

Ashdod was the place where the captured Ark of the Covenant was taken and put into the temple of Dagon. It symbolizes those who are attached to the false gods of this world and personal ego. Also those who take that which is God’s and invest it in delusion and worship of materiality and ego. Even though it was shown to them over and over that Dagon was no true God, still they set the idol back up and finally banished the Ark with God’s true presence from the temple of Dagon, rejecting it and sending it back to the Hebrews. This is the way of many in the world, they expel God from their lives while wanting all of God’s benefits (which they have no intention of acknowledging).

And, lo, I say that men will come from lands afar, from east, from west, from north, from south and sit with me in consciousness of life. Behold, I say, the last shall be the first, the first shall be the last. All men are called unto the kingdom of the Christ; but few are chosen, for the pure in heart alone can see the king. (Aquarian Gospel 141:8-10)

Here we see that the essence of the kingdom of God is consciousness, for spirit is consciousness itself, as is God. Purity of heart is the supreme requisite for entering the kingdom and beholding the King.

And as he spoke a Pharisee came up and said, You man of Galilee, if you would save your life remain not here; flee instantly, for Herod swears that he will take your life, and even now his officers are seeking you. And Jesus said, Why is it that the Pharisees are so concerned about my life? And then he said unto the man who spoke, Go forth and say to that sly fox, Behold, I heal the sick and cast the unclean spirits out today, tomorrow, and the days to come, and then I will attain. Go say to him, I need not fear in Galilee, for I must meet the cruel wrath of men within Jerusalem. (Aquarian Gospel 141:11-14)

Fearlessness is a trait of those established in righteousness. Also Jesus knew his destiny and was aware that Herod would have no implication in his death, at least directly.

And while they tarried in the place a man, a Pharisee, invited Jesus and a few of those who followed him, to dine with him upon the Sabbath day, to celebrate the marriage of his son. Among the guests was one afflicted with a dropsical disease. And Jesus said to those who had been sent to get from his own lips some words by which they might accuse him of a crime, You lawyers

and you Pharisees, what do you say about the lawlessness of healing on the Sabbath day? Here is a man, one of your own, and he is sore distressed. Shall I, in God's own strength, say out the healing Word and heal this man? The lawyers and the Pharisees were dumb; they answered not. Then Jesus spoke the healing Word and healed the man and he, rejoicing, went his way. Then Jesus said again unto the lawyers and the Pharisees, Which one of you who has a horse or cow, if it would fall into a pit upon the Sabbath day would not call in his friends to help to draw it out? And not a man could answer, Here am I. (Aquarian Gospel 141:15-23)

This, too, is business as usual for Jesus.

As Jesus looked upon the guests who had been bidden to the feast and saw them crowding in to get the highest seats, he said to them, You selfish men, why do you strive to take the highest seats when you are but invited guests? You do not show our host the courtesies of life. When men are bidden to a marriage feast they should sit in the lower seats until the host shall place them where he wills. You may, unbidden, take the highest seat; but then a man more honorable may come and when the host shall bid you rise and take a lower seat that he may honor his more worthy guest, you cannot help but blush for very shame in your humility. But if you take the lowest seat and then are honored by your host and asked to take a higher seat, you are esteemed an honored guest. In this event we note a principle in life, That he who would exalt himself shall be abased, and he who humbles low himself shall be exalted in the sight of men. (Aquarian Gospel 141:24-29)

One thing I have observed regarding truly holy people: they are unfailingly courteous and respectful of others.

Then Jesus spoke to all the guests; he said, When any one of you would make a feast, it should not be for friends, or kindred, or the rich; for they consider such a courtesy loaned out, and they feel called upon to make a greater feast for you, just in the payment of a debt. But when you make a feast, invite the poor, the lame, the blind; in this a blessing waits for you, for well you know that you will get naught in return; but in the consciousness of helping those who need, you will be recompensed. (Aquarian Gospel 141:30-32)

This is very much understood in the East, especially India, but little elsewhere. The idea is that at all times we should be doing everything in such a way that merit (positive karma) will be accumulated to help us along the way. And even more beneficial will be the inner effects from having been unselfish and caring and extending assistance to others.

And then he spoke a parable; he said, A wealthy man prepared a feast; he sent his servants forth to bid his chosen ones to come; but they desired not to

go, and they formed such excuses as they thought would satisfy the would-be host. One said, I have just bought a piece of land, and I must go and prove my title to the land; I pray to be excused. Another said I must go down and prove my ownership in sheep that I have bought; I pray to be excused. Another said, I have been married but a little time and so I cannot go; I beg to be excused. Now, when the servants came and told the man who had prepared the feast that those he had invited would not come, the man was grieved in heart; and then he sent his servants forth into the streets and alleys of the town to bring up to the feast the poor, the lame, the blind. The servants went abroad and found the poor, the lame, the blind, and brought them in; but there was room for more. The host then sent his men of arms to bring by force the people to his feast; and then the house was full. (Aquarian Gospel 141:33-40)

Only in the Aquarian Gospel version of this parable do we learn that the people gave as excuse whatever they thought the man who invited them would accept. Really they just did not want to bother. This is very much the case with people. They are invited by God to tread the righteous path, but it does not interest them so they use all kind of things in their life as excuses. What they really mean is they just do not want to do it. Such is the folly of human beings.

And God has made a feast for men. Long years ago he sent his servants forth unto the favored sons of men. They would not hear his call; they came not to the feast. He then sent forth his servants to the strangers and the multitudes; they came, but there is room for more. Behold, for he will send his angels forth with mighty trumpet blast, and men will be compelled to come up to the feast. (Aquarian Gospel 141:41-43)

This not an apocalyptic event, but the way things will work out at different times in the future. Finally God calls so loudly that people have to hear.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Two

Now, Jesus and the twelve went to another town, and as they entered it they said, Peace be to all; good will to all. A multitude of people followed and the master said to them, Behold, for you are followers for selfish gain. If you would follow me in love, and be disciples of the Holy Breath, and gain at last the crown of life, you must leave all there is of carnal life behind. (Aquarian Gospel 142:1-3)

To be a disciple of the Holy Breath is to be empowered in the Holy Spirit (the Holy Breath) through spiritual endeavor, yoga meditation being the prime element. Purification and infusion with the light and power of the Holy Spirit through sadhana is essential. Union with the Absolute is the only worthy goal, for that alone is the destiny of every sentient being. Through yoga we can experience our eternal connection with the Infinite whose life flows into and through us always whether we know it or not. Supported by continual spiritual practice, the aspirant ascends in consciousness, which is the essence of life. The crown of life is the attainment of God consciousness and being permanently established in it. Material life must be transmuted into the life of the spirit, and therefore must be totally left behind as the yogi ascends in consciousness.

Count well the cost before you start to follow me; it means the giving up of life, and all you have. If you love father, mother, wife, or child, more than love the Christ, you cannot follow me. If you love wealth or honor more than you love the Christ, you cannot follow me. (Aquarian Gospel 142:8-10)

This seems drastic, because it is. To pass from finite existence to infinite existence is a total revolution in status. Nothing can be loved above God. Nothing that could be called “ours” can be clung to. Just the opposite: all that is God must be cast away completely from our hearts and life. Only those with empty hands can “lay hold on eternal life” (I Timothy 6:19). “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33).

The paths of carnal life do not run up the mountain side towards the top; they run around the mount of life, and if you go straight to the upper gate of consciousness you cross the paths of carnal life; tread in them not. (Aquarian Gospel 142:11)

On a wall of our monastery we have hung an ancient Irish depiction which shows monks in a rowboat rowing straight upward toward the sky. The people who made that reproduction put two hangers on the back so if someone desired they could make it appear that the monks are rowing horizontally and not vertically. This is the mentality of the world. As Saint Teresa of Avila said, worldly people want to

go to God the way a chicken walks. In case you have not watched a chicken walk, I will describe it to you. They meander around, never in a straight line, scratching and pecking at the dirt, often lifting one foot and then standing still as if they are in a coma. They literally veer to the side frequently and often walk backwards a bit. If they run, it is only for a few feet and then they stop and wonder what they are doing. Everything they do is "a little bit." As I say, they meander, they do not really walk. It is purely a matter of lack of intelligence, and therefore lack of good sense. Further, as they walk they often croon to themselves in an aimless and patternless manner, as if trying to figure out if they are even alive, much less where they are and why. Yet people prefer to live in just such a way, and are proud of it.

But the Lord Jesus tells us that we must not wander around the mountain of life in circles, maybe only going upward a little bit at a time, but must head straight up the mountain to the top. As we do so, we will cross the life paths of ordinary people, but we must not get pulled onto them, otherwise we may wander aimlessly like them.

It is not that we should disdain them, or think we are superior to them. Rather, we should have good will and do our best to help them. But we must recognize the simple truth that we are not walking on their path at all and make sure we do not get pulled along in their orbit. And we must realize that it is very unlikely that they will begin walking up the straight path with us. "Oh, I am not advanced as you; I have too many demands on me with the responsibilities I took on before I began hearing about higher spiritual life." This is the kind of thing they say, but it all means: "I pray thee have me excused.... I pray thee have me excused.... I cannot come" (Luke 14:18-20). This is their plea, but it really is a simple refusal to walk the ways that lead to God. Ignorance and rebirth is still their destiny.

And this is how men bear the cross; no man can bear another's cross. Take up your cross and follow me through Christ into the path of true discipleship; this is the path that leads to life. This way of life is called the pearl of greatest price, and he who finds it must put all he has beneath his feet. Behold, a man found in a certain field the croppings of a wondrous mine of gold, and he went forth and sold his home and all he had and bought the field; then he rejoiced in wealth. Now, there were present, scribes and Pharisees of wealth who loved their money, and their bonds and lands, and they laughed loud to scorn what Jesus said. (Aquarian Gospel 142:12-16)

No man can bear another's cross. Perhaps one of the worst delusions a spiritual aspirant can have is the mistaken idea that anyone other than himself can do the necessary tasks that must be gone through to rise in consciousness. Exoteric Christianity claims that Jesus died in our place and in India there is nonsensical talk of teachers who can work out our karma for us or can by their intense sadhana somehow cancel the need for us to do the same as they did. Some gurus are so outrageous that they claim the disciple cannot really meditate—that the guru is doing the meditation within them and making everything come out right. This is

not “grace” but destructive disempowerment.

It is the power of God within us that accomplishes everything, but only at the constant application of our will. No one can do it for us. once told some disciples: “You have God’s blessing and my blessing. What you lack is your blessing.”

It is as Jesus said: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Matthew:16:24). First of all, it is addressed to those who intend to take the very same spiritual path as Jesus and follow it to the end. That is why he speaks of those who “will [to] come after me.” They plan to become just like Jesus. But to do that we must leave behind all the ways and consciousness of material life. That is why he said: “let him deny himself.” Also, the disciplines Jesus underwent to purify his consciousness must be duplicated in their lives by taking up their cross every day—for it is a matter of putting forth the will at every step of the way. Again, following Jesus is taking the exact path which he took. But what if we do not know the path? We must look to India and study the fundamental texts: the major Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras. *Soham Yoga, the Yoga of the Self* and *The Light of Soham* can also be invaluable helps.

Follow me through Christ into the path of true discipleship; this is the path that leads to life. We must not confuse Christ with Jesus, as Jesus has made clear previously in the Aquarian Gospel. We must pass through Christ by means of meditation which unites us to Father, Son [Christ] and Holy Spirit. We must become disciples of God, and seeking God is the fundamental trait of such a disciple. Adulating a human teacher and identifying with him as the way to God without which God cannot be known is to deliberately lead oneself astray. The way to God through experience of God is “the path that leads to life.”

This way of life is called the pearl of greatest price, and he who finds it must put all he has beneath his feet. In the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew the kingdom of heaven is also likened to a pearl of great price, but this gives us a more meaningful understanding of the initiate’s way of life as the pearl. It is practice; it is doing; it is sadhana. Many people think “getting saved” is the pearl, but the true pearl it is the path to God. Certainly it costs everything and those who would walk that path must put aside all that they have or could possibly attain. They are said to put everything under their feet because everything we turn from and renounce become paving stones of the path. The casting aside of that which is negative and worthless becomes a vital step forward to God. We “give up” utter nonsense. Of themselves they are nothing, but the renouncing of every single thing is a positive karmic force that moves us onward. The things renounced are trash, but the renouncing is of greatest value. Everything done for God becomes a treasure in our life. There are no good things in our life, only trivia, until we enter the gate of life. Then everything is sacred and meaningful. It is the offering to God that transmutes the lead of this world into the gold of divine attainment.

There is a hymn that expresses it very well, however limited the author’s intellectual understanding of salvation might have been:

So straight is the gate and so narrow
The way to eternal day,
And few are the pilgrims who find it,
Too great is the price they must pay.

Salvation is free, yet to gain it
The soul must leave all things behind;
Deny self and follow the Savior,
The way straight and narrow to find.

How rugged the path, yet God's glory
Attendeth each soul on that way;
And brighter and brighter it shineth,
Revealing a glad, perfect day.

But it's worth all it costs to be holy,
It is worth all it costs to be true;
God's blessing and honor shall crown thee
With power thy life to endue.

Behold, a man found in a certain field the croppings of a wondrous mine of gold, and he went forth and sold his home and all he had and bought the field; then he rejoiced in wealth. Now, there were present, scribes and Pharisees of wealth who loved their money, and their bonds and lands, and they laughed loud to scorn what Jesus said.

We must abandon all to gain The All. Then we shall rejoice in infinite wealth and our investment will be seen as wise beyond any ordinary understanding. It is worth repeating what I cited before. Mirabai, the great poet/musician saint of India wrote: "I have sold everything in the marketplace of this world and bought my Khanaia (Krishna). Some laugh at me and say the price was too great, and some say that the price was too small. But Mira only knows that it was everything she had."

Then Jesus spoke to them and said, You are the men who justify yourselves in sight of men; God knows your wickedness of heart; and you must know, O men, that whatsoever is revered and is exalted by the carnal mind, is an abomination in the sight of God. (Aquarian Gospel 142:17, 18)

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (I Corinthians 3:19).
This is a rule we can safely follow at all times.

And Jesus went his way, and as he went a young man ran and knelt down at his feet and said, Good master, tell me what to do that I may have eternal life. And Jesus said, Why do you call me good? No one is truly good but God himself. And God has said, If you would enter into life, keep the Commandments of the law.

The young man asked, To which commands did he refer?

And Jesus said, You shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not do adulterous things; you shall not falsely testify; and you shall love your God with all your heart, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

The man replied, These things I have observed from youth; what lack I yet?

And Jesus said, One thing you lack; your heart is fixed on things of earth; you are not free. Go forth and sell all that you have, and give your money to the poor, and come follow me, and you shall have eternal life.

The man was grieved at what the master said; for he was rich; he hid his face and went in sorrow on his way. (Aquarian Gospel 142:19-28)

The man sincerely believed that he loved God with all his heart, but Jesus saw otherwise.

And Jesus said, One thing you lack; your heart is fixed on things of earth; you are not free. Go forth and sell all that you have, and give your money to the poor, and come follow me, and you shall have eternal life. The man was grieved at what the master said; for he was rich; he hid his face and went in sorrow on his way. Jesus had to tell the man the truth: that unless he divested himself of everything he could not love God and search meaningfully for God. Certainly Jesus did not intend to cause him pain, but an infected part of the body hurts at the slightest touch. Weak eyes are pained by the light that is easily beheld by normal eyes. So sometimes we must speak the truth plainly, though gently and firmly. This may provoke a negative reaction, but that is the choice of the hearer, not the speaker. It is harder to be a teacher than to be a student, for a kind person does not want to grieve anyone. Yet: Truth Alone Prevails. *Satyam Eva Jayate*. This is the law.

And Jesus looked upon the sorrowing man and said, It is so hard for men with hoarded wealth to enter through the door into the kingdom of the soul.

And his disciples were amazed at what he said.

He answered them and said, I tell you, men, that they who trust in riches cannot trust in God and cannot come into the kingdom of the soul: Yea, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a man with hoarded wealth to find the way of life.

And his disciples said, Who then can find the way? Who can be saved?

And Jesus said, The rich may give his gold away; the high may kiss the dust, and God will save. (Aquarian Gospel 142:29-33)

Since it is our duty to share our bounty with others, to hold on to it and keep increasing it can be a fearsome trap. We need not impoverish ourselves, but we must give away as much as is just; and "just" must be determined by the Master's standards. It is necessary to humble ourselves in spirit. Then God will take charge of our life and free us.

Then Jesus spoke this parable to them: A rich man lived in splendid state;

he wore the finest garments men could make; his boards were loaded with the costliest viands of the land. A beggar, blind and lame, whose name was Lazarus, was wont to sit beside the waste gate of this home that he might share with dogs the refuse from the rich man's board.

It came to pass that Lazarus died, and angels carried him away unto the bosom of our father Abraham. The rich man also died, and he was buried in a costly tomb; but in the purifying fires he opened up his eyes dissatisfied. He looked and saw the beggar resting peacefully in the bosom of his father Abraham, and in the bitterness of his soul he cried, My father Abraham, look down in mercy on your son; I am tormented in these flames. Send Lazarus, I beseech, that he may give me just a sup of water to cool my parched tongue.

But Abraham replied, My son, in mortal life, you had the best things of the earth and Lazarus had the worst, and you would not give him a cup of water there, but drove him from your door. The law must be fulfilled, and Lazarus now is comforted, and you are paying what you owe. Besides, there is a great gulf fixed between your zone and us, and if I would I could not send Lazarus to you, and you cannot come up to us till you have paid your debts.

Again the man in anguish said, O father Abraham, I pray, send Lazarus back to earth, and to my father's house, that he may tell my brothers who are yet in life, for I have five of them, about the horrors of this place, lest they come down to me and not to you.

And Abraham replied, They have the words of Moses and the seers, let them hear them.

The man replied, They will not hearken to the written word; but if a man would go up from the grave they might believe.

But Abraham replied, If they hear not the words of Moses and the seers they would not be persuaded even though one from the dead stood in their midst. (Aquarian Gospel 142:34-48)

In the purifying fires he opened up his eyes. The Aquarian Gospel account of this parable supplies us with very important differences from the usual interpretation of exoteric Christianity. First of all, we see that the rich man is not being punished or consigned to everlasting hell, but that the fires he is experiencing are for his purification. This is, of course, completely in keeping with the teachings of Origen. He points out in *De Principis* that God has only one motivation for his dealings with humanity. No matter how unpleasant a consequence may be, it's purpose is only our benefit. God does not punish, he heals. In the astral world the rich man is awakened to his situation, much of which is explained to him. Awakening is the sole purpose of any event in relative existence.

You are paying what you owe. It is a matter of karma. A karmic debt is being discharged in order to free the man for spiritual progress. This is true of every aspect of our life in the relative universe.

And you cannot come up to us till you have paid your debts. Once the debt has been paid, then there is a possibility for future growth and consciousness. That, however,

will be determined by the man's response to his present situation. Nothing is automatic. There has to be a corresponding change in the awareness of an individual. It is our response to something that determines the positive or negative results.

If they hear not the words of Moses and the seers they would not be persuaded even though one from the dead stood in their midst. Thoughts really are things. That is, they are energy thoughtforms. And all energy possesses a vibration. Therefore a concept introduces a particular vibration, or rate of vibration, into the mind. The fundamental character of our mental energy determines our response to an idea. Some thoughts set up a conflict in the energy field of the mind, and others are compatible with the mental energies. This affects our reaction to them. So it is the fundamental vibration of the mind that determines the character of our response to any idea.

We may tell ourselves that something is the truth or is untrue. But this will not be based on logic, rather on our experiencing of the mental vibration of the idea. This is why some people are blind to the truth and others readily accept it. Consequently the nature of a person's thoughts reveals the quality of the subtle body in which the intellect is located. It is exactly that simple. Therefore Abraham explains that those who are immersed in material consciousness will not understand spiritual matters. Even miracles will in no way influence them.

It is all a matter of the evolutionary character of the mind itself. Also, the ability to draw a reasonable conclusion about something is a matter of the energy behavior of the mind. Otherwise it will be as though nothing has happened.

And Peter said, Lord, we have left our all to follow you; and what is our reward?

And Jesus said, Most verily I say to you, that you who have left all to follow me shall come into a newness of a life hid deep with Christ in God. And you shall sit with me upon the throne of power, and judge with me the tribes of Israel. And he who conquers carnal self, and follows me through Christ shall have a hundred fold of that which is the wealth of life on earth, and in the world to come, eternal life. (Aquarian Gospel 142:49-52)

Heaven and external happiness are not the legitimate motivations for our following Christ. Rather, we must seek the revelation of "a life deep hid with Christ in God." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). It is our inner glory, our true, divine nature that we are seeking to possess. That is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Three

The Lord was standing by the sea; the multitudes were there and one stood forth and said, Does God bestow rewards as men bestow rewards, for what is done?

And Jesus said, Men never know what other men have done, this life is such a seeming life. One man may seem to do a mighty work, and be adjudged by men as worthy of a great reward. Another man may seem to be a failure in the harvest fields of life, and be dishonored in the face of men.

Men do not know the hearts of men; God only knows the hearts of men, and when the day is done he may reward with life the man who fell beneath the burdens of the day, and turn away the man who was the idol of the hearts of men. (Aquarian Gospel 143:1-6)

Karma is the law. Everything is determined by karma: nothing else. It is our mistaken ideas that cause us to believe that God is a cosmic arbitrator, that all is in a sense God's judgment and action. Instead the universe is a great reactor, and we determine its response. We create our life, from life to life. The most important aspect of karma is the fact that it is determined by our minds. Buddha emphasized this continually. Therefore Jesus insists that the heart of the human being determines his destiny. We are always the masters of our "fate."

And then he spoke a parable; he said, The kingdom of the soul is like a man who had a vast estate. And in the morning time he went down to the market place to search for men to gather in his grain. He found three men, and he agreed to give to each a penny for his service for the day, and sent them to his field. Again he went down to the market place the third hour of the day and found five men in waiting, and he said, Go down into my field and serve, and I will pay you what is right; and they went down and served. He went again; it was the sixth hour of the day, and seven men were waiting at the stand; he sent them to the field to serve. And at the eleventh hour he went again; twelve men stood there in seeming idleness; he said to them, Why stand you here in idleness all day? They said, Because we have no work to do; no man has hired us. And then he sent them to his field to serve. Now, when the evening came the man said to his steward, Call the laborers from the field, and pay each for his services. And all were paid, and each received a penny for his hire. Now, when the twelve, who served but from the eleventh hour, received each one penny for his hire, the three were sore aggrieved; they said, These twelve have served but one short hour, and now they have an equal share with us who have toiled through the scorching hours of day; should we not have at least two pennies for our hire? The man replied, My friends, I do no wrong to you. Did we not have a fast agreement when you

went to work? Have I not paid in full? What is it unto you if I should pay these men a smaller or a larger sum? Take that which is your own and go your way, for I will give unto the twelve what I will give unto the three, the five, the seven. They did their best and you could do no more than do your best. The hire of man is based upon the intent of the heart. (Aquarian Gospel 143:7-21)

As I say, everything is disposed according to the ways of the heart.

As Jesus taught, a Pharisee came up and said, Lord, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? And Jesus said, You ought to know; what says the law? The Pharisee replied, The law provides that man may be divorced, may put away his wife. And Jesus said, The hardness of the hearts of men induced the giver of the law to make provisions such as these; but from the first it was not so. God made a woman for a man, and they were one; and afterwards he said, A man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; they are no more divided; they are one, one flesh. What God has joined no man can part. (Aquarian Gospel 143:22-27)

Man's law, including those of religion, is almost always different from God's law, therefore we must be very careful as to what we assume is allowed or prohibited. Our intuition must reveal to us the higher purposes of God, and not those of ourselves.

Now, when they went up to the house, a man made free to ask again about this matter of divorce. And Jesus said again what to the Pharisee he said; and then he gave the higher law of marriage life: Whoever puts away his wife, except she be a courtesan, and then shall take another wife, commits adultery. The woman who shall leave a man, unless he be a libertine and an adulterer, and then becomes the wife of any other man, commits adultery. (Aquarian Gospel 143:28-31)

This is a very high ideal, but what is the desire to be a disciple of Jesus and his Father but the highest possible ideal? We must be those who will to do the highest and the best. Once a Western missionary could not understand the sacrifices a devout Indian woman was making for her religion, and challenged her. She simply and gently replied: "Only the best for my God." If we are not the best by the standards of Christ and God how can we ever be theirs?

And Thomas asked, What is adultery?

And Jesus said, The man who harbors lustful thoughts, who covets any woman not his wife, is an adulterer. The wife who harbors lustful thoughts, and covets any man who is not wed to her, is not her husband, is a courtesan. Men cannot make a law to bind two hearts. When two are bound in love they have no thought of lust. The woman cannot leave the man; the man has no desire to send his wife away. When men and women harbor lustful thoughts,

and covet any other flesh, they are not one, not joined by God. (Aquarian Gospel 143:32-37)

This is extremely clear and extremely discomfiting to those who either will not or cannot conform to this high ideal of marriage that Jesus consistently sets forth in the Aquarian Gospel. The words of Jesus in several places of the Aquarian Gospel make this clear. Either we follow them or we do not. And there the matter ends.

And Philip said, Lord, are there few that God has joined in holy marriage bonds? And Jesus said, God knows the pure in heart; the lustful men and women are but creatures of the lustful self; they cannot be at one; nor can they be at one with God. (Aquarian Gospel 143:38, 39)

Just as Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentil soup (Genesis 25:29-34), so a human being sells his soul for sex: turns away from God and seizes animal lust.

Nathaniel said, Is it not well that all men should refrain from taking on themselves the marriage vow? And Jesus said, Men are not pure because they are unmarried men. The man who lusts is an adulterer if he has wife or not. (Aquarian Gospel 143:40, 41)

This is also true and must be faced by the unmarried, and especially the monastics

And then he said to all, Some things men know by being told, while other things they know not till the gate of consciousness shall open up for them. (Aquarian Gospel 143:42)

A worthy teacher teaches the way to open the gate of consciousness and then waits for the aspirant to do the needful. And there are others who one day just know without being told the true facts of life. But in all cases, until the necessary level of evolution, of consciousness, is reached there is no possibility of higher knowledge coming to anyone.

I speak a mystery that now you cannot understand; but you shall some day understand. A eunuch is a man who does not lust; some men are eunuchs born, some are eunuchs by the power of men, and some are eunuchs by the Holy Breath, who makes them free in God through Christ. He who is able to receive the truth I speak, let him receive. (Aquarian Gospel 143:43-45)

One who does not understand cannot really receive what Jesus is teaching, and such a one is not censured by Jesus who understands that consciousness must open before these vital principles can really be grasped. But he knows that all shall come to this point, so there is no need for anxiety. We must follow his example if we would be wise.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Four

When they had journeyed through the towns and cities of the land of Galilee, the Lord with his disciples came to Tiberius, and here they met a few who loved the name of Christ. And Jesus told them many things about the inner life; but when the multitudes came up, he spoke a parable; he said (Aquarian Gospel 144:1-2)

Here we see a plain demarcation between those who love the Gospel as their very lives and those who do not yet so understand. Direct and open instruction regarding the inner life is given to the first group, but the other must first understand how to skillfully live the outer life before the mysteries of the inner life can be revealed to them. It is not a matter of worthy or unworthy, but of capable and incapable. It is a matter of evolution, nothing more. This principle is uppermost in the mind and heart of a worthy teacher and he will never violate it.

A certain man with great possessions had two sons. The youngest son grew tired of life at home and said, My father, pray divide your wealth and give the portion that is mine to me, and I will seek my fortune in another land. The father did as he desired, and with his wealth the young man went into a foreign land.

He was a profligate and soon had squandered all his wealth in ways of sin. When nothing else remained for him to do he found employment in the fields to care for swine. And he was hungry, and no one gave him aught to eat, and so he ate the carob pods that he was feeding to the swine.

And after many days he found himself and said unto himself, My father is a man of wealth; he has a score of servants who are bountifully fed while I, his son, am starving in the fields among the swine. I do not hope to be received again as son, but I will rise and go straight to my father's house, and I will make confession of my waywardness; and I will say, My father, I am come again; I am profligate, and I have lost my wealth in ways of sin; I am not worthy to be called your son. I do not ask to be received again as son, but let me have a place among your servants, where I may have a shelter from the storms and have enough to eat. (Aquarian Gospel 144:3-12)

And after many days he found himself and said unto himself. Self-forgetfulness is a major factor in earthly life. That is why in the esoteric Mass formulated by Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater of the Liberal Catholic Church the Confiteor (Confession) is vastly different from that of any other Mass form. You can see for yourself:

“O Lord, thou hast created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of thine own eternity; yet often we forget the glory of our heritage and wander from the path which leads to righteousness. But thou, O Lord, hast made us for thyself

and our hearts are ever restless till they find their rest in thee. Look with the eyes of thy love upon our manifold imperfections and pardon all our shortcomings, that we may be filled with the brightness of the everlasting light and become the unspotted mirror of thy power and the image of thy goodness; through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

This alone is the aspiration worthy of the children of God, immortal spirits rooted in the very being of God. Only when we realize that this is the truth about ourselves can we have any valid perspective on spiritual life and hope to make any progress.

One sign of a person having “come to himself,” as the Gospel of Luke (15:17) puts it, is his taking himself in hand and beginning to reason within himself and direct himself to higher life.

I do not hope to be received again as son, but I will rise and go straight to my father’s house, and I will make confession of my waywardness; and I will say, My father, I am come again; I am profligate, and I have lost my wealth in ways of sin; I am not worthy to be called your son. I do not ask to be received again as son, but let me have a place among your servants, where I may have a shelter from the storms and have enough to eat. Buddha said more than once that the first sign of spiritual awakening is the ability to feel shame. He did not mean self-loathing or self-condemnation, but the ability to realize when we have done something for which we should feel personal responsibility and regret.

There are both spiritually healthy and spiritually unhealthy repentance. Regarding the healthy repentance Saint Paul wrote: “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:* but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what clearing of yourselves*, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter” (II Corinthians 7:9-11).

Therefore acknowledgment of culpability and the desire to not repeat the error is a holy and blessed thing. The desire to be a servant of God is also very healthy, because those who serve God serve humanity which we are told to love next to God. (“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself” Luke 10:27.) True humility is a great virtue. Who in the cosmos is as humble as God? Therefore holiness and humility are inseparable, but a positive humility based on love and respect for God and man.

And he arose and sought his father’s house, and as he came his mother saw him while yet a great way off. (A mother’s heart can feel the first faint yearning of a wandering child.) The father came, and hand in hand they walked a-down the way to meet the boy, and there was joy, great joy.

The boy tried hard to plead for mercy and a servant's place; but love was all too great to listen to the plea. The door was opened wide; he found a welcome in the mother's heart, and in the father's heart. (Aquarian Gospel 144:13-17)

A mother's heart can feel the first faint yearning of a wandering child. The boy tried hard to plead for mercy and a servant's place; but love was all too great to listen to the plea. The door was opened wide; he found a welcome in the mother's heart, and in the father's heart. God is both our Father and our Mother. In God is the love and patience of Mother and the wisdom and order of Father. I once heard a great teacher say: "God is like an expert safecracker. The entire attention of the safecracker is engaged in listening for the sound of the tumblers falling into place. He immediately reacts to the slightest sound. In the same way God is listening with his whole being for even the tiniest response from mankind. And he comes running at the slightest call of our heart."

Again, true repentance is true love.

The father called the servants in, and bade them bring the finest robe for him; the choicest sandals for his feet; a ring of purest gold for him to wear. And then the father said, My servants, go and kill the fatted calf; prepare a feast, for we are glad; our son we thought was dead is here alive; a treasure that we thought was lost is found.

The feast was soon prepared and all were merry, when the eldest son who had been serving in a distant field and knew not that his brother had returned, came home. And when he learned the cause of all the merriment he was offended, and would not go into the house.

His father and his mother both besought him tearfully to disregard the waywardness and folly of their son; but he would not; he said, Lo, all these years I have remained at home, have served you every day, have never yet transgressed your most severe commands; and yet you never killed for me a kid, nor made for me a simple feast that I might make merry with my friends; but when your son, this profligate, who has gone forth and squandered half your wealth in ways of sin, comes home, because he could do nothing else, you kill for him the fatted calf and make a wondrous feast.

His father said, My son, all that I have is yours and you are ever with us in our joys; and it is well to show our gladness when your brother, who is near and dear to us, and who we thought was dead, returns to us alive. He may have been a profligate; may have consorted with gay courtesans and thieves, yet he is still your brother and our son. (Aquarian Gospel 144:18-29)

He may have been a profligate; may have consorted with gay courtesans and thieves, yet he is still your brother and our son. This must ever be our perspective about ourselves and others. No matter what the past, even then—and now and for always—we and they are divine children of God. For that is our nature. Nothing can change it and nothing can prevent its eventual manifestation. Certainly a foolish past should be regretted but the ever-present potential for spiritual glory should be set in mind and

its manifestation striven for.

Then Jesus said so all might hear: he who has ears to hear, and a heart to understand will comprehend the meaning of this parable.

Then Jesus and the twelve came to Capernaum. (Aquarian Gospel 144:30, 31)

The true Gospel of Jesus the Christ in its totality can only be known and understood by those whose hearts have been completely purified and opened to the divine light through the cultivation of spiritual consciousness, especially through meditation.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Five

A company of Pharisees came up to speak with Jesus and they said, Rabboni, we have heard you say, The kingdom is at hand. We read in Daniel that the God of heaven will form a kingdom, and we ask, Is this the kingdom of the God you speak about? If so, when will it come?

And Jesus said, The prophets all have told about this kingdom of the God, and it is just at hand; but men can never see it come. It never can be seen with carnal eyes; it is within.

Lo, I have said, and now I say again, None but the pure in heart can see the king, and all the pure in heart are subjects of the king.

Reform, and turn away from sin; prepare you, O prepare! the kingdom is at hand. (Aquarian Gospel 145:1-6)

The Kingdom of God is in the spirit. Religionists do not usually like this because they want to say that their sect is the Kingdom of God on earth, implying that no one is in the Kingdom of God except the adherents of their organization. Bigots really detest the idea that no one can judge who is in or out of the Kingdom because it is purely spiritual in nature. Christian bigots equally dislike the idea that various institutions are branches of the Christian Church which is also purely spiritual in constitution. What no one seems to ponder is whether an exclusionary attitude is itself a sign that a person is separating himself from the Church, though claiming to be part of all that is really the Church. Sri Ramakrishna told the story of a sectarian Hindu who was so bigoted that he would not even touch anything sacred to those outside his particular group. The form of God he claimed to be so dedicated to appeared to him and said: "You can have nothing to do with me as long as you hate."

The truth is this: *God* is the Kingdom. And we are all living in God at every moment. Nothing is outside God. That is why in the esoteric Mass rite used in our monastery the Creed begins: "We believe in God, the undivided Unity, embracing all in oneness. We believe in the Holy and all-glorious Trinity, who pervades the whole universe, who dwells also in the spirit of man." Absolute unity is implied in these words. No one is outside the Kingdom; all are part of it. Some are more aware than others, but the creation itself is a great school for evolving consciousness, and it is to be expected that all sentient beings within creation will be manifesting a vast range of degrees of consciousness from zero to one hundred percent. And all are moving onward to the single Goal of union with God.

Also implied here is that only those who live inwardly can be aware of the Kingdom. Purity of heart and mind fits us for the life of the Kingdom. Those who reform themselves, transmuting their consciousness through deep spiritual practice, especially meditation, will certainly enter into and possess the Kingdom, living in God.

And then he spoke to his disciples and he said, The seasons of the son of man are past. The time will come when you will wish above all else to see again one of these days; but you can see it not. And many men will say, Lo, here is Christ; lo, there is Christ. Be not deceived; go not into their ways. For when the son of man will come again no man need point the way; for as the lightning lights the heavens, so will the son of man light up the heavens and earth. But, lo, I say, that many generations will have come and gone before the son of man shall come in power; but when he comes no one will say, Lo, here is Christ; lo, there. (Aquarian Gospel 145:7-11)

A Kingdom and a Christ that need to be pointed out are not the true Kingdom or Christ. Jesus is telling us that when he comes again those who are ready for entry into the Kingdom will know it from within. None of the worthy will need to be told where and how. Their spirits will illumine their minds and show them the way.

But as it was before the flood in Noah's day, so shall it be. The people ate, they drank, were filled with merriment and sang for joy, and did not know their doom until the ark was done and Noah entered in; but then the flood came on and swept them all away. So, also, in the days of Lot; the people ate and drank; they bought, they sold, they planted and they reaped, they went their ways in sin, and they cared not; but when the righteous Lot went from their city's gates the earth beneath the city shook, and brimstone fires fell from heaven; the gapping jaws of earth flew wide, and swallowed up their homes, their wealth, and they went down to rise no more. So shall it be when comes the son of man in power. (Aquarian Gospel 145:12-17)

This is extremely severe, but Jesus has spoken it. The worthy will not need to be told of his second advent and the unworthy will be incapable of knowing it. Indeed, he implies that they will be swept away in some manner. This deserves serious consideration.

I charge you men, as I will charge men then, Seek not to save your wealth, or you will lose your lives. Go forth, and look not back upon the crumbling walls of sin. Do not forget Lot's wife. (Aquarian Gospel 145:18)

The message is: Flee for your life and take nothing of your old life with you. Remember Lot's wife who simply looked back to the place of her old life and remained there forever as a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). When the Christ comes again we must run to him for the saving of our lives and souls, caring for nothing else. It will apparently be a time of great upheaval.

Whoever tries to save his life will lose his life; whoever freely gives his life in serving life will save his life. (Aquarian Gospel 145:19)

Those who dedicate themselves to the helping of others will themselves be saved, but those who selfishly think only of themselves will perish. Frankly, this is

always the truth at any time. “Thy neighbor as thyself” is the immutable law.

Then comes the sifting time. Two men will be in bed; one will be called, the other left; two women will be working side by side; one will be snatched away, the other left. (Aquarian Gospel 145:20)

This indicates that only half will be saved/survive. Whether this means half of the total population or half of those that could be saved is not clear. But that we need to act quickly and rightly is very evident.

And his disciples said, Explain to us this parable; or is it not a parable?

And Jesus said, The wise will understand, for where the bread of heaven is, there you will find the pure in heart; and where the carcass lies will gather all the birds of prey.

But lo, I say, before these days will come, the son of man will be betrayed by one of you into the hands of wicked men, and he will give his life for you and all the world.

Yea, more; the Holy Breath will come in power and fill you with the wisdom of the just.

And you will tell the wondrous story in Judea and in Samaria and in the farther lands of earth. (Aquarian Gospel 145:21-25)

Those whose lives are centered in their spirit will be drawn to Jesus when he comes again. But much has to happen before then, as Jesus describes. Even now, awaiting his advent, we must tell the wondrous truth to all who will listen—not in the sectarian sense but in the esoteric sense of the need to realize and manifest our own Christhood.

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And his heav’nly love to me;
He from death to life hath brought me,
Son of God with him to be.

(“I Will Sing of My Redeemer” by Philip P. Bliss)

And then to teach that men should pray and never faint, he told this parable: There was a judge who feared not God, nor yet regarded man. There was a widow who oft implored the judge to right her wrongs and to avenge her foes. At first the judge would hear her not, but after many days he said, I fear not God, and I regard not man, yet, lest this widow wear me out by pleading every day I will avenge her on her foes. When the disciples asked the meaning of this parable, the Lord replied, The wise can understand; the foolish have no need to know. (Aquarian Gospel 145:26-31)

What a marvelous statement of spiritual wisdom: *The wise can understand; the foolish have no need to know.* May we be wise.

There is a profound esoteric principle here regarding the controlling and shaping

of our life. Often what is required to obtain something is a building up of psychic energy on the inner planes. When the amount, the “critical mass,” is reached, then the desired effect follows inevitably. The widow in this parable invested her life energy in her insistence to the judge. She built up a thought form in the etheric levels and when it was substantial and strong enough then even the unjust and uncaring judge was compelled to comply with her demands. Sometimes (in truth, oftentimes) it is not a matter of “God’s will be done” but “My will be done.” For we are the Sons of God, are we not?

And then to teach a lesson unto certain of his followers who trusted in themselves and thought that they were holier than other men, he told this parable:

Two men went to the synagogue to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other was a publican. The Pharisee stood forth and prayed thus with himself, O God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, who are extortioners, unjust, adulterers; not even like this publican. I fast two times a week, and I give tithes of all I get.

The publican came not a-near; he would not lift his eyes to heaven, but smote his breast and said, O Lord, be merciful to me; I am a sinner in thy sight; I am undone.

And now, you men, I say to you, The publican knew how to pray, and he was justified. The Pharisee knew how to talk, but still he went away condemned.

Lo, every one who lauds himself shall be abased, and he who does not praise himself shall be exalted in the sight of God. (Aquarian Gospel 145:32-40)

Humility and a clear seeing of our erroneous ways is necessary for purification. Again, we are not to loathe ourselves and condemn ourselves, but we are to reject the idea of continuing in our mistaken thoughts and deeds and pray fervently for help from God, Christ, the angels and the saints. Then mercy shall come to us and our souls will be healed. Those who acknowledge their weakness shall gain the strength of God. Humility is the most precious treasure of the soul.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Six

The work of Jesus in the land of Galilee was done, and he sent forth a message, and the many came from many towns of Galilee; came to receive a benediction from his hand. Among the multitudes who came was Luke, a Syrian from Antioch, a learned physician and a just and upright man. Theophilus, a Grecian senator, a minister of Caesar's court, was also there; and many other men of honor and renown. (Aquarian Gospel 146:1-3)

Here we find Saint Luke the Evangelist mentioned. Though he was a physician he was also a gifted painter and many of his icons are still in shrines throughout the Eastern Orthodox world. I have seen one myself, Our Lady of Tikhvin, that was a living embodiment of the Virgin Mary.

The important point here is that Jesus was renowned in the land of Israel and that people of influence and from far places sought him out. His entire ministry was known to the whole nation and even throughout the Roman Empire if an official of the Roman court came to hear him.

And Miriam sang:

All hail the Day Star from on high!

All hail the Christ who ever was, and is and evermore shall be!

All hail the darkness of the shadowland! All hail the dawn of peace on earth; good will to men!

All hail triumphant king, who grapples with the tyrant Death, who conquers in the fight, and brings to light immortal life for men!

All hail the broken cross, the mutilated spear!

All hail the triumph of the soul! All hail the empty tomb!

All hail to him despised by men, rejected by the multitudes; for he is seated on the throne of power!

All hail! for he has called the pure in heart of every clime to sit with him upon the throne of power!

All hail, the rending veil! The way into the highest courts of God is open for the sons of men!

Rejoice, O men of earth, rejoice, and be exceeding glad!

Bring forth the harp and touch its highest strings; bring forth the lute, and sound its sweetest notes!

For men who were made low, are high exalted now, and they who walked in darkness and in the vale of death, are risen up and God and man are one forevermore,

Allelujah! praise the Lord forevermore. Amen. (Aquarian Gospel 146:4-16)

This is truly a marvel, revealing that Miriam either was a prophetess or had been told by Jesus in detail of his future even beyond the cross.

All hail the Day Star from on high! All hail the Christ who ever was, and is and evermore shall be! One of the gravest errors of Christianity has been the confusion of Christ with Jesus. Christ is God, the source, pervader and controller of the universe, the Second Person of the Trinity. Jesus is an individual spirit who has attained perfect union with Christ and is a perfect reflection, a veritable incarnation, of Christ.

All hail the darkness of the shadowland! All hail the dawn of peace on earth; good will to men! Why is “the darkness of the shadowland” being hailed? Because it is in the shadowland that the light of Christ has shown forth into the world. “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” (Isaiah 9:2). If there had been no darkness the light would not have been sent to us. So even that which is negative ultimately has a positive effect.

All hail triumphant king, who grapples with the tyrant Death, who conquers in the fight, and brings to light immortal life for men! The resurrection of Jesus is not just some tremendous wonder to awe us, but rather is a revelation of the immortal life that is the very nature of every single human being.

All hail the broken cross, the mutilated spear! All hail the triumph of the soul! All hail the empty tomb! Even that which has been defeated is glorified by being made a vehicle of the truth of immortality.

All hail to him despised by men, rejected by the multitudes; for he is seated on the throne of power! Jesus was the King of Immortality and enthroned in power from the moment of his birth. The mystery-drama of his life, death and resurrection was proof of that.

All hail! for he has called the pure in heart of every clime to sit with him upon the throne of power! We have not been called to grovel before Jesus and make the claim that he is absolutely unique. Rather, we have been called by him to Christhood, to possession and manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ.

All hail, the rending veil! The way into the highest courts of God is open for the sons of men! That which was rent was the veil that kept humanity blinded to the truth of both God and man. The rending of the veil was not a destruction, but a restoration of humanity to the immortality of Paradise.

Rejoice, O men of earth, rejoice, and be exceeding glad! Bring forth the harp and touch its highest strings; bring forth the lute, and sound its sweetest notes! For men who were made low, are high exalted now, and they who walked in darkness and in the vale of death, are risen up and God and man are one forevermore. Allelujah! praise the Lord forevermore. Amen. Human beings can be restored and placed back in the eternal path of evolution that leads to establishment in the consciousness that is the oneness of God and man.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, let now the benediction of thy love, thy mercy and thy truth rest on these men. The lamp is taken from their midst, and if the inner light be not aflame, lo, they must tread the ways of darkness and of death. And then he said to all, Farewell. (Aquarian Gospel 146:17-20)

What Jesus says has applied to humanity throughout its existence and should

never be forgotten by us: "If the inner light be not aflame, lo, they must tread the ways of darkness and of death." We must at all time keep that consciousness of the spirit, the inner light, bright within us and walk in that light in the world, as well.

Then Jesus and his mother, and the twelve, and Miriam and Mary, mother of the two disciples, James and John, and many other loyal souls who loved the Christ, went to Jerusalem, that they might celebrate the Jewish feast. And as they journeyed on their way they came to Enon Springs, near unto Salim where the harbinger once taught.

And as they rested by the fountain, Mary, wife of Zebedee, and mother of the two disciples, James and John, came to the master and she said, My Lord, I know the kingdom is about to come, and I would ask this boon: Command that these my sons shall sit with you upon the throne, the one upon the right, the other on the left. And Jesus said to her, You know not what you ask.

And then he turned to James and John and said, Are you prepared and are you strong enough to drink the cup that I will drink? They said, Yes, master, we are strong enough to follow where you go.

Then Jesus said, You shall indeed drink of my cup; but I am not the judge of who will sit upon my right or my left. The men who live the life and keep the faith will sit upon the throne of power. (Aquarian Gospel 146:21-30)

If we would be of the immortal Company of Christ, then we, too, must love the Christ, must both love God the Son and seek and find our personal Christhood which is the only way to God.

Not only did Mary not know what she asked, she had no real grasp of the nature of the kingdom of God. Nor did they, as their confidence when questioned revealed.

The glorious truth is this: ALL "who live the life and keep the faith will sit upon the throne of power." It will not be one or two, but every single person who enters and abides in the divine kingdom.

Now, when the apostles heard the pleadings of the mother for her sons, and knew that James and John were seeking special favors from the Lord, they were indignant and they said, We surely thought that James and John had risen above the selfish self. Who can we trust among the sons of men?

And Jesus called the ten apart and said to them, How hard for men to comprehend the nature of the kingdom of the soul! These two disciples do not seem to know that rulership in heaven is not akin to rulership on earth. In all the kingdoms of the world, the men of power, they who exalt themselves, show their authority, and rule with iron rule; but you must know that they who rule the sons of light are they who seek no earthly power, but give their lives in willing sacrifice for men.

Whoever would be great must be the minister of all. The highest seat in heaven is at the feet of him who is the lowest man of earth. I had a glory with our Father-God before the worlds were made, and still I come to serve the

race of men; to be the minister of men; to give my life for men.

And then the Christines journeyed on and came unto Jerusalem. (Aquarian Gospel 146:31-39)

We surely thought that James and John had risen above the selfish self. There has to be what is called “the occasion for sin” for a sin to occur. For example, if there is a place where there is no alcoholic drink and in that place there is no way to manufacture it, then drunkenness cannot occur. So often what appears to be virtue is simply the absence of opportunity. Or it may be the fear of being thought a bad or undisciplined person. But when the situation that prevents negative behavior is changed or when there is no longer an interest in appearing virtuous to others, then the negative conduct can feely happen.

As soon as there seemed to be a chance of obtaining a special rank for her sons, then the mother came forward and asked Jesus to bestow it on them. So it could then be seen that it was not a matter of having risen above selfishness and self-seeking, but of simply not knowing such a favor might be had for the asking.

It is good to study the surroundings of people, for then we may find that their behavior comes from far different motives than we might naively think.

How hard for men to comprehend the nature of the kingdom of the soul! This is not a condemnation, for how can those who have had no experience of spirit or the supernatural possibly comprehend those things? To prevent ourselves from making similar mistakes, we must ensure that our consciousness is continually immersed in spiritual realities. This is only made possible by spiritual discipline (sadhana), by the steadfast practice of yoga.

Rulership in heaven is not akin to rulership on earth. Again, there must be a supernatural perspective uppermost in the aspirant’s mind. A “normal” person involved in the “normal” things of the “normal” world cannot comprehend even the simplest realities of heavenly life that transcends earthly life. It is a matter of the opening and development of consciousness, the key to which is yoga.

They who rule the sons of light are they who seek no earthly power, but give their lives in willing sacrifice for men. Those to whom we must look for the opening of our awareness to higher, spiritual life, are those who have devoted their lives to the uplift of others after having first lifted themselves to divinitys. This is the Way of Christ. Jesus did not come to earth for himself, but for others, just as did Krishna, Amitabha Buddha, Gautama Buddha and the other saviors of humanity.

In India spiritual leaders are often made potentates. One time I was in Delhi where huge posters were found on walls throughout the city proclaiming that a famed guru and his wife were going to be put on a huge scale and weighed so their disciples could give them their weight in gold to prove their devotion. The posters urged all viewers to come and observe the wonder! Nearly all such gurus are declared by their disciples to be God revealed. How different is the picture Jesus draws of those who truly can uplift and free lost and bound humanity.

Whoever would be great must be the minister of all. The highest seat in heaven is at the feet of him who is the lowest man of earth. That is, only those who are the servants of the

least and the lowliest can be enthroned in the heights of heaven. This truth was marvelously revealed in Swami Sivananda. He was indeed the servant of all mankind. I witnessed this myself many times. Love for mankind, service to all, and perfect humility: these were his constant glory. How few are those who embody this ideal. Jesus washed his disciples' feet. Where can this be seen in today's world?

I had a glory with our Father-God before the worlds were made, and still I come to serve the race of men; to be the minister of men; to give my life for men. This is not boasting but a pledging to give himself in sacrifice for all: a sacrifice that continues even today.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Seven

Now, many Jews from Galilee, Judea and Samaria were in Jerusalem and at the feast. The porch of Solomon was filled with scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law, and Jesus walked with them.

A scribe approaching Jesus said, Rabboni, why do you keep the people waiting in suspense? If you are the Messiah that the prophets said would come, will you not tell us now?

And Jesus said, Lo, I have told you many times, but you believed me not. No man can do the work that I have done and bring to men the truth as I have brought the truth who did not come from God. What I have done and said are witnesses for me. God calls, and they whose ears have been attuned to hear the heavenly voice have heard the call and have believed in me; because God testifies for me. You cannot hear the voice of God, because your ears are closed. You cannot comprehend the works of God, because your hearts are full of self. And you are busybodies, mischief-makers, hypocrites. You take these men whom God has given me into your haunts and try to poison them with sophistries and lies, and think that you will snatch them from the fold of God. I tell you, men, these men are tried and you can snatch not one of them away. My Father who has given them to me is greater than you all, and he and I are one. (Aquarian Gospel 147:1-11)

God calls, and they whose ears have been attuned to hear the heavenly voice have heard the call and have believed in me; because God testifies for me. It would be very easy to just say: "God has called and they have answered," as if it was all a matter of God calling. But that would leave out half the matter. God calls and people hear only because their "ears have been attuned to hear the heavenly voice." And who attunes their ears? *They do!* Through self-discipline and spiritual practice they purify, refine and open their spiritual faculties. And they would not have done so if they had not understood that one day the call would come and if they had not wanted to hear and respond to the divine voice. So it was their choice. They believed in Jesus because they were on the same wavelength and could intuit the divine will working through Jesus, and were hoping that the same will would work in and through them.

You cannot hear the voice of God, because your ears are closed. You cannot comprehend the works of God, because your hearts are full of self. Those whose ears are not consciously and intentionally attuned to God cannot hear the voice of God. And the way to attune ourselves is to practice meditation on God, upon his very being and consciousness. Those whose attention is fixed on themselves and the pursuits of their desires are completely unaware of the ways and works of God. But those who practice yoga draw near to God, touch him, find their eyes of spirit opened and find themselves awakened in God.

And you are busybodies, mischief-makers, hypocrites. You take these men whom God has given me into your haunts and try to poison them with sophistries and lies, and think that you will snatch them from the fold of God. I tell you, men, these men are tried and you can snatch not one of them away. My Father who has given them to me is greater than you all, and he and I are one. It is essential for us to understand that when Jesus or a truly holy person “reads the pedigree” of someone they are not condemning them or trying to make them feel guilty or ashamed. They are just telling them the plain truth because they hope such people might really hear and be healed. And they are also wanting the people witnessing their words to understand how things really are.

Jesus is speaking to those that do their best to undermine and reverse any drawing near to God or any awakening that may have begun to stir in the consciousness of others. All my life I have seen religious people ganging up on those whom God has been drawing to himself, and therefore drawing them out of the orbit of the limited religion in which they have been trapped. Friends to themselves and enemies of God, these “spiritual authorities” are shameless in their bullying and cajoling. Having many times been the object of such “straightening out” I know well what “having sense” talked to me is like.

But Jesus is right. They cannot put such people back in the prison of their little, silly theology. No more. Evolution itself has put the objects of their endeavors beyond further hoodwinking. God enlightens and calls them and they awake, hear and follow.

I do want to tell you of just one such incident which illustrates this. Years ago I knew a very pure-hearted novice in a monastery. He was not at all intellectual, actually being simple to the point of seeming mentally deficient. But his devotion to God was to the point of genius. Once I saw two highly educated priests trying to convert him to their utterly specious ideas. One of them spoke his sophistry and when he paused the novice said: “You are right!” And proceed to repeat back what he thought the priest had said, but which was actually a brilliant and total demolishing of his supposed reasoning. The man sat there as though hit in the stomach. Then the other took over and the same thing happened! This went on for about half an hour. One time the novice returned to past remarks and said: “What your said a little bit ago was really good...” and proceeded to again wipe out their deceit. Finally they gave up and left. The novice, all smiles and innocence, got up and said to me: “I am so glad they came today. I learned a lot.” And he went up to his attic room to pray to God, whom, though he realized it not, he could triumphantly call “my goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth people under me” (Psalms 144:2).

This is not the only incident in which I have heard divine wisdom from the lips of very simple and even backward people whose hearts were pure.

And then the Jews took stones to throw at him and cried, Now we have heard enough; away with him; let him be stoned.

But Joseph, member of the great Sanhedrin of the Jews, was in the porch and he came forth and said, You men of Israel, do nothing rash; throw down those stones; your reason is a better guide than passion in such times as these. You do not know your accusations to be true, and if this man should prove himself to be the Christ, and you should take his life, the wrath of God would rest upon you evermore. (Aquarian Gospel 147:12-15)

This is Joseph of Arimathaea who intervenes. We can see the character of the minds and hearts of the enemies of Jesus. Killing an innocent man or even a Messiah does not phase them, but the idea that “the wrath of God would rest upon you evermore” gets their attention. It is a trait of the lowest level of religionists that reward and punishment form the basis of their religious motivations. It is not God or others who matter, but their own pious skins.

And Jesus said to them, Lo, I have healed your sick, have caused your blind to see, your deaf to hear, your lame to walk, and cast out unclean spirits from your friends; For which of these great works would you desire to take my life?

The Jews replied, We would not stone you for your works of grace, but for your vile, blasphemous words. You are but man and still you say that you are God.

And Jesus said, A prophet of your own said to the sons of men, Lo, you are gods! Now, hark, you men, if he could say that to the men who simply heard the word of God, why should you think that I blaspheme the name of God because I say, I am a son of God? If you believe not what I say you must have faith in what I do, and you should see the Father in these works, and know that I dwell in the Father-God, and that the Father dwells in me. (Aquarian Gospel 147:16-21)

This pretty well sews it up! Not that it will convince the kind of people who believe that anyone different from them is wrong or evil.

And then again the Jews took stones and would have stoned him in the temple court; but he withdrew himself from sight and left the porch and court and went his way; and with the twelve he went to Jericho, and after certain days they crossed the Jordan and in Bethabara abode for many days. (Aquarian Gospel 147:22-23)

This is an example of how we should react to such people. Ignore them and go on about our lives.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Eight

One day as Jesus and the twelve were in the silence in a home in Araba a messenger came and said. Lord, Jesus, hear! your friend in Bethany is sick, nigh unto death: his sisters urge that you arise and come in haste. Then turning to the twelve the master said, Lo, Lazarus has gone to sleep, and I must go and waken him. And his disciples said, What need to go if he has gone to sleep; he will awaken by and by. Then Jesus said, It is the sleep of death; for Lazarus is dead. But Jesus did not haste to go; he stayed two days in Araba; and then he said, The hour has come and we must go to Bethany. But his disciples urged him not to go; they said, The Jews are waiting your return that they may take your life. And Jesus said, Men cannot take my life till I have handed unto them my life. And when the time shall come I will myself lay down my life; that time is near, and God knows best; I must arise and go. And Thomas said, Then we will also go; yes, we will offer up our lives and die with him. And they arose and went. (Aquarian Gospel 148:1-10)

But Jesus did not haste to go; he stayed two days in Araba; and then he said, The hour has come and we must go to Bethany. Times, like plants, often need to ripen before action is taken. This is for so many reasons that I dare not speculate as to what they might have been in this instance. Often it is to let the people involved come to a stabilized condition or for their inmost attitudes to manifest. Furthermore, the world is a living entity, a field of consciousness in which there are many tides that affect all things and events. This is what astrology is all about, for example.

And Jesus said, Men cannot take my life till I have handed unto them my life. And when the time shall come I will myself lay down my life. “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above:* therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin” (John 19:10, 11). This is true of all of us. Only that which is in the divine plan can come about. Karma is created and manifests according to precise, unalterable laws. Therefore we should not fear or doubt. But that is not so easy to manage.

Now, Mary, Martha, Ruth and many friends were weeping in their home when one approached and said, The Lord has come; but Mary did not hear the words. But Ruth and Martha heard, and they arose and went to meet the Lord; he waited at the village gate. And when they met the master Martha said, You are too late, for Lazarus is dead; if you had only been with us I know that he would not have died. But even now I know that you have power over death; that by the sacred Word you may cause life to rise from death. And Jesus said, Behold, for Lazarus shall live again. And Martha said, I know that he will rise and live again when all the dead shall rise. And Jesus said, I am

the resurrection and the life; he who has faith in me, though he be dead, yet shall he live; and he who is alive, and has a living faith in me, shall never die. Do you believe what I have said? And Martha said, Lord, I believe that you are come to manifest the Christ of God.

Then Jesus said, Go back and call aside your sister, and my mother and the prophetess and say that I have come; and I will stay here by the gate till they have come to me. And Ruth and Martha did as Jesus bade them do, and in a little while the Marys and the prophetess had met the Lord. And Mary said, Why did you tarry thus? If you had been with us our brother, dear, would not have died. (Aquarian Gospel 148:11-22)

Martha said, You are too late, for Lazarus is dead; if you had only been with us I know that he would not have died. But even now I know that you have power over death; that by the sacred Word you may cause life to rise from death. Such is the faith of Martha, rooted in knowledge of the power of Jesus and of the Word when invoked by him.

And Martha said, Lord, I believe that you are come to manifest the Christ of God. Here again we find the right perspective regarding Jesus. He is not The Christ, but manifests The Christ. And that is exactly what a Christian is, and what each Christian must aspire to be.

Then Jesus went up to the house and when he saw the heavy grief of all, he was himself stirred up with grief, and said, Where is the tomb in which he lies? They said, Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The people said, Behold how Jesus loved this man! And others said, Could not this Lord, who opened up the eyes of one born blind, have saved this man from death?

But soon the mourners stood beside the tomb, a sepulchre hewn out of solid rock; a massive stone closed up the door. And Jesus said, Take you away the stone. But Martha said, Lord, is it well? Behold our brother has been dead four days; the body must be in decay, and is it well that we should see it now? The Lord replied, Have you forgotten, Martha, what I said while we were at the village gate? Did I not say that you should see the glory of the Lord?

And then they rolled the stone away; the flesh had not decayed; and Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, thou who hast ever heard my prayers, I thank thee now, and that these multitudes may know that thou hast sent me forth, that I am thine and thou art mine, make strong the Word of power. And then he spoke the Word, and in a voice that souls can comprehend, he said, O Lazarus, awake!

And Lazarus arose and came out of the tomb. The grave clothes were about him fast, and Jesus said, Loose him and let him go. (Aquarian Gospel 148:23-35)

And then they rolled the stone away; the flesh had not decayed. The inner bodies of Lazarus had not separated from his physical body, because it was his destiny to be recalled by Jesus. That is why Jesus earlier told the disciples: "Lazarus has gone to sleep." But when Lazarus heard the empowered voice of Jesus, he lived, and so will

we live if we immerse ourselves in continual consciousness of the Word.

The people were amazed and multitudes confessed their faith in him. And some went to Jerusalem and told the Pharisees about this resurrection of the dead. The chief priests were confounded, and they said, What shall we do? This man is doing many mighty deeds, and if we do not stay him in his work, all men will look on him as king, and through the Romans he may take the throne, and we will lose our place and power. And then the chief priests and the Pharisees in council met and sought a plan by which they might put him to death. (Aquarian Gospel 148:36-39)

What a reaction! Knowing Jesus could raise the dead, they were yet so blinded by their egos that instead of awe they just felt hatred for someone they considered a rival, a threat. This is one of the reasons why great teachers often stay invisible to the public.

Deluded people react in a completely irrational manner. Sincere people continually pestered the Masters who were directing Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society to come out in public, show themselves and demonstrate their astonishing powers based on their vast wisdom. Always they resisted, knowing that if they did “go public” it would only arouse the wrath of the ignorant, the bigoted and the religionists that would, like the priests in this passage, look upon them as dangerous rivals and “devil worshippers.”

Caiaphas was the high priest then, and he came forth and said, You men of Israel, do you not know the law? Do you not know that in such times as these we may give up one life to save our nation and our laws? Caiaphas did not know that he was prophet, speaking out the words of truth. He did not know the time had come for Jesus to be offered up a sacrifice for every man, for Jew and Greek, and all the world. From that day forth the Jews conferred together every day, maturing plans to put the Lord to death. Now, Jesus and the twelve did not remain in Bethany; but in the hills of Ephraim, upon the borders of Samaria, they found a home, and there abode for many days. (Aquarian Gospel 148:40-45)

Caiaphas was the high priest then, and he came forth and said, You men of Israel, do you not know the law? Do you not know that in such times as these we may give up one life to save our nation and our laws? What “Law” did he find this in? In the American South there are quite a few sayings that are confidently cited as being from the Bible. One such is: “Every tub must stand on its own bottom.” (I knew a woman who would quote this as holy scripture.) They are called Chimney Corner Scripture by those that know better. One time a man I knew very well said: “As the Good Book says, ‘If at first you don’t succeed, try try again.’” And his wife asked: “What ‘good book’ was that, Charlie? Your third-grade reader?” He was most annoyed.

The time had come for Jesus to be offered up a sacrifice for every man, for Jew and Greek, and all the world. Although the standard doctrine of ‘the Atonement’ is an error, it is true

that Jesus was a kind of sacrifice for the upliftment of humanity and the earth itself. Or rather, he was an Offering of Love for the whole world—and remains so today. There is a very complex background to this which includes his own karmic destiny determined in previous lives.

Undaunted, Jesus continued his ministry, knowing all that was to happen in the great plan of God.

Chapter One Hundred Forty Nine

The great Passover of the Jews, the feast of Spring, was calling every loyal Jew up to Jerusalem. Ten days before the feast the Lord and his disciples left the Ephraim hills and by the Jordan way, went down to Jericho.

And as they entered Jericho a wealthy publican came out to see the Lord; but he was small in stature and the throng was great and he could see him not. A tree, a sycamore, stood by the way and he climbed up the tree and found a seat among its boughs. When Jesus came, he saw the man and said, O Zaccheus, make haste, come down; I would abide with you today. And Zaccheus came down and joyfully received the Lord; but many of the stricter sect called out and said, For shame! he goes to lodge with Zaccheus, the sinner and the publican.

But Jesus did not care for what they said; he went his way with Zaccheus, who was a man of faith, and as they talked together Zaccheus said, Lord, I have ever tried to do the right; I give unto the poor half of my goods, and if by any means I wrong a man, I right the wrong by paying him four fold.

And Jesus said to him, Your life and faith are known to God, and lo, the benedictions of the Lord of hosts abide with you and all your house. (Aquarian Gospel 149:1-10)

It is not uncommon for holy people to know the names of those they meet. There was a holy Russian Orthodox priest in Spring Valley, New York, who always called people by their names when he met them. He was himself a disciple of St. Nectarios, the last great clairvoyant elder (starets) of the renowned Optina Monastery. There was a time in my sadhana when I not only would know the names of whoever I saw (including people on television), I would look at their aura and see astral movies of their daily life. I did not like it at all, so having heard that if you tell about some psychic abilities they will go away, I told people about it in hopes that it would go away and it did. (Earlier I could see through walls for a while when going down a street. I wrote about it to friends and that stopped, too. Such things are just gimmicks, and potentially dangerous distractions.) Jesus, however, was a savior, and his knowledge of others was directly from God and not to be classed with mere psychic abilities. For example, ordinary clairvoyance and spiritual clairvoyance are very different. Jesus knew Zaccheus because of his love for him. So he sought him out and saved him.

Tax collectors (publicans) were hated by the people because they represented and often embodied Roman oppression, but Zaccheus was an honest man and extremely charitable, as was Jesus' grandfather Joachim.

This incident shows that genuine virtue draws divine assistance to those who possess it. Those who purify themselves will find that the good and holy will come into their lives and affect them for the better.

Then Jesus spoke a parable to all; he said, A vassal of an emperor was made a king, and he went to the foreign land to claim his rights and take the kingdom to himself. Before he went he called ten trusted servants and to each he gave a pound and said, Go forth and use these pounds as you have opportunity, that you may gain for me more wealth, And then he went his way.

And after many days he came again, and called the ten, demanding a report.

The first one came and said, Lord, I have gained nine pounds; you gave me one and here are ten. The king replied, Well done, you faithful man; because you have been faithful in a little thing I judge that you will be a faithful servant in a greater thing; behold, I make you ruler over nine important cities of my realm.

The second came and said, Lord, I have gained for you four pounds; you gave me one, and here are five. The king replied, And you have proven up your faithfulness. Behold, I make you ruler over four important cities of my realm.

Another came and said, Lord, I have doubled what you gave to me. You gave one pound to me and here are two. The ruler said, And you have proved your faithfulness; Behold, I make you ruler over one important city of my realm.

Another came and said, Lord, here is what you gave to me. I knew you were an austere man, oft reaping where you did not sow and I was sore afraid, and so I took the pound you gave to me and hid it in a secret place; and here it is. The king exclaimed, You slothful man! you knew what I required, that I expected every man to do his best. If you were timid and afraid to trust your judgment in the marts of trade, why did you not go forth and put my money out for gain, that I could have my own with interest?

Then turning to the steward of his wealth the ruler said, Take you this pound and give it unto him who has by diligence earned nine. For lo, I say, that every one who uses what he has and gains, shall have abundantly; but he who hides away his talent in the earth shall forfeit what he has. (Aquarian Gospel 149:11-26)

This is actually a very esoteric parable. To each person the same thing was given: spiritual opening and spiritual strength. According to their karma and samskara they gained different amounts, but all were rewarded because they did their best according to their ability. In the same way we find that people who practice yoga will progress according to their individual status and makeup. But all who practice do progress. The person who just hangs on to what is given him, thinking well of himself, will lose what he has. As the king explained, he expected every one to do his best. Somewhere I once found this little verse that tells it all:

Do your best.
Leave the rest.
Angels
Do no more.

As the Master Kuthumi told one aspirant: “Your best is sufficient for us,” meaning that even if it has lacks and flaws, the fact that it was the best we could do makes it acceptable to God and the holy ones.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty

The Christines started on their way to Bethany, and as they went, while yet in Jericho, they passed a beggar sitting by the way; and he was blind Bartimaeus. And when the beggar heard the multitude pass by he said, What is it that I hear? The people said to him, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.

And instantly the man cried out, Lord Jesus, son of David, stay! have mercy on poor blind Bartimaeus! The people said to him, Be quiet; hold your peace. But blind Bartimaeus called again, Thou son of David, hear! have mercy on poor blind Bartimaeus!

And Jesus stopped and said, Bring him to me. And then the people brought the blind man to the Lord, and as they brought him up they said, Be cheerful, now, Bartimaeus, the Lord is calling you. And then he threw his cloak aside, and ran to Jesus as he waited by the way.

And Jesus said, What will you have, Bartimaeus? The blind man said, Rabboni, open up mine eyes that I may see.

And Jesus said, Bartimaeus, look up; receive your sight; your faith has made you whole. And he at once received his sight, and from the fullness of his heart he said, Praise God. And all the people said, Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 150:1-14)

This is a very straightforward historical account, but there are two points with symbolic messages we can look at.

The people said to him, Be quiet; hold your peace.... And then the people brought the blind man to the Lord. That which hinders us at first may eventually be the very thing that helps us. This is especially true about opposition from other people. Opposition can make us strong, and can shake us out of the childish complacency that so many grow up with who are sheltered. Part of becoming an adult psychologically is resistance from those close to us. All our life we were part of a unit, and when those people who seemed like an essential part of our existence begin opposing us and even being very unpleasant and threatening, this shocks us into realizing that we are independent and must struggle for our independence. So in this way they help us. And often after they have seen that we are definitely going to follow our convictions or aspiration they become supportive and encouraging. This is also true of situations or things that give us trouble. At first they are painful but the struggle against them enables us to see our folly in aversion to them and gives us the insight and perseverance to overcome them. So what at first hinders then becomes a help. They do not change, but we do, and that is what growth is really about: individual self-reliance.

The essential message is: be true to yourself and strong in holding to your convictions and standards and in time you will see that what caused you pain and anxiety at first has enabled you to stand firm and confident.

Jesus said, Bartimaeus, look up; receive your sight. We must elevate our consciousness if we would receive real and lasting healing of body, mind and soul. Looking Up is an essential ingredient for spiritual health

Then Jesus and the twelve went on to Bethany. It was six days before the feast. And when the people knew that Jesus was in Bethany they came from near and far to see him and to hear him speak. And they were anxious all to talk with Lazarus, whom Jesus had awakened from the dead.

Now in Jerusalem the priests and Pharisees were all alert; they said, This Jesus will be at the feast, and we must not permit that he shall slip away again. And they commanded every man to be alert and help to apprehend the Lord that they might take his life. (Aquarian Gospel 150:15-19)

Truly, it could be said to these people: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44). And so are all those like them through the centuries and even today.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-One

It was the day before the Sabbath day, the eighth day of the Jewish Nasan month, that Jesus came to Bethany. And on the Sabbath day he went up to the synagogue and taught.

And on the morning of the first day of the week, the Sunday of the week, he called his twelve apostles unto him and said, This day we go up to Jerusalem; be not afraid; my time has not yet come. Now, two of you may go unto the village of Bethphage, and you will find an ass tied to a tree, and you will see a little colt near by. Untie the ass and bring her here to me. If anyone inquires why you take the ass, just say, The master has a need of her; and then the owner will come on with you.

And the disciples went as Jesus bade them go; they found the ass and colt a-near an open door; and when they would untie the ass the owner said, Why would you take the ass away? And the disciples said, The master has a need of her, and then the owner said, 'Tis well.

And then they brought the animal, and on her put their coats, and Jesus sat upon the ass and rode into Jerusalem. (Aquarian Gospel 151:1-9)

Zechariah the prophet had said: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass" (Zechariah 9:9).

And multitudes of people came and filled the way, and his disciples praised the Lord and said, Thrice blessed is the king who in the name of God is come! All glory be to God, and peace on earth; good will to men!

And many spread their garments in the way, and some tore branches from the trees and cast them in the way. And many children came with garlands of sweet flowers and placed them on the Lord, or strewed them in the way, and said, All hail the king! Long live the king! The throne of David shall be built again. Hosanna to the Lord of hosts! (Aquarian Gospel 151:10-14)

Here we see that the people considered that Jesus would establish an earthly kingdom, that they had no grasp of his spiritual mission or the spiritual nature of his kingdom. This was not their fault, for they had been raised in an externalized, ritualistic and fiercely nationalistic religion, that defined the Messiah and his mission according to their self-centered material desires: especially for an earthly kingdom that would dominate other nations as they were presently dominated by Rome. The oppressed longed to become an oppressor "by the grace of God"!

Among the throng were Pharisees, who said to Jesus as he passed, Rebuke this noisy throng; it is a shame for them to cry thus in the street.

The Lord replied, I tell you, men, if these should hold their peace the very

stones would cry aloud.

And then the Pharisees conferred among themselves; they said, Our threats are idle words. Behold, for all the world is following him.

As Jesus drew a-near Jerusalem he paused and wept, and said, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the holy city of the Jews! yours was the glory of the Lord; but you have cast the Lord away. Your eyes are closed, you cannot see the King; the kingdom of the Lord of heaven and earth has come; you comprehend it not. Behold, the day will come when armies from afar will cast a bank about your way; will compass you about, and hem you in on every side; will dash you to the ground and slay you and your children in the streets. And of your holy temple, and of your palaces and walls, they will not leave a stone upon a stone, because today you spurn the offers of the God of heaven. (Aquarian Gospel 151:15-22)

The Lord replied, I tell you, men, if these should hold their peace the very stones would cry aloud. There is an esoteric message here: Creation itself is inherently conscious and therefore intelligent and on occasion acts of its own volition in response. So when in the Bible we read about trees and mountains and rivers acting more like humans than inanimate objects we should not be quick to dismiss this as fantasy or poetry.

And of your holy temple, and of your palaces and walls, they will not leave a stone upon a stone. This was a common practice of conquerors at that time. They literally tore all buildings down so that a single stone would not be left on top of another. This was total destruction and had a tremendous psychological effect on the conquered peoples.

Because today you spurn the offers of the God of heaven. Jesus does not say that this calamitous future will come about because the Jewish people were going to “kill” God or even Jesus, but because they are rejecting the grace and love offered by God to them through Jesus. It is not even that they are disrespecting God, but that by refusing the blessing they will no longer have the protection that would have prevented the destruction of Jerusalem. It is like a person destroying the money he would need to purchase something essential for his life, or someone deliberately making a hole in the boat he is rowing. Throwing away spiritual opportunity will result in suffering for the people of Israel, but not because they have “insulted” or “angered” God the way modern religionists often insist. Here, too, karma is simple reaction, not punishment.

When Jesus and the multitude had come into Jerusalem, excitement reigned, and people asked, Who is this man? The multitudes replied, This is the king, the prophet, priest of God; this is the man from Galilee.

But Jesus tarried not; he went directly to the temple porch, and it was filled with people pressing hard to see the king. The sick, the halt, the lame, the blind were there, and Jesus paused, and laid his hands on them and healed them by the sacred Word. The temple and the temple courts were filled with children praising God. They said, Hosanna to the king! The son of

David is the king! All hail the king! Praise God!

The Pharisees were filled with anger when they heard the children sing. They said to Jesus, Hear you what the children say? And Jesus said, I hear, but have you never read the words of our own bard who said, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise!

And when the evening came the Lord and his disciples went again to Bethany. (Aquarian Gospel 151:23-31)

The Lord is hastening on to his destiny without allowing anything to distract or deflect him. Nor will he ever be conciliatory toward those that worship their corrupt egos rather than God. The murder in their hearts arises solely from selfishness, greed and egotism.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Two

Next day, the Monday of the week, the master with the twelve, went to Jerusalem. And as they passed along the way they saw a fig tree full of leaves without a sign of fruit. And Jesus spoke unto the tree; he said, You useless cumbrer of the ground; you fig tree fair to look upon, but a delusive thing. You take from the earth and air the food that fruitful trees should have. Go back to earth and be yourself the food for other trees to eat. When Jesus had thus spoken to the tree he went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 152:1-6)

Fig trees have a very interesting trait: the fruit appears before the leaves. Therefore when a fig tree has leaves you can assume that it has figs as well. The fig tree in this passage was a literal tree, but it was not manifesting the right order of things and is therefore a symbol of a person who has all the traits and ways of spiritual growth but is really either a hypocrite or an ineffectual aspirant. Barren while exhibiting the signs of fruitfulness, such a person is unworthy.

In the next chapter we shall meet this tree again.

And when he reached the temple, lo, the rooms were filled with petty merchants selling doves and animals, and other things, for sacrifice; the temple was a mart of trade. And Jesus was indignant at the sight, and said, You men of Israel, for shame! This is supposed to be the house of prayer; but it is now a den of thieves. Remove this plunder from this holy place. The merchants only laughed and said, We are protected in our trade by those who bear the rule; we will not go.

Then Jesus made a scourge of cords, as he did once before, and rushed among the merchantmen, threw all their money on the floor; threw wide the cages of the doves, and cut the cords that held the bleating lambs and set them free. And then he drove the merchants from the place, and with a clean, new broom he swept the floors.

Chief priests and scribes were filled with wrath, but feared to touch or even to rebuke the Lord, for all the people stood in his defense.

And Jesus taught the people all day long and healed a multitude of those diseased, and when the evening came he went again to Bethany. (Aquarian Gospel 152:7-15)

Jesus, as Messiah and a Son of God had more right than anyone to say how the temple should be administered and he had the divine right to cleanse the temple of merchandising and greed. By this action he also was preventing the further sacrifice of animals which was not a part of Israel's spiritual heritage but had been borrowed from the ignorant and perverted nations around them, just as they had taken to themselves a king in imitation of the Gentiles rather than continuing with the judge system which God had given them. Of course once Jesus was gone everything in the

temple went back to where it had been before, but he had given them a chance to reform and his obligation had been fulfilled, for he was hastening on to his ultimate sacrifice.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Three

On Tuesday, early in the day, the master and the twelve went to Jerusalem. And as they went the twelve observed the tree to which the Lord had talked the day before, and lo, the leaves were withered, just as if they had been scorched with fire. And Peter said, Lord, see the tree! Its leaves are withered and the tree seems dead. And Jesus said, So shall it be with those who bear no fruit. When God shall call them up to give account, lo, he will breathe upon them, and their leaves, their empty words, will wither and decay. God will not let the fruitless trees of life encumber ground, and he will pluck them up and cast them all away. (Aquarian Gospel 153:1-5)

So shall it be with those who bear no fruit. When God shall call them up to give account, lo, he will breathe upon them, and their leaves, their empty words, will wither and decay. Whenever we go forth from this world there is a summing up of our life. At that time we cannot take refuge in rationalization or erroneous views. Rather, we see things absolutely clearly and accurately. The ego has no chance there to intervene. We see the way things are directly and completely. This is the action of the Holy Spirit, the “breath” God will breathe upon us. All that is false and illusory will melt away and only the perception of the reality of our situation will remain.

God will not let the fruitless trees of life encumber ground, and he will pluck them up and cast them all away. This is not some kind of vengeance or judgment, but a great mercy. All that is barren in our life will be eliminated so we will not forever be wandering in the maze of our deluded minds. The vision of the truth may not be pleasing to us, and may even be shameful and painful, but it will be freeing us from the possibility of wasting many lives.

Now, you can demonstrate the power of God. Have faith in God, and you can bid the mountains to depart, and they will crumble at your feet; and you may talk to wind and wave, and they will hear, and will obey what you command. God hears the prayer of faith and when you ask in faith you shall receive.

You may not ask amiss; God will not hear the prayer of any man who comes to him with blood of other men upon his hands. And he who harbors envious thoughts, and does not love his fellow men, may pray forever unto God, and he will hear him not. God can do nothing more for men than they would do for other men. (Aquarian Gospel 153:6-11)

Through faith great things can come to pass, but faith is not enough. There must be rectitude of thought, work and deed.

You may not ask amiss; God will not hear the prayer of any man who comes to him with blood of other men upon his hands. And he who harbors envious thoughts, and does not love his fellow men, may pray forever unto God, and he will hear him not.

Injury of others, hatred, envy and hardness of heart toward any will ensure that our prayers will bear no fruit but will go unheeded by God and the godly: the saints and angels.

God can do nothing more for men than they would do for other men. In the Lord's Prayer we are told that we shall only be forgiven to the degree that we forgive others. In the same way nothing will be done for us more than we either do for others or are sincerely willing and able to do for others.

And Jesus walked again within the temple courts. The priests and scribes were much emboldened by the council of Caiaphas and the other men in power, and so they came to Jesus and they said, Who gave you the authority to do as you have done? Why did you drive the merchants from the temple yesterday?

And Jesus answered them and said, If you will answer what I ask, then I will answer you; Was John, the harbinger, a man of God, or was he a seditious man? The scribes and Pharisees were loath to answer him; they reasoned thus among themselves: If we shall say, John was a prophet sent from God, then he will say, John testified for me, that I am son of God, why do you not believe his words? If we should say, John was a bold, seditious man, the people will be angered, for they think he was a prophet of the living God. And so they answered Jesus and they said, We do not know; we cannot tell. Then Jesus said, If you will tell me not, then I will tell you not who gave me power to drive the robbers from the house of God. (Aquarian Gospel 153:12-21)

Jesus has set his sight upon the end of his mission and is preparing for that. Therefore he has no words or time to waste on those whose hearts are intent on evil and destruction, who wish to be his murderers. Consequently he is embodying the statement he himself made in his life as David: "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward" (Psalms 18:26). "Froward" means stubborn, perverse and crooked. He is acting in pure honesty according to the actual nature and intent of those who approach him.

And then he spoke a parable to them; he said, A man once made a feast inviting all the rich and honored people of the land. But when they came, they found the door into the banquet hall was low, and they could enter not except they bowed their heads and fell down on their knees. These people would not bow their heads and fall down on their knees, and so they went away; they went not to the feast. And then the man sent forth his messengers to bid the common folks, and those of low estate, to come and feast with him. These people gladly came; they bowed their heads and fell down on their knees, and came into the banquet hall and it was full, and every one rejoiced.

And then the master said, Behold, you priests and scribes, and Pharisees! the Lord of heaven and earth has spread a sumptuous feast, and you were bidden first of all; but you have found the door into the banquet hall so low

that you must bow your heads and fall down on your knees to enter in, and you have scorned the king who made the feast, refused to bow your heads and fall down on your knees, and you have gone your way; but now God calls again; the common folks and those of low estate have come in multitudes, have entered in unto the feast and all rejoice.

I tell you, men, that publicans and courtesans go through the gates into the kingdom of the God of heaven, and you are left without. John came to you in righteousness; he brought the truth, but you believed him not. But publicans and courtesans believed, and were baptized and now have entered in unto the feast. I tell you now, as I have told you many times, The many have been called, but chosen are the few. (Aquarian Gospel 153:22-33)

Humility is essential to enter into communion with God, a humility which is not an emotion but an honest, spiritual insight into the glory of God which renders the seer glad and willing to bow down and kneel before God and his saints, including his messengers. For bowing to the Messiah was bowing to God who sent him, and it was done with joy by those who yearned for the way into the eternal Kingdom.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Four

The multitudes would hear what Jesus had to say, and so they built a platform in the temple court, and Jesus stood upon the place and taught. He spoke in parables; he said,

A man possessed a vast estate; he planted out a vineyard, placed a hedge about it, built a tower, installed the press for making wine. He placed his vineyard in the hands of husbandmen and then he journeyed to a distant land. Now, in the vintage time the man sent forth a servant to receive and bring to him his portion of the fruitage of the vines. The husbandmen came forth and beat the man; laid forty lashes on his back and cast him out beyond the vineyard gate. And then the owner sent another man to bring to him his own. The husbandmen laid hold of him and sorely wounded him and cast him from the vineyard, leaving him half dead beside the way.) The owner sent another man to bring to him his own. The husbandmen seized hold of him and with a javelin they pierced his heart; then buried him beyond the hedge. The owner was aggrieved. He thought within himself, What shall I do? and then he said, This will I do. My only son is here, and I will send him to the husbandmen, They surely will respect my son and send me what is mine. He sent his son; the husbandmen took counsel with themselves; they said, This is the only heir to all this wealth, and if we take his life the vast inheritance is ours. They took his life and cast him out beyond the vineyard hedge. The day will come; the owner will return to reckon with the husbandmen, and he will seize them every one, and cast them into scorching fires where they shall stay until they pay the debts they owe. And he will place his vineyard in the care of honest men. (Aquarian Gospel 154:1-13)

There is not much to say about this parable because it is the same as that in the regular Gospels. It is a portraying of how Israel persecuted and even killed the messengers of God through the centuries, and how they are now about to murder the greatest of all, one who had attained the status of a Son of God. But the consequences will be terrible and tremendous suffering will come upon those who committed the crime and those who did not approve yet did not oppose it. Tremendous karma will be created and tremendous will be reaping of it. Furthermore, others will be entrusted with the spiritual wealth that was rejected by those to whom it was originally offered.

Certainly when we see the great sufferings that came to the generation of those involved in the death of Jesus we see this parable is no exaggeration. However it must be pointed out that few things are more outrageous than the false assertion that the Jewish nation through the centuries has been responsible for the death of Jesus. This is an excuse for inexcusable deprivations and persecutions aimed at them. It is one of the most shameful aspects of Western civilization.

Then turning to the priests and scribes he said, Did not your prophets say, The stone the builders cast away became the capstone of the arch? You men who pose as men of God, as husbandmen, lo, you have stoned and killed the messengers of God, his prophets and his seers, and now you seek to slay his son.

I tell you men, the kingdom shall be snatched away from you, and shall be given unto people who are not a people now, and to a nation that is not a nation now. And men whose speech you cannot understand, will stand between the living and the dead, and show the way to life.

The chief priests and the Pharisees were deeply moved with anger when they heard this parable and would have seized the Lord and done him harm, but they were sore afraid; they feared the multitude. (Aquarian Gospel 154:14-19)

I tell you men, the kingdom shall be snatched away from you, and shall be given unto people who are not a people now, and to a nation that is not a nation now. And men whose speech you cannot understand, will stand between the living and the dead, and show the way to life. The first part is well known, prophesying that those who would come to believe in the revelation of Jesus would be a new nation that would inherit the blessings which Israel enjoyed in the past. The interesting part is the second which speaks of those who “will stand between the living and the dead, and show the way to life.” This implies that true Christians are in touch with all the living, whether embodied or disembodied, and can show the way to life in union with God. Those who do not fit this description are not Christians.

And Jesus spoke another parable; he said, The kingdom is a-like a certain king who made a feast in honor of the marriage of his son. He sent his servants forth to call the people who had been invited to the feast. The servants called; but then the people would not come. And then the king sent other messengers abroad to say, Behold, my tables now are spread; my oxen and my fatlings are prepared. The choicest viands and the richest wines are on my boards; come to the marriage feast. The people laughed and treated with disdain his call, and went their way; one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and others seized the servants of the king; abused them shamefully; and some of them they killed. And then the king sent forth his soldiery who slew the murderers and burned their towns.

And then the king sent other servants forth; to them he said, Go to the corners of the streets, the partings of the ways, and to the marts of trade and say, Whoever will may come up to the marriage feast. The servants went their way and called; and lo, the banquet hall was filled with guests. (Aquarian Gospel 154:20-30)

This is a continuation of the same theme and contains no new or noteworthy elements.

But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man who had not on a wedding robe; he called to him and said, Friend, why are you here without a wedding robe? Would you dishonor thus my son? The man was dumb; he answered not. And then the king said to his guards, Take you this man and bind him hand and foot and cast him out into the darkness of the night. The many have been called, but none are chosen to be guests who have not clad themselves in wedding robes. (Aquarian Gospel 154:31-35)

It was the custom at the time of Jesus that wealthy people would send magnificent clothing to those they invited to a special feast. Instead of little cards with their names on them, their clothing was proof that they were truly invited. In this parable a man managed to get into the feast, but had no garment. The term “wedding robe” is used here in the sense that those who are destined to be “wed” to God will possess a special “robe.” The initiate of a valid spiritual system is given the power to develop an entirely new level of being, known to the yogis as a “sadhana body.” The Taoists are very insistent on this and refer to the “divine embryo” which evolves into the vehicle through which divine consciousness is perceived and united with. Sri Ramakrishna spoke of this body, saying that it is through the sadhana body, produced by spiritual practice, that aspirants actually come to see and know God. The wedding robe and the sadhana body are the same thing.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Five

As Jesus spoke, the Pharisees came up to question him; they thought to criminate him by what he said. A strict Herodian spoke and said, My Lord, you are a man of truth; you show the way to God, and you do not regard the personality of men; tell us, what do you think; should we, who are the seed of Abraham, pay tribute unto Caesar? or should we not? And Jesus knew his wickedness of heart and said, Why do you come to tempt me thus? Show me the tribute money that you speak about. The man brought forth a piece of coin on which an image was engraved. And Jesus said, Whose image and whose name is on this coin? The man replied, 'Tis Caesar's image and his name. And Jesus said, Give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's own; but give to God the things of God. And they who heard him said, he answers well. (Aquarian Gospel 155:1-9)

There is nothing to comment on here since it is like the usual Gospel texts.

And then a Sadducee, who thinks there is no resurrection of the dead, came up and said, Rabboni, Moses wrote that if a married man shall die, and have no child, his widow shall become his brother's wife. Now, there were seven brothers and the eldest had a wife; he died and had no child; a brother took his widow for his wife, and then he died; and every brother had this woman for his wife; in course of time the woman died; now which will have this woman for a wife in the resurrection day?

And Jesus said, Here in this plane of life men marry just to gratify their selfish selves, or to perpetuate the race; but in the world to come, and in the resurrection day, men do not take upon themselves the marriage vows. But, like the angels and the other sons of God, they form not unions for the pleasure of the self, nor to perpetuate the race. Death does not mean the end of life. The grave is not the goal of men, no more than is the earth the goal of seeds. Life is the consequence of death. The seed may seem to die, but from its grave the tree arises into life. So man may seem to die, but he lives on, and from the grave he springs up into life. If you could comprehend the word that Moses spoke about the burning bush that burned and still was not consumed, then you would know that death cannot destroy the life. And Moses said that God is God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel. God is not God of dead men's bones, but the living man. I tell you, men, man goes down to the grave, but he will rise again and manifest the life; for every life is hid with Christ in God, and man shall live while God shall live. The Pharisees and scribes who heard the Lord, exclaimed, he speaks the truth; and they were glad to have the Sadducees discomfited. (Aquarian Gospel 155:10-24)

Here in this plane of life men marry just to gratify their selfish selves, or to perpetuate the

race; but in the world to come, and in the resurrection day, men do not take upon themselves the marriage vows. But, like the angels and the other sons of God, they form not unions for the pleasure of the self, nor to perpetuate the race. In the higher worlds “society” is no longer needed for development, so naturally marriage, family, nationality, etc. are left behind in this plane. There is an absolute obsession with the idea that families will be reunited “over there” and suchlike, but that is not accurate. Certainly, those who have been closely associated in earthly life may return and again meet those with whom they had previous connection, but many aspects of earthly life dissolve at death. We have to pass on and grow beyond the circumstances of previous lives. Otherwise there would be no progress at all. In higher worlds God becomes the focus of life and no longer does the little wandering ego hold center stage. This is the purpose of evolution.

Death does not mean the end of life. The grave is not the goal of men, no more than is the earth the goal of seeds. Life is the consequence of death. The seed may seem to die, but from its grave the tree arises into life. So man may seem to die, but he lives on, and from the grave he springs up into life. The most perfect exposition of this truth is found in the Bhagavad Gita:

“ The wise mourn neither the living or the dead. Truly there never was a time when I was not, nor you, nor these lords of men—nor in the future will there be a time when we shall cease to be. As to the embodied person childhood, youth and old age arise in turn, so he gets another body—the wise are not deluded by this. These bodies inhabited by the eternal, indestructible, immeasurable, embodied Self are said to come to an end. Neither is the Self slain, nor yet does it die at any time; nor having been will it ever come not to be. Birthless, eternal, perpetual, primeval, it is not slain whenever the body is slain. Even as a man casts off his worn-out clothes and then clothes himself in others which are new, so the embodied casts off worn-out bodies and then enters into others which are new. And moreover, if you think this Self to have constant birth and death, even then you should not mourn. Of the born, death is certain; of the dead, birth is certain. Therefore, over the inevitable you should not grieve. Beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their middle state and again unmanifest in their end. What lamentation can be made over this? Some perceive this Self as wondrous, another speaks of it as wondrous, another hears of it as wondrous, but even having heard of this Self, no one knows it. This embodied Self is eternally indestructible in the body of all. Therefore you should not mourn for any being” (Bhagavad Gita 2:11-13, 18, 20, 22, 26-30).

If you could comprehend the word that Moses spoke about the burning bush that burned and still was not consumed, then you would know that death cannot destroy the life. This is a very unique interpretation, but it is certainly on target and not to be disregarded.

And Moses said that God is God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel. God is not God of dead men’s bones, but the living man. When I was seven or eight I was deeply affected by hearing a sermon on the radio on the fact that there are no dead because the immortal spirit cannot die. Some are embodied and some are disembodied, but all

are alive.

I tell you, men, man goes down to the grave, but he will rise again and manifest the life; for every life is hid with Christ in God, and man shall live while God shall live. Two truths are presented here: reincarnation and the fact that we all live with the life of God because we are a part of God. We can no more die than God can die, “whose shadow is immortality” as the Yajur Veda says (4.1.8; 7.5.17).

And then an honest scribe came forth and said to Jesus, Lord, you speak as one whom God has sent, and may I ask, Which is the greatest and the first of the Commandments of the Law? And Jesus said, The first is Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. These are the greatest of the ten, and on them hang the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. The scribe replied, My soul gives witness that you speak the truth, for love fulfils the law, and far transcends burnt offerings and sacrifice. And Jesus said to him, Lo, you have solved a mystery; you are within the kingdom and the kingdom is in you. (Aquarian Gospel 155:25-31)

The final sentence is extremely important. Jesus does not say the man is near the kingdom, which would imply that Jesus can put him into the kingdom if he will become a convert to his Messiahship. Not at all. Jesus says that he is already in the kingdom and the kingdom lives in him. He need not “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ” to enter the kingdom. He is there already with Jesus.

To his disciples Jesus spoke, and all the people heard; he said, Beware you of the scribes and Pharisees who pride themselves in wearing long and richly decorated robes, and love to be saluted in the market place, and seek the highest seats at feasts, and take the hard-earned wages of the poor to satisfy their carnal selves, and pray in public, long and loud. These are the wolves who clothe themselves to look like sheep. (Aquarian Gospel 155:32-34)

This is a description that can be applied to most who make a business of religion.

And then he said to all, The scribes and Pharisees are placed by law in Moses’ seat, and by the law they may interpret law; so what they bid you do, that do; but do not imitate their deeds. They say the things that Moses taught; they do the things of Beelzebub. They talk of mercy, yet they bind on human shoulders burdens grievous to bear. They talk of helpfulness, and yet they put not forth the slightest helpful efforts for their brother man. They make a show of doing things, and yet they do not anything but show their gaudy robes, and broad phylacteries, and smile when people call them honored masters of the law. They strut about and show their pride when people call them father, so and so. (Aquarian Gospel 155:35-41)

Reading this I am reminded of a very old man I once saw at a church meeting. He spoke of his spiritual history and of how coming into contact with a particular church had helped him greatly. He concluded: "I got what they *preached*, not what they *had*." Jesus advises us to do the same

Hear, now, you men, Call no man father here. The God of heaven and earth, and he alone, is Father of the race of men. Christ is the hierarch, the high, exalted master of the sons of men. If you would be exalted, sit down at the master's feet and serve. He is the greatest man who serves the best. (Aquarian Gospel 155:42-44)

There is no substitute for God, though religion tries mightily to promote many. Some make a god of the Bible, some of their church organization, some of a spiritual figure, some of a theological view and some of themselves. But God alone is the Father of our souls. We came from him and we shall return to him. The intermediary between God and man is Christ, the Only-begotten of the Father, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Jesus was great in the kingdom because he was the best servant of Christ; so much so that he was a perfect reflection of Christ, a Christ himself, as are all perfected Sons of God.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Six

The scribes and Pharisees were wild with rage; and Jesus said, Woe unto you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! you stand within the way; you block the door; you will not go into the kingdom and you turn aside the pure in heart who are about to enter in. Woe unto you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he has been made he is a son of hell, just like yourselves.

Woe unto you who call yourselves the guides of men! and you are guides, blind guides; for you pay tithes of cummin, mint and dill, and leave undone the weightier matters of the law; of judgment, justice, faith. You filter out the gnats before you drink; but then you swallow camels and the like.

Woe unto you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! you clean and scour the outside of the cup, while it is full of filth, extortion and excess. Go to and clean the inside of the cup, and then the poisonous fumes will not defile the outside of the cup.

Woe unto you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! you are yourselves like whitewashed sepulchres; your outer garbs are beautiful, but you are full of dead men's bones. You seem to men to be divine; but in your hearts you nourish lust, hypocrisies and vile iniquities.

Woe unto you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! you build and then adorn the tombs of holy men of old and say, If we had lived when these men lived, we would have guarded them, would not have acted as our fathers did, when they maltreated them and put them to the sword. But you are sons of them who slew the holy men, and you are not a whit more just than they. Go forth and fill the measure of your fathers who were steeped in crime. You are offsprings of the vipers, and how can you be but serpents of the dust?

God now has sent again to you his prophets and his seers, his wise men and his holy men, and you will scourge them in your synagogues, and stone them in the streets, and nail them to the cross. Woe unto you! for on your heads will come the blood of all the holy men who have been slain upon the earth. From righteous Abel down to Zacharias, son of Barachias, who was slain within the Holy Place before the altar of the Lord. Behold, I say that these things all shall come upon this nation and the people of Jerusalem.

And Jesus looked about and said, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou cruel city of Jerusalem, that slays the prophets in the streets and kills the holy men whom God has sent to you! Lo, I would oft have gathered you as children to the fold of God; but you would not. You have rejected God, and now your house is desolate, and you shall see me not again till you can say, Thrice blessed is the son of man who comes as son of God. (Aquarian Gospel 156:1-23)

Then Jesus went and sat beside the treasury and watched the people as

they paid their tithes. The rich men came and gave of their abundance; and then he saw a poor but loyal widow come and put a farthing in the treasure box. And then he said to his disciples who were standing by, Behold, for this poor widow who has put a farthing in the treasury has done more than they all; for she has given all she had; the rich have given just a little share of what they have.

A company of Grecian Jews were at the feast, and they met Philip, who could talk with them, and said, Sir, we would see the Lord, this Jesus, who is called the Christ. And Philip led the way, and brought them to the Christ.

And Jesus said, The hour has come; the son of man is ready to be glorified, and it cannot be otherwise. Except a grain of wheat fall into earth and die it can be nothing but a grain of wheat; but if it die it lives again, and from its grave a hundred grains of wheat arise. My soul is troubled now; What shall I say? And then he cast his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, I would not ask to be relieved of all the burdens I must bear; I only ask for grace and strength to bear the burdens whatsoe'er they be, this is the hour for which I came to earth. O Father, glorify thy name!

And then the place was lighted with a light more brilliant than the noonday sun; the people stood a-back; they were afraid. And then a voice that seemed to come from heaven said, I have both glorified my name and yours, and I will honor them again. The people heard the voice, and some exclaimed, Behold, a distant thunder! Others said, An angel spoke to him. But Jesus said, This voice was not for me; it was for you, that you might know that I am come from God. Now is the judgment of the world at hand; the prince of darkness shall be manifest and go unto his own. The son of man will now be lifted up from earth, and he will draw all men unto himself.

The people said, The law declares that Christ abides forever more. How can you say, The son of man will now be lifted up? Who is the son of man?

And Jesus said to them, The light is shining now; walk in the light while you still have the light. The darkness comes; but he who walks in darkness cannot find the way. Again I say, Walk in the light while you still have the light, that men may know that you are sons of light.

And Jesus stood out in the temple porch, and made his last appeal unto the multitudes; he said, he who believes in me, believes in God who sent me forth to do his will, and he who sees me now beholds my Father-God. Behold, I came a light unto the world; he who believes in me shall walk in light, the light of life. You men who hear me now, If you believe me not, I judge you not. I am not come to judge the world, but I am come to save the world. God is the only judge of men; but what I speak will stand against you in the day when God will judge the world; for from myself I do not speak; I speak the words that God has given me to speak.

And then he said, Jerusalem, with all your glory and your crimes, Farewell. (Aquarian Gospel 156)

This is all very clear and sadly true.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Seven

Then Jesus with the twelve went forth and sat upon Mount Olives, just beyond the city's gate. And his disciples said, Behold the wondrous city of Jerusalem! its homes are all so beautiful! its temples and its shrines are clothed in such magnificence! And Jesus said, The city is the glory of my people, Israel, but, lo, the time will come when every stone will be cast down, and it will be a hiss and byword for the nations of the earth.

And the disciples asked, When will this desolation come? And Jesus said, This round of human life will not be full until the armies of the conqueror will thunder at her gates, and they will enter in, and blood will flow like water through the streets. And all the precious furnishings of the temple, court and palaces will be destroyed, or carried off to deck the palaces and courts of kings.

Behold, these days are not at hand. Before they come, lo, you shall be maltreated by the scribes and Pharisees, the high priests and the doctors of the law. Without a cause you will be haled into courts; you will be stoned; you will be beaten in the synagogues; will stand condemned before the rulers of this world, and governors and kings will sentence you to death. But you will falter not, and you will testify for truth and righteousness. And in these hours be anxious not about your speech; you need not think of what to say; for, lo, the Holy Breath will overshadow you and give you words to say. But then the carnage will go on, and men will think that they are pleasing God by killing you, and nations far and near will hate you for the sake of Christ. And men will stir up evil thought among your kin, and they will hate you and will give you up to die. And brothers will be false to brothers; fathers will stand forth and testify against their own, and children will drive parents to the funeral pile.

When you shall hear the Roman eagle screaming in the air, and see his legions streaming o'er the plain, then know the desolation of Jerusalem is near. Then let the wise wait not, but flee. Let him who is upon his house wait not to enter in the house to gather up his wealth, but let him flee. And he who labors in the field must not return, but leave his all to save his life. And woe to mothers with their little children in that day; none shall escape the sword. The tribulation of these days cannot be told in words, for such has never been since God created man upon the earth. The conqueror will carry many of the sons of Abraham away as captives into foreign lands, and they who know not Israel's God will tread the highways of Jerusalem until the anti-Jewish times have been fulfilled.

But when the people have been punished for their crimes, the tribulation days will end; but lo, the time will come when all the world will rise, like

gladiators in a ring, and fight just for the sake of shedding blood. And men will reason not; they will not see, nor care to see a cause for carnage, desolation, thefts; for they will war with friend or foe. The very air will seem surcharged with smoke of death; and pestilence will follow close upon the sword.

And signs that men have never seen will appear in heaven and earth; in sun, and moon, and stars. The seas will roar, and sounds will come from heaven that men can never comprehend, and these will bring distress of nations with perplexity. Hearts of the strongest men will faint in fear, in expectation of the coming of more frightful things upon the earth. (Aquarian Gospel 157:1-26)

Jesus certainly told the future of things, and we have been seeing the insanity of the nations manifesting as increasingly more devastating wars as well as multitudes of lesser wars throughout the world.

But while the conflicts rage on land and sea, the Prince of Peace will stand above the clouds of heaven and say again: Peace, peace on earth; good will to men; and every man will throw away his sword, and nations will learn war no more.

And then the man who bears the pitcher will walk forth across an arc of heaven; the sign and signet of the son of man will stand forth in the eastern sky. The wise will then lift up their heads and know that the redemption of the earth is near. (Aquarian Gospel 157:27-30)

The beginning of peace will come during the Aquarian Age which began in 2001. But we need not be too surprised if there is not a storm before the calm.

Before these days shall come, behold, false Christs and poor deluded prophets will arise in many lands. And they will show forth signs, and do a multitude of mighty works; and they will lead astray the many who are not wise; and many of the wise will be deceived.

And now I tell you once again, When men shall say, The Christ is in the wilderness, go you not forth. And if they say, The Christ is in the secret place, believe it not; for when he comes the world will know that he has come. For as the morning light comes from the east and shines unto the west; so shall be the coming of the age and son of man. The wicked of the earth will weep when they shall see the son of man come down upon the clouds of heaven, in power. (Aquarian Gospel 157:31-36)

I cannot speculate how this will all come about, but the wise will certainly ignore the prophets of every religion that are assuring us that their ultimate prophet or avatar is about to manifest. In India every two-cent prophet or avatar declares that either Satya Yuga has come or is about to come, even though they say we are presently in the Kali Yuga, which cannot possibly be followed by the Satya Yuga except after the Dwapara and Treta Yugas.

Take heed you, O take heed, for you know not the hour nor the day when comes the son of man. Let not your hearts be overcharged with sensuous things, nor with the cares of life, lest that day come and find you unprepared. Keep watch at every season of the year; and pray that you may meet the Lord with joy and not with grief.

Before these days shall come our Father-God will send his messengers abroad, yea, to the corners of the earth, and they will say. Prepare you, O prepare; the Prince of Peace shall come, and now is coming on the clouds of heaven.

When Jesus had thus said, he went with his disciples back to Bethany. (Aquarian Gospel 157:37-42)

In other words, after all the foregoing, the only answer is to cultivate our own spiritual evolution, become adept yogis and be ready for whatever comes.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Eight

The morning of the Wednesday of the week was come, and Jesus with the twelve went out to Olivet to pray; and they were lost in prayer for seven hours. Then Jesus called the twelve close to his side and said, This day the curtain parts and we will step beyond the veil into the secret courts of God. And Jesus opened up to them the meaning of the hidden way, and of the Holy Breath, and of the light that cannot fail. He told them all about the Book of Life, the Rolls of Graphael, the Book of God's Remembrance where all the thoughts and words of men are written down. He did not speak aloud to them; he told the secrets of the masters in an undertone, and when he spoke the name of God there was a silence in the courts of heaven for half an hour, for angels spoke with bated breath. And Jesus said, These things may not be spoken out aloud; they never may be written down; they are the messages of Silenceland; they are the Breathings of the inner heart of God. (Aquarian Gospel 158:1-6)

This day the curtain parts and we will step beyond the veil into the secret courts of God. The mind has many levels of consciousness that may be thought of as rooms that are divided from the other rooms by heavy veils. Only when the energies and states appropriate to a room have been fully perceived or mastered can the individual consciousness move beyond the veil into the next room. There a higher level of consciousness and power is encountered, and there, too, lessons must be learned and insights gained before the next veil can be moved aside and the further room entered.

This is not a matter of teaching or learning, but of expansion of consciousness achieved through evolution of the energy systems of the individual. The changes and perceptions do not come from without, but from within. A true teacher does not expound philosophies or metaphysics, but rather instructs the student in the methods of self-development by which he opens the inner treasury of spirit-consciousness. Instruction is needed, but it means absolutely nothing without the requisite application through diligent practice. No matter how great the teacher, the disciple must become as great and greater as he moves onward through veil after veil until he steps beyond either rooms or veils into the realm of the Absolute from which he came and to which he now returns.

Jesus is now going to open to the chosen twelve that which heretofore has been unknown territory to them: the secret courts of God.

And Jesus opened up to them the meaning of the hidden way, and of the Holy Breath, and of the light that cannot fail. The hidden way is the inner way, the way of opening and expanding consciousness through meditation. Solomon speaks of "the secret places of the stairs" (Song of Solomon 2:14). These are stages along the ascent to God. The power which enables the yogi to attain the heights of spirit consciousness is

the Holy Spirit, the *Agia Pneuma*, which literally means “the Holy Breath” as is found in the Aquarian Gospel. How to access that divine transforming power is the purpose of yoga. The light that cannot fail is the light of the spirit, both the individual spirit, the *jivatman*, and the supreme, universal Spirit, the *Paramatman*. This light shines forever and cannot be diminished or extinguished. This is our true nature, our true Self.

He told them all about the Book of Life, the Rolls of Graphael, the Book of God's Remembrance where all the thoughts and words of men are written down. The universe is formed of intelligent Consciousness, the Consciousness that is God. Since God is eternal, so is the universe, and that implies that nothing is lost at any time, that all which takes place in creation is impressed forever in the etheric levels known as the akashic records. It of course is not a literal book nor material scrolls, but living consciousness itself, a Cosmic Memory. It is this which Levi Dowling accessed to discover the truth life and teachings of Jesus that he might pass them on to us. This was a lifetime endeavor because he first had to develop the ability to tune into those records and then be able to determine what in this infinite “library” He would “read.” It was only at the very end years of his life that he managed this perfectly and left us this most precious heritage in which aspirants were able to behold the true face of Jesus and find his true words of wisdom. Besides Dowling, only Paramhansa Yogananda later in the twentieth century gave to the world the authentic teaching of Jesus the Christ.

He did not speak aloud to them; he told the secrets of the masters in an undertone, and when he spoke the name of God there was a silence in the courts of heaven for half an hour, for angels spoke with bated breath. Whether Jesus spoke in a quiet voice or this means that he communicated with the disciples through an inner voice, we do not know. But that the wisdom of the masters of spiritual life of all ages was imparted by him, of that we can be sure. And when he spoke to them the Name of God, they entered into the divine silence that is the nature of spirit-consciousness itself, the Silent Word that is the inmost treasure of the yogi.

And Jesus said, These things may not be spoken out aloud; they never may be written down; they are the messages of Silenceland; they are the Breathings of the inner heart of God. It is not that these sacred things are secret like the secrets of earthly minds. Rather, that they are knowledge beyond words, movements of consciousness that can only be known by those who experience them directly. The light and power of the Holy Spirit has two modes: sound and silence. Through the sound we reach the silent communications that “are the Breathings of the inner heart of God.” Only adept yogis understand these words of Jesus, the Great Yogi. Yogananda coined the term “Yogi-Christ” in reference to perfectly liberated Masters, among which Krishna, Buddha and Jesus were numbered. Yoga is the path to Christhood.

And then the master taught the twelve the lessons they should teach to other men. He sometimes taught in parables; he said, You call to mind the words of yesterday about the coming of the son of man. Now, you shall teach

to other men what I have spoken and am speaking unto you; teach them to pray and not to faint; to be prepared at every moment of the day, for when they least expect him, then the Lord will come. (Aquarian Gospel 158:7-9)

The major difficulty the yogi must overcome is the tendency to eventually fade away ("faint"). Every yogi I have known began by being fervent in spirit, dedicated and rejoicing in the unfoldment of their awareness through their diligent practice. But after a while, earlier for some and later for others, nearly all of them began to cool off, to become matter-of-fact in their attitude, rote in practice and finally to slack off increasingly. Oh, most kept their paraphernalia and claimed to be yogis and would say the right words if required, but the melody had ended. Increasingly they turned back to the ways of the world they had left behind and became again what they were before yoga, though without admitting it. At the end of their life, as Omar Khayyam said, they left through the same door they entered. To them Jesus says in the book of Revelation: "Thou hast left thy first love" (Revelation 2:4).

The yogi must be vigilant, on guard against that which would deflect him from the path, and intent on the continuing dawn of consciousness that has begun in him. Everyone experiences moments of power that can change the direction of their life. This happens in every department of human life, including the spiritual life. Therefore we must be always on the watch, seize those moments and shape our life accordingly. The advent of God-consciousness comes in a split second. Only the watchful and quick are able to catch onto it and rise through it into a higher level of evolution and consciousness. There are many such fleeting events and only the devoted and watchful can take advantage of them. These are moments when eternity opens to the individual. Only those who immediately step into those eternal moments will succeed in spiritual life. Often failure to grasp one such moment results in a lifetime of failure.

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13:32-33, 37). Spiritual life is the most serious and demanding endeavor of which a human being is capable. This we must realize and act accordingly.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matthew 13:44-46).

A man went to a distant land and left his house and all his wealth in care of servants; five to guard his house and five to guard his barns and herds. The servants waited long for his return, but he came not, and they grew careless in their work; some spent their time in revellings and drunkenness, and some slept at their posts. And night by night the robbers came and carried off the

wealth from house and barn, and drove away the choicest of the herds. And when they knew that much of all the wealth that they were left to guard had been purloined, they said, We cannot be to blame; if we had known the day and hour when our Lord would come again we would have guarded well his wealth, and suffered not the thieves to carry it away; he surely is at fault because he told us not.

But after many days the Lord returned, and when he knew that thieves had robbed him of his wealth, he called his servants and he said to them, Because you have neglected what was given you to do, have spent your time in revellings and sleep, behold you all are debtors unto me. What I have lost by your neglect, you owe to me. And then he gave them heavy tasks to do, and bound them to their posts with chains, where they remained till they had paid for all the goods their Lord had lost through their neglect.

Another man locked up his wealth and went to sleep, and in the night time robbers came, unlocked his doors, and when they saw no guard, they entered in and carried off his wealth. And when the man awoke and found his doors ajar and all his treasures gone, he said, If I had known the hour when the thieves would come I would have been on guard. Beware, my friends, beware! and be prepared at every hour, and if your Lord shall come at midnight or at dawn, it matters not, for he will find you ready to receive. (Aquarian Gospel 158:10-20)

This continues the theme of being on guard and vigilant. But this is not about watching for the Lord, but of watching so thieves will not steal what we have. For carelessness and wrong actions rob us of all spiritual merit and growth. We must be watching for the coming of God because we want to be with him, and we must also be watching for the approach of evil so we can avoid it or drive it away.

A man went to a distant land and left his house and all his wealth in care of servants; five to guard his house and five to guard his barns and herds. The servants waited long for his return, but he came not, and they grew careless in their work; some spent their time in revellings and drunkenness, and some slept at their posts. And night by night the robbers came and carried off the wealth from house and barn, and drove away the choicest of the herds. We have five outer senses and five inner senses so we can watch over our external life and our internal life. Both our material and our spiritual life must be dedicated to purification and growth in conformity with the will and plan of God. But if our inner and outer powers are not used aright, we will suffer great loss and be guilty of laxity. It will not happen all at once, but gradually the thieves of wrong thoughts, words and deeds will carry away whatever good we may have and leave us spiritually empty and poor.

And then he gave them heavy tasks to do, and bound them to their posts with chains, where they remained till they had paid for all the goods their Lord had lost through their neglect. God is merciful and will not condemn us to eternal darkness or pain, but we will have to reap the negative spiritual karma we created through indifference, laziness and transgression. Bound to the round of birth and death, of reincarnation, we will have

to pay our karmic debts. We must regain what we lost, and that will be to our benefit. For God loves us with an eternal love and wants us to be revealed as his eternal children and to live with him, one with him forever.

And then, behold, a marriage was announced, and virgins, ten of them, were set apart to meet the bridegroom when he came. The virgins clothed themselves in proper garbs, and took their lamps and sat in waiting for the watch to say, Behold, the bridegroom comes! Now, five were wise; they filled their lamps with oil; and five were foolish, for they carried empty lamps. The groom came not at the expected time; the virgins were a-weary with their watch and slept. At midnight came the cry, Behold, the bridegroom comes! The virgins rose; the wise ones quickly trimmed their lamps and went forth ready to receive the groom. The foolish virgins said, We have no oil, our lamps burn not. They sought to borrow from the wise, who said, We have no oil to spare; Go to the merchant men and buy and fill your lamps and then come forth to meet the groom. But while they went to purchase oil, the bridegroom came; the virgins who were ready with their lamps all trimmed went with him to the marriage feast. And when the foolish virgins came the door was shut, and though they knocked and called aloud, the door was opened not. The master of the feast exclaimed, I know you not! and in disgrace the virgins went their way. (Aquarian Gospel 158:21-31)

Once more we have the two themes: be watchful and ready for the coming of higher consciousness and life, and do not neglect the spiritual life. The lamps the young women had represent the outer life which must be kept clean and ready for use. But we are not just bodies, we are spirits. In fact, the bodies continually fall away from us, but our nature as spirit remains. Therefore the foolish only have an external religion of outer observance. The wise also purify their their outer life and conform it to divine laws, but they also have an inner, spiritual life symbolized by the oil. They have awakened spiritual consciousness and experience. Therefore they will not be strangers to God on the day when they leave their bodies and rise to the spiritual world. They will be received with rejoicing“into everlasting habitations” (Luke 16:9). But the foolish will be turned back to this world to be born over and over until they cultivate spiritual consciousness in themselves. Then they, too, will be wise and join the wise in the higher worlds.

Again I say to you, and you shall say to them who follow you, Be ready every moment of the day and night, because when you expect him not, the Lord will come. Behold, when he will come with all his messengers of light, the Book of Life, and that of Records, shall be opened up—the books in which the thoughts and words and deeds are written down. And every one can read the records he has written for himself, and he will know his doom before the judge shall speak, and this will be the sifting time. According to their records men will find their own. (Aquarian Gospel 158:32-36)

This is an explanation of the real “judgment” which we experience at the end of every life. And the message is simple: Be Ready.

The judge is Righteousness, the king of all the earth, and he will separate the multitudes as shepherds separate the sheep and goats. The sheep will find their places on the right, the goats upon the left, and every man will know his place. And then the judge will say, to those upon the right, You blessed of the Father-God, come unto your inheritance, which was prepared for you from times of old. You have been servants of the race; and I was hungry and you gave me bread; was thirsty and you gave me drink; was naked and you gave me clothes; was sick, you ministered to me; and was in prison and you came to me with words of cheer; I was a stranger and in your homes I found a home. Then will the righteous say, When did we see you hungry, thirsty, sick, imprisoned or a stranger at our gates and ministered to you? And then the judge will say, You served the sons of men, and whatsoever you have done for these, that you have done for me.

The judge will say to those upon the left, Depart from me; you have not served the sons of men. I was hungry and you gave me naught to eat; was thirsty and you gave me naught to drink; I was a stranger and you drove me from your door; I was imprisoned and was sick, you did not minister to me. Then these will say, When did we thus neglect to care for you? When did we see you hungry, thirsty, sick, a stranger or in prison and did not minister to you? And then the judge will say, Your life was full of self; you served the self and not your fellow man, and when you slighted one of these, you slighted and neglected me.

Then will the righteous have the kingdom and the power, and they who are unrighteous shall go forth to pay their debts, to suffer all that men have suffered at their hands. (Aquarian Gospel 158:37-48)

Here again we see that there is no condemnation or damnation, but rather the necessity to reap negative karma and wisely accrue positive karma so we will be placed on the right hand of God and Christ.

They who have ears to hear and hearts to understand will comprehend these parables.

When he had finished all these parables he said, You know that in two days the great Passover feast will come, and lo, the son of man will be betrayed into the hands of wicked men. And he will give his life upon the cross, and men will know that he, the son of man, is son of God. Then Jesus and the twelve returned to Bethany. (Aquarian Gospel 158:49-52)

The “ears to hear and hearts to understand” are in our inner bodies, in our souls. If they are opened then we will comprehend all the mysteries of God and his Christ. Yoga is the way of opening, the way into the everlasting kingdom.

Chapter One Hundred Fifty-Nine

Bar-Simon, who was once a leper and was cleansed by Jesus by the sacred Word, abode in Bethany. In honor of the Christine Lord he gave a feast, and Lazarus was among the guests, and Ruth and Martha served.

And as the guests reclined about the table, Mary took a cruse of rich perfume and poured it out on Jesus' head and feet. And then she knelt and with her hair she wiped his feet; the odor of the rich perfume filled all the room.

Now, Judas, always looking at the selfish side of life, exclaimed, For shame! why did you waste that costly perfume thus? We might have sold it for three hundred pence, and had the money to supply our wants and feed the poor. (Now, Judas was the treasurer, and carried all the money of the Christine band.)

And others said, Why, Mary, what a profligate you are! You should not throw such wealth away. (Aquarian Gospel 159:1-8)

The world always begrudges anything offered to God. Worldlings that live in personal luxury become indignant when money is spent on places of worship or anything that deals with spiritual life. But the loudest complaints are about those who dedicate themselves to God in monastic life. "What a waste!" they shout, as they throw their own precious life away in selfish pursuit of emptiness. It is true: you cannot take wealth and possessions with you at the time of death. But I assure you, you can take every "penny" of the spiritual wealth you have accumulated through spiritual practice, discipline, dedication and sacrifice. Make the wise choice: invest in your divine spirit, and divine illumination will be the interest you receive abundantly.

But Jesus said, You men, be still; let her alone; you know not what you say. The poor are with you constantly; at any time you can administer to them; but I will not be with you long. And Mary knows the sadness of the coming days; she has anointed me beforehand for my burial. The gospel of the Christ will everywhere be preached, and he who tells the story of the Christ will tell about this day; and what was done by Mary at this hour will be a sweet memorial to her wherever men abide. And when the feast was over Jesus went with Lazarus to his home. (Aquarian Gospel 159:9-13)

Jesus' prophecy about the everlasting remembrance of Mary's love and sacrifice has certainly come true. At my paternal grandmother's funeral the minister read Saint Mark's account of this incident and preached on Jesus' words: "She hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8).

Now, in Jerusalem the priests and Pharisees were busy with their plans to

seize the Lord and take his life.

The high priest called in counsel all the wisest men and said, This deed must be accomplished in a secret way. He must be taken when the multitudes are not a-near, else we may cause a war; the common people may stand forth in his defense and thus pollute this sacred place with human blood. And what we do, that we must do before the great day of the feast.

And Ananias said, I have a plan that will succeed. The twelve with Jesus every day go forth alone to pray; and we will find their trysting place; then we can seize the man and bring him here without the knowledge of the multitudes. I know one of the twelve, a man who worships wealth, and for a sum I think that he will lead the way to where the man is wont to pray.

And then Caiaphas said, If you will lead the way and bribe the man of whom you speak, to aid in seizing Jesus in a secret place, then we will give to you a hundred silver pieces for your hire.

And Ananias said, 'Tis well. (Aquarian Gospel 159:14-22)

How astonishing this is! They are going to stain their souls with the sin of murder, and not murder of an ordinary man but of the Christ, the Messiah of the Lord. Yet the high priest says: "The common people may stand forth in his defense and thus pollute this sacred place with human blood." Here we see the mental and spiritual devastation worked by externalized, exoteric religion.

Judas the betrayer is rightly characterized by Ananias as "a man who worships wealth." All those who worship materiality (mammon) betray their own inner Christ, selling their divine birthright for perishable gain that death will wrench from them forever.

And then he went to Bethany and found the twelve at Simon's house and, calling Judas to the side he said, If you would care to make a sum of money for yourself, hear me: The high priest and other rulers in Jerusalem would like to talk with Jesus when alone, that they may know about his claims; and if he proves himself to be the Christ, lo, they will stand in his defense. Now, if you will but lead the way to where your master is tomorrow night that they may send a priest to talk with him alone, there is a sum of silver, thirty pieces, that the priests will give to you:

And Judas reasoned with himself; he said, It surely may be well to give the Lord a chance to tell the priests about his claims when he is all alone. And if the priests would do him harm he has the power to disappear and go his way as he has done before; and thirty pieces is a goodly sum. And so he said to Ananias, I will lead the way, and by a kiss make known which person is the Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 159:23-30)

This shameful picture needs no comment, just a serious asking of ourselves if we, too, betray through such specious reasoning, through such willing gullibility. We need to ask ourselves the question Jesus put to Judas: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48).

Chapter One Hundred Sixty

On Thursday morning Jesus called to him the twelve disciples, and he said to them, This is God's remembrance day, and we will eat the paschal supper all alone.

And then he said to Peter, James and John, Go now into Jerusalem and there prepare the pasch. And the disciples said, Where would you have us go to find the place where we may have the feast prepared? And Jesus said, Go by the fountain gate and you will see a man who has a pitcher in his hand. Speak unto him and say: This is the first day of unleavened bread; the Lord would have you set apart your banquet hall where he may eat his last Passover with the twelve. Fear not to speak; the man whom you will see is Nicodemus, ruler of the Jews, and yet a man of God. And the disciples went and found the man as Jesus said, and Nicodemus hastened to his home; the banquet hall, an upper room, was set apart, the supper was prepared.

Now, in the afternoon the Lord and his disciples went up to Jerusalem and found the feast in readiness. And when the hour had come to eat the feast, the twelve began to strive among themselves, each anxious to secure the honored seats. And Jesus said, My friends, would you contend for self just as the shadow of this night of gloom comes on? There is no honored seat at heaven's feast except for him who humbly takes the lowest seat.

And then the Lord arose and took a basin full of water and a towel, and bowing down, he washed the feet of all the twelve and dried them with the towel. He breathed upon them and he said, And may these feet walk in the ways of righteousness forevermore.

He came to Peter and was about to wash his feet, and Peter said, Lord, would you wash my feet? And Jesus said, You do not comprehend the meaning of the thing I do, but you will comprehend. And Peter said, My master, no, you shall not stoop to wash my feet. And Jesus said, My friend, if I wash not your feet you have no part with me. And Peter said, Then, O my Lord, wash both my feet, my hands, my head. And Jesus said to him, he who has taken first his bath is clean, and has no need to wash, except his feet. The feet are truly symbols of the understanding of the man, and he who would be clean must, in the living stream of life, wash well his understanding every day.

Then Jesus sat with his disciples at the table of the feast and said, Behold the lesson of the hour: You call me master; such I am. If, then, your Lord and master kneel and wash your feet, should you not wash each other's feet and thus show forth your willingness to serve? You know these things, and if you do them, blessed thrice are you. (Aquarian Gospel 160:1-23)

There is no honored seat at heaven's feast except for him who humbly takes the lowest seat.

God is the most perfectly humble being. See how he does all things for all sentient beings, yet remains invisible to them most of the time. Indifference and ingratitude are the payment he receives from human beings for his loving providence, yet he continues his care for them. He gives all to those who have nothing to give in return. He wishes nothing for them but their freedom. Therefore in the kingdom of heaven the highest place is given to those who are perfected in humility.

For many years in church I often sang the song:

If thou wouldst have the dear Savior from heaven
Walk by thy side from the morn till the even,
There is a rule that each day you must follow:
Humble thyself to walk with God.

Just as the Lord, in the world's early ages,
Walked and communed with the prophets and sages,
He will come now if you meet the conditions:
Humble thyself to walk with God.

Just as the stream finds a bed that is lowly,
So Jesus walks with the pure and the holy;
Cast out thy pride, and in heartfelt contrition
Humble thyself to walk with God.

Humble thyself and the Lord will draw near thee,
Humble thyself and his presence shall cheer thee;
He will not walk with the proud or the scornful,
Humble thyself to walk with God.

He breathed upon them and he said, And may these feet walk in the ways of righteousness forevermore. Breathing upon something is way an adept can infuse it with power. So Jesus breathed upon the apostles' feet he had washed and bestowed on them the destiny and power to "walk in the way of righteousness forevermore."

And Jesus said, You do not comprehend the meaning of the thing I do, but you will comprehend. This is an important lesson for an aspirant, especially a yogi, to learn. True religion comes from the highest realms of consciousness, and can seem totally pointless and even foolish if not insane to those in the grip of worldly ignorance. Yet if a person perseveres in practice and observance, in time he will benefit and come to understand the purpose of what before was incomprehensible to him. The same applies to advice given by spiritually advanced people. More than once I was told to do something I thought completely silly, but when I did as directed, great understanding came to me. Please do not think I am advocating mindless and unquestioning obedience, but it must be realized that often wisdom appears foolish to those who themselves lack wisdom.

Practice of meditation can seem very silly and worthless when first presented to someone. As I have told you previously, the first time I learned a meditation technique I was so disgusted at what seemed its silliness that I considered walking out of the class. I had been cheated! But fortunately the teacher said right then: "Now sit and do it for a while." I did, and found it astoundingly effective. When after sufficient practice of that method I was instructed in a much more powerful and elaborate practice I laughed and thought: "God must have a great sense of humor. Imagine that such a strange process could help in realizing God!" But when I did it the first time I thought I would fly up and bounce off the ceiling.

The feet are truly symbols of the understanding of the man, and he who would be clean must, in the living stream of life, wash well his understanding every day. Meditation is the daily purification of the mind and heart that will keep them ready to receive divine wisdom through intuition.

You know these things, and if you do them, blessed thrice are you. Blessing of body, mind and soul come to those who learn and apply the wisdom of the saints and master yogis.

And then he said, This is an hour when I can truly praise the name of God, for I have greatly wished to eat with you this feast before I pass the veil; for I will eat it not again until anew I eat it with you in the kingdom of our Father-God. And then they sang the Hebrew song of praise that Jews were wont to sing before the feast.

And then they ate the pasch and as they ate, the master said, Behold, for one of you will turn away this night and will betray me into wicked hands. And the disciples were amazed at what he said; they looked into each other's face in wonderment; they all exclaimed, Lord, is it I?

And Peter said to John, who sat beside the Lord, To whom does he refer? And John put forth his hand and touched the master's hand and said, Which one of us is so depraved as to betray his Lord?

And Judas said, Lord, is it I? And Jesus said, he is the one who now has put his hand with mine into the dish. They looked, and Judas' hand was with the hand of Jesus in the dish. And Jesus said, The Prophets cannot fail; the son of man must be betrayed, but woe to him who shall betray his Lord.

And from the table Judas rose at once; his hour had come. And Jesus said to him, Do quickly what you are to do. And Judas went his way. (Aquarian Gospel 160:24-35)

Here we see that all things were known to Jesus and that he revealed them to his disciples so it would be understood that nothing was fate or misfortune, but the divine will and plan.

And when the pasch was done the Lord with the eleven sat a while in silent thought. Then Jesus took a loaf of bread that had been broken not and said, This loaf is symbol of my body, and the bread is symbol of the bread of

life; and as I break this loaf, so shall my flesh be broken as a pattern for the sons of men; for men must freely give their bodies up in willing sacrifice for other men. And as you eat this bread, so shall you eat the bread of life, and never die. And then he gave to each a piece of bread to eat.

And then he took a cup of wine and said, Blood is the life, this is the life-blood of the grape; it is the symbol of the life of him who gives his life for men. And as you drink this wine, if you shall drink in faith, you drink the life of Christ.

And then he supped and passed the cup, and the disciples supped; and Jesus said, This is the feast of life, the great Passover of the son of man, the Supper of the Lord, and you shall often eat the bread and drink the wine. From henceforth shall this bread be called Remembrance bread; this wine shall be Remembrance wine; and when you eat this bread and drink this wine remember me. (Aquarian Gospel 160:36-43)

There are many interpretations of this sacred action. There is abundant evidence that in the churches possessing unbroken apostolic succession the bread and wine are transformed and transfused with the consciousness of Christ that manifested as his immaculate body and blood. (See *The Yoga of the Sacraments*.) Turning aside from the arguments and theories set forth by both believers and unbelievers, the wise simply partake of that consciousness and are enlivened by it.

Those not in churches of the apostolic succession have experienced that those obeying the command of Jesus and partaking of the elements that symbolize his body and blood also receive an inward spiritual vivification beyond rational understanding.

Both are constrained to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37).

Chapter One Hundred Sixty One

Now, after Judas had gone forth to meet the emissaries of the priests and to betray his Lord, The master said, The hour has come, the son of man will now be glorified. My little children, I am with you yet a little while; soon you will seek me and will find me not, for where I go you cannot come.

I give to you a new command: As I love you and give my life for you, so shall you love the world, and give your life to save the world. Love one another as you love yourselves, and then the world will know that you are sons of God, disciples of the son of man whom God has glorified. (Aquarian Gospel 161:1-5)

As I love you and give my life for you, so shall you love the world, and give your life to save the world. This is a much wider perspective than is given in the canonical gospels, so much so that this is a completely different commandment altogether. Perhaps only in *At the Feet of the Master* and the writings of C. W. Leadbeater can we find this advocated. The true disciples of Jesus do not just love one another: they love the world and dedicate their lives to its salvation. We may not know anyone that attempts this ideal, but that is all the more reason that we should.

Love one another as you love yourselves, and then the world will know that you are sons of God, disciples of the son of man whom God has glorified. We are to feel that others are as much a part of our very existence as we are ourselves, and to love and value them accordingly. Considering the ways of human beings this is completely impossible unless we carefully cultivate the Mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16) by our attempt to attain Christ Consciousness through meditation. For to have such love is a trait of the Sons of God, of those who have followed Jesus Christ unto their own Christhood.

And Peter said, Lord, where you go there I will go, for I would lay my life down for my Lord. And Jesus said, Boast not of bravery, my friend; you are not strong enough tonight to follow me. Now, Peter, hear! you will deny me thrice before the cock shall crow tomorrow morn.

And then he looked upon the eleven and said, You all will be estranged from me this night. The prophet said, Lo, he will smite the shepherd of the sheep; the sheep will flee and hide away. But after I am risen from the dead, lo, you will come again, and I will go before you into Galilee.

And Peter said, My Lord, though every other man forsake you I will not. And Jesus said, O Simon Peter, lo, your zeal is greater than your fortitude! Behold, for Satan cometh up to sift you as a pan of wheat, but I have prayed that in your faith you shall not fail; that after trial you may stand a tower of strength.

And the disciples all exclaimed, There is no power on earth that can estrange, or cause us to deny our Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 161:6-14)

The great error here is the ego-based refusal of the disciples to not believe Jesus. How could they believe that he did not know their future? If they had believed him and begged him to help them to not fail in loyalty and courage he surely would have done so, and their story would have been very different. For each one of them died a martyr's death except for Saint John who boldly went with Jesus to his trial and the crucifixion, although he was well-known to the high priest and other officials as a disciple of Jesus (John 18:15). By his steadfastness we know that he must have taken refuge in Jesus and not insisted on his own strength to keep him from forsaking the Lord.

And Jesus said, Let not your hearts be sad; you all believe in God; believe in me. Behold, for there are many mansions in my Fatherland. If there were not I would have told you so. I will go unto my Fatherland, and I will prepare a place for you that where I am there you may be. But now you do not know the way unto my Fatherland.

And Thomas said, We do not know where you intend to go; how could we know the way? And Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, the life; I manifest the Christ of God. No man can reach my Fatherland except he comes with me through Christ. If you had known and comprehended me, then you would know my Father-God.

And Philip said, Show us the Father and we will be satisfied. And Jesus said, Have I been with you all these years and still you know me not? He who has seen the son has seen the Father, for in the son the Father has revealed himself.

Lo, I have told you many times that what I speak and what I do are not the words and works of man; they are the words of God, who lives in me and I in him. Hear me, you faithful men: he who believes in me and in my Father-God shall say and do what I have said and done. Yea, more, he shall do greater works than I have ever done, because I go to him whose works we do, and then I can reach forth my hand in helpfulness. And in my name, through Christ, you may petition God and he will grant you your request. Do you believe what I have said? Yes, you believe, and if you love the Christ and follow me then you will keep my words.

I am the vine; you are the branches of the vine; my Father is the husbandmen. The branches that are worthless, bearing naught but leaves, the husbandmen will cut away and cast into the fire to be burned. And he will prune the branches that bear fruit that they may yield abundantly. The branch cannot bear fruit if separated from the vine; and you cannot bear fruit when separate from me. Abide in me, and do the works that God, through me, has taught you how to do, and you will bear much fruit, and God will honor you as he has honored me.

And now I go my way, but I will pray my Father-God and he will send another Comforter to you, who will abide with you. Behold, this Comforter of God, the Holy Breath, is one with God, but she is one the world cannot receive because it sees her not; it knows her not. But you know her, and will know her, because she will abide within your soul.

I will not leave you desolate, but in the Christ, which is the love of God made manifest to men, I will be with you all the way. (Aquarian Gospel 161:15-38)

I will go unto my Fatherland, and I will prepare a place for you that where I am there you may be. In Saint John's gospel Jesus tells his disciples: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

I am the way, the truth, the life; I manifest the Christ of God. No man can reach my Fatherland except he comes with me through Christ. This should be carefully read and understood very literally, for it is not the same as what we read in the Biblical gospels. Here Jesus tells us that since the Christ of God, the Only Begotten Son or Ishwara, is manifesting through him, those who go with him by following the same path that Jesus did to unite with the Christ, will reach the world he has prepared for his disciples and come to know the Father.

He who has seen the son has seen the Father, for in the son the Father has revealed himself. God has revealed himself through Jesus. That is how in seeing Jesus the Father could be seen, not that Jesus himself is the Father. Our President appoints ambassadors, and they represent him, but they are not him. It is the same with those who know God: God is revealed in them, but they are not God. They are the perfected Sons of God.

Lo, I have told you many times that what I speak and what I do are not the words and works of man; they are the words of God, who lives in me and I in him. Those who accept Jesus and his words and his works, are accepting God and his words and his works, for they all originate in God Consciousness. Not that Jesus is possessed by God like a medium is with a spirit, but that Jesus lives in God and is so perfectly one with God that whatever God wills, he wills, and therefore whatever God does, Jesus does.

Hear me, you faithful men: he who believes in me and in my Father-God shall say and do what I have said and done. Yea, more, he shall do greater works than I have ever done, because I go to him whose works we do, and then I can reach forth my hand in helpfulness. Christians are meant to become Christs, just as did Jesus. And they shall do even greater things in this new age of Aquarius, because humanity in general is more capable of receiving both the words and works of God than at the time of Jesus. And they, too, shall be the works of Jesus who, dwelling in God, assists us now.

And in my name, through Christ, you may petition God and he will grant you your request. Do you believe what I have said? Yes, you believe, and if you love the Christ and follow me then you will keep my words. In the Aquarian Gospel we find the correct distinction made between Jesus and the Christ. It is the mistaken identification of Jesus with the

Christ that has resulted in the utterly erroneous Christology and Soteriology of Eastern and Western Christianity, both their definition of Jesus/Christ and of the means of salvation brought by Jesus.

If a person unites himself with Christ, then when he invokes the Name of Jesus, God will grant his petition. If the consciousness of the invoker is not one with Christ, and therefore one with Jesus, then his prayer will be “unheard.” We must love Christ, who is God, and follow Jesus, our perfect example in becoming ourselves Christ. Christ is God (Ishwara, the personal aspect of God), and Jesus is Man Made God Through Christ.

I will not leave you desolate, but in the Christ, which is the love of God made manifest to men, I will be with you all the way. The purpose of Jesus is to lead us to union with Christ in the attainment of divine sonship, of Christhood, and then to union with God the Father. All this is done through the patronage of Jesus the Master. Again we should remember that the Father is the transcendent, impersonal Reality and Christ is the immanent, personal Reality, Ishwara the Lord. And the two are really One. It is impossible to understand the Trinity or the Incarnation (Avatara) without knowing the truths of Sanatana Dharma. The “Christian” understanding of the Trinity and the Incarnation is a hopeless mess, a literal “dog’s dinner.” Without the Light of India the whole world stumbles in darkness. Jesus was a teacher of that Light, and no one can be his disciple who does not live and move in that Light.

I believe in Sanatana Dharma because I believe in Jesus; and I believe in Jesus because I believe in Sanatana Dharma. The two are inseparable.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Two

Now, John was deeply grieved because the master said, I go away, and where I go you cannot come. He wept and said, Lord, I would go with you through every trial and to death. And Jesus said, And you shall follow me through trials and through death; but now you cannot go where I will go; but you shall come. (Aquarian Gospel 162:1-3)

Jesus tells John that he will go with him through his trials and death, but he cannot go further, unto the very throne of the Father in the Highest heaven, at this time, but that he shall in time go the very path that Jesus will traverse before him.

And Jesus spoke again unto the eleven and said, Grieve not because I go away, for it is best that I should go away. If I go not the Comforter will not come to you. These things I speak while with you in the flesh, but when the Holy Breath shall come in power, lo, she will teach you more and more, and bring to your remembrance all the words that I have said to you. There are a multitude of things yet to be said; things that this age cannot receive, because it cannot comprehend.

But, lo, I say, Before the great day of the Lord shall come, the Holy Breath will make all mysteries known—the mysteries of the soul, of life, of death, of immortality; the oneness of a man with every other man and with his God. Then will the world be led to truth, and man will be the truth.

When she has come, the Comforter, she will convince the world of sin, and of the truth of what I speak, and of the judgement of the just; and then the prince of carnal life will be cast out.

And when the Comforter shall come I need not intercede for you; for you will stand approved, and God will know you then as he knows me. (Aquarian Gospel 162:4-11)

When the Holy Breath shall come in power, lo, she will teach you more and more, and bring to your remembrance all the words that I have said to you. The Holy Spirit Mother, the very fabric of the cosmos which is the “womb” in which all spirits are making their way back to God, contains within herself all things and therefore quite naturally can reveal all things. She is herself the power that transforms men into gods. She is Vidya Shakti, the Power of Knowledge, Omniscience itself.

The Father and the Son (Christ) are modes of Consciousness which observe and direct the evolutionary process, but it is the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit, who initiates and accomplishes all things. She is not a servant of the Father and Christ, she is one with them, the completion of the Trinity known as Satchidananda. When Consciousness is still, we call it Spirit; and when Consciousness moves we call it Power or Energy. But Consciousness is One. Therefore the Trinity is also Unity. There are not three Gods, but the One God in three modes of relating to the spirits

that exist eternally within God. So the Holy Breath is God become dynamic in order to empower our physical, astral and causal bodies in the process of evolution. (Again, without the insight of the Indian sages we could not possibly grasp these basic facts.) She is particularly the empowerer of the yogis. She is the Giver of Life and Life Itself. This is why in all viable spiritual traditions those who attain enlightenment do so through intense involvement with the Mother. The Father and Christ may be the goal, but the Mother is the path without which none can reach them, without which none can know them.

There are a multitude of things yet to be said; things that this age cannot receive, because it cannot comprehend. The general consciousness of the human race rises and falls as it passes through various stages. In India these stages are the yugas.

In the West it is considered that there are two-thousand-year cycles that are named according to the astrological signs whose characteristics dominate during them. Jesus was born at the beginning of the Piscean Age which lasted for two thousand years. We have now just entered the Aquarian Age which began around the year two thousand. (Human calculations are not absolutely precise, so some leeway must always be given when considering these Ages.)

In the Piscean Age, the highest spiritual faculties of the general population were very inward-turned and psychic. Consequently people could only understand things in that context. In the Aquarian Age (and the century of transition that preceded it), consciousness has become increasingly outward-turned and broadened in scope to embrace the entire world and even the universe itself. Global thinking is common, something impossible in the Piscean age. Government is taking on a character unthought of in the previous age, and society is in complete flux as the new form begins to emerge. Human beings are directing their lives in ways impossible under the aegis of Pisces.

The liberating science of yoga has become a factor in the life of people in every nation. This was predicted to me by a Rosicrucian astrologer in January of 1962 as the great gathering of planets in the sign of Aquarius was approaching. "Right now, we yogis are few and considered freaks; but in time 'yoga' and 'guru' will become household words. Vegetarianism which is also now considered freakish will spread throughout the world as new discoveries in nutrition are made public along with new vegetable sources of food that will replace animal sources." And so it has proved to be.

But the most important thing is the opening of the Western mind to the spiritual wisdom of the East. Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism flourish in places they would have been bitterly opposed and persecuted a short time before. In my own home town where a few decades ago Christian Scientists and members of Unity were almost lynched on occasion, there are now three Buddhist meditation centers, one Hindu temple and about six yoga centers.

In this Aquarian Gospel, Jesus says: "Man is not far enough advanced in sacred thought to comprehend the Universal Church, and so the work that God has given me to do is not the building of that Church. I am a model maker, sent to make a

pattern of the Church that is to be—a pattern that the age may comprehend.

“My task as model builder lies within my native land, and there, upon the postulate that Love is son of God, that I am come to manifest that Love, the Model Church will stand. And from the men of low estate I will select twelve men, who represent the twelve immortal thoughts; and these will be the Model Church.

“The house of Judah, my own kindred in the flesh, will comprehend but little of my mission to the world. And they will spurn me, scorn my work, accuse me falsely, bind me, take me to the judgment seat of carnal men who will convict and slay me on the cross.

“But men can never slay the truth; though banished it will come again in greater power; for truth will subjugate the world. The Model Church will live. Though carnal man will prostitute its sacred laws, symbolic rites and forms, for selfish ends, and make it but an outward show, the few will find through it the kingdom of the soul.

“And when the better age shall come the Universal Church will stand upon the seven postulates, and will be built according to the pattern given” (60:7-15).

In the Piscean Age the Christian Church was only a model, but in the Aquarian Age it will become what he intended it to be. There is a great deal to look forward to.

But, lo, I say, Before the great day of the Lord shall come, the Holy Breath will make all mysteries known—the mysteries of the soul, of life, of death, of immortality; the oneness of a man with every other man and with his God. Certainly these ideas are now to be found everywhere throughout the world, and their roots being in the Far East is open knowledge.

Then will the world be led to truth, and man will be the truth. What an incredible prophecy: Human beings will not just know the truth, they will *become* the truth—they will become one with God. Not all humanity will attain this state because not all will seek it; but those who seek shall not just find, they shall Be.

When she has come, the Comforter, she will convince the world of sin, and of the truth of what I speak, and of the judgement of the just; and then the prince of carnal life will be cast out. And when the Comforter shall come I need not intercede for you; for you will stand approved, and God will know you then as he knows me.

The hour has come when you will weep; the wicked will rejoice, because I go away; but I will come again, and all your sorrows shall be turned to joy. Yea, verily, you will rejoice as one who welcomes back a brother from the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 162:12, 13)

When the Comforter shall come I need not intercede for you; for you will stand approved, and God will know you then as he knows me. Saint John of Kronstadt frequently referred to the Holy Spirit as the “air” in which all live and the medium through which human beings have communication with the spiritual world. Here Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will bring about union with God and man so each will know the

other.

I will come again, and all your sorrows shall be turned to joy. Yea, verily, you will rejoice as one who welcomes back a brother from the dead. This is a reference to two events: the resurrection which was imminent and the second advent (birth) of Jesus in the future. The mystical tradition of Judaism says that the Messiah will come twice: first as son of Joseph and be rejected and second as son of David and be accepted. In the first instance it was the followers of Jesus that would rejoice, but in the second advent many more will recognize him and rejoice.

It is interesting that Jesus likens himself to a brother to those that shall rejoice. This is because he was once an evolving soul just as we are, and became a perfected image of God in whom God was revealed. He is not God, but a son of God as are all sentient beings.

And the disciples said, Our Lord, speak not in proverbs any more; speak plainly unto us; we know that you are wise and know all things. What is the meaning of your words, I go away, but I will come again?

And Jesus said, The hour is come when you will all be scattered forth, and every man will be afraid; will flee to save his life and leave me alone; yet I will not be all alone; my Father-God is with me all the way.

And wicked men will take me to the judgment seat of wicked men and in the presence of the multitudes I will give up my life, a pattern for the sons of men. But I will rise again and come to you. These things I speak that you may be established in the faith when they shall come to pass.

And you shall bear the buffetings of men, and follow in the thorny path I tread. Be not dismayed; be of good cheer, Lo, I have overcome the world, and you shall overcome the world. (Aquarian Gospel 162:14-22)

This is very clear; the main point is that Jesus told the apostles all that would come to pass and that they were prepared for it.

Then Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, My Father-God, the hour has come; the son of man must now be lifted from the earth, and may he falter not, that all the world may know the power of sacrifice; for as I give my life for men, lo, men must give their lives for other men. I came to do thy will, O God, and in the sacred name, the Christ is glorified, that men may see the Christ as life, as light, as love, as truth. And through the Christ become themselves the life, the light, the love, the truth.

I praise thy name because of these whom thou hast given me, for they have honored thee and they will honor thee; and none of them are lost, and none are gone away, except the blinded son of carnal life, who hath gone forth to sell his Lord. O God, forgive this man because he knows not what he does.

And now, O God, I come to thee, and am no more in mortal life; keep thou these men to whom I have made known thy wisdom and thy love. As they believe in me, and in the words I speak, may all the world believe in them and

in the words they speak. As thou hast sent me forth into the world, so I have sent them forth. I pray that thou wouldst honor them as thou hast honored me. I do not pray that thou wouldst take them from the world, but that they may be guarded from the evil of the world, and not be subject to temptations that are too great for them to bear. They once were of the world, but now are of the world no more, as I am of the world no more. Thy word is truth, O God, and by thy word let them be sanctified.

I do not pray for these alone, O God; I also pray for all who will believe on me, and will accept the Christ because of what they do and say, that they may all be one. As I am one with thee, and thou art one with me, may they be one with us, that all the world may know that thou hast sent me forth to do thy will, and that thou lovest them as thou hast ever loved me. When Jesus had thus said, they sang the Jewish song of praise, and then arose and went their way. (Aquarian Gospel 162:23-40)

The son of man must now be lifted from the earth, and may he falter not, that all the world may know the power of sacrifice; for as I give my life for men, lo, men must give their lives for other men. Where is the doctrine of “atonement”? No mention at all here or anywhere else in the Aquarian Gospel. Rather, the crucifixion is a source and an opening of spiritual opportunity for the world. The main message is that followers of Jesus must dedicate their lives to the help and upliftment of humanity. Obviously to be a Christian (Christine) is something very different from what the world and worldly churches think it means. Will we follow and believe them or Jesus?

In the sacred name, the Christ is glorified, that men may see the Christ as life, as light, as love, as truth. And through the Christ become themselves the life, the light, the love, the truth. The blinded son of carnal life, who hath gone forth to sell his Lord. This is how Jesus describes Judas, not as the most evil person who ever lived. Though he would be his betrayer, Jesus understood that Judas was blinded by material consciousness, not a demon but a poor lost and blind soul.

They once were of the world, but now are of the world no more, as I am of the world no more. If we wish to follow Jesus to our own Christhood we must become like him, no longer of this world but inwardly living in realms of the spirit. Jesus words that “I am of the world no more” indicates that he was once of the world like the disciples, but that he attained the heights of Christhood as may we.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Three

As Jesus and the eleven went out, a Roman guard approached and said, All hail! Is one of you the man from Galilee? And Peter said, We all are men from Galilee; whom do you seek? The guard replied, I seek for Jesus, who is called the Christ. And Jesus answered, Here am I. The guard spoke out and said, I do not come in an official way; I bear to you a message from the governor. Jerusalem is all alive with vengeful Jews who swear that they will take your life, and Pilate would confer with you, and he would have you come to him without delay. And Jesus said to Peter and the rest, Go to the vale, and by the Kidron wait for me, and I will go alone and see the governor.

And Jesus went up with the guard, and when he reached the palace, Pilate met him at the gate and said, Young man, I have a word to say that may be well for you. I have observed your works and words three years and more; and I have often stood in your defense when your own countrymen would fain have stoned you as a criminal. But now the priests, the scribes and Pharisees have stirred the common people to a stage of frenzied wantonness and cruelty, and they intend to take your life. Because, they say, that you have sworn to tear their temple down; to change the laws that Moses gave; to exile Pharisee and priest and seat yourself upon a throne. And they aver that you are fully in league with Rome. The streets of all Jerusalem are filled this moment with a horde of madmen all intent to shed your blood. There is no safety for you but in flight; wait not until the morning sun. You know the way to reach the border of this cursed land. I have a little band of guards, well horsed and armed, and they will take you out beyond the reach of harm. You must not tarry here, young man, you must arise and go.

And Jesus said, A noble prince has Caesar in his Pilate Pontius, and from the point of carnal man your words are seasoned with the wise man's salt; but from the point of Christ your words are foolishness. The coward flees when danger comes; but he who comes to seek and save the lost must give his life in willing sacrifice for those he comes to seek and save. Before the pasch has been consumed, lo, all this nation will be cursed by shedding blood of innocence; and even now the murderers are at the door.

And Pilate said, It shall not be; the sword of Rome will be unsheathed to save your life. And Jesus said, Nay, Pilate, nay; there are no armies large enough in all the world to save my life. And Jesus bade the governor farewell, and went his way; but Pilate sent a double guard with him lest he should fall into the hands of those who were alert to take his life. But in a moment Jesus disappeared; the guards saw him no more, and in a little while he reached the brook of Kidron where the eleven were.

Now, just beyond the brook there was an orchard and a home where one,

Massalian, lived, where Jesus oft had been. Massalian was his friend, and he believed that Jesus was the Christ that Jewish prophets long ago had said would come. Now, in the orchard was a sacred knoll; Massalian called the place Gethsemane. The night was dark, but in the orchard it was doubly dark and Jesus bade the eight disciples tarry by the brook, while he, with Peter, James and John went to Gethsemane to pray. (Aquarian Gospel 163:1-29)

Here we find the surprising fact that Pilate was a friend of Jesus and wanted to protect him, though Jesus resisted his insistence that he leave Israel. Yet in the end Pilate gave Jesus over to his murderers because he feared accusations might be brought against him to Caesar by the toadies of Rome, the high priest, his father-in-law and much of the Sanhedrin.

The priests, the scribes and Pharisees... intend to take your life. Because, they say, that you have sworn to tear their temple down; to change the laws that Moses gave; to exile Pharisee and priest and seat yourself upon a throne. And they aver that you are fully in league with Rome. What a list of absurdities! Jesus had no interest in any of these things, especially not to change the Law of Moses into a new law as contemporary Christians claim he did. Jesus brought to Israel not a new religion but the primal revelation of the Indian sages that transcended all the superstitions cloaked as religions. Yet after his departure from Israel we see that his disciples entered into a betrayal much more shameful than that of Judas. They made a reconciliation with the ignorant religious system Jesus had disproved when he was only twelve years of age (see Luke 2:41-50), claiming that he had renewed it by becoming a blood sacrifice to appease God. What a monstrous, blasphemous claim. So today everyone thinks Jesus' mission was to create a reformed, spiritualized Judaism.

They sat beneath an olive tree, and Jesus opened up the mysteries of life to Peter, James and John. He said, The Spirit of eternity is One unmanifest; and this is God the Father, God the Mother, God the Son in One. In life of manifests the One became the Three, and God the Father is the God of might; and God the Mother is omniscient God, and God the Son is love. And God the Father is the power of heaven and earth; and God the Mother is the Holy Breath, the thought of heaven and earth; and God the Son, the only son, is Christ, and Christ is love. I came as man to manifest this love to men,

As man I have been subject unto all the trials and temptations of the human race; but I have overcome the flesh, with all its passions and its appetites. What I have done all men can do. And I am now about to demonstrate the power of man to conquer death; for every man is God made flesh.

I will lay down my life, and I will take it up again, that you may know the mysteries of life, of death, and of the resurrection of the dead. I lay me down in flesh, but I will rise in spirit form with power to manifest myself so mortal eyes can see. So in a trinity of days I will show forth the all of life, the all of death, the meaning of the resurrection of the dead. And what I do all men can

do.

And you, my three, who constitute the inner circle of the Church of Christ, will show to men the attributes of all the Gods. And Peter shall make known the Power of God; and James shall show the Thought of God; and John shall demonstrate the Love of God. Be not afraid of men, for you have been sent forth to do the mighty works of God the Father, God the Mother, God the Son. And all the powers of carnal life cannot destroy your life until your work is done. I leave you now, and I will go out in the darkness all alone and talk with God. By sorrow I am overwhelmed, I leave you here to watch with me. (Aquarian Gospel 163:30-47)

The Spirit of eternity is One unmanifest; and this is God the Father, God the Mother, God the Son in One. In life of manifests the One became the Three, and God the Father is the God of might; and God the Mother is omniscient God, and God the Son is love. And God the Father is the power of heaven and earth; and God the Mother is the Holy Breath, the thought of heaven and earth; and God the Son, the only son, is Christ, and Christ is love.

God never changes. If he is triune, then he has been triune from eternity. And Jesus clearly states that here. The unmanifest is one and three simultaneously even before there is manifestation.

When manifestation occurred, the triune nature of God was revealed. God the Father is power in the sense of being the substratum of power behind all things. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, is knowledge and wisdom. God the Son is love because he holds every atom of creation in his consciousness and wills their evolution in hope of their return to the Father as divine sons.

I came as man to manifest this love to men. As man I have been subject unto all the trials and temptations of the human race; but I have overcome the flesh, with all its passions and its appetites. What I have done all men can do. Jesus had long ago passed from humanity to perfect divinity, but he returned to us in a mortal, limited body because he was to show to other humans the pattern of loving sacrifice that must be followed by us all. Since Jesus assumed all the condition of a human being he has proved that we can follow him without excuse. That, too, is a matter of love.

And I am now about to demonstrate the power of man to conquer death; for every man is God made flesh. Our immortality is evidence of our innate divinity through which death can be conquered.

I will lay down my life, and I will take it up again, that you may know the mysteries of life, of death, and of the resurrection of the dead. Life, death and resurrection are not just conditions, but powers possessed by each human being. We know this because Jesus our “brother” has demonstrated this. It is not easy to keep in mind when studying the life of great Christs such as Jesus, Krishna and Buddha that they are showing us human potential, because their divinity is so much in the foreground and our divinity is so much in the background to the point of invisibility. So we think that to equate ourselves with them is arrogance and blasphemy. But to do otherwise is ignorance and blasphemy of ourselves.

I lay me down in flesh, but I will rise in spirit form with power to manifest myself so mortal

eyes can see. Jesus' body was completely transmuted into divine consciousness. It was no longer material but spiritual, yet that does not mean it was a mere appearance, a phantom. Just the opposite: it was in the condition of total reality, for spirit alone is ultimately real.

So in a trinity of days I will show forth the all of life, the all of death, the meaning of the resurrection of the dead. Life and death are but alternating steps in the journey of the spirit that ends in the transmutation of both into changeless immortality that is resurrection into Spirit.

And what I do all men can do. This needs no comment, but I did not want to put it with the other statements so the point Jesus is making will be absolutely clear. Jesus is showing to the world the power of humanity which is innately divine. Our lives in gas, mineral, plant, animal, human and superhuman forms are dreams. Rising to divinity is the only real awakening.

And you, my three, who constitute the inner circle of the Church of Christ, will show to men the attributes of all the Gods. And Peter shall make known the Power of God; and James shall show the Thought of God; and John shall demonstrate the Love of God. This was done both in the teaching and the daily life of each of the three. So powerful was Saint Peter that his shadow cured the sick (Acts 5:15). So wise in the mysteries of God was Saint James that he was the head of the first Christian community. Saint John throughout his life wrote and spoke of the love of God, and the last words he spoke on earth were: "My little children, love one another" as his deified body dissolved into light and was pure spirit. (It is this "transmogrification" alone that Taoists consider proof of the ultimate attainment.) All three wrote epistles found in the Bible that reflect the traits Jesus attributed to each.

Be not afraid of men, for you have been sent forth to do the mighty works of God the Father, God the Mother, God the Son. And all the powers of carnal life cannot destroy your life until your work is done. I leave you now, and I will go out in the darkness all alone and talk with God. By sorrow I am overwhelmed, I leave you here to watch with me.

Then Jesus went three hundred cubits toward the east, and fell upon his face and prayed; he said, My God! my God! is there a way by which I may escape the horrors of the coming hours? My human flesh shrinks back; my soul is firm; so not my will, but thine, O God, be done. In agony he prayed; the strain upon the human form was great; his veins were burst asunder, and his brow was bathed in blood.

And then he went back to the three, and found them all asleep; he said, O Simon, Simon, do you sleep! Could you not watch with me a single hour? Be vigilant, and watch and pray that your temptations be not too great for you to bear. I know the spirit is alert and willing; but the flesh is weak.

And then he went again and prayed, O Father, God! if I must drink this bitter cup, give me the strength of soul; for not my will, but thine be done.

And then he went again to his disciples; lo, he found them still asleep. He

wakened them and said to James, Have you been sleeping while your master has been wrestling with the greatest foe of men? Could you not watch with me a single hour?

And then he went again and prayed. O God, I yield to thee; thy will be done.

And then again he went back to the three, and still they slept. He said to John, With all the love you have for me, could you not watch with me a single hour?

And then he said, It is enough; the hour has come, and my betrayer is at hand; arise and let us go. And when they came again to Kidron, lo, the eight disciples were asleep, and Jesus said, You men, awake; behold, for the betrayer of the son of man is come. (Aquarian Gospel 163:44-61)

My human flesh shrinks back; my soul is firm;... I know the spirit is alert and willing; but the flesh is weak. This is an important lesson. The body often seems to have an existence completely independent of the mind (buddhi: intelligence) and spirit. Its drive for preservation of physical life is a powerful, even overwhelming, instinct. Therefore we must never think that our aspirations and inspirations are invincible. In a moment the body can sweep them away. Tremendous will is always a necessity at every step of spiritual life.

In agony he prayed; the strain upon the human form was great; his veins were burst asunder, and his brow was bathed in blood. If this great effort and concentration of will were necessary for Jesus, they are certainly necessary for us. Jesus has not done everything for us, nor has he made anything easy. Make no mistake: we must all tread the path he trod.

And then he went again and prayed, O Father, God! if I must drink this bitter cup, give me the strength of soul; for not my will, but thine be done. We cannot depend on ourselves, alone. We need the infinite power and grace of God. True, we are divine, but finitely so. In the last steps of the Great Journey we require the assistance of Infinite Divinity to persevere and reach the Goal.

Have you been sleeping while your master has been wrestling with the greatest foe of men? The greatest foe of men is not “the devil” but humanity itself. For spiritual life leads to the “death” of humanity in the revelation of our divinity. Being a human being has become a habit with us, and the body has powerful subliminal impulses to sustain it. Even great Masters must sometimes contend with this power. Patanjali wrote in Yoga Sutras 2:9: “Abhinivesha is the strong desire for life which dominates even the learned.”

Abhinivesha is the desperate will to live rising from false identification of the Self with the body; an instinctive and unreasoning clinging to life and a dread of death. Even great yogis can have a subconscious impression (samskara) of this but they can master it. Two examples are given in *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

Lahiri Mahasaya encouraged Sri Yukteswar to attend the *Kumbha Mela* at Allahabad in January, 1894. There he met Mahavatar Babaji. Later, when he met with Lahiri Mahasaya in Benares the following occurred:

“Gurudeva, the divine master asked me to give you a message. “Tell Lahiri,” He said, “that the stored-up power for this life now runs low; it is nearly finished.””

“At my utterance of these enigmatic words, Lahiri Mahasaya’s figure trembled as though touched by a lightning current. In an instant everything about him fell silent; his smiling countenance turned incredibly stern. Like a wooden statue, somber and immovable in its seat, his body became colorless. I was alarmed and bewildered. Never in my life had I seen this joyous soul manifest such awful gravity. The other disciples present stared apprehensively.

“Three hours passed in utter silence. Then Lahiri Mahasaya resumed his natural, cheerful demeanor, and spoke affectionately to each of the chelas. Everyone sighed in relief.

“I realized by my master’s reaction that Babaji’s message had been an unmistakable signal by which Lahiri Mahasaya understood that his body would soon be untenanted. His awesome silence proved that my guru had instantly controlled his being, cut his last cord of attachment to the material world, and fled to his ever-living identity in Spirit.”

When Yogananda returned to India in 1935 the following conversation took place.

“Arrangements were recently made for Master to visit Kidderpore [a section of Calcutta], but he failed to go.” Amulaya Babu, a brother disciple, made this remark to me one afternoon; I felt a cold wave of premonition. To my pressing inquiries, Sri Yukteswar only replied, “I shall go to Kidderpore no more.” For a moment, Master trembled like a frightened child.

(“Attachment to bodily residence, springing up of its own nature [i.e., arising from immemorial roots, past experiences of death],” Patanjali wrote, “is present in slight degree even in great saints.” In some of his discourses on death, my guru had been wont to add: “Just as a long-caged bird hesitates to leave its accustomed home when the door is opened.”)

Jesus had been struggling with abhinivesha; and so must we all some day.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Four

The Lord with the eleven were in the orchard of Massalian, and as they talked they saw a band of men with lanterns and with swords and clubs approaching them. And Jesus said, Behold the emissaries of the evil one! and Judas leads the way. And the disciples said, Lord, let us flee to save our lives. But Jesus said, Why should we flee to save our lives when this is the fulfillment of the words of prophets and of seers?

And Jesus went alone to meet the men; and as they came he said, Why are you here, you men? whom do you seek? And they replied, We seek the man from Galilee. We seek for Jesus, one who calls himself the Christ. And Jesus answered, Here am I.

And then he raised his hands and with a mighty thought he brought the ethers to the state of light; and all the orchard was aglow with light. The frenzied men were driven back and many fled and tarried not until they reached Jerusalem; and others fell upon their faces on the ground. (Aquarian Gospel 164:1-9)

Here Jesus demonstrates that no one could have power over him; that he willingly surrenders to the evil ones.

The bravest men, and they with hardest hearts, remained, and when the light had paled, the Lord again inquired, Whom do you seek? And Ananias said, We seek the man from Galilee; we seek for Jesus, he who calls himself the Christ. And Jesus answered him and said, I told you once before; but now I tell you once again that I am he.

By Ananias, Judas stood; but in a moment he had gone and coming up behind the Lord he said, My Lord; and then he kissed him as a sign that he was Jesus whom they sought. And Jesus said, Do you, Iscariot, come and thus betray your master with a kiss? This thing must need be done; but woe to him who does betray his Lord. Your carnal greed has seared your conscience and you know not what you do; but in a little time your conscience will assert itself, and in remorse, lo, you will close your span and take your life. Then the eleven came, laid hold of Judas and would have done him harm; but Jesus said, You must not harm this man; you have no right to judge this man; his conscience is his judge, will sentence him and he will execute himself. (Aquarian Gospel 164:10-18)

Your carnal greed has seared your conscience and you know not what you do; but in a little time your conscience will assert itself, and in remorse, lo, you will close your span and take your life. There is no condemnation here, yet there is the reaction of the universal law: what is sown shall be reaped. Judas himself shall be judge and executioner of himself.

And then the mob led on by Malchus, servant of Caiaphas, laid hold of Jesus, and was binding him with chains. And Jesus said, Why do you come in dead of night with swords and clubs to take me in this sacred place? Have I not spoken in the public places of Jerusalem? Have I not healed your sick, and opened up your blinded eyes, and made your lame to walk, your deaf to hear? You could have found me any day. And now you try to bind me down with chains, what are these chains but links of reeds? And then he raised his hands; the chains were broken and they fell to earth. (Aquarian Gospel 164:19-22)

Jesus was always master of the situation. No bonds could hold him.

And Malchus thought the Lord would flee to save his life, and with a club he fain would smite him in the face. But Peter had a sword, and rushing up he smote the man and wounded him. But Jesus said, Stay, Peter, stay; put up your sword; you are not called to fight with swords and clubs. Whoever wields the sword shall perish by the sword. I do not need protection by the sons of men, for I could call this moment and a legion, yea, twelve legions of the messengers of God, would come and stand in my defense; but then it is not well. And then he said to Malchus, Man, I would not have you harmed. And then he laid his hand upon the wound that Peter made, and it was healed. (Aquarian Gospel 164:23-27)

The Lord is fearless but always merciful, so he heals the one who wished to strike him.

Then Jesus said, Be not concerned lest I should tear myself away from you and flee to save my life. I have no wish to save my life; do with me as you wish. And then the mob rushed up to seize the eleven to take them back to stand for trial as the aids of Jesus in his crimes. But the disciples, every one of them, deserted Jesus, and they fled to save their lives. Now, John was last to flee; the mob laid hold of him and tore his garments all to shreds; but he escaped in nakedness. Massalian saw the man, and took him to his home and gave him other clothes; and then he followed after them who led the Lord away. And Peter was ashamed because of his weak cowardice, and when he was himself again he joined with John and followed close behind the mob, and came into Jerusalem. (Aquarian Gospel 164:28-33)

Here we see that momentarily Saint John was fainthearted, but he returned to be with Jesus all the way. Peter also did the same, but things worked out differently for him, as we shall see.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Five

Caiaphas was the high priest of the Jews; the mob led Jesus to his palace hall. The court had been convened, and all the galleries were packed with scribes and Pharisees already sworn as witnesses against the Lord. (Aquarian Gospel 165:1-2)

Throughout history the devious and the evil have created sham dramas to bolster their power over others and make their spurious principles seem just and right. In our own time, the Stalinist trials were prime examples. People confessed to things that no one could be responsible for. One man wept on the witness stand as he confessed to causing an epidemic among the horses in the Ukraine.

Here we have the same situation when deceit and evil seem omnipotent and the intended victim seems indeed to be “brought as a lamb to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7). But in this case just the opposite is true: and this is taking place at the will of God, of Christ and of the Master Jesus. A great victory is in the future, and these terrible things are the steps that shall lead to it.

The maid who kept the palace door knew John and this disciple asked that he and Peter be admitted to the hall. The maid permitted them to enter in, and John went in; but Peter was afraid and tarried in the outer court.

The woman said to Peter, as he stood beside the door, Are you a follower of this man from Galilee? And Peter said, No, I am not.

The men who had brought Jesus to the hall sat by a fire in the outer court, because the night was cool, and Peter sat with them.

Another maid who waited in the place saw Peter and she said to him, You surely are from Galilee; your speech is that of Galilee; you are a follower of this man. And Peter said, I know not what you mean; I do not even know this man.

And then a servant of Caiaphas, one of those who seized the Lord and brought him to the court, saw Peter and he said to him, Did I not see you in the orchard of Massalian with this seditious Nazarene? I’m sure I did, and you are one of those who followed him.

Then Peter rose and stamped upon the floor, and swore by every sacred thing, that he knew not the criminal.

Now, John was standing near and when he heard the words and knew that Peter had denied his Lord, he looked at him in sheer astonishment.

Just then a cock crew loud beneath the court, and Peter called to mind the words the Lord had said, Before the cock shall crow tomorrow morn you will deny me thrice. And Peter’s conscience smote him heavily, and he went out into the night and wept. (Aquarian Gospel 165:3-16)

John went in; but Peter was afraid and tarried in the outer court. If he had not done this,

perhaps no one would have questioned him about his connection with Jesus, and he would not have denied knowing him. Fear, especially cowardice, nearly always delivers us into the hands of inimical forces, persons and situations.

The men who had brought Jesus to the hall sat by a fire in the outer court, because the night was cool, and Peter sat with them. Peter is setting himself up for the denial he so vigorously denied.

Through the years I have seen people setting themselves up for a fall. Looking back they may fabricate and claim their failure was the fault of some other factor or persons, but it is not true: they deliberately created the trap, walked toward it, and jumped (not fell) in. Almost always their prior conversations indicated exactly what they intended doing to themselves. In fact, most people are totally transparent, obviously intent on their eventual self-destruction. Many are outrageously brazen about it, enacting a farce that anyone can detect.

Just then a cock crew loud beneath the court, and Peter called to mind the words the Lord had said, Before the cock shall crow tomorrow morn you will deny me thrice. And Peter's conscience smote him heavily, and he went out into the night and wept. The fact that Peter admitted his fault and grieved over it indicated that in time all would be corrected and he would be reinstated as a disciple of Jesus. The same would have happened to Judas, but by his own hands he put himself beyond any such possibility for that lifetime.

Caiaphas sat in state; before him stood the man from Galilee. Caiaphas said, You people of Jerusalem, who is the man that you accuse? They answered: In the name of every loyal Jew we do accuse this man from Galilee, this Jesus, who assumes to be our king, as enemy of God and man.

Caiaphas said to Jesus, Man, you are permitted now to speak and tell about your doctrines and your claims. And Jesus said, You priest of carnal man, why do you ask about my words and works? Lo, I have taught the multitudes in every public place; I have restored your sick to health; have caused your deaf to hear, your lame to walk, and I have brought your dead to life again. My works have not been done in secret place but in your public halls and thoroughfares. Go ask the people, who have not been bought with gold or glittering promises, to tell about my words and works.

When Jesus had thus said a Jewish guard came up and smote him in the face and said, How dare you speak thus unto him, the high priest of the Jews? And Jesus said, If I have spoken falsely bear witness unto what I say; If I have told the truth why did you smite me thus?

And then Caiaphas said, What'er you do, do in a legal way, for we must answer to a higher court for everything we do or say. Let the accusers of this man present their charges in a legal form. And then Caiaphas' scribe stood forth and said, I have the accusations here in legal form; the charges made and signed by scribes and priests and Pharisees. Caiaphas said, Be still, you men, and hear the charges read. The scribe took up a roll and read:

To the Sanhedrin of the Jews and to Caiaphas the high priest, most

honored men: The highest duty man can render is to his nation and his own is to protect them from their foes. The people of Jerusalem are conscious that a mighty foe is in their very midst. A man named Jesus has come forth and claims to be heir to David's throne. As an imposter he is foe, and in the name of every loyal Jew we here submit these charges which we are competent to prove; and first, he blasphemes God; he says he is son of God; that he and God are one; and he profanes our holy days by healing, and doing other work upon the Sabbath days; and he proclaims himself the king, successor of our David and our Solomon; and he declares that he will tear our temple down and build it up again in form more glorious in three days; and he declares that he will drive the people from Jerusalem, as he drove out the merchants from the temple court; and bring to occupy our sacred hills a tribe of men that know not God; and he avers that every doctor, scribe and Pharisee and Sadducee, shall go in exile, and shall never more return; and to these charges we do set our hands and seals.

Annas.	Simon.
Abinadab.	Annanias.
Joash.	Azaniah.
Hezekiah.	

Now, when the scribe had read the charges, all the people called for blood; they said, Let such a wretch be stoned; let him be crucified.

Caiaphas said, You men of Israel, do you sustain the charges of these men? A hundred men who had been bribed, stood forth to testify; they swore that every charge was true.

Caiaphas said to Jesus, Man, have you a word to say? are you the son of God? And Jesus said, So you have said; and then he said no more. (Aquarian Gospel 165:17-47)

Jesus refused to take part in the farce enacted by Caiaphas and his henchmen. Yet they spoke the truth in spite of their intentions, for Jesus was indeed "a mighty foe" of the evil to which they were enslaved and by which they enslaved others. And he did indeed say he was a Son of God; that he was one with God. He did heal on the Sabbath and rightly claimed to be a descendant of David and king of a spiritual kingdom. But whether they understood or misunderstood it was all the same: they hated him and wanted his death.

Intuiting that Jesus had the power to free people from the bondage of ignorance and evil, they realized that their power was in grave danger. Even though Jesus made clear that it was their action that would bring about the destruction of Jerusalem, they pretended that he had claimed that he would himself bring it about.

One time when Yogananda told a group of food faddists that if they did not give up their crack-brain ways one of their group would die, they shouted: "You are cursing us!" as if the evil lay with him. One of their number did die, and their association was dissolved as a result. They were the cursers, and their foolishness the curse, but it was easier to blame one who told them the truth. It has always

been like this when evil in power is confronted by those whose only “weapon” is truth.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Six

When Jesus would not speak, Caiaphas stood before the Jewish mob and said, Bind fast the prisoner, for he must go before the great Sanhedrin of the Jews to answer for his life. We cannot execute a criminal until our findings have been verified by this, the highest council of the Jews.

As soon as it was day the highest council of the people met; the Lord and his accusers stood before the bar. Caiaphas was the chief; he rose and said, Let the accusers of this man from Galilee bring forth their charges and their evidence. Caiaphas' scribe stood forth and read the charges and the names of those who had accused the man from Galilee. And all the witnesses were made to stand and testify before the council of the Jews.

And then the lawyers weighed the evidence, and Nicodemus stood among the men who plead. He raised his hands and said, Let justice now be done, though every scribe and Pharisee and priest and Sadducee, as well as Jesus, the accused, be judged a liar. If we can prove this Jesus to be foe and traitor to our laws and land, let him be judged a criminal and suffer for his crimes. If it be proved that these who testify are perjurers in the sight of God and man, then let the man from Galilee go free. And then he brought the testimonies of the witnesses before the judges of the law; no two of them agreed. In heat of passion, or for gain, the men had testified. The council would have gladly judged that Jesus was a criminal and sentenced him to death; but in the face of all the evidence they were afraid. (Aquarian Gospel 166:1-13)

The sham continues. Caiaphas' words: "We cannot execute a criminal until our findings have been verified by this, the highest council of the Jews," show his intention. Also telling is the sentence: "The council would have gladly judged that Jesus was a criminal and sentenced him to death; but in the face of all the evidence they were afraid."

This reminds me of a relative of mine, Sir John Burke, who was martyred for his Catholic faith in Ireland by the forces of unbelief and evil. While he was on his way under guard for a trial, the wicked were already building the scaffold for his execution.

As I have mentioned before, when Salvation Mountain in Southern California near Niland was being investigated by the California Legislature as to whether or not it was an environmental hazard, the anti-religious members of the legislature brazenly allotted one hundred seventy five thousand dollars for its demolition, which fortunately did not occur as they hoped.

And then Caiaphas said, You man from Galilee, Before the living God, I now command that you shall answer me, Are you the Christ, the son of God?

And Jesus said, If I would answer, Yes, you would not hear, nor yet believe,

if I would answer, No, I would be like your witnesses, and stand a liar in the sight of man and God. But this I say, the time will come when you will see the son of man upon the throne of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.

And then Caiaphas rent his clothes and said, Have you not heard enough? Did you not hear his vile blasphemous words? What further need have we of witnesses? What shall we do with him? The people said, Put him to death.

And then the mob rushed up and spit into his face, and struck him with their hands. And then they bound a cloth about his eyes and smote him in the face and said, You are a prophet; tell us who it was who smote you in the face.

And Jesus answered not and like a lamb before his shearer he, the man from Galilee, resisted not.

Caiaphas said, We cannot put a man to death until the Roman ruler shall confirm the sentence of this court; so take this criminal away and Pilate will endorse what we have done. And then was Jesus dragged along the way up to the palace of the Roman governor. (Aquarian Gospel 166:14-24)

And so the drama goes on.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Seven

Into the palace of the Roman governor the Jews would enter not lest they become defiled and be unworthy to attend the feast; but they led Jesus to the palace court, and Pilate met them there.

And Pilate said, Why this commotion in the early day? What is your prayer? The Jews replied, We bring before you one, an evil and seditious man. He has been tried before the highest council of the Jews and has been proven traitor to our laws, our state and to the government of Rome. We pray that you will sentence him to death upon the cross. And Pilate said, Why do you bring him unto me? Go to, and judge him yourselves. You have a law, and by the sanction of the Roman law, you have a right to judge and right to execute.

The Jews replied, We have no right to execute a man upon the cross, and since this man is traitor to Tiberius, our counsellors believe that he should meet the most humiliating death—the death upon the cross.

But Pilate said, No man can be found guilty of a crime by Roman law until the testimony all is in, and the accused has been permitted to defend himself; so I will take your bill of charges, with the evidence you have, and judge by Roman law.

The Jews had made a copy of the accusations in the language of the Roman court, and they had added to the bill: We charge that Jesus is an enemy of Rome; that he demands that men shall pay no tribute to Tiberius.

And Pilate took the bill; his guards led Jesus up the steps into the palace hall. And Jesus stood before the Roman governor, and Pilate read to him the charges of the Jews, and said, What is your answer to this bill? These charges, are they true or false? And Jesus said, Why should I plead before an earthly court? The charges have been verified by perjured men; what need I say? Yes, I am king; but carnal men cannot behold the king, nor see the kingdom of the God; it is within. If I had been king as carnal man is king, my servants would have stood in my defense, and I would not have willingly surrendered to the minions of the Jewish law. I have no testimony from the sons of men. God is my witness, and my words and deeds bear witness to the truth; and every man who comprehends the truth will hearken to my words, and in his soul give witness unto me.

And Pilate said, What is the truth? And Jesus said, Truth is the God who knows. It is the changeless one. The Holy Breath is truth; she changes not and cannot pass away.

And Pilate went again unto the Jews and said, This man is guilty of no crime; I cannot sentence him to death.

And then the Jews grew boisterous; they cried aloud and said, Our council surely knows. The wisest men of all the land have found him guilty of a score

of crimes. He would pervert the nation of the Jews; would overthrow the Roman rule and make himself the king. He is a culprit come from Galilee; he must be crucified. (Aquarian Gospel 167:1-25)

Into the palace of the Roman governor the Jews would enter not lest they become defiled and be unworthy to attend the feast; but they led Jesus to the palace court, and Pilate met them there. See the evil of externalized religion. Plotting the murder of an innocent man, they will not enter the palace of a Roman lest they “defile” themselves and not be able to observe the Passover. This is the insanity which develops in those immersed in such externalized religion. Eventually they have no more conscience or sense of right and wrong than do the worst of criminals. I well remember speaking with a yogini who had been raised in just such a religion. She told me that she was unable to convey to anyone who had not experienced it for themselves just how hellish it had been for her. Since I had been brought up in a very similar church I understood her completely. Unspeakable corruption lies beneath the veneer of such a religion along with covert unbelief and blasphemy.

Pilate said, Why do you bring him unto me? Go to, and judge him yourselves. You have a law, and by the sanction of the Roman law, you have a right to judge and right to execute. The Jews replied, We have no right to execute a man upon the cross, and since this man is traitor to Tiberius, our counsellors believe that he should meet the most humiliating death—the death upon the cross. Here we see that these wicked men were not content with bringing about the death of Jesus; they were determined that it should be both the most painful and the most disgraceful. “Evil-doers, the lowest of men, bereft of knowledge by maya, do not seek me, being attached to (existing within) a demonic mode of existence” (Bhagavad Gita 7:15).

Why should I plead before an earthly court? The charges have been verified by perjured men; what need I say? Jesus refused to go along with the pretence that justice was intended, and plainly spoke of the true character of the proceedings.

Yes, I am king; but carnal men cannot behold the king, nor see the kingdom of the God; it is within. If I had been king as carnal man is king, my servants would have stood in my defense, and I would not have willingly surrendered to the minions of the Jewish law. The accusers of Jesus had no true understanding of the concepts they were speaking about: Messiahship, the kingdom of God or even the nature of the Law they pretended to uphold.

Truth is the God who knows. It is the changeless one. The Holy Breath is truth; she changes not and cannot pass away. Someone once asked Adi Shankaracharya the great advaitist and reformer of the monastic Swami Order: “What is truth?” He simply answered: “There is no such thing as truth [satya]; there is only the True [Sat],” meaning God. Jesus was no doubt familiar with that incident. Jesus is telling Pilate (and us) that ultimately truth is not a philosophy, theology or verbal formulation, but God himself. And nothing is God that is not changeless. In this relative existence, the Holy Spirit is the unchangeable and the imperishable. Those who are her disciple-children shall become like her.

And Pilate said, If Jesus is from Galilee he is a subject of the governor of Galilee, who should be judge. Now, Herod had come down from Galilee and with his suite was in Jerusalem. And Pilate sent to him the Lord in chains; he also sent a copy of the charges, and of the testimonies of the Jews and asked that he would pass in judgment on the case. And Herod said, I have heard much about this man and I am pleased to see him in my court. And then he asked the Lord about his claims, about his doctrines and his aims. And Jesus answered not a word; and Herod was enraged; he said, Do you insult the ruler of the land by answering not? And then he called his guards and said, Take you this man and torture him until he answers me.

The guards took Jesus and they smote him; mocked him; wrapped him in a royal robe; they made a crown of thorns and put it on his head; they put a broken reed into his hands; and then they said deridingly, All hail, thou royal king! Where are your subjects and your friends?

But Jesus answered not a word. Then Herod sent him back to Pilate with this note of courtesy: Most worthy counsellor of Rome, I have examined all the charges and the testimonies that you sent to me regarding this seditious man from Galilee, and while I might adjudge him guilty of the crimes as charged, I yield to you my rights as judge, because you are superior to me in power. I will approve of any judgment you may render in this case.

Now, Pilate and the tetrarch had been foes, but the experience of this hour destroyed their enmity and they were friends in after days. (Aquarian Gospel 167:26-38)

Jesus answered not a word. Solomon said that there is “a time to keep silence, and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7). The wise know which is which. Jesus knew that Herod was a completely Romanized man, alien to Israel and its religion, an intellectual dabbler who wanted to be entertained by his questioning. So Jesus had nothing to say to him. There is a little-known hymn that explains the situation.

A friendless pris'ner at Pilate's bar,
'Mid the raging mob he stood;
Like wolves that had scented his blood from afar
And eagerly him pursued;
The voice of these murd'rers was heard as they cried,
Till Jerusalem's city was stirred;
“Away with him, let him be crucified”;
But he answered never a word.

The priests and the elders with fiendish spite,
Accused him of many things;
But his face was radiant with heavenly light,
He could hear the sound of wings;
And Pilate marveled to see him there,

As each wicked charge he heard,
His mute lips moved as in silent prayer,
But he answered never a word.

With fiercest hatred his foes pressed on,
To kill him their greatest desire;
The faith of his foll'wers was almost gone,
Must the last faint spark expire?
Will he meekly yield in his dreadful hour,
When a murderer is preferred?
He who raised the dead, has he lost his pow'r?
But he answered never a word.

Then they brought the cross that Barabbas should fill,
He, a murderer, now to go free;
And they laid it on Jesus to bear up the hill,
To purchase salvation for me;
Though hungry and thirsty, and bleeding and cold,
Not a sigh passed his lips that was heard;
He trembled a moment, then sank to the ground,
But he answered never a word.

The rabble with spite and revenge urged them on,
Till he came to Calvary's brow,
Where they nailed his hands and his feet to the cross—
O sinner, look on him now!
Then raising the cross, oh, what suff'ring and pain!
Till the earth and the heavens were stirred,
But the suffering Jesus with meekness endured,
But he answered never a word.

But there hung by his side a thief, broken and sad,
With sins that were all his own,
And he cried, "Dear Lord, remember me
When Thou sittest on Thy throne";
And the Savior turned and looked upon him,
His compassion deep was stirred;
And peace, sweet peace he shed o'er that soul—
He could answer him with a word.

From this account we see that the mocking of Jesus was done in Herod's palace,
not that of Pilate.

Now, Pilate and the tetrarch had been foes, but the experience of this hour destroyed their

enmity and they were friends in after days. By their mutual betrayal and tacit condemnation of Jesus they became literal “brothers in blood” and from then on friends, whereas before Pilate had the integrity to have no use or contact with Herod whose worthless character he knew well.

When Jesus had been brought again to Pilate’s court, the Roman Governor stood forth before the accusers of the Lord and said, I cannot find this Nazarene to be a criminal as charged; there is no evidence that he should suffer death; so I will scourge him well and let him go. The Jews cried angrily, It is not meet that such a dangerous man should live; he must be crucified. Then Pilate said, I bid you wait a little time. And then he went into an inner room and sat in silent thought.

And as he mused his wife, a godly woman, chosen from among the Gauls, came in and said, I pray you, Pilate, hearken unto me: Beware of what you do this hour. Touch not this man from Galilee; he is a holy man. If you should scourge this man you scourge the son of God. Last night I saw it all in vision far too vivid to be set aside as idle dream. I saw this man walk on the waters of the sea; I heard him speak and calm an angry storm; I saw him flying with the wings of light; I saw Jerusalem in blood; I saw the statues of the Caesars fall; I saw a veil before the sun, and day was dark as night. The earth on which I stood was shaken like a reed before the wind. I tell you, Pilate, if you bathe your hands in this man’s blood then you may dread the frowns of great Tiberius, and the curses of the senators of Rome.

And then she left, and Pilate wept. (Aquarian Gospel 167:39-49)

How sad this is. Pilate knew the innocence of Jesus and wanted to save him; yet he could not withstand the machinations of the evil plotters against Jesus. Even more, he feared that they would send reports to Rome accusing him of treason to Tiberius, who in time became the first Christian emperor of Rome, though edited “church history” has it otherwise. Ironically, Pilate’s account to him of Jesus was a factor in his eventual conversion.

All spiritual aspirants face situations like this when they feel pulled apart by conflicting factors such as loyalty and fear of public opinion. When I enrolled in a series of meditation instructions that were to come by mail, the application I filled out asked if I wanted the organization’s return address on their envelopes or if they should be blank. I realized that if I was so cowardly as to not want my family to see what I was receiving, I could hardly hope to face any obstacles that might arise in the future. So I checked the box that said the return address should be on the envelopes. The journey of a thousand miles is indeed begun by the first step.

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Eight

A superstitious people are the Jews. They have a faith that they have borrowed from the idol worshippers of other lands, that at the end of every year, they may heap all their sins upon the head of some man set apart to bear their sins. The man becomes a scapegoat for the multitudes; and they believe that when they drive him forth into the wilds, or into foreign lands, they are released from sin. So every Spring before the feast they chose a prisoner from the prisons of the land, and by a form their own, they fain would make him bear their sins away.

Among the Jewish prisoners in Jerusalem were three who were the leaders of a vile, seditious band, who had engaged in thefts and murders and rapine, and had been sentenced to be crucified. Barabbas bar Jezia was among the men who were to die; but he was rich and he had bought of priests the boon to be the scapegoat for the people at the coming feast, and he was anxiously in waiting for his hour to come. (Aquarian Gospel 168:1-6)

They have a faith that they have borrowed from the idol worshippers of other lands. The word “faith” should obviously be “belief.” This is referring to the custom of the scapegoat, but animal sacrifice was also an imitation of the nations around and not at all part of the Law of Moses. Many other things were also adopted from the alien religions and this worked like leaven to the downfall of Israel.

Here we find more information about Barabbas than in the canonical gospels.

Now, Pilate thought to turn this superstition to account to save the Lord, and so he went again before the Jews and said, You men of Israel, according to my custom I will release to you today a prisoner who shall bear your sins away. This man you drive into the wilds or into foreign lands, and you have asked me to release Barabbas, who has been proven guilty of the murder of a score of men. Now, hear me men, Let Jesus be released and let Barabbas pay his debt upon the cross; then you can send this Jesus to the wilds and hear no more of him. (Aquarian Gospel 168:7-10)

Here is Pilate’s last desperate attempt to save Jesus while saving himself. It never works. That is why Jesus said: “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 16:25).

At what the ruler said the people were enraged, and they began to plot to tear the Roman palace down and drive in exile Pilate, and his household and his guards. When Pilate was assured that civil war would follow if he heeded not the wishes of the mob, he took a bowl of water, and in the presence of the multitude, he washed his hands and said, This man whom you accuse is son of the most holy Gods, and I proclaim my innocence. If you would shed his

blood, his blood is on your hands and not on mine.

And then the Jews exclaimed, And let his blood be on our hands and on our children's hands.

And Pilate trembled like a leaf, in fear. Barabbas, he released, and as the Lord stood forth before the mob, the ruler said, Behold your king! And would you put to death your king? The Jews replied, he is no king; we have no king but great Tiberius. (Aquarian Gospel 168:11-17)

This man whom you accuse is son of the most holy Gods, and I proclaim my innocence. So Pilate "confesses" Jesus before all. Yet it is of no meaning spiritually, because he is condemning Jesus as much as if he believed him guilty of the accusations made against him. Proclaiming innocence means nothing.

The washing of Pilate's hands is very much like the baptisms that are done just out of custom or to clear the way for marriage or to falsely appear righteous, such as those throughout the centuries by those in hope of gain and favor when kings would convert to Christianity.

And let his blood be on our hands and on our children's hands. Such a declaration means nothing, for no one can pass on guilt to others for evil deeds. And it is nothing less than spiritual insanity to cite this foolishness as proof that anyone but those directly involved in the execution of Jesus were guilty of that crime. One exoteric monk actually wrote to me, saying in reference to the Jewish people of today: "They killed my Lord!" Such is like saying that all the descendants of those who engineered the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, including those living today, are guilty of Lincoln's death.

Pilate says openly that Jesus is the king of Israel; but since he did not claim him as his king as well, it counts for nothing.

We have no king but great Tiberius. This is brazen hypocrisy. Those who shouted this hated Tiberius and the empire he ruled. They denied that he was their lawful ruler and that Pilate was their legitimate governor. But see to what depths their blood lust drags them.

Now, Pilate would not give consent that Roman soldiers should imbue their hands in blood of innocence, and so the chief priests and the Pharisees took counsel what to do with Jesus, who was called the Christ. Caiaphas said, We cannot crucify this man; he must be stoned to death and nothing more. And then the rabble said, Make haste! let him be stoned. And then they led him forth toward the hill beyond the city's gates, where criminals were put to death. The rabble could not wait until they reached the place of skulls. As soon as they had passed the city's gate, they rushed upon him, smote him with their hands, they spit upon him, stoned him, and he fell upon the ground.

And one, a man of God, stood forth and said, Isaiah said, he shall be bruised for our transgressions and by his stripes we shall be healed.

As Jesus lay all bruised and mangled on the ground a Pharisee called out,

Stay, stay you men! behold, the guards of Herod come and they will crucify this man. And there beside the city's gate they found Barabbas's cross; and then the frenzied mob cried out, Let him be crucified. Caiaphas and the other ruling Jews came forth and gave consent. And then they lifted Jesus from the ground, and at the point of swords they drove him on.

A man named Simon, a friend of Jesus, was a-near the scene, and since the bruised and wounded Jesus could not bear his cross, they laid it on the shoulders of this man, and made him bear it on to Calvary. (Aquarian Gospel 168:18-27)

Here we find that Jesus was both stoned and crucified, that the Sanhedrin and Pilate were equally guilty of his death, that Jesus suffered under both Hebrew and Roman "law."

Chapter One Hundred Sixty Nine

Now, Judas who betrayed his Lord, was with the mob; but all the time he thought that Jesus would assert his power and demonstrate the strength of God that he possessed, and strike to earth the fiendish multitudes and free himself; but when he saw his master on the ground and bleeding from a score of wounds, he said, O God, what have I done? I have betrayed the son of God; the curse of God will rest upon my soul.

And then he turned and ran with haste until he reached the temple door; he found the priests, who gave to him the thirty silver pieces to betray the Lord, and said, Take back your bribe; it is the cost price of my soul; I have betrayed the son of God. The priests replied, That matters not to us.

Then Judas threw the silver on the floor, and, bowed with grief, he went away, and on a ledge beyond the city's walls he hanged himself and died. In time the fastenings gave way, his body fell into the Hinnon vale and after many days they found it there a shapeless mass. The rulers could not put the price of blood into the treasury, and so they took the thirty silver pieces with which they bought a potter's field, where they might bury those who had no rights to lie within their sacred grounds. And there they put the body of the man who sold his Lord.

This should be more a cause of grief for us than the sufferings of Jesus, because his were not only voluntary, they opened the gates of life to both the living and the dead. But Judas, guilty though he might be, was a suffering soul, unable to believe in the love of God and Jesus that would grant him forgiveness and healing as Peter would receive. In this way he, too, denied Jesus.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy

The Jewish mob pushed on toward Calvary and as they went the Marys, Miriam, and other women not a few, were close beside the Lord. They wept aloud. When Jesus saw them weeping and lamenting thus he said, Weep not for me, for though I go away, go through the gateway of the cross, yet on the next day of the sun, lift up your hearts, for I will meet you at the sepulchre. (Aquarian Gospel 170:1-3)

Even here Jesus tells others of his coming resurrection and predicts that he will meet them at the sepulchre.

The great procession came to Calvary. The Roman soldiers had already bound the two state prisoners to the cross. (They were not nailed, but simply bound.)

Four soldiers of the Roman guard that Herod brought from Galilee were called to execute the orders of the court. These were the men who had been set apart to torture Jesus and secure from him confession of his guilt. These were the men who scourged him, put a crown of thorns upon his head, a broken reed into his hands, and wrapped him in a royal robe, and bowed in mockery, before him as a king. These soldiers took the Lord and stripped him, laid him on the cross and would have bound him there with cords; but this would not suffice. The cruel Jews were near with hammer and with nails; they cried, Not cords, but nails; drive fast the nails and hold him to the cross. And then the soldiers took the nails and drove them through his feet and hands.

They offered him a sedative to drink, a draught of vinegar and myrrh; but he refused to drink the draught.

The soldiers had prepared a place in which to plant Barabbas' cross between the other criminals; and here they raised the cross of Jesus, who was called the Christ; and then the soldiers and the mob sat down to watch him die.

And Jesus said, My Father-God, forgive these men; they know not what they do. (Aquarian Gospel 170:4-15)

They were not nailed, but simply bound. Death on the cross usually took place by suffocation. The arms were tied on the cross raised at an angle so the muscles of the chest would become eventually paralyzed and the victim would begin to suffocate. But the feet were on a small platform so the crucified could raise himself up and get some breath, but eventually because of fatigue would slide down and began to suffocate after a while. It was a hideously cruel death. Sometimes, though tied to the cross, the hands and feet of the crucified were nailed to the wood, thus greatly increasing the pain and the struggle for breath. Plus infection would set in and intense fever and thirst would result.

They cried, Not cords, but nails; drive fast the nails and hold him to the cross. Not content with Jesus being crucified, his enemies in their madness insisted on him being nailed to the cross. Such was their unquenchable hatred.

They offered him a sedative to drink, a draught of vinegar and myrrh; but he refused to drink the draught. Being a willing sacrifice, Jesus embraced every bit of the suffering. His love overreached the hatred of his tormentors.

My Father-God, forgive these men; they know not what they do. Here is the meditation on Jesus' words by Paramhansa Yogananda in *Whispers From Eternity*.

Come to Me, O Christ, as the Divine Shepherd of Souls

O Christ—Thou rarest flower of hearts—Thou didst sail on the storm-tossed lake of prejudiced minds. Its evil-scented, gloomy thought-waves lashed Thy lily-tender soul. They crucified Thee with their evil. Yet Thou didst shed the aroma of goodness and forgiveness, and didst help them to be purified by remorse, so helping them to become attractively sweet-scented with Thine all-loving Flower-Soul.

O Thou Great Lover of error-torn brothers—an unseen monument of the mightiest miracle of love was established in each heart when the magic wand of Thy voice uttered: “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Thou hast healed the cataract of hatred, and now we have grown to see: “Love thine enemies as thyself, for they are thy brothers—though sick and sleeping.”

Thou hast taught us not to increase their delirious kicks of hatred by battering them with the bludgeons of revenge. Thine undying sympathy hath inspired us to heal and wake our brothers, suffering from the delirium of anger, by the soothing salve of our forgiveness.

Thy crucifixion reminds us of the daily crucifixion of our fortitude by trials, of our wisdom by ignorance, of our self-control by the scathing hands of temptation, and of our love by misunderstanding.

Thy test on the cross proved the victory of Thy wisdom over ignorance, of Thy soul over flesh, of Thy happiness over pain, and of Thy love over hatred. So are we heartened to bear our crosses bravely and pleasantly. Teach us to pour out sweetness when crucified by harshness, to bear with calmness the assault of worries, and to give understanding unceasingly to those who unjustly hate us.

O Shepherd of Souls, wandering hearts are of themselves seeking the one fold of divine devotion. We have heard the ever-calling music of Thine infinite kindness. Our one desire is to be at home with Thee, to receive the Cosmic Father with joyous, open eyes of wisdom, and to know that we are all sons of our own One God.

Teach us to conquer the Satan of dividing selfishness, which prevents the gathering of all brother-souls into the one fold of Spirit.

Calling to one another by the watchword: “Love him who loves you, and love all who love you not,” let us rally beneath the canopy of the universal sense of Christ-Oneness. Amen.

Now, Pilate had prepared a tablet to be placed upon the cross on which was written in the tongues of Hebrew, Latin and Greek these words of truth: JESUS THE CHRIST, KING OF THE JEWS. And this was placed upon the cross. The priests were angered when they read these words upon the tablet of the cross. And then they prayed that Pilate would not say, he is the Christ, king of the Jews; but say, he claims to be the Christ, king of the Jews. But Pilate said, What I have written, I have written; let it stand. (Aquarian Gospel 170:16-19)

Once again Pilate witnesses to the truth about Jesus. Though it was a useless gesture on his part, it demonstrates how powerful was the effect of Jesus on him that his realization of Jesus' true Messiahship was so unshaken even then. When others decried Jesus, saying that his crucifixion was proof he was not the Messiah, Pilate, the alien Roman, knew he was in truth the Christ.

That night Pilate's wife, Claudia, left the palace in secret and took refuge with the followers of Jesus, never returning to Pilate.

The Jewish multitudes who saw the Lord upon the cross were wild with joy; they said, All hail, fake king! You who would tear the temple down and in three days would build it up again, why don't you save yourself? If you are Christ, the son of God, come from the cross; then all men will believe.

The priests and scribes and Pharisees looked on the scene and scoffed; they said, he rescued others from the grave; why doesn't he save himself?

The Jewish soldiers and the Roman guards who came from Galilee were loud in mocking and deriding him.

One of the other men upon the cross joined in the mockery; he said, If you are Christ, you have the power; just speak the Word, and save yourself and me. The other man upon the cross rebuked the man; he said, You wretch! have you no fear of God? This man is innocent of any crime while you and I are guilty and are paying up the debts we owe.

And then he said to Jesus, Lord, I know thy kingdom comes, the kingdom that the world can never comprehend; and when thou comest on the clouds of heaven, remember me. And Jesus said, Behold, for I will meet you in the realm of souls this day. (Aquarian Gospel 170:20-30)

According to ancient documents, this man who appealed to Jesus was a fallen Essene. He had become a robber on the way to Egypt, and had met the Holy Family when they were going there. He befriended and helped them on their way. For this good deed he was able to be with Jesus at the end of his life and be received by him into the astral world.

Now, standing near unto the cross were many women from Judea and from Galilee. Among them were the mother of the Lord and Miriam, and Mary, mother of the two apostles, James and John, and Mary Magdalene, and Martha, Ruth and Mary, and Salome. When Jesus saw his mother and the

singer Miriam standing close beside the cross and John a-near, he said to John, In your most tender care I leave my mother and my sister Miriam. And John replied, While they shall live my home shall be the home of your thrice blessed mother and your sister Miriam. (Aquarian Gospel 170:31-35)

From this time onward Saint John was as a son to the Virgin Mary. Because of his exceptional purity and devotion he was able to take the place of Jesus in caring for her.

According to a custom of the Jews, to those who were the executioners of law and took the lives of criminals, belonged the garments of the criminals. So when the Lord was crucified, the Roman guards divided up among themselves the garments of the Lord. But when they found his coat it was a seamless coat and highly prized. For it the guards cast lots, and thus determined who should have the prize. And thus the scripture was fulfilled, which said, And they divided all my robes among themselves, and for my vesture they cast lots. (Aquarian Gospel 170:36-40)

In his previous life as David, Jesus had written: "The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.... They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Psalms 22:16, 18). Through the books of the prophets there were many prophecies of Jesus, especially about his passion, yet none heeded them until afterward.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy One

Now, at the sixth hour of the day, although the sun was at its height, the day became as dark as night; and men sought lanterns and they built fires upon the hills that they might see. And when the sun refused to shine and darkness came, the Lord exclaimed, Heloi! Heloi! lama sabachthani (Thou sun! thou sun! why hast thou forsaken me?) The people did not understand the words he spoke; they thought he spoke the name Elijah and they said, he calls upon Elijah in his hour of need; now we will see if he will come. (Aquarian Gospel 171:1-5)

Jesus was an Essene, and the Essenes believed that the sun was a divine manifestation, imparting spiritual powers to both body and mind. They faced the rising and setting sun and recited prayers of worship, refusing, upon rising in the morning, to speak a single word until the conclusion of those prayers. They did not consider the sun was a god, but a symbol of the One God of Light and Life. It was, though, felt that appropriate prayers directed toward the sun would evoke a divine response. When Jesus met the king of Kashmir after his resurrection as recorded in the *Bhavishya Maha Purana*, he told him that part of his teaching was: "Meditate upon him Whose abode is in the center of the sun." This explains Jesus' words which until the Aquarian Gospel was published remained unknown and misunderstood.

And Jesus said, I thirst. A Roman soldier dipped a sponge in vinegar and myrrh, and placed it to his lips.

Now, at the ninth hour of the day the earth began to quake, and in the darkness of that sunless day, a flood of golden light appeared above the cross; and from the light a voice was heard which said, Lo, it is done.

And Jesus said, My Father-God, into thy hands I give my soul.

A Roman soldier in compassion said, This agony is all too great; relief shall come. And with a spear he pierced his heart and it was done; the son of man was dead. (Aquarian Gospel 171:6-10)

This is quite different from the official account of the Jesus' death. Whether Jesus left his body consciously, as is the way of yogis, or whether the Roman soldier killed him with the spear is not made clear here. But, as Yogananda's longtime disciple, Sri Daya Mata, once said to me: "It is not the mode of Jesus' death that matters, but *who he was* that was crucified."

And then the earth was shocked again; the city of Jerusalem rocked to and fro; the hills were rent and tombs were opened up; and people thought they saw the dead arise and walk the streets. The temple quivered and the veil between the sanctuary and the Holy Place was rent in twain, and

consternation reigned through all the place. The Roman guard who watched the body on the cross exclaimed, This surely was the son of God who died. And then the people hurried down from Calvary. The priests, the Pharisees and scribes were filled with fear. They sought the cover of their synagogues and homes and said, Behold, the wrath of God! (Aquarian Gospel 171:12-16)

People thought they saw the dead arise and walk the streets. Apparently they only saw the astral bodies of the dead.

They sought the cover of their synagogues and homes and said, Behold, the wrath of God! But they did not acknowledge their crime and repent.

The great day of the Jewish pasch was near, and Jews could not by law permit a criminal to hang upon the cross upon the Sabbath day. And so they prayed that Pilate would remove the bodies of the men that had been crucified. And Pilate sent his guards to Calvary to note if all the men were dead.

And when the guards were gone, two aged Jews came to the palace door to see the governor, and they were members of the highest council of the Jews; yet they believed that Jesus was a prophet sent from God. The one was Rabbi Joseph, the Arimathean counsellor, and he was just and loved the law of God. And Nicodemus was the other one who came. These men fell down at Pilate's feet and prayed that they might take the body of the Nazarene and lay it in a tomb. And Pilate gave consent. Now, Joseph had prepared a costly mixture to embalm the body of the Lord, about a hundred pounds of aloes and of myrrh, and this they took and hastened out to Calvary.

And when the guards returned they said, The Nazarene is dead; the malefactors are alive. And Pilate told the guards to go and smite the living men so they would die, and then to give their bodies to the flames; but give the body of the Nazarene to rabbis who would call for it. The soldiers did as Pilate said.

The rabbis came and took away the body of the Lord and when they had prepared it with the spices they had bought, they laid it in the new-made tomb that had been made for Joseph in a solid rock. And then they rolled a stone up to the sepulchre.

The priests were fearful lest the friends of Jesus would go forth at night and take away his body and then report that he had risen from the dead, as he had said; and they requested that the governor would send his soldiers to the tomb to guard the body of the dead. But Pilate said, I will not send a Roman guard; but you have Jewish soldiers and may send a hundred men with a centurion to guard the tomb. And then they sent a hundred soldiers out to guard the tomb. (Aquarian Gospel 171:17-36)

In this way there would be one hundred witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus!

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Two

The tomb in which they laid the body of the Lord was in a garden, rich with flowers, the garden of Siloam, and Joseph's home was near. Before the watch began Caiaphas sent a company of priests out to the garden of Siloam that they might be assured that Jesus' body was within the tomb. They rolled away the stone; they saw the body there, and then they placed the stone again before the door. And Pilate sent his scribe who placed upon the stone the seal of Rome, in such a way that he who moved the stone would break the seal. To break this Roman seal meant death to him who broke the seal. (Aquarian Gospel 172:1-5)

More proof of Jesus' resurrection is being set in place. An entire company of priests saw that Jesus' body was in the tomb before it was sealed by a seal that all the guarding soldiers could testify was unbroken until Jesus came forth from the tomb.

The Jewish soldiers all were sworn to faithfulness; and then the watch began. At midnight all was well, but suddenly the tomb became a blaze of light, and down the garden walk a troupe of white-clad soldiers marched in single file. They came up to the tomb and marched and countermarched before the door.

The Jewish soldiers were alert; they thought that friends had come to steal the body of the Nazarene. The captain of the guard cried out to charge. They charged; but not a white-clad soldier fell. They did not even stop; they marched and countermarched among the frightened men. They stood upon the Roman seal; they did not speak; they unsheathed not their swords; it was the Silent Brotherhood.

The Jewish soldiers fled in fear; they fell upon the ground. They stood apart until the white-clad soldiers marched away, and then the light about the tomb grew dim. Then they returned; the stone was in its place; the seal was not disturbed, and they resumed their watch. (Aquarian Gospel 172:6-14)

It was the Silent Brotherhood. Members of the Silent Brotherhood came at the birth of Jesus (Aquarian Gospel 3:6-7), and now they attend his resurrection. What was the Silent Brotherhood? No explanation is given, but we can assume that it was a spiritual association of highly developed individuals. They are mentioned several times in the Aquarian Gospel.

Now, Jesus did not sleep within the tomb. The body is the manifest of soul; but soul is soul without its manifest. And in the realm of souls, unmanifest, the Lord went forth and taught. He opened up the prison doors and set the prisoners free; he broke the chains of captive souls, and led the

captives to the light; he sat in council with the patriarchs and prophets of the olden times; the masters of all times and climes he met, and in the great assemblies he stood forth and told the story of his life on earth, and of his death in sacrifice for man, and of his promises to clothe himself again in garb of flesh and walk with his disciples, just to prove the possibilities of man; to give to them the key of life, of death, and of the resurrection of the dead.

In council all the masters sat and talked about the revelations of the coming age, when she, the Holy Breath, shall fill the earth and air with holy breath, and open up the way of man to perfectness and endless life. (Aquarian Gospel 172:15-24)

The body is the manifest of soul; but soul is soul without its manifest. All of creation proceeds from the subtlest causal realms down through the astral regions and then manifests as the material universe. It is the same with the manifestations of the spirit: first the causal bodies, then the astral bodies and then the material body. Just as creation emerges from Spirit, so all the bodies of an individual emerge from the spirit.

The Lord went forth and taught. He opened up the prison doors and set the prisoners free; he broke the chains of captive souls, and led the captives to the light. Even in the astral worlds Jesus was Messiah and Savior, bearing witness to his mission before those great souls that had gone before him.

He stood forth and told the story of his life on earth, and of his death in sacrifice for man, and of his promises to clothe himself again in garb of flesh and walk with his disciples, just to prove the possibilities of man; to give to them the key of life, of death, and of the resurrection of the dead. All the works and words of Jesus were not for his glorification, but rather were intended “just to prove the possibilities of man” to man. “To give to them the key of life, of death, and of the resurrection of the dead.” His purpose was to show every one of us our divine potential which he realized and showed to the world. Jesus is not unique, but is what every human being is destined to be. This is the glorious Gospel of the true Christ: “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; *which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*” (Colossians 1:25). So said Saint Paul, another Christ.

The revelations of the coming age, when she, the Holy Breath, shall fill the earth and air with holy breath, and open up the way of man to perfectness and endless life. This is about the Aquarian Age which began in the year 2000.

The garden of Siloam was silent on the Sabbath day; the Jewish soldiers watched and no one else approached the tomb; but on the following night the scene was changed. At midnight every Jewish soldier heard a voice which

said, *Adon Mashich Cumi*, which meant, Lord Christ arise. And they supposed again that friends of Jesus were alert, were coming up to take the body of their Lord away.

The soldiers were alert with swords unsheathed and drawn, and then they heard the words again. It seemed as though the voice was everywhere, and yet they saw no man. The soldiers blanched with fear, and still to flee meant death for cowardice, and so they stood and watched.

Again, and this was just before the sun arose, the heavens blazed with light, a distant thunder seemed to herald forth a coming storm; and then the earth began to quake and in the rays of light they saw a form descend from heaven. They said, Behold an angel comes. And then they heard again, *Adon Mashich Cumi*. And then the white-robed form tramped on the Roman seal and then he tore it into shreds; he took the mighty stone in hand as though it were a pebble from the brook, and cast it to the side.

And Jesus opened up his eyes and said, All hail the rising sun; the coming of the day of righteousness! And then he folded up his burial gown, his head bands and his coverings and laid them all aside.

He rose, and for a moment stood beside the white-robed form. The weaker soldiers fell upon the ground, and hid their faces in their hands; the stronger stood and watched. They saw the body of the Nazarene transmute; they saw it change from mortal to immortal form, and then it disappeared. The soldiers heard a voice from somewhere; yea, from everywhere, it said, Peace, peace on earth; good will to men. They looked, the tomb was empty and the Lord had risen as he said. (Aquarian Gospel 172:25-42)

He folded up his burial gown, his head bands and his coverings and laid them all aside. We must not forget that Jesus had been wrapped up like a mummy with *one hundred pounds* of aromatics in the windings. Yet he passed through all that as though it did not exist.

They saw the body of the Nazarene transmute; they saw it change from mortal to immortal form. How they recognized what they saw, and exactly what they saw we do not know, but somehow it was communicated to them. From then on the body of Jesus was purely divine light: real, but not material yet able to be touched. This seems contradictory because we forget that everything at all times are manifestations of Divine Light.

Peace, peace on earth; good will to men. Now at the consummation of Jesus life the angels proclaim what they did at his birth (Aquarian Gospel 3:13).

The soldiers hastened to Jerusalem, and to the priests, and said, Behold, the Nazarene has risen as he said; the tomb is empty and the body of the man is gone; we know not where it is. And then they told about the wonders of the night.

Caiaphas called a council of the Jews; he said, The news must not go forth that Jesus has arisen from the dead; for if it does all men will say, he is the

son of God, and all our testimonies will be proven false.

And then they called the hundred soldiers in and said to them, You know not where the body of the Nazarene is resting now, so if you will go forth and say that his disciples came and stole the body while you slept, each one of you shall have a silver piece, and we will make it right with Pilate for the breaking of the Roman seal. The soldiers did as they were paid to do. (Aquarian Gospel 172:43-50)

How tragic that they could not rejoice with all the righteous at the triumph of Jesus that was the triumph for all men.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Three

Now, when the rabbis took the body of the Lord and laid it in the tomb, the mother of the Lord, and Mary Magdalene, and Miriam were there. And when the body was entombed they went to Joseph's home and there abode. They did not know that Jewish soldiers had been sent to guard the tomb, nor that the Roman seal was placed upon the stone; so in the morning of the first day of the week they hastened to the tomb with spices to further embalm the Lord.

But when they reached the tomb they found the terror-stricken soldiers running frantically about. The women did not know the cause; but when they found an empty tomb they were excited and aggrieved. The soldiers did not know what had transpired; they could not tell who took the body of the Lord away.

And Mary Magdalene ran with haste toward Jerusalem to tell the news to Peter and the rest. She met, just by the gateway, Peter, James and John; she said, Some one has rolled away the stone and carried off the body of the Lord. And then the three disciples ran toward the tomb; but John was fleet of foot and was the first to reach the tomb; he found it empty; the body of his Lord was gone. When Peter came he went into the tomb, and found the grave clothes neatly folded up and laid aside. Now, the disciples did not comprehend the scene. They did not know the meaning of their Lord when he informed them just before his death that he would rise from death upon the first day of the week. The three disciples went back to Jerusalem; the mother of the Lord and Miriam went not away. (Aquarian Gospel 173:1-13)

It is amazing that both the enemies and the followers of Jesus did not believe, though in differing ways.

And Mary looked within the tomb, and saw two masters sitting there; they said, Why do you weep? And Mary said, Because my Lord is gone; some one has carried off the body of my Lord; I know not where it is.

Then she arose and looked around; a man stood near and said, Why do you weep? whom do you seek? And Mary thought it was the gardener and said, If you have borne away the body of my Lord, O tell me where it is that I may lay it in a sacred tomb. And then the man came near and said, My Mother! and Mary said, My Lord! The eyes of Miriam were opened up and she beheld the Lord.

And Jesus said, Behold, I told you as we walked along the way up to the cross that I would meet you at the sepulchre upon the first day of the week. Now, Mary Magdalene was sitting not a great way off, and Jesus went to her and said, Why seek the living among the dead? Your Lord has risen as he said,

Now, Mary, look! Behold my face! Then Mary knew it was the Lord; that he had risen from the dead.

And then Salome, and Mary (mother of the two disciples, James and John), Joanna, and the other women who had come out to the tomb, saw Jesus, and they talked with him. (Aquarian Gospel 173:14-24)

Mary looked within the tomb, and saw two masters sitting there. So it was not angels as generally supposed, but two members of the Silent Brotherhood.

And then the man came near and said, My Mother! and Mary said, My Lord! Further, Jesus speaks first to his ever-virgin mother, not to Mary Magdalene; but she recognized him when he spoke.

The eyes of Miriam were opened up and she beheld the Lord. This is interesting: Miriam could not see Jesus at first.

Now, Mary Magdalene was sitting not a great way off, and Jesus went to her and said, Why seek the living among the dead? Not an angel, but Jesus himself said these words to Saint Mary.

And Mary Magdalene was filled with joy. She sought again for Peter, James and John; she found them and she said, Lo, I have seen the Lord; and Miriam has seen the Lord; the mother of the Lord has seen the Lord; and many more have seen his face; for he has risen from the dead. But the disciples thought that she had simply seen a vision of the Lord. They did not think that he had risen from the dead. Then Mary found the other members of the company and told them all about the risen Lord; but none of them believed. (Aquarian Gospel 173:25-28)

Still unbelief!

Now, Peter, James and John were in the garden of Siloam; were talking with the gardener about the happenings of the day when John beheld a stranger coming up the walk. The stranger lifted up his hands and said, I am. Then the disciples knew it was the Lord.

And Jesus said, Behold, for human flesh can be transmuted into higher form, and then that higher form is master of things manifest, and can, at will, take any form. And so I come to you in form familiar unto you. Go speak to Thomas, and the other men whom I have called to be apostles unto men, and say to them, that he whom Jews and Romans thought was dead is walking in the garden of Siloam; will stand again before the priests and Pharisees within the temple in Jerusalem; and will appear unto the sages of the world. Tell them that I will go before them into Galilee. (Aquarian Gospel 173:29-37)

The stranger lifted up his hands and said, I am. Then the disciples knew it was the Lord. When Jesus was incarnated as Moses, "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou

say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:13, 14). And so now Jesus proclaims his oneness with God by seemingly saying I AM.

I have, however a speculation that this passage may have a much greater meaning. In his viewing of the events set down in the Aquarian Gospel, Dowling heard the people speak in their usual language, that of Jesus being Aramaic, but he got the impression of the meaning psychically. That is why we need not think that every word is infallible.

Jesus was a Nath Yogi, and the Nath Yogi sadhana is Soham Yoga, meditation based on the mantra Soham which means “I am That.” And Nath Yogis often greet one another: “Soham!” Also, “I Am That I Am” is the literal translation of *Soham Asmi*, “I Am That I Am,” since Soham means “I Am That” and Asmi means “I Am.” This expression is found in the two oldest Upanishads, the Isha and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads. In the Isha Upanishad, we find it in the sixteenth verse which concludes: *Yo sav asau purushah; Soham asmi*: “I am that Purusha [Spirit-Self]: I Am That [Soham] I Am [Asmi].” In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, we are told: “In the beginning this [world or cosmos] was only the Supreme Self [Paramatman], in the form of the Purusha. Looking around he saw nothing else than Himself. And He first said, I am Soham [Soham asmi]” (1:4:1). Thus, Soham is the “first speaking” of the Absolute Itself: the expression of the knowledge and knowing of the Self. We, too, are Soham. And *Soham Asmi*—“I Am That I Am”—is exactly what God told Moses was his Name (Exodus 3:14). At the core of every sentient being Soham exists as the Self—is the Self. For more on this see *Soham Yoga, the Yoga of the Self and Light of Soham*.

And Jesus said, Behold, for human flesh can be transmuted into higher form, and then that higher form is master of things manifest, and can, at will, take any form. This is the witness-experience of great saints throughout the ages, especially in India. My friend, Durga Prasad Sahai, was present when his guru, Swami Keshavananda (written about in *Autobiography of a Yogi*), manifested to his disciple, Swami Satyananda. (In the photograph of Yogananda with Swami Keshavananda found in *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Swami Satyananda is standing to Keshavanandaji’s right.) Yogananda himself also appeared in living physical form after his mahasamadhi. I read the account of a woman who was reading *Autobiography of a Yogi*. Closing her eyes she prayed: “O Yogananda, tell me if yoga is my path!” When she opened her eyes he was standing in front of her. He extended his hand and she took hold of it. Then he disappeared. But he had been physically there. Once when a friend of mine was dangerously ill out alone in a forest, Yogananda materialized and led someone to find him. If “the righteous live for evermore” (Wisdom of Solomon 5:15), what then of those who are perfectly one with God?

And so I come to you in form familiar unto you. Once after the passing of Yogananda, Doctor Lewis, his first American disciple, saw a great Light. A voice came from that Light and said: “I came to you as Yogananda.” The Beloved Disciple wrote: “God is Light” (I John 1:5).

Then Peter, James and John went forth and found their brethren and said, Behold, the Lord is risen from the dead, and we have seen him face to face. The brethren were amazed at what the three disciples said; but still they looked upon their words as idle talk and they believed them not. (Aquarian Gospel 173:38, 39)

No comment!

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Four

Towards the evening of the resurrection day, two friends of Jesus, Zachus and Cleophas of Emmaus, seven miles away, were going to their home. And as they walked and talked about the things that had occurred a stranger joined their company. He said, My friends, you seem discouraged and are sad. Has some great grief upon you come? Cleophas said, Are you a stranger in Judea, and know not of the thrilling things that have transpired here? The stranger said, What things? To what do you refer? Cleophas said, Have you not heard about the man from Galilee who was a prophet mighty in both word and deed? A man whom many thought had come to found again the kingdom of the Jews, and drive the Romans from the city of Jerusalem and be himself the king? The stranger said, Tell me about this man.

Cleophas said, his name was Jesus; he was born in Bethlehem; his home was up in Galilee. He loved the people as he loved himself. He was, in truth, a master sent from God, for he had matchless power. He healed the sick and made the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and even raised the dead. The Jewish scribes and Pharisees were jealous of his fame and power, and they arrested him; by perjured witnesses they proved him guilty of a score of crimes, and on last Friday he was taken to the place of skulls and crucified. He died and he was buried in a rich man's tomb, out in the garden of Siloam. This very morning when his friends went to the tomb they found it empty; the body of the Lord was gone. And now the news has spread abroad that he has risen from the dead. (Aquarian Gospel 174:1-15)

He loved the people as he loved himself. This is the first thing Cleophas says in describing Jesus, for this is the proof that he was one with God, the Lover of Mankind. So many devotees are busy trying to love God above all things, but they forget that they must also love all sentient beings above themselves. Not doing so, they do not attain perfection in love of God.

He was, in truth, a master sent from God. Cleophas does not say Jesus is God the Creator come to earth, but that he is a Master sent from God. This is just what any intelligent devotee in India would say about a great Master such as Sivananda. Certainly such a Master is an avatar, but Yogananda explained very clearly that an avatar is a totally liberated person that has returned to earth for the liberation of others.

The stranger said, Yes, I have heard about this man; but it seems strange that after all the things that Jewish prophets long ago foretold concerning him that when he came men knew him not. This man was born to demonstrate the Christ to men, and it is just to say that Jesus is the Christ. According to the word, this Jesus came to suffer at the hands of men, to give his life as pattern

for the sons of men; to rise from death that men might know the way to rise from death. And then the stranger told the two disciples all about the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, and read to them a multitude of things that had been written of this man from Galilee.

And now the men had reached their home, and as the night was near they importuned the stranger to abide with them. And he went in with them and as they sat about the table at the evening meal, he took a piece of bread, and blessed it in the name of Christ. And instantly their eyes were opened up, and they perceived that he, the stranger, was the Lord, the man from Galilee; that he had risen from the dead; and then the form of Jesus disappeared.

When he had gone, the two disciples were amazed. They said, Did not our hearts burn with delight while he was talking to us by the way and opening up the testimonies of the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms? Then Zachus and Cleophas went back to Jerusalem, and everywhere they went they said, Lo, we have seen the Lord; he walked with us to Emmaus; he ate with us the evening meal, and broke for us the bread of life. (Aquarian Gospel 174:16-26)

This man was born to demonstrate the Christ to men, and it is just to say that Jesus is the Christ. According to the word, this Jesus came to suffer at the hands of men, to give his life as pattern for the sons of men; to rise from death that men might know the way to rise from death. Here we see the true mission of Jesus, and it is not to be a blood sacrifice so sinners can get into heaven by “pleading the blood of Jesus.” Rather, it is to show the way to Christhood to all men: at least to those evolved enough to be interested.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Five

The evening of the resurrection day had come; the ten apostles were in Simon's house in Bethany. The lawyer, Thomas, was not there. The doors were closed and barred, because the Jews had said that they would drive the Galileans from the land.

And as they talked, lo, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said, Peace! peace! And the disciples shrank in fear; they thought it was a phantom that they saw. And Jesus said, Why are you troubled thus? Why do you fear? I am no phantom form. I am your Lord, and I have risen from the dead. I often said, I will arise; but you believed me not; and now come here and see. A phantom has not flesh and bones and brawn, like I possess. Come now, and clasp my hands, and touch my feet, and lay your hands upon my head. And every one came up and clasped his hands, and touched his feet, and laid his hands upon his head. And Jesus said, Have you here anything to eat. And they brought out a fragment of a fish; he ate it in the presence of them all and then the ten believed. Nathaniel said, And now we know that he has risen from the dead; he stands a surety of the resurrection of the dead. And Jesus disappeared. (Aquarian Gospel 175:1-11)

Jesus himself had to prove to those who should most have believed him that he truly had risen and possessed a true, though glorified and transmuted, body.

Now, Mary, Martha, Ruth and Lazarus were in their home, and they had heard the rumor that their Lord had risen from the dead, and Martha said, It cannot be, for such a thing has never happened since the world began. But Mary said, Did not the Lord bring back our brother from the dead? and he could surely bring himself to life again. And as they talked, the Lord stood in their midst and said, All hail! For I am risen from the dead, first fruitage of the grave! And Martha ran and brought the chair in which the Lord had ever loved to sit, and Jesus sat down on the chair. And for a long, long time they talked about the trial, and the scenes of Calvary and of the garden of Siloam. Then Jesus said, Fear not, for I will be your boon companion all the way; and then he disappeared. (Aquarian Gospel 175:12-19)

It would not matter when Jesus would seem to depart from them, for in spirit and indeed in their hearts he would be with them always, and he will be with us all the way if we really wish him to be.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Six

Ravanna, prince of India, gave a feast. His palace in Orissa was the place where men of thought from all the farther East were wont to meet. Ravanna was the prince with whom child Jesus went to India many years ago. The feast was made in honor of the wise men of the East. Among the guests were Meng-ste, Vidyapati and Lamaas. The wise men sat about the table talking of the needs of India and the world. (Aquarian Gospel 176:1-5)

We see here that true Masters do not speak of empty philosophy or themselves, but about the needs of the world. And they do not do that theoretically, but to find out the ways to fill those needs.

The door unto the banquet hall was in the east; a vacant chair was at the table to the east. And as the wise men talked a stranger entered, unannounced, and raising up his hands in benediction said, All hail! A halo rested on his head, and light, unlike the light of sun, filled all the room. The wise men rose and bowed their heads and said, All hail!

And Jesus sat down in the vacant chair; and then the wise men knew it was the Hebrew prophet who had come. And Jesus said, Behold, for I am risen from the dead. Look at my hands, my feet, my side. The Roman soldiers pierced my hands and feet with nails; and then one pierced my heart. They put me in a tomb, and then I wrestled with the conqueror of men. I conquered death, I stamped upon him and arose; brought immortality to light and painted on the walls of time a rainbow for the sons of men; and what I did all men shall do. This gospel of the resurrection of the dead is not confined to Jew and Greek; it is the heritage of every man of every time and clime; and I am here a demonstration of the power of man. Then he arose and pressed the hand of every man and of the royal host, and said, Behold, I am not myth made of the fleeting winds, for I am flesh and bone and brawn; but I can cross the borderland at will.

And then they talked together there a long, long time. Then Jesus said, I go my way, but you shall go to all the world and preach the gospel of the omnipotence of men, the power of truth, the resurrection of the dead. He who believes this gospel of the son of man shall never die; the dead shall live again.

Then Jesus disappeared, but he had sown the seed. The words of life were spoken in Orissa, and all of India heard. (Aquarian Gospel 176:6-21)

They put me in a tomb, and then I wrestled with the conqueror of men. I conquered death, I stamped upon him and arose; brought immortality to light and painted on the walls of time a rainbow for the sons of men; and what I did all men shall do. This struggle of Jesus with the principle of death is unique to the Aquarian Gospel. Again we see that Jesus is a

revelation of the awakened human being, not a God whose deeds none can duplicate. I well remember when as a teenager at a “youth meeting” I mentioned the example of Jesus. Immediately a girl (who did not last on the spiritual path) snapped: “But Jesus was divine!” This is the detriment worked on its adherents by exoteric Christianity.

This gospel of the resurrection of the dead is not confined to Jew and Greek; it is the heritage of every man of every time and clime; and I am here a demonstration of the power of man. Jesus is not a demonstration of unattainable divinity, but of the divine power inherent in all humanity. Rather than being convinced by his example that Jesus is uniquely God, we should be inspired and motivated to follow his path to the same Christhood. The truth is, exoteric Christianity stands in the way of the true Gospel of “Christ in you the hope of Glory” and prevents people from laying hold on the kingdom in their own right.

I go my way, but you shall go to all the world and preach the gospel of the omnipotence of men, the power of truth, the resurrection of the dead. He who believes this gospel of the son of man shall never die; the dead shall live again. Here is the effect of the true Gospel of Christ: omnipotence is revealed in each aspirant who shall resurrect into life.

The magian priests were in the silence in Persepolis, and Kaspar, and the magian masters who were first to greet the child of promise in the shepherd’s home in Bethlehem, were with the priests. And Jesus came and sat with them; a crown of light was on his head. And when the silence ended Kaspar said, A master from the royal council of the Silent Brotherhood is here; let us give praise. And all the priests and masters stood and said, All hail! What message from the royal council do you bring?

And Jesus said, My brothers of the Silent Brotherhood, peace, peace on earth; goodwill to men! The problem of the ages has been solved; a son of man has risen from the dead; has shown that human flesh can be transmuted into flesh divine. Before the eyes of men this flesh in which I come to you was changed with speed of light from human flesh. And so I am the message that I bring to you. To you I come, the first of all the race to be transmuted to the image of the AM. What I have done, all men will do; and what I am, all men will be. But Jesus said no more. In one short breath he told the story of his mission to the sons of men, and then he disappeared. (Aquarian Gospel 176:22-31)

The problem of the ages has been solved; a son of man has risen from the dead; has shown that human flesh can be transmuted into flesh divine. That is, ordinary matter can be transmuted into Divine Light, including the body of the liberated Master, something that the Taoists have held through the ages.

Before the eyes of men this flesh in which I come to you was changed with speed of light from human flesh. And so I am the message that I bring to you. See “The Law of Miracles” chapter in *Autobiography of a Yogi*. There Yogananda explains as fully as can be done the principles governing miracles, which includes that of the speed of light. What

thrilling words: "I am the message that I bring to you!" This can one day be said by us as well.

To you I come, the first of all the race to be transmuted to the image of the AM. What I have done, all men will do; and what I am, all men will be. One more: this and this alone is the Christian Gospel. All else is ignorance and darkness.

The magi said, Some time ago we read this promise, now fulfilled, upon the dial plate of heaven. And then we saw this man who has just demonstrated unto us the power of man to rise from carnal flesh and blood to flesh of God, a babe in Bethlehem. And after many years he came and sat with us in these same groves; he told the story of his human life, of trials, sore temptations, buffetings and woes. He pressed along the thorny way of life until he had risen and overthrown the strongest foes of God and man; and he is now the only master of the human race whose flesh has been transmuted into flesh divine. He is the God-man of today; but every one of earth shall overcome and be like him, a son of God. (Aquarian Gospel 176:32-37)

He is the God-man of today; but every one of earth shall overcome and be like him, a son of God. So it is obvious that Christianity has hardly begun to be known after two thousand years. Now that the Aquarian Age has arrived this will certainly change, but not overnight.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Seven

It was the Sabbath day and many priests and scribes and Pharisees were in the temple in Jerusalem. Caiaphas, Annas and some other ruling Jews were there.

A stranger came in garb of fisherman and asked, What has become of Jesus who is called the Christ? Is he not teaching in the temple now? The Jews replied, That man from Galilee was crucified a week ago, because he was a dangerous man, a vile, seditious man.

The stranger asked, Where did you put the body of this man from Galilee? Where is his tomb? The Jews replied, We do not know. His followers came at night and stole the body from the tomb in which it lay and carried it away, and then declared that he had risen from the dead.

The stranger asked, How do you know that his disciples stole the body from the tomb? was any one a witness of the theft? The Jews replied, We had a hundred soldiers at the place, and every one of them declares that his disciples stole the body from the tomb.

The stranger asked, Will any one of all your hundred men stand forth and say, I saw the body stolen from the tomb? The Jews replied, We do not know; these men are men of truth; we cannot doubt their word.

The stranger said, You priests and scribes and Pharisees hear me: I was a witness of the facts, was in the garden of Siloam, and stood among your hundred men. And this I know that not a man among your hundred men will say, I saw the body stolen from the tomb. And I will testify before the God of heaven and earth, The body was not stolen from the tomb; the man from Galilee is risen from the dead.

And then the priests and scribes and Pharisees rushed up to seize the man and cast him out. But instantly the fisherman became a radiant form of light, and priests and scribes and Pharisees fell back in deadly fear; they saw the man from Galilee.

And Jesus looked upon the frightened men and said, This is the body that you stoned beyond the city's gates and crucified on Calvary. Behold my hands, my feet, my side and see the wounds the soldiers made. If you believe that I am phantom made of air, come forth and handle me; ghosts do not carry flesh and bones. I came to earth to demonstrate the resurrection of the dead, the transmutation of the flesh of carnal man to flesh of man divine.

Then Jesus raised his hands and said, Peace be to every one of you; goodwill to all mankind. And then he disappeared. (Aquarian Gospel 177:1-19)

I was a witness of the facts, was in the garden of Siloam, and stood among your hundred men. And this I know that not a man among your hundred men will say, I saw the body stolen

from the tomb. Jesus was present in subtle body observing the situation before he reentered his body and arose.

Peace be to every one of you; goodwill to all mankind. No matter what these people had done, including the engineering of his torture and death, Jesus only response is to will peace and goodwill to them, and throughout the ages to all those who have rejected, mocked and even denied his existence.

Now, Thomas, had not seen the Lord since he had risen from the dead, and when the ten averred that they had seen and talked with him he said, Until I see the nail prints in his hands and feet, the spear wound in his side, and talk with him as I have talked with him before, I cannot have a reason to believe that he is risen from the dead.

At Simon's house in Bethany the men from Galilee had met. It was the evening of the first day of the week, and on the morrow all would turn their faces toward their homes. The eleven apostles all were there: the doors were closed and barred, and Jesus came and said, Peace be to all!

And then he said to Thomas, Friend, you do not know that I have risen from the dead; the time has come for you to know. Come here and see the nail prints in my hands, the spear wound in my side, and talk with me as you have often talked with me.

And Thomas came and saw and then exclaimed, My master, and my Lord! I do not now believe, I know that you are risen from the dead.

And Jesus said, Because you see me you believe, and blessed are your eyes; but blessed thrice are they who see me not and yet believe.

Then Jesus vanished from their sight, but the disciples were established in their faith. (Aquarian Gospel 177:20-29)

Thomas had said that he would not believe in Jesus' resurrection "until I see the nail prints in his hands and feet, the spear wound in his side, and talk with him as I have talked with him before." And to him Jesus said: "Come here and see the nail prints in my hands, the spear wound in my side, and talk with me as you have often talked with me," for in his omniscience he knew every word Thomas had spoken.

I have known of more than one instance when a saint has repeated the exact words of someone. For example, one time a friend of mine was very ill and could not go to see Anandamayi Ma when she came to Delhi. When a friend of hers was leaving to see Ma, she said: "Don't say anything to her, but O how I wish she would send me just some little thing as a sign of her blessing!" To her joy and surprise her friend returned with a tiny earthen pot with sweets inside and told my friend: "When I was leaving, Ma called for me and handed me this, saying: 'Please take this little thing to Raihana for me even though it is just some little thing. And please tell her what I have said.'"

And Thomas came and saw and then exclaimed, My master, and my Lord! he did not say: "My Lord and my God" as the corrupted official Gospel says, but that Jesus was Master and Lord in a spiritual sense, not that he was God incarnate.

I do not now believe, I know that you are risen from the dead. Many have said the same: “I do not *believe*; I *know*.”

Because you see me you believe, and blessed are your eyes; but blessed thrice are they who see me not and yet believe. Jesus does not rebuke Thomas for doubting, but calls him blessed. Those who have not seen yet believe are thrice blessed because that is proof that their spiritual intuition has been awakened and they can know that which is unknown to most others.

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Eight

Apollo, with the Silent Brotherhood of Greece, was sitting in a Delphian grove. The Oracle had spoken loud and long. The priests were in the sanctuary and as they looked the Oracle became a blaze of light; it seemed to be on fire, and all consumed. The priests were filled with fear. They said, A great disaster is to come; our gods are mad; they have destroyed our Oracle.

But when the flames had spent themselves, a man stood on the orac pedestal and said, God speaks to man, not by an oracle of wood and gold, but by the voice of man. The gods have spoken to the Greeks, and kindred tongues, through images made by man, but God, the One, now speaks to man through Christ the only son, who was, and is and evermore will be. This Oracle shall fail; the Living Oracle of God, the One, will never fail. (Aquarian Gospel 178:1-7)

God speaks to man, not by an oracle of wood and gold, but by the voice of man. Again, Jesus is deified man, not humanized God.

The gods have spoken to the Greeks, and kindred tongues, through images made by man. Although a great Oracle has come, Jesus says that sacred images have indeed spoken to humanity or given messages by other signs. In Egypt there were statues that would speak at sunrise and sunset. One still exists, but it is so damaged that at sunrise and sunset only a kind of twanging and cracking sound is heard. But speaking images were real and according to Jesus were not superstition or “of the devil.”

Apollo knew the man who spoke; he knew it was the Nazarene who once had taught the wise men in the Acropolis and had rebuked the idol worshippers upon the Athens’ beach; and in a moment Jesus stood before Apollo and the Silent Brotherhood, and said, Behold, for I have risen from the dead with gifts for men. I bring to you the title of your vast estate. All power in heaven and earth is mine; to you I give all power in heaven and earth. Go forth and teach the nations of the earth the gospel of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal life through Christ, the love of God made manifest to men.

And then he clasped Apollo’s hand and said, My human flesh was changed to higher form by love divine and I can manifest in flesh, or in the higher planes of life, at will. What I can do all men can do. Go preach the gospel of the omnipotence of man. Then Jesus disappeared; but Greece and Crete and all the nations heard. (Aquarian Gospel 178:8-15)

I have risen from the dead with gifts for men. I bring to you the title of your vast estate. All power in heaven and earth is mine; to you I give all power in heaven and earth. Jesus’ resurrection was not to just be a sign of his greatness or God’s favor, but rather it

was the opening to humanity of undreamed potential. All power is potentially every human being's.

My human flesh was changed to higher form by love divine and I can manifest in flesh, or in the higher planes of life, at will. What I can do all men can do. Go preach the gospel of the omnipotence of man. The love of God is the "secret" of Jesus and his deified disciples. Not only omnipotence, but omnipresence is opened to those who will diligently seek and find.

Claudas and Juliet, his wife, lived on the Palatine in Rome and they were servants of Tiberius; but they had been in Galilee; had walked with Jesus by the sea, had heard his words and seen his power; and they believed that he was Christ made manifest.

Now Claudas and his wife were on the Tiber in a little boat; a storm swept from the sea, the boat was wrecked and Claudas and his wife were sinking down to death. And Jesus came and took them by the hands and said, Claudas and Juliet, arise and walk with me upon the waves. And they arose and walked with him upon the waves. A thousand people saw the three walk on the waves, and saw them reach the land, and they were all amazed.

And Jesus said, You men of Rome, I am the resurrection and the life. They that are dead shall live, and many that shall live will never die. By mouth of gods and demi-gods God spoke unto your fathers long ago; but now he speaks to you through perfect man. He sent his son, the Christ, in human flesh, to save the world, and as I lifted from the watery grave and saved these servants of Tiberius, so Christ will lift the sons and daughters of the human race, yea, every one of them, from darkness and from graves of carnal things, to light and everlasting life. I am the manifest of love raised from the dead; Behold my hands, my feet, my side which carnal men have pierced. Claudas and Juliet whom I have saved from death, are my ambassadors to Rome. And they will point the way and preach the gospel of the Holy Breath and of the resurrection of the dead. And that was all he said, but Rome and all of Italy heard. (Aquarian Gospel 178:16-29)

By mouth of gods and demi-gods God spoke unto your fathers long ago. So Jesus did not think the Romans were ignorant heathen who worshipped idols or demons, but that the one God communicated with them through various highly evolved "gods and demi-gods" of their religion. It is a pity that Christians do not follow Christ in these matters.

Christ will lift the sons and daughters of the human race, yea, every one of them, from darkness and from graves of carnal things, to light and everlasting life. Jesus does not say that he will be lifting all humanity, but that Christ will do so. And that is done through many chosen messengers and agencies.

The gospel of the Holy Breath and of the resurrection of the dead. Evolution is the key to everything, and that is a process of the divine, conscious energy we call the Holy Spirit. Self-evolution is the requisite for any significant attainment, and the process

has many adjunct modes, but the central stream, the trunk of the evolutionary tree is Yoga.

The priests of Heliopolis were in their temple, met to celebrate the resurrection of their brother Nazarite; they knew that he had risen from the dead. The Nazarite appeared and stood upon a sacred pedestal on which no man had ever stood. This was an honor that had been reserved for him who first would demonstrate the resurrection of the dead. And Jesus was the first of all the human race to demonstrate the resurrection of the dead.

When Jesus stood upon the sacred pedestal the masters stood and said, All hail! The great bells of the temple rang and all the temple was ablaze with light.

And Jesus said, All honor to the masters of this Temple of the Sun. In flesh of man there is the essence of the resurrection of the dead. This essence, quickened by the Holy Breath, will raise the substance of the body to a higher tone, and make it like the substance of the bodies of the planes above, which human eyes cannot behold.

There is a holy ministry in death. The essence of the body cannot be quickened by the Holy Breath until the fixed is solved; the body must disintegrate, and this is death. And then upon these pliant substances God breathes, just as he breathed upon the chaos of the deep when worlds were formed, and life springs forth from death; the carnal form is changed to form divine.

The will of man makes possible the action of the Holy Breath. When will of man and will of God are one, the resurrection is a fact. In this we have the chemistry of mortal life, the ministry of death, the mystery of deific life. My human life was wholly given to bring my will to tune with the deific will; when this was done my earth-tasks all were done.

And you, my brothers, know full well the foes I had to meet; you know about my victories in Gethsemane; my trials in the courts of men; my death upon the cross. You know that all my life was one great drama for the sons of men; a pattern for the sons of men. I lived to show the possibilities of man. What I have done all men can do, and what I am all men shall be.

The masters looked; the form upon the sacred pedestal had gone, but every temple priest, and every living creature said, Praise God. (Aquarian Gospel 178:30-47)

Jesus was the first of all the human race to demonstrate the resurrection of the dead. Both before and after Jesus many Masters have appeared to people in tangible bodies after their death, but their bodies were temporarily materialized bodies that returned to the ether. Jesus was the first Master to return from the dead and live in a spiritually transmuted avatar body for years afterward as he did in India.

In flesh of man there is the essence of the resurrection of the dead. Everything is formed of spirit-consciousness and therefore is immortal. Those who unite their

consciousness with the fundamental consciousness that is their true Self and is, as Jesus says, “the essence of the resurrection of the dead,” can manifest their spiritual immortality in the form of physical immortality if it is according to the divine plan for the earth.

This essence, quickened by the Holy Breath, will raise the substance of the body to a higher tone, and make it like the substance of the bodies of the planes above, which human eyes cannot behold. Through the Holy Spirit manifesting in the yogi’s body through the yogic processes known as kriyas, its vibrations are raised to the same frequency “of the planes above, which human eyes cannot behold” and the yogi can pass into those higher worlds and back into this one as well. Some great Masters in India have been entombed in mausoleums and when their help was needed would emerge in physical body, actually passing through the stone walls. Often they would give spiritual instruction to aspirants and then walk back into their tomb.

There is a holy ministry in death. The essence of the body cannot be quickened by the Holy Breath until the fixed is solved; the body must disintegrate, and this is death. And then upon these pliant substances God breathes, just as he breathed upon the chaos of the deep when worlds were formed, and life springs forth from death; the carnal form is changed to form divine. This is quite mysterious. The death process is necessary for the substance of the body to be immortalized. So those who rise from the dead are truly raised by God.

The will of man makes possible the action of the Holy Breath. When will of man and will of God are one, the resurrection is a fact. In this we have the chemistry of mortal life, the ministry of death, the mystery of deific life. This can only be understood by the yogis (yoga siddhas) who have attained perfection in yoga (yoga siddhi).

My human life was wholly given to bring my will to tune with the deific will; when this was done my earth-tasks all were done. All my life was one great drama for the sons of men; a pattern for the sons of men. I lived to show the possibilities of man. What I have done all men can do, and what I am all men shall be. Jesus affirms this over and over because this and this alone is the true Gospel of Christ. Those who do not understand Jesus in this way do not at all understand him and his mission. There is no possibility of their actually being Christians (Christines).

Chapter One Hundred Seventy Nine

Now, the apostles were at home in Galilee; the women tarried in Judea until the Pentecost. And Peter, James and John, and Andrew, Philip and Nathaniel were in Capernaum. They joined with Jonah and with Zebedee, and in their boats went out to fish. They toiled all night and when the morning came they had no fish.

And as they neared the shore a man stood on the shore and said, How many fish have you? And Peter answered, None. Again the man called out and said, A school of fish is passing now upon the right side of your boat; cast out your net. They cast their net, and it was filled; and John exclaimed, It is the Lord who stands upon the shore. And Peter plunged into the sea and swam to shore. The other men brought in the net, and it contained a hundred fifty and three fish and yet it did not break.

And Jesus said, My children, let us break our fast together here. They found some living coals upon the beach and Peter brought and dressed the fish; they had some bread. And when the meal had been prepared they broke their fast, and Jesus ate of both the fish and bread. (Aquarian Gospel 179:1-11)

Jesus had called these apostles away from the fishing profession and they had become vegetarians like him and all Essenes. Yet, in the confusion that followed Jesus' crucifixion and the reluctance to accept his resurrection, "Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately" (John 21:3). So they had gone back to the nets from which Jesus had called them. Yet, Jesus spoke kindly to them, calling them "children," and he even ate a bit of the fish to show them that he was not displeased with them and that he did indeed have a real body that could eat and digest.

Now, after breakfast all the men were sitting on the beach, and Jesus said to Peter, Do you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and do you love your neighbor as you love yourself? And Peter said, Yea, Lord, I love the Lord my God with all my heart; I love my neighbor as I love myself. And Jesus said, Then feed my sheep.

And then he said to James, Do you love her, the Holy Breath, with all your heart, and do you love your neighbor as you love yourself? And James replied, Yea, Lord, I love the Holy Breath with all my heart; I love my neighbor as I love myself. Then Jesus said, Protect my sheep.

And then he said to John, Do you love Christ, the love divine made manifest, with all your heart, and do you love your neighbor as you love yourself? And John replied, Yea, Lord, I love the Christ with all my heart; I

love my neighbor as I love myself. And Jesus said, Then feed my lambs. (Aquarian Gospel 179:12-20)

It was necessary for Peter, James and John to affirm their determination to return to their way of life and discipline to which Jesus had called them away from being fishmen, so Jesus questioned them as to their love for God and told them their future obligations in demonstrating that love. The questions are interesting, though all three are asked if they love their neighbor as they love themselves.

Love is the keynote of all. Jesus asks Peter if he loves God (the Father) with all his heart, and the charge is to feed the Lord's sheep. He asks James if he loves the Holy Spirit, and the charge is to protect the sheep. Then he asks John if he loves the Christ, and the charge is to feed the lambs. What does this all mean? Peter is to show the love of the Father by leading and teaching the sheep of the Church. James is to closely supervise and protect them as the administrator of the first Christian community in Jerusalem. John is to lead and teach the lambs.

What is the difference between Peter's obligation and that of John? The sheep which Peter is to look after are the Christians living an ordinary life as family members. The lambs are the virgins—the monastics—who were especially under the care of John. From the very first there was a distinction made in the Church between those living the usual way of life and those who were living a life of total consecration as monastics in isolated communities in both Israel and Egypt. In the same way, many centuries later the great Russian saint, Seraphim of Sarov, established two kinds of convents: one for women who had been married before taking up the monastic life and one for women who had never been married. By doing this he indicated that the two differed markedly in their mental and spiritual character and he felt they would fare better if they were not mixed together. Those who had been married were "sheep" and those who had not been married were "lambs."

Then Jesus rose and said to Peter, Follow me. And Peter followed him. When Peter saw that John was following him he said to Jesus, Lord, behold, John follows you! What shall he do? Now Peter did not hear the master when he said to John, Then feed my lambs. And Jesus spoke to Peter and he said, It matters not to you what John shall do; not even though I will that he remain until I come again. Just do your duty; follow me. And Jesus passed, they knew not where he went. (Aquarian Gospel 179:21-26)

Just do your duty; follow me. It was a failing of Peter to always be asking what others should do, rather than just doing his duty and following Jesus as he knew to do. It is the same with us. One of the most vicious and destructive habits of human beings is gossip and comment on what other spiritual people are doing. This is a special curse in Eastern Christianity (the Eastern Orthodox Church), I am very sorry to say, and the clergy are the worst. I have seen people's spiritual life destroyed by either engaging in this kind of talk or of hearing it and losing spiritual confidence in their teachers and leaders. And most of what is said is either either

negative speculation or outright lies. For example, the moment a bishop in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia heard that Saint John Maximovitch had left his body, he began proclaiming to all that Saint John had been poisoned and demanded that a police investigation be started and the saint's body autopsied. He was also quite vocal in claiming who had done the poisoning. This went on and on. One time a novice in an Orthodox monastery here in America claimed that his mother was dying and asked leave to go home and see her. Permission was granted, but instead he went to the headquarters of another Orthodox jurisdiction and joined it. That was the truth, which I knew. But months later a monk of that monastery told me that a Jesuit (!?) priest had entered the monastery bookstore and said he needed to see the novice. When the novice came to the bookstore, the Jesuit took a gun from his pocket and forced him to leave and get in a car and drove off with him—and he had not been heard of since!

In *At the Feet of the Master*, the following invaluable advice is given about this awful vice.

“Three sins there are which work more harm than all else in the world—gossip, cruelty, and superstition—because they are sins against love. Against these three the man who would fill his heart with the love of God must watch ceaselessly.

“See what gossip does. It begins with evil thought, and that in itself is a crime. For in everyone and in everything there is good; in everyone and in everything there is evil. Either of these we can strengthen by thinking of it, and in this way we can help or hinder evolution; we can do the will of the Logos or we can resist him. If you think of the evil in another, you are doing at the same time three wicked things:

“(1) You are filling your neighbourhood with evil thought instead of with good thought, and so you are adding to the sorrow of the world.

“(2) If there is in that man the evil which you think, you are strengthening it and feeding it; and so you are making your brother worse instead of better. But generally the evil is not there, and you have only fancied it; and then your wicked thought tempts your brother to do wrong, for if he is not yet perfect you may make him that which you have thought him.

“(3) You fill your own mind with evil thoughts instead of good; and so you hinder your own growth, and make yourself, for those who can see, an ugly and painful object instead of a beautiful and lovable one.

“Not content with having done all this harm to himself and to his victim, the gossip tries with all his might to make other men partners in his crime. Eagerly he tells his wicked tale to them, hoping that they will believe it; and then they join with him in pouring evil thought upon the poor sufferer. And this goes on day after day, and is done not by one man but by thousands. Do you begin to see how base, how terrible a sin this is? You must avoid it altogether. Never speak ill of any one; refuse to listen when any one else speaks ill of another, but gently say: ‘Perhaps this is not true, and even if it is, it is kinder not to speak of it.’”

The news soon spread through all Capernaum that Jesus had risen from

the dead, that he had walked with his disciples by the sea and ate with them the morning meal. The multitudes came forth to see. Now Peter, James and John, together with the other men who had been called to be apostles of the Lord, went to the mountains near Capernaum to pray. And as they prayed the master came; they saw him and they talked with him. He said to them, The Pentecost is near at hand; go to Jerusalem and I will meet you there. And as he talked, a multitude of people came; they saw the Lord; they said, Behold, for now we know that he, the Nazarene, has risen from the dead for we have seen him face to face. (Aquarian Gospel 179:27-32)

According to Saint Paul: "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" (I Corinthians 15:6). So there was abundant witness to the resurrection of Jesus.

Chapter One Hundred Eighty

The eleven apostles of the Lord were in Jerusalem and in a spacious room that they had chosen by the Lord's command. And as they prayed the Lord appeared to them and said, Peace be to all; good will to every living thing. And then he talked with them a long, long time.

And the disciples asked, Will you restore the kingdom unto Israel now? And Jesus said, Be not concerned about the governments of men; the masters will direct. Do that which has been given you to do, and wait and murmur not. (Aquarian Gospel 180:1-6)

Peace be to all; good will to every living thing. Exoteric Christianity is only interested in human beings whom they see as either "saved" or "unsaved," on the way to heaven or on the way to hell. But true Christianity, being aware of the transmigration of souls, is interested in all sentient beings, for each one is evolving toward the revelation of the divine Self within. As a consequence they never kill and eat them like wild beasts, nor do they mistreat them in any way. Rather, they love and respect them, seeing that not only all humanity, but all sentient beings are the family of God, all moving toward the one Goal. Those who hold this view often evoke from animals manifestations of surprising intelligence and intuition.

Be not concerned about the governments of men; the masters will direct. It may be hard to believe, but the ultimate direction of the world is in the hands of master yogis. Their manner of direction is subtle and strictly according to spiritual principles. Therefore they would never impose anything on the world. Rather, they work to help human beings understand the direction in which the world should go. Just as no one tries to have a society based on love, in the same way no one believes the Masters will succeed, but really they are. Their way moves very slowly indeed, so much so that their effects on the world are not at all evident to the ordinary observer.

Just as it is possible for a psychically developed person to attune himself to individuals and send healing and enlightening vibrations to them, in the same way the great Masters can attune themselves to vast segments of humanity and send the vibrations of wisdom and awakening to them. This is, as I say, a slow process, and a Master might work for many years on the awakening of a single, simple principle in the consciousness of a limited number of human beings. Their endeavors follow exactly the astrological principles of the various ages. For example, in the Piscean Age the general consciousness was very individual and in-turned, and therefore so was spiritual progress. In the Aquarian Age entire segments of the world population will become awake and alive to broad principles that will manifest in an equally broad manner. In the Piscean Age the ideals of freedom and democracy and social responsibility were only held by a very small minority who through their personal power were able to bring those blessings to a small percentage of the world's

nations. But just as the ripples in water spread out wider and wider, so in the preceding century and now in the Aquarian Age itself, these principles are becoming far more understood and desired than in preceding centuries, or even millennia. Social consciousness is a fundamental trait of this new age. The Master will have an easier time than heretofore, but still progress will be step by step, not leaps or jumps.

Do that which has been given you to do, and wait and murmur not. This is a version of Jesus' advice to Peter in the previous chapter: "Just do your duty; follow me." Life is short at the best, and uncertain at all times. Therefore we need to spend every moment in yoga sadhana, which is why continual japa is so crucial for success in spiritual life. We must not have useless and distracting elements in our lives. Anyone who has moved very often has had the experience of being amazed at how much can be accumulated over a short time, and very little of it of lasting value. That is where garage and yard sales come from! So we must examine our lives and make sure we are not wasting them by going down byways that may entertain and distract the mind, but for that very reason are enemies of our souls.

We must hold to japa night and day. Jesus told us: "In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19). We must wait and not be impatient. We have taken countless lives to get into the bondage we find ourselves in, and we will be blessed indeed if we can get out after spending a very long life in continuous spiritual practice. Deep within us there are elements that must be purged before we can rise to higher consciousness. As Sri Yukteswar once told an arrogant scientist: "Examine your thoughts unremittingly for twenty-four hours. Then wonder no longer at God's absence." But those who will do japa and meditation unremittingly each will get experience of the divine presence within.

All power in heaven and earth is given unto me, and now I bid you go to all the world and preach the gospel of the Christ, the unity of God and man, the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life. And as you go and preach, baptize the people in the name of Christ. They who believe and are baptized shall rise up in the newness of the life of Christ, and they who disbelieve shall rise not in the newness of the life of Christ.

And you shall give to men the power I give to you. They who believe and are baptized shall heal the sick; shall cause the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk; shall cast the unclean spirits out of those obsessed; shall tread on deadly serpents and be not harmed; shall pass through flames and not be burned; and if they drink a poisonous draught it shall not kill.

You know the sacred Word, which is the word of power.

The secret things that I have told to you that may not now be told to all the world, you shall make known to faithful men who shall in turn reveal them unto other faithful men. Until the time shall come when all the world may hear and comprehend the words of truth and power.

And now I will ascend to God, as you and all the world will rise to God.

Behold, upon the day of Pentecost you all shall be endowed with power from on high. But here you shall remain till then in holy thought and prayer. (Aquarian Gospel 180:7-18)

All power in heaven and earth is given unto me. “Heaven” is both the higher, subtler worlds and the higher, subtler levels of the individual, and “earth” is the material and materially-oriented levels of the individual as well. Jesus was master of his entire being and the entire range of creation as well. We, too, must reach that level of mastery. The key is right now in our hands.

Preach the gospel of the Christ, the unity of God and man, the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life. The truth about Christ and Jesus must be made known, as well at the fact that God and man are one, though not the same. God is infinite spirit and man is finite spirit. But both are spirit. It is possible for us to hear the call: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.... Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Ephesians 5:14, 17). This is the resurrection of the spirit into Eternal Life.

And you shall give to men the power I give to you. They who believe and are baptized shall heal the sick; shall cause the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk; shall cast the unclean spirits out of those obsessed; shall tread on deadly serpents and be not harmed; shall pass through flames and not be burned; and if they drink a poisonous draught it shall not kill. This Piscean Christianity could not do. Only a relatively few could be empowered by the Apostolic Succession, and that gave only a fraction of the power Jesus intended for every Christian to possess and use. And it gave no wisdom at all. Two thousand years have proved that. But now in this Aquarian Age the doors are fully opened and the intention of Jesus shall be fulfilled. “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known” (Matthew 10:26).

You know the sacred Word, which is the word of power. Quickly that Word was forgotten and substitutions made for both the power and the knowledge that Jesus wanted his initiates to possess. There are not many Words needed: only the ultimate one, the manifesting Word (vachaka) of God. Of that Word the sage Patanjali tells us: “Its japa and meditation is the way” (Yoga Sutras 1:28).

The secret things that I have told to you that may not now be told to all the world, you shall make known to faithful men who shall in turn reveal them unto other faithful men. Until the time shall come when all the world may hear and comprehend the words of truth and power. The time has now come, for in this Aquarian Age the minds of people in general will be able to comprehend what in the Piscean Age would have appeared nothing but mystifying gibberish. The very fact that so many people in the West have adopted the philosophies of the East indicates that now at last people are ready to understand the teachings of Jesus which have little correspondence to orthodox Churchianity.

And now I will ascend to God, as you and all the world will rise to God. Jesus is not speaking of mere bodily ascension, but of ascent in spiritual consciousness. He was going to be passing into the higher worlds which cannot be entered without a corresponding level of evolution and consciousness. The only way to follow Jesus in

his ascension is to ourselves ascend in spirit-awareness.

Behold, upon the day of Pentecost you all shall be endowed with power from on high. But here you shall remain till then in holy thought and prayer. Before the disciples could ascend as did Jesus, they needed the spiritual empowerment that would come upon them at Pentecost, so they were told to stay in Jerusalem and prepare themselves for that.

Then Jesus went to Olivet, and his disciples followed him, and in a place not far removed from Bethany, he met the Marys and Salome; met Martha, Ruth and Miriam; met Lazarus and a host of others who had come from Galilee.

And Jesus stood apart and raised his hands and said, The benedictions of the Holy Ones, of the Almighty God, and of the Holy Breath, of Christ the love of God made manifest, will rest upon you all the way till you shall rise and sit with me upon the throne of power.

And then they saw him rise upon the wings of light; a wreath encircled him about; and then they saw his form no more. But as they gazed up into heaven two men, in robes of white, appeared and said, You men of Galilee, why gaze you thus so anxiously upon the ascending Lord? Lo, he will come again from heaven as you have seen him go to heaven.

Then the eleven and Lazarus, and other men from Galilee together with the faithful women, not a few, returned unto Jerusalem and there abode. And they were constantly in prayer and Holy thought. They waited for the Holy Breath, and for the coming of the promised power from on high. (Aquarian Gospel 180:19-28)

Till you shall rise and sit with me upon the throne of power. This is the destiny each sentient being will eventually realize.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).

Chapter One Hundred Eighty One

The fact that Jesus had arisen from the dead was not denied by many of the rulers of the Jews. And Pilate gave an order that the followers of the Nazarene be not molested in their worship any place in his domain. The day of Pentecost was near at hand and every one was looking for a manifest of Spirit power.

Now, in Jerusalem the eleven had met to choose a man to fill the place of Judas who betrayed his Lord. And Peter said, the Lord called to this ministry twelve men as twelve foundation stones on which the Christine temple should be built. This Judas who betrayed his Lord, has gone to his own place beyond the veil. Of him the prophet wrote: his habitation shall be desolate; no man shall dwell therein; his office let another take. From those who have accompanied us from Gikal, where the harbinger baptized, until this day, shall one be chosen to complete the number twelve, to fill the place from which our brother by transgression fell.

And then the eleven spent a long, long time in prayer, and when they cast their lots, Matthias, from the valley of the Nile, was chosen for the place. Matthias was an Israelite indeed; but he was learned in all the wisdom of Egyptian schools, and he had taught the mysteries of Mizraim in Jericho. He was among the first to greet the harbinger; among the first to recognize the Nazarene as Christ, the son of God; he had been with the Christine band in all their journeys in the land of Galilee, Judea and Samaria. A messenger was sent who found Matthias, and he came and joined the eleven, and for a time the twelve were lost in silent prayer.

The Christines who had come from Galilee and places in Judea, about six score, were there, and Peter told them of Matthias, and how, by lot, he had been chosen an apostle of the Lord. The Christines all were glad and praised the name of God; and Miriam sung a song of praise.

These are the names of the apostles of the Lord; Peter, John and James; Philip, Andrew and Nathaniel; Thomas, James the son of Alpheus and Simon Zelotes; Matthew, Jude, the son of Alpheus and Matthias. (Aquarian Gospel 181:1-17)

There is really nothing to comment on here except to note that Saint Matthias had an extensive esoteric background before becoming a disciple in contrast to the others who, though Essenes, were very simple in their thought and action until Jesus called them to the perfect way.

Chapter One Hundred Eighty Two

Now, when the day of Pentecost had come Jerusalem was filled with pious Jews and proselytes from many lands.

The Christines all were met and were in perfect harmony. And as they sat in silent prayer they heard a sound a-like the distant murmur of a coming storm. The sound grew louder still, until, like thunder peals, it filled the room where the apostles sat. A brilliant light appeared, and many thought, The building is afire. Twelve balls, that seemed like balls of fire, fell from heaven—a ball from every sign of all the circle of the heavens, and on the head of each apostle there appeared a flaming ball of fire. And every ball sent seven tongues of fire toward heaven, and each apostle spoke in seven dialects of earth. (Aquarian Gospel 182:1-7)

I knew an Eastern Orthodox priest who could prove that one of his ancestors was present at Pentecost, but he knew no more of the event than the official account. But here we learn more of the descent of the Holy Spirit on that day when the earth itself was initiated into the path of Christhood. For the speaking of many languages was a sign that all humanity was destined to follow that path, whatever the religion might be to which they would belong. For Christ is God and belongs to all religions no matter what name they may ascribe to him. Jesus is a teacher of all mankind, as are the other great world teachers God has sent into the world.

The ignorant rabble treated lightly what they heard and saw; they said, These men are drunk, and know not what they say. But men of learning were amazed; they said, Are not these men who speak all Jews? How is it that they speak in all the languages of earth?

And Peter said, You people of Jerusalem, and you who live beyond the city's gates; Peace be to you, and all mankind. This is the time that holy men of old desired to see, by faith they saw this hour, and now they stand with us in ecstasy. The prophet Joel in olden times told of the things you see and hear. The Holy Breath spoke with his tongue and said, And it shall come to pass in latter days, that I will breathe upon the sons of men, and fill them with the blessedness of holiness. Your sons and daughters will stand forth and prophesy; your young men will be seers; your old men will dream dreams. And I will show wonders in the heavens above, and marvelous signs in earth. Sounds will proceed from heaven and voices will be heard that men will fail to comprehend. The sun will fail to shine; the moon will wade in blood before the coming of the great day of the Lord. And it will come to pass that they who call upon the name of God in faith shall be redeemed.

This is the day of Christine power; the day that he, the man from Galilee, is glorified. He came as a babe in Bethlehem and from his day of birth the

kings of earth went forth intent to take his life. God held him in the hollow of his hand.

Men called him Jesus, and they called him well, for he was sent to seek and save the lost. And Jesus grew to manhood and was subject unto all trials and temptations of the sons of men, that he might know the loads that men must bear, and know the way to succour them.

In distant lands he lived and by the sacred Word he healed the sick, threw prison doors ajar, and set the prisoners free, and everywhere he was proclaimed, Immanuel. But wicked men despised him and rejected him, and by bribed men they proved him guilty of a score of crimes; and in the presence of a multitude of men who hear me now, they nailed him to a cross; they sealed him with the seal of death; but death was all too weak to hold him in the tomb and when immortal masters said, *Adon Mashich Cumi*, he burst the bands of death, and rose again to life.

He showed himself alive, not only to the rulers in Jerusalem, but to the many in the distant parts of earth; and then, before the wondering eyes of many who now hear me speak, attended by a retinue of courtiers of the angel world, he ascended to the throne of God. And being now exalted high, and having breathed to full the Holy Breath, he breathes again on us, and thus sheds forth what you now see and hear.

You men of Israel, Know that God has made this man from Galilee whom you abused and crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Aquarian Gospel 182:8-31)

Peace be to you, and all mankind. All true religion speaks to the whole world, not just to its official members. And in time it must be realized that true religion is one and transcends all distinctions, that a real seeker of God belongs to all religions and cannot be limited to one.

This is the time that holy men of old desired to see, by faith they saw this hour, and now they stand with us in ecstasy. By means of his newly empowered and expanded consciousness Saint Peter could see the astral bodies of the ancient prophets and teachers that had foreseen the new birth the world was that day given. Even more were gathered there in subtle bodies than there were those in physical bodies.

And it will come to pass that they who call upon the name of God in faith shall be redeemed. It is usually supposed that it is the name of Jesus that will guarantee salvation, but Peter was speaking much more broadly. Those who call on God in faith shall find the way to liberation.

And Jesus grew to manhood and was subject unto all trials and temptations of the sons of men, that he might know the loads that men must bear, and know the way to succour them. Jesus was not God magically pretending to be human, but a formerly true human being who showed that all humanity are not men but sleeping gods. Awake in God Consciousness he showed the way that others might attain the same.

In distant lands he lived and by the sacred Word he healed the sick, threw prison doors ajar, and set the prisoners free. By the Name of Christ, Jesus manifested the Christ and himself became a Christ.

Having breathed to full the Holy Breath. This is the process of salvation, of baptism in the Holy Spirit by means of which perfect union with God is accomplished. It is through spiritual practice (tapasya) that we become one with the Infinite.

And then the people said, What shall we do?

And Peter said, This Christine Lord has sent us forth to open up the gates of dawn. Through Christ all men may enter into light and life.

The Christine Church stands on the postulates that Jesus is the love of God made manifest; that love is savior of the sons of men. This Christine Church is but the kingdom of the Holy One within the soul, made manifest. This day the Christine Church is opened up, and whosoever will may enter in, and, by the boundless grace of Christ, be saved.

Again the people said, How may we enter in that we may share the boundless grace of Christ?

And Peter said, Reform and be baptized, and turn away from sin and lead the life deep hid with Christ in God, and you shall enter in and be redeemed. Three thousand people turned away from sin and were baptized and sought to lead the life deep hid with Christ in God. And in one day the Christine Church became a mighty power; and Christ became a mighty word that thrilled the multitudes in many lands. (Aquarian Gospel 182:32-40)

This Christine Lord has sent us forth to open up the gates of dawn. Becoming a Christine is just the beginning of the beginning. Discipleship is just the dawn, and all must pursue it unto the fullness of day, unto the state of conscious oneness with God. Many think that “believing” and “confessing” seal the matter, but they are mistaken. The life of Christ must be lived.

Through Christ all men may enter into light and life. By rising to Christhood and uniting with Christ, the individual spirit enters into the Light and Life of the Trinity, becoming one with the Father and the Holy Spirit as well.

The Christine Church stands on the postulates that Jesus is the love of God made manifest; that love is savior of the sons of men. Christians have wrangled for centuries over the question as to whether man is saved by faith or works. But according to Saint Peter both ideas are wrong. Man is saved by love: by loving the God who is love and by whose love all are saved. The answer is not in belief and not even in worship, but in loving God. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37).

This Christine Church is but the kingdom of the Holy One within the soul, made manifest. The true Church is spirit and is within. It is no institution, but divine life itself. It cannot be joined; it can only be lived.

How may we enter in that we may share the boundless grace of Christ? The Christine Church is not really a religion. It is participation in “the boundless grace of Christ.” It is the only true life, the life in God.

Reform and be baptized, and turn away from sin and lead the life deep hid with Christ in God, and you shall enter in and be redeemed. Right away the life must be altered to

conform with the principles of spiritual life. Baptism is not a magical rite that makes someone a Christine. Rather: "Now the Christine gate is opened up, and washing is established as the pledge of your discipleship. Until this age shall close this pledge shall be a rite, and shall be called, Baptism rite; and it shall be a sign to men, and seal to God of men's discipleship" (Aquarian Gospel 78:10-11). Those who would be disciples of Jesus, knowers of God, must be yogis, for only yogis "lead the life deep hid with Christ in God." Then they can "enter in and be redeemed" and brought back into the conscious sonship of God.

And in one day the Christine Church became a mighty power; and Christ became a mighty word that thrilled the multitudes in many lands. The fullness of this "day" Has only just dawned. It is the Aquarian Age in which the Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ can finally be understood and followed. In those lands that long have claimed to be Christian the true Gospel of Christ can now be known and recognized as Saint Augustine wrote in the fourth century: "The identical thing that we now call the Christian religion existed among the ancients and has not been lacking from the beginnings of the human race." Jesus brought it to the West from India where it originated and still flourishes. It is not new; it is eternal; it is Sanatana Dharma.

And now our journey through the Aquarian Gospel together is completed. For me it has been a great privilege to ponder and comment on the magnificent gift God has given to the world through Levi Dowling. I hope it has been the same for you.

Glossary

Acharya: Preceptor; teacher; spiritual teacher/ guide; guru.

Adharma: Unrighteousness; demerit, failure to perform one's proper duty; unrighteous action; lawlessness; absence of virtue; all that is contrary to righteousness (dharma).

Arjuna: The great disciple of Krishna, who imparted to him the teachings found in the Bhagavad Gita. The third of the Pandava brothers who were major figures in the Mahabharata War. His name literally means "bright," "white," or "clear."

Arya(n): One who is an Arya—literally, "one who strives upward." Both Arya and Aryan are exclusively psychological terms having nothing whatsoever to do with birth, race, or nationality. In his teachings Buddha habitually referred to spiritually qualified people as "the Aryas." Although in English translations we find the expressions: "The Four Noble Truths," and "The Noble Eightfold Path," Buddha actually said: "The Four Aryan Truths," and "The Eightfold Aryan Path."

Arya Dharma: The Dharma of the Aryas. See Sanatana Dharma.

Arya Samaj: The organization founded by Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati in the nineteenth century to encourage the restoration of the more ancient and simple forms of original Vedic religion.

Atma(n): The individual spirit or Self that is one with Brahman; the essential being, nature or identity of each sentient being.

Avatar(a): A fully liberated spirit (jiva) who is born into a world below Satya Loka to help others attain liberation. Though commonly referred to as a divine incarnation, an avatar actually is totally one with God, and therefore an incarnation of God-Consciousness.

Bhagavad Gita: "The Song of God." The sacred philosophical text often called "the Hindu Bible," part of the epic Mahabharata by Vyasa; the most popular sacred text in Hinduism.

Bhaktivedanta (Swami): The founder of the Hari Krishna movement in America.

Bharat(a)varsha: The land of India.

Bhava: Subjective state of being (existence); attitude of mind; mental attitude or feeling; state of realization in the heart or mind.

Bhavanam: Meditation. "Bhavanam is setting the heart on the Lord" (Shankara, Commentary on the Yoga Sutras). It has the connotation of all the awareness becoming focused and absorbed in it.

Brahma Sutras: A treatise by Vyasa on Vedanta philosophy in the form of aphorisms. Also called the Vedanta Sutras or Vedanta Darshana.

Brahmajnana: Direct, transcendental knowledge of Brahman; Self-realization.

Brahmajnani: One who possess Brahmajnana.

Brahman: The Absolute Reality; the Truth proclaimed in the Upanishads; the

Supreme Reality that is one and indivisible, infinite, and eternal; all-pervading, changeless Existence; Existence-knowledge-bliss Absolute (Satchidananda); Absolute Consciousness; it is not only all-powerful but all-power itself; not only all-knowing and blissful but all-knowledge and all-bliss itself.

Brahmin (Brahmana): A knower of Brahman; a member of the highest Hindu caste traditionally consisting of priests, pandits, philosophers, and religious leaders.

Caste: Caste. In traditional Hindu society there were four divisions or castes according to the individual's nature and aptitude: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. (See the individual entries.)

Chakra: Wheel. Plexus; center of psychic energy in the human system, particularly in the spine or head.

Darshan: Literally "sight" or "seeing;" vision, literal and metaphysical; a system of philosophy (see Sad-darshanas). Darshan is the seeing of a holy being as well as the blessing received by seeing such a one.

Dayananda (Maharishi Swami): A leading reformer within Hinduism in the nineteenth century (1824-1883) and the founder of the Arya Samaj.

Dhanvantari: The great rishi who first revealed the principles of Ayurveda to his students.

Dharma: The righteous way of living, as enjoined by the sacred scriptures and the spiritually illumined; law; lawfulness; virtue; righteousness; norm.

Guna: Quality, attribute, or characteristic arising from nature (Prakriti) itself; a mode of energy behavior. As a rule, when "guna" is used it is in reference to the three qualities of Prakriti, the three modes of energy behavior that are the basic qualities of nature, and which determine the inherent characteristics of all created things. They are: 1) sattwa–purity, light, harmony; 2) rajas–activity, passion; and 3) tamas–dullness, inertia, and ignorance.

Guru: Teacher; preceptor; spiritual teacher or acharya.

Ishwara: "God" or "Lord" in the sense of the Supreme Power, Ruler, Master or Controller of the cosmos. "Ishwara" implies the powers of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience.

Jagadguru: World guru; world teacher.

Jagannath Puri: A pilgrim city on the east coast of India in Orissa State where multitudes come daily to worship Krishna in the temple of Jagannath (Lord of the World).

Japa: Repetition of a mantra.

Jnana: Knowledge; knowledge of Reality–of Brahman, the Absolute; also denotes the process of reasoning by which the Ultimate Truth is attained. The word is generally used to denote the knowledge by which one is aware of one's identity with Brahman.

Jnani: A follower of the path of knowledge (jnana); one who has realized—who knows—the Truth (Brahman).

Karma: Karma, derived from the Sanskrit root *kri*, which means to act, do, or make, means any kind of action, including thought and feeling. It also means the

effects of action. Karma is both action and reaction, the metaphysical equivalent of the principle: “For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.” “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). It is karma operating through the law of cause and effect that binds the jiva or the individual soul to the wheel of birth and death. There are three forms of karma: sanchita, agami, and prarabdha. Sanchita karma is the vast store of accumulated actions done in the past, the fruits of which have not yet been reaped. Agami karma is the action that will be done by the individual in the future. Prarabdha karma is the action that has begun to fructify, the fruit of which is being reaped in this life.

Krishna: An avatar born in India about three thousand years ago, Whose teachings to His disciple Arjuna on the eve of the Great India (Mahabharata) War comprise the Bhagavad Gita.

Kriya Shakti: The power or faculty of action.

Kshatriya: A member of the ruler/warrior caste.

Lahiri Mahasaya: Shyama Charan Lahiri, one of the greatest yogis of nineteenth-century India, written about extensively in *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramhansa Yogananda.

Mahabharata: The world’s longest epic poem (110,00 verses) about the Mahabharata (Great Indian) War that took place about three thousand years ago. The Mahabharata also includes the Bhagavad Gita, the most popular sacred text of Hinduism.

Maharaj(a): “Great king;” lord; master; a title of respect used to address holy men.

Mahashakti: The Great Power; the divine creative energy.

Mantra(m): Sacred syllable or word or set of words through the repetition and reflection of which one attains perfection or realization of the Self. Literally, “a transforming thought” (manat trayate). A mantra, then is a sound formula that transforms the consciousness.

Maya: The illusive power of Brahman; the veiling and the projecting power of the universe, the power of Cosmic Illusion. “The Measurer”—a reference to the two delusive “measures,” Time and Space.

Narada: A primeval sage to whom some of the verses of the Rig Veda are attributed.

Nath Yogi: A member of the Nath Yogi Sampradaya.

Nath Yogi Sampradaya: An ancient order of yogis claiming Matsyendranath, Gorakhnath, Patanjali, Jnaneshwar and Jesus (Isha Nath) among their master teachers.

Niyama: Observance; the five Do’s of Yoga: 1) Shaucha: purity, cleanliness; 2) Santosha: contentment, peacefulness; 3) Tapas: austerity, practical (i.e., result-producing) spiritual discipline; 4) Swadhyaya: self-study, spiritual study; 5) Ishwarapranidhana: offering of one’s life to God.

Parabrahman: Supreme Brahman.

Patanjali: A yogi of ancient India, a Nath Yogi and the author of the Yoga Sutras.

Prakriti: Causal matter; the fundamental power (shakti) of God from which the entire cosmos is formed; the root base of all elements; undifferentiated matter; the material cause of the world. Also known as Pradhana. Prakriti can also mean the entire range of vibratory existence (energy).

Prana: Life; vital energy; life-breath; life-force; inhalation. In the human body the prana is divided into five forms: 1) Prana, the prana that moves upward; 2) Apana: The prana that moves downward, producing the excretory functions in general. 3) Vyana: The prana that holds prana and apana together and produces circulation in the body. 4) Samana: The prana that carries the grosser material of food to the apana and brings the subtler material to each limb; the general force of digestion. 5) Udana: The prana which brings up or carries down what has been drunk or eaten; the general force of assimilation.

Purana: Literally “The Ancient.” The Puranas are a number of scriptures attributed to the sage Vyasa that teach spiritual principles and practices through stories about sacred historical personages which often include their teachings given in conversations.

Purusha: “Person” in the sense of a conscious spirit. Both God and the individual spirits are purushas, but God is the Adi (Original, Archetypal) Purusha, Parama (Highest) Purusha, and the Purushottama (Highest or Best of the Purushas).

Rama: An incarnation of God—the king of ancient Ayodhya in north-central India. His life is recorded in the ancient epic Ramayana.

Ramakrishna, Sri: Sri Ramakrishna lived in India in the second half of the nineteenth century, and is regarded by all India as a perfectly enlightened person—and by many as an Incarnation of God.

Ramana Maharshi: A great twentieth-century sage from Tamil Nadu, who lived most of his life at or on the sacred mountain of Arunachala in the town of Tiruvannamalai.

Ramayana: The great Sanskrit epic poem by the sage Valmiki describing the life of Rama, the king of ancient Ayodhya in north-central India, who is regarded as an incarnation of God. The renowned Hindi devotional poem by the saint Tulsidas, also on the life of Rama.

Rig Veda: The oldest scripture of India, considered the oldest scripture of the world, that consists of hymns revealed in meditation to the Vedic Rishis (seers). Although in modern times there are said to be four Vedas (Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva), in actuality, there is only one Veda: the Rig Veda. The Sama Veda is only a collection of Rig Veda hymns that are marked (pointed) for singing. The Yajur Veda is a small book giving directions on just one form of Vedic sacrifice. The Atharva Veda is only a collection of theurgical mantras to be recited for the cure of various afflictions or to be recited over the herbs to be taken as medicine for those afflictions.

Rishi: Sage; seer of the Truth.

Rita(m): Truth; Law; Right; Order. The natural order of things, or Cosmic

Order/Law. Its root is ri, which means “to rise, to tend upward.” It is said to be the basis for the Law of Karma.

Sadhaka: One who practices spiritual discipline–sadhana–particularly meditation.

Sadhana: Spiritual practice.

Sadhu: Seeker for truth (sat); a person who is practicing spiritual disciplines; a good or virtuous or honest man, a holy man, saint, sage, seer. Usually this term is applied only to monastics.

Samadhi: The state of superconsciousness where Absoluteness is experienced attended with all-knowledge and joy; Oneness; here the mind becomes identified with the object of meditation; the meditator and the meditated, thinker and thought become one in perfect absorption of the mind.

Sampradaya: Tradition; philosophical school; literally: “handed-down instruction;” also a line of supposed initiatic empowerment.

Samskara: Impression in the mind, either conscious or subconscious, produced by action or experience in this or previous lives; propensities of the mental residue of impressions; subliminal activators; prenatal tendency. See Vasana.

Sanatana Dharma: “The Eternal Religion,” also known as “Arya Dharma,” “the religion of those who strive upward [Aryas].” Hinduism.

Sankalpa: A life-changing wish, desire, volition, resolution, will, determination, or intention—not a mere momentary aspiration, but an empowering act of will that persists until the intention is fully realized. It is an act of spiritual, divine creative will inherent in each person as a power of the Atma.

Sanskrit: The language of the ancient sages of India and therefore of the Indian scriptures and yoga treatises.

Sarada Devi (“Holy Mother”): The virgin-wife of Sri Ramakrishna, and a great teacher in her own right, considered by many to be an incarnation of the Mother aspect of God.

Satchidananda: Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; Brahman.

Satya Loka: “True World,” “World of the True [Sat]”, or “World of Truth [Satya].” This highest realm of relative existence where liberated beings live who have not entered back into the Transcendent Absolute where there are no “worlds” (lokas). From that world they can descend and return to other worlds for the spiritual welfare of others, as can those that have chosen to return to the Transcendent.

Shiva: A name of God meaning “One Who is all Bliss and the giver of happiness to all.” Although classically applied to the Absolute Brahman, Shiva can also refer to God (Ishwara) in His aspect of Dissolver and Liberator (often mistakenly thought of as “destroyer”).

Shudra: A member of the laborer, servant caste.

Siddhi: Spiritual perfection; psychic power; power; modes of success; attainment; accomplishment; achievement; mastery; supernatural power attained through mantra, meditation, or other yogic practices. From the verb root sidh—to

attain.

Sivananda (Swami): A great twentieth-century Master, founder of the world-wide Divine Life Society, whose books on spiritual life and religion are widely circulated in the West as well as in India.

Soham: “That am I;” the ultimate Atma mantra, the mantra of the Self; the Ajapa Gayatri formula of meditation in which “So” is intoned mentally during natural inhalation and “Ham” is intoned mentally during natural exhalation. Soham is pronounced “Sohum,” as the short “a” in Sanskrit is pronounced like the American “u” in “up.”

Soham Bhava: The state of being and awareness: “THAT I am.” Gorakhnath says that So’ham Bhava includes total Self-comprehension (ahamta), total Self-mastery (akhandā aishwarya), unbroken awareness of the unity of the Self (swatmata), awareness of the unity of the Self with all phenomenal existence—as the Self (vishwanubhava), knowledge of all within and without the Self—united in the Self (sarvajñatwa).

Sri: Holy; sacred; excellent; venerated (venerable); revered; a term of respect similar to “Reverend.” Also: prosperity, glory, and success—and therefore an epithet for Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and abundance, the consort of Vishnu. It is often used as an honorific prefix to the name of deities and holy persons to indicate holiness (Sri Krishna, Sri Swami N., etc.). Also used as the equivalent of the English “Mr.” (Srimati would be the equivalent of “Mrs.”)

Sri Yukteswar Giri, Swami: The guru of Paramhansa Yogananda.

Swabhava: One’s own inherent disposition, nature, or potentiality; inherent state of mind; state of inner being.

Swadharma: One’s own natural (innate) duty (dharma, based on their karma and samskara. One’s own prescribed duty in life according to the eternal law (ritam).

Swadhyaya: Introspective self-study or self-analysis leading to self-understanding. Study of spiritual texts regarding the Self.

Swami: Literally, “I am mine”—in the sense of absolute self-mastery. It could be legitimately translated: “He who is one with his Self [Swa].” It is often used in the sense of “lord” or owner as well as a spiritual guide or authority. God Himself is the ultimate Swami. As a matter of respect it is always used in reference to sannyasis, since they have vowed themselves to pursue the knowledge of the Self, or those considered to be of spiritual advancement.

Vaishya: A member of the merchant, farmer, artisan, businessman caste.

Varnashrama: Related to the four castes and the four stages (ashramas) of Hindu life; the laws of caste and ashrama.

Varnashram dharma: The observance of caste and ashram.

Vasana: Subtle desire; a tendency created in a person by the doing of an action or by experience; it induces the person to repeat the action or to seek a repetition of the experience; the subtle impression in the mind capable of developing itself into action; it is the cause of birth and experience in general; an aggregate or bundle of

samskaras—the impressions of actions that remain unconsciously in the mind.

Vedanta: Literally, “the end of the Vedas;” the Upanishads; the school of Hindu thought, based primarily on the Upanishads, upholding the doctrine of either pure non-dualism or conditional non-dualism. The original text of this school is Vedanta-darshana, the Brahma Sutras compiled by the sage Vyasa.

Vedas: The oldest scriptures of India, considered the oldest scriptures of the world, that were revealed in meditation to the Vedic Rishis (seers). Although in modern times there are said to be four Vedas (Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva), in the upanishads only three are listed (Rig, Sama, and Yajur). In actuality, there is only one Veda: the Rig Veda. The Sama Veda is only a collection of Rig Veda hymns that are marked (pointed) for singing. The Yajur Veda is a small book giving directions on just one form of Vedic sacrifice. The Atharva Veda is only a collection of theurgical mantras to be recited for the cure of various afflictions or to be recited over the herbs to be taken as medicine for those afflictions.

Vedic: Having to do with the Vedas.

Vishwaprana: The universal life force (prana).

Vivekananda (Swami): The chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, who brought the message of Vedanta to the West at the end of the nineteenth century.

Vyasa: One of the greatest sages of India, commentator on the Yoga Sutras, author of the Mahabharata (which includes the Bhagavad Gita), the Brahma Sutras, and the codifier of the Vedas.

Yadava: “Descendant of Yadu” an ancient Indian king; the Yadavas, a clan of India, were descended from King Yadu; a title of Krishna, since he was part of the Yadava clan. Swami Bhaktivedanta, founder of the Hare Krishna movement in the West, as well as some anthropologists, believed that the Yadava clan, who disappeared from India shortly after Krishna’s lifetime, emigrated to the middle east and became the people we know today as the Jews, Abraham having been a Yadava.

Yama (1): Restraint; the five Don’ts of Yoga: 1) ahimsa—non-violence, non-injury, harmlessness; 2) satya—truthfulness, honesty; 3) asteya—non-stealing, honesty, non-misappropriateness; 4) brahmacharya—continence; 5) aparigraha—non-possessiveness, non-greed, non-selfishness, non-acquisitiveness. These five are called the Great Vow (Observance, Mahavrata) in the Yoga Sutras.

Yoga: Literally, “joining” or “union” from the Sanskrit root yuj. Union with the Supreme Being, or any practice that makes for such union. Meditation that unites the individual spirit with God, the Supreme Spirit. The name of the philosophy expounded by the sage Patanjali, teaching the process of union of the individual with the Universal Soul.

Yoga Sutras: The oldest known writing on the subject of yoga, written by the sage Patanjali, a yogi of ancient India, and considered the most authoritative text on yoga. Also known as Yoga Darshana, it is the basis of the Yoga Philosophy which is based on the philosophical system known as Sankhya.

Yogananda (Paramhansa): The most influential yogi of the twentieth century in the West, author of *Autobiography of a Yogi* and founder of Self-Realization

Fellowship in America.

About the Author

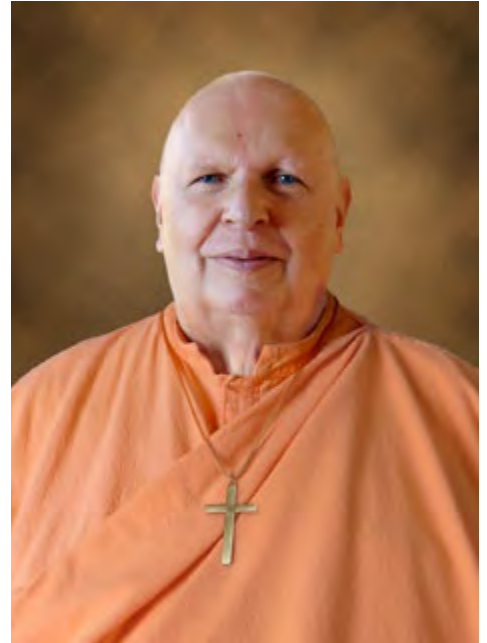
Abbot George Burke (Swami Nirmalananda Giri) is the founder and director of the Light of the Spirit Monastery (Atma Jyoti Ashram) in Cedar Crest, New Mexico, USA.

In his many pilgrimages to India, he had the opportunity of meeting some of India's greatest spiritual figures, including Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh and Anandamayi Ma. During his first trip to India he was made a member of the ancient Swami Order by Swami Vidyananda Giri, a direct disciple of Paramhansa Yogananda, who had himself been given sannyas by the Shankaracharya of Puri, Jagadguru Bharati Krishna Tirtha.

In the United States he also encountered various Christian saints, including Saint John Maximovich of San Francisco and Saint Philaret Voznesensky of New York. He was ordained in the Liberal Catholic Church (International) to the priesthood on January 25, 1974, and consecrated a bishop on August 23, 1975.

For many years Abbot George has researched the identity of Jesus Christ and his teachings with India and Sanatana Dharma, including Yoga. It is his conclusion that Jesus lived in India for most of his life, and was a yogi and Sanatana Dharma missionary to the West. After his resurrection he returned to India and lived the rest of his life in the Himalayas.

He has written extensively on these and other topics, many of which are posted at OCOY.org.



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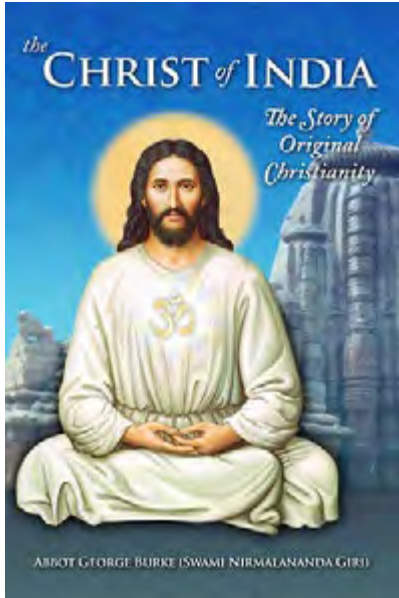
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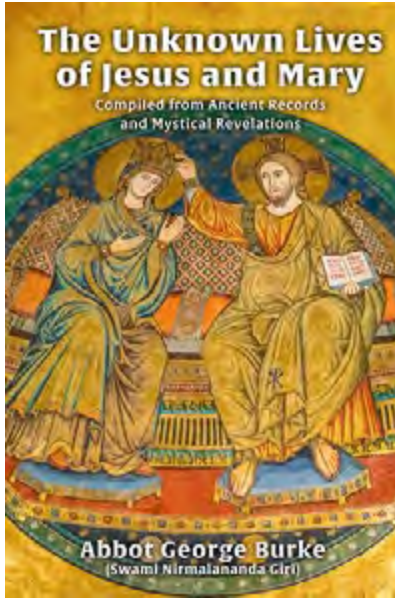
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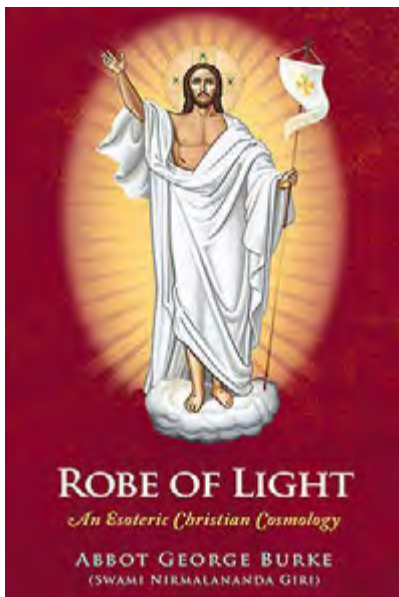
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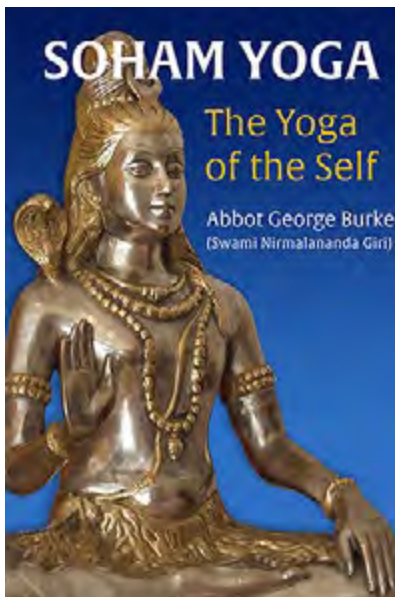
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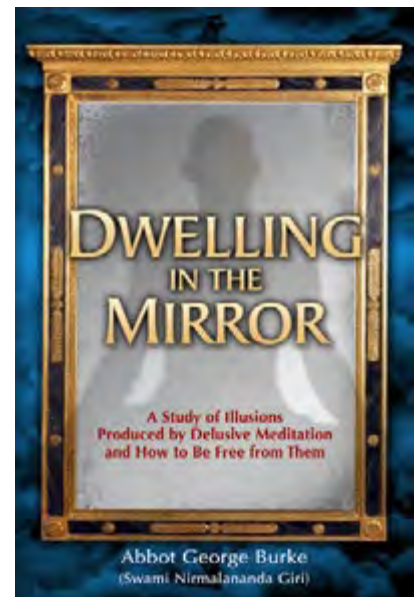
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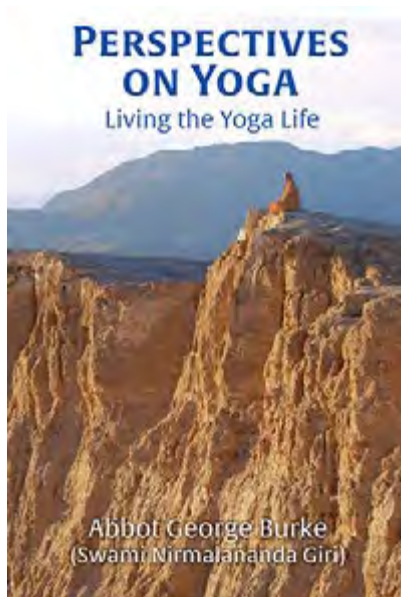
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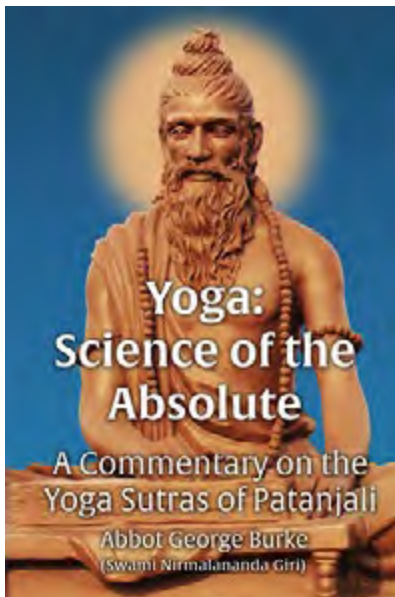
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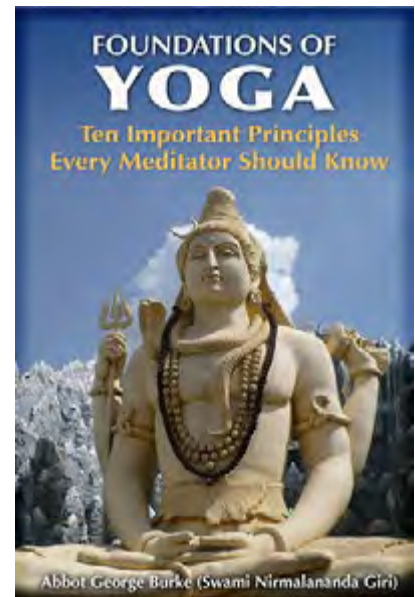
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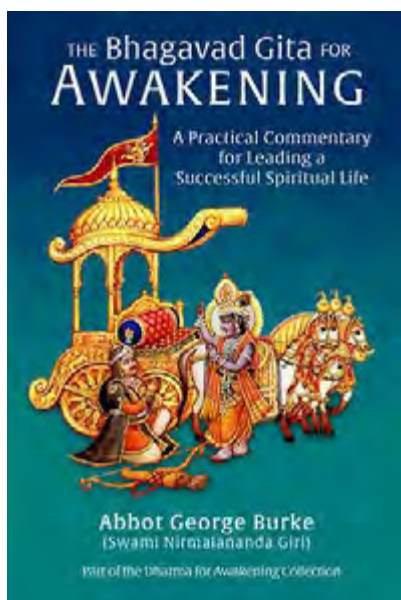
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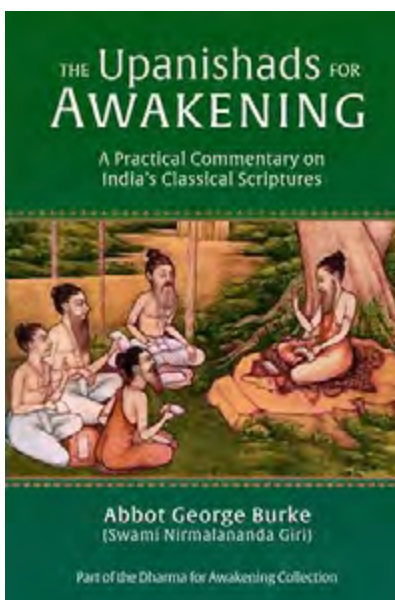
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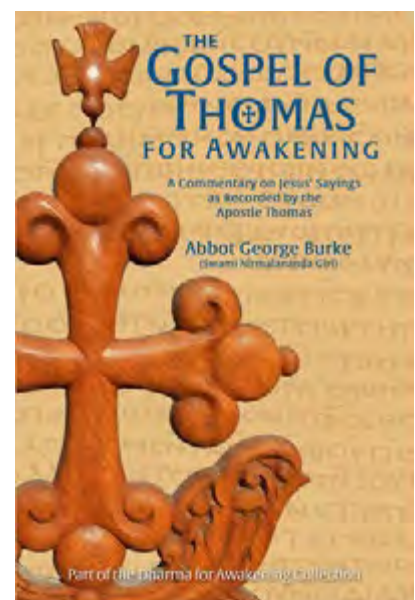
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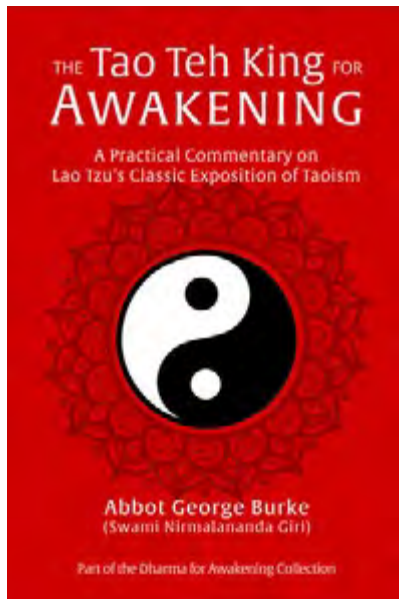
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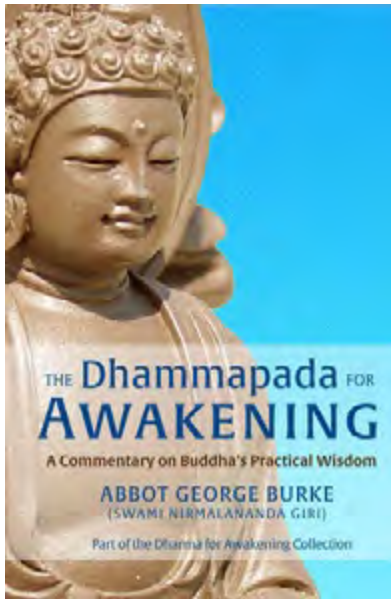
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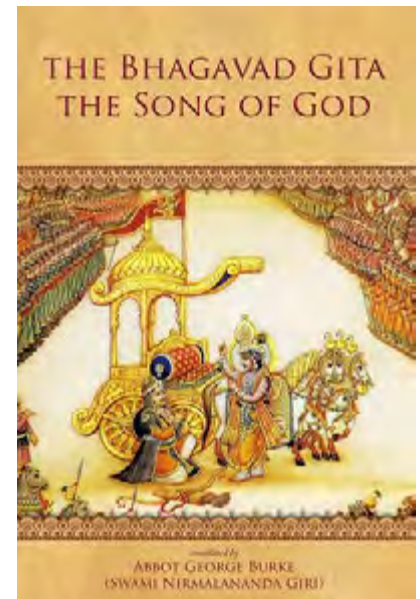
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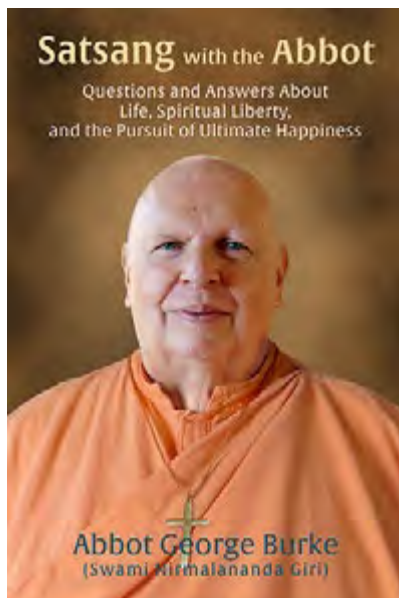
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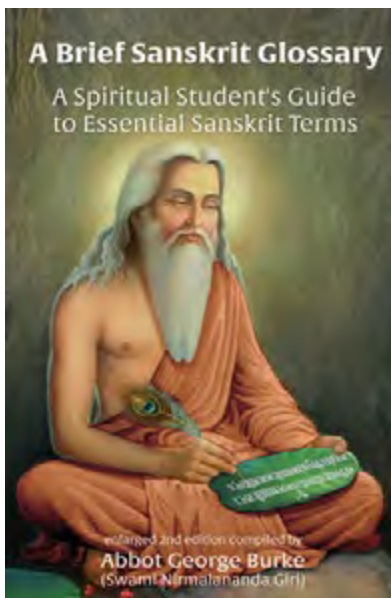
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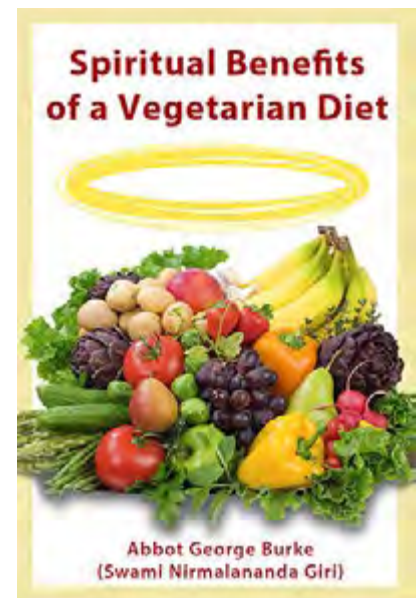
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