

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

‘KNOW THYSELF’
Jnana Yoga

Part 2



Complete Works

P R O S V E T A

Table of Contents

‘KNOW THYSELF’

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

Chapter One: Beauty

Chapter Two: Spiritual work

Chapter Three: The power of thought

Chapter Four: Knowledge: heart and mind

Chapter Five: The causal plane

Chapter Six: Concentration, meditation, contemplation and
identification

Chapter Seven: Prayer

Chapter Eight: Love

Chapter Nine: The will

Chapter Ten: Art and music

Chapter Eleven: Physical gestures

Chapter Twelve: Respiration

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Readers will better understand certain aspects of the lectures published in the present volume if they bear in mind that Master Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov's teaching was exclusively oral and that the editors have made every effort to respect the flavour and style of each lecture.

The Master's Teaching is more than a body of doctrines; it is an organic whole, and his way of presenting it was to approach it from countless different points of view. By treating certain aspects in many different contexts he constantly reveals a new dimension of the whole, and at the same time throws new light on the individual

aspects and their vital links with each other.

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov



Chapter One

Beauty

I

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘It is a crime to treat beauty as a prey to be pounced on and captured, devoured and defiled; but it is also a crime not to seek beauty in order to contemplate it. If human beings use beauty as a lure in order to entice others into the abyss, it is not the fault of beauty; it is they themselves who are not sufficiently pure. They kindle a fire within, and then, because of all their impurities, the fire starts to smoke. Beauty should not cause the downfall of human beings; on the contrary, it should lead them to God, elevate them to heaven itself. For my part I would wish to be nourished by beauty alone; in fact, I assure you, if God were not all beauty, if he were only wisdom, love and power, I would not love him so much. It is because he is beautiful that I love him and want to resemble him. Beauty is the only thing that has any attraction for me. But only pure, spiritual beauty, not every kind of beauty. Yes, for my notion of beauty is not the same as yours: very often, where others see splendour, I see ugliness, and where others see nothing, I can often see a hidden splendour.’

If there were no cosmic Principle at work in the universe, if the supreme Mother¹ were not ever-present, working to preserve the harmony and perfection of forms, human beings would have turned into something repulsively ugly. Considering that they live in a permanent state of disorder and conflict, constantly in the pursuit of pleasure, it is not surprising that they have lost all beauty.

I have sometimes met truly lovely young girls, but more often than not, when I look at them a little more closely, I find out how trite and even how wayward and licentious their thoughts and desires are. By rights, if absolute justice existed, these girls should be outwardly deformed; such inner defects should not be clothed in such a charming exterior. But their exterior is charming and this means that the supreme Mother is making a sacrifice in order to help them; otherwise, by rights, there should be an absolute correspondence between the content and the form. This correspondence exists in animals, vegetables and minerals. It is only in human beings that there is a discrepancy, and this is because, for the moment, thanks to their will-power and intelligence, human beings can prevent the outer form from expressing the inner content. You can see people who seem magnificent; they are good-looking and well built and yet, inwardly, they are swarming with monsters of their own creation. And then there are others, who are externally deformed, wretched and

tattered, but who are inwardly beautiful. To be sure, there are also some in whom the form corresponds exactly to the content. You could say that there are four categories of people: those who are inwardly beautiful and outwardly ugly; those who are outwardly ugly and inwardly beautiful; those who are ugly both inwardly and outwardly, and those who are beautiful both inwardly and outwardly.

As I have already explained, this discrepancy between the inner and outer being is due to the fact that the inner life changes much more rapidly than external forms. The discrepancy, therefore, is between the past and the present. From one day to the next human beings can completely change their philosophy and their whole outlook on life, whereas their physical appearance cannot change immediately. Our physical bodies are made of materials that are far less pliable than the subtle, flexible matter of thought, which can be transformed almost at will. Picture someone, for instance, whose physical appearance is repugnant but who has embraced a divine philosophy: only very gradually will this philosophy seep into their whole being and animate the matter of their physical body until, one fine day, that body becomes radiantly beautiful, truly divine, because it is the exact reflection of their inner life, the life of their soul and spirit. And the opposite can also be true: a very beautiful person can be bent on evil while their physical appearance continues to be beautiful; it will not change overnight. They may be a fiend inwardly, but they will continue to be god-

like in appearance. These things happen and, as people cannot see the inner reality, they are misled by the visible form that expresses the past. It is only a question of time, though: sooner or later the outer form ends by reflecting the inner life.²

But, whatever a person's physical appearance may be, there is one thing that cannot lie and that reveals exactly what that person is, and that is their fluidic emanations. If you are capable of perceiving these, the beauty or the ugliness of their outward appearance will not mislead you. A person's emanations are an exact expression of their inner state, and if they are dingy, discordant and unwholesome it is because they reflect their dingy, discordant and unwholesome thoughts and desires. You cannot see the divine world that exists in someone, but you can sense their emanations. And if they really and truly emanate purity and light, you can be a hundred per cent sure that the content is beautiful. Sometimes, in fact, a person's emanations are so powerful that, for all their subtlety, they become visible. There are people, for instance, who are physically ugly and deformed but who, for an instant, suddenly become astoundingly expressive and beautiful. For one brief moment, their emanations change their form. There are three aspects to consider, therefore: the form, the emanations that transpire through this form and that do not always correspond to it, and the spirit that produces these emanations. As it is virtually impossible to know the spirit, and as forms are deceptive, the only sure way of knowing the truth about someone is through

their emanations.

But let's get back to the question of beauty. Human beings have never really understood true beauty because they look no further than the form, and if the form is aesthetically pleasing they exclaim, 'How beautiful!' But behind that form there are other things worth knowing: the expression and the emanations of the inner being, the life that flows within it. And if you can see beyond even these and discern the spirit that dwells in heaven, you will discover a beauty that is even more perfect. In reality, however, the splendour of a person's spirit cannot be adequately expressed even by their emanations, for the physical body is incapable of reflecting such subtlety. This is why, in the text I just read to you, it says, 'My notion of beauty is not the same as yours; very often, where others see splendour, I see ugliness, and where others see nothing, I can often see a hidden splendour.' You were a little shocked by this, to start with, but now you understand why I say it. Yes, and if I see things so differently to others, it is because I have studied and observed, so that I now possess a science.

I have sometimes walked along the beaches with friends and, in order to teach them to see things as I see them, I would point out some of the women and girls we passed. I would say, 'Do you see that girl? You can tell from her skin and her emanations that she is ill. And that one over there is vicious. And that one is superb!' And my friends were astonished to see that I could appreciate

something that no one else could see or appreciate.³ Yes, human beings are incapable of appreciating what is divine because they look no further than appearances.

Actually, beauty, true beauty, cannot be explained at all. It is life, a life which streams forth, which emanates. Suppose, for example, you have a diamond; when the sun's rays fall on it you are dazzled by the beauty of the colours you see. Well, this is true beauty: it is comparable to the light of the sun. And to the extent to which someone emanates beauty such as this, to that extent they come close to true beauty. True beauty is not in forms; true beauty has no form even, for it exists on high, in a realm in which there are only currents, forces and radiances. When a human being succeeds in contemplating this beauty, they are seized by such ravishment that they almost wish for death. True beauty cannot really be found in the bodies or on the faces of men and women; it is in the world above. It is only from time to time, if a man or woman is so closely attuned to the divine world that they allow some of its radiance to shine through them, that their faces can hint at that beauty.

Bear this always in mind: beauty is not in the form, it is in the radiance, the emanations. This is why you must not try to pounce on it to capture and devour it: it is not a form that can be grasped. You must only contemplate and marvel at it; steep yourself in it. This is why men must change their attitude towards women. When

a man meets a very lovely woman, instead of wanting to possess and defile her, he must contemplate her and see her as an inspiration, a means by which he can attain the Deity.⁴ I realize, of course, that this point of view is so totally unknown that it may even seem grotesque. Most people behave as though beauty were something to be pawed, possessed, soiled and torn to shreds. They are like children who look at the pictures of a book and then tear out the pages!

Oh, I know that you are still asking yourselves, ‘What on earth is he talking about? Beauty is there for our pleasure!’ Yes, pleasure is the only thing most people are interested in. Eminent scientists have written lots of books explaining the techniques that will give you the maximum amount of pleasure. This is why you have the impression that what I am saying is quite outlandish. And yet these things are true and very real.

Make up your minds, from now on, to improve your attitude towards beauty; to consider it as the language of living nature and a means by which to draw closer to the Lord. If you want to have some slight idea of what true, pure, luminous beauty is, take a crystal, a prism, and watch how the light passes through it and becomes so beautiful that you could gaze at it for hours, enraptured by the colours in it. This is something I often do. Instead of wasting my time on the stupid pleasures most people indulge in – drinking, playing cards, gambling or kissing the girls – I

find joy in the beauty of light. And I advise you to do the same; you will gain a great deal from it. Of course, some of you will say, 'I am not ready for any of that. It is not for me!' but this is faulty reasoning. On the contrary, you should say, 'Even if I am not made for that, even if I am still too weak, I am going to nourish myself on beauty.' Obviously, as long as you use your present state as the yardstick of what you can or cannot do, you will never get any further.

True beauty, therefore, is not on the physical plane but elsewhere. To be sure, the earth is beautiful; plants, mountains, lakes and rivers are beautiful. But I am bound to say that all the beauty of the earth pales in comparison with the beauty of the world above. Beauty is the expression of the highest perfection. Beauty possesses intelligence, light, purity, music, colours and perfumes, and this is why, for me, beauty is always linked to the Deity. The Deity is beauty. And, as I have said, if God were not beautiful, I would not seek him. Many people seek God because he is all-powerful or because he is all-knowing. I seek him because he is beautiful. I have a weakness for beauty – which means that I have a weakness for perfection. So much the better: it is excellent to have such weaknesses! The only weakness you will never be blamed for, in fact the only weakness which is a glory, is a weakness for beauty. But not the beauty that human beings know and appreciate. I tell you frankly, I have seen a great many very lovely girls, and I have also seen some very handsome men, but

they have never really dazzled me, because I have always looked for another kind of beauty, a beauty beyond the world of forms. That is what has always saved me: my love of beauty. And you, too, will be saved if you have the same love of beauty; but, without that love, you will be ready to do anything with anyone who comes along until you are completely degraded and demolished.

The Bonfin, August 7, 1976

II

Human beings continually hanker for all kinds of things because they imagine that these things will bring them happiness. But there are always two sides to a coin, and wisdom consists in knowing which of the things you desire will not have consequences that are the exact opposite of what you hoped for. Take the question of beauty, for instance: is there a woman alive who does not long to be beautiful? And yet beauty is always accompanied by all kinds of inconveniences.

Beauty can be a great power for good; it is capable of inspiring and elevating the human soul to extraordinary heights.

Unfortunately, though, this is not always what happens: men are so filled with lust and base appetites that a beautiful woman cannot help but stir up every level of the astral plane. Every man who sees her bombards her with flames that are not particularly pure so that she bathes in an atmosphere polluted by their frustrated desires. Every kind of slime and filth is thrown at her and, often enough, if she is neither intelligent nor enlightened but allows herself to be devoured by swine.

Sad to say, it is true that the prettiest girls are seldom very intelligent; they rely on their beauty and are inwardly empty. It seems that beauty lasts longer if you never exert yourself; if you begin to work or to exercise your brain, your beauty is liable to get a little crumpled! A beautiful woman takes care not to do anything to mar that beauty; she goes about and shows herself off in the hope of attracting a multi-millionaire, and it is he who will work for her. If she had to do the washing or clean the floors, she would spoil her hands. And reading, studying and even thinking can also spoil one's beauty. If you go to a shop or an office for information, for instance, you would do better to put your questions to the plainest girl there; she will tell you everything you want to know. If you ask a pretty girl, she will say, 'I'm sorry sir, I don't know.' She will not even know what the shop sells. She is only there as a figurehead, to attract buyers. But a girl who does not have the advantage of good looks relies on her own work, her own efforts.

And the same is true of men: the best-looking men are often

stupid and empty-headed, whereas the features of those who are most intelligent and capable are often irregular and a little crooked. When the trunk and branches of a tree are twisted, it shows that the tree has had to overcome great difficulties in the course of its growth, but it had the will to survive in spite of all obstacles, and its desperate struggles are reflected in the shape of its trunk and branches. With human beings the same thing happens: the tormented, deformed features of some of the world's most gifted and able people prove that they have had to triumph in very difficult circumstances. The regrettable thing is, though, that they have often developed their intellectual capacities and their will-power to the detriment of kindness and the ethical qualities. All their energies have been focused on their determination to succeed by guile and covetousness, and this is why their faces are deformed. Beauty speaks more of moral than of intellectual qualities. Yes, this is something you do not know: people who are very good-looking are not always very intelligent; in fact, they are often ripe for the plucking! And, indeed, this is what happens: they are plucked and devoured by others who are not so beautiful but who have learned how to look out for themselves!

Beauty has far more affinity with kindness than with intelligence. Perhaps you will object: 'Oh, that is not true! I have known some really lovely women who were absolute fiends!' No, the trouble is that you cannot see what is staring you in the face. When you look at women like that you can sense something cruel,

selfish and treacherous behind the beauty of their features; you cannot say that they are truly beautiful, therefore. Their whole attitude, even the way they hold themselves, shows that in their innermost being they are cold and calculating and bent on getting their own way, and it is this that is ugly; it is this that transpires, in spite of their outward appearance. You can sense that they are femmes fatales, women who are deadly for others. Beauty is something simpler, something natural and uncontrived, almost naive; it is not treacherous and calculating, it may not be particularly intelligent, but it is kind-hearted.

It takes a great deal of practice to be able to discern these shades of difference. It is something very subtle, not just a question of physical features or forms. Certain women are physically very beautiful, but one senses that terrible ambitions and lusts that will be fatal to others emanate from their astral bodies. In a previous existence they worked to cultivate the qualities and virtues which are responsible for the beauty of their bodies or their faces. In this life they are no longer working in the same direction but, as the physical body is slow to change, even though they are fast sinking into degradation, it still holds out and manifests something of its past glory. They may be riddled with debts but their 'mansion' is still beautiful and in good repair. For this is what the physical body is: the stones of which our house is built, and eventually even the stones crumble and fall.

On the other hand, the opposite can also occur: some people

who are rich in qualities and virtues can be outwardly ugly and deformed because their physical body reflects the life they led in a previous incarnation. Even if they have changed in the meantime, even if they have learned some hard lessons and repented of their past behaviour, they cannot immediately repair the damage done to their physical being; it takes time. But their physical deformities do not prevent you from being charmed and captivated by the inner beauty shining through their eyes and their smile. You probably remember Victor Hugo's description of Quasimodo in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*: he was extremely ugly, but his love, devotion and unselfishness were so great that he was completely transfigured. You will object that Quasimodo was a fictional character invented by Victor Hugo. That is true, but such cases do exist. I have sometimes seen people whose external appearance was extremely rough and primitive but whose inner life was extraordinarily refined and delicate.

Although they may not know it, therefore, those who live a truly harmonious, well ordered inner life are modelling and fashioning their face and their physical body. To be sure, the work is long and difficult, but they can be sure of the results: they will return to earth, one day, with a divine, angelically beautiful body.

Henceforth, try to discern whether the beauty of the men and women you meet in life is purely external, whether there is not some sign of inner deformity, or whether, on the contrary, their external deformities conceal the splendour of their soul. How often

I have experienced this! Time and again, my attention has been caught by the beauty of a man or woman glimpsed in a crowd, and then, not five minutes later, I could hardly bear to look at them, for I had recognized the diabolical reality within them. Yes, and yet I started by finding them very attractive, because the first impression is always of the external reality; it is this that strikes you to begin with. But, on closer inspection, you are sometimes horrified by what you see. And then, with others, it is just the reverse: at first sight they seem to be quite unremarkable but, on closer acquaintance, you gradually discover all the poetry and beauty concealed within them.

Most human beings are only concerned with outward appearances; in fact, they spend fantastic sums on their physical appearance. If they took as much trouble to improve their inner looks as they take in their attempts to improve their outward looks, they would be living wonders. Unfortunately, the effects of what you do for your outward appearance do not last; you have to start all over again every day. Whereas, although inner improvements may take longer to achieve, you can be absolutely sure that they will endure. Make up your mind, therefore, to dedicate at least half an hour a day to making yourself more beautiful. I highly recommend that you go to a beauty salon, but of a different kind. Every morning at sunrise, for instance, you are in a beauty salon for, when you watch the sun rising, something always changes for the better in your etheric, astral and mental bodies.

And lakes and forests and all the lovely things of nature are also beauty salons. But the best beauty salon of all is within you; it is in this inner beauty salon that you can do your most effective work. Every day you can use the colours of the rainbow to remedy certain inner imperfections.

It is not only your face but your whole body that benefits from the work you do in your inner beauty salon. Actually, you would do better not to bother too much about your present physical body; concentrate rather on building a new body, your body of light, the body of glory that is mentioned in the scriptures.⁵ Initiates use all the subtlest, purest, most divine elements from within themselves in the construction of this body. Every time they experience a sublimely poetic moment of adoration or sacrifice, they use it as material with which to build up this body, just as they would model a statue. They know that, one day, they will have to leave behind their mortal physical body; they cannot take it with them to the farthest bounds of space, so they concentrate on building their body of glory. And, for this, they use all the materials gleaned from the higher realms during their meditations and contemplations. All these sublime emotions serve to form that body, making it gradually so radiant and powerful that it is even capable of carrying their physical body away to distant places. And, at this point, they are invulnerable; nothing can harm them any longer. They have reached their secret refuge on high;⁶ they have become immortal.

To build your body of glory is the most precious work you can do, the only work that is really worth doing. But this means that, from childhood on, you have to get into the habit of working mentally, of creating with your thoughts. It is not enough to learn things passively; you must use your mental powers actively. That is to say, you must learn to react and remedy and intervene in your own inner life. You must be like children who build all kinds of things with their little building blocks. It is very good to give children the means to build and invent things; it helps to develop their creative faculties. The necessity of working actively with one's powers of thought, of making one's own, original mark, is not sufficiently developed in human beings.

This active, dynamic dimension of thought is extremely important. In fact, it is what matters most; but you have to be born under the right star. The capacity for active mental work is indicated in a person's horoscope by the conjunction or favourable aspect of Mars and Mercury. But the influence of Jupiter, Venus and the Sun must also be present, otherwise the power may be there but it will not necessarily be benign. Mars and Mercury provide the capability, the endurance and the perseverance, but they do not necessarily guide someone in the right direction. Their forces belong to the will and the intellect, and they can be used either for good or for evil. But when Jupiter, Venus and the Sun also have a say in the matter, all their activity is turned towards good, towards a dedication to the collectivity, to harmony and

generosity, to light and to divine glory.

Certainly, therefore, beauty must be loved and desired; but beauty alone, beauty that is not at the service of something more elevated, can lead to the worst disasters. Think of how many men have committed suicide for the sake of a pretty woman, simply because that pretty woman aroused envy and jealousy wherever she went! In order to ennoble and elevate human beings, beauty must be at the service of an idea; if it is not, it is dangerous and harmful. The pity is that most pretty women use their beauty as a means to get the things they want, money or fame, instead of using it to do good, to help others to evolve and become nobler, to make poets of them. Beauty is a double-edged sword: it can do good but it can also do harm. Women should be conscious of the way they use their beauty, therefore, and never forget that heaven sees what they do. It is heaven that has given them this treasure, and it is concerned to know how the capital it represents is used. If heaven sees that a woman uses her capital only for the satisfaction of her selfish whims and fancies, not only will it be taken from her but she will be sent an illness or some other misfortune.

And what I have said about beauty can be applied to all the gifts one has received: wealth, knowledge, fame or strength. What a terrible handicap it is not to be able to control one's wealth! You want to sample everything, experience everything, wipe out all who stand in your way. And think of the karmic debt you pile up in this way! People do not know how dangerous some of the

things they ask for would be; they do not know what they should ask for. They always ask for complicated things that are bound to make them suffer. Why do they not ask to be perfect, to be true servants of God?¹ Why do they not ask for light, purity and divine love? Purity can never harm them, nor divine love, nor light. As long as you desire only worldly possessions, you must realize that there will always be a good and a bad side to everything, and you will always be unhappy.

The Bonfin, August 10, 1964

¹ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 10: 'The cosmic family and the mystery of the Trinity'.

² See *The Powers of Thought*, Izvor Coll. n° 224, chap. 5: 'How thought produces material results'.

³ See *'In Spirit and in Truth'*, Izvor Coll. n° 235, chap. 10: 'The perfume of Eden'.

⁴ See *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol. 28, chap. 11: 'L'homme et la femme dans la nouvelle culture'.

⁵ See *'Au commencement était le Verbe' – commentaires des Évangiles*, Complete Works, vol. 9, chap. 13: 'Le corps de la résurrection'.

⁶ See above, chap. 8: 'La haute retraite'.

⁷ See *The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 3: 'Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect'.

Chapter Two

Spiritual work

I

How did primitive men light a fire when there were no matches? Even children know that! They took two pieces of wood and rubbed them together until the friction produced heat and then a flame and, ultimately, light. So it is movement that produces heat, and heat that becomes light.

And today, we hear people with a spiritual philosophy declaring that, if they worked on the physical plane, they would lose their light! No, physical work is necessary; it must be there as the necessary prelude to heat, that is to say, to love. And when that love is sufficiently intense it produces light, that is to say, intelligence. Light is the result of movement and heat. If you believe that physical work robs you of your light, therefore, it is because it is not true light; it is sloth. There is nothing in Initiatic Science to indicate that work destroys light.

The will, movement and activity correspond to the physical plane; feelings correspond to the astral plane, and thought to the mental plane. And whether you start from the top or the bottom,

the energies produced by an activity on any one of these planes can be transformed into a different form of energy by moving onto the next plane. In other words, you can move upwards from action to thought or downwards from thought to action. The process by which movement is transformed into heat and light (or light into heat and movement) are well known and frequently applied in physics. The only people who do not know or apply them are slothful spiritualists who are content to meditate, study, reflect and talk without ever transforming any of these activities into feelings or actions. But I have been given the task – and a thankless task it often is – of looking after you, and this obliges me to give you a proper understanding of these things so that you may be free and evolve more rapidly.

You have to understand, therefore, that physical work is indispensable to the evolution of every human being without exception. Even if no one else obliges you to work, you must oblige yourself. If you do not, your health, particularly your muscles and your circulation, will feel the ill-effects. On the excuse that you feel perfectly well, you never exert yourself, but it is precisely this illusory well-being that misleads the whole of humankind. If you only realized how beneficial physical activity was for your health and even for a heightened consciousness, you would always make an effort, even when you are alone at home, to have some chores to do, something to clean or wash. In fact, even I, who could so easily ask the brothers and sisters to do things for

me, do as much of my own work as I can. Yes, because I know that it is not by getting other people to do one's work that one acquires more light. Indeed, I often wonder what people understand by 'light'. Nobody really knows anything about what light is or how it is born.

Try to free yourself from all those philosophies that are unacceptable to us here, in the Universal White Brotherhood. If you imagine that you are going to lose your light by working physically, then it would be better to lose it, because what you lose will not be true light. True light cannot be lost by working; on the contrary, if you work, the light will never abandon you. It is when you work, in fact, that you begin to understand things better and make new discoveries, not when you idle away your time doing nothing, waiting for others to feed you and give you money.

I regret having to talk to you about such things, but it seems to me that it is very necessary to do so; it is the fire, this evening, that inspired me to talk about this. You will ask, 'Why the fire? We do not have to rub two sticks together to produce fire nowadays!' True, but what are you doing when you strike a match? Things are easier, today, but the principle of movement is the same; we have not been able to do away with that. And I will go much further still, and say that lovers also generate heat through movement and that the heat they produce is transformed into ideas, thoughts, plans, and so on.¹ So, as you see, there is a whole philosophy

involved here.

How can you produce movement if you do not work on the physical plane? You cannot! As for light, it hardly comes into it at all. Oh, of course, you will always find some kind of light, the phosphorescence of will-o'-the-wisps, for example. But phosphorescence is not true light, it is produced by the putrefaction of matter. And the light of the astral plane is not true light, either; many mystics and occultists are led seriously astray because they take this illusory astral light for true light. You must not trust every kind of light. People sometimes tell me about a man or woman they have met whose eyes shone with an extraordinary, fascinating brilliance. Yes, but you would be well advised to distrust someone whose eyes shine too brightly. The eyes of a serpent are very bright and shiny, too, but they shine with an astral light. All those who have an intense astral life have this look and those who succumb to its fascination are robbed of all their strength. It takes much study to be capable of recognizing true spiritual light, for it is soft and gentle; it is not bright and glittering.

True light is related to true love; true love is related to true will, and the will manifests itself in physical movement. The slightest gesture you manage to make on the physical plane is a manifestation of the will. If a person's activity on the physical plane were orderly and their gestures harmonious and graceful, their will would be strengthened and they would achieve self-mastery. How can you imagine that you are going to achieve the

mastery of your whole being when you have not even begun to practise by controlling your gestures and every movement you make on the physical plane?

The Bonfin, August 4, 1965

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The body of glory – *I Cor. 15:42-55*

II

What a sunrise, this morning! I really think that it has never been more beautiful; impossible to tear oneself away from it! Have you ever seen such light, such purity and transparency in the air? And such serenity and power, too! What a privilege it is to be able to come here every morning to slake our thirst at this fountain of life and imbibe its subtlest elements! Very few men and women enjoy such conditions. Those who feel the imperative need to quench their thirst at this source have found the secret. The road lies open before them; immense possibilities for development and

fulfilment are available to them; they can be assured of finding true joy, true satisfaction, true fulfilment.²

I must tell you how happy I am for you, my dear brothers and sisters, for I can see that you are acquiring a taste for the sunrise; that you are more and more keenly aware of how indispensable it is to come to the sunrise to be purified and illuminated. It will not be long before you begin to discover the treasures that the Creator has placed within you from all eternity and which are there, waiting for you. And when you do so, you will see what a beautiful, rich, expressive, musical creature a human being is.

Today, I want to add a few words to what I was saying yesterday about work, for there are a great many points that still need to be clarified. For instance, some kinds of physical work are purely physical, whereas others have a spiritual element to them, and the results will not be the same in both cases. Certain kinds of work are extenuating; they erode and disintegrate human beings and make it impossible for them to grow and advance towards the light. But when I speak of work, I mean a harmonious activity that is compatible and in harmony with our ideal, with our philosophy, and this means, of course, that not every kind of work is acceptable. The subject is so vast that it is impossible to speak of every aspect; there is far too much to be said, especially in view of all the new types of activity that have appeared in recent years. So

I propose to speak about it from a point of view which has never been properly appreciated.

Work concerns the three worlds: physical, spiritual and divine. In other words, it is something that exists not only on the physical, material level, but also on the level of emotions and feelings, and on that of thought, of the spirit. It is important to understand this, for work exists all the way up the scale, and it is possible to work at the same time on all three levels: physical, spiritual and divine. Also, we must co-ordinate the three levels of work so that our physical activity is in harmony with the other levels, so that it neither destroys nor is destroyed by the whole. A human being's activity in the three worlds must be in perfect harmony, therefore, and this means that they need considerable knowledge. The trouble is that most human beings do not have this knowledge, and the result is that they often engage in work or activities that are so much in contradiction with their being as a whole that it is not long before they begin to suffer from a host of different ailments, and even the specialists, whose job is to classify and find names for them, are at a loss. The truth is that all these new illnesses that keep cropping up are simply evidence of the disharmony and strife between the three worlds: the divine world of thought, the spiritual world of emotion and the physical world of action. A very extensive knowledge of human nature is needed in order to unify all one's activities in time and space, to know exactly how much or how little to do; when, how and in what order to do things.

Once a person possesses this knowledge of their different activities in the three worlds, once they are capable of harmonizing and synchronizing all their actions and of adapting and using them for the service of an ideal, they can truly claim that their life is one of indescribable beauty, joy, happiness and fulfilment. This is why the divine school of the Universal White Brotherhood teaches a proper understanding of all human activities; from the basics of nutrition,³ breathing⁴ and sleep,⁵ to the most exalted activities of heart, mind, soul and spirit. It is important for one's consciousness to be on the alert at every moment of the day or night so as to know exactly how to act. If your intellectual activity takes one direction, all your feelings pull in the opposite direction and your physical work is aimed in yet another direction, is there any wonder that you feel off-balance?

There are a great many people, also, who have the reputation of being very active and dynamic and who launch into many different activities for various reasons of their own. Some want to show that they are capable in many different areas; others are ready to do anything to become rich; still others keep chopping and changing in the hope that they will find what they are looking for in a new occupation, and so on. In the course of my life, I have had occasion to study many individual cases and to see why people do what they do, to see what their motives are and what they hope to obtain. And as it was often easy for me to see in

advance that a person's built-in faculties and capacities were not attuned to the goals they had set themselves, and that they would soon have exhausted all their energies, I would warn them of the danger they were in. But my warnings were never any use. Yes, the importance of this question of one's physical, astral and mental work is incalculable. Think about it, reflect on it, and ask yourself whether what you do on the physical plane corresponds to what is in your heart and your head.

If you try to imitate certain sadhus, whose only work is meditation and contemplation, and who never do any work on the physical plane, this too will lead to certain anomalies, for humans were created to live in the three worlds and, properly understood, every activity on one plane benefits the other planes. This is why we refuse to eliminate any one type of activity; anyone who does so mutilates themselves; they are no longer a whole person, and they will never be able to present themselves to the Lord as someone who has developed all their God-given possibilities on the three planes. When people are under-developed on one level it interferes with their activity on the other levels. When you are active only on the physical plane and never on the mental plane, the lack on the mental plane will eventually be felt on the physical plane, and vice versa. These notions should be very helpful to you.

The goal of the Universal White Brotherhood is not to imitate certain aspects of the various religions or philosophies. The vocation of the Universal White Brotherhood is to create new

human beings, men and women who are whole and complete. It is time to discard all those narrow philosophies that develop only one small part of you and leave all other aspects incomplete and undeveloped. The true philosophy that is going to spread throughout the world must be a philosophy of total fulfilment. Humans must be strong, flexible and robust on the physical level; they must be full of love, kindness and indulgence in their heart, and they must have a keen, luminous intellect capable of understanding the laws of life and of the universe. This is the ideal of the new human. Whatever other people may think, believe or preach does not interest us. We are here to tell you that the new human must be a whole person, capable of working on both the physical and spiritual planes and, even, on the far more exalted planes of the divine world. The ideal held up by universities is that of a scholar, a man or woman of great learning, a specialist in his or her chosen field. But the divine school does not stop there; it is capable of leading human beings to greater heights and of teaching them to develop faculties that are above and beyond the intellect: the faculties of their causal, buddhic and atmic bodies (that is to say, the higher intellect, the higher heart and the higher will). And these faculties will give them untold possibilities of wisdom, love and power.

You are already familiar with the diagram (Figure 1) that illustrates the human trinity, in which a human's causal, buddhic and atmic bodies are reflected in their mental, astral and physical

bodies. That which is lowest, as you see, is directly linked to that which is highest. The will, which is on the level of the physical body, belongs in reality to the highest level.⁶ Yes, the will belongs to the divine Principle of God the Father.

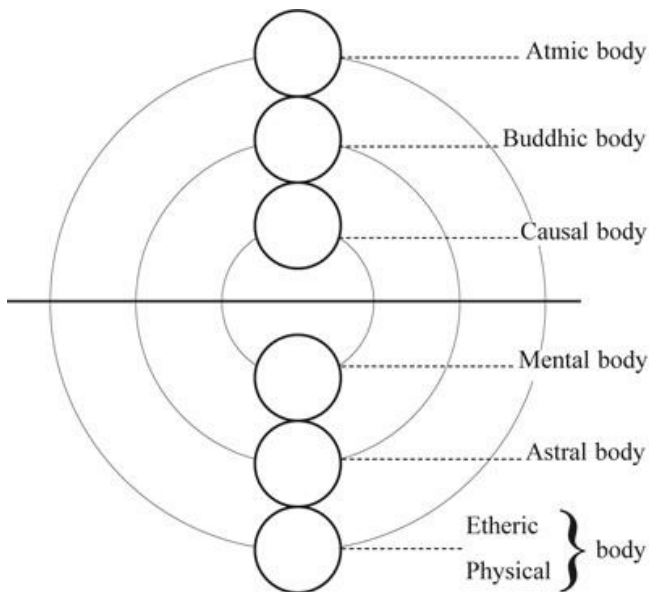


Figure 1

You may say that this contradicts what I told you yesterday.

No, it is not a contradiction; it is just that you have to learn how to handle these notions in the light of Hermes Trismegistus' words, 'What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below', knowing that it is true, but in reverse. The heavenly Father, therefore, the creator and source of all things, divine volition and power (the atmic plane), is reflected in the physical plane. The Son, who is all love and all compassion (the buddhic plane), is reflected in the astral plane. And the Holy Spirit, who is wisdom and absolute intelligence (the causal plane), is reflected in the mental plane. And the thing to remember is that the highest is reflected in the lowest. This is why crystals symbolize the divine world and why the world of crystals and metals, the whole of the physical plane, conceals such great mysteries. What is lowest, the stones of the earth, is linked to what is highest, the spirit, but they are separated by a vast intermediate region. Even in our own bodies, what is lowest, the sexual organs, is linked to what is highest, the brain. Medical science proves this.

You can now understand that by means of your physical work you can be in touch with the most exalted regions. Through your orderly, harmonious physical activity you become powerful on the highest levels; you become a creator. Without that activity you will be paralysed on the higher levels. On the other hand, if you work actively on the level of the spirit, your physical body will be strengthened and will become capable of marvellous, miraculous accomplishments here, on the physical plane. And the same rules

apply to the regions of feeling and thought. All those who fail to understand this truth, therefore, and who imagine that by working on the physical plane they will lose their light and their true strength and power, will in fact lose them by doing nothing. Whereas those who have understood will continue to work all their life long.

Everyone has to work; everyone has to exert and fortify themselves, and, at the same time, everyone must be lucidly aware that this work can serve to trigger the powers of the spirit. What do you suppose initiates do when they are in their study, oratory or laboratory? They pronounce certain words and make certain gestures accompanied by the appropriate thoughts and feelings, and in this way they set in motion certain forces that benefit the whole world. An initiate is never inactive; they never just sit there doing nothing in the hope of fooling people into thinking that they have reached nirvana or some such!

You must not think that the whole question is now perfectly clear. In theory, yes, it is quite clear, but you will find that it is not quite so easy in practice. Each one of you has to find the best ways of manifesting yourself in the three worlds and learn to harmonize and unify them so that there is no contradiction between them. Without this co-ordination each one of us is like the four animals that tried to carry a load together. A crayfish, a mole, an eagle and a fish all pulled the load in different directions; the eagle upwards, the mole downwards, the fish forwards and the

cray fish backwards. And the load, of course, stayed where it was!

When I meet people I am always very interested to know whether they have managed to co-ordinate their intellect, heart and will. And what is it that I often see? I see someone who wants to be a saint or a prophet but who smokes and has other vices; their actions are in direct contradiction to their thoughts. I see others who say, 'Everybody always takes advantage of me. I have had enough of being a dupe; I will never do anything for anyone again!' And then, the very next day, their kind heart urges them to be generous; they do not want to be, but they cannot help themselves. They cannot stop being kind-hearted, fair and generous. And then there are those who make up their minds every day not to embrace their sweetheart again, but the very next time they meet they give in to the temptation – and this goes on for years. We see examples of this every day; in fact, I am sure that you all know how it goes! To be capable of unifying one's heart, intellect and will and getting them all to pull in the same direction is a privilege that is very rarely given to mortal man. But those who achieve it have achieved the precept of Jesus to be '*perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*' This is the ideal of all true initiates; they have no other ideal. They aspire to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect, and, having achieved this, to bring to earth the perfection they have seen in heaven.

This is what I know. What other people may think or consider important is of no interest to me. All I am interested in is knowing

what is in the minds, hearts and wills of those who are perfect – and I do know it. For whatever anyone may say about them, they are focal points in the universe, extraordinary dynamos of love and power. Whatever anyone may say about them, they are gardens full of trees and flowers. Whatever anyone may say, they are rivers, waterfalls, cascades. Whatever anyone may say, they are suns. And, though human beings may not recognize them for what they are, heaven recognizes them, and their names are inscribed in the great book of life as collaborators of the Godhead.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, you must not be content with a few little efforts here and there; you must go all the way. For my part I know nothing more beautiful, nothing greater, nobler or more luminous. And all that I have revealed to you today is confirmed by the sky and the sun, by the trees and the Rock.⁷ Yes, even the cicada sings for the glory of God. Everything confirms that what I have been telling you is the pure truth. But to understand this truth and sense it for yourselves you must work, for it is through your work, your activity, that this understanding will come. If you do not work, if you never exert yourselves, even if you think that you understand, it is not possible; you never will. It is through activity that you can begin to understand.

And now, suppose someone tells me, ‘I realize that what you tell us is the truth. It is all so beautiful and noble and immense. The trouble is that I have never been taught to see things in that way,

and I find it all too difficult.' Of course, that is quite understandable and excusable. When you do not know the way, when you have never learned this philosophy, it is entirely excusable to say, 'But I did not know! My life has been full of mistakes and now I do not know how to put things right. I am unhappy because I feel that I have inherited a terrible, crushing burden.' Yes, but once your eyes have been opened to all this beauty, the only thing that is inexcusable is to do nothing about it, to fail to apply it. How will you justify such an attitude to the creatures of the higher world? It is very serious: it would be better never to have come here, never to have known this teaching, than to know it and do nothing about it. Once you have been introduced to the true philosophy that has been a touchstone for all the noblest and best members of the human race, you will be assuming a terrible burden, a terrible karma, if you do nothing about it. You will have to pay very dearly for your negligence.

And now, let me wish you peace and light and, above all, activity. Off you go! Set to work and take care to make your activities on the physical, astral and mental planes correspond to your activities on the three higher planes. In this way each of you will become an example of the hexagram, that marvellous pentacle that Solomon chose as his symbol, but which existed long before his time. The whole of esoteric science is contained in the two intertwined triangles that form what we call the Seal of Solomon and with which, so tradition tells us, Solomon was able to seal up

even the most malignant spirits and cast them into the sea. A lot of people wear this symbol, but it does not do them any good. It is not by wearing it, but by understanding it and putting it into practice in your life, that you can make it one of the most potent talismans there can be – on a par with the pentagram that Paracelsus considered to be above all other talismans. What a lot of things there are to explain, still, about the pentagram, which represents perfected man, and the hexagram, which represents the masculine and feminine principles united in the pursuit of a common task.

As you see, I have not yet said all there is to say about work. Be patient, it will come.

The Bonfin, August 5, 1965

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

‘Perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.’ – *Matt. 5:48*

Someone comes and tells me that they still have to take care of all their material obligations and that, once that is done, they will devote themselves entirely to the spiritual life. I look at them and tell them, 'That day will never come!' 'Why do you say that?' 'Because you obviously do not know how things work. Look, here is a rubber ball with a puncture in it and a dent in one side. Try and squeeze it into shape again.' So they take my ball and pinch it, but the dent appears on the other side. Once again they try to push out the dent and only succeed in making another. 'There you are', I say. 'That is an image of what happens with our material obligations. Nothing is ever settled once and for all; there is always something new that crops up and has to be taken care of. Once your job is settled, there is still your wife (or husband), the maid, the children, the grandchildren. You will never be free! So do not wait until all your material affairs are in order, for that will never happen. And when you have retired and are beginning to think that things are settling down because your son and daughter are safely married, if someone says to you, "Now you can meditate", you will have to reply, "I cannot. My brain has gone soft". Do not wait until you are a useless wreck before you decide to embrace the spiritual life.'

This is why, when I hear young people saying, 'I want to live my own life!' I think, 'What ignorance!' Yes, they will live their own lives, but how? In the midst of anguish and tears, in suffering and bitterness. That is not much of a life! Believe me, you must

dedicate your life to heaven, then you can be sure that heaven will always guide, direct and protect you, and your life will be divine.⁸ Otherwise, you will be ruled by your passions and live in the company of demons until, when you are worn out and fit for nothing but the scrap-heap, you say, 'Lord, I give you my life. It is all yours!' I can just see the Lord scratching his head in perplexity and wondering what on earth he can do with the tattered remnants of your life. Yes, I assure you, this is what people do: when they are in the gutter, worn to a shred, they turn and say, 'Lord, I am yours!' But when they are young and fresh and vigorous, they use their lives to live like pigs. They wait until they are ready for the scrap-heap to give themselves to God, but God does not need a pile of scrap iron!

Believe me, if only you knew the importance, the splendour of spiritual work, you would concentrate all your thoughts, all your heart and all your soul on it every single day, several times a day. The thing that holds people back and causes them to neglect this work is that they never see any objective, tangible results on the physical plane. And yet this spiritual work is the foundation of everything: of their future, their glory, their power and their happiness. If they do not give it first place in their lives, they will never obtain any of the other things they desire. All initiates are unanimous on this score: the only thing that really counts is a personal effort, a sincere effort, an effort of the will in union with the mind, the soul and the spirit, all bent on the highest goal.

I have talked about this question thousands of times already, but I have to keep coming back to it, for it is often when people hear something for the thousandth time that they tell me, 'Master, I have suddenly understood; now I see what you mean!' You have to keep coming back to the most important truths, to harp on them, to repeat them over and over again, to look at every aspect of them until, at last, you feel illuminated, enlightened, dazzled, because you have understood! From that moment on your future is laid out before you; you may not see it to begin with, but it will become clear to you later. In the meantime, therefore, the important thing is to acquire a taste for spiritual activities, to begin to love them so much that, if ever you were obliged to forgo your inner work of meditation and contemplation, you would feel that you had been deprived of something essential. Make this a habit; cultivate this need, this love of spiritual things. I assure you, my dear brothers and sisters, nothing can be more beneficial to you. You will become independent, strong and confident; you will rise above all difficulties, because you will have discovered that your centre of gravity, your divine centre, the only element that is above all external contingencies, dwells permanently within you, and that no one can take it from you.²

Yes, the only possession, the only wealth that can never be taken from you are your own efforts, your own spiritual work. Everything else can be taken from you; everything else can fade

and be wiped out. The only area in which you have control is your own inner being. This is why your only possessions and the only things that can give you a sense of true independence and stability are your own efforts. Whatever the circumstances, you can always feel that there is an eternal, immortal, indestructible centre within you.

If, instead of spending your time reading books and haring off in all directions in the hope of learning something new, you got into the habit of devoting a few moments of your time to uniting yourself to the divine world, what you gained in this way would be yours for ever. You could take it with you wherever you went, even into the next world. Nothing could take it from you. All that you have gained from your reading, on the other hand, all your theoretical knowledge is not really yours. You will have to leave it behind when you leave this world, and in your next incarnation you are going to have to learn it all over again. You can only take with you the things that you have discovered and verified and acquired by your own efforts. All the rest will be taken from you, because it does not belong to you; you got it from someone else. You are thieves! Yes, without realizing it, we are all thieves. All our knowledge, everything we possess, comes from others. What have we ever discovered for ourselves? Very few human beings actually discover something. Most of what they say or write belongs to someone else. They are incapable of discovering anything for themselves. So, you see, we are all walking about with stolen coins

in our pockets!

You will say, 'But we took all that wealth honestly!' True, but honestly or dishonestly, it was still theft. The very fact, for instance, that you can tell someone where China or Japan is means that you have stolen the knowledge from an atlas. Yes, all the wealth you flaunt before the world belongs to someone else. To be sure, for the little while that you are on earth, this wealth will bring you the benefits that the world has to offer. Those who understand nothing about anything will pay you compliments and praise and applaud you, but when you leave for the next world, you will be naked, for you will have prepared none of the elements you need there.

Human beings all want to succeed where others have succeeded; they are ready to die for human glory, for human acclaim. The ambition of many is to reach the higher echelons in business or government, where intrigue and corruption are the order of the day, and they are miserable if they fail. They do not see that heaven has saved them from disaster by allowing them to fail. It never occurs to them to be grateful! This is why the heavenly entities are not particularly pleased with them. They say, 'Look at all the good things we have tried to do for that soul, but it has never understood that we wanted to cleanse and purify and illuminate it; we wanted to make it superb, powerful and intelligent. We wanted it to be an example, capable of spreading light, and its only response is to be devoured by regret because it

has been refused something that could only have made it suffer, that would even have killed it and plunged it into darkness.’

The advantages of earth do not last. I am not saying that you should renounce them completely, no, but you must not set your heart on gaining the good opinion of others at any price, for – I am sorry to have to say this, but it is true – even if you succeed, you will be forgotten within a few years, and you will have wasted your whole life for the sake of a brief public acclaim. Whereas, if you work with the light and for the light, without trying to please or be applauded by others, you will always be well received, even if you ask for nothing, because, when all your thoughts are focused on the fullness of life others will find fulfilment in your presence. But if all your efforts are spent on trying to please others, even to the point of abandoning the Lord, you will soon be left with nothing at all. You must never abandon the Lord, even for the sake of your husband or wife or children, for the day will come when they abandon you, and then you will be forced to realize that, by trying to satisfy them only on the material plane, you have wasted your entire life. You must try, first and foremost, to satisfy the greatest Being of all, he who gives you life, health and joy.

The wise appreciate both creatures and creation but they give first priority to the Creator, for without the Creator there would be neither creatures nor creation. Even if everything that exists disappeared, the Creator could always produce a new creation. Those who are wise concentrate on the essential core of reality. It

is because they have discovered and are concerned with the essence that they are wise; whilst those who are foolish are busy with the residue, the husks, the non-essentials at the periphery. They are delighted to spend their lives digging about in filth and slime because, as they say, 'At least we have something to keep us busy!' Are you saying to yourself that this is an exaggeration? But you only have to ask yourself, 'Are human beings concerned with health, light, peace or freedom?' No, they are not. They are far more concerned with sickness, depravity and horrors, with war and vice. Why, for instance, are they so keen on studying every conceivable form of sexual perversion instead of trying to find the most sublime way of loving?

The most important thing is to devote a few minutes every day to making contact with the heavenly powers. This is more important than anything else in life. Even if you had to die of hunger, it would be better to do so; it would be better to starve to death rather than satisfy human stupidity in order to have the wherewithal to eat, clothe yourself and cut a fine figure in front of others. It is better to die of hunger than to abandon the light. The world is worthwhile; human beings are worthwhile. I, myself, work for the good of the world and of human beings, but my thoughts are elsewhere. I work for human beings, that is true, but I do not make their scale of values my universal yardstick. Or rather, to put it differently, I should say that we have to give and to receive: we have to receive from heaven and give to human beings. This is the

lesson of the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *aleph* א. *Aleph* is the symbol of the initiate who both gives and receives.

The Bonfin, September 26, 1977

¹ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol 15, chap. 4: ‘The goal of love is light’.

² See *Sunrise Meditations*, Brochure n° 323.

³ See *The Yoga of Nutrition*, Izvor Coll. n° 204.

⁴ See *Respiration – Spiritual Dimensions and Practical Applications*, Brochure n° 303.

⁵ See *Looking into the Invisible – Intuition, Clairvoyance, Dreams*, Izvor Coll. n° 228, chap. 14: ‘Sleep, an image of death’, chap. 15: ‘Protect yourself while you are asleep’, chap. 16: ‘Astral projection while asleep’.

⁶ See *Man’s Two Natures, Human and Divine*, Izvor Coll. n° 213, chap. 2: ‘The lower self is a reflection’.

⁷ The Rock is a rocky platform at the top of a hill near the Bonfin, where the Master and his disciples gathered (and his disciples still do so) every morning, in spring and summer, to meditate and watch the sun rise.

⁸ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 1: ‘I came that they should have life’.

⁹ See '*In Spirit and in Truth*', Izvor Coll. n° 235, chap. 3: 'The link with the centre', chap. 4: 'Reaching for the top'.

Chapter Three

The power of thought

I

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Everybody thinks; the only question is, how do they think? If you stir up a dunghill you will release a nauseating stench, and this is often how people think: they stir up piles of filth and it stinks! Everybody thinks; there is not a man or woman alive who does not think. Even when they are not concentrating on what they are thinking, they are still thinking. The trouble is that they think badly. I am not telling you that people should think, therefore – they already do so – for thought exists before and takes precedence over everything else. Even idlers, who do nothing else, think, but their thoughts drift like leaves blown by the wind. A lot of people think about how to cheat and rob and assassinate others, but that is not really thought. To be capable of true thought implies that you know what to think about and how to think. When I speak of thought I am speaking of an instrument that is designed to bring us closer to the divine world, to a world of light, certainty and peace. If you learn to do a divine work by means of thought, even when you are alone and destitute, you will still be overflowing with joy,

for you will possess heaven and earth within you.'

Men and women use their faculty of thought day and night, but as they do not know how to use it correctly it does not do them much good. In fact, not only does it not benefit them, it becomes a cause of torment and self-destruction. It is vital to realize that thought is a force, a power, a tool that the Lord has given to us so that, like him, we may become creators; but creators of beauty and perfection. The faculty of thought enables us to make contact with all kinds of regions, quintessences, creatures and materials, both in the divine world and in the world of darkness and, as human beings do not know that it is always creative, they often get mired in such negative preoccupations that they destroy themselves. Nobody realizes what a fantastic instrument God gave us when he gave us the power of thought. But, of course, we have to know how and in what area the power of this instrument manifests itself.

Thought is all-powerful. True, but it is all-powerful in its own realm, that is to say, on the mental plane, for the matter of thought is so subtle that it can have an immediate effect only on matter that is equally subtle. When you wish for something, a palace, a mountain, a river, a child or a flower, your thought is instantly materialized and becomes a reality, but in its own region. And as you cannot see or feel it and have no tangible proof that it exists, you often create chaotic, destructive images. All the creations of thought can become visible and tangible, but it takes a long time.

How often the reality of thought has been brought home to me! A few years ago a clairvoyant came to see me and, as we were talking, although he had no idea that I planned to have a temple built here, he suddenly said, 'I see a building over there', and proceeded to describe it to me exactly as it was planned, with the right number of storeys, doors, and so on. This proves that the building had already been built on the mental plane before being built on the physical plane.

When a thought is created, it goes off on its own and starts doing what has been asked of it, but to begin with its activity is restricted to its own invisible domain. Before it can materialize physically, it has to descend to a lower level. And as thought always has a tendency to materialize, it moves down, clothes itself in slightly heavier garments and begins to work on the astral plane. After a while it descends to the etheric plane, continuing to become denser and more material until it finally appears on the physical plane. Yes, but as this does not happen all at once, human beings have never believed that thought is a force. If they were clairvoyant, they would see that all the thoughts they produce leave them and go flying off into space. Are they monsters, angels or divinities? A clairvoyant could tell them, for he or she can see them, but those who have created them have no idea.

If you were sufficiently sensitive you would see the clouds surrounding human beings, the entities of darkness that emerge from them and go off into space to wreak havoc. And those

concerned have no idea that it is they who are the authors of that havoc. I have already explained this question to you. Imagine that you would like to murder someone: even if you do not actually dare to do so, there is still a risk that your murderous thoughts will take effect, because another human being, with the same structure and disposition as yourself, may pick up your thoughts through the law of affinity,¹ and commit a crime of which, without knowing it, you would be the author. A great many crimes are committed by people who say, 'I don't know what got into me. I had never thought about doing anything like that. I suddenly felt I had to obey the impulse.' They themselves are surprised and dismayed; they cannot understand how they could do such a thing. Where do these currents and impulses come from? Human beings are so ignorant, they hardly ever know why certain things happen to them, and what could be more unfortunate than to find oneself in difficult circumstances, to have to endure all kinds of tribulations or illness without even understanding why? Thought is a tremendously potent instrument, therefore, but you have to know what to think about and how to think.

Today I want to talk to you about a subject that I have never said much about: the faculty of comparison. The centre we use in making comparisons is here, in the middle of the forehead, and it is a very important centre for philosophers, because comparison is one of the most effective means we have of knowing reality. In order to have an idea of the value of something, you have to

compare it with something else and see whether it is better or less good, stronger or weaker, more or less luminous, and so on. Well, there is a good deal to say about comparison, but I want to talk to you today about two attitudes which, although no one has ever understood the fact, are simply the result of the comparisons we make. People speak of humility and pride. There are lots of definitions of each to choose from, but I find that all of these definitions are terribly vague and remote.

People usually think that a humble person is someone who obeys and submits to others. And, naturally, everybody likes a person who is not a trouble-maker, who never digs in their heels or rebels. But is this really a good quality? No, because, more often than not, this kind of humility is not based on wisdom or true understanding. On the contrary, it is based on fear, weakness, helplessness. What can you expect? When someone is truly incapable, how can they be anything but humble? They yield to everybody else, because they are a nonentity. But just wait and see what will happen to them if you give them some power or some money! Will they still be so humble? Not a bit of it: they will want their revenge! This has often happened. Beware of humble people, therefore. They are humble only because they have nothing; no talents, no intelligence, no money. There is nothing left for them but to be humble. On the other hand, if you give someone all kinds of possibilities and they continue to be humble, then you can be sure that their humility is the real thing. But you cannot know this

about someone until they have been tried and proven. You always judge people on the basis of appearances. You say so-and-so is humble, so-and-so is proud, but you have no valid yardstick by which to evaluate pride or humility.

The truth is that pride and humility are simply two different ways of comparing things. If you compare yourself to what is less than you, to those who are ignorant and incapable, then of course you will see them as ants and yourself as an elephant, and pride will take possession of you. When you compare yourself only to those who are smaller or weaker than you, you start to think of yourself as superior, a creature of such perfection that you are worthy to be seated at the right hand of the Almighty! And humility, also, is a comparison, but a comparison with all those who are more perfect: initiates, great Masters, the angels – even God himself.² Obviously, when you make this comparison, you see so many defects, imperfections and weaknesses in yourself, you think you have achieved nothing and learned nothing.

And now, what about me? Am I humble? According to you, no one has greater pride or is more lacking in respect! Yes, to all appearances, this is true, because I did away with modesty a long time ago. But in reality, I am humble, because I never compare myself to ants, only to those who are much more advanced than I am, and when I see where I stand compared to them, I am humble. Inwardly, in my heart and soul, I am humble. When people say to

me, 'Ah, if I could only achieve a tenth of what you have achieved!', I can only look at them with pity, for what I have achieved is so little, the tenth of that is nothing at all! When I think of the fantastic achievements of certain sublime beings, I find that I have done nothing. So I tell you, sincerely, I have not even begun my work; I am still getting ready to begin. Of course, I know that if you rely on outward appearances, I am not humble; I criticize, I threaten, I pound my fist on the table! And what about Jesus? Was he humble or proud? He was not humble when he denounced the Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, sons of hell, a brood of vipers and whited sepulchres. No, he was not being humble then, because no one should be humble before those who are in error. But, in reality, he was the humblest of beings, because he was humble before the eternal Lord. And I have to say the same of myself: I am not humble before those who are in the wrong, but I am humble before the Lord.

Actually, the proud are those who, on the strength of their own limited talents, refuse to rely on anybody but themselves. When the Lord sees people with this attitude, he puts them down by withholding the light that would reveal reality to them. Yes, because they rely exclusively on themselves. Whereas those who have true humility have less confidence in their own capacities; they are ready to say, 'I can do nothing without your help, Lord. You alone have all light and knowledge. Come into me and take charge of me', and thanks to that humility, they are raised up and

exalted and become invincible.

Pride is a defect of the intellect. The proud are those who have too much confidence in their own point of view, their own judgement. It never occurs to them that they might be wrong, that there are other valid points of view. No, no, they are always right! Well, this attitude is extremely damaging, for as time goes on, it makes people increasingly obtuse and prejudiced. For my part, I am never convinced that my way of looking at things is impeccable. Even now my only desire is to be ruled, guided and enlightened by Cosmic Intelligence. The whole world may think that I am one of the proudest men that has ever lived, but heaven knows that in fact I am one of the most humble.

Comparison leads, also, to some other consequences that have never been fully grasped. When you continually compare yourself with something that is ugly and imperfect, you come under the influence of a law of nature by virtue of which you begin to resemble the ugliness and imperfection that you have focused on. There is a danger, therefore, in not knowing how to use the method of comparison. If you know how to use it correctly, you will focus only on beings that are truly sublime, because, in this way, in the long run, you will end by resembling them, by becoming a divinity. This is why we go to watch the sun rising every day and try to compare ourselves to it. Years later, thanks to this comparison, we too shall begin to possess the light, warmth and life of the sun.³

Yes, this is a natural law and it manifests itself here, too. Look at all the different animals that imitate their environment until they end by looking exactly like it. Well, this law applies on the inner level also. This is why you should always try to compare yourself with sublime creatures, for in this way you learn humility, while at the same time drawing closer to those beings and beginning to resemble them.

I talked to you, one day, about a very striking phenomenon that everyone has observed but no one has ever thought of interpreting. I meet someone who is just coming back from the sea-shore and I ask them what they have seen. ‘Oh, nothing much,’ they say, ‘I climbed about on the rocks and looked at the sea and the sun. There was a breeze blowing.’ ‘Is that all?’ I ask. ‘Yes; what else was there to see?’ ‘Why, the whole of creation. All the laws of nature!’ They look at me in bewilderment, so I tell them, ‘Yes, there you were with all these extraordinary phenomena lying there before you and you did not decipher any of them! You say that there were rocks. Well, what were the rocks like?’ ‘Full of bumps and hollows. Some of the shapes reminded me of animals – I even saw one that looked like a friend of mine!’ ‘All right, but how were all those shapes made?’ ‘No doubt by the action of the water on the stone.’ ‘Ah, now you are getting somewhere! And who drove the water on to the rocks?’ ‘It must have been the wind.’ ‘Yes, and who drove the wind?’ ‘It must have been the sun.’ ‘Right! And you tell me that you did not see anything in all that? The whole of

nature was there before you, ready to speak to you, to explain how to work on yourself, how to model and shape yourself, and yet you neither saw nor understood any of it! The sun corresponds to the spirit within us, the air corresponds to our thoughts, the water to our feelings, and the earth – those rocks you saw – to our physical body. When the spirit acts on our thoughts, our thoughts act on our feelings and our feelings fashion our physical body.’

What an extraordinary analogy this is, and yet no one has seen it. Even scientists never see the similarities, the connection between all that exists in the universe. Their research deals with things that are not really essential, and one day, when instead of becoming divinities they begin to deteriorate and disintegrate inwardly, they will see that all their knowledge has done very little for them. Nothing is more important than life: how you live, how you think and what you think about. Humankind needs a new philosophy today, to save it from all the excesses that have resulted from technical progress. For health is disappearing, the light is disappearing, morality is disappearing, human beings are tearing each other apart; and it is science that has set mankind on the path of ultimate destruction. This does not mean that I am opposed to science, or that I think that scientific progress should be halted. Not at all; but I think that science must take another direction. Instead of being content to supply people with more comfort and more weapons, thereby encouraging their natural inclination for sloth and destruction, it must find other goals.

In the long run, human beings will realize that their inner faculties are being destroyed by all the machines and gadgets invented for their use, for they never have to exert themselves any more, they never do any inner work; they expect everything to come from outside themselves. Humanity cannot make any true progress in this way for, in reality, external means can only make human beings weaker if the powers of the spirit are allowed to remain somnolent and crippled. It may seem as though progress were being made, but in reality there is a constant erosion of will-power and vitality. As a matter of fact, a few scientists are already beginning to doubt that all this technical progress is really contributing to the good of humanity. As I say, we must not try to put a stop to progress; certainly not, for it is nature herself that urges men and women to continue their researches. But their researches must be turned in other directions. We must never stop seeking, never stop trying to penetrate the mysteries of nature, but we must start seeking in another direction, an upward direction; that is to say, in the direction of the spirit, the inner life, the realm of subjective reality.

Science follows the path of objectivity; it studies everything that is external to humans, and this is where its error lies, for what is external to humans does not actually belong to them. You have money, arms and machinery: well and good, but if they are taken away from you, you break down. Why look for strength and power outside yourself, where it can never be really yours? Human

beings grasp for everything on the outside while remaining inwardly empty and impoverished. Initiates, on the other hand, want all their wealth to be within them and, in this way, whatever happens in the world around them, they are always strong, powerful and happy.⁴

And I remember telling you one day, ‘You draw and carve and write, but the things you create are always external. Other people appreciate you for your external creations, but when they see you, yourself – what a scarecrow!’ Yes, people spend all their energy on externals, and I grant you that what they produce is often beautiful, magnificent – you can fool a lot of people that way – but inside them there is nothing but monsters and decay. In the future, human beings will understand that they must work at making themselves beautiful, at writing their own book, at carving their own statue, and what they produce will be marvellous, divine and absolutely unique. And it will endure for ever. Whereas today artists show you the little creations they have produced outside themselves, while within themselves there is no beauty, nothing worthwhile.

Of course, I know that human beings are not accustomed to seeing things this way. They are slaves to their old concepts, and they have reached a consensus amongst themselves that it cannot be otherwise. They stand around nodding and applauding each other like so many drunkards toasting each other’s health. And if

an initiate attempts to introduce them to a higher philosophy, they immediately oppose it, even though it is far superior to any other. They have organized their lives according to their own criteria, their own weaknesses, their own stupidity, dishonesty and greed, and now they say, 'It cannot be helped, old man, that's life!' But I say, 'No, that is not life. It is only one kind of life, the kind of life that you have created for yourselves. There is another life of which you know nothing!' For my part, I know true life, and it is not the life of weaklings, dunces and idiots. Nowadays everybody wants to model their life on the lives of people of that kind.

And this brings us full circle, back to the question of comparisons. Men and women compare themselves with each other and say, 'That's life!' No, they do not know what life is. It has many different degrees: there is the life of a toad, the life of a wild boar, the life of a crocodile or a snake! Yes, but there is also the life of an angel. To be sure, it is all life, but it is not all the same. You see? They do not even know that there are many different degrees of life. Do you really believe that we have something to learn from people like that?

Take the time to reflect on this question of comparisons, therefore, for only those who know how to compare can become intelligent. This is what is important: to compare things and learn to perceive even the slightest shades of difference. For my part, I learned to do this with colours by practising with the help of a prism – for that is the only way to be sure you have the true

colours – and now I can distinguish almost imperceptible shades in any colour. And this is important: before you can make comparisons, you have to have a yardstick, an absolutely perfect model; without it you cannot make a comparison. This is true for colours and it is true for everything else: forms, sounds, qualities and characters. You have to know perfection in order to compare. Every day, instinctively and unconsciously, everybody compares, but what and whom do they compare? They compare their husband with their lover, and they conclude that their husband is nothing to write home about! Everybody compares, but they do not know what they should compare nor how to do so, because they have no models. But I can lead you to regions in which you will find models for everything and, once you have seen them, you will be able to compare and form a judgement, and your judgement will always be right.

The Bonfin, July 6, 1975

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Depending on their strength, nature and quality, and on the intention and emotion with which they are charged, a human being's thoughts seek out specific beings or objects before returning to the one who sent them. Some thoughts have a very short life span, whereas others survive for hundreds and even thousands of years. Yes, there are still thoughts abroad in the world today that have been there since the days of ancient Egypt, Syria or Chaldaea, even Atlantis. Some of these thoughts are so evil and venomous that they are still destructive, whereas others, on the contrary, are still the source of great blessings. What a lot could be said on this subject! There is as much to say about thoughts as about human beings.

You must think of each thought as an individual being that tries to live as long as it can until, when its strength is finally exhausted, it dies. Thoughts are creatures produced and nourished by human beings, and all thoughts of the same nature get together and reinforce and amplify each other. But we are not in the habit of thinking of thoughts as living entities; there is no mention of this in conventional science; it is something that is completely unknown. Only Initiatic Science, which has made a close study of human thought, knows not only that thoughts are living entities but that, depending on the person who projects them, these entities will either be beautiful, expressive, intelligent and potent, or ugly, lack-

lustre, formless or even monstrous.⁵

‘What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below’, said Hermes Trismegistus. If you know how to use the law of universal analogy, you can even penetrate an atom and discover that it, too, is a living, vibrant entity which may be luminous and intelligent – or it may be just the opposite. Each cell, too, is a living entity, a tiny intelligent soul that knows how to breathe and eat as well as how to secrete and emit something. Look at all the work that the cells of the stomach, brain, heart, liver and sexual organs do, and they even have their own specialization. It is all these tiny entities as a whole and the sum of their activities that constitute our intelligence. Yes, our intelligence is built on the intelligence of all these little cells: we depend on them and they on us; we form a unit. We can do nothing on the physical plane without the consent of our cells. If they cease working, if they refuse to collaborate, our organism can no longer function; we can no longer assimilate nourishment, nor eliminate or breathe properly. However angry this may make us and however much we may protest, nothing can change it. Human beings are, therefore, a synthesis of all the intelligences that inhabit their being.

Just as every cell of an organism reflects the whole being, every atom reflects the cell. It too lives and breathes and moves, and our inner state depends on the movement of our atoms. Let me give you an example: when you experience a sense of rapture and

inspiration during your meditation, the vibrations of your etheric, astral and mental bodies affect your cells and a new, more harmonious movement is communicated through them to all your atoms and electrons. And this movement, in turn, releases certain forces which enable you to strive for and achieve great things, because your whole body is mobilized for action. The phenomenon of thought is identical to the fission of the atom. It is on an infinitesimal scale, of course, but it is, nevertheless, an atomic explosion which releases energy within the brain. It is important, therefore, to intensify this phenomenon so as to be capable of accomplishing wonders – even greater wonders than those accomplished by lasers – and projecting beams of light to infinite distances.⁶

Initiates tell us that a human being is a great mystery – a whole science in themselves, a whole universe – and that, even if we study this mystery for millions of years, we can never know all there is to know. How true that is! A human being contains everything. Every phenomenon in the universe exists (in other forms and with other dimensions and proportions) within them. People of the sixth and seventh races will know how to work with the atomic power of their own brains. Men and women of the seventh race will be true creators, like the Lord himself.

A thought, therefore, is a living entity formed by a human being. The thoughts that enter our minds are entities that we

ourselves have formed or, sometimes, that have been formed by others and that come and visit us, and, in this case, we often do not realize that they are simply visitors: we think we have formed them. The task of a disciple, therefore, is to learn to distinguish the forces that originate in their own will and their own thoughts and feelings and, once they know them, to keep a careful watch on them and learn to guide and direct them so as not to be at the mercy of the fearful currents that threaten to attack and annihilate them. In this way, they use the forces contained in their thoughts, feelings and will for a magnificent work of creation and, in so doing, begin to resemble the Lord, for all that is created by their thoughts and feelings is good, useful and beneficial.

Feelings too, like thoughts, are entities that break away from a human being who is moved by a strong desire and start to live a life of their own. For example, a man may have a very strong desire to embrace a woman. His desire, his feeling, is an entity that leaves him and goes to embrace that woman. Or his desire may be to beat up an enemy – and it does so. The enemy in question may feel nothing, because the man's feeling was not materialized, but, in reality, both his thoughts and his feelings strike out on their own and work either good or evil. When you have the intention to heal or console someone, your thoughts, like so many little angels, flutter round the person, caressing them and doing their best to heal them. Nobody sees this, neither the person sending the thoughts nor the one who receives them. Only clairvoyants can see these

things, and, unfortunately, clairvoyants do not often have cause to admire what they see; they are more often horrified by it. Yes, because human beings, who are incapable of harbouring good thoughts and feelings for any length of time – still less of controlling them when they are not good – spend their time mentally destroying and assassinating others. Say a woman wants to get rid of her husband: she has never dared to do anything about it herself, perhaps, but her thoughts are little assassins ready to do it for her. It is just as well that very few people possess the secret of how to materialize their thoughts, for, if they had it, they could assassinate anyone, even at a distance.

If you want to understand much more than I can ever reveal to you, never forget that everything below is like what is above; that thoughts are living entities with the same capabilities as human beings, and that you are surrounded by your thoughts as though by your own children. Yes, this is a whole science. Some thoughts are like small children: they cling to you, and you have to feed and wash and educate them. Without your realizing it, they batten onto you and drain you of your strength. Others rampage round the world, stealing and plundering. But the invisible world has its own kind of police force, and they will hold you responsible for the damage caused by your children. If your thoughts are destructive, you will be brought before the courts on high and ordered to pay damages and costs! Is your life full of trials and tribulations, bitterness and distress? And do you still wonder why? The answer

is, simply, that you still have debts to pay in the invisible world. This is why I have always insisted on the importance of using your thoughts and desires to form angelic, divine children, who will always be with you and bring only blessings upon you.⁷

Even if all this seems so bizarre and improbable that you cannot bring yourself to believe it, you must still behave in accordance with this science. When you are more spiritually advanced, you will begin to sense that it is a reality and, when you see and feel it for yourself, you will no longer have any doubts. One day you will be in a position to verify all these things for yourself but, in the meantime, you are going to have to rely on the knowledge and abilities of those who have learned to know and feel more than you.

Thought, which is composed of an extremely subtle matter, can travel through space even faster than light. If you know how to concentrate your thoughts, you can obtain elements from outer space, you can reach the sun, you can make contact with heavenly entities, with the angelic hierarchies, you can reach the throne of God and receive forces, illumination and extraordinary revelations. You must get into the habit of working with your thoughts in this way every day, for this is the divine life, this is the only thing that counts. Get into the habit of scaling the heights by means of thought. Get into the habit of rising to the very throne of God and of praying and beseeching him. Some of you will probably

complain, 'But I have often tried to do what you say, but I never get any results!' The fact that you have never seen any results does not mean that I am lying to you. It simply means that, because of the density of the matter that envelops you, you cannot see the results, but you may be sure that they are there. You feel nothing, you see nothing, and so you imagine there is nothing there. But, little by little, as a disciple perseveres in their efforts, the path opens up and becomes clearer, a bridge once again spans the gulf that separates them from the heavenly regions and they begin to live. They only have to concentrate on these regions for a few minutes for blessings, joy, happiness and strength to flood their being.

With patience and perseverance, a disciple eventually achieves close communication with the divine world. Before reaching this point, however, they have to spend years digging and delving as though they were trying to dig an endless tunnel through a mountain, until, one fine day, they are almost blinded as they suddenly come out into the light. There is no spiritual exercise more effective than that of focusing mentally on an image of the summit. As a rule, Christians have not been taught to seek the summit, the supreme Being. They are even told it is a sin of pride to do so, so they cling to the saints and prophets and never dare to reach any higher. The saints and prophets, virgins and martyrs are all very well, but it is better, far better, to get into the habit of concentrating on the summit, on the highest peak. When you do

this you release certain forces; something stirs within the summit and moves towards you, orders go out for you to be attended to, and those who put these orders into effect can be initiates, saints, prophets, the people around you – even animals or birds. Yes, heaven's orders can be carried out by animals or even by the spirits of nature and the four elements, but a disciple must not exclusively address those who serve as intermediaries for the Lord. He or she must also look up and address the Lord directly, and the Lord will send word down through a hierarchy of beings.

So, as I say, you must get into the habit of speaking to the summit. Some of you will say, 'But it takes too long, it is too difficult, it is not a practical proposition! I prefer to talk to little St Thérèse or St Anthony, because when I lose something he helps me to find it.' Well, you can do that too, of course, but you must not let that prevent you from concentrating also on the summit, on the Lord, because it is he that is in command; everything depends on him. Initiatic Science explains that we are built on the same pattern as the universe: we have a summit or centre within us, and this centre is our higher self,⁸ God's representative. When you concentrate on the summit of the universe, on the Lord, therefore, you are making contact with the summit of your own being and setting in motion very pure, subtle vibrations, which spread out and produce extremely beneficial transformations within you. Even if your prayer is not answered directly, therefore, you gain a spiritual element!

Yes, it is quite true that your prayers are not always answered. Cosmic Intelligence sometimes judges that what you asked for would do you more harm than good, so it refuses your request. But you still gain by asking, because in doing so you make contact with your higher self and touch off a force, the highest force within you, which spreads out, producing sounds, perfumes and colours and influencing all your cells and all the entities that dwell in you. In this way you can gain some extremely precious elements. Whereas, if you concentrated exclusively on entities of a lower level, you would never reach the summit, and, therefore, would never attract sublime elements. Even if the saint or prophet you pray to answered your prayer, you yourself would remain unchanged.

To be sure, it does not seem to be very profitable to concentrate on the summit, for we will never get money, a job or worldly glory by doing so. We will continue to live as though in a wilderness, and we will never have any material achievements to show as a result, whereas the prayers of those who ask for concrete, material things are answered more rapidly. And this is what misleads human beings. This is why so many people think they are being more intelligent by asking for material things. No, it is the others who are more intelligent. They know that what they are asking for cannot be obtained rapidly, because it is too exalted, too sublime. But once it does begin to take shape, then it will become apparent that it is they who have been incomparably more

intelligent. Yes, those who continue to believe, in spite of years of apparently fruitless prayers, will achieve the greatest results, simply because they have shown more intelligence. Of course, the intelligence I am talking about is of a rare kind; it is the intelligence that enables us to understand that, in order to obtain truly significant results, we have to touch the centre: the summit which organizes and ordains all things.

Let's take an example: if you are an insignificant, unknown member of society, there is not much you can do to change the destiny of your country. If you want to do that, you will have to gain admittance to the centre, the sovereign or president. Once this is achieved you can do whatever you wish for your country, simply because you have influence with the centre. But if you remain at the periphery, you will be without authority and no one will obey you. Anyone who concentrates on organizing only the periphery of their life, therefore, will never be capable of altering the destiny of their 'country', either for good or, fortunately, for evil.

You must realize that the very same law prevails in the inner world. As long as you fail to concentrate on the centre, you may obtain a few little benefits, to be sure, but nothing really depends on you. Whereas if you are at the centre, you can turn the whole world upside down, for the centre makes you all-powerful: everything depends on you. So you can see why truly intelligent people do not waste their time on futile, fleeting realizations. They

work unceasingly to reach the summit without worrying about how many years or centuries it will take to get there. A single being can change the destiny of the world, on condition that they succeeds in reaching the summit.

When you reach this summit that exists within you, you possess the same powers as the Lord himself and no one can stand in your way. Yes, and all that exists in the world proves that Cosmic Intelligence has so ordered things that true strength and true power are to be found only at the summit. If you doubt this, it means that you have really understood nothing and, when one does not understand, the only thing left is to suffer. This is not what I hope for, for you. On the contrary, I hope I shall never have to see you suffer again. But when one does not understand, it is impossible not to suffer. Actually, suffering is a blessing, for it is given to human beings so that they will be obliged to understand.

The thing that prevents human beings from understanding is their personality.² It is so sure of itself, so stubborn and indestructible, and it prevents them from knowing the truth and becoming free. Everyone believes that their own point of view is the only valid one. How many times I have already told you that everything in my life began to improve from the day I decided to replace my own point of view with that of the initiates. But most human beings, even those in the Brotherhood, continue to defend their own mistaken point of view, and this is why they continue to

stagnate and suffer. Why do they not make up their minds to get rid of a point of view that makes their lives hell? Why do they cling to it and go on bolstering it and defending it? If they once made up their minds to replace it, they would all leave me far behind, and I would have to run to catch up with them! But they do not want to change, so I am always ahead of them. Yes, and this gives my personality great pleasure, for it loves to boast! It does not want you to change; it is quite content if you insist on clinging to your personality! My dear brothers and sisters, what do I have to do to get you to understand the truth?

And now I want to reveal a vitally important truth to you, which all spiritual Masters have taught and which is strongly emphasized by Initiatic Science: the fact that all human beings eventually dwell in the region to which they direct their thoughts. When you leave this world, you will go to where your thoughts are. If your thoughts were habitually elevated, you will reach the most exalted regions, and if, on the contrary, they were turned towards hell, you will go to hell. This is the greatest truth of all! If, therefore, you ask only for intelligence, love or beauty, you can be absolutely sure that no force in nature will ever be able to prevent you from dwelling in the region of your choice, the region in which your thoughts and desires have always dwelt. Unfortunately, human beings are so wretched and ignorant they do not know this, so they often prepare a dreadful future for themselves in the next world. When they believe this is the whole of reality, they feel free

to cheat and lie and steal, and think themselves very clever when their schemes work out well. In reality they are cheating themselves.

My dear brothers and sisters, our whole destiny depends on these truths. I must emphasize this to you and point out yet again how fortunate you are to belong to the Universal White Brotherhood, for it is capable of changing your whole future. I have no right to deceive or mislead you. I have based my whole life on these, the greatest of all truths. And, whether anyone else knows it or not, whether anyone else sees it or not, whether anyone else appreciates it or not, I shall continue in the same direction and, one day, we shall see who was right. Appearances are nothing; the only thing that matters is to have the highest, most glorious, most sublime, divine ideal, and never worry about how long it will take to achieve it. As long as it is beautiful and as long as it is true, why be held up by any other considerations? Why worry about what your husband or your wife or your neighbours might say? Nothing must stop you, neither time nor difficulties.

This is the one thing that matters most, therefore: the summit, and this summit awakens your own inner summit, your higher self. There is no other way to arouse it. It floats too far away, too far above you. As long as you do not work according to the rules, it remains totally impassive and unmoved. But once you begin to work as you should, it comes closer and takes care of you, and then everything changes. You can be thoroughly miserable or

indignant, you can fly into a rage, but if you do not work, your higher self will do nothing to intervene; it will simply look on and smile. But if you work, it can do anything. These are extremely important truths, but, unfortunately, the Church has never explained them. It has been content to persuade and threaten, and human beings are just the same as ever. The Church has good intentions, but it does not possess this science. Priests have been to a seminary and studied the Gospels, but that is not enough.

You cannot understand the Gospels without Initiatic Science. The Gospels contain everything, but not everything is in the heads of those who read them.¹⁰ This is why the ideal proposed to Christians is not very exalted. All that is required to be a respectable Christian is to carry out one's marital and domestic duties, go to church on Sundays and light a candle from time to time. A person can be totally ignorant and mindless, but that does not matter as long as they are a Catholic! Well, human beings may think that this is wonderful, but the invisible world finds it grotesque. Of course, the Christians who hear this will be scandalized and think I intend to demolish everything. Not at all! I am reconstructing everything.

And now, let me add a few words: a true disciple is one who has the conviction that thought is a reality, an all-powerful reality. Knowing this, they make good use of every moment of their day to make their faculty of thought work for them. Even in the most

unfavourable circumstances, when others are unhappy, defeated or in revolt, a disciple feels free and all-powerful, capable of creation, whereas those who do not know how to work with their thoughts spend their time complaining, because something is always lacking. They do not realize that they possess a faculty that makes them all-powerful creators, and it is because they are ignorant of this innate potential that they become vicious and cruel. A disciple knows that, whatever the difficulties, whatever their circumstances in life, they can always rise above them.

God has given human beings all the means they need to be free and invincible and has placed these means within their faculties of thought. If so many people find cause for unhappiness in every circumstance in life, it is because they do not know this. Once you have discovered this truth you are above all contingencies, and nothing can ever defeat you again. But this does not happen all at once; it takes long years of practice before you can achieve this freedom and feel you are on a higher plane. But, once you have achieved it, even the fear of death no longer exists. Yes, you no longer fear death for you are beyond its reach. Death can only affect your body; it cannot affect you, for, as you now know, you are a spirit.

You must meditate on these things for days and months. A genuine disciple spends their whole life working ceaselessly on just a few truths; they never forget them. This is the only way to accomplish anything. What I have given you today is a key, and

you must not leave it to rust with so many others. Today – and tomorrow – it will enable you to open every door. These things are not just theories for me; I live with them and put them into practice day and night.

When people have failed in some way, whether on the spiritual or the physical plane, they seek to justify their failure by blaming the conditions they had to work with. It is always the fault of their parents or their education, of society or of the world itself. In other words, they are dependent on external conditions, they allow themselves to be defeated by circumstances, and the result is disastrous. They are tied hand and foot, limited, impotent, paralysed. They accomplish nothing on the pretext that conditions are not right. Well, it is easy to see that people like this know nothing about Initiatic Science. If they had had a master, he would have explained to them that the Creator had given them all kinds of unknown forces and energies and that, by means of their mental faculties, they could be above conditions, that even in prison they could be free.

Humans have the power to neutralize their circumstances so that they no longer have a negative effect on them. But if they do nothing but wait for conditions to improve, they begin to rot and end by disintegrating. Even the greatest spiritual Masters have to accept the most appalling conditions when they incarnate on this earth. Yes, but they triumph over every privation, illness or persecution because they have another philosophy, a philosophy

of the spirit. Henceforth, therefore, whatever happens to you, tell yourself, 'Yes, conditions are bad. I am surrounded by vermin, wasps, snakes, mosquitoes and wild beasts, but I have the power within me to trigger currents which are real and powerful. It is they that will prevail, and in the end I shall dwell in paradise.' If you do this you will be on top of your circumstances; otherwise it is they that will get on top of you and crush you. If you train yourself to think like this every day, it will not be long before you find yourself victorious in even the most dreadful, the most unfavourable circumstances. Yes, because your inner forces are more powerful than your circumstances.

The spirit is above everything else and, when you manage to become one with it, to identify with it, you receive strength, peace of mind, illumination, release. But nobody works with the spirit. You are always waiting for better material conditions; you are permanently vulnerable, unhappy and defeated in advance, because you do not know how to work, what to work with or what to work at. You have identified with your physical body – which is, of course, utterly dependent on physical conditions – and so you waste away. This is the inevitable outcome of your deplorable philosophy. And if you do happen to succeed in some areas and win a little happiness, it is only because others have helped you, or thanks to some temporary external circumstances, not because your philosophy is trustworthy.

Always give priority to the spirit. In this way, not only will

you be above your material conditions, but those conditions will actually begin to improve, because conditions are inert and inanimate, and you can change them by means of the spirit, for the spirit is alive. Life is never still; it never stagnates; it keeps things constantly on the move. But if you do not allow life to intervene, the material conditions that get in your way will be there for ever.

Sèvres, May 30, 1975

III

Would you like to know how I see you? I will tell you: as children in kindergarten school. Now, there is no reason to be offended! You are at school and have been given some clay to work with, and each one of you, according to your skill, imagination and degree of development, models that clay into objects that reflect your own particular gifts and qualities. And what is this modelling clay? It is the subtle, etheric matter that we draw from space, the raw material that can be fashioned by our powers of thought. God created the world by his Word: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.'*¹¹ The Word of God is God's thought.

We too should be capable of creating, like God, by means of thought. However, I must warn you about one thing that is absolutely vital, and that is that you must be quite clear about whether the way you use your thoughts and what you wish and work for are really and truly good, both for yourself and the rest of humankind, or whether, on the contrary, they are destructive. This is the only thing you have to worry about. There is no need to worry about whether or not your thoughts and feelings will materialize. That is a certainty: sooner or later, good or bad, they will materialize; and if they are bad, you will be the one to cry out in distress. You will not escape the consequences. Unfortunately, human nature is not very highly evolved yet, and the first thing most people think about, when certain means and possibilities are revealed to them, is to use them for their own personal, selfish interests, to acquire things for themselves. This is the danger. And it was because of this danger that initiates in the past revealed very little about the powers of thought. But whether or not these things are revealed, human beings already use them without realizing it. Whether they know it or not, all men and women think and imagine, covet and wish for things. To reveal nothing to them, therefore, is no guarantee of safety either for themselves or for others. This is why it is better to instruct human beings and, at the same time, warn them that they are in possession of fearful powers.

Everyone should know, therefore, that nature has given them

certain powers and that, thanks to those powers, they are the artisans of their own destiny. They should be told, 'Do whatever you choose, but be careful to choose wisely, because it is you who will have to bear the consequences. If you wish for money, worldly success or glory, you must realize that none of these things lasts long and, also, that they put you under an obligation and make you the slaves of those who give them to you.' Jesus said, *'The ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me'*, and this means that 'the ruler of this world' possesses riches which he distributes to those who put themselves at his service. Jesus had received nothing from him, so he owed him nothing, he was completely free. This passage from the Gospels is very profound. It means that if you concentrate exclusively on material acquisitions, you necessarily ally yourself with the ruler of this world, for they belong to him. It is he who distributes them. Directly or indirectly, therefore, it is to him you go for them. You make yourself his client and, although he may give you what you ask for, he will demand your liberty, your free will, in exchange. Be careful, therefore!

So I urge you to become far more conscious of the importance of your mental activity. A raw material, a quintessence that exists everywhere, in and around you, has been put at your disposal. And it is up to you, the children of God, to take this formless matter and use it to model and fashion extraordinary, wonderful realizations. The invisible world sees our creations; it sees whether we are creating and projecting a lot of little monsters, devils and

vipers, or whether we are creating angels, sweet-smelling winged beings, and filling the space around us with wondrous entities. Yes, the invisible world takes an interest in what humans create and judges them accordingly. If it sees some who, instead of contributing to universal harmony, do nothing but disrupt and destroy it, it denies them favourable conditions and possibilities, and they start to regress and fall back onto a lower level of evolution. And what a lot of different levels there are, all the way from stones up to the level of God himself! The Master Peter Deunov told me, one day, that the earth under our feet is composed of the remains of fallen divinities, that it is their bones, their skeletons. Can this be true? Yes, certainly. But others have climbed to such heights they are now in a state of beatitude in the bosom of the Lord. The question is, therefore, to know what are the best activities for a disciple to work at – and I can point out some of them for you.

The first concern of disciples is to work to perfect themselves, to recover the image of themselves that they possessed once before, a very long time ago, before they left paradise, and which they have since lost. This is their principal task: to recapture their original countenance which shone with such light, such splendour and perfection that all the forces of nature obeyed them. Even the animals were struck with wonder when they saw them. They were sovereign; everything obeyed them because of the perfection of their countenance. Later, when they left paradise to

experience life in the world, they lost that perfection, and other creatures no longer recognized them, as their face was no longer so beautiful or expressive. They no longer marvelled at the sight of them; they turned their backs on them and refused to obey them. A disciple, therefore, who remembers this distant past, has only one thought: to recover this lost face. And, as the first face of a human being was that of God himself – for humans are made in the image of God – they can find their own lost face by thinking of the face of God. Yes, by thinking of light, of the splendour and perfection of the infinite, almighty and all-loving God, humans find their own original image even without intending to.

If Moses said, in *Genesis*, that humans were created in the image of God, he certainly never intended these words to remain idle and useless.^{[12](#)} On the contrary, they were to be an indication for initiates; they were meant to show them that they should concern themselves with that image. Disciples, therefore, learn to focus on the perfection of God: sometimes on his love, at other times on his wisdom or his power. God has so many qualities and attributes that no one can ever exhaust all these riches, and, by focusing on them, they model themselves and gradually draw closer to the perfection of God. To be sure, this is a very lengthy, an infinitely lengthy task, but it is one of humanity's most worthwhile tasks, that of recovering its lost sovereignty.

Of course, human beings cannot be forced. Each one reacts

according to his or her degree of evolution. What can you expect of a cat? However much you explain things to it, it will only say, 'I cannot play the piano, I cannot study at the university, I cannot command an army, but I can catch mice!' Try as you might to explain a better way of life to it, it will listen quietly, purr a little and then disappear to pounce on a mouse before reappearing after a few minutes, licking its chops. Each one understands things according to his or her own level of evolution. For my part, I am talking for those who are eager to study and work at perfecting themselves, and I know that they will be delighted and will say, 'Ah, that is just the thing for us!' The others will go off and look for some 'mice', that is to say, some less elevated pleasures.

In any case, very few will understand what I am saying, because these ideas are so advanced and unusual! How many have ever heard of an etheric quintessence that humans can model? No one ever talks about that. True, but a new age is upon us, and human beings must begin to undertake new kinds of work, and there are still many that we have not talked about yet. Would you like me to tell you about some of them? Very well, here you are!

Perhaps some of you would prefer a more impersonal^{[13](#)} activity than this preoccupation with one's own image. In that case, you can think of the world as one immense family whose members all love, understand and help each other. Picture a world in which there are no more wars, no more national boundaries, in

which all human beings are free to travel and meet others. Yes, you can think of so many wonderful things for the happiness of humankind!¹⁴ Imagine that everyone in the world dances the paneurhythmy;¹⁵ that everyone in the world watches the sun rise in the morning; that the whole earth sings a hymn of joy and gratitude to the Creator. Surely it is far more wonderful to do this than to dwell on all kinds of selfish, prosaic things!

You can also think about the life of the entities that dwell in heaven: the angels, archangels and divinities, all the heavenly hierarchies. Think about their qualities, about the light in which they dwell, about their love and, above all, about their purity, and pray for all that splendour to descend to earth. In this way you will be building bridges and establishing channels of communication so that the wealth, beauty and perfection of that higher world may really and truly come down to earth, one day.¹⁶

Yes, instead of allowing your thoughts to drift aimlessly, you must give them some work to do. If you are waiting for a train or in a dentist's waiting room, turn your thoughts to the world above and go on with this divine work. What do you suppose most people think about when they are in buses or trains? One is thinking of how to revenge themselves on someone who has insulted them, another is planning to steal his best friend's wife, a third is plotting to supplant a colleague, and so on. They all have their minds occupied, to be sure, but usually with something ugly

or vicious: how to satisfy their lusts or settle accounts with their neighbour. You would be hard put to find more than one or two who have any communication with heaven. All the others are immersed in their humdrum or frankly criminal preoccupations. I can actually see this. In fact, it is not difficult to see what is in people's minds, for everything is reflected: nothing is more obvious than a person's thoughts and desires. You may imagine that you can conceal them, but in one way or another they are always visible – especially when you most want to hide them!

To be sure, there are many more kinds of work you can do, and, once you know them, you will never know the boredom of those who are continually seeking distractions because they do not know what to do with themselves. Your only problem will be that the days go by too fast, that you never have enough time to drink from the ocean that lies there before you. Yes, it is well worth giving up certain preoccupations which do you no good and devoting more time to spiritual activities.¹⁷ Thanks to such activities, you will, at last, breathe freely and be reborn. They will free you from the clutches of the ruler of this world. You will have nothing to do with him, for this domain does not belong to him. All the treasures and blessings you receive will come from other, heavenly entities, and you will feel free, free... as free as air!

Now, I leave you to meditate on these three methods of work, for, as you know, this is what is essential in our teaching: how to

work. Everyone can find knowledge, bits and pieces of information in books. There are so many books, whole libraries full of books, and people read and read and never do any work. But here, it is work that counts. All that I have said so far is simply a preliminary, theoretical explanation – an explanation that is indispensable, no doubt, but it is still not work. The real work has barely begun. Now is the time to start. With the three methods I have just explained to you there is work enough for the whole world for the rest of eternity.

There, that was just a few remarks about the work we do here every day when we come together in silence to meditate. You must be conscious of this work and know what we are doing and how and why we are doing it. And it must be obvious to you by now that you cannot do this work perfectly if you are content to devote only two or three minutes a day to it. You have to give it more time than that. Some of you think that our meditations are already too long, but that is because they have not begun to work yet. They spend the time dreaming and allowing their thoughts to drift aimlessly, so they get bored and keep wishing it would end. Whereas those who have already acquired a taste for this work wish the silence might never be broken. Yes, because the greatest joy known to humans is not to eat or to breathe, to learn or even to be loved; no, a human being's greatest joy is to become a creator.

It is in the act of creation that the greatest joy is to be found, and this means that artists experience greater joy than others. A

very inferior reflection of creation on the physical plane is the act of procreation, or love-making as it is called. It is not the actual love-making that makes men and women happy, it is because they are creating something. For better or for worse it is an act of creation. Absolute happiness lies in being a creator, because it is in creating that one comes closest to the very essence of God. God is creator, and man and woman, too, are creators, and this should show you how essential this question is. The only thing is, of course, that God's creations and human creations are not quite the same. Look at the horrors people produce when they create: an abominable child, a future gangster! But that does not matter, at least they are creators!

The greatest happiness lies in creating, therefore, and it is artists that experience greater happiness than others. You will say, 'What about mystics and scholars?' Yes, to the extent to which mystics and scholars are creators, they too can be as happy as artists. 'But I have known plenty of artists who were very unhappy people.' That is quite possible, but do not misunderstand me: I mean that it is while they are creating, while they are in the act of creation, that artists are happy (and by 'artists' I mean any and every human being who creates).

A few minutes of silent meditation.

At last I begin to sense that the brains of some of you are mobilized and this work is being done, and that is wonderful! And

what will it be if you continue? How much you will gain from it, how much you will develop and, above all, what peace will be yours! Yes, you will at last begin to know peace. You still do not know what peace is. Peace is not the absence of movement or noise; on the contrary, it is an intense activity, but an activity that is perfectly harmonious. Peace is a state in which we live, a state in which we understand and rejoice and work. But until you have tasted it for yourself, you can never understand what it is.

Well, there you are: it is work that counts. Once a disciple has discovered this true work, nothing can hold him or her back. I remember that, when I was young, Master Peter Deunov would repeat the words: *Rabota, rabota, rabota. Vréme, vréme, vréme. Vera, vera, vera.* 'Work, work, work. Time, time, time. Faith, faith, faith'.¹⁸ He never explained why he kept repeating these words, but I thought about it for years, and I discovered that he had condensed a whole philosophy into those three words. Yes, this is what counts: work, but also the faith that you need to undertake and persevere with that work and, above all, time. Yes, for it does take time! It is no use imagining that it is all going to happen in a flash. I know now what *vréme* is; the years have gone by, and I see that *vréme* is really important!

And work! How much more there is to say about this word! Human beings work, of course, that is to say they labour to earn their living, but that is not true work. They sow seed, they sweat,

they tire themselves out, and they imagine that they are working because they are earning their daily bread. No, they have not begun to work yet, for work as an initiate understands it is the great and noble activity of a free being. Work implies activities of a particular kind, and, today, I have given you an idea of at least three of these activities.

Sèvres, January 2, 1965

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‘In the beginning was the Word’ – *John 1:1*

‘The ruler of this world is coming’ – *John 14:30*

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IV

Humans have tremendous potential on the physical plane, but their greatest potential is on the psychic plane, the plane of thought. The only trouble is that they have never exercised their capacities in the domain of thought, so they do not know how to

use them. When people are faced with an unexpected difficulty, their first reaction is often to panic or to give way to despair. The possibility that their thought, their spirit, might possess elements which would enable them to remedy the situation never seems to occur to them.

No, they start running round in circles, weeping and gnashing their teeth, or they go out and buy a tranquillizer – or a gun! And the result is that their situation goes from bad to worse. The first thing initiates do when they encounter a difficulty is concentrate, enter into themselves and make contact with the invisible world so as to be given the light they need to cope with it. This is why you will soon see them acting with lucidity, efficiency and method. Of course, they can also have recourse to material means, but they will always begin by using psychic means. How can anyone expect to correct a difficult situation if they lose their head and cannot see where they are going? That is the best possible way to confuse and destroy everything. And it is often what happens; people act blindly, without thinking. They lose their head so completely in a fire that, instead of escaping, they throw themselves into the flames.

You will never find the solutions you need without light. For example, if you are woken in the middle of the night by a noise – something has fallen and broken, or someone has got into your house – do you rush out in the dark to see what it was? No, you know that would be dangerous. Your first reaction is to switch on

the light, then you can see what woke you up and do something about it. And this applies in every circumstance in life: the first thing to do is to throw light on the situation. In other words, the first thing to do is to concentrate and reflect so as to see what action to take. If you have no light you will search in different directions, knock on different doors and try all kinds of ineffectual means. Yes, simply because you have no light. The essential factor is light; thanks to the light you will avoid wasting a great deal of time and money and doing a lot of damage.

You should get into the habit of turning your attention inwards every day, several times a day, and learning to work with words, images, forces. If you did this, you would soon see all kinds of changes beginning to take place within you. All those who give priority to the inner life, to thought, the will, the spirit, achieve greater self-mastery and power; they are always more luminous and more serene and fulfilled than others. This is a known fact, a phenomenon that can easily be seen and verified, but such facts have always been overlooked by science. They have been left for a few psychologists or mystics to study. Why has conventional science never studied these questions? It should have done so a long time ago, for whatever goes on in human beings is too important to be neglected. Science concentrates on so many minor, insignificant questions, but when there is a phenomenon of truly cosmic importance it behaves as though it did not exist. And I say that this attitude is neither intelligent nor scientific nor logical.

Science should be in a position to explain the means that yogis, sadhus and hermits have used in order to reach a state of fulfilment, serenity and ecstasy. It should be able to tell us what elements they used and where they found them. But it has nothing to say about all this, and that is a great deficiency. The day will come when science is called to account for failing to study this question.

Human beings possess very powerful inner resources of thought, imagination¹⁹ and will,²⁰ and those who have explored and experienced the power of these resources have gone far and reached great heights. Not all of them have been successful, unfortunately, for it is very difficult: very few have ever reached the summit. But even if only one had succeeded it would be enough, for that one would prove that it was possible. And there are many more than one! If we were to ask these beings to explain the methods they used and how they succeeded, they would tell us how to concentrate, meditate, eat and breathe. They would make us understand that untold powers lie hidden in the souls and spirits of men and women, and that we have to awaken, channel, orientate and control those powers.

And now, if the brothers and sisters could only acquire a taste for this work, they would get fantastic results! So far, they have always preferred to have recourse to external means; they have not developed their psychic faculties. They have no faith – or perhaps it is simply that they lack patience – so they are always looking

for tangible, external, material solutions. ‘Oh, thought!’ they say. ‘I have tried it and it didn’t work!’ And why did it not work? Suppose you have a physical or psychic failing of some kind: since it took you centuries to develop and reinforce it, is it any wonder that you cannot get rid of it just like that, in a couple of minutes? It may take centuries more to undo all that. But, as it never occurs to human beings that there is such a thing as justice in the universe, they are revolted and furious and refuse to believe there is any truth in Initiatic Science.

In my opinion, the best way is to combine the two, the inner and the outer means. You will get things done more rapidly that way. But you must begin by working with the soul and the spirit, with your powers of thought, and only add a physical element to facilitate the process.

At the moment, just the opposite happens: science continues to make progress and, in the interests of science, the human race is being poisoned and its health is being undermined. Human beings are being sacrificed to the aggrandizement of science! Of course, you will think that I am exaggerating. No, not really. A great deal of work is being done for the progress of science and not much for the progress of human beings. If you want a kiln to stay hot, you have to keep feeding fuel into it, and the fuel that is keeping the fires of science alive are human beings. Thanks to its human victims, the kiln of science is always hot. You will object that my point of view is warped. I know; in fact, I knew that a long time before you did!

But it so happens that my warped point of view is sometimes the truth. Fifty years from now there will not be a single healthy person on the planet. And when I say fifty years I am being optimistic. You are told to drink this and swallow that, and in doing so you are poisoning yourselves. But I tell you to take no medication of any kind, to eat properly, breathe properly, work properly, sleep properly and, above all, to think properly. But I know very well that I could talk about this for centuries and there would never be more than a few to follow my advice. The majority would say, 'What rubbish! Can you imagine? Have recourse to the inner world, to thought? No, no. We know what to do!' Yes, people always look outside themselves for what they need, even love. They look for it in a man, a woman, a young girl, a boy, a bird, a pet dog. No one ever looks for it inwardly, and that is why they are always disappointed; they never find it.

Now, I want to get you to explore your own inner world. When you have a difficulty, a sorrow or suffering of any kind, say to yourself, 'I can put that right myself. I can soon bring back the smiles, the joy and gladness.' And you will succeed just as long as you recognize, in advance, that you have the power to do so. There are moments in your life when you are perfectly happy, you feel you have everything you desire, nothing is lacking, and then, the very next moment, you feel forlorn and desolate. Perhaps you think the first feeling, the sense of happiness, was an illusion. No, it was a reality, but a reality of another kind, of a kind you do not

appreciate. It is when you are convinced that you have nothing that you are more likely to be deluding yourself, for it is then you are blind to the invisible reality in and around you. The question is to determine what you need and then you will discover that, in fact, you already have it within you.

Let me illustrate this: a poor man living in an attic complains that he is poor, abandoned, an outcast, but I ask him, 'Do you not know who your father and mother were? Do you not know about the inheritance they left you? Why do you stay in this slum? Look at all those fields and lakes and forests. Look at this great mansion. All this is yours, why not enjoy it?' So then he begins to explore the rest of the house, and what does he find? All kinds of valuable pictures and furniture. He did not know that he was heir to all that! Well, the same thing happens when you begin to explore all your own inner possibilities. They are infinite, but the problem is that you do not know it. Obviously, I am not talking about the external world. The external world does not belong to you, that is true, but inwardly everything belongs to you. Yes, on the inner level the universe itself belongs to you; you lack absolutely nothing; it is all yours. Go and look at it, explore it and enjoy it all, for you are all heirs of the heavenly Father and of mother nature. How can you still have the impression that you are poor and abandoned?

Yes, my dear brothers and sisters, you must turn to the initiates, who have found the light, and learn from them, for they live lives of abundance and serenity in that light. You will object

that the initiates cannot give you a roof over your head or a fire to warm yourself by when it is cold. No, but they will give you far more than that; they will give you eternal life, eternal joy and limitless light. The things you are asking for are trifles. The initiates will not give you money but they will give you life. Yes, with them you will live.

Of course, I am not saying that you must totally neglect the material aspect. I am not telling you to abandon everything but meditation and prayer, as some yogis or Christian ascetics have done. Our goal is different; it does not consist in winning a handful of people and leading them on a purely spiritual, mystic path. Our goal is to win the whole world, and you cannot make the whole world follow a path that was only intended for the few. And, since our aims are different, our methods must also be different. It was all right when a few hermits and ascetics disappeared into the forests and deserts, but to think that the populations of whole countries should do the same, each person praying and meditating under their own little tree or in their own little grotto... what utter nonsense! Who would do the work? Who would take care of growing enough food to keep all those ascetics alive? They would all have to be willing to die of hunger and cold! No, no, my goal is to give people a philosophical system that can be applied by everyone, in which each individual is free to work, earn a living, marry and have a family, and in which, at the same time, each one has an inner light, a discipline, a method of work.

The question is how to give both the spiritual and the material dimension their due, for, so far, this ideal has never really been achieved. A few have been so eager to shun the world with all its temptations and difficulties that they have chosen to spend their lives in solitude and meditation, but the majority has always been totally absorbed by worldly affairs.²¹ The important thing is to combine the two: to live a divine life and to live it in the world. In myself, these two aspects are harmoniously combined, and it is up to you, now, to achieve this harmony, for you are still at the stage where, if you begin to take an interest in the spiritual life, you let your worldly interests slide, and if you take an interest in worldly affairs your spiritual life languishes. No, you must have both. Believe me, it is possible! With all the explanations I give you, you are already beginning to feel that these things are profoundly true and important, that your life has meaning and direction, that you know where you are going. This means that the light within you will become brighter and brighter and that you will know more and more joy and happiness, for light and happiness go hand in hand. As long as you believed yourselves to be poor and disinherited, you were bound to be unhappy, but as soon as you discover that your house contains hidden treasure, do you not think it will make a difference? Of course it will! And it will be the same when you discover your inner riches and possibilities, all your inner potential. You will immediately be all smiles again!

V

If you are sometimes besieged and tormented by certain mental images, it is important to know that you have the power to change them. And you can do this by focusing on them and giving them another form and colour. They will always end by giving in to your will.

Suppose, for instance, that you are just dropping off to sleep; in the twilight zone between waking and sleeping, you see yourself struggling laboriously along a road deep in mud or lost in a dark and dangerous forest. What should you do? Should you allow these images to continue unchallenged? Should you put up with them passively? Just before dropping off to sleep, you are on the borderline between the physical and astral worlds, you are about to enter the astral region, and these images bear a message: they are a premonition, a warning of unpleasant events in store. Or you can have the opposite experience and find yourself in a marvellous garden full of flowers, birds and music, and these images foretell good things that are to come.

But let's get back to the times when you are the victim of dark mental images. Even though you are on the edge of unconsciousness, you still have a certain degree of lucidity and can still react by raising your thoughts to higher regions so that other, more luminous images begin to form in your mind. This does not mean that you can actually change the course of events; you may still have to experience the trials and difficulties those images foreshadowed, because such things often depend on outside circumstances. But, by changing the mental images, you set in motion other currents and forces which will help you when difficulties do arise. You cannot prevent outside events from occurring, but you can help matters by preparing the inner conditions that will enable you to face up to them.^{[22](#)}

Winter is a difficult season, but if we have enough fuel to keep us warm we get through it all right. And the same is true of the inner life: you must be aware of what is going on within you. There is no way of avoiding the dark phantoms of the mind and the painful sensations that assail us all; we live in a world of chaos and it is inevitable that we should suffer some repercussions. The question is not how to change the world – it is not possible – but how to improve our own inner situation. We cannot transform the world but we can transform ourselves. The transformation of the world is God's business, and no one will ever hold us responsible for not having done it. The one thing that is asked of us is to make up our minds to transform just one creature on earth, ourselves.

That is the only thing that we shall be held responsible for, the transformation of ourselves.

As soon as you feel negative currents invading you, therefore, as soon as you are aware of gross, primitive, sensual urges, instead of letting yourself be swept away by them in the mistaken belief that there is nothing you can do to help yourself, you must react at once. When a human being improves his or her inner state of mind, the whole world is transformed, because he or she sees it through different 'spectacles'. Why do lovers find the world so beautiful? Because everything in them is beautiful and poetic. People do not take lovers seriously, but they should. We should admire them and learn from them. It may be snowing or raining, but if they are together, then, for them, the sun is shining, the sky is blue, the birds are singing and the flowers perfume the air. It is springtime in their hearts. Lovers are a book that you should read and study very thoroughly. You will object, 'Yes, but their world is purely subjective.' Exactly, we have to begin with the subjective world. It is in the subjective world that God has hidden every potentiality. Materialists have no power in the domain of thought and feelings, because they rely too much on the objective, physical, material world and have lost all faith in the powers of the inner world; they want to obliterate every trace of that world.

Certainly, there is a danger here for those on a spiritual path: knowing that they can change the course of their thoughts and feelings, that they can change their sorrow into joy, their

discouragement into hope, they imagine that they can just as easily change the external world. No, that is not so. The great advantage of the subjective world is that it puts you in touch with the invisible, subtle forces of nature. This world is a reality, but it is not a concrete material reality, and there is a danger in trying to convince others of the reality of what you are so convinced of. The objective and subjective worlds both exist, but in order to adjust the two realities, you have to know the correspondences and how they relate to each other. If you become totally absorbed in the inner world, the external world will cease to exist for you, and this can lead to every possible anomaly, every illusion and error; you will simply be grotesque. As for materialists who neglect the subtle world, they will certainly get on much better on the physical plane but, on the other hand, they forfeit all possibility of becoming inwardly creative.

A genuine creator is a man or woman of thought. Creation takes place in the mind, not on the physical plane. On the physical plane one can only copy and imitate and tinker with matter. True creation takes place in the spiritual world. Thus, even though materialists control and dominate matter and force it to work for them, they lose their sovereignty. They equate themselves with matter, they sink to the level of matter, thereby losing the power to command and robbing themselves of their magical power. This is why I say that, if you become capable of always using your will-power, your thought and your spirit to control and fashion your

inner impulses, you can become a creator, a formidable power. But do not delude yourself: just because you are capable of making your thought obey you and of accomplishing a work of inner transformation, it does not mean that the physical world will obey you as well. A lot of people fail to distinguish the two worlds and go off their heads because they keep getting them mixed up. I gave you the example of lovers for whom, when they are together, winter is turned into spring. The springtime within them is real, but it is still winter on the outside. If they imagine that they only have to stretch out a hand and, abracadabra! the birds will sing and the snow will melt, they are due to be disillusioned. But this is what some spiritual people do – they imagine things. They believe that they only have to pronounce certain magic words and the cliff face will open up before them. Like Ali Baba, all they have to do is say, ‘Open, Sesame!’ and they will find hidden treasure and live in comfort for the rest of their days. No, it is much more sensible to work than to expect to find treasure like that.

Of course, if a disciple continues, day after day, to transform and embellish everything that exists in the inner world of their own thoughts and feelings, the currents created by this work will eventually influence even physical matter, and they will be capable of producing phenomena in the objective world. Yes, because everything is connected. The vibrations, particles, waves and emanations of their inner world reach out and impregnate the objective world, and the objective world can become as radiant and

luminous as the subjective world. But tremendous time and practice are needed before a disciple is ready to achieve this.

A few minutes ago, I spoke of the troublesome images that sometimes come to mind just before you fall asleep, and I told you that, even in such cases, your consciousness should be sufficiently awake to be able to replace these images by others. You must not simply endure suffering. You must not just resign yourself and allow yourself to be victimized; you must try to remedy the situation. You may not manage to improve everything; you are not strong enough for that yet, but the little you can do is like a seed that is already beginning to bear fruit. If you were destined to be one hundred per cent in the cold and dark, perhaps you will manage to be only ninety-nine per cent in the cold and dark. You pronounce a few words, say a prayer, concentrate on a luminous image, and each of these actions is a cry for help. Why do you not observe what goes on in life? I am always telling you that you must take your lessons from life. See how a child behaves: who told it that a word, a cry was something powerful? When it is in danger, it screams 'Mummy!' Who taught it to use that magic word? If the child did not call out, its mother would never know it was in danger, but as soon as she hears the cry she rushes to the rescue. Why do adult human beings not do at least as much as little children and cry for help from heaven?

You have to begin at the beginning, and the beginning is just that: to be constantly wide awake and vigilant and able to recognize

the nature of a thought or feeling just as soon as it appears within you. Sometimes, when you are busy with odd jobs about the house, working in the garden or driving your car, for instance, you are concentrating on what you are doing but, at the same time, part of your mind is marinating in negative, vindictive thoughts and feelings. And this state of affairs can go on for hours without your even being aware of it. This is the kind of thing you must become conscious of, for this underground stream of poison will continue to flow through you until you intervene and put a stop to it.

The Gospels tell us, *'Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.'*²³ But vigilance can be useful in many other circumstances as well. Protection against attack from an enemy is only one of its hundreds of uses; another one is to enable us to intervene in our own inner life. We have to be vigilant in order to trigger constructive forces and become all-powerful, as powerful as God himself, as free as God himself. The first step towards freedom, the first step in becoming a creator, in becoming powerful, is to look into ourselves in order to take stock of our situation and do the best we are capable of at the time in order to remedy it.

Never forget that the first step in becoming powerful is to be vigilant, to be aware of your inner situation so as to be in a position to improve it. Otherwise, if you are not conscious of the true state of your inner reality, it will simply continue to

deteriorate until there is no longer anything you can do about it.

Sèvres, December 31, 1962

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‘Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around’ – *1 Peter 5:8*

VI

There are so many exercises you can do with your thoughts. Let me give you just one example. Suppose that you have a thorny problem to deal with: you must pick up that problem – mentally, of course – and put it next to all the good things you have, all the riches and possibilities within you, and compare it to them. You will soon see that it will not stand the comparison. When you bring it face to face with the greatness, the immensity of your qualities and talents, it will be forced to turn tail. Yes, learn to bring the things that distress you face to face with your true riches, with the glorious future in store for you, and you will see that they will disappear without a trace. This is the method of confrontation, and you must learn to use it: it is extremely effective. One sees many

examples of this kind of debate between two people, in life or on the television. Little by little, if one of them is not being entirely truthful, he or she begins to feel guilty, to hesitate and stammer, and finally capitulates. Whereas the opponent, who may have seemed weaker in the beginning but who has truth on their side, gradually gains confidence and begins to hold their head up. Where does this strength come from? From their sense of being in the right. And the stronger they become, the more uncomfortable their opponent feels. To begin with they will bluster and threaten and try to hide their embarrassment in the face of the truth, and then, all of a sudden, they will collapse like a pricked balloon.

So, whenever you are being plagued by troublesome entities, tell them, 'Come here, I want to show you something', and then bring them face to face with all the wealth you already possess and all that will be yours in the future. They will begin by trying to bluff and bluster, but they will soon disappear without a trace, and you will realize you have the power to transform and improve a great many things in this way. Why not practise and learn to do this? Life is full of opportunities of this kind, so there is never any need to be bored. There are always some interesting experiments you can do, something useful to be learned or to create.

Perhaps you are under the impression that malicious entities of the invisible world have never tried to deceive me or to persuade me that I was an idiot to give up everything else for the sake of the spiritual life, that I was on the wrong track and should turn back.

Do you really believe that I have been spared, that it is only you who are tempted and tried in this way? How naive you must be! And do you want to know how I reacted at those times? Their arguments were so persuasive that I often came very close to believing them, but then I would turn the tables on them by saying, 'All right, but if I am on the wrong track, explain to me why I have been given so much light, why I have been allowed to live through so many divine moments, why I have had experiences of such extraordinary beauty that I could have wished to die. Go on, explain that away if you can.' But, at this, they simply vanished; they could not hold out in the face of this truth, in the face of such irrefutable arguments.

The solution, therefore, is to bring your enemies face to face with the splendour of your spiritual life. You must learn to stand up to them and, above all, to refute their arguments. When you do this, they do not know what to say, so they go away and leave you alone. And if they come back another time, use the same method: receive them politely but firmly and tell them, 'Yes, yes, I quite understand. But tell me, how is it that I have known this or that sublime moment in life? How is it that I have understood all these great truths?' They will be completely disconcerted. So, go ahead, now! Try it!

At times, entities of this kind have haunted the greatest geniuses, artists, thinkers and philosophers, even the greatest saints and initiates, in the hope of upsetting them and getting them

to abandon their work. And they have often succeeded! Even Jesus was not spared this experience (remember the three temptations in the desert)²⁴ but, as you know, they could not convince him. He answered Satan by quoting the great truths of the Bible to him, and it was Satan who surrendered. But when these entities tried to tempt St John the Baptist, they succeeded. You will not find this story recorded in so many words, but look at the facts: to begin with, when he was baptizing in the Jordan, John the Baptist was convinced that Jesus was the Christ. He told his disciples, John and James, *'Look, here is the Lamb of God!'* and *'I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'* Later, when he was in prison, the Gospels tell us that he sent some of his disciples to ask Jesus, *'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?'* How can we explain this change of attitude? Simply by the fact that malicious entities had visited him and managed to convince him he had been mistaken, so that now the poor man was no longer sure and sent his disciples to question Jesus.

As you see, therefore, there are some very clever entities about, and they are fully capable of leading you into error. You will never escape from their clutches or know how to contradict or defeat them unless you learn to do so in an initiatic teaching. It is extremely important to be guided by knowledge, by a light. You will say, *'But John the Baptist had a light; why did he doubt later on?'* The truth is that John the Baptist had not received the same initiation as Jesus. He was a very ardent man who had earned great

spiritual gifts in his previous incarnations, but he undertook his spiritual work without the initiatic preparation that Jesus or St John the Evangelist had received, so he did not possess the infallible criteria that alone could have prevented him from being misled. As long as someone has not studied everything, they will always be subject to doubt, distrust and discouragement. It is only when you have pursued these studies to the very end that you see things clearly and can defend yourself. St John the Baptist was unable to do this, so he ended by giving in and began to doubt. In view of the enlightenment, the illuminations he had already received, he should have driven away the entities that tempted him, but his imprisonment and the persecution he had been subjected to had weakened him and clouded his mind to such an extent that he lost his clairvoyance and allowed himself to be invaded by doubts. He should have told the entities that were crowding round him, trying to trip him up, 'No, no, I am not mistaken; the revelation I received was too luminous to be false.' If he had said this with conviction, they would have left him alone. But he did not; he listened to their arguments and said to himself, 'Perhaps they are right, after all', and, once he had said that, he was no longer so sure of what he had actually experienced.

And think of all the entities that tempted Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane! They tried to make him fall at the last minute by telling him, 'You are not obliged to submit to this destiny. You can still escape death. You have already done so much, it is really not

necessary to sacrifice your life as well! Besides, look at these people you are trying to save; they do not appreciate you, they have already betrayed you. Go; get away while you can!’ And Jesus came very close to giving way to temptation before pulling himself together and answering them, ‘Away with you! This is the mission I have come to accomplish, and I must go through with it!’ And the evil entities were defeated and left him alone. But what anguish he had been forced to go through!

Yes, these entities try to tempt everybody; not only you, but also the greatest prophets and the greatest saints. Doubt, the fear of death, sensuality, pride... so many different kinds of temptation exist! A great many saints have been tempted by pride. The devil told them, ‘You are too strong for me, you have completely vanquished me! What strength; what will-power! What mighty weapons you have!’ He hoped that he could get them to respond with pride, that they would say, ‘Ah yes, I have vanquished you. I am very strong!’ But those who were instructed in Initiatic Science were on their guard. They replied, ‘No, it was not I who vanquished you; it was the Christ within me who vanquished you!’ and in saying this they overcame the temptation.

You see, you must always know what to say, how to answer. The word ‘dialogue’ is in fashion these days, but an inner dialogue with these lower entities – a regular set-to, in fact – has always existed! And if you know how to answer them you will be the winner; but if you do not, you will be the loser! So, learn from

Jesus, who always knew exactly what verses of scripture to use in replying to the devil. He said, *'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God... Do not put the Lord your God to test... Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."*' Find these truths and hold on to them, for they are the weapons you need, the only weapons capable of repelling the spirits of evil. Grasp these weapons of truth and hurl them at your enemies, for only truth is all-powerful and capable of vanquishing them. They are powerless in the face of truth.

There, that is all for today. I have already given you so many formulas that you can use in the different circumstances of life. And again today, I have given you several very useful methods. At first sight they may seem very trivial, but in practice their importance is huge. Set to work, make use of them, and you will see for yourselves how effective they are.

Sèvres, January 2, 1969

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'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' – *John 1:29*

'I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal' – *Luke 3:16*

‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ –
Matt. 11:2-3

Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane – *Matt. 26:36-46*

‘It is written, One does not live by bread alone’ – *Matt. 4:4-7*

VII

Instead of being permanently immersed in the past, you must learn to live in the future. Humanity’s past is not very glorious; people have often behaved like animals – or worse! Whereas the future, remote though it may be, holds the promise of a magnificent destiny for the world, for the goal of humanity’s evolution is to lead them closer and closer to the Deity. And you can already have a foretaste of that extraordinary state of beauty, fulfilment and strength, you can already live in the reality of it, simply by conjuring up a picture of it in your imagination. Yes, this exercise can be extraordinarily effective; it is capable of transforming your whole life. Unfortunately, human beings never think of using their minds in this way, and their lives are drab, dull, aimless and without joy. They do not know how to make use of two essential truths: first, that thought is truly a power and, second, that it can

be used to project oneself into the future and experience it in advance.

Look at what happens when you are waiting in fear and trembling to face a difficult situation, to take an exam or appear in court, for instance: days before it actually happens, you keep going over it in your mind and worrying about it in advance. And when you are looking forward to holding your sweetheart in your arms, there too, you picture those moments of delight, and enjoy them in advance. If you have been invited to dinner or to the theatre, you look forward with a pleasant sense of anticipation to the enjoyment of an amusing play or a delicious meal. Well, if your imagination can project you into a future that is just around the corner, why should not it be equally capable of projecting you into the distant future?

The power of the imagination is real and can be used equally effectively for a negative or for a positive purpose. We must learn, therefore, to use it positively.^{[25](#)} Initiates observe simple facts of this kind and have found that they can be extraordinarily effective in helping them to improve their existence. But ordinary human beings never reflect on their day-to-day existence or learn to benefit from the opportunities it presents. They go through life unconsciously, with long faces, always dwelling on what has gone wrong, on all the terrible, catastrophic events they hear about! There may be no disaster in the offing, but they dwell on the

possibility so insistently it finally happens: they actually bring it upon themselves!

Everybody knows these things: we live in fearful or hopeful anticipation of events before they happen. But why live only in the near future that will be upon us today or tomorrow? The future I am talking about is the very remote future that will be ours much, much later, in millions of years from now, perhaps. When I see what people think of as the future, it seems so near that, from my point of view, it is already the past. Yes, for what I call the past is the distress and suffering of people's lives, all their doubts, torments and anguish. They keep repeating this past because they keep projecting it into the future. By expecting to find suffering in the future, they experience it already, in the present, without realizing that what they think of as the future is already the past.

The past as I understand it is a deplorable state of consciousness where there is always something missing, whereas the future is a perfect state of consciousness. All the imperfect states of consciousness that you experience, therefore, all those fears and apprehensions, even if they concern the future, actually belong to the past, for the past is disorder, vice, illness and brutishness. The future, on the contrary, is growth, improvement, maturation, for we are all on our way to perfection.

As long as you continue to project yesterday's imperfections onto the days to come, you will continue to reproduce and repeat

the old past and your future will be nothing more than the bits and pieces of the past that you have projected ahead of you. It will be a projection, to be sure, but a projection of all that is vicious and corrupt. Whereas, if you project all that is most beautiful, luminous and perfect, you will already be living in the future that is waiting for you. And this future is already a reality, because you can feel it. If you are able to feel something in the present, it proves that, even though it may not have materialized on the physical plane yet, it does exist in another form, on the plane of thought and feeling, and that is very important. So, this is what you must learn to do: practise this and you will see that you will be incapable of living as you lived in the past; it will be impossible.

It is a great blessing for you to know these new truths. With them you will be rich and well-armed and able to create a future that is entirely different from the past. This is as true and mathematically certain as the absolute laws of the universe. But you have to undertake this spiritual work whole-heartedly, and the first step is to keep an eye on your thoughts. Whatever the circumstances, always be sure to keep an eye on what is going on within yourself, and make sure that you know where your thoughts are and what they are doing. You must be constantly alert, lucid and aware. How often I have asked people what they were thinking about, only to find that they did not know; they had never bothered to find out! It is quite extraordinary how people can think all day long and never know what they are thinking! In

these conditions, how can you expect them to learn to control the forces of nature, to orientate and concentrate them and use them for their spiritual work? It is absolutely impossible. If you allow any and every force to enter you without exercising any form of control, without even being aware of it, those forces will end by being in control of you. If you want to become their master, you must begin by taking charge of the situation, that is to say, you must begin by being constantly aware of the thoughts and feelings that pass through you. This is a disciple's greatest quality: they are permanently aware of what is going on within them. At any given moment they know the nature of the currents that are moving them, and, as soon as a negative thought or feeling enters, they arrest it and replace or transform it.

This is your primary work, therefore: to control, direct and master everything that goes on inside you. Take careful note of it, for it is an absolute. True Initiatic Science begins here: never allow any inner event, any psychic phenomenon or emotion to occur without being aware of it. Most people are aware of what goes on inside them only when they are struck by tragedy and disaster. When this happens, of course, they are aware that something terrible is going on within them, but, as I have often had occasion to verify, when the situation is less dramatic, they are not conscious of their inner lives.

Your first duty, therefore, is to be lucid, to keep a watchful eye on what goes on inside you, and, as soon as a negative element

crops up, to do everything possible to remedy the situation. In this way you will become truly powerful. The foundation of all power is in this ability to see what is going on in oneself, and it need not prevent you from being active, and working and creating. Some people imagine that if they began to observe and analyse themselves they would never do anything else, but actually it is just the reverse. With me, this has become a habit; it is my normal attitude, and it certainly does not prevent me from acting.

And this is how children should be brought up. Even when they are still very young, they should be taught to be conscious of every inner phenomenon, of even the subtlest shades in their state of mind. Are they happy or sad? Are they hesitant or confident? Nothing should escape their attention. I often ask adults to explain what they are feeling at a given moment, and nine out of ten say, 'I cannot express it, I cannot find the right words!' Well, that is enough to tell me all I need to know about their character and their possibilities for the future. It is a bad sign; one cannot expect very much of people who are not even capable of expressing their impressions or emotions. They see nothing abnormal in the fact that they leave their inner life permanently in shadow and make no effort to analyse themselves, but to my mind this is extremely dangerous. Others, on the contrary, are capable of explaining so marvellously the slightest movement, the subtlest sensations of their soul and spirit, that it is obvious that they are very advanced beings. Those who imagine that their psychic life is going to

organize itself without any analysis or lucidity on their part are due to be disappointed.²⁶ It is no use expecting any great spiritual work from someone who lacks the most basic qualities even to begin such work.

You should be in a constant state of joy and gratitude, my dear brothers and sisters, for you are nourished every day with the greatest truths, and these truths are capable of giving you all that your soul and spirit have been yearning for for thousands of years. You have never known how to obtain these truths, but now you see that it is very clear and simple. You only have to look for them close to hand, in your everyday lives. All the great laws, all the truths of Initiatic Science are here, in the things we say and do every day. You only have to get into the habit of seeing and understanding and deciphering them. More and more, when I reflect on the gestures and events of our everyday lives, I see that all the answers we are looking for are stored up here, just waiting for us to find them. Human beings always expect to find truth a long way away whereas, in reality, it is already here, written in us and on us and on everything around us.

The Bonfin, April 21, 1977

¹ See *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226, chap. 11: ‘The three great laws of magic’.

² See *True Alchemy or the Quest for Perfection*, Izvor Coll. n° 221, chap. 11: ‘Pride and humility’.

³ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth – The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 2: ‘When we gaze at the sun our soul begins to resemble it’.

⁴ See *The Philosopher’s Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor Coll. n° 241, chap. 3: ‘You are the salt of the earth’.

⁵ See *The Powers of Thought*, Izvor Coll. n° 224, chap. 4: ‘Thoughts are living beings’.

⁶ See *Light is a Living Spirit*, Izvor Coll. n° 212, chap. 9: ‘The spiritual laser’.

⁷ See *Hope for the World: Spiritual Galvanoplasty*, Izvor Coll. n° 214, chap. 11: ‘Replenish the earth!’.

⁸ See ‘*Know Thyself*’ – *Jnana Yoga*, Complete Works, vol 17, chap. 8: ‘The higher Self’.

⁹ See *Man’s Two Natures, Human and Divine*, Izvor Coll. n° 213, chap. 1: ‘Human nature or animal nature?’.

¹⁰ See *The True Meaning of Christ’s Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215 and *New Light on the Gospels*, Izvor Coll. n° 217.

¹¹ See ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’ – *commentaires des Évangiles*, Complete Works, vol.9, chap. 1: ‘Au commencement était le Verbe’.

¹² See ‘*You Are Gods*’, Synopsis Coll., Part III: ‘So God created humankind in his image’.

¹³ This use of the word ‘impersonal’ must be understood in the context of Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov’s teaching concerning the human being’s two natures, the human and divine, the lower self and the higher self, as he terms them, the personality and the individuality. For a fuller treatment of the subject, see *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete Works, vol. 11, and *Man’s Two Natures, Human and Divine*, Collection Izvor, N° 213.

¹⁴ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 15, chap. 29: ‘Towards a broader concept of the family’.

¹⁵ Paneurhythmy is a form of rhythmic dance designed to express and enhance a harmonious relationship between the dancers and the forces of nature. It was created by the Master Peter Deunov.

¹⁶ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 3: ‘The angelic hierarchies’.

¹⁷ See *Vie et travail à l’École divine*, Complete Works, vol. 31, chap. 3: ‘Le véritable sens du mot travail’.

¹⁸ See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 13: ‘Rabota, vreme, vera: work, time, faith’.

¹⁹ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 14, chap. 2: ‘Taking the bull by the horns’, and *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol. 28, chap. 3: ‘L’imagination formatrice’.

[20](#) See *Man's Psychic Life: Elements and Structures*, Izvor Coll. n° 222, chap. 5: 'The apprenticeship of the will', and *Youth, Creators of the Future*, Izvor Coll. n° 233, chap. 14: 'The will must be sustained by love'.

[21](#) See *Vie et travail à l'École divine*, Complete Works, vol. 31, chap. 2: 'Matérialistes et spiritualistes'.

[22](#) See *Looking into the Invisible – Intuition, Clairvoyance, Dreams*, Izvor Coll. n° 228, chap. 15: 'Protect yourself while you are asleep', chap. 16: 'Astral projection while asleep'.

[23](#) See *The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 9: 'Watch and pray'.

[24](#) See *Le grain de sénévé*, Complete Works, vol. 4, chap. 6: 'Les trois grandes tentations'.

[25](#) See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 14, chap. 2: 'Taking the bull by the horns', and *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol. 28, chap. 3: 'L'imagination formatrice'.

[26](#) See 'Know Thyself': *Jnana Yoga*, Complete Works, vol. 17, chap. 7: 'Consciousness'.

Chapter Four

Knowledge: heart and mind

I

Every day of my life I make some sensational discovery. Today, for example, I have suddenly discovered what an extraordinary thing it is that we have two legs. When you have only one leg to stand on, the slightest puff of wind blows you first one way and then the other, and you end by finding yourself flat on your back. Yes indeed, two legs are so much better than one! Isn't that a fantastic discovery? You will say that it is nothing new, you have known that for a long time. All right, but if you know it, why are you always perched on one leg? Why do you always hop instead of walking? Those who are sentimental hop on their left leg – they do not use their heads – and the intellectuals hop on their right leg – their hearts are dried up. You are all one-legged!

People always know things theoretically, but the fact that they do not put them into practice means they do not really know them. That is why they stand on only one leg all their life long; they even go out for walks, hopping along on one leg! So I asked

myself, one day, ‘Why does nature teach us to walk by putting our left and right foot forward alternately?’ The answer is simple: it is because human beings must use both their heart and their mind.¹ They must know how and when to alternate between the masculine and feminine principles in the way they behave. All the accidents that happen to people happen because they do not know how to walk with both legs and they do not look where they are walking. Many people walk with their eyes on the ground because, as they say, ‘You have to keep both feet firmly on the ground!’ And the result is that they bump their heads on an overhanging branch, a wall or a lamp-post. Others walk with their gaze lost in the clouds, saying that the world does not interest them – and they fall into the first ditch they come to! So where should you look? The answer is simple: you should look alternately at the stars and the earth; you must be alternately a spiritual person and a materialist. Yes, it is in the simplest things of everyday life that God has concealed the greatest mysteries.

The Bonfin, April 24, 1976

II

We cannot stop ourselves from feeling. We can stop our

thought processes, but it is impossible to stop all feeling, all sensation. And the reason why we cannot switch off our faculty of sensation is that it dates from a much earlier stage of human evolution than that of thought. This is why, today, although it is possible to stop thinking, we always have some kind of sensation: a sensation of well-being or distress, of hunger or thirst or simply of emptiness. So, as I say, it is possible to arrest one's thought processes. However, it is very difficult to do so, especially for people of the West, because they attach so much importance to the activity of the intellect and, very often, that activity is so chaotic, that they can no longer put a stop to it. This means that their thoughts, their intellectual activity often prevents them from sensing the realities of the higher planes – the planes that exist above the physical, astral and even the mental level; it prevents them from sensing the existence of heaven. Yes, because it is always too agitated, chaotic and discordant.

Initiatic Science teaches its adepts to halt their thought processes in order to go much further and much higher, and experience sublime sensations of rapture and ecstasy. The sages of India say the mind is the assassin of reality, and it is true: you cannot know reality if you rely on the mind. You will perhaps know a great many details about something, a great many surface truths, but you will never know the reality, the quintessence of something. Only the heart has the power to penetrate to the centre of reality.

The surface and the inner substance of things, the objective and the subjective worlds: these two aspects of reality exist, and the mind is predestined to explore the objective world, while the heart is designed to know the subjective world. When I speak of the heart, however, I am speaking neither of our physical heart nor even of our feelings. When the initiates speak of the heart, they are referring to the soul and its power to perceive the reality of things and to penetrate their quintessence. Let me illustrate this to help you understand it better. You ask one person to stand inside a sphere and another to stand outside it, and then you ask them to describe the sphere. One will say it is concave and the other will say it is convex, and they are both fifty per cent right. To the person on the outside, the sphere is necessarily convex, but to the one on the inside it is concave. Scientists who look at things from the outside, therefore, are right in what they say about them, but only insofar as the outside is concerned. And mystics who see things from within, through sensation and feeling, are also right.

The mind is one thing, and the heart is another. For centuries, humankind has given preference sometimes to the one and sometimes to the other, and each of them sees things correctly from their own point of view. But the whole truth can only be found by uniting the two, and, as only the great masters are capable of doing this, only they are capable of knowing the whole truth.² The rest of humankind continues to quarrel and be torn between the two,

and sometimes religion is in the ascendancy and sometimes science. In our times, the pendulum has swung towards science: for centuries people tried to exterminate science, claiming it was the work of the devil, but now it is getting the upper hand and it is religion that is the underdog. Neither one possesses the whole truth, however. We need the initiates to restore order and show us a point of view that is superior to these two partial, inadequate points of view.³

Sensitive people see everything in the light of their own sensations, and these sensations are often flawed and even unwholesome; they are real, certainly, but they are valid only for the persons concerned. If someone tells you about their personal sensations, you must remember that they concern only their own particular case; they do not apply to the universe and all creatures in it. On the other hand, when those whose point of view is exclusively intellectual explain things to you, you must remember that they have no vital experience of them. Neither the first nor the second category possesses the truth, therefore, and neither can set themselves up as models and guides for humankind.

Actually, there are two kinds of thought and two kinds of feeling: a higher and a lower kind. On the causal plane, the plane that is above both the astral and mental planes and on which thought and feeling become one, it is possible to think and feel at the same time. But this is a truth that is inaccessible to the

majority of human beings, for they know almost nothing about their own structure; they are aware of no more than a few manifestations of their physical, astral and lower mental bodies. They do not even suspect that a higher order of thought, feeling and action exists. Only someone who has already had a personal experience of this kind, who has already experienced ecstasy, knows that there is a point at which thought ceases and another faculty takes over, a faculty that is, at the same time, sensation and comprehension and in which the mind has no part. For my part, I find all this very clear, because heaven has allowed me to experience these inner states; I have seen and touched and understood. The difficulty begins, however, as soon as I try to explain these emotions and sensations, these moments of life in another dimension, to others. There are no images that can help me to make myself understood. But I want you to understand at least this: you cannot truly know things with only your mind. You must reach up to and awaken a higher mind, a faculty that is no longer the mind but the spirit. In the same way, if you want to experience the fullness of feeling, you must awaken not only the heart but the soul.

Human beings are content to leave their heart and mind to fight it out between them, without really understanding that, although both are necessary and useful, they are not enough; that they must develop another faculty, the faculty of intuition. Intuition is both intelligence and sensation, but an intelligence and a

sensation of a higher kind. Intuition gives you one hundred per cent of the truth, and it is superior to clairvoyance, for clairvoyance only gives you the objective view of the astral or mental planes. It enables you to see, and what you see either terrifies or enchants you, and that is the end of it. It is not a vital experience. Whereas with intuition you see nothing, but you understand things as though you were seeing them a hundred times more clearly, and at the same time you live them, you feel them. Intuition, therefore, is superior to clairvoyance. It is intuition that leads to true illumination.⁴

Some spiritual seekers, particularly in the East, attempt to attain illumination by creating an inner void. I am willing to believe that some succeed, but when I was in Japan, I lived for a time in a Buddhist monastery up in the mountains not far from Tokyo, and there I had the opportunity to observe the daily lives of the monks and take part in their meditations and exercises. The means of investigation at my disposal are, no doubt, very limited, but as far as I could see from my observations, and by taking part in all their activities, I fear that the void they were seeking was really and truly a void. I do not want to criticize, but from what I have learned of true Initiatic Science, the void must never be a goal in itself. If a disciple or an initiate seeks to empty themselves, it must be in order to be filled, and that fullness should normally be reflected in their face and in their whole attitude.

While I was in this monastery, therefore, I participated in their meditations every morning, very early, and again in the evening, and I was always very surprised to see how, after these lengthy meditations, there was no visible change on the monks' faces, no light, nothing! Perhaps they were tired? Perhaps they had reached a point of saturation after years and years of the same practices? I do not know. But to my mind, after a prolonged meditation during which one has communicated with the divine world, one's face should express something new and luminous, something vibrant and expressive, and if it does not, it means that that meditation did not achieve its purpose. I repeat, emptiness is not a goal in itself; its only purpose is to attract fullness.

Emptiness is the manifestation of the feminine principle and fullness that of the masculine principle, and if they are not united nothing can be achieved. Take a flint (the feminine principle) and strike it with a piece of iron (the masculine principle). If it does not produce a spark and set fire to the tinder, the operation is a failure – and a great many meditations are failures in just this way! You see? All the mysteries of the universe are revealed in the two principles, masculine and feminine. Whenever I want to understand something I call on them: 'Oh, eternal principles, eternal feminine and masculine, come and enlighten me!' and they come and explain everything to me.⁵

I repeat, emptiness must be used to attract fullness, plenitude,

otherwise it is useless and worse than useless; it is dangerous. Some people imagine that if they can achieve this void, this passive state of emptiness, they will be visited by the Deity. No, if you are passive, there is no guarantee that it is the Deity who will come to you. You are more likely to be visited by negative entities from the invisible world, who are only too pleased to find a dwelling place in someone weak and defenceless. Yes, for if you abandon yourself without first taking the trouble to protect yourself by developing your active, dynamic principle, you will be at the mercy of the most dangerous entities.

When you meditate, you should begin by being passive so as to relax and establish a state of calm, and then, after a few moments, you must be active and dynamic and focus your thoughts and feelings on whatever subject you have chosen, projecting and intensifying them until you feel yourself expanding, filled with a sense of awe and wonder. Only then is it safe to pause and try to empty yourself, to stop thinking and allow yourself only to feel. At this point you will be in no danger, since you began by being active and outgoing; any malicious entities that tried to slip in and tap your energies for their own benefit will have been repulsed. The only way to create a void without danger, therefore, is to begin by purifying yourself. What can you possibly hope to attract if you have not worked to make yourself pure and luminous? Your inner impurities will only attract undesirable entities from outside. Too many people who have never renounced

or sacrificed anything in their lives pray for heaven to dwell in them. If only it were as easy as that! They clamour for heaven at once; they want to be given all graces, virtues and gifts without any effort other than that of creating a void. Well, a void is the most dangerous thing there is if you do not know how to prepare yourself beforehand.

You have to begin by developing a dynamic, active attitude. Only then can you safely explore the realms of passivity, mediumship and clairvoyance, because then you will be protected. But it is sheer folly simply to empty yourself in the hope that the Holy Spirit will come and fill your void. Someone will come, you may be sure, but there is no guarantee that it will be the Holy Spirit. If you have never made a serious, strenuous effort to purify your inner self and drive out all pernicious entities, how can you possibly imagine that the Holy Spirit would accept your invitation to dwell in what is no better than a swamp? Other, inferior beings will enter and dwell in you, because they will be attracted by the banquet you have prepared for them (your passions and lusts) – but the Holy Spirit? Never! The Holy Spirit may come to you one day, but only after a profound, sincere work of purification.⁶

There are all kinds of teachings, my dear brothers and sisters, but you must not commit yourself to one of them without serious reflection. Some of them teach their adepts to roll about on the ground, to utter incoherent cries or to speak in tongues – tongues

that no one understands! But, tell me, what is the point of all that? They say it is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Well, if that is how the Holy Spirit manifests itself, all I can say is that it is not even a good teacher. The language it speaks is incomprehensible! It may know all there is to know about languages, but it does not know much about teaching, for the first concern of a good teacher is to make themselves understood. No, no, the Holy Spirit is a cosmic principle of supreme wisdom and power; why make it out to be such a ridiculous figure? The Holy Spirit rolling on the ground and speaking in tongues? What nonsense! It does not need to be on the ground. When you are talking to a friend or to your husband or wife and trying to convince them of something, do you roll about on the floor? Of course not! And this shows that the inspiration which moves you is superior to that which moves those who delude themselves that they are possessed by the Holy Spirit.

It goes without saying that there are valid elements in all teachings, because they have all adopted certain esoteric truths. But what they have done with those truths, how they have adapted them and to what ends, is another matter.

The Bonfin, August, 1971

Most human beings are in the habit of being guided by their instincts and impulses. In itself this is not necessarily bad, but in obeying your instincts you are doing exactly what an animal does, and if we have become human beings endowed with the power to think and to reason, it is not so that we should continue to behave like animals. You will say, 'But are there not times when it is perfectly all right to follow certain impulses?' Yes, there are; and that is what we are going to look at now: in what circumstances we can safely abandon ourselves to our impulses.

In the beginning, man and woman were pure spirit, created in the image of God. They dwelt in the bosom of the eternal Lord, and the peace, bliss and light of their life in those far-off days have remained etched into their being, but they are now so deeply buried they are almost forgotten. If this sublime world is to rise to the surface and manifest itself today, humans must let themselves be guided by those hidden impulses. The sublime world that has been so long forgotten by humans is the world of the superconscious, the world both of the future and of the distant past, a past far more remote than the one we share with the animals: the past of our life in paradise. Once we enter this sublime region, therefore, we can safely abandon ourselves to our impulses. However, we cannot enter this region until we have worked intelligently to prepare the ground and open up the paths that lead to it. Only when this

preliminary work has been done will the sublime currents of pure light, pure music and pure inspiration begin to flow within us. Only then can we safely be guided by them rather than by our rational mind. And this is what the greatest geniuses, the greatest artists do: they abandon themselves to the higher forces which impregnate them. But before they can do this, they have to work and practise for a long time to open the channels for the higher currents to pass through.

Humans possess faculties that are superior to their intellect and their powers of reason. When I tell you to think and use your reason, therefore, I am talking about the preliminary work that needs to be done. This is not the whole of wisdom. If, in your present stage of development, you obey only your earthly, selfish instincts and motives, you will never release the powers of intelligence which alone are capable of giving you a clear understanding of reality; still less will you have any hope of setting in motion those higher faculties. Have you ever seen an animal that was moved by divine inspiration? Of course not! Animals are inhabited by their purely primitive instincts of self-preservation and the preservation of the species. So it is much better to get into the habit of reflecting about things than to be a slave to your instincts and passions. On the other hand, even this preliminary phase will become a handicap later on, for what is good for animals is bad for humans, and what is good for humans is bad for superhumans and initiates. We are constantly obliged to evolve and

even to abandon certain attitudes or reactions that were good in the past but that are good no longer.

The present-day culture based on the intellect will not prevail for ever. Of course, we have to develop our intellect in order to control and master the animal impulses which were good in the past but which are bad today. In every trade or profession you are expected to be capable of control; no one entrusts machines or delicate instruments to someone who does not know how to handle and control them. And why should it not be the same for what goes on in your inner being? You must get into the habit of reflecting and, once you have the habit, once the groundwork has been done by the mind, the next step will happen naturally, and all those subtle forces, which are so much greater and more powerful, will be free to manifest themselves, and you will become conductors of heavenly currents, expressions of the Godhead. The mind will always be needed for this preparatory work of organization and harmonization so that humans can become fit instruments for divine forces.

At the moment, human beings put the intellect above everything else and never think of trying to make contact with the higher forces that govern the universe, with divine entities. In fact, they deny their existence and even scoff at them or blaspheme against them. They do not realize that, by severing their bonds with the world above, they are allying themselves with the subconscious forces, which constantly bombard them with ignoble

impulses. For the subconscious is that animal world in which human beings lived for millions of years, killing and devouring each other mercilessly, and it is time now to rise above that realm. In fact, we should also rise above the realm of consciousness, because, even on that level, men and women are influenced by the world below, and all their intellectual energies are consumed in an attempt to satisfy needs generated by this lower world. Yes, I assure you, even the intellect does not work for a glorious, noble, generous ideal; more often than not it works only for the interests of our lower nature.

As for being capable of extricating us from our difficulties, the intellect is hopelessly inadequate. It is capable of reflecting and seeing what goes on but not of finding an effective solution. The solutions proposed by the intellect are always very shabby: to hoodwink and cheat others or to elbow them aside and ruin them. The world considers those who succeed with such methods to be very 'intelligent', but that is not intelligence. The intellect is not intelligence; it is simply a means that has been given to humans to enable them to get along in their everyday life. The faculty of intelligence is far superior to the intellect. It is not the work of true intelligence to cheat others. True intelligence is what humans use to gain control of their heart and their feelings, of their thoughts and emotions, and it is linked to the divine world, to the higher world of the superconscious, from which flow those extraordinary currents that are beyond human comprehension and that benefit

the whole world, the whole universe.⁷

All those who have learned how to work in this way, who have gained the mastery of their feelings and maintained close contact with the higher world by consciously associating their mind with it, have been capable of sublime accomplishments. Amongst them are certain philosophers, scientists and artists and, above all, of course, the initiates. All the others, all the war-lords and conquerors who have ravaged the earth, should be forgotten and wiped from the pages of history (which would be none the poorer for it), and only those who were open to inspirations from the world above in order to help humanity to advance should be remembered. Of itself, the human mind is too poor to be capable of any such inspirations, but if it is tuned in to sublime entities, then it can receive elements from a higher world. All initiates who have followed these rules and prepared themselves to become receptacles for that light, for that divine force, have been capable of healing and prophecy and have given human beings rules and precepts to guide them and help them to live in harmony and peace.

Remember this one thing, therefore: part of your intellectual activity must consist in bringing the currents of the superconscious down into the conscious and even into the subconscious, so that the subconscious may be cleansed and purified and its wild beasts tamed. Only the powers of the divine world can accomplish this;

the intellect cannot do it all, so why do you rely so much on its limited possibilities? Even scholars and philosophers realize that there are problems that cannot be solved by the mind. This is why they need to have recourse to the faculties of the superconscious. It does not matter whether you call these faculties the third eye, a sixth sense, intuition or anything else; what does matter is that they exist and that they must be developed.

Sèvres, May 25, 1965

IV

It is written, *'And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent'*.⁸ In order to know God we have to fuse into one with him, but two objects of different materials or different densities are incompatible; they cannot fuse into one. Take a small quantity of quicksilver and break it up into little drops. All you have to do to make one larger drop again is to push the little drops together so that they fuse into one. I am sure you have all done this experiment at some time, so you know what will happen if, before trying to push the little drops together again, you sprinkle some dust on them: you will never be able to get them to cohere again; they will remain separate. Well, is

it not the same for us? The splendour, purity and immensity of the Lord are so great; how can we possibly fuse into one with him if we are impure, vicious, dark and evil? This is why I say that you have to change your life, and to change your life means to purify yourself, to remove all the layers of dirt that prevent that fusion from taking place. And this is possible, of course, only if you are ready to make certain sacrifices, to give up certain things and learn to control and master yourself. If you are ready to do that, then, yes, it is possible to tune in to other vibrations, other wavelengths, and communicate with them thanks to the purity and intensity of your life.

But I must throw some light on this notion of intensity, for very few people know what it means to live with intensity. Suppose a young man is feeling tired and sleepy, and then his sweetheart comes in and he begins to embrace her. During the few minutes of amorous excitement and volcanic eruptions that follow, his eyes will be shining, and it will be obvious that he is no longer sleepy. Many people would say he was living with intensity. No, that is not what I am talking about at all! A truly intense life, the intense life of the initiates, is so subtle that no sign on a person's face betrays its presence. If a supposedly intense life is visible, it means that it is the life of the astral plane. All that heat and agitation belong to the astral plane. This is not what I mean when I say you must live with intensity. No, the more elevated one's spiritual life, the less there is to be seen in the way of physical

manifestations. But if you do not possess the criteria that would permit you to judge these things, you will mistake frenzy, excitement and agitation for intensity.

The more highly evolved a person is, therefore, the more intense their life. Sometimes, of course, when a disciple's life becomes too intense, it can be very frightening; they have the impression that something within them is about to explode. And, in fact, that could be true: if they do not know how to work in such a way as to heighten the intensity of their vibrations only very progressively, very gradually, their nervous system can break down. The human organism is capable of standing up to the most extreme tensions of nature, on condition that they are not imposed on it suddenly. A human being is like an engine that has to be warmed up gradually, otherwise it seizes up. But, if you feel your brain is about to burst because of too much psychic or spiritual work, what is to prevent you from channelling some of that excess energy into your arms and legs by doing some physical work? You will quickly regain your balance if you drain off some of that energy into other areas.

Physical work is a therapy that I have often recommended to those who are psychically unbalanced, or who suffer from obsessions or an *idée fixe*. They need to work until they are worn out, and then to sleep. Yes, work, sleep and proper food: that is the treatment I prescribe! Unfortunately, human beings have no faith in the efficacy of this treatment; they have greater faith in

hospitals and clinics because they are more spectacular. They are not impressed by a treatment that corresponds exactly to what nature herself would prescribe: to eat and sleep a little more or a little less, or to change their activity. And yet nothing is more marvellous than natural remedies of this kind that put everything right and cost so little! The brothers and sisters often think that I am all-powerful and that I will heal them by waving my magic wand. No, to begin with I will only give you some advice. It is up to you to heal yourselves. If you put into practice all the methods I give you and you are still not cured, then I will see what other means to use. I am not the magician you think I am. Or perhaps I am, but in another region.

But to get back to what we were talking about earlier: the question of intensity. True intensity is a spiritual life that carries you to great heights and enables you to understand, feel and create, and this intense spiritual life is so subtle that it has no visible manifestations on the physical plane. Whereas the emotions and sensations of the astral plane are so much closer to the physical plane that they are far more visible. Look at someone who is studying, reflecting or meditating: their face is motionless. Whereas the face of someone who is in the grip of their feelings or emotions moves constantly; their eyes, eyebrows and mouth move and even the colour of their skin changes. Look at a man who is furiously angry or maddened by lust for a woman: even if he tries to conceal his emotion he cannot do so; everybody can see it. Feeling has

much more effect on the physical body than thought. Thought is much more remote and subtle and has little effect on the physical plane; the world of thought is invisible and extremely elusive.

Thanks to an intense spiritual life, the quality of your emanations will be transformed and have a beneficial effect on the people and things around you – even on the trees, the rocks or the clouds.⁹ But if you make no effort to live an intense spiritual life, you will become more and more moronic, and more and more subject to accidents, for we can never be safe here below. Look at the congestion on the roads. The seas are a little less congested, and the skies even less so, you can more easily accelerate to great speeds in the air without risking a collision. And now for the interpretation of these facts. If you live on the physical plane, that is, on the level of your stomach, belly and genitals, you will have a lot of accidents, because that is the way it is on the physical plane. You will say, ‘All right, then I must move onto the astral plane and live on the level of feelings and emotions.’ Yes, you can live at greater speed on the astral plane, but even there you will come up against the interests of your husband or wife, your boss or your colleagues. Even there you will meet with conflict and accidents. ‘Then I shall go and live on the mental plane, the plane of thought.’ You will be better off there, but even there you will find yourself in conflict with all those whose philosophical, scientific, religious or political opinions differ from yours.

If you really want to avoid being knocked about and bruised and trampled on, go even higher to the realm of air, to the subtle, limpid, luminous realms of the ether. As long as you continue to live in the depths of the material world, in the world of avarice, desire and pleasure, you will continue to be plagued by all kinds of difficulties. You will continue to have bumps on your head – and if it is not bumps, it will be something worse! The initiates have chosen to live in the etheric world, that is to say, the spiritual world, the only world in which one is always safe, because it is the world of perfect harmony. This is what Jesus was implying when he said that a wise man builds his house on rock. The rock is the causal plane.

Sèvres, April 9, 1964

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The house on the rock – *Luke 6:47-49*

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² See *Truth: Fruit of Wisdom and Love*, Izvor Coll. n° 234.

³ See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 4: ‘Science and religion’.

⁴ See *Looking into the Invisible – Intuition, Clairvoyance, Dreams*, Izvor Coll. n° 228, chap. 2: ‘The limited vision of the intellect, the infinite vision of intuition’ and chap. 19: ‘Sensation is preferable to vision’.

⁵ See *Love and Sexuality*, Izvor Coll. n° 14, chap. 1: ‘The masculine and the feminine principles’, etc., and *Cosmic Balance – the Secret of Polarity*, Izvor Coll. n° 237, chap. 4: ‘The role of the masculine and the feminine’.

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Chapter Five

The causal plane

I

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘If you want to change things in the world you have to climb to the top of the mountain. The mountain I am referring to is your own mountain, your causal body. This is where you have to be when you formulate a prayer or a blessing, because only on this level can your prayers and blessings be realized and brought to fruition in the world.

In the Cabbalah, God is always referred to as the Most High because, symbolically speaking, all power and omniscience are to be found on the higher planes. Even in war, for example, you have to be above your enemy in order to vanquish them; if you are beneath them, you will always be vulnerable and at their mercy. And wild animals always try to get above their prey so as to pounce on them and grip them by the throat. It is a law that holds good in every domain: if you are on lower ground you will be defeated. And if you do not know this law and fail to apply it when you meditate, you can work for years without results. The

first thing to do if you want to meditate is to quieten the tumult in your lower bodies, to free yourself from them and rise above the mists and dust of those regions, and then, when you sense that your thoughts have reached a great height, you can do your work and you will get results.’

To say that you have to rise above mists and dust is, of course, symbolic. ‘Dust’ is what clouds the mind when it has wandered along too many different paths and prevents it from seeing things clearly. And ‘mist’ is produced by the humidity of the heart when it is exaggeratedly emotional and sentimental; it too prevents one from seeing clearly.

Dust and mist speak a language that I recognize at a glance, an eloquent language that explains many things. When I see mist in a person’s eyes, I know at once that they are dabbling in the things of the astral plane. And when I see dust, it tells me they are lost in some improbable thoughts or calculations of their own. But the eyes of someone who dwells on the higher planes are clear, transparent and luminous.¹

In your meditations and prayers, therefore, you must always try to rise to great heights, as high as you possibly can. In fact, why not use your imagination and picture yourself scaling a mountain? The picture in your mind will lead you to another mountain, the one inside you, and when you reach the top, on the

causal plane, you will find so many more ways open to you for the realization of your spiritual thoughts and desires. For true strength is not to be found below; human beings always look for it below in material things, but it is above.

When I was very young, I already knew intuitively that the highest peak in a country represented that country's causal body. This is why, when I was nineteen or twenty, I climbed Mount Musala, which is the causal body of Bulgaria and the Balkans (just as Mount Everest represents the causal body of India and Tibet, and Mont Blanc that of France and Italy), and while I was up there, I imagined that I was on Mont Blanc, talking to the French. And you see, it came true! So what is to prevent you from doing the same thing? If you cannot climb to the top of Mont Blanc, at least you can picture yourself very high up, as high as possible, and from that great height you can formulate the noblest and most disinterested wishes: the coming of the kingdom of God and his righteousness, for instance. Yes, for you must be careful about what you ask for. If your wishes are too worldly, if you ask for money, women or cars, for instance, there is no guarantee that you will get much satisfaction from them when your wishes come true. Whereas if you ask for things that are virtually unattainable, you will not be disappointed, even if they never come about. And the kingdom of God and his righteousness is not something that can be easily achieved! A genuine Master never asks for something material. Even if he is in need, even if he is dying of hunger, his

prayers will always be for celestial things, because he knows that, in that way, his soul will be filled, filled with immensity.

You have to learn to live at a high altitude, therefore. If you want to be invulnerable, absolutely safe from attack, you must always build your house on high ground. This is why Jesus said that a wise man builds his house on rock, for rock is a symbol of the causal plane. Once you are on the causal plane you are out of harm's way and nothing evil can reach you, for you are very high up. Whereas if you build your house on the astral level, in the turmoil of your passions, temptations and volcanic eruptions, or even on the physical or mental plane, you will always be vulnerable. The important thing is simply to establish your dwelling on the highest ground, that is to say, to have the highest ideal.

'A wise man built his house on rock.' Yes, and Jesus presented the same idea in another form when he said, *'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.'* Almost forty years ago, I talked to you about this parable² and explained that rust, moth and thieves are symbols: rust is the symbol of the dangers that threaten us on the physical plane; moths symbolize the dangers on the astral plane, and thieves symbolize the dangers of the mental plane.

A disciple, therefore, has to rise above the physical, astral and mental planes (where he or she will always be in danger) and amass treasure on the causal plane. Only the treasures of the causal plane will remain intact for eternity.

The Bonfin, September 27, 1975

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God referred to as ‘the Most High’ – *Gen. 14:18-22, Ps. 78:17 and 35, Ps. 91:1 and 9, etc.*

‘The wise man builds his house on the rock’ – *Luke 6:47-49*

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth’ – *Matt. 6:19-20*

II

Although we are not aware of it, we have all transgressed many different laws in the past, and if we find ourselves in difficulties today, with all kinds of debts to pay and problems to

solve, it is because we have never made reparation for our transgressions. But destiny hides this knowledge from us. When we decide to marry or go into partnership in business, for instance, we are not allowed to see what our prospective partner or associates are really like nor how they are liable to react in any given circumstances. This is hidden from us so that we may better pay our debts. If we could see what lay ahead we could more easily avoid many things, so the law of justice arranges things in such a way that we neither remember the past nor foresee the future. We are up to our necks in boiling water – and we cannot wriggle out of it!

When one follows the lives of human beings closely, one is amazed to see how things work. Providence keeps an eye on us to see if we are ripe and, when it sees that we are unripe, it waits and gives us more time. It says to itself, 'Even if I released them, they would only make the same foolish mistakes and get themselves into hot water all over again. I should do better to leave them with their difficulties for a little longer.' Yes, providence keeps an eye on human beings and waits for the right moment to release them from their trials. And a spiritual Master knows very well that providence has its plans for each one; he will never do anything to thwart those plans. He too keeps an eye on his disciples and leaves them to suffer a little so that they may understand that, by accepting the sacrifices they are called on to make today, they are paying for the many blunders they have made in the past. You

have eaten and drunk, symbolically speaking, and left without paying your bill, or you have taken what did not belong to you. All of that has been recorded and added up, and now you can no longer escape the arm of the law; you have to pay. The best way to be free is to pay your karmic debt by sacrificing something of yourself, and it is this that is difficult. Human beings are unwilling to understand this; they are unwilling to sacrifice or do without things; on the contrary, they want to have everything. This is why humankind is continually at war. And their karmic debt keeps piling up. The secret of how to be free, therefore, is to make sacrifices, to strip oneself of everything, to detach oneself and leave everything for others.^{[3](#)}

Even Jesus did nothing to help his disciples avoid trials and painful experiences, because he knew that they were for their good. He even allowed them to be martyred. For what does it matter if you have to give up your physical body when you can build yourself a new and much better one? Most human beings possess neither a true knowledge of the laws of destiny nor true power or strength, so they always try to solve their problems by resorting to violence or to legal manoeuvres,^{[4](#)} and things just become more and more complicated. If you want to be free, you will often have to go without a great many things; this is the only way to breathe freely. But how many are capable of this? Very few. Only those who want to become perfect. The others will never see an end to their tribulations.

Now I am not saying that it is easy to follow the path of the initiates, for you will rarely be understood by others. A disciple's family and friends are always there to judge and condemn and assassinate them when they decide to change their life. Do not imagine, when you enter an initiatic school, that things will be easy, that everybody will understand you and carry you shoulder-high. No, life will not be a bed of roses; there are bound to be inconveniences. On the other hand, if you want to continue to conform to their crude, selfish, materialistic point of view, you will gain something, of course, but you will be opposing the divine order and sacrificing your peace, your freedom and your light.

It is well worth putting up with criticism, mockery and a lack of understanding – even from those closest to you – if that is the price you have to pay for the joy of achieving your high ideal and breathing an air that is pure. Yes, it is well worth it, because that lack of understanding will not last long. Time passes, and the work you continue to do on yourself is so real, so powerful and so luminous that, sooner or later, everyone will see the light that streams from you and be obliged to acknowledge they had misjudged you: they will see that your will is so strong you have overcome all difficulties. They will sense something marvellous emanating from you, whilst their own strength and light have continued to dwindle. They will sense that it is you who have chosen the better path. Of course, you will have to wait a long time for this to happen, but, even so, it is much better than trying to

make others happy by being as uncouth and dishonest as they are. Besides, what would you gain in that way? A few trifles that would soon wear out, while you yourself would continue to be as despicable, impotent and impure as ever. Many of those who chose the wealth and comforts of the world have recognized that it was not worth it, because none of it lasts, nothing can be relied on.

The day before yesterday, a sister came to see me and complained that she was so lonely, that she had no one she could count on. I told her, 'Wherever you go, you imagine that others will stay exactly where you left them and that you will always have the pleasure of finding them there when you come back. But everything moves and changes and is transformed. You cannot count on anything staying the same.' 'So what should I do?' 'Do not look to others; look to yourself. You can meet others, associate with them, do business with them, but if you rely on their stability you will be deluding yourself, and you will always be unhappy when you see that things are not what you had hoped or desired, that nothing is exactly what you want it to be. You must know in advance that even your children will not always be what they are today, that they will leave you and go and look for another, younger "mother". And if, by good fortune, people are faithful, so much the better!'

Of course, no one is particularly happy about this, but, unfortunately, that is the way it is, and if you want to avoid unnecessary distress or worry, you have to understand that

everything shifts and changes and that you must not count on anything being stable. Once you have understood this you will no longer be unhappy about it, because you will no longer be tempted to deposit your 'capital' in a 'bank' that is doomed to go bankrupt. You will work to develop your own strength and light, and that, at least, is something that you can count on. Whatever happens around you, you will grow and become stronger, because you are an intelligent being. Leave others alone, let them acquire their own experience in their own way, and, one day, when they are exhausted, they will understand that their materialistic philosophy has misled them. If someone comes and asks for your advice, show them the advantages of a spiritual life, but leave them to choose their own path.⁵ It is quite useless to try to force someone in any way. You will soon learn that people do exactly what they please, and you will simply be wasting your time and energy.

My advice to all of you, therefore, is to rely on nothing external, neither on your businesses nor on your possessions nor even on your friends, for you can never be sure that you really know them. If God gives you a few faithful friends, that is wonderful, and you should be grateful to him. But if you count only on others, on all that is external to yourself, if you pursue shadows and illusions and neglect the living spark within you, you will be preparing terrible suffering for yourself. That suffering may not be immediate, but you will certainly encounter it in the long run – simply because everything changes.

Jesus possessed this knowledge. In fact, he summed it up in a few words that human beings have never taken the trouble to think about or try to understand: *'A wise man built his house on rock.'* This is symbolic, of course, for even if your house is built on rock, it can still be destroyed. What Jesus was saying was this: do not seek refuge on the astral plane, in the realm of emotions, feelings and sensations, for in these regions you will always be at the mercy of wind and rain; there is no stability there. One day you will know a little joy, and the next day you will be weeping. Today you will be happy because you have kissed someone, and tomorrow you will be full of regrets. The world of feelings is changeable and unstable.

Naturally we cannot do without all feeling, that is true, but at least our 'house', our permanent abode, must not be in the region of feelings. Our dwelling place must be on a much higher level, on the causal plane, the plane of thought, reason, reflection, wisdom and light. And when you feel a storm getting up within you, use the weapons that the causal plane gives you, and try to get your rebellious cells to calm down. When you are on a very high level, you become invulnerable and can always be in control of the situation; you become a lighted beacon and can help others. But do you know what you must do in order to achieve that? You must move house, that is all! You will say, 'All right, but where should we go? No one has ever asked us to go somewhere else.' No, of course not, because everybody lives where you are now. All your

friends live in these lower regions, and no one ever thinks about moving to higher ground.

It is not at all easy to make up your mind to move house. Generations and generations of human beings have lived in these storm-battered regions, and now no one wants to move; they are too used to living with torment, strife, passion and hatred. Yes, it is terrible to see where human beings have chosen to live – and to think that they imagine, in their ignorance, that this is where they will find solutions to their problems! But it is not possible for this region to offer any solutions to your problems; it is too exposed to winds and storms. How many people will you find who are capable of observing reality and drawing the right conclusions? Very few, because very few have chosen to dwell in the region of intelligence, love and peace in order to be free to act. Of course, even these few will still be subject to the turmoil and tribulations of life, but at least their true dwelling place is not on that level; it is higher up.

Human beings have never understood why their brain is at the top of their body. If they understood this they would always try to function on that level – for it is there that reason, intelligence and light are to be found – instead of continually suffering, whining and weeping down below. How often I have had to say to a sister, ‘You spend hours, weeks and months weeping and wailing and crying your eyes out! For goodness sake, cry a little if you have to – half an hour or so – and spend the rest of your time thinking.

When you feel like crying, tell yourself, “You want to cry? Very well, I’ll get some handkerchiefs ready, but before you begin I want to do a little thinking.” Then you will think and reflect and search for the solutions you need, and they will occur to you much more readily than if you spent your time crying. Otherwise you will cry for three or four hours, until you are worn out, and the next day you will begin all over again!’ Tears never solve anything. Instead of dwelling only on your feelings, you must move to that blessed region of pure reason, pure wisdom and pure light. All the methods and solutions you need are there, but you never go and look for them. I see so many people constantly absorbed, bogged down in their feelings! They take them out for walks and show them to everyone they meet in the hope of finding a little sympathy and compassion or some sign of approval. Really, human nature is very odd!

And what do you suppose happens when, in attempting to help a sister or brother, or anyone else who comes to consult me, I start to explain what they could do to improve their character? As often as not, instead of being calm and serene and listening to my explanations carefully in the desire to learn and benefit from them, they take offence and protest or burst into tears, because their feelings have been hurt. They are so immersed in their feelings that their brains are clouded, and they are incapable of understanding what I am telling them. Their distress absorbs all their attention so that, however much I explain, they cannot assimilate any of it; all

their energies are swallowed up by the outraged sensibilities of their personality. However truthful and logical my arguments are, they can neither understand nor remember them: they are too busy weeping – especially the sisters! So then, of course, I am obliged to tell them, ‘My dear sister, you have been crying for years, but have your tears ever solved any of your problems? No? Then why do you go on crying? Your tears may give you a little release, perhaps, they may water the flowers in your garden, that is true, but they will never help you to find a solution to your problems. They are simply an excuse for not doing any work. Cry for a few minutes, if you have to – that should satisfy the cells that are accustomed to pouring out floods of tears – and then get down to work. Begin to think and reflect about the situation, and perhaps you will find a solution. To do nothing but cry is to react like a drunkard who goes and drowns their sorrows in beer and then finds themselves, the next day, with all the same old cares and difficulties. Instead of getting drunk they would do much better to reflect and try to find a solution or ask someone to help them. Of course, you may feel a little better after shedding a few tears, but your problems will still be there.’

Tears are not necessarily a bad thing, but you should not cry because you have difficulties or because your feelings have been hurt. I myself have sometimes shed tears, even in front of you, in front of the whole Brotherhood, but it is never because something has hurt or offended me. I only cry when I see something very

beautiful, noble and sublime, when I hear celestial music.

Your personality is not in the habit of being treated roughly; everybody flatters you and lulls you with illusions, and you take yourself for the centre of the universe. And then, when a Master puts you in your place, you are so upset that you forget that his only concern is for your future, for your evolution. You forget that he spends all his time and energy, his whole life, trying to be of use to you. You do not stop to think that he is the only person who can do you any good. In fact, you are incapable of understanding what he says, because you forget to think at all. His words are precious stones, but you are too upset and too busy crying to pick them up. And that is a pity. If you always listen to your personality you will never learn anything, for it is too easily hurt. Change your attitude and, when your Master shakes your personality up a bit and it begins to cry out and protest, follow his example and give it a good shaking. Do not try to protect it, otherwise you will be undermining the work your Master is doing in trying to teach it better manners.

Sometimes, when a father scolds a child who has done something wrong, the mother destroys the good effects of the scolding by hugging and kissing them and defending them. She should not do this; she should show them that she agrees with their father; she should make them see that it is no good coming to her to be consoled since they have done wrong. When a child senses that their father and mother do not agree, they will take advantage of it,

and they are likely to turn out badly as a result. Work with your Master, therefore: if he treats your personality roughly, show that you approve of what he is doing. In this way, when your personality sees that no one is standing up for it, it will begin to reform. From now on, therefore, instead of being wounded or indignant by what I say, accept it and remember my words. If you do this you will make great progress.⁶

And now, in case you are wondering why our lives are always so full of turmoil, let me say it is so we may learn how to think and how to act, what to rely on and what to be concerned about. Everything that happens to us, therefore, is designed to lead us to a far broader, vaster more exact understanding. If you fail to see this, you will continue to suffer. But if you see that you can use everything that happens to you to climb much higher, to become nobler and stronger and, above all, freer, then, instead of weeping and feeling miserable, you will thank heaven and tell the Lord, ‘Lord God, if you had left it to me to decide to climb up to you, I think I could never have managed it in this incarnation – nor even in the next! How good you are, Lord! I was stuck in a bog and you have dragged me out of it. Thank you. Thank you.’ And then you will pounce on every occasion that presents itself and try to understand it with this new insight.

You must get into the habit of reflecting, reasoning and studying, instead of always encouraging, nourishing, flattering and

amplifying your feelings until there is no room for thought, intelligence or wisdom. If you are still incapable of remedying certain negative states, it is because you pay so much attention to your feelings, and your feelings, as I have already said, are a force, but a force that is blind. Our feelings have the power to stimulate us, to spur us on, but they are incapable of steering us in the right direction. Someone else has to guide them, and that someone is our mind or, better still, our spirit.

Perhaps you remember the story I told you, one day, about the legless man and his blind friend who were brought before the magistrate for stealing apples. The legless man pleaded, 'But, Your Honour, how could I reach the tree? I haven't got any legs!' And the blind man declared, 'How could I have done it, Your Honour? I cannot see anything!' Everyone in court was almost convinced of their innocence, when someone cried out, 'Yes, but if the legless man was on the shoulders of the blind man, between them they could easily steal the apples!' And that was exactly what they had done: the blind man hoisted the cripple onto his back and the cripple, whose sight was excellent, guided him: 'A little more to the left, one step to the right, a little farther forward,' and so on. Well, the legless man is the mind, and he rides on the shoulders of the blind man, the heart. The heart is below, our feelings are below, and the brain, which is above, has to guide them 'a little farther to the right, a little to the left...' They work together in this way to do good deeds or commit crimes.

So, as I have said, you must move up to that higher region of the causal plane, to the rock that Jesus spoke of. ‘All right,’ you will say. ‘But we shall need a big removal van to take our furniture and all our belongings.’ No, it seems to me, on the contrary, that you should not take any of those things. They are too heavy. You would do much better to acquire new belongings and make some new furniture of lighter, more etheric materials. Leave behind all your old Louis XIV or XV furniture; leave everything you have, and go and live in that region where there are no more clouds; build a new house on the mountain top where the materials are sound, durable and pure. ‘And where is this mountain top?’ you will ask. On the sephirotic Tree of Life. The causal plane is represented on the sephirotic Tree by the sephirah *Binah*. *Binah* is the home of the twenty-four elders of which St John speaks in *Revelation*: ‘*Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.*’ The twenty-four elders are seated on unshakeable rocks, the ‘thrones’, and no one can touch them. *Binah* is the region of divine intelligence.⁷

If you continue to dwell in the mists and illusions of the lower regions of *Yesod*, you will be lost. And even the regions of *Hod* – the intellect – or *Netzach* – love – must not be your final dwelling place. You must go much higher than that, all the way to *Binah*. This is where you must establish your little caravan or, if you

prefer, pitch your tent. For *Binah* is the ‘secret place of the Most High’ spoken of in Psalm 91: *‘Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling-place.’* Several years ago I gave a lecture on this subject.^{[8](#)}

The thing to do, therefore, is to free yourself, but you can free yourself only when you have done your duty. You are tied to certain creatures, you have signed a certain number of contracts, and you cannot simply cut loose and be free without fulfilling your obligations. To leave your husband or wife on the pretext that you want to be free is not a solution: the only result would be to incur new debts that would have to be paid in a future incarnation. You cannot be free until you have paid all your debts. Everybody wants to be free – that is normal, but it is important to have the right notion of freedom, otherwise, instead of becoming freer, you will sink more and more deeply into debt. It is not as easy as you think to set yourself free. It is when you want to be free that you begin to realize how many things bind you. People think they only have to sever their physical, material bonds and they will be free. No, absolutely not! It takes a whole lifetime – in fact, one lifetime is not always enough – to free oneself from certain memories, certain imprints and images. You can free yourself physically, but inwardly you will continue to carry a crushing burden with you wherever you go.

No, our problems cannot be solved just like that, all at once.

You say you have decided to move, but how long will it take you to complete your move? You will soon begin to realize how strong your attachments are. If a fish decided to leave the sea or the river and go and live on dry land, it would die. In order to survive on land it would have had to prepare itself by getting some lungs, and it has not got any lungs. And if you want to move to a higher region you must begin by preparing yourself; you will not survive up there if you are not equipped to do so. In fact, you will not be there very long before you start wishing you were back on earth. You will complain, 'But I cannot get any cigarettes here. There are no night-clubs or bars, and I need to smoke and drink and have some pretty women to cuddle. I'd rather go down again.' Those who want to live in the sublime regions must not have so many crude needs of this kind. This is why not everybody can move house. In fact, if you were to move someone up there by force, they would soon scurry down again, complaining that they could not stand it, that they would die up there. And then there are others who would die if they were forced to live in the prosaic lower regions; they would die because they would not be able to stand such conditions.

Make an effort, nevertheless, to move to the region of the causal plane. Human beings have evolved considerably in the millions of years they have been on earth, and if you take the trouble to practise every day, to meditate and put certain of your brain cells to work, you will find you are capable of approaching

the divine world. And once you begin to get used to this work, you will go further and further and begin to have a clearer view of much vaster, broader, deeper horizons until, at last, you are permanently established in these blessed regions.

There, my dear brothers and sisters, that is what I wanted to tell you today. All you have to do now is move house, that is to say, give priority to the spirit instead of dwelling always in the heart and the mind. But notice that I have not said you should get rid of the heart and the mind; that would be impossible. They are an indispensable and integral part of life, so there is no getting rid of them. You only have to make sure that neither is allowed to predominate and create an imbalance. The heart must simply counterbalance the mind, for there are people who do away with feelings and function exclusively with the mind, and that is not good either. They end by drying up. The heart and mind are both indispensable, but you have to find the right balance and dwell on a level above that of the mind. Do not make the mistake of thinking that, when I tell you that you should not dwell only in the heart, I am telling you to dwell in the mind. No, the mind is not capable of solving your problems. Neither the heart nor the mind is capable of solving everything. You have to go higher than the intellect: the causal plane is not the intellect. You still have a lot to learn about these things.

So, now I wish you a successful house-moving – and I shall look forward to meeting you all very soon on the causal plane!

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¹ See *The Mysteries of Yesod – Foundations of the Spiritual Life*, Complete Works, vol. 7, Part II-9: ‘To find purity’.

² See *Spiritual Alchemy*, Complete Works, vol. 2, chap. 5: ‘Lay up for yourselves treasures’.

³ See ‘*Know Thyself*’: *Jnana Yoga*, Complete Works, vol. 17, chap. 5: ‘Sacrifice’.

⁴ See *Man, Master of his Destiny*, Izvor Coll. n° 202.

⁵ See *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol. 28, chap. 1: ‘Pourquoi choisir la vie spirituelle.’

⁶ See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor Coll. n° 207, chap. 6: ‘A Master is a mirror reflecting the truth’ and chap. 7: ‘A Master is there only to give light’.

⁷ See *The Book of Revelations: A Commentary*, Izvor Coll. n° 230, chap. 7: ‘The twenty-four elders and the four holy living creatures’, and *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 15: ‘Binah: II. The realm of stability’.

⁸ See ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’ – *commentaires des Évangiles*, Complete Works, vol. 9, chap. 8: ‘La haute retraite’.

Chapter Six

Concentration, meditation, contemplation and identification

I

Meditation is an activity by which the mind endeavours to penetrate spiritual truths.

Contemplation is an activity of the heart or the soul, which dwells on an image, a quality or a virtue in order to rejoice in its light and beauty and be in communion with it.

And on a higher level than meditation and contemplation is the magical activity of identification, by which the will and the spirit identify with the Creator in order to create.

Some days, a disciple feels inclined to work with the mind: to think, and search and ponder; this is meditation. On other days, finding themselves in a state of harmony, peace and bliss, they feel drawn to contemplate. And then there are other days when their will manifests itself more strongly, and they feel the desire to do something, to create, to set in motion invisible forces. You have all certainly experienced these three states, even though you may not

always have recognized them or been able to define them. But it is time now for you to know yourself better. You must learn to recognize your state of mind, the nature of the work you have been doing and the faculty that predominated in that activity. Depending on their individual nature and the relative development of their intellect, heart and will, each disciple will, of course, have a greater affinity for one kind of activity than for another.

This is why you must know yourself and know which of these three faculties is more highly developed in you, and which is the least developed. In this way you will be in a position to remedy any deficiencies. But let me give you a piece of advice: always work with the faculty that is most strongly developed and, from time to time only, try to do something to strengthen those that are weakest. Do not try to work exclusively with your weakest faculties on the pretext that they need to be exercised. It is far better to find one's strongest point and work with it, and then, from time to time, you can try to remedy your shortcomings, for if you abandon your wealth and pay attention only to your poverty, your progress will be slow and you are liable to be discouraged. On the contrary, you must put your best talents, gifts and faculties to work, for wealth attracts wealth, and it is only when you have earned a great deal of wealth that you will be in a position to do something about your deficiencies.

If you never try to experience some truly spiritual moments in your life, you will be naked and destitute when you get to the next

world. Some people may say, ‘Yes, but I do not seem to be able to. My brain has never learned the habit. My thoughts are always all over the place!’ Yes, I know, but you must learn to discipline your mind. You must practise, for if you cannot concentrate you will never get results. Whether you want to meditate, contemplate or create, concentration is essential. Concentration does not belong to one particular faculty; it consists in engaging all one’s faculties in the pursuit of a definite goal and of keeping them trained unwaveringly in that direction. Meditation, prayer, contemplation and identification all presuppose the ability to concentrate. Concentration is indispensable; no work can be effective without it. A person who allows his or her mind to wander in all directions will never get anywhere. You cannot become the creator of your own future if you are weak, dissipated and disorganized.¹

Concentration is one of the most important factors in almost every activity. Engravers, surgeons, acrobats, to name but a few, all know how important it is. They all have to concentrate in order to avoid a clumsy gesture that could have catastrophic results. Even manual workers need to concentrate to avoid having an arm or a leg cut off by a machine. So many accidents happen because of a moment of distraction! Concentration, therefore, is truly the foundation of safety and success, and, generally speaking, people understand this and manage to apply it in their professional work. But it is when it comes to the psychic and spiritual domain that they have no notion of its value.

And you, as disciples, must understand that you will never make any progress unless you learn to concentrate. You must practise every day, gradually increasing the time you give to it until you are capable of concentrating on your spiritual work for hours on end. Yes, for hours at a time! Some people can do this; they are capable of working on the psychic plane for hours on end. It is easy to do so for a few minutes... but for several hours? So there you are, make an effort! With practice, everything is possible.

Sèvres, January 15, 1968

II

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Only one thing is really important for humans, and that is their ability to concentrate on divine realities: it is this that will enable them to continue their progress in peace for the rest of eternity. Suppose that, on leaving this world, you find yourself shrouded in an atmosphere of darkness and obscurity, which prevents you from seeing either your friends or the angels: what will rescue you from that solitude and darkness? Your ability to

concentrate on a divine reality. Yes, this ability endures after death, because it is not a product of the brain but of the immortal spirit.

When man leaves his physical body, this ability survives in his spirit, for it is the spirit that thinks, feels and acts. It does so in this world through the medium of the physical, material body, but you must not think that it can no longer feel, think or act when it is released from the body. On the contrary, it is then that it is free to act most effectively. A disciple who has acquired the habit of concentrating on luminous subjects will be very powerful on the other side: they only need to concentrate on the Lord or on light to scatter difficulties and darkness. But if they have never developed this ability during their life on earth, they will be unable to use it on the other side. This is why you must get into the habit of concentrating every day on the most elevated subjects.'

My dear brothers and sisters, you are still not sufficiently conscious of the immense power of concentration. You still allow your thoughts to drift and wander. But what can you possibly achieve if your powers of thought are so weak, so dispersed? Concentration is an indispensable element of spiritual life. It is something you should practise tirelessly and for years without even questioning whether you are capable or incapable of it. Once you have developed the capacity to concentrate you will be in a position to remedy all your deficiencies and improve every aspect of your life. If there is one thing that you must believe in, it is the power of concentrated thought.

Naturally, everyone is capable of practising a certain form of concentration. A young man will concentrate for hours on the charms of the girl he loves, on certain joys or pleasures. And when you have a raging toothache, nothing is easier than to concentrate on it; it is impossible to think of anything else!

There are thousands of examples in life that demonstrate the effectiveness of concentration. Perhaps, for example, you have already amused yourself by focusing the sun's rays through a magnifying glass on a piece of paper and holding it there until the paper bursts into flames. But why have you never transposed this phenomenon on to the psychic plane and seen that thought too can be focused on one point, and that if it is trained steadily on that point for long enough it too can set fire – symbolically speaking – to things? Of course, on the physical plane, this experiment with a magnifying glass is elementary compared to the extraordinary things that scientists do nowadays with a laser, by which light – which has a natural tendency to fan out from its source – is concentrated into one narrow beam. And this narrow beam of light is so powerful it is now used for all kinds of technical, medical and military purposes. Surely the fact that physical light is all-powerful (as demonstrated by lasers) is an additional reason to believe that spiritual light too is all-powerful.²

You will say, 'Of course, passion is powerful; that is true.

Anger, jealousy, resentment can be so strong that they burn and explode and destroy everything. But light? What can light do?' Ah, that is the trouble; no one has ever taught human beings to use this power that God has given them and to focus it on a given point, a given subject.

One of the best exercises in concentration I have given you is to meditate in front of the rising sun, to focus all your powers of concentration on the sun to the exclusion of every other thought, and to remain in this best-of-all attitudes for a long time.³ After an exercise of this kind, you will feel strengthened, enlightened, happier and more fulfilled. And, as I have already told you, if you are ill, you can concentrate on a particular organ of your body and do it a great deal of good by sending rays of sunshine into its cells – rays of light, love, kindness, vitality and joy.

Yes, you can really and truly help to improve your health by mental concentration. Oh, I know, you think it is a waste of time. Why bother to try and concentrate? There are so many drugs on the market today; you can cure anything by swallowing a pill! That is true, but that is no way to become stronger nor, above all, to develop the immense inner forces which will continue to serve you even after you have left this earth. Instead of relying on ineffectual, temporary, external means, disciples must learn to be inwardly strong and to rely only on the power of their spirit for the help they need. Otherwise their inner faculties wither and

decline and, inevitably, everyone concludes that human beings are powerless to help themselves, that they are totally conditioned by external circumstances. And this conclusion will be true, for people do everything possible to make it true.

The spirit is a tremendous power, but no one believes this. And do you know why? Because they have tried it for one minute, and when they found that nothing changed, they made up their minds that they were wasting their time, that thought and the spirit were impotent! The fact is, of course, that they simply have not understood. You must realize that if thought and the spirit are ineffective, it is because matter has become so opaque, heavy, unyielding and leaden that it is going to take thousands of years to change it and make it sensitive and subtle. And, as human beings have not even begun this work of transformation, matter still resists with all its might. If they had done some work in this direction in the past, their physical bodies would already be much more malleable, more accessible to the influence of thought and easier to educate. Their work would have made it possible for light, for the spirit, to penetrate the matter of the body. If physical realities and material conditions still predominate today, therefore, it is because human beings are deluded by appearances and are no longer capable of seeing or feeling the world of the spirit, of heaven, of the Deity.

There was a time – I have already explained this to you – when a human being's spirit was so remote from their body they

had no physical feeling at all.⁴ They could have been cut up in little bits and would not have felt a thing. And, as their spirit was unhampered by the physical matter of their body, they could see and hear the things of the other world and spend much of their time visiting it. It was only much, much later that the invisible world decided it was time for a human being's physical body to develop, and gradually, as this development took place, their spirit entered their body more and more until it conformed to it so completely it began to forget it was a spirit. This is why the human spirit no longer identifies with its true self. It has forgotten who and what that self is and is aware only of the physical body. But, by penetrating the physical body so completely in order to control and govern it, the spirit has given it capabilities it never had in earlier ages, and once this penetration is complete and the spirit achieves the mastery of all the organs and functions of the physical body, the movement will be reversed: human beings will become clairvoyant and clairaudient, and, thanks to their mediumistic powers and their sensitivity to the spiritual world, they will walk the path of perfection.

But, let us get back to the powers of concentration: there are fakirs in India who have practised the art of concentration for so many years that they are capable of acting on the etheric quint-essence – known in Sanskrit as akasha – with such power they can make a seed sprout in front of your eyes, and within a few hours the sprout becomes a full-grown plant, which flowers and

produces delicious, ripe fruit. This may seem impossible, but it can quite easily be explained. The fakir influences the divine quintessence of the akasha in such a way that it acts on the genetic blueprints in the seed. Every seed of every tree contains a kind of etheric stereotype or pattern, a synthesis of its special characteristics: its size, shape and vitality, the colour of its flowers, the scent and flavour of its fruit, etc. All these characteristics are contained in the seeds but, in the ordinary way, they will be actualized only if the seeds are planted and watered. Normally, nature brings the tree to its full stature only gradually, after years of growth.

However, this evolution can be hastened. If you can intensify the forces of light, warmth and life flowing into the seed from the sun, the atmosphere and the earth, so that it is nourished more rapidly than in the normal course of nature, the growth of the plant can be greatly accelerated. You see how simple it is! It is done with the aid of akashic energy, the quintessence which contains all the elements the plant needs in order to grow: vitality, warmth, light, magnetism and electricity. A fakir who knows how to do so simply intensifies these forces, thus accelerating the development of the stereotypes contained in the seed and, if it is a mango seed, for instance, within a few hours produces a tree laden with delicious fruit for all to taste and enjoy.

But what is really interesting is that this phenomenon also exists on the spiritual plane, and that we can greatly accelerate the

development of certain inherent possibilities. Of course, even if we do nothing to cultivate it, our innate potential will eventually mature, simply by the force of circumstance, but that will take millions of years. Every human being possesses all kinds of seeds within themselves, the seeds of all the gifts, qualities and faculties that the Creator has planted within them. But these gifts are still invisible. They are still at the stage of seeds in the frozen soil, waiting for the warmth, rain and sunlight that will make them grow. In winter, the soil is full of seeds of all kinds, but they do not sprout, for there is not enough light or warmth. All they can do is wait; but as soon as spring arrives and brings more light and warmth, all those seeds that have been hiding underground will start thrusting their heads out into the light. Everyone knows this, even children! Yes, everyone knows it, but when it comes to transposing phenomena of this kind onto the spiritual plane everyone is unbelievably ignorant!

And now if you ask me how you can find out whether those seeds, the gifts that God has planted in you, are real, I will tell you that you can do so by exposing yourself to the sun. For it is the sun that will warm them, make them sprout and coax them out into the light of day. When I speak of the sun, of course, I mean, first and foremost, the spiritual sun and only secondly the physical sun. The sun in the physical world is, as it were, an illustration of how things work on the spiritual plane, but, as human beings do not believe that the spiritual sun has the power to bring out all their

hidden faculties and virtues, they think that they do not need to expose themselves to its light and warmth. Is it any wonder, then, that nothing grows in their 'soil'? They are permanently frozen and in the dark, shivering and miserable. Why do they not come closer to the spiritual sun, the Lord, and experience the joy of seeing all their seeds sprouting and growing in their garden?

Try this today, for the first time; make a truly whole-hearted effort to set in motion potent, spiritual, divine forces. You must begin here and now, if you want your work to extend into the world of the spirit. For there, as I have already explained, matter is not so dense or opaque; on the contrary, it is pliant and docile; it submits to the commands of thought and takes on the form, dimensions and colour dictated by thought. You can do whatever you like with this subtle matter.

Well, there you are! Never forget how important it is to practise concentration. Practise concentrating on truly celestial things every day, and you will feel extraordinary effects in your life. Instead of perpetually stagnating in the same sufferings and difficulties, you will begin to grow, to free yourself and to live a life full of harmony, light and peace.

The Bonfin, April 24, 1976

III

My dear brothers and sisters, I can understand that, when you are at home, you have no time to meditate in the morning, because you have to rush off to work. But that is not the case here; you are not in a hurry, you have every opportunity you need, so make the most of the situation. One day you are going to have to make up your minds to go down into the depths of your own being and set in motion something that is buried deep within you that refuses to move. If you fail to do this, you will always skim the surface of reality and never know either its heights or its depths. You want people to think of you as a spiritual person, but there is no intensity of vibration within you. How often do I have to say this? Take advantage of the fact that we are together to create currents and waves that will affect you and the rest of the world. People prefer to remain on the surface, believing that this inner mental work will land them in hospital. But the truth is exactly the reverse; if people end up in hospital, it is because they have never been willing to set in motion anything luminous and divine within themselves; they have allowed negative influences to go in and out of them uncurbed.

Believe me, you must practise. And not just for a few minutes at a time. What can you possibly accomplish in a few minutes? Let me illustrate this: you are standing at the edge of the sea, twirling a

stick in the water. Gradually you create a tiny whirlpool; some straws, scraps of paper and corks begin to chase each other round and round. You keep twirling your stick, and some little boats are caught up in the movement. You go on and on, and, one after another, transatlantic liners start whirling round until the whole world is caught up in the movement! Well, the etheric world in which we are immersed is like the ocean: by means of thought, you can stir up the entire universe. Yes, just as long as you persevere and never stop twirling your stick. But you do stop, so of course nothing happens. Human beings are only willing to persevere when food or drink or love are concerned. Yes, especially love. They wish it could last for ever. Fortunately, nature is very wise; it foresaw that men and women would be capable of destroying themselves, so it equipped them with what you might call a safety device. Yes, for otherwise human beings would be ready to indulge their disgusting habits day and night. Whereas, where the things of the soul and the spirit are concerned – and I have seen this for myself – they are content to dip their fingers in holy water occasionally and mumble a few prayers before going to sleep; that is the beginning and the end of their spirituality! But heaven laughs at these self-styled ‘spiritual’ people!

As long as you have still not understood the few basic rules on which all spiritual life is built, you cannot become a conductor for the divine world, a worker in the Lord’s vineyard.⁵ You have to persevere and continue to work in ever greater depth until every

particle of your being is caught up and works with you towards the goal you have set yourself, until every part of you actively participates in this work on yourself – and not only on yourself but on every creature in the world and on the cosmos itself. The sun radiates light and warmth throughout the universe and never bothers about who will benefit from it. It is not interested in knowing who exposes themselves to its rays and who hides away, asleep in his basement. I assure you, the sun is neither offended nor angry when people fail to appreciate its warmth and light. And there are initiates who, like the sun, project their light and love throughout the cosmos and who, like the sun, are quite unconcerned about whether human beings benefit from them or not. They are perfectly happy and fulfilled; all their pleasure lies in distributing their wealth throughout the universe. Just think of how far human beings still have to go before reaching this level of evolution!

But, believe me, there is no greater happiness than the happiness of the sun. Without worrying about whether anyone benefits from its gifts or not, it continues to give. Such an attitude is unheard of amongst human beings. As soon as they see they are not appreciated, they stop giving.⁶ This is the love of human beings: they always expect gratitude and gifts from others. But the sun expects nothing. Of course, I realize most people will think it is crazy to talk of the sun in this way. They believe the sun can neither think nor feel. And yet the sun is the most extraordinary

being in the whole of our solar system. Of course it thinks and feels and acts; it is alive. And the earth, too! Nobody realizes the earth is an intelligent being with millions of workers constantly at work.

In the view of official science, everything is lifeless and mindless except human beings. Only a human being, this poor little pigmy, is capable of thought! When I talk about the sun and compare it with human beings, people look at me and think, 'Poor fellow, he is in his second childhood!' Yes, because only children think everything is alive. They talk to stones, trees and flowers because, for them, they are all alive. Well, children are right to think this. In fact, they are the only ones who are right, because they are the only ones who attribute life to everything that exists. Later, as they get older, they are told that nature is dead, and they too become dead. That is the end of them – death takes over. So now, let me tell you something of vital importance: if you want to be truly alive, attribute life to everything around you – to crystals, trees, mountains, the sky, the sun, everything. Consider everything to be alive and intelligent – more so than you, in fact. In this way you will, at last, make progress.⁷

Such is our psychology. As long as human beings imagine they are the only creatures capable of thought, that nothing else thinks or understands or feels anything, they will never make any progress. The sun is the most intelligent of beings. If you are

astonished by what I say about it, it is because you have always thought of the sun as a body without life. Whereas, because I think of it as a living being, it teaches me a great many things. Yes, the sun is my teacher. This is the truth, and one day the whole world will know it.

Videlinata (Switzerland), March 30, 1970

IV

It is good to realize that, in this silence and harmony, in this brotherly ambience so deeply imbued with happiness, sweetness and love, and surrounded as you are with so many friends and magnificent beings who are here to help you, your inner self has the best possible conditions in which to express itself. In this setting, that mysterious, subtle self within you is free to reveal itself, to expand and blossom, to look into infinite space and record all the marvellous things it sees and bring them about on the physical plane.⁸ To be sure, we are rarely conscious of the reality that this inner being sees and contemplates, but if we practise frequently, that reality gradually reaches our consciousness and a marvellous treasure enters us and stays with us.

You must acquire a taste for meditation. Meditation must dwell in your mind, heart and will as a joy without which life is insipid and meaningless. You should look forward impatiently to the moment when you will be free, at last, to immerse yourself in eternity and drink the elixir of everlasting life. But I see no sign of that joy or that impatience in you. You should be like alcoholics who think of nothing but wine. When the time comes for you to meditate, you should think, 'At last, my heart, soul and spirit are going to embrace the universe. At last, if only for a few seconds, they will be coming face to face with immensity.'

The fact is, my dear brothers and sisters, everything here is to help you. Even this hall shares this mission, for it is alive and inhabited by beings who are here to work for you. Begin by relaxing and reaching an inner state of peace and calm. Try to become more aware of yourself and to get a sense of greater breadth and greater freedom. Try to get back to your true self, to get back to all that you heard before you came down to earth and that is still there, deep inside you. You were told so many things and given so much good advice, and it has all been forgotten! Now you must try to remember all that you learned in the higher world. You have no right to waste your life on useless trifles; heaven expects something of you. You have been given an abundance of raw materials with which to do something, and it is up to you to organize, purify and sublimate those raw materials so that one day you can give them back to the divine world.

You must acquire the habit of entering into yourself, of taking control of your inner self so that light and peace, your own will, your consciousness and your superconsciousness are all present. When you achieve this, all the rest will come easily, and you will be happy to feel that you are truly alive and active because you have achieved self-dominance, you are in control of the situation.

Believe me, your moments of meditation are the most important moments of your life. You must never think you are giving too much time to meditation. It will never be too much as long as you have still not managed to awaken something within you. Perhaps you will say, 'But is there really anything much to be awakened?' Indeed there is, but today's men and women – and especially Westerners – have no notion of this kind of work. They reflect, they read, they write, and it is true that they have achieved prodigious results in this way, but all their activities remain on the surface. They have still not learned to awaken something in the depths of their own soul or spirit.

To be sure, there is no point in deluding oneself: it is very difficult to meditate. How can someone who is wholly absorbed in mundane occupations or a prisoner to his or her passions have any hope of meditating? People think they can become divinities without denying themselves anything, without sacrificing or giving anything up. No; one has to free oneself from one's passions and instincts before the mind can soar up to the eternal Lord. I have

seen so many people who have meditated for years and who have just become more and more dull-witted because they never realized – or they refused to admit – that it is impossible to meditate if one does not fulfil certain conditions. It is impossible to meditate if one is not free. They smoke and drink and fornicate, and then they go and meditate! Well, it is just not possible, for a host of memories, reminiscences and mental images arise in their minds and occupy their thoughts. Everybody meditates nowadays; it is the fashionable thing to do, it seems! But it does not do them any good, for it is impossible to meditate just like that, without preparation of any kind. How can anyone meditate if they have never had a high ideal, if they have never freed themselves from their moods or their licentious habits, if they have never wished for anything more than the satisfaction of their physical desires and their appetite for wine or cigarettes? They declare that they meditate, but what do they meditate on? On a woman's breasts! On her beautiful legs! They cannot meditate on the things of heaven because they have no yearning for them; they do not feel the urge to seek the divine world. So, everybody meditates nowadays! What nonsense; it is truly laughable! Yes, laughable; for you cannot meditate if you do not have a sublime ideal to free you from your ordinary, animal way of life and lead you towards heaven.⁹ You cannot meditate until you have overcome certain weaknesses and understood certain truths. In fact, not only can you not do so, it is even dangerous to try.

Many people close their eyes, strike a pose and appear to be meditating, but what is really going on inside? Where are they? The Lord only knows! If you could see into their heads you would see that they were fast asleep! They are deep in meditation! Today, you can even see public demonstrations of meditation! But this is impossible. How can anyone possibly meditate in public? Or if they can, it means they are so advanced, so free of all ties, that they are capable of meditating anywhere and at any time, because their spirit is ceaselessly in communion with the divine world. But this kind of love for the sublime world supposes an extraordinary degree of evolution. It supposes that you have suffered and been burned, that you have understood and become totally detached. Only then, finally, can you meditate anywhere and at any time.

If you want an accurate idea of how most people meditate, watch a cat: a cat can sit for hours in front of a mouse-hole, meditating on how to catch a mouse! Well, that is what most human beings do: they meditate about how to catch a two-legged 'mouse'! No, I believe that meditation is not quite so simple as many people think. You have to be very advanced to meditate, and, above all, you must have an immense love of the divine world. If this is the case, then your thoughts are already focused, and you can begin to meditate without any special effort, almost in spite of yourself. Your mind is so free it sets out on its own, as it were, to do its work.

If you want to meditate, you have to understand the nature of

psychic work. You must know that you should never try to force your brain to concentrate on a subject from one moment to the next, for this does violence to the cells of the nervous system, and your brain defends itself by refusing to work. The first thing to do is to relax, to remain passive, as it were, while, at the same time, keeping an eye on the gradual pacification of your cells. Naturally, it takes practice to be able to do this quite quickly, but eventually you will find it only takes a few moments. To begin with, therefore, you must use gentleness, peace and love and, above all, never try to force anything. This is the secret of a good meditation. Then, once you feel your nervous system is well disposed and your 'batteries' have been recharged (for this passive attitude gives the body an opportunity to replenish its supplies of energy), you can focus your thoughts on the subject you have chosen.

If you want to do this work every day without tiring, if you want to be active, dynamic, ready and willing to achieve some important work every day, you must learn how to use your brain correctly. This is very important. From now on, therefore, if you want to keep up your spiritual activities for a long time, you must be very careful about this: never rush at a subject of meditation all at once. Even if it is something very dear to your heart, a subject you are very attached to, do not dash at it, otherwise there will be a violent reaction. Always begin by being relaxed and approaching things peacefully and gently.

And, once again, if many of you are incapable of achieving this

state of peace, it is because your way of life is not sensible. If you go out for the evening and eat and drink to excess, if you do something reprehensible or indulge in vile thoughts and feelings, you cannot expect to do any serious spiritual work next morning. Spiritual work is only possible for those who live intelligently and are not constantly pursued by all kinds of unresolved problems. As I have so often said, if you have left the gas turned on in the kitchen, if you have forgotten the baby in the bath, how can you hope to concentrate on something spiritual? Your thoughts will always be somewhere else: your house is going to blow up! Your baby will be drowned! So, as you see, spiritual work is very closely linked to a sensible way of life.

At the beginning of your meditation, therefore, you should feel relaxed, as though you were floating in an ocean of peace and bliss, and abandon yourself in an attitude of receptivity to this sense of cosmic harmony. Then, when you sense that your organism is in possession of all its faculties, you can launch into a work in which your whole being participates. Yes, for it is not only your mind, but your whole body, all your organs and all your cells, that must be mobilized for this work.

During the first few minutes, try not to think. Simply glance into yourself to see that everything is functioning smoothly and pay attention to nothing but your breathing. Breathe regularly, do not think; allow yourself simply to feel, to be aware that you are breathing. You will find that this regular breathing imposes a

harmonious rhythm on your thoughts and feelings and your whole body, and this is very beneficial.

Now I would like to add one final point which is important: often, when you are alone and left to your own devices, you find that you do not really want to meditate, but when you are with a group, you feel stimulated and encouraged to do so. Well, this is where a brotherhood is so useful. If you are inclined to be lazy, or are tired or discouraged, if you have lost your faith or your hope – in all these situations the presence of others can be a help. When you are constantly in touch with brothers and sisters who are full of enthusiasm and love, their attitude influences you and encourages you to follow their example. This is why discouragement never lasts long when you live in a brotherhood; you always find the support, help and stimulus you need. So now you see the advantage of creating many fraternal groups. Of course, this is not the only advantage, but it is the one I want to mention today. Are you feeling discouraged? Are you worn out? Come to us, here, and the good vibrations, the love of the brothers and sisters and the light of their auras will be a comfort to you and restore your enthusiasm, and you will soon be ready to get back onto the upward path and start climbing again. Why remain always alone, isolated, separate and apart? Do you want to grow constantly weaker and more vulnerable? Do you want to be perpetually exposed to attack from negative forces? That is no solution. You must all enter the protective circle of the Great

Sèvres, March 12, 1977

V

The intellect is a faculty that enables human beings to know the physical world, and a little of the psychic world, but no more than a little. In other words, the human intellectual faculty is severely limited: men and women cannot know truth by means of the intellect alone. The truth of a rose, for instance, is not only its scent and its visible form and colour. The truth of a rose is a soul, an emanation, a whole existence that cannot be grasped by the intellect, because, in order truly to know it, you have to penetrate all the elements that contribute to making it what it is. You meet someone, and the truth of that person includes everything concerning them: their soul, their spirit, their thoughts, their feelings, their plans for the future. Everything. As long as you do not know all these things, you do not know the truth of that person. You may know a little something, something about what appears on the surface, but not the truth. The truth can only be known by the spirit, which is a divine power, a spark of divine fire.

To know something or someone is to penetrate to the heart of that being, and this can only be achieved by identification, that is to say, by fusing into one with the being you want to know. For an instant, you become another, and, of course, you cannot become another if you remain outside and look at his external appearance. You have to enter into them and feel, if only for a moment, all their inner thoughts, feelings, strengths and weaknesses. This is something that cannot be done by the intellect, only by the spirit.

And now for the practical application of this: if you apply your spirit and all your love, every day, to the practice of identification with the supreme Being, the Source of life, the first Cause, the Father of all creatures, there will come a moment when it will be as though God himself and all his splendour, power, love and wisdom were within you.^{[11](#)}

When Jesus said, *'Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect'*,^{[12](#)} he was asking his disciples to practise this method of identification. We know that he himself had already achieved this identification, for he said, *'I and my Father are one.'*^{[13](#)} But nowadays, Christians are reluctant even to acknowledge that these words are in the Gospels, and if anyone dares to talk about becoming as perfect as the Lord, they immediately charge him or her with blasphemy! You have to be 'humble', which means a non-entity, someone who has neither power nor knowledge nor clairvoyance – nothing. That is what

being a Christian means, and I say, ‘Poor Christians, they just do not understand!’

The initiates of India and Tibet all work at identification. They have this formula, ‘I am That’ which they repeat constantly, for years. In this way they try to eliminate any notion of separation between humans and the Godhead. God alone exists, and humans are simply one of his manifestations. After years of practising this exercise of identification, an initiate is capable of working miracles. Yes, indeed, it is very simple; but human beings are busy with other things. They never think about identifying with the Deity; they prefer to identify with animals. When they have lived together for years, the master begins to look like the dog instead of the dog looking like its master!

So, there you are, my dear brothers and sisters, true knowledge cannot be obtained by means of the intellect, only by the spirit, for true knowledge is identification.

Sèvres, November 21, 1965

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‘I and my Father are one’ – *John 10:30*

¹ See *The Seeds of Happiness*, Izvor Coll. n° 231, chap. 21: ‘We are the artisans of our own future’.

² See *Light is a Living Spirit*, Izvor Coll. n° 212.

³ See *Sunrise Meditations*, Brochure n° 323.

⁴ See *The Zodiac, Key to Man and to the Universe*, Izvor Coll. n° 220, chap. 2: ‘The zodiac and the forming of man’.

⁵ See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol. 29, chap. 1: ‘On the spiritual work’.

⁶ See *The Seeds of Happiness*, Izvor Coll. n° 231, chap. 16: ‘Give without expecting anything in return’ and chap. 17: ‘Love without asking to be loved in return’.

⁷ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor Coll. n° 242, chap. 16: ‘Opening the doors to the dreamworld’.

⁸ See *The Path of Silence*, Izvor Coll. n° 229.

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¹⁰ See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol. 29, chap. 7: ‘On participating in the work of the Universal White Brotherhood’.

parts II and III.

[11](#) See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 10: ‘Identifying with God’.

[12](#) See *The True Meaning of Christ’s Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 3: ‘Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect’.

[13](#) See above, chap. 2: ‘My father and I are one.’

Chapter Seven

Prayer

I

Jesus said, *'Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.'* This secret place that Jesus talked about is simply a higher state of consciousness. Whenever a disciple manages to create conditions of silence and peace within themselves, whenever they feel the inner need to express their love to the Lord, to be in communion with him, they are in that secret place. Perhaps you are wondering where this secret place is: it can be in your heart, your mind or your soul. You are in this secret place whenever you are in a higher state of consciousness. Suppose, for instance, that you are meditating on a sublime reality that is really beyond your power to grasp, and then, after a little while, you begin to understand. What has happened? Where did that understanding come from? It came from your own spirit which has always possessed it, even though your consciousness had not previously had access to it. For humans do not know what goes on in their subconscious; neither do they know what goes on in the higher world, in heaven, in their own heaven, their own spirit, their own superconscious.

You can shut yourself up as often as you like between the four walls of a physical room in order to pray, but if you do not love the Lord, if you cannot reach that state of fervour which constitutes prayer, you will never find nor enter into the secret place. The secret place is that state of intense concentration, peace and inner silence in which everything else fades away, in which there is only your prayer, only your inner word reaching out into space. When you are in this state, whether you know it or not, you are in the secret place. Do not imagine that, when they are praying with all their heart, the mystics think about this secret place! They may not even have the faintest idea that it exists. Jesus talked about it in order to make things clearer to his disciples, but in reality there is no such place in the higher world. And the same is true of the dwellings he talked about: *'In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places... I go to prepare a place for you.'* In talking about these heavenly dwellings, Jesus simply meant that the inner state of his disciples was such that they were already close to the Deity.

There are many images of this kind in the Bible. Take just this verse of Psalm 116, for instance: *'I walk before the Lord in the land of the living.'*¹ The *'land of the living'* is a state of consciousness. If you like, you can also say it is the earth, but the etheric earth. For the earth is not only what we can see, the ground on which we walk; the earth is also a subtle world in which dwell luminous spirits, angels and divinities. It is the world in which Jesus dwells.

Yes, for Jesus promised, *'I am with you always, even to the end of the world'*, so he has not left the earth. Of course, he has left the physical earth, but not the etheric, living, luminous, divine earth. And when a man or woman, here on earth, succeeds in becoming pure and rises to a higher spiritual level, they too begin to dwell in the land of the living; they are in communion with the great Masters, with angels and divinities, with Christ himself. In fact, owing to the correspondences that exist between the material world and the subtle world of consciousness, thought, feelings and energies, whenever a disciple attains a higher state of consciousness, this state attracts materials of the utmost purity from the cosmos, and the disciple uses those pure materials to build his or her luminous body of glory. We have to begin by working on the spiritual plane; if we do this the material plane will automatically be transformed.

Every spiritual thing has a material correspondence. Every particle of matter has its correspondence on the spiritual plane. But you have to work on the spiritual plane by means of thought, prayer and meditation, for it is this that creates the invisible currents capable of attracting elements from the sublime regions on high. In this way, this land of the living, which exists so far only in the superconsciousness of human beings, will one day become a concrete reality. All initiates have based their work on this law of correspondences, and if they have such total trust in divine wisdom, it is because they know that what is inwardly divine will

eventually be outwardly divine. Their only concern is to make sure that what they themselves do is right and harmonious. For the rest, they have the firm conviction that the laws of nature are faithful and that what is accomplished on the spiritual plane will, one day, be accomplished on the physical plane.

Sèvres, April 30, 1963

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‘Whenever you pray, go into your room’ – *Matt. 6:6*

‘In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places...’ – *John 14:2*

‘I walk before the Lord in the land of the living’ – *Pss. 116*

‘I am with you always, even to the end of the world’ – *Matt. 28:20*

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Even if you were ground to dust so fine that you think there could be nothing left of you, there would always be one atom left, one atom which can never be destroyed and with which you are capable of rebuilding the whole universe. And that atom is the gift of prayer. In your moments of intense, harmonious silence, this atom, this gift of prayer, is constantly being reinforced and becoming stronger within you for all eternity.’

Yes, within every man and woman is an indestructible atom to which God has given the power, in all circumstances, to ask, pray and implore. This atom is God’s greatest gift to humankind, and if it did not exist, the human race would have disappeared long ago.

I realize that no one knows of the existence of this ‘atom of prayer’. In fact, you yourselves may find the notion totally unacceptable and be unable to believe in it. And yet Initiatic Science has already taught you that, at the tip of a human being’s heart, is another, very special atom which records everything that they think, feel and experience in the course of their life. That atom does not have the power to intervene or change anything; it can do no more than record what happens. It is like a minute spool of magnetic tape which records everything a person does from the moment they are born until they die, and when they die it stops recording and is detached from them. But if, at the point of death, something happens to bring them back to life, then this atom is not

detached and something very interesting occurs. There are people, for instance, who have been saved at the very last minute from drowning or suffocation, and who have described, afterwards, how they saw their whole life pass in a flash before their inner eye, but in reverse. That tiny spool of tape started to reverse and showed them everything that had ever happened to them, going back from the moment they almost died to the moment of their birth, so that they saw all the good and all the bad things they had done.

Yes, but there is also this other atom in humans, the atom of prayer, which is not purely receptive: it has the power to ask for the help it needs to remedy a situation. If a person never prays, of course, their atom of prayer will never be fully developed and their life will unfold strictly along the lines predetermined by destiny. To be sure, this atom cannot change the general outline of a person's life – it is extremely difficult to modify that – but it can change certain things on the subtle, etheric plane. This is why people who have the habit of prayer suffer less acutely than others. They are not so easily discouraged or embittered by their difficulties; they are less likely to feel dejected and abandoned. Many of life's most distressing events (war, for instance) depend on the human collectivity; the individual cannot avoid them. In wartime, everyone suffers privations and misfortune, but those who pray, those whose soul and spirit are active, transform these difficulties inwardly. Even though external events are the same for all, in circumstances which defeat and discourage others or even

drive them to suicide, those who pray find strength, nourishment and encouragement.

Nowadays people have lost the habit of prayer, and this is a pity. They say, 'What is the point of praying when we have everything we need?' But the truth is that prayer belongs to a different order of things. Even if you have everything you need, you must still pray. Why? Because prayer is a creation. Every creature needs to create. Yes, but if you have never developed certain faculties, if you have never cultivated intelligence and light, you cannot really create, you can only copy. At best you can reproduce things, just as men and women reproduce their own physical and moral weaknesses in their children. They think they are creating, but the truth is they are simply reproducing. True creation takes place on a much higher level and, knowing this, those who want to create know that they are going to have to surpass and transcend themselves, so that their imagination, soul and spirit may perceive and work with elements from the heavenly regions. If they do this, if they succeed in reaching up to heaven, in rising to a great height and drawing something of that world down to earth, their works of art will always contain elements of that higher world.² This is how artists used to work in the past. Before undertaking a work of creation, they began by creating a climate of tranquillity, peace and elevation in themselves, and then, if they were painters, they would perceive images, forms and colours they had never seen on earth, or, if they were musicians, they would

hear symphonies and choral harmonies no human being had ever produced, and so on. In this way, they were able to compose, paint and write great creations. Even today – and even though they are unaware of it – this same process is used by all inventors: they induce a state of calmness and receptivity in themselves until their mind is like the smooth, transparent waters of a lake in which the sun and the stars are reflected. When you achieve this state of receptivity, you discover a world which has certainly always existed but which is invisible to our physical eyes and becomes real only to souls that are fit to perceive and comprehend it.

True prayer is a creation. When you pray you are not simply asking for help from your supervisor or the manager because they are in a position to give you something. You are not applying to your bank for a loan; you are not begging for a consenting smile from a woman. No, you will never gain much from that kind of prayer, because the people you are praying to are on the same level and have the same failings as yourself. True prayer creates a link with the most sublime of all beings, the Creator of heaven and earth. When we pray, therefore, we are creating a bond with this sublime Being, this Being of immensity and infinity, and it is thanks to this bond that we can make contact with and capture elements of the higher worlds and bring them back into our everyday world for the benefit of all creatures. For this is something that you must realize: the elements, particles and electrons of this sublime region are so powerful that, even if you

managed to capture no more than one, it could transform you in unimaginable ways! You can feel it vibrating within you as it purifies, enlightens and heals you and restores harmony to your whole being. And this beneficial, radiant state of harmony influences all those you come in contact with so that they, too, begin to be transformed.

Even the feeblest, most diseased, most destitute of human beings possess this atom of prayer and have the power to work with it. Even if they lack money, food and clothing, even if they are in prison, they have this tremendous power. Talent, money and strength are not given to all, but all can use the power of this atom to plead for help from the luminous spirits on high. The whole of a human being's power resides in this, for this atom has the ability to go everywhere, to persist, to form and fashion everything. If, when you are in difficulty, you do not ask for help, your difficulties will simply continue. This atom of prayer is the only universal remedy, but if you do not use it, if you never exercise it, you will just have to suffer inwardly from all that is pre-ordained, for the power of this atom lies on the psychic plane, that is to say, on the level of the emotions and of our perception of the world. When you pray, it is impossible for you yourself to be unchanged, even if nothing changes externally. If a war is going on, it will continue; if it is freezing, you will feel cold; if it is raining, you will get wet, but your prayer will have changed something inside you.

A man may be dying; he may be all alone, abandoned and

destitute, but because he prays he can die joyfully, in peace and light. In the same circumstances, someone who does not pray will be consumed by sentiments of revolt and hatred. Even if prayer can do nothing to change external circumstances, it is enormously effective in this life and even for one's next incarnation. Most people do not know why religion has always tried to convince criminals or unbelievers to repent and ask for God's forgiveness before dying: it is because that last moment is so important. Suppose someone has always been a believer and led a good and virtuous life: if they rebel against God or lose their faith at the last moment they will be destroying all the good done during their lifetime. Yes, because it is the last moment that counts.

I have often given you the example of a woman who invites a childhood friend to stay. They begin by falling into each other's arms, and the first few days pass in happy reminiscences as they talk about their lives and compliment each other on their families, and so on, but then things begin to go sour. The hostess becomes impatient to bring this visit to an end and, finally, almost drives her friend out of the house. And her friend will never forgive her! They should have done exactly the reverse. They should have begun by quarrelling (if they really had to) and then, at the last moment, the hostess should have showered so many gifts and such kindness on her friend that she would have been eternally grateful. Yes, for she would remember only those last moments. This is the way things work. So you can see how important it is to know the laws and to

abide by them. It does not really matter if you have not managed to change anything in this life: as long as you live the last moments of your life well, your future destiny will be changed, your next incarnation will be better. Never forget this.

The Bonfin, August 25, 1972

III

When I say you should start by being disagreeable with your guests, some kind of explanation is called for. You must not take it literally; I was simply describing a psychological phenomenon you have certainly never noticed. Actually, there are four possible scenarios: you can begin well and end well; you can begin well and end badly; you can begin badly and end well, and you can begin badly and end badly.

You do not have to receive your guests with blows and harsh words! But it is interesting to see that, although one may begin something well, there is a tendency, after a time, to slacken off, to make no more effort, and there is always the danger that things will end badly. You can see this happening to a great many people who started well in life. They imagine things will continue to go well,

that they will always be winners and continue to be acclaimed and crowned with laurels, that they will always be given a warm reception wherever they go. Lulled by this false security, they become careless and less vigilant, and everything begins to go wrong. Those who have begun badly, on the other hand, know they are going to have to make a great effort in order to overcome this initial handicap and succeed in life. If they succeed in the end, it is because of their lack of success in the beginning. Of course, this does not mean that all those who begin by being unsuccessful will necessarily end by being triumphant, but, generally speaking, it is true to say that the difficulties human beings experience oblige them to surpass themselves, and they end by being victorious.

So, as I say, it is not essential to start off badly on the pretext of wanting to end well. A bad beginning inevitably leaves some traces; people will distrust you and speak ill of you if you begin badly, so you will have to work a hundred times harder to get them to change the bad opinion they have of you. It may be more difficult, therefore, for someone who started badly to pull themselves up again, but if they make the necessary efforts it is they who will win in the end. They will overtake everyone else, because they will be obliged to muster forces and powers within that those for whom life has always been easy have never had to call upon. They have always been successful, everything has always fallen into their lap; true, but something within them has gone to sleep. From the initiatic point of view, therefore, success is

not always desirable.

Of course, if someone is very weak and puny it would be better if they did not have to contend with any great obstacles because, if they failed to overcome them, they would give up; once they fell they would not have the strength to pick themselves up and struggle on. But there are others – very few, unfortunately – who are nourished by failure and draw strength from it, who are invigorated by adversity and made so strong by the opposition of their enemies that they overtake everyone else. Unfortunately, as I say, there are not many who continue to forge ahead in spite of obstacles, adversity and the enmity of others. Most people are immediately discouraged, annihilated. Only those who are very highly evolved can be strengthened by adversity. In fact, it is often heaven itself that sends people their trials, because it knows their nature and knows that, in order to climb to the highest peak, they need the stimulus of great difficulties. And others are treated with much greater gentleness, because, otherwise, they would get nowhere. Heaven treats each one differently, according to his or her nature. This is why it is so difficult to form an opinion about the destiny of any individual. The sufferings endured by some people seem to be a punishment imposed by their karma, whereas in reality they are a blessing sent from heaven to oblige them to scale the highest peaks.³

Extremes are always linked; there is always a connection

between the biggest and the smallest, between good and evil. If you begin too well you provoke a reaction from evil; it begins to track you and lay snares for you. Do not rest on your laurels, therefore! Never tell yourself that victory is already yours, that you have won the race. If you do that, you are bound to end very badly. Even if you sometimes fail, you must pick yourself up and go on. Try to understand the reasons for your failures and make use of them. In this way you will discover things that you would never have discovered if you had not failed. Even the richest and most powerful human beings have sometimes failed, but once they recognized the cause of their failures they were in a position to overcome them. If you read the life stories of some of these people, you will see that this is absolutely true. But you will find very few who, having enjoyed the best possible conditions to begin with, also went on to finish well.

The Bonfin, September 8, 1972

¹ See *The Fruits of The Tree of Life – The Cabbalistic Tradition*, Complete Works, vol. 32, chap. 20: ‘The land of the living’.

² See *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 13: ‘Look to heaven for models’, chap. 14: ‘Through his thoughts and feelings, man is a creator in the invisible’.

³ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor Coll. n° 242, chap. 3: ‘Suffering is a stimulus’.

Chapter Eight

Love

I

I have already explained to you that our three essential faculties – the mind, the heart and the will – represent a trinity, which reflects the blessed Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in whose image we are created.^{[1](#)} And I have already explained that the goal of the mind is science or knowledge, the goal of the heart is love and that of the will is power.

Today I want to examine the question of how human beings develop these three factors. Experience has shown them that those who possess knowledge or power are esteemed, respected and feared by others and that they always get what they want, whereas those who are kind and generous and full of love never achieve very much, for they are always deceived and exploited. This is why people strenuously emulate those who possess knowledge or power and, equally strenuously, avoid cultivating love and kindness. But their reasoning is faulty, for centuries of study, practice and training are necessary to obtain knowledge or power – and even then your work is never finished – whereas love is

immediate. If you make up your mind to love you can do so at once. For my part, I have chosen to love. I leave knowledge and power to others and choose love for myself, for I have understood that it is in love that the richest possibilities exist.

The heart is always linked to the mind and the will. When you begin to manifest love, the other two factors, knowledge and power, are set in motion. You do not have to go and look for them; they appear automatically. You must love, love day and night, without bothering your head about whether human beings deserve to be loved. I know that if I worried about that, I would have given the whole thing up long ago. But I tell myself, 'Whether they deserve it or not is not my business; it is in my interest to continue to love them.' Yes, because, little by little, my love brings me the other two, for they both need the heart. Without the warmth of the heart, the mind shivers with cold; and without the gentleness of the heart, the will lashes out and destroys everything. So they both need to draw close to the heart to be warm and calm.

Look: knowledge is up here, in your head, and power is down here, in your arms and legs. Your arms enable you to work and your legs enable you to move about – and you can also use your hands to punch someone and your feet to kick them! And your heart is halfway between your head and your legs. If the heart were not there, neither your head nor your legs could do anything at all. It is the heart that sustains them, that gives them the energy they need, by contracting and expanding without pause. It is the heart

that is at the centre and is, therefore, the most important of the three. It is thanks to the heart that life continues to flow. As soon as the heart stops beating, everything else stops too. You see, the same arguments about the role of the heart apply equally well in the area of anatomy and physiology. But human beings have abandoned the heart, symbolically speaking. They seek power and, as money means power, they seek power through money. They seek knowledge, also, but if the knowledge they seek is misused, it will only lead them astray. Nobody thinks of seeking kindness, gentleness or generosity. And this is why human beings are not happy: they may always be bigger and more powerful, but they will not be happy.

Power does not bring happiness; neither does wisdom. Even Solomon said, *'In much wisdom is much vexation, and those who increase knowledge increase sorrow.'* Only the heart can give us happiness. Even without knowledge and power we can be happy if we love. Of course, I know that there will be many who think that this is not serious enough, that love and laughter are for children, that adults should seek knowledge and power. Well, for my part, I shall leave others to look for power and knowledge, and go back to childhood! I know that this expression is derogatory, but I do not mind. I intend to stick to the heart, for that is why I am always happy. I know nothing, I can do nothing, but I am happy. People who are used to the attitudes and points of view of the world are often very disappointed when they come here. They say, 'But

what is all this? I thought to find a high initiate, a Master who would inspire fear and awe, and what do I see? A child!’² Ah yes, poor things! They cannot understand it at all. They have been so warped by the world that they will never be able to be happy.

But you who are here, make an effort to understand me and to continue to live always in this happiness, this joy, this enthusiasm. For goodness sake, what does it cost to smile at someone or look at them with love? And it can make so many situations better. Everybody runs after knowledge, money and power, and they never understand why they are perpetually unhappy and tormented. They are unhappy, because they do not realize that the only thing that matters is love, and that only love can give them happiness. This is the meaning of the formula that the Master Peter Deunov gave us: Bojiata lubov nossi palnia jivot, ‘The love of God brings fullness of life.’

You must make up your mind to follow the path of the heart, the path of kindness and generosity, of forbearance, forgiveness, gentleness and harmony. Yes, for it is the heart that tempers, improves and vivifies everything; it is the heart that sustains life. When the heart stops, everything else stops. This thing that human beings have rejected, therefore, the heart, the centre, love – this is what we have to get back to.

In any case, as I have already said, love attracts both

knowledge and power. You will get to know all about something you love much more quickly and more easily than someone who studies it without loving it. As soon as you love, you understand. A mother who loves her child knows at once what it needs, because love has eyes to see with.³ Also, if you love to do something, you will have a good chance of being able to do it; you will be eager and unafraid, and the forces you need will be available. If you want proof of this, think of a timid young girl whose lover is waiting for her at night on the far side of a graveyard. In the ordinary way she would be terrified to walk past all those graves, but now, in her eagerness to join her lover and feel his embrace, she is afraid of nothing. Ah, yes, love! If you want to advance more rapidly than those who seek knowledge and power, work with love.

Now, I am not saying that love does not need to be accompanied by wisdom and will-power; it does. Love needs to be enlightened by wisdom, otherwise it can make stupid mistakes. It also needs to be controlled and mastered by strength. You must never stop loving, but you must have sufficient wisdom not to show your love too openly, otherwise people will take advantage of you and cause you all kinds of problems. And you must have the strength of will you need to defend yourself. If love is to manifest itself divinely, it must be accompanied by both wisdom and power. And there you have the blessed Trinity, once again. The three must always go together: love, wisdom and power.

The highest and most potent magic dwells in the heart. You can say all the formulas and make all the prescribed gestures, but if your heart is not in it, if your words and gestures are not imbued with the intensity that comes from the heart, they will be ineffectual. And the reverse is equally true: you can say not a single word and make not a single gesture, but if your heart is full and ardent, heaven will hear you and answer your prayer. Some occultists spend their time searching for magic spells and incantations, but they never get much good from them. Whereas those who know nothing about such things but who pray with all their heart get what they ask for. Try to live always in love and joy, and you will be in paradise, in the kingdom of God, here, on earth. Try it! For at least one week... for two weeks. Make up your mind, every morning, to love the whole of nature, the trees and the sun; make up your mind to love all your brothers and sisters in the Brotherhood; make up your mind to love the whole of humanity.

The Bonfin, August 3, 1976

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‘In much wisdom is much vexation’ – *Ecclesiastes 1:18*

II

The whole world will tell you, 'Be careful, be prudent; do not be too kind. It is very dangerous to be kind, because people take advantage of you and then criticize you.' But where does that leave love, kindness and generosity? No, you must do what is right in the eyes of heaven; that is enough. If we always had to consider the spite, jealousies and monstrosities of others, we would never do anything. There are always some who tell an initiate he should be prudent in the way he shows his love and his light, but what have they ever accomplished with all their prudence? They are in deep trouble, and their prudence has never kept them free of trouble. I have great admiration and respect for prudence, but I do not possess it. I have never worked with prudence; I am not prudent, and, in fact, my love tells me that if I am prudent I shall never really love. And one must love! 'But it is imprudent to love!' It cannot be helped: if I love I am not being prudent, perhaps, but I am doing something divine. Those who are prudent have never done anything; they are already dead. Goodness me, what a lot of things still need to be explained!

Human beings are wicked, that is true, but that is no reason to be perpetually bitter and indignant and angry with them. Leave them alone! I have seen just as much of their wickedness as you have – probably a great deal more, in fact. All kinds of people have

been unjust and cruel and ungrateful to me; what you have experienced is nothing in comparison with what I have suffered. But that is no reason never to love anyone again, to shut oneself up in one's misery. For in the final analysis, you are only hurting yourself when you do that. I know that some of you will say, 'I have the right to hurt myself as much as I want. I am not harming anyone else.' But this only proves that you do not understand much about it. We are all connected to each other, and if you are sad, depressed and sombre, your state reflects on those around you, and you are responsible for that. To all appearances you are doing no harm to anyone, that is true. You are not harming them deliberately; you are not doing so in any visible way, but you are harming them all the same, because you are spreading harmful waves and particles. And, as the laws of fusion and osmosis are constantly in effect in all worlds, you run the risk of causing many others to become like you. Instead of making the situation any better, therefore, you are responsible for making it worse. You have no right to destroy yourself or to fall back into darkness on the pretext that you are hurting only yourself. No, nothing can happen in you without being reflected in others, and if you think differently it only shows that you are ignorant, that you imagine we are all separate from each other and our intimate thoughts and feelings have no influence on others. On the contrary, they influence our family and friends and even animals, plants and inanimate objects. In harming oneself, therefore, one is harming the whole world. Try and justify yourself, now! When we know the

laws we are obliged to reason and behave differently.⁴

So, as I say, leave other people alone and devote all your energy to the work of perfecting yourself until you have achieved such splendour that you only have to appear before them for them to be annihilated by your perfection. When this happens, they will see for themselves that they have been floundering in slime. But for you to go and start digging in that slime yourself, to think that by lowering yourself into their filth you can do something to purify it: no! The only result would be that you, too, would become filthy! Become luminous, therefore, so luminous that you can show yourself to others, and without your saying a single word they will understand that they are the ones who have gone astray.

There are many people who work for justice, kindness, purity and honesty, but as they do not know how to go about it they end either by being completely discouraged or by hating the whole world. You must leave other people alone and work on yourself until you become a sun. Once you have achieved this, the mere fact of your presence before them will be enough to give them a lesson, the best and most effective lesson imaginable. Whereas at the moment, you cannot be a lesson to them, because when they look at you they see you are not much better than they are. So they say, 'All right, since you are so sure you are right, why do you not prove it to us by showing us how lucid, enlightened and free you are? You cannot! Look at you. You are lack-lustre, embittered,

feeble and always ill. Why do you not just go away and start doing something about improving yourself instead of trying to give us advice?' Yes, because there is only one test in life, and that is what you yourself have achieved. You can open your mouth and instruct others if you have already achieved something; if not, you will only make yourself ridiculous.⁵

And stop worrying about people who are in love. What does it matter to you if they embrace and make love? Leave them alone; be a little more broad-minded. This is their only joy, poor things. Heaven is more generous than you are. You do not realize that you are wishing for their death by wanting to deprive them of something that gives some meaning to their lives. It is thanks to this that they are able to work and make sacrifices. If you want to live in chastity and purity, do so, but do not meddle in other people's lives. When you meddle, in fact, it shows that you have repressed and inhibited your own feelings, and this is dangerous; as we have often seen, it can even lead to madness. If you are capable of remaining pure, chaste and virginal, so much the better; it is you who will gain from it. But if you are always in a state about what other people do, it proves that you are not pure. Be broad-minded! If the Lord does not object, why should you? Do you want to outdo him? The Lord is indulgent and full of love; why do you have to be so intolerant, so mean and ungenerous? Be tolerant, be broad-minded, and work to improve yourself. Who is stopping you from becoming a saint, a shining light? But you must leave

other people alone! If you forget to work on yourself and continually meddle in other people's affairs, you will end by being even worse than they are. In saying this I am giving you a very helpful method: work at your own perfection, and leave other people alone; do not interfere with the way they live. If they have to give an account of themselves one day, it is to heaven that they will give it, not to you.

We cannot make people honest, incorruptible, fair, pure and generous. But although we cannot do this, at least we can try to ally ourselves with the good, for the good is always at work, and when we form an alliance with it we are opening our doors to it. You have no idea of the number of ways in which the good can heal, transform, pacify, purify and sanctify. I am not saying that you should be blind to evil, no; you must try to see it and be on your guard against it. But to see only what is evil and close your eyes to what is good is very bad. Unfortunately, there are people who delight in evil as though it were their favourite food; they are thrilled by scandals, cataclysms or pornography. From childhood, human beings should acquire a love for all that is beautiful, good, noble and pure: this is true education. Education is not a question of improving classrooms, sports facilities or even textbooks. True education consists in bringing up children from their earliest years to love all that is best.

Sèvres, April 18, 1970

III

A brother was saying all kinds of nice things to me the other day. Things like, 'What a wonderful life it is here! It is as though we were no longer living in time. How difficult it is going to be to have to get back to life in the ordinary world!' and so on. Well, I was pleased to see that the brothers and sisters realized that life here was different, that we were no longer living in time, but, as he said, how can you adjust to your ordinary way of life when you go home? Well, even for this I can give you some methods that can be useful to you, for we have all kinds of different methods here.

Let us suppose that as soon as you get home you are greeted by an enormous difficulty. In order to overcome it, you must say to it, 'Come here, you and I have something to discuss. Now, do you imagine that you are capable of terrifying me? Oh no, I have seen too much to be afraid of you. Do you know the Bonfin?' 'No', says the difficulty, 'What is that?' 'That is where we meet all kinds of difficulties! But you, do you really think you are much of a difficulty? Do you get up at five o'clock in the morning?' 'No.' 'Well, I do! At the Bonfin, I got up at five o'clock every morning!' 'Oh my!' murmurs the difficulty. 'Yes, and that is not all,' you add, 'Do you take a lot of showers?' 'Showers? What kind of showers?'

‘Cold showers, of course! I have been taking lots of cold showers.’ Now it is the difficulty’s turn to ask questions. ‘Tell me about those showers: were they real showers or are you speaking figuratively?’ ‘Both! And that is not all; have you...’ But by this time the difficulty is beginning to have second thoughts and is edging away, because it sees it does not have much hope of winning a fight with someone who has endured such great difficulties at the Bonfin. Getting up while it is still dark in the middle of summer, taking cold showers – and especially showers administered by me – that is really something to brag about!

I had better warn those amongst you who are longing to be serious: you are due for a disappointment today. How can we be serious today, when everything is so bright and gay? Look around you! Everything in nature is vibrant with gaiety and joy. Today, we must vibrate in unison with the whole of nature. Are you wondering where I see evidence of gaiety and joy? Everywhere. I can feel it all around us, and this is life; life is gaiety. I can feel a profusion of these seeds of gaiety streaming out in all directions from within me. Can you not feel them? Try to swallow at least one or two of them! You will object, ‘But that is not very philosophical! Not at all scientific!’ Well, people have funny ideas about what is scientific or philosophical.

Now my dear brothers and sisters, try to feel this gaiety, try to feel simple and natural like children; that will help you never to become cold and proud. Gaiety is a marvellous attitude, because it

keeps the brain, and even the body, supple and flexible, and the face expressive.⁶ As soon as someone loses this flexibility, this expressiveness, this youthfulness, they become disagreeable and unattractive, because in spite of everything, human beings need warmth, kindness and a smile. If you are no longer capable of giving them that, they do not like you; they feel cheated. How is it possible to love someone who never smiles or laughs? They become intolerable, an unbearable burden to all. It's a wonder they manage to put up with themselves! How do they do it? I have never understood this. The damage done by this attitude, therefore, is very great: in the first place one becomes unattractive, secondly, one loses one's flexibility, and, thirdly, one makes oneself unhappy. So what possible advantage can anyone see in it? Oh, to be sure, there will always be a few idiots who are ready to revere someone who never laughs or smiles. They say, 'What a great person this must be – always so serious!' Well, if Buster Keaton never smiles or laughs, that is one thing, but Buster Keaton makes everybody else laugh. Imitate him if you like; keep a straight face and never laugh yourself, but at least make other people laugh. If you stop other people from smiling or laughing you really are a scourge!

Details like this seem at first sight to be quite insignificant but, in fact, they are extraordinarily important. Adults who want to be what they think of as 'serious' have, in fact, chosen the surest way to destroy themselves. And then they adore children! Yes, because they see that children have escaped this mentality: they feel free,

they laugh and play and tumble about, and if they fall they pick themselves up over and over again. Whereas if adults fall down just once, that is the end of them; they cannot pick themselves up again. At bottom, adults would love to be like children, but their pride or the fear of forfeiting their prestige forbids it. And so they can only get steadily older – older both inwardly and outwardly. To be sure, if you were like children, you would perhaps lose in prestige, but you would certainly gain a great deal in love, and to be loved is far better than to be coldly respected.

Today is a blessed day! Just look at the light! Look at how pure and transparent it is! Thousands of nature spirits, little gnomes with beards and funny little hats, are here laughing with me. They whisper amongst themselves, ‘Here is one, at last, who understands!’ And they bring me all kinds of presents from nature. You cannot see them, but they all bring me some little gift, because they have never seen anyone laugh like that before. My laughter travels over the hills and far away, and, hearing it, thousands of them flock to me, saying, ‘We have had our fill of long faces, of all those sad or sinister countenances!’ Ah, if you only knew how much good it does one to laugh!

There are a brother and sister here in the Brotherhood whose father told them they should not laugh, because there were too many people in the world who were unhappy. But how can we help those who are unhappy? By being unhappy ourselves? No, we have to laugh in order to make them happy. If nothing else, our

laughter can be infectious. We have to do something for all the unhappy people in the world, but what good will it do to be just like them? If we bombarded those who are unhappy with gaiety, they would be forced to surrender.

Of course, we must not laugh at all the wrong moments and in all circumstances; we have to find the right moment. You have probably heard about the letter a woman wrote to her son who was a soldier: 'My dear son, I am writing in pencil because the cat has just upset the ink-well. Fortunately, there was no ink left! You know, since you left to become a soldier, we have noticed that you are not here. I am sending you two shirts that I have mended for you. They belonged to your elder brother. When they are worn out, send them back to me because your little brother is waiting for his turn to wear them. My dear son, be as brave as your father who was a hero. In the last war he was wounded five times: the first time was in his right thigh, the second was at the front, the third was in Madagascar, the fourth was in an ambush and the fifth at close quarters. Let me give you some news of the village: last Sunday was the village festival, and there was the yearly donkey race. What a pity you were not there, my boy; you would certainly have won first prize. Your elder brother is getting married to the girl who made us all laugh so much at your grandmother's funeral; I am sure you remember her! Love and kisses from your very fond mother.' What a wonderful letter! Yes, but of course, you should not make people laugh at funerals.

When people are always stiff and never laugh, even when they see or hear something very funny, it shows something is wrong with them, but it is no better to laugh stupidly at everything. Laughter should be attractive, and there should be a reason for it. I only have to hear how someone laughs to know exactly what they are like. A person's laugh is a significant indication of their character, and it is also very revealing to see what makes them laugh and what doesn't.

Anyway, I have just received a letter from an adorable little girl of six. She has written to me from Paris, and she says, 'Dear Master, I love you. I love you so much I feel like laughing.' What a revelation! When you feel like laughing, it means that your heart is full of love, and that love has to manifest itself in the form of laughter, otherwise your heart would burst. A spontaneous burst of laughter is a sign of love, but when love is no longer there, no one feels like laughing. An expression that is sad or too serious is a sign of a lack of love. Love manifests itself in joy and gaiety. But laughter is only one manifestation; one can perfectly well be cheerful without laughing. Laughter is the sign that an energy is escaping – a benign, generous, luminous energy.

Actually, laughter is something very mysterious; philosophy has never really explained it. It is said that humans are the only creatures that laugh, but, in point of fact, laughter also exists in animals. Of course, they laugh in their own way. And what do they

laugh about? About the stupidity of human beings. They think human beings are very weird animals, and they laugh at them surreptitiously, amongst themselves, so that we never realize it. But laugh they do!

In any case, the fact that it is impossible to laugh when one is feeling ill proves that laughter is a very beneficial, very therapeutic energy. This is why a visit to a circus with clowns can be very good for someone who has problems with their liver, for laughter relaxes the spleen, and the spleen can heal the liver. Someone whose liver is over-burdened with poisons and toxins of all kinds tends to be depressed and pessimistic. But the spleen can help to remedy this; that is why it is placed where it is, opposite the liver. Of course, if you ask anatomists why the liver is on one side and the spleen on the other, they will be unable to answer you, but I can answer you: it is because, in this way, they can give each other a helping hand. Is my explanation sufficiently scientific for you?

Why do you cling so tenaciously to traditions that make you old? All your flexibility wears off. I no longer recognize you when you come back here after an interval of several months. Your expression has hardened and your faces are pale, sad and discouraged. Then, after you have been here a few days or a few weeks, you are well on the way to becoming young again. Why can you not maintain this attitude of cheerfulness, joy, hope and love? Be like children! Children are full of love; that is why they are always flexible and happy. It is when they begin to lose their love

that they become unhappy. Adults are unhappy beings.

I have already talked to you in the past about the difference between children and the elderly.⁷ Children cannot be serious because they are too young. They possess no philosophy or science. They laugh and sing and dance, because they are all love, movement and plasticity. The elderly, on the other hand, shrivel up and become economical and serious, because their reserves of strength are almost exhausted, and their possibilities are very limited. And so we can draw a conclusion from this observation: when people are always serious it proves their reserves are running low, whereas those who are gay, cheerful and full of love, have plenty of reserves and can spend freely because they are rich. You see how marvellously all this corresponds! If the elderly are not as outgoing and generous as children are, it is because they are coming to the end of their reserves, and they have to use their gestures, words and laughter sparingly. And they watch their step and walk cautiously, because they know that, if they fall, they will not be able to pick themselves up again. In reality, we should combine the two and be both old and young at the same time. Here, in our heart, we should be young, and here, in our head, we must be old. Unfortunately, more often than not, people have the heart of an old man and the intellect of a baby. They do not understand anything.

The whole world must have heard a television interview, some time ago, with some Tibetan lamas, who declared that all the

greatest sages were people who knew how to laugh. And if you read Paul Brunton's books, *A Search in Secret India* and *A Search in Secret Egypt*, you will learn a great deal from this extraordinary writer. Amongst other things, you will learn how he went to India to find a Master, and, although he met many, they were all very serious, grave, severe and distant, and he felt that something was lacking with each one. Then, one day, he met a guru who was very simple in his manner, very friendly and gay, always laughing and making jokes, and, after observing him more closely, he realized that he was more advanced, wiser and more luminous than all the others, and he became his disciple. And this guru was Ramana Maharshi. It is said that he radiated such light and emanated such love and joy that his skin was like gold. I visited his ashram in Tiruvannamalai while I was in India. Unfortunately, Ramana Maharshi was no longer alive, but I met his disciples and they were truly like their master: full of love and light and full of smiles. No one has ever welcomed me more warmly than they did. Their Master's room had been kept intact as a sacred shrine and nobody was allowed to enter it, but they let me go in and meditate in that room for as long as I wanted. I have an unforgettable memory of that ashram.

I know very well that, whatever I say, you are going to stick to your present attitude, thinking, 'That is all nonsense. We are serious people.' All right, but then why are you always so unhappy? The truth is that you do not really know what it means

to be serious. A really serious person does not always have to wear a serious expression; they have to have a serious character. In other words, they have to be strong and stable; they have to be someone who can be relied on. Serious people are firm and unshakeable in their convictions and ideas. You can try, but you will never find anyone more serious than me. I assure you, I am one of the most serious people in the whole world. The only thing is that I am fortunate enough to understand that a serious expression does not make a serious person. In any case, if you are so enamoured of seriousness, you should pay a visit to the zoo; that is where you will find the most serious creatures in the world. No philosopher is more serious than some of the big monkeys. But true seriousness is an inner thing. Outwardly I am a child, but inwardly I am far more serious than you, whereas you are old outwardly, but you are not serious inwardly, because your convictions and ideals are always changing. Do you really think you can convince me you are serious? No, someone who is always unsure of his or her divine convictions is not serious.

I am quite capable of putting on airs and assuming an attitude that would make a tremendous impression of seriousness. I could seem to be more serious than anyone and have enormous prestige in the eyes of the world, but I am not interested in prestige. I have never clung to my prestige, because there are other things that are far more important. To make other human beings happy, to elevate and enlighten others – these things are more important than seeking

prestige. If you have prestige, it is not going to do anyone else any good; you will be the only one to ‘benefit’ from it – if you can call it that, for, in fact, you will not benefit at all. On the contrary, it will simply make you callous, and others will avoid you.

So in conclusion, we should always be like children in our hearts – simple, resilient, loving and full of smiles – and like old men in our heads – thoughtful, knowledgeable and learned. To be serious is not a question of not laughing; it is a question of never forsaking your high ideal, your divine philosophy; it is a question of being always faithful and true. That is what it means to be serious. Laugh, therefore, and be happy, but be faithful to the way of light. In this way, heaven will rank you amongst those who are serious, and even if ignorant human beings think you are no better than children, you will have the right to say with the greatest initiates, ‘I am stable, son of one who is stable, conceived and engendered in the realm of stability.’⁸

The Bonfin, August 9, 1966

¹ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth*, - *The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 4: ‘The sun reflects the blessed trinity’ and chap. 15: ‘The sun is in the image and likeness of God’.

² See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor Coll. n° 207, chap. 12: ‘Unless you become like children...’

[3](#) See *Looking into the Invisible – Intuition, Clairvoyance, Dreams*, Izvor Coll. n° 228, chap. 6: ‘Love and your eyes will be opened’.

[4](#) See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor Coll. n° 242, chap. 10: ‘Our place on the cosmic Tree’.

[5](#) See *The Splendour of Tiphareth - The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 20: ‘The sun teaches by example’, and *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 19: ‘Example: the best method of pedagogy’.

[6](#) See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol 29, chap. 4: ‘On the living knowledge’.

[7](#) See *Le grain de sénévé*, Complete Works, vol. 4, chap. 7: ‘L’enfant et le vieillard’.

[8](#) See *The Fruits of The Tree of Life – The Cabbalistic Tradition*, Complete Works, vol. 32, chap. 13: ‘Binah, the realm of stability’.

Chapter Nine

The will

I

Once again, I am obliged to repeat and insist that the one thing that is most lacking in the world is will-power. There is no lack of intellect or of heart. Human beings are constantly in pursuit of both knowledge and sensations, but they do nothing to acquire the elements that would strengthen their will and free them from their difficulties and their torments.

And now, I must tell you that, if men and women are incapable of standing up to the forces that torment them inwardly – particularly the forces of their sexuality – it is because they have not sufficiently developed their love of higher, more beautiful, more sublime realities.¹ If they had, this love would go to battle and gain the victory for them. But they have not got this kind of love, and as their will-power is too weak to conquer their impulses, they give in. You need an ally to prevent your wild beasts from devouring you, and it is this love for something better and more perfect that can be your staunchest ally. As long as you have not got this love, it is absolutely inevitable that you will continue to

fall into the traps that have been laid for you on the astral plane.

When I see people who imagine they can stand up to temptation with nothing more than their strength of will to help them, I always think, 'Poor wretch, they have no idea what is in store for them. They will have given in within three or four days!' And, sure enough, that is what happens. Someone says, 'I swear I shall never marry; I will never kiss so-and-so again', and in no time at all, that is just what they have done! You must never say such things, because you provoke the creatures of the astral plane to try and trip you up. They say, 'Aha, we'll see, we'll see!' And they set their little traps for you to fall into. This is why people so often do exactly the opposite of what they had solemnly declared or sworn they would do. If I hear someone who has no love for the sublime world boasting that they can overcome temptation, I can assure them, with absolute certainty: 'You have no allies or friends; you are bound to be defeated.'

The first thing you have to do, therefore, is to love the heavenly entities and establish a relationship of exchange with them so that they are always with you. If you do this, other, lower entities will begin to obey and yield to you, because something higher and more powerful is there, helping and sustaining you. But if there are no higher forces to back you up, how can you hope to overcome that age-old force within you? The truth is that you cannot. No one can. But you have never been taught this truth. You struggle and struggle against that force until you make yourself ill.

Yes, because, when you struggle like that, you are divided against yourself, you are tearing yourself apart, and that is very dangerous. Initiates never struggle against these negative forces; they mobilize them and put them to work. Thanks to their love for something else, for something better and more intelligent, they take control and steer these forces towards their own goals. Initiates will never destroy themselves by struggling in the way others struggle. Instead, they work, organize and take charge of the situation. This is true science.

You must not rely only on your own strength, your own will-power. The will is linked to love, and this means that, if you do not love something, you will have no desire to work to achieve it. You will always feel you are being forced, and no one can advance as they should when they are forced. It is when you love something that your will collaborates and spurs you on to seek and find it. So you must create a bond with heavenly entities; you must make them your friends and partners, for when your will is backed up by love, by a true, sublime love, that love will prevent negative forces from making you their servant.

Remember what I said about beauty. I told you that beauty can be your salvation; not a purely physical, material beauty, but spiritual beauty, which is at the same time purity, harmony, intelligence and perfection – the beauty of God. If you love that beauty, your love will prevent you from straying into cesspools and sewers. And I can prove it to you: look at the way you behave

when you are wearing your smartest and newest dress. Do you start cleaning the house or doing the dishes or the weekly wash? Of course not, because you know that you would get it dirty. But if your clothes are already dirty, you will enjoy getting them even dirtier! Well then, why have you never seen that the same conclusion can be drawn with respect to your spiritual life?

Let us suppose that you have this magnificent inner garment, that is to say, a pure luminous aura. You will remember that I have already spoken to you about the coat of many colours that Joseph was given by his father Jacob. The story in *Genesis* says that Joseph's brothers were very envious of him because of this coat. But his coat was, in fact, the symbol of his aura. When scripture – the book of *Revelation*, in particular – talks about sumptuous garments of dazzling whiteness, it is referring to the aura, for the aura is our true garment.² And if your aura is very beautiful it will protect you, because you will not want to risk getting it dirty. Whereas, if it is already stained and dirty, you will feel free to do whatever you please, however filthy.

So, you see, beauty can be your salvation. And the same is true of your love of the divine world. Cultivate and tend that love every day, and it will help you overcome the temptations that gnaw at you. Otherwise, if you neglect and fail to work with this tremendous power of heavenly love that is there to protect you, you will be seduced and devoured by the wild beasts within you.

If there are so few human beings who achieve the mastery of themselves, it is because there are very few who know these great truths. And even if they knew them, how many would be willing to put them into practice? Human beings are lazy, and they do not have a high ideal, so they cling to their purely biological, animal, instinctive life.³ On that level, everything takes care of itself; they do not need to make an effort. Their instincts are there, their hunger and thirst are there, so why should they bother their heads about anything else? However much you reveal to people, if they are not animated by a high ideal, it will not do them any good. This is why, even after listening to such revelations, there will always be some who will still not make much progress; they have no real desire to advance. But all those, on the other hand, who have a high ideal, those who do want to become divinities, will forge ahead and nothing will stand in their way. So, you see, it is all very clear, marvellously clear! Even I am awestruck at how clear it is! And I hope you are too. Well, even if you are not, I am! If I had to wait for you to be in awe, I would probably have to wait several hundred years, so I just go ahead without you, and the thing is done!

Sèvres, January 11, 1977

Joseph's coat of many colours – *Gen. 37:3-4*

Garments of dazzling whiteness, symbols of the aura – *Revelation 3:4 and 5, 4:4, 7:9 and 13, etc.*

II

Self-governance does not depend only on the will; it also requires knowledge and appropriate practical methods. I have known people who had enormous will-power and who, in spite of that, were incapable of controlling their own gestures, thoughts or feelings.

Let me give you an example: when you need to control a machine, will-power alone is not enough. You have to know how it works, what lever or button to push in order to start or stop it. If you tried to control it by will-power alone, you would simply be run over or ground to mincemeat! Mastery implies knowledge, therefore. You have to find and put your finger on the precise spot that triggers the energy released by the machine. The machine itself is not conscious: once it is set in motion, if you do not know how to stop it, it will keep going, and, if you try to stop it, either it will

smash you or you will have to smash it.

And the same pattern exists in our inner life. If you want to achieve self-mastery, instead of wrestling directly with the unruly energy within you (almost everybody does this, and that is why they never get anywhere and are always defeated and ground under), you must find out where it comes from. As it is, when you have tried unsuccessfully once, twice or three times, you give up, convinced that it is impossible. No, you must not give up, you must simply say to yourself, 'Well, since I have failed so miserably, it must mean I don't know enough about it. I must go and learn more; I'll go and find an initiate, a Master, and ask him to teach me how to do it.' And the Master will tell you, 'My child, you must not attack your instincts, feelings and impulses head-on. When you want to stir the hot embers of a fire, you do not do it with your hands – you use a poker or tongs, and when a gas or water pipe develops a leak, you turn it off at the main. Will-power is necessary, of course, but it must take second place to knowledge. As long as you try to do things by exerting will-power without knowledge, you will simply be wasting your energy.'

If you want to achieve this mastery of all your gestures, thoughts and feelings, you have to begin as young as possible by learning to master all the minor things of everyday life. This is the only way to develop the psychic powers that will, in the long run, enable you to command much greater forces. You will say you cannot see the connection. Well, this is precisely the mistake

everybody makes. As long as you have not learned self-control in the most insignificant gestures of everyday life, you will never be able to control your hatred, anger, contempt, disgust or thirst for revenge. Take the way you behave at meals: if you had ever paid attention, you would have realized you are not even capable of controlling your hands.⁴ You continually fiddle with your knife and fork and move things about without even realizing it. Begin by learning to keep your hands still. How can you hope to control forces that are so much stronger than you when you have not yet learned to control these little gestures? Do you want to do great things? For my part, I am content to concentrate on very little things, for it is the little things that set great things in motion.

If you want to control a force that is already in motion, you have to work back to its source. The best way to control a band of rebels, for instance, is to capture the person in charge, the leader, for it is this person that inspires and encourages the others. As long as they are alive and at liberty, their followers keep up the struggle, but once they are neutralized, they lose heart and the rebellion fizzles out. Before tackling a feeling, a passion or an attraction, something that is tormenting you – thereby reinforcing it – you must enter into yourself and try to identify the source of your enemy's strength. When you do this, you will find that other forces and energies arise within you to control it. Simply because of your effort to turn inwards, help will come to you from the divine world, from the causal world, and your enemy will soon lay

down its arms.

Of course, knowledge alone is not enough either. It must be accompanied by a firm resolve of the will; otherwise you will be overwhelmed and swept away by the slightest upheaval. Nothing is more important than self-mastery; once you have this, everything else is easy. Instead of trying to dominate others, therefore, you would do much better to learn to dominate your own thoughts, your own inclinations and unruly impulses. For it is in this way that you will obtain all the rest, whereas if you are so busy trying to acquire other things that you neglect to acquire self-mastery, all the other things you achieve will be harmful and a burden to you. Self-mastery is the greatest good a disciple could wish for. You can always sense those who have never made an effort to gain self-mastery; the gestures and words they use to express themselves show they are not in control of their own feelings, thoughts or actions. And when other people see this, it is only natural that they should have no respect or esteem for them. They may pity them or they may disregard them, but they will never place them at the centre of their lives as models or ideals to be imitated.

Training in self-mastery should begin in a child's earliest years, and it is up to parents to ensure that this happens.⁵ But, as parents have never made the effort for themselves, they are not an example, so how can they expect to succeed with their children? Of

course, the mere fact that people live in society means they have to exercise some degree of self-control if only in their own interest or to gain the respect of others. They learn to be careful about what they say (they may long to use certain four-letter words, but they refrain from doing so!), and they hide or are hypocritical about their feelings. But inwardly, they give free rein to all their worst impulses, which ravage and sweep everything before them. Genuine self-mastery cannot be faked; it is not simply a superficial attitude designed to draw the wool over other people's eyes; it is a profound inner attitude.

As long as you are incapable of self-control, your cells will never obey you, but if they sense in you a master, they immediately obey your orders. Even a horse can sense a rider who is frightened, and it will take great pleasure in sending them flying! It laughs in triumph, 'Aha, I got the better of you all right!' Animals are not afraid of someone who is not in control of themselves. They sense a weakness, and their reaction is to bite or kick him. We have often heard that an Indian yogi can sit and meditate for hours in perfect safety in a forest full of snakes and wild beasts. Yes, because the animals sense the presence of a being who is in control of themselves and they respect them. All living creatures have an innate sense of hierarchy. If even wild beasts can sense your degree of evolution, how much easier must it be for your own cells, which are like tiny intelligent animals.

We might say that our school teaches nothing but the science

of the insignificant. Yes, the science of all that is infinitely small, infinitely despised, rejected and scorned; this is the science we bring you. Begin, therefore, by controlling your gestures and, above all, your hands. Your hands are often left to themselves, ignored by your consciousness, and this proves that your will is not controlled by your intelligence. You can have considerable will-power and be very active, but that will-power and that activity are uncontrolled. One sometimes meets very strong-minded people, people that are like a force of nature, but they are not in control of themselves. They are incapable of mastering their very real strength, and this can be devastating for society. Every force, every form of energy, has to be controlled and orientated so that it does only good, and this has not yet been achieved. There is no lack of strength or energy, there is no lack of wealth, professional skills or science, but they have not yet been made to converge and unite for the good.

The time has come to begin working on yourselves in little things. Take the gymnastics,⁶ for instance. If you do them without first concentrating inwardly, you will have much more difficulty in keeping your balance. The movements will be less well done than if you had taken a few seconds beforehand to think about what you were going to do. Your gestures will be ragged and uneven, disharmonious, and if someone is watching you, they would find you ridiculous. Or suppose you have to pick up a heavy parcel; do not rush at it, take a deep breath and then pick it up. If you do not

start by taking a deep breath, you will have less control over your muscles and are likely to drop the parcel or lose your balance.

No words can express the advantages to be gained from knowing how to control oneself. Self-control makes you the ruler of your own cells, and all the treasures and forces stored up in your organism are at your disposal. When you achieve this, you can soothe and comfort and do an extraordinary amount of good to all who come in contact with you. And when all the conscious, intelligent beings that inhabit the universe see you have achieved this self-mastery, they will immediately befriend you and help you and, more and more, you will begin to feel that you are rich and very powerful.

Sèvres, May 15, 1965

¹ See *Sexual Force or the Winged Dragon*, Izvor Coll. n° 205, chap. 9: ‘A high ideal transforms sexual energy’.

² See *Notre peau spirituelle, l’aura*, Brochure n° 309, and ‘*In Spirit and in Truth*’, Izvor Coll. n° 235, chap. 8: ‘Garment of light’.

³ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 1: ‘I came that they should have life’.

⁴ See *The Path of Silence*, Izvor Coll n° 229, chap. 4: ‘Make your meals an exercise in silence’.

⁵ See *Youth: Creators of the Future*, Izvor Coll. n° 233, chap. 1: ‘Youth, a world in gestation’, chap. 14: ‘The will must be sustained by love’.

⁶ See *A New Earth – Methods, exercises, formulas, prayers*, Complete Works, vol. 13, See the appendix at the end of the volume.

Chapter Ten

Art and music

I

I know that my way of expressing myself often surprises you. You are not accustomed to lecturers who explain things in such simple, direct ways. On the contrary, they use every possible trick of voice or gesture to attract attention and fascinate their audience. And they succeed! People are captivated and entranced, but whether they understand what is said and whether they will remember any of it is another matter.

An idea needs to be expressed in simple, unadorned terms if it is to be properly understood. But the masses are not trying to understand or learn something; they are more interested in having their emotions aroused and experiencing powerful sensations. This explains how so many politicians who were talented orators could succeed in mesmerising a whole population and leading it into danger, even to the brink of madness and death, simply by a skilful use of their facial expressions, their gestures and their tone of voice. In some instances, all they had to do – even if they had no personal conviction – was to shout, ‘God bless the Fatherland’, for everyone to applaud wildly and follow them to the end.

But poets also can easily seduce the ignorant masses, who do not know what true poetry is and ask only to be lulled by nebulous, lunar words and images. These so-called poets take refuge in the lower regions of the astral plane, where they are themselves seduced and deceived by the entities that dwell there, so that they become the most feeble, sickly and unstable of beings. It is pitiful to allow oneself to be hypnotized by nothing but the empty charm of words. If the poems you read do not make you stronger, more intelligent and more lucid, leave them alone; they will only debilitate you, and you will become like their authors, spineless and without a high ideal.

When I was very young, I was very eager to write poetry. I composed verses and mystical tales into which I wove many spiritual truths, visions and prophecies, but I stopped writing poetry as soon as I realized that it was draining me. It was making me hypersensitive and vulnerable and holding me down in the astral, lunar regions. So I abandoned those regions and went to look for true poetry in the sun. And now, if you sense that there is poetry in some of the explanations I give you, it is because I have transposed that poetry into the areas of science and philosophy. The home of true poetry is nature, for everything in nature is both beautiful and scientific.¹ Nowadays we are in the habit of divorcing science from poetry, but in nature they are closely linked.

And poetry and life must also be linked. A true poet is one who is capable of living the beauty expressed in his or her verse, who is capable of living, thinking, feeling and acting poetically. It is all too easy to compose poetry whilst continuing to live a very unpoetic life!² Many poets are incapable of writing anything without the stimulus of alcohol, tobacco and endless love affairs! Apparently they need all these different experiences and sensations in order to prevent the 'springs of inspiration' from running dry. But the springs of these sorry poets ran dry a long time ago! There they are, these poets, sick, vulnerable and spineless, exposed to every passing breeze, perpetually in the grip of passions, anguish, torments and ugliness – and ready to end their own lives for a trifling disappointment. Poor poets!

I have known a great many poets in my life and have had plenty of opportunity to study them. I do not deny that they are often very gifted and very sensitive. Some of them have real genius, but they have never developed their inner strength, will-power or balance, and they think that in order to create they have to plumb the depths of hell. What a brilliant discovery! Certainly, if you do not live to the full, if your life is not rich in experiences, you cannot create – that is true. But why go and look for your materials down below, in the subconscious and the lowest, most sordid levels of life? There is some raw material there, to be sure, but it is not the best. Why not look for experiences in other areas and discover, for instance, the realities of heaven, purity and divine

love? All the great geniuses of the past had these celestial experiences; that is why they were capable of creating masterpieces, whereas the majority of artists today delight in plunging into filth. And once they are thoroughly steeped in it, they begin to write, claiming they have first-hand knowledge of human nature. But all they know is the lowest, infernal aspect of humans, and this is what they feed to the public.

In the future, poets will again celebrate the purity, intelligence and beauty of God and the universe. They will nourish men with divine ambrosia, with the dew from heaven. By means of their works, all artists will contribute to the betterment of humankind. At the moment they are more skilled in portraying people's perversion and degeneracy. A great many actors can play to perfection the part of a drunkard or a sadistic gaoler, for instance, because they have personal experience of something of the kind, whereas they would be incapable of playing the part of Jesus or one of his disciples without making themselves ridiculous. They do not know what holiness is, so they have no idea what words or gestures to use to express it.

Poetry must be based on a higher learning, a divine understanding, otherwise it is worthless and even harmful. This is why Plato, who possessed true Initiatic Science, said there was no room for poets in his Republic (because poetry, as it is commonly understood, is a world of illusion and falsehood, a dim reflection of true poetry), whereas philosophers and scientists were welcome.

France has some very great poets, whom I admire, to be sure, but it is a pity that the way they live is not as poetic as their writings. I know very well that no one is accustomed to judging things this way: they allow themselves to be seduced by all that is most extrinsic and superficial.

In fact, even when something is profound, human beings themselves are so superficial that, often enough, their attention is caught only by its outward aspects. I noticed, for instance, that some people used to come and listen to my lectures simply in order to look at me, at my face, my clothes, my grimaces! They did not remember anything I said; they did not even know what I was talking about. They were full of admiration and perfectly happy just to sit and listen to me. Let me tell you about a case in point that happened a few years ago: I asked a rich and very distinguished woman who attended my lectures regularly why she came. Her answer was, 'Oh, you are always so well dressed, your shirt cuffs are always so white!' And I, poor fool that I was, had thought she came because she valued my ideas! I was like the minister who was up in the pulpit, one day, preaching with great eloquence and much gesticulation, and who was very disappointed to see that the congregation remained quite unmoved. Finally, he noticed a poor little man at the back of the church who was crying his heart out. 'Ah', said the minister happily to himself, 'At last I have moved someone. I am a great orator!' After the service, he hurried to the door to talk to his parishioners, and when the man

came out, wiping the tears from his eyes, the minister asked him, 'My friend, what was it in my sermon that moved you so deeply?' 'Oh, Reverend', replied the man, 'I once had a goat that I loved dearly, but it was eaten by a wolf, and when I saw your beard and heard your voice, I thought it was my little goat that had come back to me and I was overcome!' So much for the minister's eloquence! And my own success depended on a pair of snowy white cuffs! Very few people are attracted by profound philosophical research. Most of them are only interested in a speaker's face or clothes or tricks of speech or, perhaps, by some high-sounding phrases that may not even mean anything.

In the future, artists will no longer be judged on their writings, paintings or sculpture; people will want to know the artists themselves so as to admire the poetry and music emanating from them and from their lives. Artists will spend their lives writing their own book, carving their own statue, painting their own picture. In the future, men and women will no longer be content to create works that are extraneous to themselves; they will spend their time creating themselves. They will all want to live a poetic life; they will want their gestures and all their thoughts to be musical; they will draw the lines of their own faces; they will work to sculpt themselves in the image of God. Of course, it takes a great deal of time, effort and work to create in this manner, but the question of time must never deter anyone. For the things that humans create outside their own being never truly belong to them.

They have to leave them behind when they die, whereas the work they do on themselves will be with them for eternity. In the future, people will spend their whole lives refining and embellishing their own being, learning to be more expressive, more alive and more luminous – and this is far more important than spending one's life on a painting, a statue, a book or a symphony.

The Bonfin, September 21, 1966

II

In nature, everything sings and vibrates; all creatures emit vibrations which spread out in the form of musical waves. This is why it is true to say that everything in nature is music. There is music in the whisper of a stream, in the roar of a cataract and the ceaseless ebb and flow of the waves of the ocean. There is music in the voice of the wind, in the rustling of leaves and the twittering of birds. And the music of nature constantly arouses and stimulates people's own musical sense and incites them to sing or to play a musical instrument. Through music people communicate their feelings and emotions; through music they express their deepest religious sentiments, and it is through music that they manifest their joys and sorrows, their love and all their most profound

experiences.

Music is the respiration of the human soul and consciousness. It is through music that the soul manifests itself in the world. When a person's higher consciousness is awakened, when they develop their subtler powers of perception, they will begin to hear that glorious symphony that reverberates through space from one end of the universe to the other, and they will finally understand the deepest meaning of life.

Music awakens in our souls memories of our heavenly home, a yearning for that lost paradise. It is one of the most powerful mediums – far more powerful than painting or dance – because it is so immediate, so instantaneous. In a flash you remember you have come from heaven and must one day return to heaven. Of course, there are some kinds of music which, on the contrary, awaken a desire to remain on earth as long as possible, but that is not the true function of music.

Everybody listens to music, but only initiates know how to listen to it in such a way as to awaken their spiritual chakras, in such a way as to project themselves into space and rise to greater, nobler heights, to purify themselves or even to solve certain problems. When we listen to a piece of music, we must first of all know whether it is a force for good or for ill, what it represents and what comparison it suggests. Is it like the wind or like thunder? Is it like a cataract or a waterfall tumbling down the mountainside? Is

it like electricity? Or heat? Whatever the energy it emits you must learn to use it. If it suggests the wind, you can imagine you are on a ship in full sail. If it suggests electricity, you can use it to set in motion your spiritual ‘appliances’, and so on. Music is a force. Each sound, each vibration triggers a movement in space and releases certain forces in human beings.

Every day, after meals, I am in the habit of letting you listen to music, because I want you to learn to use it as a tool for inner creations in order to accomplish a tremendous spiritual work: the projection of sublime ideas and images that will, one day, become concrete reality. Music can help you; especially mystical, deeply religious music which takes you out of yourself and carries you up to great heights.

Let others think and live as they please, but you who are seeking to advance in the spiritual life must learn to make use of everything that God has given you. A disciple is someone who is determined to use their time and energy and all the materials that nature and the Lord have given them in order to achieve or earn something more.³ They are like the servant in the Gospels to whom his master had given a few talents before going on a long journey and who invested them so that they would earn more, rather than burying them away where they would be unproductive. A disciple is an intelligent, sensible servant who uses everything heaven has put at their disposal to accomplish a divine task.

Whether it be air, water or food, whether it be their thoughts and feelings or their own body, their eyes and ears or all the innumerable things that exist in nature, they learn to put them all to good use. They learn how to make everything work for them so that they become more prosperous day by day, whilst others waste their time frittering away their energies and their resources, because they have no method to show them how to work.

While you listen to music, therefore, learn to work with it; use it to form a mental picture of all the things you wish for. You want so many things – and yet you do nothing to get them! Music gives you all kinds of possibilities and the very best conditions, for it creates an atmosphere that is like a strong wind filling your sails and driving your ship on towards a new world. Music is a powerful aid in making things come true. Instead of letting your mind wander aimlessly, fix it firmly on the most ardent desire of your heart. If it is health you need, imagine yourself the picture of health: see yourself in all your daily activities – walking, talking or eating – radiant and glowing with health and communicating health to all around you. If it is intelligence and light you need, if you are always getting things wrong and making a fool of yourself, use music to help you imagine you are learning and understanding things, that light is flooding into you, even that you are spreading it around and sharing it with others. Work in this way to acquire whatever it is you want – beauty, strength, will-power, perseverance, and so on – and to remedy whatever deficiency you

sense in yourself. Otherwise you are wasting your time here, you have still understood nothing about the teaching, and the years will go by and you will never transform anything within yourself.

You must make use of all the conditions you are given here. You are given silence, peace and quiet and magnificent music, and you must work with all that and achieve something with it. I can well understand that it is not possible to do this work at home because of all the noise, all your occupations and commitments. But here, at least, you have quiet, ample space and freedom, and you must make the most of them. While you are listening to music, link yourself to all that is most luminous and elevated, and you will soon feel extraordinary transformations in yourself.

Today we are going to listen to some Tyrolean songs, and you will hear the girls and young men singing and whistling and stamping their feet. Some of you, I have no doubt, will be astonished that we listen to Tyrolean music; it is not at all the kind of thing one hears in church! But this is not a church. Or, rather, it is a church and, at the same time, it is a university and an academy of fine arts. This should be the case everywhere – as it was in the past – for men and women need to develop their mind, heart and will harmoniously and together. Decadence began to set in when science, religion and art went their separate ways and even began to oppose each other. Although religion attempted to annihilate science, it failed to do so; in fact, science gained the upper hand.⁴

And, today, it is art that is beginning to gain precedence over both science and religion.

Art, science and religion should never be separated in human society. And, in the same way, the activities of heart, mind and will should never be separated in individual human beings. Once they are separated they begin to war with each other, and degeneration sets in. All three must walk hand in hand, solidly united and in the same direction. When the mind approves of something, the heart must contribute its strength, love and enthusiasm, and the will must seal the bond by actions. But if the mind condemns and works against the desires of the heart, and the will is incessantly torn between the desire to satisfy first one and then the other, the result is anarchy.

But to get back to our Tyrolean songs: initiates in the past, who understood the nature of human beings and their needs, instituted popular holidays and feast days, which were occasions for the masses to unwind and enjoy themselves thanks to music, dancing, exhibitions and plays. Even the early Church Fathers instituted feast days on the same lines as those of ancient Egypt and Greece. But it is clear that initiates would never have taken such measures if they did not correspond to certain human needs. This is why I say that something is lacking in those who are always serious, who never relax or take any recreation. They need to come here and listen to these Tyrolean songs; it would do them a lot of good! There is something so fresh and gay and youthful

about them, something that speaks of springtime! They are just nice young people, singing and dancing, their eyes sparkling as they look at the sun, the sky, the flowers and nature around them. And they express their joy so vividly we can feel its influence almost as though they were here, beside us. For my part, their happiness makes me feel happy. We listen to masses, requiems and oratorios so often; we need a little variety from time to time. Why not get a little closer to these young people as they sing and dance and learn to share their feeling that life is beautiful?

But do not misunderstand me; I am not saying you should listen to just any kind of music on the pretext that it is a relaxation or that it releases you from your inhibitions, as they say today. There is a lot of modern music that awakens the wild beasts in men and women, that arouses their most primitive instincts. But that is not the case with these Tyrolean songs: they express the desire to remain young, to be happy and to love the whole of nature. Because of this, we can draw energy from them and work with them.

The Bonfin, July 20, 1965

Before anything else, let me remind you what a tremendous privilege it is for you to be here. Nowhere else in the world will you find people who get up and sing together at sunrise, as we do here.

But you do not yet understand the significance of this four-part choral singing. It is a symbolic expression of our desire to embrace the universe, to be attuned to and in harmony with the whole. Every day, before you begin to sing, you must look into yourself for a moment in order to still any inner agitation and put aside the concerns of everyday life, so as to be in harmony with all the creatures of the cosmos and sing in unison with them. The practice of singing in four parts is already a reflection, an expression on the physical plane, of this exercise of inner harmonization that we have to do every day, several times a day, in our spirit, soul, mind and heart. But choral singing is also, of course, a symbol of what we have to do to attune ourselves and harmonize with each other, for the blending of voices over our heads is, at the same time, a blending of our souls and spirits. The four voices – bass, tenor, contralto and soprano – represent the four strings of a violin, for the violin is also a symbol of the human being. The G-string represents the heart, the D the mind, the A the soul and the E the spirit. The violin itself represents the physical body, and the bow represents the will, which plays on the four principles – heart, mind, soul and spirit.

The number four is also the number of the elements (fire, air, water and earth), the number of letters in the name of God – Yod, He, Vau, He: h v h y, and of the divisions of the universe according to the Cabbalah – *atziluth, briaiah, yetzirah and assiah*.⁵ There are, of course, other systems that divide the universe into two, three, seven, nine or even twelve regions, but each system corresponds to a particular point of view, a particular attitude towards things. You can equally conceive that there is no division and see only the unity of the universe. The four voices – bass, tenor, contralto and soprano – remind us that the four principles of heart, mind, soul and spirit must vibrate harmoniously within humans. Why do you suppose that a violinist has to keep tuning his or her violin? We cannot make any genuine inner progress if all the parts of our being are not harmoniously tuned. Before anything else, therefore, it is important to look into ourselves and never undertake anything until the strings of our violin are attuned.

It is very important to sing. To be sure, you can listen to records at home. There are not many people who actually sing – they do not seem to feel the need to do so – but there is a tremendous difference between singing and listening to someone else sing. The difference is exactly the same as between eating and watching someone else eat: those eating get fat and strong while you wilt away. After eating, they are full of energy and ready to work, whereas you can barely move your little finger. Yes, it is as different as that! Those who sing ally themselves with the world of

music, whereas those who never sing become inwardly weaker from lack of nourishment. Music, and particularly singing, are a form of nourishment, a spiritual nourishment.

These songs by the Master Peter Deunov were conceived to enable us to participate in the harmony of the universe and, at the same time, do some spiritual work. You will say, 'Oh, are we working when we sing? I just feel happy when I am singing, that's all.' That is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. As long as you fail to see all that is contained in the act of singing, to see how it touches every region of your being, you will be unable to benefit from it fully. In fact, you could continue to sing in this way for the rest of your life and get no good from it at all. You must not be content with the slight sensation of well-being and joy you get from it; you must understand what is going on.

In the sephirotic Tree of Life music belongs to the sephira *Chokmah* in which reign the cherubim. The cherubim are pure music, and for this reason they dwell in perfect harmony. *Chokmah* is the region of the logos, by which all things were created, and the logos is simply music, the harmonious sounds that fashioned matter. For sound models matter and gives it form, and it was thus – by the logos – that God fashioned the formless matter that *Genesis* calls *Thohu wa-bhohu*. God breathed his Word over that cosmic dust and forms appeared. Through the action of the logos, the cherubim received a divine vibration, and this vibration was passed on to all the other creatures in the lower regions of the

universe, all the way down to earth. The sole function of the cherubim is to sing together in harmony. This is why, when human beings also try to sing in harmony, they create a bond between themselves and the angelic order of the cherubim, the order of music and heavenly harmony. Whenever you sing, whether you know it or not, you are in contact with the cherubim, and in this way the harmony of sounds works its effects on you; it causes the particles of your physical body to vibrate so that one day its forms will reflect perfect beauty and harmony.⁶

Singing, therefore, creates the conditions most conducive to the purification and embellishment of our physical bodies. And one day you will experience the awakening of the spiritual chakras and antennae of your souls, and they will become capable of receiving the cosmic forces flowing from *Chokmah*. You will receive the gift of inspiration and poetry, of all that is most marvellous, harmonious and perfect; you will hear the music of the spheres, you will sing with the choirs of angels, and wisdom will make its dwelling within you. Yes, for music is an expression of wisdom; the Hebrew word *chokmah* means wisdom. *Chokmah* lies outside our scale of seven notes; it reaches beyond the planets of our solar system and embraces the zodiac. And as the zodiac symbolizes immensity, the cosmos, infinity, music transports us to such heights that we melt into that immensity.

You must try to understand, therefore, and not be content

with the pleasurable sensations you have when you sing. You must realize that the beneficial effects of music reach to the most sublime regions. I am sure that, once you really understand the question in this way, you will devote much more time to singing together, because you will begin to feel some tangible results. You are continually busy with activities that seem important, but that cannot make you any happier, nobler, healthier or more luminous! The best they can do is give you more material comforts and an easier life, but that contributes nothing to your transformation. Whereas when you sing together with real conviction, you are striving to attune yourselves to another, higher order of things, and this transforms you and furthers your evolution. This is why I insist that you meet in order to learn to sing together. You do not realize what tremendous wealth these songs contain. In fact, even when you are at home alone, if you feel unhappy or troubled in any way, choose a song, put yourself in mental contact with the region of the cherubim and picture yourself singing with all the brothers and sisters throughout the world. You will experience a tremendous influx of strength, courage, hope and inspiration. Music enhances and beautifies everything. When you have been singing, you have new inspiration, life seems more beautiful, other people seem better and your will is strengthened. Why not do all this consciously?

There... just a few words to underscore the immense importance of learning the songs.⁷ And if heaven has given you the

privilege of having a very beautiful voice, and if you wish to convince others that our Teaching can be a powerful aid in helping them to improve their lives, sing. Your singing may well be far more convincing than all the intellectual arguments in the world. In fact, I can tell you that, when a human being reaches the gates of paradise, they are asked, 'Can you sing?' and when they say, 'Yes', they are told to sing. But many people's songs are so bizarre the heavenly entities block up their ears and cry out in horror, 'Is that what you learned to sing on earth? Go away. You cannot come in!' But when you get up there and sing the magnificent songs of the Brotherhood, you will be welcomed with open arms!

Singing is a very potent instrument both for good and for evil. Are you feeling sad, tired and depressed? Start singing and things will begin to get better. Not in five seconds, perhaps, but if you persevere, everything will begin to get lighter and, little by little, you will find yourself being borne up into brighter regions. You do not realize how many means and resources you possess, so you do not make use of them. But I am there constantly to remind you of your wealth, for the worst possible affliction is to possess such riches and still feel wretched, because you are not even aware you possess them. If you devote more time to singing, therefore, and if each one of you without exception learns to sing in harmony, the results will be immense. You will be working firstly on yourself and secondly on the world around you, for this harmony reflects on your surroundings, and sooner or later the whole world will

experience its influence. In this way you will be working for the good of humanity.

With your individualistic philosophy, your individualistic research, your individualistic conceptions, can you form a choir and sing in harmony? No, all you can do is sing a solo. Whereas, when you work with others, you can form a choir. To work alone and only for oneself is the old philosophy, which needs to be replaced. To be sure, we all have to do our individual work, but we must do it for the good of the collectivity, for a collectivity must be composed of perfect individuals. It is not enough for everyone to remain alone in their own little cubby-hole, intent on perfecting themselves without a thought for the collectivity. The new philosophy does not reject the old, but the individual quest for perfection must serve only to perfect the collectivity.

So, now, are you going to make up your minds to sing?

Sèvres, April 4, 1964

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‘Thohu wa-bhohu’ – *Gen. 1:2*

IV

I wish you could see as vividly as I can all the beauty, splendour and power you create when you sing as you sang today. When you can do this more consciously, the forces and the light that flow from you will be even more extraordinary. I feel sure you already realize the rare and exceptional beauty of these songs. Yes, but it would be even better if you could understand their magical efficacy.

Everything we do in life is magic, but this is a fact that is widely ignored and misunderstood because people are afraid of the word ‘magic’; it is something that nobody wants to study, recognize or understand. The truth is that there is nothing but magic in life. All works of art, all painting, sculpture and dance – even beautiful women – all is magic!

The word ‘magic’ simply means influence, the effect of one thing on another. If something or someone exerts a beneficial, agreeable, harmonious influence, we say it is divine magic, and if something or someone disrupts, disorganizes or devastates things, we say it is black magic. But, in fact, everything is magic: the whole of life – the way people look at things, their words, gestures and attitudes, geometrical forms, colours – everything. Even

insects, animals and plants without consciousness, fruit and flowers – all these things affect and influence other beings, attracting or repelling them, healing them or making them ill. And the sun, the stars, mountains and lakes – everything affects and influences us. This is a universal law: the whole cosmos and all the beings in it affect and influence humans and all other creatures. It is important to understand this and to think, feel and act more and more constructively, positively and harmoniously, for in doing so you become white magicians.⁸

And we have here a very potent means of working constructively and positively on all creatures, and that means is our singing, our music. It is this that I particularly want to emphasize: the importance of the songs we sing here in the Brotherhood, the importance for ourselves, first of all, but also for others, even for the whole world. The more conscious you are of their power, the more that power is enhanced, for everything depends on the factor of consciousness. As soon as you are conscious of what you do, its power for good or ill is amplified. And here, in the Brotherhood, we work only with harmonious, luminous forces. The rest does not interest us; we leave that to others. If some people want to dabble in some very costly experiences, they are free to do so, but as far as we are concerned, our choice is made: we are only interested in good, in light, creation, edification.

Yes, I assure you, the way you sang today ravished my heart. There were moments when your voices expressed such unity, such harmony and, above all, so much love and goodwill for the realization of that unity, for the realization of the Universal White Brotherhood to come. In fact, after that, I really had no desire to start talking; I would have much preferred to remain in silence, to meditate and pray. Truly, you have given me immense joy today; I felt you would soon be capable of stirring up the whole world. But on one condition: that you remain always as united as you were today, united in the bond of brotherhood. The power emanating from you in such moments is extraordinary; you are capable of shaking the world to its foundations. The most fantastic projections, entities and forces were present, circling above you and all round you.

You have a tremendous magical power for good, therefore, but you must never forget that all power is based on unity and harmony. Never forget that you must form a family. Leave aside all consideration of your different characters and tendencies, all the differences in your degree of evolution, social background or profession.² Forget about all that, for none of it really matters; none of it makes much difference to your spiritual life. Strengthen the conviction in your hearts that, in spite of your differences, you all belong to the Brotherhood, that you are members of this Brotherhood, and that you sing together in order to awaken the consciousness of men and women throughout the world. If you do

this, then indeed you will be truly powerful.

I wish you would give me such joy more often, that I might see you welded together in unity, so that you can overturn all barriers, obstacles and fortresses, and the ideal of brotherhood can spread throughout the world. Believe me, it is this unity that is the source of your power. Even if you do not like each other, therefore, even if you have had differences of opinion, none of that matters: sing together, and you will produce extraordinary sparks of light. You think to yourself, 'Ah, just let me catch sight of so-and-so, and I will wring their neck for them!' That is fine, but first of all go and sing, and we'll see about the rest later! Start by singing, and then you will no longer feel like wringing anyone's neck! You may not understand where this tolerance has come from all of a sudden, but it will be the singing that has already transformed you and made you just a little gentler. So, whether you love or hate each other, whether you agree or disagree, it makes no difference; what matters is to achieve unity.

Surely you do not imagine that soldiers who go to war together all get on well with each other simply because they are in the same regiment? Before being in the army they might well have been neighbours who heartily detested each other, but once they are united in common cause against an enemy it is amazing what they are capable of doing together! They support and help each other, they even save each other's lives. When the war is over, they will probably revive their quarrels, but at least they have proved

they are capable of working together for a time! And why should we not be capable of doing as much? In fact, I am convinced that so long as you sing and pray together your misunderstandings will dissolve and disappear entirely, and in the end you will be incapable of quarrelling again.

I assure you that, for the rest of the day, I shall be thinking of the joy I felt when I heard you singing so magnificently together. There it is! This is the magic power capable of conquering and driving away the clouds of darkness! And now, what can you do to obtain this new consciousness and be always welded together and united in the work we are doing here? The accord that reigns amongst you must grow and be strengthened, for it is here, in the collectivity, that you will find true beauty and harmony. So instead of traipsing here, there and everywhere, you would do better to come here and sing. Yes, because in this way you will set in motion a work of inner purification, illumination and liberation that, without your even being aware of it, will restore order within you. You will be preparing a nucleus, a cell of the new life for the benefit of all those who come here in the future, and they will be staggered to see that, while they were still wasting their time and amusing themselves, you have been hard at work preparing for the coming of the new culture!

But there is one more thing I must add: it seems to me that when you learn a new song and sing it for the first time, you sing it better. It may not be faultless, but you sing it with enthusiasm.

And then, later, when the songs are technically more perfect, that first enthusiasm is lost. If only you cultivated both aspects, the songs would be more and more beautiful as time went on. Personally, I plead in favour of both: for your technique to improve and your enthusiasm to increase. Why sing automatically, mechanically, without warmth or soul? You must have noticed this, too, no doubt. So, as I say, it is very good to improve the technical quality of the songs, but you also have to keep an eye, every day, on the warmth, the love, the ardour you put into them.

Sometimes, too, your voices are very strong when you sing. Strength is good, but it is not particularly conducive to very spiritual emotions. You should insist less on the force you put into your singing and more on the feeling, because it is the feeling that gives a song vitality and subtlety and makes your voices more expressive. And if you add light to the feeling – that is to say, if you sing with intelligence and inner harmony – it will be perfect. Loud, soulless singing produces nothing worthwhile. It may make a great impression superficially, but it does not touch the subtlest chords of the soul and spirit. In any case, you already know all this; it is not new to you, but I would like you to be more aware of it.

The important thing is to measure and weigh each element so as to have the right proportions. Strength must not predominate; it must be present, but primarily as the foundation on which the feeling rests, which makes your singing expressive and awakens

emotion. When you tell your sweetheart you love her, do you shout at the top of your voice? No, that would only frighten her away. You do not have to hit her over the head in order to convince her of how much you love her! So the power in your singing must not be on the physical plane; it must be on the astral plane. Your goal must not simply be to do things – one can always do all kinds of things – but, in doing them, to trigger tides and currents that have never before existed in everyday life. Henceforth, therefore, you must always try to sing with feeling so that your voices become more expressive.

And the same can be said with regard to your physical gestures and movements. The movements of some oriental dances, for instance, are very slow, almost imperceptible, but they are extraordinarily expressive, whereas European dancing is becoming more and more acrobatic. No, dance should be an expression that is more spiritual than physical. The rhythm of Spanish dances is always staccato, and the men and women express a mutual defiance and a haughty, arrogant attitude. The beauty of this kind of dance lies in the graceful arching of the dancers' bodies, but the constant hammering out of the same fierce, rapid gestures is not good from the spiritual point of view. The solar plexus feels these harsh rhythms as a succession of blows and they have a dangerous effect on the dancers. This style of dancing is an expression of the personality, the lower nature. Dance should be graceful, supple and light; it should bring us closer to a more ethereal existence, to

something diaphanous, etheric and fluid, like the movement of dragonflies or water nymphs.

Each form of art has a particular mission for which it is predestined. Painting, for example, used to be a veritable initiation. A painter was supposed to begin by rising to the contemplation of the divine world, and only after doing so would he attempt to depict what he had perceived on canvas so that those who looked at his painting could be inspired to take the same upward path. This approach implied a rigorous ascetic discipline, for we can penetrate these sublime regions only after years of self-abnegation, meditation and contemplation. And, of course, as this discipline is extremely difficult, many painters prefer to paint scenes from the lower planes of everyday life or, even lower, from those of the subconscious, from hell itself. Every art, therefore, has its predestination, and, as I said at the beginning, the predestination of music is to awaken in our breasts the memory of our heavenly homeland. But, today, all notion of this predestination is gradually disappearing.

Sèvres, December 20, 1964

¹ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor Coll. n° 242, chap. 16: ‘Opening the doors to the dreamworld’.

² See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works,

vol. 29, chap. 4: ‘On the living knowledge’.

³ See *The Powers of Thought*, Izvor Coll. n° 224, chap. 1: ‘The reality of spiritual work’.

⁴ See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 4: ‘Science and religion’.

⁵ See ‘*Et il me montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’, Synopsis Coll., Part XI-2: ‘Les racines de la matière: les quatre Animaux saints’.

⁶ See *Harmony and Health*, Izvor Coll. n° 225, chap. 2: ‘The world of harmony’.

⁷ See *Mystical songs sung in Bulgarian* – Ref. CD 1510.

⁸ See *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226.

⁹ See *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete Works, vol. 11, chap. 22: ‘Toward Universal Brotherhood’, and *Love and Sexuality*, vol. 15, chap. 29: ‘Towards a broader concept of the family’.

Chapter Eleven

Physical gestures

I

It is very important for you to be aware of how you walk. You must walk with a light, supple step and with your head up. It is a bad sign to walk bent forward with your eyes on the ground, for instance, or to hammer the ground with your heels at every step. People do not realize what violence they are doing to their brains by walking like that: every step is a shock to the brain. In a few years their nervous system will be shattered, and the way they think and everything they do will manifest coarseness and violence. You should never walk the way German soldiers during World War II used to walk (and they were not the only ones). It is not the heel but the toes that should touch the ground first.

If you are tired after walking for half an hour, it means that you do not know how to walk. But if you adopt the proper rhythm, the more you walk the stronger you will become; so much so that, even if you were tired before you set out, you will feel more vigorous after walking. Each of you must find the rhythm that suits you best and does not tire you. If you feel that your energies are beginning to circulate more actively within you while

you walk, it means that you have found the right rhythm for you. Years ago, in Bulgaria, when we used to hike to Mount Musala, I would observe the brothers and sisters to see how they walked. And I also observed myself, so as to find the right rhythm that would allow me to keep going without tiring.¹

The trouble is that, as people never think about this, they walk in a slovenly way and are soon exhausted. When people go for an excursion in the mountains, for example, they carry packs on their backs, and that is fine, but, too often, they also carry something in their hands and talk, discuss or sing as they walk, and that is the surest way to wear oneself out. When you walk you should not carry anything in your hands. Carry whatever you need on your back, but leave your hands free. Adjust your step to the rhythm of your breathing, and allow your arms to swing freely as though they were helping you to move forward. This movement of the arms combined with rhythmic breathing will enable you to walk for a long time without tiring. Try it and you will see how marvellously effective it is. But do not talk or sing.

Well, these few recommendations can be useful, but the real secret of how to walk tirelessly is to have something in your head and your heart. In your head should be the idea that you are walking towards the light, and in your heart should be the joy that comes from imagining that you will soon see the mountains, breathe the pure air at their summits and sense that you are getting

closer to heaven. I assure you, in spite of my age, I would leave you all panting behind me if we competed together, simply because of the way I walk. Of course, I am older now; it is not the same thing as when I was twenty, but this method gives one great endurance. The essential thing is to see that your breathing and arm movements are in rhythm with your step. If you talk or sing, you destroy the rhythm, and without rhythm you will tire much more quickly.

The Bonfin, July 23, 1977

II

I have said that we must put the spiritual life in first place. Of course, I know that that is very easy to say, but how many people are really tempted by the spiritual life? Most people have absolutely no desire for a spiritual life; so what should we do about them? They are attracted to other things; they find pleasure in other ways. What can we do to get them to participate in the spiritual life? In point of fact, it is very simple. Ignatius of Loyola found the answer: he knew that even when you do not feel like praying, you can always learn to do so, if you kneel down and place yourself in a position of prayer. If you keep on doing this

day after day, you will eventually be seized and carried along by a spiritual current until you feel moved, even to the point of tears. To start with, therefore, you can do no more than make a physical gesture, but that gesture eventually awakens a feeling. Well, there you have the method, but I should like to add a few points.

We all know that, when someone has absolutely no desire to live a spiritual life, they will be entirely taken up by their sensations, emotions and passions. However, even if they have no feeling for the spiritual life and do not desire it for themselves, they can still understand intellectually that there are advantages to it, and once they understand that, they can take the necessary steps to adapt to it. Take an example: you have to take care of your teeth, and you hate what that involves. You do not want to go to the dentist, because you are afraid he or she will hurt you, and yet you agree to go, because you recognize that there are certain advantages in doing so. Your heart does not want to go, but your mind tells you it is advisable to do so, so you do it. And this kind of situation constantly arises in our physical life, so why not apply the same reasoning to the spiritual life? Tell yourself, ‘I know it is going to hurt, but it is better to do it.’ And there you are, in the dentist’s chair!

You have to begin by understanding the advantages of the spiritual life, therefore. Then you have to try to spend time with people who live a spiritual life (by coming here, to the Brotherhood, for example), and then you have to adopt the

postures and make the physical gestures, as though you had already acquired a taste for these things. You must say to yourself, 'Very well, although I do not feel like it, I will go to the sunrise, I will meditate and pray and do the exercises.' And you will soon see that the taste, the need for the spiritual life will begin to filter into you.

Never forget that your gestures are related to your feelings. Why, when you are angry or in love, do your feelings break out, whether you want them to or not, and manifest themselves on the physical plane through corresponding physical gestures? When you love someone, you feel the instinctive desire to kiss them, and when you are furious with someone, your instinct tells you to kick them! Each feeling manifests itself through a corresponding gesture, and vice versa, each gesture awakens its corresponding feeling. If you look as though you are filled with admiration and delight, it will end by being true. Pretend to be furious, and this, too, will come true. As thoughts and feelings lead to certain gestures, so certain gestures lead to their corresponding feelings.² This is true psychology.

The Bonfin, August 31, 1977

Our hands are like antennae: they have the ability to attract and absorb energies from the cosmic ocean which bathes us on all sides, and if, in fact, we so rarely absorb these energies, it is either because our consciousness is occupied with other things or because it is asleep. Of course, we receive some energies from the cosmos whether we are conscious of the fact or not, but only the grossest, most physical, material energies. In fact, every living creature, every animal and every plant receives energies from the cosmic ocean.

And we, like plants, also have roots, and the deeper our roots are plunged into the soil, the more energies we receive. But this does not get us very far, for our roots cannot receive celestial energies; only our leaves and flowers can do this. The region below the solar plexus and diaphragm – the stomach, intestines and sexual organs – corresponds to our roots, and the head (including the mouth, ears, nose and eyes), corresponds to our flowers and, therefore, receives much subtler energies. But the energies received through the sense organs are less subtle than those received directly by the brain and still less subtle than the divine energies received on a still higher plane by the spirit.³ Our task, therefore, is to awaken and set in motion our spirit, for only the spirit is capable of establishing contact with divine energies.

But let us talk about those supreme instruments of magic: our hands. A magus is one who has learned to use his or her hands to receive and transmit energies, to amplify or attenuate them and channel them in whatever direction they are needed. Here, at the Bonfin, we greet each other several times a day with a gesture of the hand. You have no idea how significant and effective this gesture is. Yes, but only for those whose consciousness is awakened. For others, it is simply a convention. Of course, the effect of this gesture also depends on your mental or physical state when you make it. If you are tired and discouraged, you will make others feel tired and discouraged too. But if you are feeling in tiptop form and ready to move heaven and earth, you will communicate this energy to others.

When initiates open their door in the morning, they raise their hand to greet the whole of nature: the trees, the sky, the sun, and so on. They greet the new day and all creation. Perhaps you are wondering what good this gesture does. It serves as a link, a direct bond between themselves and the source of life. Yes, for nature answers them. How often I have gone out to my garden in the morning to greet the angels of the four elements – the angels of earth, water, air and fire – and even the gnomes and sylphs, undines and salamanders.⁴ And when I do this I see how delighted they are, for they dance and sing for joy. And to the trees and the rocks and the wind, too, I send greetings. Try it for yourself. If something is a little off-balance within you, you will feel it slipping into place

again and becoming more harmonious, and many dark and difficult elements will fade away – yes, simply because you have decided to salute living nature and all her creatures.

Greet the earth itself, also. In fact it is good to stretch out on the ground for a few minutes and to scratch a little hole in the soil and put a finger into it as you speak to the earth: ‘O beloved earth, my Mother, I thank you with all my heart for the materials you have given me to form my physical body. It is you I owe it to. Bless you, bless you, bless you! I love you, you know; I love you very much. Deep in your womb are marvellous laboratories in which magnificent beings are at work, carrying out your orders. I beg you to take away all the impurities and harmful elements that have accumulated within me, to transform them and give me others that are pure and transparent in exchange, so that I may work for the glory of God.’ Say this prayer three times.

The earth is a reservoir of fantastic wealth, an extraordinary workshop. Gold, precious stones, trees, flowers and living creatures are all made of earth. And, of course, there is a spirit that organizes this matter and radiates from it, and it is the spirit we love, the life that shines out from the earth.

Now, I would like to get back to the question of the greetings we exchange all day long. As I have said, this habit of greeting each other contains some very precious elements which are still largely unknown. It is useless to salute others if you do so distantly and

with reticence, with no consciousness of what you are doing. You must greet others consciously, put a lot of love into your glance as well as into your hand, and project that love outwards for the benefit of the whole world.

This gesture of greeting should be a true communion, potent, harmonious and vital. This is very important for me, for I often feel a tremendous need to give you some of my love, some of my happiness. It is a pity I cannot invite you all to come and talk to me individually; there are just too many of you, and my time is limited. But I can raise my hand in greeting to you, and when I do this I try to send you all the love that overflows from me and demands to be poured out to the world. If you could be conscious of what I am giving you through this gesture, if you could receive it with appreciation and if, in return, you could give me your full trust and friendship, the most marvellous waves and currents would flow between us. In this way, you would develop enormously and come to recognize that the subtlest forms of exchange are the most precious.

We must never deprive a living creature of love. This is the only divine right the Creator has given us: to love and be loved. No one has the right to stop us from loving. The problem is to know how to love in such a way as to avoid misunderstandings and pain. But we must love! And it is by our efforts to make our love more perfect that we draw on that great love that fills the universe.⁵

Why do you imagine you have to hold a man or woman in your arms in order to give and receive love? When you go for a walk with someone, when you talk to them or look at them, when you greet them – all that is love, and it is the subtlest, most spiritual, most etheric form of love. I am sure you have all experienced this. And you know how happy and full of light you felt. Then why do you not try to make this state last longer, even to amplify it more and more? Most human beings think that the smiles, looks and words they exchange are simply preliminaries before they ‘go all the way’. But this is not so; you can be with those you love for a long time without overstepping the boundaries, and in doing so you can be both safe and happy, and no one can accuse you of wrongdoing.

You must get rid of the idea that human beings were not meant for the most sublime forms of love, only for an animal love. Do you really think the angels and archangels do not love? They certainly do! In fact their love is far more powerful, vaster and more intense than ours, but they have no need to behave like animals to manifest it. If you want to manifest your love in better ways, begin by learning to greet others consciously with a great deal of light in your eyes and in your hand. In fact, when you are alone at home or out for a walk in the woods, what is to prevent you from raising your hand and telling all the invisible creatures of the universe that you love them? Some of those creatures are simply extraordinary; they are far more powerful and more

beautiful than human beings, and, whether you can see them or not, they hear you and draw closer to you when you greet them. In their joy, they gather round you, and each of them gives you something. If you learn to project your love out into space, you will feel freer, for in this way you will be giving your love other, more luminous, more spiritual channels.

In giving, you receive. As soon as you give something, someone else gives you something in exchange, for there is a constant circulation throughout nature. According to the laws of physics a vacuum cannot exist in nature. The saying goes that ‘nature abhors a vacuum’: when a vacuum is created, it is filled up at once. As soon as you empty your reservoir by pouring out your store of love and good wishes on all creatures, heaven immediately fills you to the brim with blessings. As soon as you empty the water from a bottle, it is filled with air. And if you succeed in emptying it of air, it will be filled with ether. In other words, when one element is poured out, it is always replaced by something subtler. As you see, there are still so many things you have to understand!

You do not know the power of the hand. When the Hebrews went into battle, Moses raised his hands and the enemy was defeated. Forces flowed from his hands, and spirits came and gave strength and courage to the soldiers. And when the battle lasted a long time and Moses’ arms tired, others came and held them up for him. If the hands can be used for war, why should we not also use them to create love and harmony? If you see people fighting, you

can raise your hand, and they will throw down their weapons and embrace. They will not feel like fighting any more when they receive the beneficial vibrations you send them.

If you learn to raise your hand in order to receive forces and relay them to others, forces that cleanse, heal, restore balance and give life, you will become a child of God. When you salute someone with your raised hand you project forces and rays of light – five forces and five colours. You may say you cannot see them, but put your hand on your face and you will see their radiancy, or put it on the nape of your neck and you will feel their energy and warmth seeping into you.

What fantastic things we can do with our hands! They are truly instruments of magic. All the things humans can do today with their hands is as nothing compared to what they will be able to do in the future. Cosmic Intelligence has placed the entire future of humanity in their hands. Everything that men and women possess has been acquired thanks to their hands. The hand is a living being with its own brain, nervous system and stomach, and, just as the whole universe is reflected in the different organs of our bodies, so the organs of our bodies are reflected in our hands. Yes, the relationship between our hands and our body is exactly the same as that between our body and the universe. This is why they are so important.

The Bonfin, July 13, 1964

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Moses during battles – *Exodus 17:8-13*

IV

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Sound, speech and music have the property of influencing matter, of modelling and fashioning it and giving it form, and it is thanks to this property that speech is creative. But only the speech of the magi, whose words are pregnant with meaning and love, is truly creative. Magi are initiates, beings who possess, first and foremost, knowledge, science, but who also possess great love, and the warmth of this love infuses life into their science. This is why the words of a magus have great power and can achieve concrete realizations: because they are filled with the light and warmth emanating from the one who says them.

Speech is powerless to fashion matter or to achieve anything

at all if it is not saturated with love and intelligence. Idle, empty words achieve nothing. So, as you see, we are obliged to study and understand many things if our words are to achieve results throughout the world, throughout the whole of creation, in the visible and the invisible worlds; if they are to set in motion humans, angels and archangels, spirits and the elements. Our speech must be bursting with intelligence and light, and also with warmth and love, with the fullness of love. Only then will it be truly powerful!’

I have already explained any number of methods to you in my talks, methods you can apply in various circumstances: exercises, gestures and formulas you can use to transform negative states, to soothe and harmonize yourselves and to forge bonds with heavenly entities. If you have time to glance through the volumes of lectures already published, and also those not yet published, you will find hundreds of explanations about this important question.⁶

Most people live, think and act mechanically, unconsciously, and their actions produce nothing significant. Their words and gestures are ineffectual, because there is no clear thought or purpose behind them. Today I want to emphasize the truth of this by throwing some new light on the gymnastics you do every morning. At first sight, these exercises may seem meaningless, for they are very easy to do, and the whole series takes only a few minutes.⁷ But they are not designed to make you labour and sweat

for hours on end with a view to developing your muscles, oblivious of the fact that there are other, far more important things to achieve. Initiatic Science teaches that all our activities must relate to all three worlds – the physical world, the world of feeling and the world of thought. In spite of the fact that you have been doing these gymnastics for years, you have achieved almost nothing, because you do not know how to use them in order to obtain powerful results for the benefit not only of yourself, but also of the Brotherhood and even of the whole world. Once again, therefore, let me show you how the word – whether spoken aloud or not – becomes potent when it is associated with a gesture, a feeling, a thought, an intention, an act of the will.

Here is the first exercise: you raise your arms over your head then run your hands down your body all the way to your feet, saying, ‘May all the blessings of heaven pour down on me and on the Brotherhood, for the glory of our heavenly Father.’ Do not ask for the blessings of heaven for yourself alone; you must help the whole Brotherhood by calling down heavenly blessings on it, too. It is so petty to do everything only for oneself! Why restrict yourself so? Why are you always so cautious and miserly that you cannot even put in a good word for others? It is because you do not know how to work with divine forces that you are continually struggling with the same difficulties. You must mobilize all the powers and possibilities God has given you – your powers of word, thought and gesture – and put them to work for the good of

the whole world.

Second exercise: bring your hands up from your feet, along the length of your body to the top of your head, saying, 'May all my cells be magnetized, vivified and resuscitated for the glory of our heavenly Father.' And all the cells of your body will be awakened and rejuvenated.

Third exercise: swing your right and left arms forward alternately as though you were swimming, saying, 'May I learn to swim in the ocean of cosmic light for the glory of our heavenly Father.' Yes, always for the glory of God, for no other reason. And this will be noted on high by those who are watching you. They will say, 'Ah, here is someone who is truly working for the Lord!'

Fourth exercise: swing both arms together, horizontally, first to one side then to the other, as though you were scything, saying, 'May all my ties with evil be severed and broken, for the glory of our heavenly Father.' Human beings never realize that they are bound by invisible bonds to the powers of hell. They cannot see these bonds, so they continue to eat and drink, amuse themselves and practise their shady deals, not knowing they are bound, tied hand and foot. They think they are free, that they are magnificent beings, when, in fact, they are no better than prisoners dragging their chains behind them! You must break these chains and free yourself for the glory of God, always for the glory of God.

Fifth exercise: 'May perfect balance reign throughout my being, for the glory of our heavenly Father.' And if you think of anything else while you are doing this exercise you will fall over! The only way to keep your balance is to concentrate on one thing, one thought, and let nothing else interfere or distract you. The organ of equilibrium is in the ear, and the ears represent wisdom. We have to be wise and reasonable in order to keep our balance; when we do not live wisely, when we break the law, we always knock something off balance.⁸

Sixth exercise: kneel on one knee and bring both hands up to your face, and then thrust them out in front of you, saying, 'May all the enemies of the Universal White Brotherhood be put to flight, expelled and rejected (you can choose whichever word you prefer), for the glory of our heavenly Father.' The enemies of the Universal White Brotherhood are not men and women, they are the spirits of darkness that enter into men and women in order to manifest themselves and destroy God's work, so we have every right to drive them out. We even have the right to say, 'May they be ground to dust, vaporized, annihilated', for they have no right to hinder the work of light.

The scriptures say the war we wage is not a war between people but between spirits, between the spirits that manifest themselves through people. But we cannot see this, so we think it is people who are our enemies. No, our enemies are beings of

another order. And if you can drive out these other beings that have come, uninvited, to dwell in certain people, you will see that those people are not wicked at all; on the contrary! As long as we do not realize this, we are like the man who, wanting to kill a fly that had settled on his friend's forehead, picked up a huge stone and crushed the fly... and killed his friend outright! This is the way people behave: they try to kill the fly – the evil spirit – and only succeed in killing the human being in whom that spirit dwells. When you are doing these exercises, therefore, you can say, 'May the enemies of the Universal White Brotherhood be put to flight and disappear for ever, for the glory of our heavenly Father.'²

Seventh exercise: swing both arms out in front of you, and then bend backwards, saying, 'May all my cells and organs be supple, for the glory of our heavenly Father.' Try to bend back as far as possible without falling over. This takes practice!

And, finally, the eighth exercise. As with the first exercise, you say, 'May all the blessings of heaven pour down on me and on the Brotherhood for the glory of our heavenly Father'.

So, there you are, my dear brothers and sisters: there is no room for idlers in the Brotherhood. You must work or you will have to leave! The Brotherhood does not need any dead weight to add to its burdens. You must do these exercises and do them consciously, otherwise you will moulder away. Even if you are old,

you must do them, for they will restore your youth. And this goes for the songs, too; I do not like to see brothers and sisters who are not singing. You must take the trouble to learn the songs, for this is the school of harmony, and you have to become harmonious. Yes, for that is how we shall revolutionize the world, through harmony, for almost everyone lives in chaos. One of the first things we learn here is to harmonize ourselves, and the songs contribute enormously to this. As it says in the meditation I read to you a few moments ago, sound, speech, can be extraordinarily powerful if it has a clear-cut goal and is full of love.

There, you have been given all kinds of fantastic means and methods, and it is now up to you to use them. You must do nothing for your own sake, only for the Brotherhood and for the glory of God. In this way, we can be sure that an unceasing flood of blessings will pour down on us and on the whole world.

The Bonfin, July 19, 1977

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The war we wage is not a war between people but between spirits
– *Ephesians 6:12*

- ¹ See *Hommage au Maître Peter Deunov*, Izvor Coll. n° 200, pp. 91-94.
- ² See *The Powers of Thought*, Izvor Coll. n° 224, chap. 5: ‘How thought produces material results’.
- ³ See *True Alchemy or the Quest for Perfection*, Izvor Coll. n° 221, chap. 2: ‘The human tree’ and chap. 7: ‘Grafting’.
- ⁴ See *The Fruits of The Tree of Life – The Cabbalistic Tradition*, Complete Works, vol. 32, chap. 22: ‘Nature spirits’.
- ⁵ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 14, chap. 17: ‘Love in the universe’, and *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 15, chap. 18: ‘Love is everywhere’.
- ⁶ See *A New Earth – Methods, exercises, formulas, prayers*, Complete Works, vol. 13, and *Golden Rules for Everyday Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 227.
- ⁷ See *A New Earth – Methods, exercises, formulas, prayers*, Complete Works, vol. 13, See the appendix at the end of the volume.
- ⁸ See *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete Works, vol. 11, chap. 13: ‘The balance restored’.
- ⁹ With the exception of this last exercise, which is done three times, each exercise is done six times.

Chapter Twelve

Respiration

I

Respiration is a function of the utmost importance. In fact, it is a function to which we owe life itself. But the question is to know how to use it in order to develop certain qualities, heal the sick, tap the forces of the cosmos and discover the solution to many problems. This respiration that gives us life, this ebb and flow that alternately fills and empties us, is a universal law of nature: everything breathes, even plants, even stones. Nothing can exist without respiration. We never stop breathing; but it is something we do unconsciously, and it is important to know exactly what respiration is. The science of respiration is highly developed in India, where it is taught by yogis, and many Westerners, who have eagerly adopted yogic breathing practices without realizing that these were not suited to their organism, have destroyed their inner balance or even died from the effects. It is very dangerous to embark on advanced breathing exercises of this kind without a guide.^{[1](#)}

The respiratory function is related to all the other functions of

the body. When a disciple learns to breathe correctly and harmoniously, every aspect of their being, including their sexuality, adjusts and achieves equilibrium. To breathe irregularly draws too much blood to the centres of sexuality in the rear of the brain whilst depriving the cells in the front of the brain of the nourishment they need. Study yourself, and observe how your breathing changes when you are in pain or when you are in the grip of anger or certain sexual emotions: it becomes fitful and irregular. This is why those who over-indulge in the coarser aspects of love and sexuality end by becoming jaded and brutish. Their intellectual faculties are diminished, because the frontal regions of the brain are insufficiently nourished.

You have to learn to breathe consciously, by which I mean that your thoughts must participate in your breathing. Instead of doing your morning breathing exercises mechanically while your thoughts are busy timing the different phases, use your fingers to count with, and occupy your thoughts with luminous ideas and mental images. It is possible to do some magnificent work in this way.

Breathing is another kind of nutrition, and, just as we have to chew our food thoroughly, we should also 'chew' the air we breathe. After breathing in, you should retain the air in your lungs (which are a kind of stomach) long enough for them to assimilate all the nutritional substances it contains. If you expel the air from your lungs almost at once, you are rejecting these substances

before your organism has had time to extract all the beneficial elements from them.^{[2](#)}

Just as water contains all the nutrients necessary to fish, so air contains all the elements needed by humans. We are like fishes swimming in the ocean of the atmosphere: we breathe air into our lungs and draw nourishment from it. But, of course, we have not yet learned to get all the elements we need from the air.

We can use deep breathing to heal our nervous system and many other disorders. If you have a deficiency of calcium, sodium, or iodine, for instance, a doctor will give you a series of injections. But an initiate is able to absorb these elements in their etheric state by breathing. You may ask, ‘How can they do that?’ and the answer is very simple: our bodies are well aware of which substances they need and have their own teams of highly skilled chemists who know how to extract them from the air. So, while breathing, initiates concentrate on the idea that their body is absorbing whatever element it needs. And in the same way, disciples do not rely only on the medicines they buy from the pharmacy. They know that if they breathe with love and conviction, they will find the elements they need in the atmosphere.

The main problem is to believe this – to be convinced of the efficacy of breathing – and to do the breathing exercises I have

given you, every day. It is this deep breathing that gives you your best meal of the day. You can skip a meal or even go several days without eating, but you must never neglect your breathing exercises, for it is thanks to them that you absorb the best elements.

It is by breathing harmoniously, also, that humans prepare the best conditions for their future incarnations, for it enables them to ally themselves with the most highly evolved intelligences and entities of the invisible world. The harmonious rhythm of their breathing attracts these entities, which come to dwell in them and work in their organism. And thanks to this close collaboration, when the time comes for them to leave this world, when their physical body disintegrates and all its constituent elements go back to their respective compartments, they will not find themselves alone: they will be in the company of these entities in the other worlds. At the moment, without being aware of it, without even knowing about all the friendly beings who are assisting you, you are working to create a community with them.

Respiration properly understood, therefore – deep, conscious breathing – holds incalculable blessings for your intellectual, emotional and psychic life. Disciples who want to manifest themselves properly on the astral, mental and physical planes must know this truth. You must watch yourself and learn to see the beneficial effects of rhythmic, harmonious breathing on your brain and all your faculties – even on your soul and spirit. It is the

most important thing there is. The functioning of all your chakras and spiritual centres and the mobilization of all your powers depends on your breathing.³ Respiration is a key, a magic wand. Those who know how to use it possess the secret of how to communicate with the sublime entities and attract them to themselves.

Sèvres, 1939

II

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Every sacrifice motivated by a divine idea is transformed into gold, into light, into love. This is the secret, the greatest of all secrets: the reason, the idea for which you work. If you work for yourself, for the satisfaction of your own desires, instincts, passions and appetites, the sacrifices you make in order to win over and manipulate others will not be transformed into light or divine energy. A great many people make sacrifices: they sacrifice their time, their money and their health, but as the motive behind their sacrifices is usually very mundane they fail to produce any great results. The one thing people know nothing about is the

importance of the idea underlying the act. The idea; this is the magical dimension, the philosopher's stone that transforms all it touches into gold. And this is why I say: work for the divine idea that light will triumph in the world, that the Great Universal White Brotherhood will exist throughout the world, that the kingdom of God will be established on earth. Everything you do for the sake of this idea is transformed into gold, that is to say, into health, beauty, light and strength.'

How true this is! And it is one of the things human beings know nothing about: the importance of an idea, of the idea that underlies our actions. Certainly, there is no lack of ideas in the world, but what kind of ideas? The idea of having a good time, of getting rich, of controlling and taking advantage of others! These are the ideas that fill most people's heads. Nobody has ever explained to them that an idea is a magical force that determines the pattern and orientation of all the particles of a person's being. Every aspect and dimension of a person's being, both physical and psychic, tends to conform to the ideal in their mind, because that is what is always at the centre, at the summit. That is what drives them and points the way, and they are obliged to obey it and follow its lead.

Human beings do not realize that the influence of a guiding idea reaches into the very depths of their being. They have no notion of the power of a divine idea, of how it can transform everything within them and around them. And what is the idea that

can do this? The most glorious of all ideas: to work for light, for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, for the propagation of the Universal White Brotherhood.⁴ No ideal can better this... at least I have never found one. If you found something better, I would adopt it willingly, but you will not, for no higher, more glorious ideal exists. This is the idea that turns to gold within you; that is to say, it becomes health, joy, strength, intelligence, hope and faith. This is the idea that has the power to transform you. Why are human beings always inconsolable? Why do they spend their time weeping and lamenting? Because they are incapable of understanding what great benefits a divine idea would bring them. Because the ideals they cherish are too personal, too egotistical.

And now, my dear brothers and sisters, prepare yourselves for a fantastic revelation that will dumbfound you. Time and again I have told you that the ordinary things we do in everyday life all have a deep significance that most people never dream of. You live your lives mechanically and automatically, never understanding or reflecting on the meaning of what you do. Take breathing, for example. I have already talked about this several times over the years, about how everything breathes, how the earth and the whole universe breathe. I have even told you that God himself breathes. He breathes out, and the world comes into being; he breathes in, and the world disappears and is absorbed back into himself – a process that takes billions of years, of course. And our own breathing is patterned on the breathing of the cosmos.⁵

But this, too, is something nobody ever thinks about. When we breathe in, we take air from the atmosphere, and it is the oxygen in the air that keeps us alive, and when we breathe out we expel carbon dioxide and other pollutants. Everybody knows this, and everybody thinks the matter stops there, that there is nothing they can do about it. But they are wrong. Why should humans continue to extract pure, life-giving elements from the universe and give back only poison and impurities? Of course, as long as their inner life is not pure this state of affairs will continue, but once they have learned to think, feel and act as they should, they will no longer pollute the atmosphere with toxic wastes. The life they breathe in will be pure, and the life they breathe out will be pure. You will say that is impossible. I assure you, it is perfectly possible. There have been saints and initiates of such purity that everything that came from them, all their exhalations, embalmed the air around them. They received divine life into themselves and, when they gave that life back to the world it was still as limpid, luminous and beneficial as when they received it, because they had not soiled it with impurities or evil of any kind.

Why should men and women be incapable of doing what an insect can do? Take bees, for example: bees came to earth from the planet Venus; that is why they are so different from all other insects. They have an extraordinary social organization and a highly developed sense of order and harmony, and they gather the nectar of flowers as food and transform it into honey. Can human

beings do as much? Absolutely not! Their cruelty, viciousness and lack of justice makes it impossible. But if they become like bees, if they work for an ideal of brotherhood, if they purify themselves and work for a divine idea, they will be capable of transforming what they absorb and producing something as delicious and fragrant as honey! For my part, I have already seen this; I have read it in the great book of living nature, in the designs of Cosmic Intelligence. It is written that one day it shall be so.

And what about roses? How have they managed to create the most exquisite of all perfumes? Many other plants receive exactly the same influences from the heavens, from the sun and the stars, but they only manage to produce a vile odour. But a rose has learned to receive perfume from the heavens and to dispense it here, on the physical plane. And the same is true of precious stones: they hand on to others the light they have received.

If you study the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *aleph*, a you will understand that it is simply a symbol of exchange, of a giving and receiving. You receive light, and you give light to others; you receive purity, and you give purity; you receive love, and you give love. This is why Jesus said, '*I am the Alpha*', for he is the only one who irradiates a light as pure as the one he receives. Everyone else gives off impurities.

I know very well that in saying these things I am leading you to regions that are virtually unattainable, but if you make it your

ideal to hand on to others the divine light, love and purity you receive, as whole and unsullied as when you received it, you will be preparing for the day when everything that emanates from you will be pure light. There is only one way to attain this ideal, and that is to work to spread the Universal White Brotherhood throughout the world, to work for the establishment on earth of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The nature of human beings' vibrations and emanations, even of their physical secretions, depends on their inner state, on their thoughts and feelings. Some of you have realized this for yourselves. Some of the sisters have even told me that when they were angry or after a sexual experience they noticed that their perspiration had a different odour. Every feeling, thought, or idea, therefore, is capable of transforming everything, even the reactions of our physical body.

I know in advance that what I have been saying will not be understood. Still less will it be put into practice, for it requires great efforts and great sacrifices, and nobody is willing to sacrifice anything. In spite of this, heaven has given me the task of revealing these things, perhaps not so much for those who are here today, as for those who will come in the future. I am obliged to give you this food, even though it is almost too rich for the powers of assimilation of present-day humanity. And although I am aware of people's faults and failings, I shall continue to do so. In this way it will be available in the future, so that those who are eager to undertake a divine work may believe it is possible and may learn

how to do so. You are all free to reject what I say and refuse to follow me, but I have my work to do. I have promised to reveal these things to you, and that promise is binding.

The Bonfin, September 3, 1977

¹ See *A New Earth – Methods, exercises, formulas, prayers*, Complete works, vol. 13, chap. 2: ‘A daily programme’.

² See *Harmony and Health*, Izvor Coll. n° 225, chap. 5: ‘Respiration and nutrition’.

³ See *Man’s Subtle Bodies and Centres - the Aura, the Solar Plexus, the Chakras...*, Izvor Coll. n° 219.

⁴ See ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’ – *commentaires des Évangiles*, Complete Works, vol. 9, chap. 4: ‘Demandez le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice’, and *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol. 29, chap. 7: ‘On participating in the work of the Universal White Brotherhood’.

⁵ See *The Mysteries of Yesod – Foundations of the Spiritual Life*, Complete Works, vol. 7, Part IV-5: ‘The angels of the four elements’, and *Langage symbolique, langage de la nature*, Complete Works, vol. 8, chap. 4: ‘Le temps et l’éternité II’.

