

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

LIFE FORCE



Complete Works

P R O S V E T A

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

LIFE FORCE



Complete Works – Volume 5 AN

EDITIONS PROSVETA

Readers are informed that this eBook might contain special illustrations and fonts that may shift when greatly enlarged.

Readers are asked to note that Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov's teaching was exclusively oral. This volume includes passages from several different lectures all dealing with the same theme.

Translated from the French

Original title: LES PUISSANCES DE LA VIE

Original edition

© 1975, Éditions Prosveta Société coop. (Suisse)

© 1978, Éditions Prosveta S.A. (France), ISBN 2-85566-108-0

© 2004, Éditions Prosveta S.A. (France), ISBN 2-85566-419-5

© Copyright Prosveta S.A. 2012. All rights reserved for all countries. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, adapted, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, whether privately or otherwise, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, audio-visual or otherwise, without the prior permission of author and publishers (Law of March 1957 revised).

Prosveta S.A – B.P.12 – 83601 Fréjus CEDEX (France)

ISBN 978-2-85566-419-4

Published simultaneously printed

international@prosveta.com

www.prosveta.com

Table of Contents

Title Page

Chapter One : Life

Chapter Two : Character and temperament

Chapter Three : Good and evil

Chapter Four : Pitting oneself against the dragon

Chapter Five : Presence and absence

Chapter Six : Thoughts are living entities

Chapter Seven : Unwanted guests

Chapter Eight : The strength of the spirit

Chapter Nine : Sacrifice

Chapter Ten : A high ideal

Chapter Eleven : Peace

Chapter One : Life

I

I am going to have to talk for a very long time and give you all kinds of explanations, arguments and examples, if I am to succeed in making you aware of the importance of life, that without life there would be nothing at all.

One day, when I was still very young and living in Bulgaria, I was listening to Master Peter Deunov giving a lecture. Knowing that I was studying palmistry, he asked me a question in front of the entire Brotherhood of Sofia. He said, 'Which line of the hand appeared first?' 'The life line', I replied. 'And which came next?' 'The heart line.' 'And then?' 'The head line.' I had answered correctly, and the Master was pleased with my reply.

In the beginning is life. Look at any creature you choose and you will see the same pattern: before everything else they have life; the capacity to feel and think comes later.

Life! The word sums up the entire wealth of the universe, undifferentiated and chaotic, waiting for a force to act upon it and organize it. In this one word 'life' are contained all future developments, just as all the organs which will eventually take shape and form a living body are potentially present in a single cell. Just as a seed must be planted, watered and nurtured before it reveals what it contains, so, given time, out of this magma, out of this chaotic jumble of undetermined reality that is life, all other things emerge and take shape.

This is how the organs we have today appeared, and many others will appear one day in the future! Since our physical body is built in the image of our astral body, and our astral body is in the image of the mental body and so on, all the way up to the divine plane, and since we have five sense organs on the physical plane (touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight) we also have five senses on the astral and mental planes. Our astral and mental organs are not yet developed, but they are there, and in good time they will manifest themselves. ¹ And once they are fully formed, humans will have untold possibilities to see, hear, taste, act and move about. Life, living beings, living

cells, micro-organisms contain in themselves all possibilities for their future development, but it will take thousands of years before they manifest themselves fully. This is the mystery, the splendour of life!

Human beings come and go, work and play, and busy themselves with all kinds of things, never realizing that their life is growing dingy and dirty and seeping away because they do nothing to protect it. They think that the life they have received is theirs to dispose of and that they have a right to use it for pleasure or to become rich, learned or famous, as they please. So they draw on their reserves without restraint until, one day, they find themselves utterly spent and obliged to abandon all their activities. It is completely senseless to behave in this way, for once we have exhausted our supply of life we have no other resources to fall back on. Sages have always said that the only essential thing is life itself and that we must protect, purify and sanctify it and eliminate whatever may hinder or prevent it from developing, because, if we do, life will give us everything else: health, strength, power, intelligence and beauty – everything!

In my lecture about the wise and the foolish virgins ² I explained that the oil Jesus spoke about symbolized life: when a person has burnt up their last drop of oil, their lamp goes out and they die. And you can find a symbol of life in every domain: for your car it is petrol; for plants it is water; for the creatures who live on the surface of the earth it is air or, more specifically for human beings, it is blood; in the field of finance and business it is gold or silver, and so on.

Life is the reservoir, the storehouse from which new creations are constantly being drawn, with ramifications stretching to infinity. And from this faceless, undifferentiated life, which is no more than a potentiality, the Spirit is ceaselessly engaged in creating new elements, new means, new forms. Life represents primordial matter and this is why it is so important.

But men and women are concerned about everything except life; if life were their first priority, if they were really concerned to cherish and protect it and keep it absolutely pure, they would find more and more possibilities opening before them for obtaining all that their hearts desire, because it is life, intense, luminous life that can give them everything. But as this is not within the scope of their philosophy all they do with their life is waste it.

They think that just because they are alive they are justified in doing whatever they please. They say, 'Well, we're alive, aren't we? So let's make the most of it!' Yes, but they very rarely achieve what they set their sights on, because they plunder their own resources. It is time for human beings to adopt a different philosophy. It is time they realized that their way of thinking affects their life, their vital reserves and the very quintessence of their being, and that if they think wrongly they will injure and spoil everything. This is what humankind needs to be taught.

Let me illustrate this with an example. Take the case of a young man whose father is very rich: as long as he studies and works well he gets a regular allowance. But then, one day, the boy begins to get into trouble and brings disrepute on his father, who responds by cutting off his allowance, and he suddenly finds himself penniless! What is the boy's greatest fault in a case like this? His greatest fault lies in putting his own life at risk, that is to say, in cutting himself off from the conditions, energies and vital currents of which money is simply the symbol. And, applying this to ourselves, we are doing the same thing when we use and abuse our existence to satisfy our own whims and fancies, when we allow ourselves to break all the laws. When we do that we are destroying our reserves and causing the flow of energies to dry up, and we end up destitute: not materially, physically destitute perhaps, but inwardly destitute. Life is the only wealth. And whatever name you give it: wealth, subsistence allowance, oil, quintessence, it comes to the same thing, for the word 'life' can be replaced by any of these terms. So life is the one most important reality, and if humans are neither intelligent nor enlightened they destroy the very source of their potential and of all their joy and inspiration.

When Jesus said, '*I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly*',³ what was the life he was talking about? When I read these words for the first time, a long time ago, I was astonished. I thought to myself, 'But his disciples were already alive! What was this life he was asking for?' And you all know the words of the Master Peter Deunov's song, *Sine moï pazi jivota*, 'My son, keep your life safely, this treasure buried within you...' This shows that the Master Peter Deunov had this same understanding of the importance of life. Yes, and now the world needs teachers and instructors capable of throwing light on this essential question of life.

Observe the behaviour of human beings: why do they spend their whole lives trying to possess things which are so much less important than life itself? They work for years in order to become rich and then, one day, they find themselves drained and exhausted and so sickened with it all that, if you weigh up what they have obtained against what they have lost, you will find they have lost everything and gained very little. But human beings are made in such a way that they are ready to lose everything, because they have never been taught that it is more important to have life, health and joy – even if they have nothing else – than to have great wealth and be too worn out to enjoy it. There is a proverb which says that a living dog is better than a dead lion. True, but there are still a lot of people who prefer to be dead lions!

What is lacking is the outlook of true philosophy. Human beings should be taught from their earliest childhood not to waste their life but to dedicate it to a sublime purpose, for that is the only way to ensure that it will become richer, stronger and more intense. Life is like a lump sum you invest in order to earn a profit: you place this capital in a bank on high so that, instead of deteriorating and being wasted, its value increases continually, and then, being rich, you will have the possibility of being better informed, of working to better purpose and growing in beauty and glory. Wouldn't it be far better if people reasoned like that?

Every day you exclaim in astonishment at the truth of what I tell you. You declare you have never heard such things, but in spite of that you go on doing exactly as you have always done, and the things you hear me saying are pushed to one side and never used. Now is the time to dedicate your life to luminous, divine activities. If you do this, not only will you no longer be wasting it, you will also be strengthening it, and with this capital you will be in a position to do far more. Whereas, if you give yourself up to emotion, sensuality and pleasure, you will be wasting your life, for everything has to be paid for, and you will be paying with your life! Nothing can ever be gained without the sacrifice of something else. As the French say, 'You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs!' But I say, 'Yes, you can. It is possible to make an omelette without breaking eggs. I know the secret!' You think it's impossible, don't you? Not at all. All you have to do is put all your capital in a bank on high, and then, instead of growing weaker and exhausting

yourself, the more you work the stronger and more powerful you become, because, with every effort you make, something comes flowing into you to make up for what you have spent. But this will only happen, of course, if you place all your 'money', all your 'capital' in a heavenly bank!

This is why it is so important that you should know who you are working for and what goal you are aiming at, for it is this that determines the direction your energies will take. If, for instance, you are working for your father, you will not lose, you will gain. What counts most, therefore, is to know for what purpose you are spending your energies and in what direction you are working, for your future hangs on this: you are working either to impoverish or to enrich yourself.

Most people work unwittingly for an enemy concealed within who is robbing and despoiling them. Truly spiritual people are more intelligent: they work and spend their energies for someone who is really themselves, and in this way they are the ones to gain. This is the intelligent thing to do: to become richer, not poorer. And it is not from selfishness or for the sake of their personality; on the contrary. Let's say, for instance, that you decide to work, not for yourself but for the collectivity. Well, since you are a member, an integral part of the collectivity, everything that improves the collectivity and makes it more beautiful will benefit each individual member of it, and this includes you. You gain because you have placed your capital in a bank called 'family', 'community', 'universal brotherhood', of which you are a member. Whereas if you decide to work for yourself, that is, for your own, mediocre little 'self', it will be a disaster: your work will not benefit you in any way. You will perhaps object, 'But of course it will benefit me. I'm bound to get something out of all that work I've been doing for myself!' No. That is where you are mistaken, for your personal, separate, egotistical little self is a bottomless pit, and by working for yourself you have thrown everything you have into that pit. That is not the way to work! Those who are too individualistic and selfish have no notion of what they might gain if they worked for the collectivity. They say, 'I'm no fool. I'm working for myself and I'm getting on nicely...' and that is precisely how they lose all their capital. So the truth is just the opposite of what it seems. Yes, initiates know that if appearances point in one direction, the truth is to be found in the opposite direction, so they work for the collectivity, and it is they who benefit

from it most.

When I speak of ‘the collectivity’ I am not speaking only of humankind, but of the whole universe, of all creatures in the universe and even of God himself. This universal collectivity, this immensity for which you are working, is like a bank, and all the work you do for it will come back to you, one day, increased many times over. For the universe does a very prosperous business; it is continually acquiring new constellations, new nebulae, new galaxies, and all this wealth will be yours.⁴

Those who work only for themselves instead of for immensity impoverish themselves, and nobody remembers or loves them, not even their own family: they are far too egocentric. They never think of others, so why should others think of them? They end their lives in disappointment, bitterness and grief. And do you think it ever occurs to them that it was their own outlook, their own philosophy that was at fault? Not a bit of it! No, no. They have always been in the right and everybody else is wicked and unjust! They deserve to be loved and helped! ‘Deserve, deserve!’ But what have they ever done to deserve anything? Whereas those who are full of love, kindness and abnegation, even if, to begin with, people think they are stupid and ridiculous, and exploit and take advantage of them, as time goes on they come to be recognized and loved for what they are: really exceptional human beings. One day those who have worked for the whole universe will be loved, cherished and rewarded. But, of course, that day will not come immediately.

When you put some money into a bank you don’t receive the interest on it the very next day. You have to wait, and the longer you wait the more interest you get. And the same law applies in the spiritual domain. You may have been working with great love, patience and faith and, to begin with, you see no results. But don’t be discouraged; if you give way to discouragement it shows that you have not properly understood the laws that prevail on earth. Yes, indeed! You have to know the rules by which banking and administrations function. If you knew them you would realize that one always has to wait. In the long run, riches will rain down on you from all sides; the whole universe will fling fabulous wealth at you. In fact, even if you wanted to avoid your reward it would be impossible: you will have brought it all on yourself. It is a question of justice!

So you can see how an egocentric philosophy is completely stupid. People rely on appearances, but appearances lie. How many times have I told you this! When you watch the sun and the stars, you have the impression that they are moving and the earth is standing still. Oh, yes, appearances can be very misleading! If we want to uncover the truth, we have to look beyond appearances, because what is considered useful and advantageous for today is very often harmful for the future. This is why initiates never act according to the criteria of the ignorant masses, and they are the ones we should follow, for only they have understood. So, never waste or injure your life for the sake of anything else. Nothing has any value compared to the value of life. Obviously, there are a few exceptional cases where people have given their lives in order to save others or in defence of an ideal. Yes, but these are the only instances that can justify the sacrifice of one's life; in every other instance we must protect and safeguard it.

The prophets and initiates who gave their lives for an ideal or for the glory of God did not, in fact, lose anything, for heaven gave them a new, far richer, far more beautiful life to reward them for having sacrificed their own life for the cause of good. I am not saying that we must always, and in every case, preserve our life: there are rare exceptions. But, generally speaking, a disciple has a duty to preserve, purify and intensify his or her life, because life is the source, the reservoir, the starting point for every other possible development, whether intellectual, religious, emotional, aesthetic or otherwise. The pattern is exactly that of the seed. Life comes first, and in that indistinct, undifferentiated life lies the germ of every future project and realization; knowledge, wisdom and light come later. But what is life? No one knows. It is very difficult to put your finger on it; it has neither form nor colour and yet it contains everything in potentiality. No one can foresee what may yet emerge from life; the possibilities are infinite.

You will perhaps disagree with me when I say that human beings are not concerned with life, that they do not try to preserve it. You will say that, on the contrary, everybody is anxious to prolong life. To prolong it, yes. I agree. But not to spiritualize and purify it or to illuminate and sanctify it and make it divine. People want to prolong their lives because they want to go on doing all the disgusting things they do, committing crimes and running up debts.

The question is still far from being understood by scientists, doctors or chemists. Do you really believe they want to prolong human lives so that they may be dedicated to the service of God or for the sake of his kingdom? Not at all! So I am not mistaken when I say that no one really cares about life: no one cares about true life. In other words, no one is capable of obtaining joy, beauty, power, wealth, renown or knowledge without making a mess of their life. In one way or another, whatever people do, they always manage to make a mess of their lives.

Initiates, on the other hand, are solely concerned with embellishing, intensifying, sanctifying, purifying and consecrating their lives. In doing so, they are, at the same time, working to achieve greater intelligence, power and happiness, because once their life has become divinely pure and harmonious its influence spreads into other regions and acts on innumerable intelligences and entities, and these entities respond by bringing inspiration. And you too, if your first concern is to enhance and perfect your life, you will be given intelligence, knowledge and strength. If your life is perfect, then it is life itself that will obtain everything else for you. Once your life is pure, noble and divine, you will never need to go looking for knowledge in libraries or universities, for it will give you all the most extraordinary knowledge drawn from the archives of the universe.

And now, instead of trying to work magic, as so many do, in an attempt to get people to love and revere you, concentrate on the quality of your life! When the life that emanates from you is vibrant with light and love, it will cause thousands to love you. It is life itself, you see, the life that emanates from you, that takes charge and wins the love of others. Yes, it is quite extraordinary: who knows what chord it touches in others or how it speaks to them, but all of a sudden everybody begins to love you. So you see, life takes it upon itself to bring you different gifts at different moments: sometimes love, sometimes knowledge and sometimes joy.

The highest form of magic, therefore, the highest form of white magic, is a pure, luminous life. And if you radiate this life to all around you, the day will come when you will no longer be able to escape from the consequences: even if you flee to another planet, even if you plead to be left alone, you will be pursued by love: you will not be able to get away from it! And if your life is

dismal, chaotic or not straightforward, you will not be able to escape the consequences, either, for the life that emanates from you will set off hostile reactions in those it touches, bringing all kinds of disaster down on you. True magic, the most authentic and most potent form of magic, therefore, is the life you lead. There is no need to be concerned about anything else: magic, knowledge and love will all be yours. Some of you will say, 'I'm very much alive, thank you! I can eat and drink and go about my business.' Perhaps, but you are not really alive, you are content to live like a vegetable; you don't know what it means to be really alive. There are different degrees of life, billions of different degrees.

The day you understand that true magic lies in the way you live, you will receive all you desire without even having to ask for it. And because that is so, I feel like saying exactly the opposite of Jesus: *'Do not ask, and it will be given to you; do not search, and you will find; do not knock, and the door will be opened for you!'* Yes, but when is this true? When you live a divine life. There: now you know! And one day those words will be written in the new Gospel, for Jesus thought this too, but he could not say it. The people of his day would not have understood. If he came back today, he would say, 'Live a divine life, ask for nothing and you will have everything!' Why? Because when you live a divine life you are giving, and those who give receive. And even if you have never expressed any special wish or asked for anything in particular it does not matter, it will still be given to you. Of course if the Inquisition existed today it would be in a great state about me: 'What arrogance! What pride! This man is trying to undo what Jesus taught!' and I would certainly be burnt at the stake! Until today I have always explained and emphasized what Jesus said, and now, today, for the first time, I have dared to say exactly the opposite. Ah, but what I say is true, given certain conditions, and that is what you have to understand.

I have no desire to destroy what Jesus taught; certainly not! It is all absolutely true. In fact, in another lecture I explained what Jesus meant when he said: *'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.'* ⁵ And I showed you the profound understanding Jesus had of human nature and of the trinity of heart, mind and will in human beings. The thing is, who does the asking, who does the searching, and who is it that knocks? It is the heart that asks, the intellect that

searches and the will that knocks. And what does the heart ask for? Love and warmth. What is the intellect looking for? Light, wisdom and intelligence. And why does the will knock? The will knocks because it finds itself in prison, and it needs space and freedom in order to act and create. So, there you have the trinity: ask for love, look for wisdom and knock to become free. What tremendous understanding Jesus had. The only thing is that perhaps the disciples missed something in their notes, for it is not clear what is meant by 'Ask, and it will be given to you.' What are we supposed to ask for? Money? Cars? Women? And what are we meant to look for? Our neighbour's fleas? And what are we meant to knock on? None of this has ever been properly explained, so people go on asking, searching and knocking and are surprised when they fail to get results: they receive nothing, they find nothing and nothing is opened for them. And yet all this is undeniably true and mathematically exact.

The heart asks, and it asks neither for knowledge nor strength; it asks for love and warmth. The intellect does not ask; it seeks, and the object of its search is the secret knowledge, hidden truths. And the will needs neither knowledge nor warmth; all it needs is to be free to act. The will wants to be strong and powerful, free and creative. How clear and precise all this is: each human faculty is especially designed for a particular function. This is true psychology, and we must not get everything mixed up. But when I examined Jesus' thought in even greater depth, I found that we should turn his formulas upside-down (I can't help it if this scandalizes some Christians!), and say, 'Do not ask, and it will be given to you. Do not search, and you will find. Do not knock, and the door will be opened for you.' Yes, but this will only be true if your life is divine in its radiance, its vibrations and emanations.

Sèvres, April 4, 1970

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

The Parable of the Wise and the Foolish Virgins – *Matt. 25: 1-13*

'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' *John 10: 10*

‘Ask, and it will be given to you’ – Luke 11: 9-10

II

Well, there you are: before we began talking about it, you thought you knew what life was, didn't you? And now you are surprised to find that, in reality, you did not know very much about it. Yes, because until you have learned how to emanate life in such a way that it gives you everything, reveals everything to you and opens all doors for you, you still do not know what it is.

From now on, therefore, you must endeavour to intensify your life and make it fruitful, for it is capable of working the highest forms of magic in hearts and souls and minds, in the entities and forces of nature and even on physical objects. Yes, it is high time all men and women realized that it is completely idiotic to throw away an eternity of splendour in exchange for the pleasure of eating and drinking, sleeping and eking out a paltry little existence! People spend their time rushing about, hectically trying to acquire more and more possessions, only to find, in the end, that they have lost everything. Tell me: do you really and truly think it is intelligent to end up like that? If initiates are so well-balanced and full of peace, joy, health and every blessing, it is because it is life that concerns them more than anything else, because they have understood that the most potent form of magic is found in life and nowhere else. Yes, in life, in being capable of breathing life into others. There is no greater magic than that of animating and stimulating human beings, of firing them with enthusiasm and resuscitating them. That is life! But it is a higher form of life, for life has many, many different degrees!

Human beings still have no clear idea of the different degrees of life. They have settled for the lowest levels, and there they stay. But they are not living; they are vegetating! Once they are properly guided they will learn to live differently. Then, instead of wasting and spoiling their life, they will begin to amplify and sanctify it, and they will be astonished and delighted to discover that the only truly effective magic is life, that it is already at work in every direction, producing extraordinary phenomena and, above all, that they are beginning to be loved by others! If you give life – a pure, intense, luminous

life – to others, they respond with love. Whereas if you give them filth, in other words if you emanate something that demagnetizes, demolishes and disintegrates, you are bringing death with you, and others begin to hate you and close their doors to you. This is magic, too, of course: black magic. And this, unfortunately, is what people learn: how to make heaven close its doors to them. Yes! Can't you see? If you produce nothing but disorder and disharmony, heaven will refuse its gifts, and you will no longer receive its life-giving, inspiring currents of energy. You will be left more and more to yourself and feel increasingly deprived and restricted, in a void. And human beings will follow heaven's example and begin to close their doors to you, too. Why are people so ignorant? Didn't they spend years at university? Yes, but nobody at a university could ever explain any of this to you!

Human beings have still not begun to study true science, for chemistry, physics, biology, astronomy and mathematics are not really true science. True science is the science of life, the science of how to live, and isn't this the only science that is never even mentioned at a university? There is no room in the curriculum for this science. But as long as I live I shall never cease to repeat what I am telling you today: 'You have never accepted the light handed down for thousands of years by initiates; you are guided by a pernicious philosophy, and you are spreading death and destruction all round you; you are destroying the source, the very roots of your existence. You have no idea what life really is!'

Why do you suppose you eat three – and sometimes four – times a day? You eat and drink and then you go to work, or do some reading or whatever it may be. But why do you start by eating? And while you are eating are you learning something? Are you working? No; you are introducing life into yourself, and as it begins to infiltrate into you it reaches every cell in your arms and legs, your ears, mouth, brain and so on, and gives them energy. And your legs can run and win first prize in a race; your arms can flail like windmills, and you can become a boxing champion and win still more prizes, and so on and so on, the same with your ears, your brain... every bit of you. But if you don't eat you are not able to run or to box or even to talk. So, you see, once you have introduced life into your organism, it seems to it that all your cells are given life, strengthened and stimulated so that all your faculties become active. The foundation, therefore, is life: it is life that animates and

nourishes all the rest.

Similarly, as I have discovered from observing what goes on every day, life can put you in touch with the divine world. This is no invention on my part: if you cannot see it, it is because you are not observant enough. If your eyes can see and your ears hear, it is because you have eaten. Try not eating for a few days and you will neither see nor hear quite so well. This proves that when life fails everything else fails too. Whereas when your life is intense, luminous and pure it opens other ears and eyes within you, and you begin to hear and see invisible realities: laws, truths and correspondences. Initiates do not learn these things in books; they see and hear the subtle realities of the invisible world, which are still unknown to even the most brilliant scientists. And they are able to do so because they possess this higher form of life which animates their higher faculties: their eyes see and their ears hear things which are beyond the reach of our physical senses. It is life itself that gives them these revelations, so the great thing is to possess that life.

When Jesus said, *'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly'*, what kind of life was he referring to? He was talking about a different degree of life, about a life that is so subtle, spiritual, luminous and divine it enables us to see, hear, feel, taste and touch a reality which is beyond the grasp of a purely physical, animal life. This is what Jesus understood by 'life', and he prayed that heaven would give his disciples that life, the only kind of life that enables humans to understand and breathe freely in the heavenly regions.

You have a seed and then, one day, it becomes a tree with roots, a trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruit. How did the seed manage to produce all that? It was life that did it. Life possesses every possibility in itself, but it has to be channelled in the right direction, just like water. If you don't dig your irrigation ditches so that the water can reach the fruit and vegetables in your garden it will not do them any good and they will die. But gardeners know this, so they dig their ditches and lay their pipes in advance, and then the water flows along them and waters all their plants. Why do people never pause to reflect on that? If they did so they would understand that the first thing to work at is life; in other words, the first thing to do is to find water and then pump it up to the higher levels, just as physical water is pumped up

to the fiftieth or hundredth floor of a skyscraper.

A human being is another kind of skyscraper but does not have merely fifty or a hundred floors but thousands of floors, and they all have to be supplied with water, all the way to the inhabitants on the very top floors, in the brain. But human beings, instead of sending water up to the top floors to feed their spiritual cells, send it all down to the lower levels where their instincts, passions and lowest desires live, and then they have none left for the top storeys. So the inhabitants on the top floors are dazed and drowsy and unable to do anything productive because they are too anaemic. Yes, there are entities that live in the brain whose work is to do research, make observations, speak and send messages, but they are incapable of working and carrying out their proper functions because they are comatose from lack of water! You have no idea of all the different instruments and all the different inhabitants that exist within you! I could describe them all to you: their characters, the task each one has been assigned, their clothes, colour, tastes, even the food they eat, but that will have to wait for another day.

So, you see, if life is lacking in you it is because you never think of channelling it to the sublime regions. Life is whatever bears fruit, gives beauty and leads to fulfilment. Not long after you have planted a seed, life begins to manifest itself, and it speaks its own special language: the appearance of tiny rootlets, shoots, leaves and buds. That is what life is: a budding, a flowering, a riot of beauty, an enrichment, an overflowing. If you begin to pay attention to life, if you plant and water it, if you train it upwards it will flourish and, in flourishing, it will awaken cells and faculties within you whose existence you have never even suspected. So nutrition explains it all. When you eat, you take in life and that life infiltrates into every corner of your being, bringing you all kinds of delights and indescribably rich and splendid states of consciousness. Even poets and musicians find themselves incapable of doing justice to all the forms, colours, expressions and melodies that life uses to manifest itself.

And now we might ask, 'How is it that no one, not even scientists, know what life is?' They know a great many things, they can give you information about all kinds of chemical combinations, but when it comes to knowing what life is they are completely in the dark. All they can say is that it is the

greatest of all mysteries. But why is it such a mystery to them? Because it has never occurred to them that they must move onto a much higher level if they want to discover what life is. Life can only be known on high, not below. On the lower level we can only find the vital instincts, animal, vegetable and mineral life. When human beings rise to the sublime heights from which life flows, when they have acquired much subtler, much more spiritual perceptions, then they will discover what life really is.

Life is God himself.⁶ There is no life outside of God. It is he who has created and distributed life, and if people are incapable of knowing life it is because they no longer believe in God. God is the source of life, and this means that we can only know life if we turn to the Godhead. But human beings are so presumptuous they even delude themselves that it is they who give life to their children. No, they are no more than depositaries of life. God has created life and entrusted some of it to men and women so that they can hand it on to their children, but they are not capable of producing it for themselves. Only God creates life, and only he can teach us the mysteries of life.

Today, perhaps for the very first time, try to understand me and say, ‘Yes, we have decided to change the direction of our life, to consecrate and sanctify it and make it more beautiful.’ If you do this, everything will begin to change for the better, including your health and the way you actually see and feel yourself, and whatever comes your way after this will be quite different. But if you cling stubbornly to your old conceptions you will never find anything, and that will be just too bad! You will continue to rub along for a few more years and then, when you get to the other side, you will be shown what an inferior, beggarly, thoroughly pitiful existence you have led. Even if you have devoured whole libraries full of books, even if you have five or six university degrees, you will still be told that you have lived like an animal, and you will have delayed your evolution tremendously. And, once again, you will have to experience suffering and distress. Whereas, new doors will open before those who have understood me, and their destiny will be changed.

As I have already said, what is all-important is the direction in which you are heading, who you are working for, the goal you are pursuing, the

dominant idea in your life. That is all that matters. But since it has always been drummed into us that we must live and think in the old, accepted way if we want the approval of our fellow men and women, we go on living exactly as everybody else has lived for thousands and thousands of years, without realizing that that is not truly life at all. Whereas, those who have understood and who want to live a divine life, those who are unafraid and bold and persevering enough to keep on going in spite of obstacles and adversity will, one day, be given strength, power and light. For a time they will have to suffer, that is true. But their distress will not last long for it is only the outward appearance: the inner reality is quite different. The reality is that they will, one day, break through into light and splendour. Whereas, those who have opted for the unreality of external appearances are in a dead-end street (what the Turks call a *tikmak sokak*, 'an alley with no exit', and the French a *cul-de-sac*). Yes, human beings are in a dead-end street because they have chosen a mirage rather than reality.

Obviously, those who choose the externals will always find some food to nibble on and gnaw at, so they content themselves with that, without in the least realizing that they are laying up tragedy for themselves in the future and that, in the meantime, they in turn are being gnawed to the bone by other entities. Whereas, those who are not seduced by appearances and have chosen authentic reality could tell you of the riches and glories in which they live. The trouble is, though, that even if they did tell you, you would not believe them. You would feel safer keeping to the beaten track; everybody has always stuck to the beaten track so it must be safer. Who knows what risks you would be running if you took a short cut straight up the mountain? Is there any wonder that I am always saying, 'Poor, wretched human beings! What faulty reasoning! What empty criteria!' Their situation is really deplorable, and there is no way of freeing them from their trials and tribulations for they will never believe you. I am sometimes very sad to see that whatever I say about all the truths I have touched and tasted, the brothers and sisters simply don't believe me. They prefer to plod along with the common herd. The majority has voted for the dusty, well-worn track that everybody else follows: it is good enough for them. Fortunately, there are a few exceptions, a few 'sun crazy' people who listen to me and follow me and who will pass on the good news to others, as has already happened in the past.

So, let me say it once again: the only thing that really matters is who you are working for and the direction you have given to your life. Life is the water which nourishes and vivifies, and if you send it upwards so that it nourishes all those anaemic, somnolent beings in your upper storeys, they will rouse themselves and begin working again and, thanks to the delicate instruments in their possession, they will give you all the information you need about the universe and your own inner life.

Is there any need for me to give you examples of how people waste and spoil their life? Take the question of love, for instance: so many people fritter away their love in the dust instead of sending it up to nourish the entities in their brain. And the result is that they lose all their inner light and become more and more like animals, because their lives are directed towards the abyss. Whereas others, who have consecrated that energy and who try to sublimate and transform it, have become geniuses and teachers and benefactors of humanity.⁷ Why does science never study this question? It knows next to nothing about it; the only advice it gives is to tell people they should get rid of all that energy on the lower level; otherwise, apparently, it will be bad for their health. What a brilliant discovery!

Once again I ask you, ‘Who are you serving? What direction are you going in? Tell me: what is your goal, your ideal?’ You will perhaps say, ‘But why do you ask? Why do you want to know all that?’ ‘So that I can foretell what is in store for you in the future, how events are going to unfold for you, whether you are going to be strong or weak, rich or poor, in light or in darkness.’ ‘Is there any connection?’ you will ask. ‘Yes, indeed, there is. If you answer my question I can tell you exactly what is in store for you.’ But people never see the correspondences or relationships between two things.

If you have understood me correctly today, you are in a position to rebuild your future. Make up your mind, at last, to give life to those beings that dwell in you, so that they can do their work, and you will see for yourself that life is capable of giving you everything: knowledge, love, goodness, beauty – everything! Before today you had not seen this clearly. You did not know how to interpret the different phenomena that take place before your eyes every day, and you never realized that exactly the same phenomena take place in the spiritual domain. And, above all, you never understood that it

was life that was the only true magic, that it was life that was capable of winning you the admiration, love and respect of men and women and of the whole universe. And now, if you want to practise magic, you can. No need to pronounce strange formulas or draw circles around yourself, no need for fumigations or mysterious ceremonies. All you need is to concentrate on improving and enhancing your life, on enriching it with ever more love, abnegation and purity, and then to distribute it, to scatter it abroad throughout the length and breadth of the universe.

There are all kinds of dangers and difficulties involved in other kinds of magic; only the magic of a divine life is without danger of any kind.⁸ Obviously it takes time, whereas other kinds of magic are much more rapid. But there are always two sides to a coin: if you apply instructions from a book in the hope, for instance, of winning someone's love, you may well succeed and the person will fall in love with you, but as you forced him or her to do so, you have broken the law of free will, and another law will see to it that you meet with all kinds of difficulties and problems. The price you pay will be very heavy indeed. Besides, there is no guarantee that you will be any happier for being loved by that particular person or that he or she will bring you luck! In fact you may well find that this love will bring all kinds of misfortunes with it. Ah, yes. If you dabble in magic you are always going to have to ask yourself, 'Am I breaking any laws? What are the consequences going to be? What is this going to cost me?' and so on. On earth, everything has its price, and this is something that magicians have never learned. No wonder that so many of them come to a bad end. In the final accounting, you see, they have to pay!

The only magic which costs nothing is the magic of a divine life: you ask for nothing for yourself, you do nothing to gain possessions of any kind and, lo and behold, everything is given to you. This is what Jesus meant: 'When you live a divine life you will no longer ask and you will be given everything, you will no longer search but you will find, you will no longer knock but all doors will be opened to you.' All wisdom is summed up in these few words; this is the very quintessence of esoteric philosophy. You will probably observe that I say that about every lecture! Yes, I know. But the point is that it is true, because every lecture contains the quintessence of the whole of life, but each time it is presented from a different angle.

There are, of course, several points that need further explanation, such as the question of the inhabitants that live on the top floor, in the brain, but that will come in good time. For the moment, accept what I have told you and do not waste your life. Perhaps you will ask, 'But are you telling us that we shouldn't work to earn money and have a house and a car, or get married and have children?' No, I have never said that. I am simply saying that if you do all these things in exactly the same way as everybody else does them today, you will not know where to draw the line, any more than they do, and you will end by going beyond what is reasonable and acceptable and start destroying yourselves. If you work sufficiently to provide for your material needs and to have time to think, meditate and love, that is excellent. But why be so set on possessing more than everybody else? People want first one thing and then another and then yet another, and they play havoc with their life in the attempt to get what they want. No, you must work reasonably and consecrate everything you do to a divine ideal. All these people who want to become multimillionaires or 'barons' of this, that or the other are bound to overstep the mark, with the result that they destroy their physical and emotional balance and often end up in a nursing home or the psychiatric ward! And yet these are the people everybody looks up to and tries to imitate!

As for young people, their models are film stars, mafia bosses, drug addicts or anarchists, and they are ready to go to any lengths to be like them. The press, films, plays and advertising all contribute to leading them astray. It is as though they had all sworn to bring about the downfall of humanity – and their own downfall, at the same time, of course! Human beings are rushing headlong towards the abyss but, as they cannot see it immediately ahead, they are unwilling even to admit that it exists and continue on their mad course. If they could see the danger ahead they might be more careful, but the abyss is still in the distance and it is well camouflaged, so they race on and, unable to stop or change course at the last minute, they fall over the edge. There is always a moment when it is too late: you can see the gulf yawning at your feet but you cannot stop or go back. It is the end of the road! Time and again I have heard people say, 'I can see the open pit at my feet but I can't stop'!

Blessed are they who have understood me today! But even if you have not understood me there are thousands of others in the world who will, because

they have antennae tuned to my wavelength. Yes, even if you don't understand me, others will; in fact many will accept my words more wholeheartedly than many of you. Already, I read or hear certain phrases or formulas of mine being repeated all over the world. It is wonderful to see how they are being received!

Sèvres, April 6, 1970

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' *John 10: 10*

III

In the previous lecture I gave you an example that should have made you think: that of the gardener. A gardener plants vegetables and fruit trees and even digs irrigation ditches for the water, but if there is no water the plants dry up. And this is what happens with human culture: human beings have got everything ready, nothing is lacking in the way of equipment, but they have forgotten to bring in the water, by which I mean life and energy, so everything withers and dies. And the difference between an initiate and the man or woman in the street is precisely this: the first concern of an initiate is to make sure there is water, because they know that it will create its own channels.

Human beings possess arms and legs, a stomach, lungs, a heart, a liver and a brain. It is all there; they have everything they need. Yes, but if there is no 'water', in others words if they have no blood, they will die. But if they are given blood, their organs come back to life, and they are once again able to walk and talk and gesticulate. There is nothing new here; everyone knows this. But then why, when it comes to the spiritual, psychic dimension of life, does everyone forget that the first thing they must do is turn on the water? They forget about that, and the result is that they are always tired, dazed and half asleep. Everything is in place... Yes, everything except the water.

Let me give you another example: all our houses are equipped with electrical wires and appliances, but if there is no current nothing will work. And it is the same in every area of life. So we need to change the prevalent philosophy, which is only interested in improving the external aspects of life and does nothing to improve life itself, and bring in the water. Where agriculture is concerned everybody recognizes that water is essential: no plants will grow without it. But where human life is concerned nobody seems to know what is needed. This is why the science of life will, one day, be the greatest of all discoveries.

So, as you see, there are still a great many things to be said about all this and, I promise you, they will be said. Those who want to perfect themselves and work at their own evolution can find everything they need here. Let them only come, and they will be given all the arguments, methods, means and materials, all the conditions they need in order to change their lives. Because that is what is needed most of all: that you change your lives. Live a pure, intense, luminous life and it will take care of all the rest: it will attract beings who are favourably inclined towards you and will love and help you. Live this pure life and let it take care of the rest; you have no idea how far it will go to find creatures who are exactly suited to your needs and lead them to you. One day you will say, 'I didn't look for my soul-mate or my beloved, and yet, here she is! She has come to me from the depths of the universe!'⁹

But try and get human beings to understand this! There is no life emanating from them; they are incapable of sending it out to find and draw to themselves a being who is attuned to them. Instead, they hunt for their soul-mate in the personal columns of newspapers, at parties and even in night-clubs! Oh, yes! And, of course, they do find someone; yes, indeed! They find someone to bring them suffering and drive them mad! Why? Because that is not how they should have set about it. And now, let me tell you something completely new: do not try to find your soul-mate; try instead to live a divine life and leave it to your divine life to find your beloved for you. The day you meet him or her, you will say, 'Yes, you're the one I've been looking for, for so long. I know you. We've been together for thousands of years.' And once you have met your soul-mate, you will never be affected by the arguments and quarrels that plague most people whose love is too commonplace. They

have barely found each other before they start quarrelling and cutting each other's throats, because they have met on too low a level.

I once knew a wonderful young woman, a member of the Brotherhood, who had the most marvellous voice. There may have been no other voice in the world to equal it. She could have become enormously wealthy; she could have had everything she wanted, but she was too stupid. She was absolutely determined to get married. She was very young and I gave her every argument I could think of: that she should wait, that she would have hundreds and thousands of men to choose from later, whereas if she got married in a hurry she would choose unwisely and suffer for it, and so on and so on. Well, she would not listen to me and she met someone in a night-club. Yes, a night-club! Once again I warned her, but there was no way of convincing her, and they got married. And, once married, they almost killed each other! They fought like cat and dog. Yes, they fought in order to prove the truth of what I had said, and did they prove it! Finally, they separated: he went off to South America and she stayed in France. Later on, of course, she looked for a second husband, and it was the same story all over again! Then a third, but it was no better. And now she is all alone and in a very sorry state!

I say to you: 'Don't look for someone! Be content to live, first of all, and you will find that thousands will come to you.' Suppose it is the middle of winter and everyone is shivering with cold: if you are a fire they will all gather round to warm themselves at the blaze. But nobody is alight; everybody is as cold as ice and wonders sadly why nobody comes near them, why nobody loves them! It is because they are too cold. It is as simple as that, but people just don't understand. Are you all very surprised at the simplicity of it? Ah, simplicity! What is simplicity? It is to live, only to live, but to live divinely. There are too many complicated, sophisticated, untruthful things in the world. People boast and bluff and deceive each other with high-flown speeches. In fact, I tell you this, 'Don't even believe what I tell you, if you don't want to, but try to feel the truth; try to see whether I lead the kind of life I am talking about, and believe in that life and nothing else. For my part, I believe only in life.'

And now, if you ask me how I explain the fact that there are so few who decide to change their life and the way they think, feel and behave, I would

say that the first reason is that they have no clear idea of the advantages to be gained from such a change. They are persuaded that the kind of life that every Tom, Dick and Harry leads is true life. You can see proof of this in the phrase that comes up time and again when something goes wrong; whenever something really sad or terrible happens, people say, 'Oh well! That's life!' If that is their attitude, how can they be expected to change? The second reason is that they do not think it is possible. And the third reason is that, for most people, it is extremely difficult to change, so they never really make up their minds to attempt it. Everything else is easy: they can get a degree and earn a lot of money – that is easy! But to change one's life is another matter entirely. As for me, if you think that when I was young I was like I am today, you are greatly mistaken! Not at all. I was as great a scallywag as any. Nobody is perfect when they arrive on this earth; it takes years and years to become any better. And when one is a bad lot – a drunkard, a thief or an assassin – it is not so easy to change; it may take several incarnations.

And let me tell you that Christians have not understood what Jesus thought about this. Jesus knew all about reincarnation and it is obvious that he believed in it, but Christians cannot see that. Let me take an example: how could such a pure, wise son of God be, at the same time, so stupid as to tell weak, sinful men and women to be as perfect as their heavenly Father? [10](#) Did Jesus really understand human psychology? Was he really so intelligent? No, if we are to accept the idea Christians have of him, he cannot have known what he was talking about: imagine asking weak, miserable human beings to be as perfect as their heavenly Father! The truth of the matter is that, in saying this, Jesus was taking reincarnation for granted, for no one can come to resemble the heavenly Father in only one lifetime. It is just not possible! Unless, of course – but this would show even greater ignorance – Christians deny the implicit acceptance of reincarnation simply because they have no idea of the greatness and glory of God! If they think it is so easy to be as perfect as the heavenly Father, it must be because they imagine him to be not much better than the man in the street: an old gentleman with a long white beard, a little like the paintings one sees of the hermits and ascetics of old. This is a Christian's idea of perfection! No wonder they think that that kind of perfection can easily be attained by going to church, listening to a few sermons and blessing oneself with holy water! If only it were so easy! But to their way of thinking it is easy.

Christians are very far from suspecting all that Jesus knew. They have never really gone deeply into the Gospels; they have never taken Jesus as their model or worked for years and years to identify with him so as to tune in to what he thought and see how he understood things. In fact, they don't even know it is possible to do so, that the spiritual exercise of identification is, in reality, the only way to penetrate the soul, heart and spirit of a being, even one who left this earth thousands of years ago. When you identify with someone it is as though you penetrated their mind.^{[11](#)}

Most people, even many scholars, have never understood why the ancient Egyptians used to wear masks representing certain deities or animals, nor why in many so-called primitive societies today – in Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal or Tibet, for instance – the witch doctors or shamans wear masks or costumes which are meant to represent monsters or certain benevolent or malevolent beings. The reason is simple: they are endeavouring, if only for a few minutes, to identify with the entities concerned. When they assume the appearance of these entities, move as they move and make certain ritual gestures, they set certain forces and currents in motion within themselves and become so deeply impregnated with the nature of these beings that they come to feel and understand things which, in their normal state, they could never feel or understand. But those who have never grasped the occult significance of these costumes laugh at them and think they are ridiculous. What ignorance and lack of understanding! In the temples of Egypt, therefore, when the priests dressed up as Osiris, Isis or Seth, or even as various other terrifying deities, it was in order to gain access to certain levels of reality or to emanate certain forces, because identification makes it possible to resemble, at least for a moment or two, the beings with whom one identifies.

This being so, suppose that you practise identification with Jesus: you make every effort to imagine you are living two thousand years ago in Palestine, that you are walking where he walked and talking to his disciples. If you could imagine it all so vividly that you felt it to be absolutely real, you would find out what Jesus had in mind when he said certain things, and you would be astonished at the extraordinary things you discovered. When Jesus said, *'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect,'* he knew that no one was capable of becoming perfect in the course of one incarnation. But he also

knew that if someone really wanted to be perfect and worked steadily to attain perfection, the desire would become so strong and vital within them that when they came back a second or third time to earth they would be unable to cut loose from the currents they themselves had created, they would continue to work along the same lines and, one day, at last, they would achieve their goal! But not in only one incarnation! It would be utterly idiotic and grotesque to contend that human beings could reach the perfection of God in one lifetime. Unless, of course, they haven't the least idea of who or what God is: the immense almighty Lord, so full of light, beauty and love – how can anyone reduce him to such insignificance? Look at them: they don't even have the strength to stop smoking, drinking, playing cards, slandering or swindling, and they imagine that in only one short lifetime they can become like the Lord himself! I tell you: people simply have no idea what the Lord is.

If you do not understand that reincarnation was implicit in everything that Jesus taught, you are putting him in a very bad light, for either he was no psychologist, he knew nothing about human nature and he was asking babes in arms to move mountains, or he had no idea of who his heavenly Father was and there was no rhyme nor reason in what he said. Take away the notion of reincarnation and everything in the Bible, in the Gospels and even in life, becomes meaningless. I have pointed this out to you time and time again! Without reincarnation God is seen as a capricious being who does whatever he pleases and suddenly flies into a rage and condemns people to hell for all eternity. How is it possible to believe that God could be such a monster? Besides, every event or circumstance in our lives would be utterly meaningless. Why do we have the children we have? Why are we born rich or poor? Why do we have good or bad health? Why are we virtuous or vicious, intelligent or stupid, beautiful or ugly? Is the only answer to these questions the arbitrary, capricious will of God? And if so, how much responsibility do men and women have? None at all. So why are we told that humans are responsible for what they do? Without reincarnation this is all thoroughly illogical, whereas if you accept reincarnation everything makes sense and becomes clear. Why have Christians taken away the main beam which holds up the whole edifice? Without it, the entire structure disintegrates. They want to do without reincarnation but they will never succeed. As soon as they accept reincarnation again, everything will become clear.

But this is not the moment to talk about reincarnation: I have already talked about it a great deal! [12](#) If I have mentioned it today, it was simply because I wanted to show you that even if Jesus never used the word, the reality was implicit in his precept to *‘be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.’* Even Moses speaks of reincarnation at the beginning of Genesis. He says, *‘Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness,”’* and, later, *‘So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them’*. How is it that the ‘likeness’ got lost along the way? Had Moses lost his memory and forgotten what he had just said? Why does the second phrase use the term ‘image’ twice and leave out the ‘likeness’? Well, this is a hidden reference to reincarnation. It means, ‘Let us make humans in our image and, after many incarnations, they will be in our likeness’. God created humans in his image but not in his likeness. But he did place in them all they needed to achieve this likeness. That is what ‘the image of God’ is: the potential resemblance to God; just as an acorn contains the image of the oak tree even though it does not yet resemble it, so humans are in the image of God without yet being in his likeness. They will be in the likeness of God when they have been planted and had time to grow.

Humans are in the image of God: like God, they think, feel and act. But they do not think as God thinks; they are not so wise, and they are not all-knowing. Nor do they feel like God, because they are not all-loving. And they cannot create as God creates, because they are not all-powerful. To the extent, therefore, to which they think, feel and act, they are in the image of God, but one day, when they have developed their full potential – and this will require numerous lives – they will be in God’s likeness: they will be as powerful, as beautiful, as wise and as full of love as God. Look at a small child: it is in the image of its parents, but it does not resemble them yet; it is too young to have developed all the possibilities that are hidden away within it. But they are there, and after many years it will resemble its parents. And the same is true for men and women: one day they will resemble their heavenly Father. This is what Moses meant, but only those who know how to look into the depths of a passage like this can interpret it correctly.

But let’s get back to the question of life. Why are human beings so reluctant to change their lives? Well, as I have said, in the first place they do

not realize the advantages they would get from such a change. Next, they just don't believe it is possible to be transformed. True, scientists are looking for ways to improve the human race, but their work is restricted to the physical plane. They think that if they can change human chromosomes they will be able to produce geniuses. Possibly they are right – but that is another question. The third reason is that people think it is very difficult to change, and they are absolutely right: it is difficult. On the other hand, I have already given you lots of methods you can use to change your life and transform yourselves. Take the method of grafting, for example: suppose you have a quince tree in your garden that gives a lot of hard, sour fruit that is quite inedible. Well, you can put all that vigour to good use and get it to produce juicy, succulent fruit by making just a few grafts. Of course, as I have already explained, you must understand that I am talking about inner, psychic grafts. I have told you, too, that the sun contains a lavish supply of grafts and that you can certainly find in the sun whatever you need to transform yourself rapidly and produce sweet, fragrant fruits.

In point of fact, it is not really so terribly hard to transform oneself; it all depends on how much you really want to do so. When you are sick and tired of yourself to the point of nausea and your desire to transform yourself and see some improvement becomes really intense, it can produce a quite extraordinary effect. But the question is: do people feel this intense desire? Yes, perhaps they do for a day or two, but it never lasts long: they soon abandon it and all their good resolutions come to nothing. You must nourish this desire constantly, and, if you do, one day you will be completely transformed, and that is the resurrection – I have already talked to you about that. Many people imagine that they will rise from the dead only at the end of time, when all the dead will be aroused from their sleep and come out of their graves. That is how Christians understand these things! And can you imagine what a splendid sight that would be: all those dead people? Amazing! No, my dear brothers and sisters, it is here and now, in this life, that we have to rise from the dead.^{[13](#)}

Of course, there is a great deal more to be said about life and, in particular, about what to do to avoid making a mess of our life. This is another thing that people know very little about: it is obvious to me that they have no notion of measure or proportion. The brothers and sisters are often full of good

intentions; I hear them say, ‘I really do want to live a divine life at last; I want my life to be more beautiful, more spiritual; I want to consecrate it...’ Yes, and then they find themselves faced with some extremely difficult problems and they have no idea how to cope. They are completely lost, and do all kinds of stupid things because they have no sense of moderation and fail to recognize limits and measures. So the subject is far from being exhausted, and we shall have to pursue it until it is all quite clear to you. I have given you these few talks with a view to convincing you to be concerned about life, but there is a great deal still to be said. Life is such a tremendously vast, rich subject; it is infinite.

And you know, that is why I love Initiatic Science so much: because there is no hope of ever getting to the end of it! Yes, isn’t that a magnificent despair? Just think of it: it will never come to an end. That is what I love: the infinity of it delights me! Oh yes, I know, of course, that it has just the opposite effect on some people. They say, ‘Oh, it’s endless! I give up’, and they go and choose something they can finish rapidly. Yes, but before long they find that they are the ones who are ‘finished’! Why? Simply because they have embraced something finite. We must embrace the infinite, the boundless, that which is beyond time and space, and, by doing so, we too become immortal, eternal and immeasurable. So don’t take refuge in what is small and restricted. Embrace the infinite, and your joy too will be infinite; you will know boundless happiness, light, strength and fulfilment. Instead of drinking from a little bottle, go to the ocean and drink, for the ocean is so vast you could drink for thousands and thousands of years without draining it. Yes, my dear brothers and sisters: go and drink from the ocean of infinity!

May light and peace be with you!

Sèvres, April 7, 1970

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

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

‘Let us make humankind in our image’ – *Gen. 1: 26*

‘So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them’ – Gen. 1: 28

¹ See *Man’s Subtle Bodies and Centres – the Aura, the Solar Plexus, the Chakras...*, Izvor Coll. n° 219, chap. 1: ‘Human evolution and the development of the spiritual organs’.

² See *Les deux arbres du Paradis*, Complete Works, vol. 3, chap. 7: ‘La parabole des cinq vierges sages et des cinq vierges folles’.

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

⁴ See *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete works, vol. 11, chap. 22: ‘Toward Universal Brotherhood’ and *Love and sexuality*, Complete Works, vol 15, chap. 29: ‘Towards a broader concept of the family’.

⁵ See *The Second Birth – Love, Wisdom, Truth*, Complete Works, vol. 1, chap. 2: ‘Ask, and it shall be given to you’.

⁶ See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 11 : ‘God is life’.

⁷ See ‘*Et il me montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’, Synopsis Coll., Part X, chap. 3 : ‘De Iesod à Kéther : la sublimation de la force sexuelle’.

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

⁹ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 14, chap. 19: ‘The twin-soul’.

¹⁰ See *The True Meaning of Christ’s Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 3: ‘Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect’.

¹¹ See ‘*Et il me montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’, Synopsis Coll., Part VI, chap. 4: ‘L’Initiation, un changement d’état de conscience’.

¹² See *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 8: ‘Reincarnation’.

¹³ See ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’, Complete Works, vol. 9: chap. 11: ‘La Résurrection et le Jugement dernier’.

Chapter Two : Character and temperament

Question: ‘Master, will you please explain what character is?’

It is generally accepted that every living creature, every animal, insect or human being, has its own particular character or, to put it in more general terms, its particular characteristics. But it will help us to get a clearer idea of the question if we begin by distinguishing between ‘character’ and ‘temperament’, because, in everyday conversation, people often confuse the two.

Basically, temperament is related to the vital dimension of the human being. It is a synthesis of all the instincts, tendencies and impulses which humans are virtually incapable of changing or eliminating, because they are rooted in their biological and physiological dimension. Temperament, therefore, is closely related to a person’s animal nature. Character, on the other hand, while it cannot be dissociated from temperament, represents the intellectual, conscious, voluntary dimension: in response to what they see as an advantage or a necessity, people can modify certain tendencies. Character, therefore, is the result achieved by our use of our intellectual and emotional faculties and our willpower in a conscious effort to mould – by addition or subtraction – our innate temperament, that is to say, the elements that nature has given us. Character is the behaviour of conscious human beings who know what they are doing and where they are going, whereas temperament represents the impulses of their biological nature, their complexes and their unconscious and subconscious tendencies. Character is, as it were, a synthesis of all the traits of a person’s temperament which they have conquered and brought under control with the help of their intelligence, their will and their ideal.

As I have said, it is almost impossible to change one’s temperament, for every human being comes into this world with a clearly defined temperament. But as the character is formed by the conscious tendencies of a being who reasons and reflects and wants to assert themselves – whether in a positive or negative way – it can give rise to an attitude, a type of behaviour, a way of manifesting oneself which is often in contradiction to the basic

temperament. This is what we mean by character. A person's character is identical to their temperament but, as it were, in a new 'edition', an edition which has been coloured, modified and directed towards a specific goal, an ideal. It is a deliberately acquired habit, which ends by becoming second nature. So, although people frequently speak of the innate 'characteristics' of a being, in point of fact, character does not exist at birth; it is formed gradually, over the years. You can see this in children: they have a temperament but not yet a character.

Since the days of Hippocrates, four types or categories of temperament have traditionally been distinguished: sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic. Later, other classifications were developed. In traditional astrology, for instance, there are seven types: Solar, Lunar, Mercurian, Venusian, Martian, Jupiterian and Saturnian. Yet another system distinguishes only three types: instinctive (in which the biological dimension is predominant), sentimental (in which the emotional dimension predominates) and intellectual (in which the mental dimension predominates). Everyone, or almost everyone, can be placed in one or other of these categories.

As I have said, therefore, it is almost impossible to change one's temperament, but environment, family, society, education and so on all exert a certain influence on it. So we may say that people build their own character under the influence of their environment and the conditions in which they live and that they can either improve it or ruin it. Conscious, individual will is an important factor in a person's character, but the will of others is also very important; a person's character reveals what he or she has decided or accepted to be like: it is the expression of the conscious dimension of a person, whereas temperament is the expression of the unconscious or subconscious dimension.

There is no need for me to explain, yet again, that if we are born with a certain type of temperament it is for a good reason. As you know, your temperament is the result of previous lives, previous incarnations: in your past lives you have allied yourself, by your thoughts, desires and actions, with certain forces. And these forces now determine your subconscious, that is, your temperament, and there is not much you can do about it.

Temperament is like our skeleton or muscular system: it cannot be radically changed. We cannot enlarge our skull, lengthen our nose or remodel a receding chin. It is absolutely true that everything in nature can be transformed by the power of thought and will; nevertheless, changes effected in this way are so slow and so imperceptible you can almost discount them entirely.

Character, on the other hand, can be changed; you can mould and improve it; in fact this is what we all have to do as disciples of a spiritual Teaching.

Take the case of someone who is very dynamic and hot-headed, even violent. This person is so curt and dogmatic they can hardly open their mouth without wounding other people's feelings or trampling on their interests. Their impulsive temperament is the cause of frequent explosions and eruptions! But then, one day, realizing that their attitude is extremely detrimental to themselves, they take themselves in hand and, after a while, by dint of willpower, manage to soften their character and stop riding roughshod over everybody. They are still quite capable of reacting violently and hitting out with their words or their fists – this will be true to the end of their days – but thanks to their strength of will they have learned to control themselves. Unfortunately there are not too many people who make up their minds to put in the effort, but there are a few, particularly initiates. Yes, initiates are made of fire, but they succeed in mastering themselves and finding just the right gesture, word or expression that will cause no damage. This is character.

Character, therefore, is a pattern of behaviour (in respect of oneself but also towards others) which has been grafted onto the basic temperament. It is an attitude, a way of doing things, which results from the union and integration of various elements, strengths or weaknesses. It is this unity we call character.

A disciple's work is based on an understanding of this question of temperament and character so that, even if they are not particularly well predisposed by temperament, they can still forge their character into one of exceptional goodness, magnanimity and generosity. It is not easy, I grant you that: if it were, everybody would already have a perfectly divine character!

Take the example of a tree: where is the temperament of a tree? In its roots.

It is the roots which determine the shape, size and strength and all the particular qualities of a tree. As for its character, well, of course, a tree cannot really be said to have a character, but still, its fruit and flowers have their own special properties (astringent, laxative, stimulating, soothing, nourishing, and so on), and you could say that they represent the 'character' of the tree. But a tree could never produce these characteristic manifestations, it could never produce flowers or fruit, if it had no roots. Of course, the analogy of the tree is not perfect because, except in cases where the fundamental characteristics of a tree (its flowers and fruit) are modified by humans through grafting, for instance, the branches of a tree are almost totally dependent on the roots. But, just as a tree without roots is incapable of producing fruit and flowers, a person without a temperament would be incapable of having a character.¹ His or her temperament is like a factory or a laboratory: depending on the type of machines and raw materials available, the range of articles or products it can manufacture and distribute is pre-determined and limited.

Animals cannot be said to have character. The character of cats, dogs or mice is simply their particular way of biting, scratching, barking, eating or running, etc. It does not amount to very much. Animals have only their temperament for, as I have just explained, character is something humans fashion consciously for themselves, and animals have no way of improving or changing themselves: they are as nature has made them. The difference, therefore, between humans and animals is that animals are bound by their temperament, condemned to remain within the limits imposed by nature. This is why they remain faithful to their instinct, whereas humans have all kinds of possibilities and very favourable conditions in which to transform themselves for better or for worse. They even have the possibility of breaking the natural law and refusing to obey. But animals, even when they attack and devour each other, are innocent; they are not breaking the laws of nature. On the contrary, their behaviour is in keeping with those laws for it was nature which gave them their aggressive instincts.

And now we come to a much more practical question: the question of how to transform, improve and perfect one's character. If you question biologists about heredity, they will probably tell you that the character traits of a newborn baby are contained in its chromosomes and that, if the chromosomes could be modified, you could change people's characters. It is perfectly true

that a child's chromosomes contain all the elements it needs for its particular characteristics. But that is only the biochemical aspect of the question. Scientists, who have never studied the question from the initiatic point of view, are not aware that the etheric body contains certain imprints or stereotypes which are far more important than chromosomes.

Esoteric Science teaches that every organ and even every cell in our body has its etheric double: behind our physical eyes are other, etheric eyes, behind our arms are other arms, behind our lungs are other lungs, and so on. This is the etheric body or 'double' as it is called: the double of the physical body.² Initiates, who have studied the subject, have discovered that all our cells, and particularly the cells of the white and grey matter of the brain and the solar plexus, possess a memory and that they record our slightest action, thought or desire. And there you have the stereotypes. Once recorded, everything must necessarily go on repeating itself. This is how habits are formed, and in order to change a habit we have to change the corresponding stereotype.

I think I have already told you about an incident that occurred when I was living in Boulogne-sur-Seine: one day I went out to post some letters. I put them in the pocket of my overcoat and went out, meaning to go for a walk and, at the same time, post my letters at the post office. Yes, but two or three days later I found my letters still in my pocket. I had forgotten all about them! And once you have forgotten something for the first time, you go on forgetting, because the stereotype has already been cut. And this is what happened to me: I forgot my letters two or three times until I finally made a resolution and, instead of putting them in my pocket, I kept them in my hand until I reached the post box. In that way I changed the stereotype and never forgot my letters again. And this is valid for everything. Are you in the habit of smoking, kissing the girls, putting your hand in other people's pockets? If you are, it means that the stereotype is stamped into the memory of your cells, and it will go on repeating itself for ever. It is the same as in a print shop: if you don't change the type you will go on for ever printing the same text. Once I had understood this phenomenon I was able to draw some important conclusions that I shared with all of you.

Take the case of someone who is studying the piano. If they do not know the laws I have been talking about, they will begin to practise a new piece

rapidly and perhaps carelessly. And, of course, because they are going too fast and not paying enough attention, they are bound to make at least one mistake and probably more! And once those mistakes have gone on record the damage is done: they can no longer correct them. Twenty or thirty years later, even if they know the piece by heart, every time they come to the spot where they made their first mistake they will have to be particularly careful, otherwise the same mistake will pop up again, for the stereotype is still there. This is why I have always advised musicians to begin practising a new piece of music without hurrying, note by note, taking all the time they need to cut a perfect stereotype. Later on they can go as fast as they please, extremely fast; they will even be able to eat and sleep while they are playing, without ever making a mistake because the stereotype in their subconscious is note-perfect!

This is an absolute law. If you don't use these methods you will be obliged to begin everything over and over again, five times, ten times and more – and even then the problem will not have disappeared. You will always have to take special care, and that means a lot of wasted effort, whereas, with a little wisdom and intelligence you can economize time, effort and energy. Never rush at something you are doing for the first time: work slowly and carefully so as to cut a perfect stereotype. Have you ever seen engravers at work? If they are tense or in a hurry they can make a mistake and, however slight it may be, the damage is done once and for all and cannot be undone. It is engraved into the metal. They are going to have to begin all over again and that is not an economical solution! This is why I have advised my friends to use certain methods, and those who use them assure me they are very useful.

Knowledge enables us to avoid a great many sorrows, disappointments and bitterness. But human beings who have no instructors think they have the right to do just about anything, and they don't realize that it is all recorded. Nature records everything, faithfully and relentlessly. People say, 'I'm going to do this and that just this once, to see what it's like.' Yes, but once it is done the stereotype is there, and it leads to their doing it a second and then a third time, and any number of times again. Or someone may decide to stop drinking, and they tell all their friends, 'It's over. No more visits to the pub! Let's go and drink to that!' and, of course, it is not over at all.

It is not only bad habits that go down on record, though. Good habits also have their stereotypes. I have known thieves who said their prayers every day, and when I asked them how they could go on praying and still practise their 'trade', they told me their fathers had taught them to pray when they were children, and they had never been able to shake off the habit! As I said, nature is faithful and true: it keeps a record of both good and evil.

Now the question is how to get rid of your old stereotypes, the old negatives that have gone on record, and start living a new, luminous life. Many people become very disconsolate when they see that they continue to stumble and fall because of the same old failings. How can you break out? By trying to do the opposite to what you are accustomed to doing and, in this way, creating other stereotypes. You must realize, though, that if you want to do this you must be extraordinarily vigilant: if you are not extremely vigilant you will forget, and the old stereotype will faithfully continue to influence you. We read in the Bible, *'Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.'*
³'Keep alert' – yes, vigilance is the secret of change and, from now on, you must learn to make other gestures, say other words and look at things in another way so as to create a deep imprint within you, a stereotype of the new life coming from heaven. When you practise these new exercises here, with the Brotherhood, you are changing your old stereotypes.

In point of fact, the old stereotypes never completely disappear; nothing that has once existed in nature ever ceases to exist. Why? Because nature has taken care to keep a full record of the history of the world in its archives; everything that has happened in the billions of years the world has existed has been preserved. This is what is known as the akasha chronica or 'akashic record'. The akasha is the ether, and, as I have said, everything is recorded on the etheric plane without our even being aware of it. But there are beings who have attained such elevation that they have been able to visit these archives and learn the history of the world. In this way they have been able to tell us what existed millions of years ago, how many human races have succeeded each other on earth, why they disappeared and what degree of evolution they had reached. This is how we have learned all kinds of things of which official science has still no knowledge. The history known to official science only goes back a few thousand years – how paltry!

In a previous lecture I explained how you can work at improving yourself by means of grafts. Suppose, for instance, that you have a wild pear tree in your garden; it is healthy and vigorous, but the fruit it produces is so hard it is inedible. But there is something you can do about it: you can graft a slip from a variety which gives sweet, succulent fruit onto the stock of the wild pear tree, and the cutting will benefit from the vigour of the wild tree and produce delicious, juicy pears or other fruits. But before you can do this, you have to know the laws of nature, for you cannot graft any and every kind of cutting onto any and every kind of stock. Even with fruit trees there are certain affinities and correspondences: for instance, you cannot graft a cutting from a tree which produces fruit with seeds or pips onto one which produces fruit with stones. Yes, grafting is quite a science! In the same way, therefore, disciples can graft new cuttings onto their old tendencies. You take your 'tree' of anger, sensuality or vanity, for instance, and onto it you graft new branches which will produce delicious new fruits. And where can you find all the cuttings you need for your grafts? The greatest and best supplier is the sun. ⁴ If we need to be present at sunrise it is for this reason: to get some cuttings from the sun.

Suppose, for instance, you have a very sensual nature, which leads to serious disorder and much suffering in your life; you can learn to look on it as a great strength, a tall, vigorous tree whose energies can be harnessed by grafting onto it cuttings of another kind: cuttings of other ideas, others desires, another ideal. The sap of your sensuality will rise and travel through the new branches, so that, instead of making life unbearable for you, it becomes a generous reservoir of forces capable of raising you all the way to the divine Mother and the heavenly Father. Yes, but these methods have to be learned, and most people have no notion, even, that they exist, much less how to use them, so they go on suffering and destroying themselves. We have to change our stereotypes; the old ones will continue to exist in the archives, that is, in our subconscious, that is true, but at least we can put new ones on top of them. We cannot simply erase old stereotypes, but we can replace them by adopting good habits in the place of bad ones.

Take the example of a train: whatever you try to do about it, it will always run on the rails it is set on. If you want it to go in a different direction you

will have to lay down new rails. Well, our stereotypes are like railway lines, and disciples have to lay down new ones within themselves. In other words, they have to give themselves other ideals and cultivate other tendencies, other interests. If they don't know how to do this they can always say, 'I've decided to change. I'm going to mend my ways and I promise to do better next time!', but since they have not actually done anything to change, when 'next time' comes along it will be just like last time, and their train will continue to run along the same old lines. Don't talk about it; just change the direction of your rails, and the train will go in a new direction.

So stereotypes and grafts are two different methods you must learn to use. Old stereotypes have to be replaced by new ones, but grafts are different, they simply have to be added on to what is already there. If you want to perform a graft you have to be sure to keep the trunk and roots vigorous and full of life and graft the new shoots onto them, for it is the trunk and roots that possess the wild, untamed energies that can be diverted to the service of a higher entity, a spirit of light, an angel or an archangel. That is what grafting is all about. All initiates have had to perform grafts by allying themselves with more exalted beings, so that the fruits they bore would be sweeter and have more flavour.

But the most powerful graft of all and the most sublime is the one where we unite with the Lord himself and say, 'Dear Lord, I want to work for the coming of your kingdom and your righteousness, but I can do so little on my own. I beg you to come and dwell in me and to work and manifest yourself through me.' And if God hears your prayer and comes to you, your tree – by which I mean you, yourself – which has never produced anything but bitter, inedible fruit, will soon start bearing delicious, perfumed fruit. All that remains of your 'tree' is the roots and the trunk, but the cutting grafted onto it, that is, the divine, invisible world, heaven itself, now produces fruit of its own on your tree. Perhaps you are wondering how this happens? The answer is that you pledged all those raw, turbulent energies within you to the service of the Lord and he has accepted and transformed them. Sometimes, in the woods, one comes across a wild pear tree bearing tiny little pears as hard as rocks. They are quite inedible; but if you heat them in the oven for a few minutes, they become soft and sweet. How does that happen? They are transformed by heat. Well, if humans are capable of making wild pears fit to

be eaten, surely the invisible world should have no difficulty in transforming your own sour fruits into sweet, juicy ones!

A disciple who is conscious of their own base tendencies can ask the Lord for some cuttings to graft onto themselves: 'Lord God, if you leave me to my own resources I'll never be any better. I beg you to help me. Do whatever you please with me. Use me as your instrument; I am at your service; I promise to do your will.' If you pledge yourself in this way, it may not be the Lord himself who comes to help you, but he will certainly send someone, an angel or an archangel, just as he sent angels to visit and instruct the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and saints in the past.

These are extremely important questions, and anyone who neglects or remains in ignorance of them will not evolve. Human beings are hard-headed, but life takes care of making those hard heads ripe! You can be sure I know what I'm talking about! I never tell you anything I have not first confirmed and tried out on myself, because then I can help you by revealing it to you; and now it is up to you to feel and understand these things and put them into practice in order to get results.

Just look where your question about character and temperament has taken us! As I say, if you don't know these things your character will never really improve, never become radiant, luminous and divine. Yes, you must know these great truths, but knowledge is not enough: you must also love them and desire with all your heart to put them into effect, and you must also have an unshakeable determination to persevere in your efforts. These are the three indispensable conditions: knowledge, love or desire, and power.

I know that some of you have done so much work on your characters that you are no longer the same creatures. Externally, of course, there is no apparent change, but inwardly you are quite different. You no longer suffer as you used to, you no longer feel yourselves crushed and shackled, you are no longer in perpetual darkness; you have found new inner wealth and new knowledge, and you bathe in an ocean of dazzling splendour, shedding light all around you. This is the kind of change we are talking about! It is not a question of changing physically; your friends and acquaintances will still recognize you. What counts is to change inwardly, to change your vibrations and emanations, to change in such a way that you can give water to someone

who is dying and restore them to life simply because you have touched it with your hand! This is the kind of change we are talking about!

Take nothing but what I have given you today; work at your stereotypes and grafts and you will transform your whole existence. How often I say to you, ‘Remember only what I have told you today.’ Always the same words – in the long run it begins to get boring, doesn’t it? And yet, it is the truth, for each lecture is complete in itself and sufficient to transform your whole life. Obviously it only deals with one particular point, but this is the true science, for each point is the centre of the universe. I talk each time in such a way that someone who heard only one lecture in their life would still be able to build their whole future on it. I do this consciously; each truth that I reveal to you is the centre of the universe, the centre of life, and you can make it the point of departure for your work and the whole of your existence. With only this one truth you can discover and obtain everything else.

Videlinata, Switzerland, March 13, 1969

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

‘Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour’ – *I Peter 5: 8*

¹ See *True Alchemy or the Quest for Perfection*, Izvor Coll. n° 221, chap. 2: ‘The human tree’.

² See ‘*Et il me montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’, Synopsis Coll., pp. 108-109, pp. 124-128, and *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 17 ‘Everything has its double – Making a new recording’.

³ See *The True Meaning of Christ’s Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 9: ‘Watch and pray’.

⁴ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth – The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 13: ‘Spiritual grafting’.

Chapter Three : Good and evil

I

Everyone is waiting for something in life, and you are no exception: you are waiting, too. But what are you waiting for? There are so many things to expect and look forward to! But let me assure you, my dear brothers and sisters, that the most marvellous thing to look forward to is to melt into the immensity of the universal Soul in order to find fulfilment and live with the life of God himself. This is the highest and best of all expectations, the only one that will never disappoint us.

When God created us he placed within each one of us everything we needed in order to achieve this fulfilment. ‘And’, you may ask, ‘where did he put all those things?’ He put them in our faculty of thought. This is why we must make it a habit to work, every day, to get in touch with God, through our thoughts, and, above all, we must learn to love this work.

Humans have everything they need within them, but they do not know this; no one has ever revealed it to them, so they do not use their inner possibilities but spend their time looking elsewhere, outside themselves. And on the outside, they will find the means they need to work on matter but not what they need for their inner transformation, not what they need for their soul and spirit. External, material means are suitable for working on the physical body, but when it comes to seeking union with God they are useless: for this, we need means that can only be found within us, in our mental faculties. And this is why disciples of an initiatic school do everything in their power to stimulate and set in motion all the possibilities that God has placed within them.

Earlier today, while I was meditating, I felt the desire to give you yet another method of working. Suppose you are deeply attracted by something, beauty or intelligence for instance, and you would love to obtain it. Try to concentrate all your powers of imagination on yourself as you want to be; spend a few minutes in contemplation of the being you long to become, and you will feel joy, confidence and vitality growing within you, as though you were already tasting what is to come. For ten or twenty minutes, imagine that

what you long for is already there; contemplate the vision of yourself bathed in light, close to God and doing splendid things. In this way, your thought prepares the ground for the future and brings you nearer and nearer to the realization of your dreams.

Naturally, there is a great deal more to be said about this and, first and foremost, one must be guided. If we are to avoid being misled or setting events in motion which will make us cry for mercy rather than giving thanks when they become reality, we need to be instructed by a Master. This is not an exercise for those who are not enlightened. There are occult groups that encourage the method of visualization as a way of getting what one wants, but they do not warn people of the dangers or explain what will happen if their desires are too personal and selfish, or if they transgress the laws of nature or go against the divine order. They simply say, 'Do this, that or the other...', and people do it! And look at the results! So, the method I have just explained will only be beneficial and valid for you if your heart is set on a divine goal, if what you want is good, not only for yourself but for the whole world. For you must realize that there is a danger here, and it lies in the fact that everything you wish for will come about. Perhaps you don't see why that is dangerous. But that is just the point: you don't see the dangers; you don't see the complications that may arise if you obtain what you want. Who knows what suffering you are storing up for yourself through ignorance, because you have not really studied your desires to see if they match up with the laws of nature and of life, because you have never paused to consider what would happen when they became reality?

So, this is a good method, but it needs some explanation and a word of warning. I could tell you to spend a few minutes visualizing yourself as you would like to be, and then someone would go and imagine himself as a mighty conqueror crowned in glory, giving orders to all and sundry, executing his enemies and so on. Or someone else who is fond of money would imagine wagonloads of gold arriving on their doorstep, and with that gold they would buy everything they had ever wanted, eat and drink to excess and satisfy every whim and fancy! Already, in their imagination they can see themselves with shops and branch offices everywhere, ruining all their competitors and monopolizing the market! That is not what I am telling you to do, but that is how many people would understand me!

But at this point I must draw your attention to a phenomenon which is inevitable, or practically so. Even if your desires are very lofty and very spiritual, you will cause your lower nature to react by arousing contradictory forces within you. For you must not think that you are completely free! There is always the other side, that other nature connected to your divine nature.¹ Have you ever seen a tree in which the branches had no connection with the roots? The magnificent things you hope for in your higher nature awaken opposing forces and desires in the roots of your being. It is as though a delegation presented itself in the mind of someone who had made some divine resolutions, petitioning them not to be in too much of a hurry, to give up their resolutions or even do just the opposite. So many mysterious things take place in the depths of the human soul! You see how it happens: to begin with all your goals and ambitions are divine, and then, little by little, other elements slip in and manage to turn them off course.

Of course, when a disciple is already accustomed to analysing themselves and being on their guard, the mental machinations of their lower nature, as it tries to infiltrate its own representatives into the assembly of saints and prophets on high, are much less likely to succeed, for while they are working, meditating and building, they are surrounding themselves with other beings who watch over and protect them. This is a disciple who is truly evolved: one that takes precautions. And, incidentally, freemasonry, which, in its primitive form, was based on a true science, depicts a mason at work with his trowel in one hand and a sword with which to defend himself in the other. This is symbolic; the mason working with his trowel is a symbol for the disciple: while they are at work, another being, a being who dwells within and is represented by the sword, keeps watch, casting its gaze in all directions like a beam of light, to ensure that their enemies do not take advantage of the dark to invade their stronghold.

I do not want to enlarge any further on the subject of the inner, private life of a disciple, but let me just say this: wish and hope for whatever you like, create whatever you like mentally, but take care always to examine everything very closely first. If your ambitions and desires are too personal, if they do not vibrate in harmony with the divine order that reigns throughout creation, they will conflict with the laws of God, with beings and entities of a

vibratory order, and you will not succeed. Or, if you do succeed, it will be even worse. In these conditions it would be preferable not to succeed. If you fail you will at least be spared all kinds of disappointments and accidents and will not have incurred a karmic debt. It is preferable not to succeed with evil designs, otherwise the karmic consequences are unavoidable. Suppose you plan to take revenge on someone by killing them and your plan misfires and you abandon the idea... so much the better! Your debt will not be as great as if you had succeeded: success would have led to your incurring an enormous debt.

Does anyone ever think of all these things or really examine them closely? No. And yet it is these things that constitute the subtle dimensions of a disciple's life. A disciple has been set down in the midst of life and has the obligation to be conscious of all that goes on in and around them. It is not enough for them to be content simply to eat and drink, to breathe and act without any conscious realization of the subtle dimension. They must find out why they are on earth, why they have a body, what their body represents and how they must behave in order to make all things work together for good. I too have had to do this. I have had to become aware of all that was going on in and around me, to ask myself why I was on earth and what was expected of me. Some day or another everyone will ask themselves the same question.

When a disciple sincerely wants to find the answer to this question they see a whole new world opening up before them. They begin to realize that things do not happen quite as they had imagined, that a more powerful order exists which they are powerless to change and that they must submit and attune themselves to it.² It is no good grumbling and rebelling; the laws are immutable and nothing will be changed just because they kick or butt their head against them. They end by understanding that they have just got to accept and abide by them. This is where true evolution begins. It is no good imagining you are strong and powerful if you are flying in the face of the divine order. Some people think that when they resist and make their own rules, it is a proof of power and authority. Yes: but how long does it last? The most intelligent beings who exist or ever have existed have all discovered that there are a certain number of laws to which men and women are bound to submit, and once they had understood and accepted those laws they began to show signs of genuine power.

Let me give you an example to illustrate what happens to someone who decides to function according to the dictates of their own personality, that is, by their own means. What are those means worth? Not much, I assure you! Suppose a private citizen went abroad and started proclaiming, 'Listen to me; I have a message for you from the government of France. Gather round; call out the band; roll out the red carpet, and I'll explain my mission!' People would just laugh in their face – unless, of course they shut them up in a lunatic asylum! Nobody would recognize them as a representative of France because they have no credentials. Then the true ambassador might turn up: a sickly, undersized, scrawny little man, but with all the proper credentials, so he would be treated with great respect: bands would play, soldiers would form a guard of honour and everybody would bow to him because he represents a rich, powerful, illustrious country. But the honours are paid to his country, not to the insignificant individual whose only distinction is to possess a few medals or decorations. And exactly the same thing happens to someone who refuses to abide by the divinely established order and attempts to make use of the luminous forces of nature on their own authority: no initiate would ever recognize them, and nor will the forces of nature. They will be asked to show their credentials and, having none, will be sent on their way.

A disciple is one who recognizes the existence of a world that is far richer, more powerful and more beautiful than their own, and who submits to it and becomes its servant: their one desire is to learn, to work along the lines prescribed by that higher world and carry out its plans. In these conditions everything is different: they are given all the identification papers and insignias they may need, and impressive means are put at their disposal; but they are no longer their own means, for now they come in the name of the Lord and a world of power is behind them to back them up.

People who are too blind to understand this law continue to behave as though they were 'the boss', and they never obtain genuine power. Whereas, truly intelligent disciples see things as they really are and say to themselves, 'How stupid I have been to try and play at being the boss! I'm going to give all that up and submit to the divine order.' And from that moment they begin to have powers at their disposal which are not their own but those of the

whole cosmos, of the whole of nature, because they have become one of its representatives. So, there you are: those who dig their heels in and refuse to submit will be left to their own resources, and these resources will gradually diminish, whereas a disciple who has understood will keep growing stronger and richer because they have reserves of divine, cosmic capital at their disposal.

While I was speaking to you, a short while ago, about the reactions from your lower nature that sometimes interfere to thwart your good intentions, I felt that many of you immediately recognized the truth of what I was saying: I could hear you saying to yourselves, ‘How true that is! How often have I planned something really wonderful, really disinterested and divine, only to find that something else came between me and my intentions and sent them off course. Where did that interference come from?’ Well, as I said, it came from that other, lower nature which we all possess. And the manoeuvre succeeded because you were not sufficiently enlightened to see what was happening; you did not realize that contradictory elements could worm their way into you. You ought either to have kept them out or used them – for everything can be used – but human beings don’t know how to get rid of negative things or how to make use of them.

As I have already told you, there are two schools: the school of good and the school of evil. In the school of good you are taught to reject everything evil in the hope that, by doing so, you will be saved. In the school of evil you are taught to combat good in the belief that, in this way, you will end by wiping it out. But there is another, better school, far superior to the schools of good and evil because it teaches you to use both. Yes, it makes use of evil, but in homoeopathic doses and, in this way, it gets remarkable results. It discards nothing; it declares: ‘Evil exists, and this must mean that God allows it to exist; otherwise it would have disappeared long ago. There must be a reason for its continued existence.’ Yes, if evil still exists it is because there is a reason for its existence. So, why struggle against it? Why imagine that we are going to be able to destroy it? We will never wipe out evil. There must be another solution.

Above all, don’t imagine that if God allows evil to manifest itself in the world it is because he has been unable to conquer it and needs our help in

doing so! You may be somewhat astonished by the philosophy I propose to explain to you now, but let me tell you that evil is necessary, more than necessary, it is indispensable to nature's work, for, unlike human beings, nature knows how to use it. Nature uses evil in the same way as a pharmaceutical laboratory uses certain poisons in the preparation of very potent medicines. Evil is a poison which can be lethal for the weak and ignorant, but for those who are strong and intelligent it is a panacea; it can cure them. This is the philosophy of the third school: evil must be used.

Some people struggle endlessly and destroy themselves In the process without ever reaching any solution to the problem, for evil continues to exist. Why struggle against evil? Wouldn't it be much better to learn to use it? You may reply that the moral law does not allow you to use evil. Very well, but consider this: what does a country do with its prisoners of war? Instead of killing them it puts them to work. In ancient cultures prisoners of war were massacred and the country was left with no workers, since their own men were all fighting, but nowadays prisoners are made to work. This is something new that is manifesting itself in human society, and having understood it I can interpret it for you. It may be purely instinctive and unconscious, but it is a sign of the times. It shows that human beings are beginning to know how to use evil in order to accomplish God's work.

This is a very difficult and delicate subject. We have always been told to take up arms against evil, but I prophesy that the new philosophy will no longer tell us to destroy it. On the contrary, it will teach us to use and transform it in order to add to our wealth! What have humans done with torrents, lightning, the wind and all manner of things that burn and destroy? They have broken them in and harnessed them for their own service. In the past, people struggled against these elements, which were seen as something evil, and now they use them! And why should we not do the same on the psychic plane, where evil is also found? Things which were considered, in the past, to be evil, will be considered, in the future, as potent forces, still capable of dealing death and destruction, but capable also of providing humans with all kinds of good things.

The earth does not see things as humans see them. Look what happens when we throw away our refuse and dirt: the earth accepts it as something

precious to be used to produce plants, flowers and fruits. And what about coal: how was it produced? And oil? And precious stones? So, if the earth possesses this wisdom, if certain initiates possess this wisdom and if God himself also possesses this wisdom (he must do so, since he has not chosen to destroy evil), why should we not try to possess it too? For thousands of years, human beings have been begging God to destroy evil, and God has simply scratched his head and smiled and murmured, 'Poor creatures! When they begin to understand that evil is necessary, they will stop begging me to do away with it!' But how many prayers will still be said before that day comes! True, we should pray, but we should pray to understand God's point of view: 'Lord God, help me to understand your conception of the world and how you have created it so that, like you, I may be above evil and untouched by it, and learn to use it to accomplish something really glorious.' If you can start to think along these lines you will soon discover there is nothing in nature that is bad. You will object that you have been taught otherwise. Ah, that I know. Only too well! But what you have been taught is incomplete: it is good enough for children, but reality is something quite different. The whole of creation is proof of the truth of what I say.³

If evil exists it must mean that God accepts its existence, for otherwise we would have to conclude that he has been unable to vanquish his enemy, in other words, that evil is more powerful than God, that God is not the omnipotent ruler of the universe. Who could have created something capable of resisting God? Another God, more powerful than the one we call 'God'? Actually, human beings have often thought that. They would say, 'What kind of a God is he, anyway, if he can't do better than that? He doesn't know everything. He can't prophesy or work miracles, whereas the devil can! Much better to be on the side of the devil!' And, in a way, their reasoning was sound: why should anyone serve an impotent God since all knowledge and all gifts come from his adversary, the devil? At least, that was what the Church said. Yes, whenever a miracle occurred, the Church would say that it was the work of the devil. Some religious people have always refused to believe that it was God who worked miracles; in their opinion he was quite incapable of doing so. So is it any wonder that people signed a pact with the devil? It was the only logical thing to do. And that is how you end up if you do not have true knowledge!⁴

It is possible that all this is creating a great upheaval in your mind, that all your ideas are being revolutionized by what I say. But a few years from now the whole world will accept this philosophy, for it is the only genuine one, the only one that puts everything exactly where it belongs. And when men and women adopt this philosophy they will no longer have to suffer inner conflict and torment, and antagonism will give way to unity. Good and evil will walk together, in the same direction, both serving the same cause. As long as people set good and evil up against each other, they are at war with themselves, tearing themselves apart, and in the end there will be nothing left of them. What can someone who is perpetually in conflict with themselves hope to achieve? Peace will never come if that old philosophy continues to hold sway. Peace and harmony will only be achieved when unity is achieved, when everything is moving in the same direction. Is this possible? Yes, indeed it is; in fact it is already a reality for higher beings: everything obeys and serves them.

The truth is – and this is something else you must realize – the devils themselves and all the spirits of hell are God's servants. Do you imagine it is the angels that mete out punishment? Oh, no; they have better things to do! It is the devils that come and torment human beings who defy the divine order, not the angels! And as soon as a person has restored order within themselves, as soon as they are in harmony once again with God's plan, the devils stop bothering them. And this is why God has no intention of destroying these beings: they serve a very useful purpose. Wherever there is an accumulation of refuse and impurities, vermin come and eat it and clean the place up again, but if you do your own cleaning, you will not be visited by vermin.

As long as human beings continue to transgress divine laws, the spirits of hell will continue to torment them. It is not up to the angels and archangels to restore order and teach human beings to be more reasonable. They have already tried persuasion and reasoning, but humans have dug in their heels and refused to listen to them, so you cannot now expect the angels, who dwell in total harmony, beauty and perfection, to start punishing them as well. No, they send others: 'You there: go ahead. It's your turn now'. And they obey and faithfully carry out instructions, because they have promised to do the will of God. And who are these 'others'? They are devils and demons, the angels of the bottomless pit. Oh, I know, I can hear you saying that in St

John's *Revelation* it says that it was angels who sent the plagues to punish humankind. Yes, but those angels were such powerful beings that all they had to do was to make a sign and other forces were set in motion and ravaged the earth.

Even sages, saints and prophets have been tormented by demons sent to try and temper them and make them stronger. These spirits are true servants: they go wherever they are sent, in obedience to the orders they receive. And the beings who ravage humankind by means of disasters and disease have also been sent by those whose task it is to see that the laws are obeyed. As soon as human beings conform with the law once again, these spirits leave them; they are obliged to, for they are not allowed to do as they please; they have to obey.

If you have read the *book of Job* you will know that what I am telling you is absolutely true. The *book of Job* is the oldest book of the Bible and it is highly initiatic: it was obviously written by one who knew. It says that '*the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.*' Why was Satan allowed to be with them? Why did the others not drive him out, since he was the evildoer? Not only was he allowed into the assembly of the sons of God, but he even conversed with the Lord and asked to be allowed to torment Job, just to see how deep his '*fear of God*' went. It is interesting to note that the first time Satan applied for permission to put Job to the test, the Lord gave it to him on condition that he only touched his possessions, not his person, and Satan robbed Job of his livestock and all his servants and children. And when Satan came back the second time, God gave him permission to '*touch his bone and his flesh*' but ordered him to spare Job's life. And each time, Satan obeyed; he inflicted exactly as much suffering on Job as he was allowed to, and no more; and yet, if God had not forbidden it he could very well have deprived him of his life as well.

Some theologians and religious leaders have been so disturbed at the idea of Satan conversing with God, and found the *book of Job* in such flagrant contradiction with all their beliefs, that they even considered removing it from the Bible! Actually, though, this story makes one reflect: and those who reflect are obliged to acknowledge that it is very profound. In fact, it is an absolute gold mine! All the temptations and ordeals endured by the saints (for

St Anthony was not the only one to be so sorely tempted, you know!) were allowed by God in order to see how they would react.

This theme of the *book of Job* provided the inspiration for Goethe's Faust, which, as you know, begins with a scene in which God and Mephistopheles are discussing Faust. We now know that Faust was a highly skilled magician who actually lived at the time of Luther, Paracelsus, Melancthon, Agrippa and Trismosin. In fact Luther knew him and condemned him, calling him 'a hellhound' and 'a sink of iniquity'! Tradition tells us that Faust had made a pact with the devil, signed with his own blood, according to which the devil gave him youth, wealth, power and every pleasure imaginable for a period of twenty-four years, in exchange for his life at the end of this time. During those twenty-four years the devil did everything Faust wanted; he even enabled him to fly! But when his time was up and he was supposed to die, Faust tried to refuse. The story is that all night long, his house trembled and shook, and in the morning he was found dead: his brain had burst. All night long the devil had kept repeating, 'You signed; you signed; you have to obey the rules.' Faust thought he could still stand up to the devil, but no: for a time the devil had obeyed him, and now he had to keep his side of the bargain. So, you see, you have to think about this and know that nothing turns out exactly as we expect it to.

Good exists, and so does evil: that, we all admit. But there is a third school which disposes of both and, one day, there will be a new philosophy which will be above both good and evil. As I have explained, that new philosophy will be like the chemist who has all kinds of virulent poisons in his or her laboratory and who knows just the right dose or the right way to combine them so that they heal instead of killing, like the earth. For the earth, too, nothing is dirty or bad; nothing has to be discarded. And why should initiates not know what the earth knows? Why should they be conquered by impurity, insults or injuries? So many people, especially artists, have had their lives poisoned by their critics. So many painters, poets and musicians have died of a broken heart because of slanders, injurious letters or venomous articles in the press! If evil had such power over them, it was because they had never learned how to use it to strengthen themselves.

The science of the future is to learn to transform, purify and use everything

in order to become stronger. Sooner or later this philosophy will prevail all over the world, for people will realize how true it is and how obviously right. Scientists have already applied it instinctively in their work: they use poisons, fire, lightning, waterfalls, etc., and one day they will even use atom bombs to produce heating and electric light. At present, once these bombs have been made, nobody knows what to do with them or how to use them for anything but destruction. I don't know if scientists have thought of this, but my feeling is that, instead of exploding them all at once, there must be a way to tap the energy they contain slowly and gradually. They have been able to split the atom very gradually, so why should it not be possible gradually to release all that energy that is stored up in a bomb? Obviously, it is much more dangerous, but it will come! One thing we can be sure of, and that is that certain materials such as plutonium and uranium with which atom bombs are made will one day supply energy to heat and light our towns and cities.

If you have been given a different explanation of good and evil, know that it was not the truth. I received the very same explanations of good and evil as you, but I was forced to conclude that there was no proof, anywhere, that they were accurate. On the contrary, the whole of nature says just the opposite, whereas the whole of nature demonstrates the truth of what I have just been telling you. Go ahead: analyse, compare and check out the truth of it for yourselves!

Start by studying human beings themselves. If you look at the upper part of them, their eyes and mouth, their nose and brain and so on, you are full of admiration. But if you look any lower, at their stomach and intestines and so on, you feel a bit disgusted. But the proof that their two halves work together is that they never go out with only one of them, on the pretext that it is more presentable than the other: wherever they go they always take both their halves with them! This being so, why have they separated them in their mind? Their two halves work together to ensure the continued existence and development of all their faculties, and if they start opposing each other it is because humans, in their ignorance, have introduced disorder and conflict into themselves. The truth is that they coexist and collaborate.

If I were to tell you to what lengths my reflections went you would be horrified. Imagine the reaction if I put the question to some of those

theologians and religious, all those puritanical people: 'Tell me, what do you imagine heaven, the kingdom of God to be like? Do men and women arrive in heaven with all their organs, or do they leave half of them behind? Do they take only their brains, their eyes and ears, and so on, to heaven with them? What do they do with all those organs that shock and disgust you so?' And they would have to admit that they had never really thought about it. No, well it is a very awkward question, isn't it? Perhaps you have never thought about it either, and perhaps you are a bit perplexed by it. You say, 'That's true; I believe in heaven all right, but what is it like and where is it?' Well, I am sure of one thing, and that is that the kind of heaven the theologians envisage must be dreadfully boring! No doubt that is why they are all in such a hurry to come back to earth! No, but seriously: don't misunderstand me. If I talk like this it is to show you that many of the things we have been taught are neither clear nor logical, and my role is to bring you face to face with certain questions that you have never thought about before.

So now you are going to start wondering: 'What's it going to be like? What will life in heaven be like?' Well, I know what it will be like! God did not create humans in order to cut them in two. In the first place it would be such a horrible sight: painters and sculptors would be sickened and revolted to see humans mutilated and torn apart. Besides who would benefit from it? God loves beauty more than anyone and he certainly did not create humans by just jumbling everything together. We don't even know how long it took him to create us. You will say, 'But we do; we know it took him just one day, the sixth day.' How well informed you are! One day! Do you really think it took only one day to create man and woman as they really are, with all the faculties we can see and all their luminous bodies that are still invisible to us? Try to recognize all that splendour, and then perhaps you will understand why God has no intention of mutilating humans by cutting them in half just to please a few ignorant individuals. I know what human beings are like up there, in the kingdom of God. The things you find so ugly, shameful and disgusting down here are, on the contrary, so beautiful, luminous and full of glory that those beings could not possibly see things your way and want to mutilate themselves. They are too full of admiration at the abundance of human beings as God conceived of them, with all their potential for manifesting themselves in splendour and perfection.

Yes, I could tell you what goes on on high, but you would not believe me; you would be shocked. So I am keeping it for later. All sacred scriptures allude to it, but it is not time to reveal it yet; it must wait until you are capable of understanding. When that day comes you will know what it means to live in love. On high, only love exists; there is nothing else. But what form that love takes and how it is expressed is another matter, and I sense that the time has not yet come to reveal it to you.

You will gradually come to realize how true and logical everything I tell you is and how closely it corresponds to reality. But I advise you not to try and verify it by referring to books written by the ignorant: refer to the book of nature, refer to creation itself; that is where you will find what I have been telling you: it is written everywhere in nature. My own knowledge comes from the book of nature, not from the books of men and women: I don't recognize their authority. The Bible, the Gospels and other sacred books, yes, but not those written by people who were neither enlightened nor inspired. I do sometimes read them, just to keep informed or out of curiosity, but I don't go to them to find the true Science.

Everything is written down for all to see in the great book of nature, but one has to have eyes capable of reading it. Yes, even what I have just been saying about good and evil is constantly before our eyes and within us. So, there you have something else to reflect on in order to make progress. And if there are some amongst you who fear that what I have said is against religion, that I am starting a revolution; if they are so weak and timorous, let them stay where they are! But let those who dare to draw nearer to true knowledge continue to advance!

In order to channel, control or transform evil one has to be a servant of God. It is not enough to be a servant of good, for good, as I have said, is limited. If good has never succeeded in vanquishing evil it is because it is not God himself; it is only half of him: evil is the other half. You could say that good and evil are brother and sister; they are not the Father. And we must approach the Father, for it is he who commands his sons and daughters. To approach the Father is to serve God, not only to serve good. We have to move up to a higher level in order to serve God, who commands both good and evil. It is there, on high, that we will find true safety. Obviously, there is no

evil on high, and to the extent to which good signifies perfection, you could say that to be a servant of good is, necessarily, to be a servant of God. But good as we understand it, intellectually, that is, as the opposite of evil, is not God: it is only one half.

Listen with great attention to what I am saying. Here are other examples that will help you understand the truth of it: take the way our blood circulates, for instance. If we had only the arterial system, life would be impossible, for the blood needs to be cleansed of its impurities, and this is where the venous system (the other half) comes in. The blood flows through the lungs, where it is purified, and once pure it goes back to the heart. What comes from the heart, therefore, is pure blood, or good. Yes, but after a while that good contains many impurities again. Has anyone ever really studied the significance of this phenomenon?

And we find the same phenomenon on the roads: the traffic goes up one side and down the other. If every road were one-way only, what would happen to the cars that have to come back? Would they be able to go one way and never come back? Or take yet another example: in the old days – and this is still the case in some countries, today – in order to turn the wheel that served to grind grain or bring up water from a well, two teams of men yoked themselves to opposite sides of it and pushed in opposite directions. They may have seemed to be working against each other, but in fact they were working together to turn the wheel.

So good and evil are yoked to the same wheel: if good were alone it could not turn the wheel. I may be the first person who has ever dared to say that good is incapable of doing whatever has to be done without a helping hand from evil. You will object that evil is an opposing force, but that is just the point: it has to be opposing! When you want to cork or uncork a bottle you use both hands and they work in opposite directions: one pulls or pushes at the cork and the other pushes or pulls the bottle the other way, and their collaboration enables you to cork or uncork the bottle.

Now do you see how two contradictory forces can work together for the same goal? It is happening every day in front of your very eyes, but you never see it!

Sèvres, December 28, 1964 (morning)

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

‘The sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them’ – *Revelation 8: 7, 9*

Job’s ordeals – *Job 1: 6, 2: 13*

II

You had better keep what I told you this morning to yourselves; people are not ready to hear these truths, and if you go around talking about them to everybody, you are going to start having problems. Look at how long you, yourselves, have taken, years and years, before you began to understand them, and I am not at all sure that you really understand them even now! Humankind has been so led astray by false traditions, it is going to take generations to cure them of it!

Human beings are constantly at war with themselves and each other because they attach importance only to what they can see on the outside. They say, ‘This is light and that is darkness... This is matter and that is the spirit... This is good and that is evil.’ But this way of dividing things up is their own invention; true initiates never see things in that light for they have always believed in the unity of reality: for them, duality is simply a manifestation of unity.

And what if we did know what was good and what was evil! But we don’t, and yet we go on fighting – fighting against God, whom we mistake for the devil and, often, adoring the devil whom we mistake for God! Yes, if we were capable of distinguishing between good and bad it would make things a lot easier, but we are not, and we get everything all mixed up. Human beings are only interested in fighting. It doesn’t matter if they are fighting against themselves, their own shadows or God himself: as long as they can have a

good fight! They are all Don Quixotes. Tilting at windmills? Yes, perhaps, but that is not important: what counts is to declare war on someone! I tell you: peace will never come as long as we cling to dualism.

I could talk to you for a long time about all this, but you are not ready for these truths yet, so it would serve no useful purpose to talk about them. How incomprehensible human beings are! They say that their genital organs are shameful, disgusting, diabolical, that they are the cause of all our temptations, and yet it is with these very organs that they create children! Does that mean that children are diabolical, too? What logic! And if these organs are instruments of the devil, how is it that God, in his wisdom, allows saints and initiates to come into the world by means of them? How is it possible for human minds to give credence to such a theory? Why have you all accepted it for so long? Is it because the Church taught it? Well, the day is coming when the Church is going to have to acknowledge the truth of a great many things it has previously rejected and condemned.

You must not believe that I am the first, or the only one, to think this way about good and evil. There have been many, in antiquity, who knew these things but who never revealed them or, if they did reveal them, they did so in such obscure sayings that nobody understood them. Thousands of years ago, long before Jesus, Hermes Trismegistus wrote in his Emerald Tablet: 'What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below, to accomplish the miracles of one thing.' Have you understood what these words mean? They contain the quintessence of what I have just been saying. Hermes Trismegistus did not explain; he only summed up. 'What is below': what did he mean by that? And why begin with 'what is below' rather than with 'what is above'?

Hermes Trismegistus concludes the Emerald Tablet with the words: 'For this reason I am called Hermes Trismegistus (Trismegistus means 'thrice great'), because I hold the science of the three worlds.' If Hermes was known as 'Trismegistus', therefore, it was because he knew the secret of unity; he knew how to use that single, many-faceted force, and it was thanks to this force that he possessed all powers. And this is the same force of which it is said that those who possess it will possess the glory of the whole world. If Hermes Trismegistus possessed it, why should there not be others who can

possess it, too?

Duality is nothing more than an expression of unity. The first and only number is ⁵. This is something you must know: 1 is the only significant number, and 2, 3, 4 and so on are simply divisions of 1. We have arbitrarily divided the 1 into two, three, four or more divisions, and we speak of them as though each were a new number, whereas they are simply different aspects or facets of 1.1 So what is 2? The 2 is simply the polarization of the 1.1 Take a magnet: a magnet is polarized but it is not divided; it is one and it remains one. The 2 cannot exist apart from the 1. Every object, and even the human being, has two ends, two poles, but is still one. And 3? The 3 is the two inseparable poles, which, through their interaction, produce a third object or being: but 3 is not a separate entity. And the same is true of 4 and 5: they are other aspects of the number 1; they do not exist as individuals. Only 1 exists.

So far, it has always been thought that each number had its own, separate identity, that there was the 1, the 2, the 3 and so on; in other words, that all the numbers were on a par with 1. No, only the 1 exists of itself: God is love, the Father, the origin, the first cause. But this has not been properly understood; people think that 1 and 2 exist separately and apart from each other, in other words, that God and Satan are equals, that they have the same power. This is false: the devil has no separate existence apart from God, a separate field of influence as it were, from which he could oppose God. The devil is simply one aspect of unity; he may be far off in the perimeter of that unity, but he is still bound to it. Take the example of our sewers and drains: are they cut off from the cities?

Of course, I realize that the problem of evil has never been explained in this way. But now you can see that there is only one number, and that that number is 1. All the others are aspects, the innumerable divisions or facets of the 1, which contains them all. This is the authentic philosophy which has always been given in the temples, in the mysteries. But the common run of men and women have been given only a few little scraps to play with: they have been allowed to believe what they liked.

Since the 1 contains all other numbers, it is the only number we need to know, and it is useless to go and look for others anywhere else, for they are not there. All those who have tried to look elsewhere, who were not content

with the 1, which represents God, have found the devil and fallen victim to his torments, while God went completely out of their minds; they forgot all about him. You can see an illustration of this in the paintings and sculptures of medieval cathedrals and palaces: the devil is everywhere. Artists delighted in depicting the devil, the torments of the damned in hell and so on, and God was forgotten. After all, what use was God, since the devil was so powerful? What an aberration! What degradation! Humankind's greatest mistake has been to try to break away from the 1, for if you think of the 1, all that is negative and hostile disappears, and that includes the devil! Only God remains.

Human beings, too, must be studied as units. Even though we can divide them into two: soul and body, individuality and personality, the inner and the outer, the higher and the lower, spirit and matter, emissive and receptive, concave and convex, man and woman, good and evil, heaven and hell, they are still one. They can also be divided into three: head, trunk and limbs, or head, lungs and belly, but they are still one. Alchemists divide the human being into four, theosophists into seven, others into nine or twelve parts, but it is still one person. Which system is right? They are all right: they can divide the human being into as many parts as they like, there will still be only one person.

So, work with the 1, for neither 2 nor 3 exists. Even if you split humans up into the infinite number of parts represented by their organs, nerves and capillaries, they are still one human being, that is to say, a unit. And what matters is the unit. To divide humans is to mutilate, destroy and disintegrate, whereas if you see each one as a whole, a unit, you are preserving their life and vigour.

The number 1 stands for harmony, plenitude, immortality, whereas all the other numbers spell dispersal and disintegration. The 2 is war, antagonism, good and evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, day and night. The 3 reconciles them for a time; 3 is the little boy who hugs his mother and father and tells them not to quarrel. Out of love for their son, they agree to a truce, but even then, in spite of him, they continue to bicker and quarrel. You know how it is, don't you! Then there is the 4; that's the daughter. And, once again, it is open warfare, for the mother prefers the son and the father prefers the daughter,

and they never stop arguing! Only in the 1 can peace be found.

Remember what I told you this morning: you have to go beyond good and evil. Good is not enough, for it has never succeeded in solving the problem of evil; it is always at war with evil but has never managed to defeat it. And evil, on the other hand, never manages to defeat good: it burns, devastates and lays waste as much as it likes, but good is constantly being reborn and growing and spreading in all directions, for it is just as tenacious as evil. There is nothing one can do to solve the conflict of good and evil, therefore: the only solution is to rise above them both.

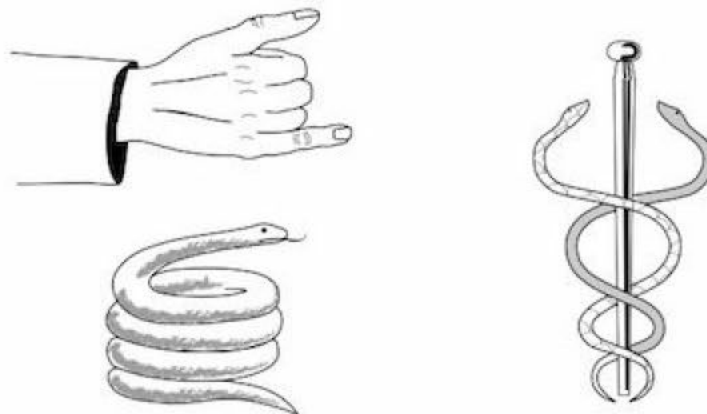
You will remember that the Bible speaks of two trees that grew in the garden of Eden: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, whose fruits were forbidden to Adam and Eve, and the tree of life, whose fruits they were allowed to eat. ⁶ Why were they allowed to eat the fruits of the tree of life? Because these fruits had the power to raise them above good and evil. To eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is to taste evil as well as good, sadness as well as joy, sickness as well as health, sorrow as well as happiness, and this division is a manifestation of the number 2. The only way to put a stop to the conflict is to return to the Source and eat the fruit of the tree of life, for the tree of life is unity. But how can you get back to unity, for it is said that an archangel, armed with a flaming sword, guards the entrance to paradise. Yes, but there is still one way of entering, and that is the way of love: love for your Maker, a love so strong and pure that the archangel will let you in, for the Lord has given him orders to let in only those who are grateful, pure and full of love. The tree of life exists; it is there; it is real and it is possible to reach it and to eat of its fruits so that its life may flow in you, too, but before you can do this you have to purify and transform yourselves.

In ancient times the initiates preached only this: the philosophy of unity. Dualism appeared on the scene much later, in the Persian religion of Manicheism, for instance, or in the Christian concept of Satan as the adversary of God. God has no adversaries; it is not possible for God to have an adversary; everything bows down before God, everything obeys him, for he alone is the Creator. We can have adversaries, of course, because we are ignorant and continually breaking God's laws, but not God!

So you must free yourselves of these misconceptions which retard your

evolution, for the philosophy of unity is the only philosophy that can save you. 'There is no God but God', proclaim the Muslims, 'and Muhammad is his prophet!' It would have been better if they had added that there are other prophets of God: Muhammad is not the only one. But still, the first part of the formula is magnificent: 'There is no God but God!' So Muslims recognize no adversary of God, but they do recognize the existence of a being who works to destroy humans, and they call him Shaitan. Shaitan, Satan; it is the same name, and the Egyptians called him Seth. For cabbalists and astrologers, Saturn, Sabbath, Satan, Shaitan... all these are the S, the great serpent which represents the devil. It is no coincidence that all these names resemble each other.

The serpent dwells in humans, too, in their spine, for the spinal column represents a snake. And it can be seen again in the human hand, which represents a coiled snake.



The caduceus of Hermes also shows two snakes, symbolizing the energies, ida and pingala, the two lateral channels of the human spinal column.⁷ These are the two forces with which initiates work; they are also, therefore, the two hands. But I have already talked to you about this in my first lectures. At that time I also told you, if you remember, that you should never close your fist with the thumb on the inside, because it is a sign of weakness. Always keep your thumb on the outside, clearly visible.

Now, I want to come back for a moment to the question of unity. Over and above the duality, the polarity that we see, is the 1. I have never told you not

to study the other numbers: no, you must study them, but you must study them in the full awareness that they are only aspects, manifestations of 1. You must keep coming back to 1. I know that it is still difficult for you to understand what I am saying, but one day you will understand. For the time being, simply bear in mind that the other numbers only exist in isolation as elements in a classification, analysis or diagram, but that in reality they are all included in 1.

In any event, I don't advise you to spread all this abroad; human beings are still so deeply influenced by the old ideas that have been drummed into them, that not only would they not understand, but they would make things difficult for you. While John Huss was being burnt at the stake, an old woman arrived, carrying a bundle of wood to add to the fire. Seeing her, John Huss cried out, 'O sancta simplicitas!' ('Holy simple-mindedness!'). Obviously, she thought she was doing the right thing; and there are a great many people like her, who would willingly burn you at the stake, thinking that they would be rendering a service to the Lord! No doubt the Lord needs people to burn heretics for him. He is thirsting for fire and blood – I suppose people like this must have consulted him! And you, too: you will be burnt at other kinds of stakes if you reveal these truths to fools. If the Inquisition still existed I would have been burnt twenty times over already, and for far less than this: human beings are so terrifyingly ignorant and narrow-minded.

There are times when we are obliged to leave people in their ignorance to suffer without a glimmer of understanding of the immense grandeur and goodness of God. Even you must sometimes ask yourselves, 'Why doesn't God come and free us from all our sufferings and sorrows?' And the answer is, 'Because we have put up so many barriers of false and arbitrary ideas between God and ourselves, that now he cannot get at us to help us. With the result that human beings are convinced that God is a long way away, totally inaccessible and deaf to their cries, whereas the devil is close to hand; he hears them and is ready to help them.' If you don't believe that this is what people think, just try making your own opinion poll, and you will soon see: 'This God that we've always been told to pray to can't be reached: he's deaf or asleep. But the devil is wide awake and ready to help at once!' And that is true. But what human beings don't realize is that it is they who have distanced themselves from God; it is they who have dug that immense gulf

that lies between them and the Lord. And yet, in reality, no other being is so close to us; no other being loves us as God loves us or is so anxious to help us, but we have got to clear away all the obstacles that prevent that love from reaching us.

I expect you remember that I told you, one day, that the sun which moves the planets, causes plants to grow and is capable of inducing epidemics, wars and cataclysms on earth with only a tiny modification of the currents flowing from it, is powerless in the face of a closed curtain. Or rather, it is not so much that the sun is powerless to draw them aside; rather it does not want to do so: that is up to us. And when we do open our curtains it comes in and lights up the whole house. But it cannot – or will not – draw the curtains for us. Even if you beg and implore it, for millions of years, saying, ‘Come in, dear sun. You are so beautiful; I beg you to come into my house and bring me light!’ it will only reply, ‘I can’t do it. You have to do it yourself. Draw back your curtains!’ Do you really expect God to draw your curtains for you? What nonsense! In fact, at the risk of being condemned as a blasphemer, I will tell you that God can do all things, but that he is very weak when it comes to opening our drawn curtains. It is up to us to do that.

Christians think that God can do everything. Yes, he can do everything except take away the curtains that, consciously or unconsciously, we have woven for ourselves. Once the sun does come into our room, everything becomes bright and beautiful, but we have to make the gesture and pull back our curtains. Ah, then: what brightness! Obviously, therefore, you can see that even if I want to sweep away all the nonsensical notions human beings have in their heads, I can do nothing if they refuse to pull back the curtains that they or others have woven and hung in their windows. If God cannot do it, if the sun cannot do it, how could I possibly do it?

For the time being, instead of embarking on explanations about good and evil, be content to talk to people about other things. But you, yourselves, you must never again be taken in by all these divisions, which are useful only to explain certain things more clearly. The important thing is to reach a synthesis of reality and not divide things up. All divisions are included in the synthesis; one cannot escape from the synthesis. Every analysis must be done within the framework of the synthesis, otherwise it leads straight to death. [8](#)

This is true, so true in fact, that you have to wait until a person is dead before dissecting them! Analysis as we understand it is synonymous with death, for it requires all the elements which produce or preserve life to be removed before it can be done. In the future, however, analysis will be done quite differently. For example, in order to preserve the life and integrity or unity of a fruit, people will study it on the tree instead of plucking it first. The study of dead beings, whether it's a piece of fruit or a human body, can only lead to false conclusions, whereas the study of living beings leads to correct ones.

But now, let's conclude. The problem of good and evil is not an easy one. Is what people call evil necessarily an evil for the whole cosmos? How often something that one person sees as an evil is welcomed by another as a good! If you lose your wallet, it is an evil for you, but it may be a great good for the person who finds it! To kill animals in order to sell their skins or make sausages, hams and all kinds of spicy meats out of their flesh may be a good thing for human beings, but what about the poor animals? And what is wrong if cars travel in both directions on the roads? Just as long as they don't collide head-on! There is nothing wrong with the blood flowing in opposite directions, as long as it remains separated in the veins and arteries; otherwise, you have the blue disease. And there is nothing wrong with cities and towns having sewage systems to evacuate all the waste humans throw away, but you have to take care not to fall into them! And so on, and so on, for everything else.

Evil, therefore, does not lie in the fact that opposing forces exist: they exist in order to work together. On the other hand, of course, if these forces come into conflict and combat and destroy each other instead of doing the work allotted to them by Cosmic Intelligence, then it is evil. Take the example of fire and water: extraordinary things can happen when you put water on the fire. Yes, just so long as you have something to separate them, otherwise the fire will simply cause the water to evaporate or the water will extinguish the fire. And this happens in every area of life if you are ignorant. Poisons or natural forces are only harmful for those who are too weak or too ignorant to know how to handle them. But for nature herself, nothing is evil.

All creatures are obliged to eat and drink, and even when the food they eat is perfectly good in itself, they still have to eliminate elements which cannot

be used by their organism. So, hell, with its myriad inhabitants, should be seen as the place in which the waste products of all creatures are deposited. This way of looking at it shows us that hell is a consequence of all the impurities and wickedness shed and eliminated by all creatures, and those who do not manage to purify and perfect themselves are drawn down into hell by the laws of affinity and attraction: there is no escape for them.

Does hell really exist somewhere in space, or is it rather a state of consciousness, a vibration, a wavelength? We will talk about this at some other time.⁹ For the moment, remember simply that God is above both good and evil, and that, if we too are to rise above good and evil, we must become one with God.

Sèvres, December 28, 1968 (afternoon)

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

The two trees in the Garden of Eden – *Gen. 2: 15-17*

¹ See 'You Are Gods', Synopsis Coll., Part II, chap. 1: 'Lower nature and higher nature'.

² See *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12.

³ See 'Et il me montra un fleuve d'eau de la vie', Synopsis Coll., Part IX, chap. 1: 'Le fleuve de la vie divine'.

⁴ See *Cosmic Balance – The Secret of Polarity*, Izvor Coll. n° 237, chap. 5: 'God transcends good and evil'.

⁵ See 'In Spirit and in Truth', Izvor Coll. n° 235, chap. 5: 'From multiplicity to unity'.

⁶ See *The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*, Izvor Coll. n° 210, chap. 1: 'The two trees of paradise'.

⁷ See *Man's Subtle Bodies and Centres – the Aura, the Solar Plexus, the Chakras...*, Izvor Coll. n° 219, chap. 5: 'Kundalini force'.

⁸ See '*Et il me montra un fleuve d'eau de la vie*', Synopsis Coll., Part VII, chap. 4: 'La charpente de l'univers. Analyse et synthèse'.

⁹ See above, Part X, chap. 5: 'Enfer, purgatoire, paradis'.

Chapter Four : Pitting oneself against the dragon

You may have been a little surprised by what I said about vanity yesterday, but I assure you it is the truth. If you make up your minds to enlist your vanity in the service of an ideal, it will be a powerful ally that will stimulate you and send you rocketing heavenwards, and one day, what was vanity will be vanity no longer; it will have become divine glory. Pride, anger and sexual energy are also forces which can be put to work either for good or for evil or, in other words, for a divine ideal or for one's own pleasure and self-interest.¹ I have already talked to you, in the past, about using your vices and weaknesses, and many of you were taken aback by the idea. You thought that the only proper thing to do was to try and get rid of them. But in the future, human beings will be so intelligent that, instead of battling against these forces (with no hope of ever winning the battle, incidentally), they will use them to become richer and more powerful in every respect.

So far, religion has always talked about plucking out evil; it tells us to uproot and eradicate it, without realizing that there is tremendous power in it. Take the case of certain mystics or ascetics who resolved never to gaze on a woman's face. Because, of course, women were temptation itself, you understand! They had been specially created by the devil in hell and a man had to flee from them to avoid falling into their clutches! So these ascetics stayed in their cells or walked through the streets with downcast eyes or took refuge in the cloister or a cave in the desert, and what did they get for their pains? Their wellsprings ran dry, their faces were all wrinkled and lined and they became lifeless and unhappy, without a grain of enthusiasm or joy. And they thought that this was a sign of holiness! But that has nothing to do with holiness. Entire generations have gone this way, in the past, but with what results? Obviously, amongst all those thousands of mystics, there were some who really did have exceptional gifts of intelligence and will which enabled them to rise above that aridity, but even they did not attain true fulfilment. Why not? Because they did not know that sexual energy was a primordial force and that God had bestowed it on humankind for its good.

In the future there will be a new philosophy which will teach men and women how to use the impulses they receive from each other, how to use the

thrill and joy of contemplating each other so as to be constantly inspired, to become geniuses and divinities. Thanks to their love which will sustain and help them and impel them onward, instead of becoming parched and shrivelled, they will be ever more alive, beautiful and expressive,² whereas, in the past, those who had no inkling of this philosophy became lack-lustre, embittered and dejected. Instead of helping and strengthening them, this force completely destroyed them. Yes, the selfsame force! So I don't advise you to adopt the mistaken notions of the past because they give very poor results. Not even the psychoanalysts can save people who adopt that old philosophy; the only thing that can save them is an initiatic philosophy, which teaches men and women how to use their instinctive impulses in order to evolve.

As far as vanity is concerned, it is exactly the same as for sexual energy. As long as vanity is not yoked and harnessed, mobilized and channelled, it weakens people; they are always trying to show others how rich they are; they will spend all their money to the point of bankruptcy in order to show off their luxurious, sumptuous life. And even their other energies, all their intellectual and moral energies, are monopolized, absorbed and exploited by their vanity. So vanity can make a complete pauper of you, both materially and psychically. But if, on the other hand, you use it as a fuel, a stimulus to propel you forward, just as we use coal or petrol, for instance, then you will be able to use it for great achievements. People always want to get rid of what is negative, to burn it, chop it down or tear it up by the roots and retain only what is positive. But if you try to work only with the positive aspects there will always be something missing, for the negative aspect exists, and if it exists it must mean it has been put there by Cosmic Intelligence for a purpose.

Here again I am giving you totally new ideas which are a long way from those taught by religion and the ethics of our day. It is a little too soon to make such revelations, but I assure you that, in the future, this question will be studied, and people will learn that even the powers of hell can be used. But before we can use them we have to learn how.

The first thing you must know is that evil can be beneficial only in homoeopathic doses. If you don't know this, it will destroy you, for an allopathic dose of evil is a furious power, which devastates and ravages all in

its path. It is for this reason that religion has always counselled people to flee from it or to combat it and work only with good. It is quite possible, in fact, that religion has never known that evil can be used. But if God has given the possibility of manifesting itself not only to good but also to evil, he must have had a reason. Of course, as long as men and women are weak, it is dangerous to tell them that evil can be useful; people have to be strong and intelligent before they can bear such revelations. But later, when Initiatic Science is more widely known, it will gradually cast its light into those unknown depths we call evil, hell, the outer darkness or the abyss.³

Up to date I have revealed only one aspect of reality to you: the positive, spiritual, celestial aspect. But disciples must neglect nothing if they are to perfect themselves and reach the last degree of initiation, so they are also going to have to be concerned with what is negative. Hermes Trismegistus said, 'What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below', but as he did not explain what he meant by 'below' and 'above', occultists have always thought he was saying that humans, animals, trees and so on, all the things to be found here below on earth, are like the things in heaven. If they thought this it was because they had not penetrated Hermes Trismegistus' innermost thought. But Hermes was called Trismegistus precisely because he possessed the science of the three worlds: the world on high, the intermediary world and the world below.

Someone who wants to explore the world below must be luminous, strong and well protected, and yet, today, we see people with little light and little wisdom launching into an exploration of the subconscious. Actually, even if its practitioners are still not very skilful or adroit, the very fact that psychoanalysis exists is a sign that the time has come for humans to explore the unknown, obscure regions of their own being. At present they are only just beginning; they are feeling their way, groping forward, not knowing how these regions are organized or structured, ignorant of the elements and materials involved and of the connections between them, ignorant, too, of the powers and entities at work here. Without any foreknowledge of these things, human beings have launched into a study of the subconscious, partly because of their own audacity and partly because they are being urged in that direction by certain guiding forces: the forces of Aquarius. Those who have begun the study of these regions have medical or university degrees, but that

is not enough; only initiates have the necessary knowledge. But in spite of that, in spite of their limited means, they manage to find some shreds of truth, and this proves that it is time, now, to descend into these regions and explore this other side of creation.

So far I have only talked to you about superconsciousness, self-consciousness and consciousness, in other words, only about what the Emerald Tablet terms 'what is above'. I have not talked to you about 'the below' yet, because you are not ready to confront the powers of the subconscious. The subconscious consists of many different layers superimposed one on top of the other, and those studied by psychoanalysts are usually only the topmost layers. Hell lies in the deeper layers, for this is what hell is: the other pole, and those who go down into the depths without proper preparation are devoured, exactly as they would be if they went down into a pit full of wild animals. Yes indeed! It is a very dangerous, very risky undertaking to go down into the depths of human nature without proper instruction and without the protection of all kinds of weapons, because when you rouse these hostile, malodorous forces from their sleep, they are liable to attack you.

And now we are going to see that 'the below' is not quite so shameful and disgusting as many religious people would have us believe, for it is here, in the lower regions, that creation takes place and children are born; life comes from this region. The lower part of humans is also their central point whereas the higher parts are peripheral. The Gospels and all the alchemical texts mention this centre, and the famous alchemist, Basilus Valentinus, in his book *The Twelve Keys*, calls it the centre or fiery core of the earth, saying that one must go down into this centre in order to find the philosopher's stone. But this earth, whose centre we must go down into, is our own 'earth', our own inner being. This is where we must go to find buried treasures. This centre is the source of life; the flow of life begins here and circulates and rises until even the brain is irrigated and enabled to function thanks to this centre.⁴ As soon as humans become estranged from their own centre they lose their balance; they are no longer in control of their passions and fall victim to every negative force.

The initiates have given us various methods we can use to reach this centre

and draw from it balance and strength and vital energies in abundance. I may, possibly, give you some of these methods soon, so you can learn to make both ends meet, the top and the bottom, the high and the low, for this is how a human being reaches fulfilment. There is, of course, a certain danger involved, because, from time immemorial, all that is vicious and obscure has been accumulating in this centre. But if you know how to take only the most minute particles of it, you find that evil provides just the element which was lacking for plenitude.

In the Talmud, it is said that at the end of time the righteous, that is to say, initiates, will partake of the flesh of the legendary sea-monster, the leviathan. Yes, the leviathan is going to be caught and cut up, salted and stored in freezers and, when the time comes, all the righteous will regale themselves with a slice of its flesh! What a delightful prospect! If we were to take the legend literally, I am afraid that many good, fastidious Christians would be sickened by it, but it has to be interpreted: the leviathan is a monster, and if the monster is fated to provide a festive dish for the righteous, it means that if we know how to use evil it can become a source of riches and blessings.

Look at all the tremendous forces of nature: lightning, electricity, fire, waterfalls, and so on. Now that humans have learned to control and use them, they bring them wealth. And yet, at one time, these forces were hostile to humans and considered evil. And hatred, anger and jealousy, and so on: aren't they poisonous and hostile, too? Yes, but with the help of the new pharmacies of the Universal White Brotherhood you will learn how to use them; in fact you will be taught methods which will enable you to make use of all the negative forces that you possess in such abundance. So now, instead of tearing your hair and moaning that you are damned and condemned to burn for eternity in the lake of fire and brimstone, you can rejoice, because the future is beginning to look much brighter for you! But be careful not to throw yourself full tilt at evil and start trying to swallow great chunks of it. One little electron, one atom at a time, is quite enough, and you must be sure to digest it well!

In the future, those who have the courage to do so will study these poisons: jealousy, hatred, fear and sexual energy, and learn to use them; in fact they will store them up in little flasks and keep them in their medicine cabinets so

as to have them to hand when they need them. As you can see, all your preconceived notions are going to have to be changed. You must stop being afraid of evil for that is the only way to put an end to the war. Mystics, religious and spiritual people are always at war, inwardly, because they have not understood the first thing about creation and life. They spend all their time and energy in a perpetual conflict with themselves because they are convinced that good must annihilate evil. But you, now, must learn to use it instead of fighting it; in this way, all the struggles and divisions will be replaced by useful and effective work. This is why initiates no longer struggle against evil; they are at peace because they have understood that it will never be destroyed.

Evil can be domesticated, chloroformed, used and even cut up in bits and eaten... but it cannot be destroyed! Read the book of Revelation and see what it says about the dragon, which is the figure of evil: it never says that it will be killed. It only says it will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years (and we still have to understand what these 'thousand years' mean), and that after these things it must be released. Does this mean the reign of evil will be restored? No, not at all! For the dragon will have been re-educated and reformed in the course of those thousand years! No one has ever wondered what would happen to it while it was down in the pit. Well, I can tell you: it will be in the care of tutors and educators, and there will be an army of manicurists, pedicurists and dentists, to file down its nails, claws and teeth so that, by the time it gets out, it will be completely inoffensive! You see, no one ever thought of that until I came along and, with my habitual curiosity, started asking questions. And I was told, 'Come, come! How could anyone believe we would leave the dragon there for a thousand years without doing anything about it?' So you see: it is going to be re-educated, and when it comes out it will be a reformed character, almost a servant of humankind, for even underground there are educators, you see. So, there is a new science, a new philosophy, a new religion for you!

Another thing that has never been explained, is why Jesus descended into hell before going up to heaven.⁵ Some people say he went to set a few unfortunate wretches free, but it is all too quick and easy to say that. What was the real reason? Why did he have to go down to hell? We cannot answer this question unless we understand what hell is and what it represents in us.

Hell represents the spring from which life flows. Yes, why did God plan things in such a way that we all had to come from this region which is thought to be so shameful and disgusting, even diabolical? These mysteries have not yet been explained, but one day they will become clear to all, for it is written that all mysteries will be laid open in the last days.

These 'last days' do not refer to the very last days at the end of everything, but to the last days of an era. There will always be the last days of one era and the first days of the next; we have to understand this. The end of the world has already been foretold many times, and a lot of poor creatures prepared to die, only to find that the world did not come to an end after all. It was only the end of an era. They should have understood that the word 'world' really stood for an era. And we, here, today, are living the last days of the world, because a new era is dawning. Only the day before yesterday I was reading a newspaper in which they said that a new type of man, a new humanity was about to appear on earth. So, you see, people do have antennae; they can feel that something is going to happen in the world. Obviously, they cannot tell us exactly what this new race, the new humankind of the Aquarian age, will be like, because their knowledge is based only on scientific data.

Yes, of course, they can embroider on the theme and say that the men and women of the future will go off to the moon and build all kinds of scientific and technical equipment there, that they will establish colonies on Mars, and so on. All that may be true, but what of the human soul? What will men and women think and how will they love? What virtues and qualities will they have, and what kinds of lives will they lead? They have not got answers to any of these questions because they do not possess the elements that could supply an answer; they are too deeply influenced by official scientific theory. But they do not know what is in store for science, either: it is quite possible that it will turn in the direction of Initiatic Science. People pin all their hopes on this or that discovery, on the development of this or that technology and, lo and behold, science suddenly takes a different direction. Yes, because science does not progress in a straight line but in a spiral, and it will soon join up with Initiatic Science.

It is extremely important for humans to learn how to use all their

weaknesses. In the future, you will all have to have this training. Actually, many of you have already begun and, instead of struggling in vain to rid yourselves completely of the negative forces that torment you, are learning to use them so as to become very strong. Take just one example: how can you use doubt? It is always a question of direction or orientation: instead of doubting Cosmic Intelligence, the existence of God or other people's kindness, why not turn your doubt on yourself? Why not doubt the accuracy of your own point of view, and ask yourself, 'Am I right in thinking this, that or the other? Do I really have the answer? Aren't there other ways of looking at things which are nearer the truth?' Why not start looking for those other ways?⁶ Unfortunately, when it comes to your own opinion you are never in any doubt, and you are always getting into trouble because you doubt everything except your own limited mental capacities! This is not a very intelligent way to behave.

Instead of believing that all our desires and appetites are perfectly valid and legitimate and really wonderful and trying to defend them all the time, we should be questioning them. Instead of always doubting our higher self, the sublime spirit within us and all the gifts God has given us, we should be doubting our personality. But our doubts are focused on the best of God's gifts while we give blind obedience to the untamed forces within us, in the belief that we are obliged to satisfy their demands. Well, it is high time all that changed! If you really insist on doubting something, you should at least find out what to doubt. As I said to some people who were in prison, 'Do you know why you're here?' 'Of course,' they replied. 'Because we got caught!' 'No, that's not the reason. The reason is that you put too much faith in your own intelligence and thought you could rely on your own schemes and calculations. You were too sure that your plans were perfect and that you would succeed. If you had doubted, you wouldn't be here today! You should have doubted a little... you had too much faith.'

You have some idea, now, of all that can be said about using the negative side of reality so that it becomes a power and even a protection for you. But if you want to know how to do this work, you have to go to an initiatic school, because it is only there that you can learn the exact nature of each virtue, force or thought and how to use it. I do not believe that a solution can be found except in the light that only Initiatic Science can give us, because it

alone is based on a true understanding of human nature. But who believes any of this today?

Nowadays, people think they are on the right path while believing in nothing at all. But this is a catastrophe! How do you make people, especially young people, understand that it is not possible to build their life on a void, that they must have a philosophy, a high ideal? The young take pleasure in demolishing all belief and then they are astonished to find themselves unbalanced. This shows that they are really not very intelligent! They may know a lot, but they do not possess true intelligence. The faculty of intelligence does not depend on how much you know. It is a way of looking at things, an inner vision, an unaccountable intuition that allows you to see the underlying reality of things; and thanks to this intuition, this sensation, you attune yourself and put yourself in harmony with all the forces of nature and the cosmos. If you strut about, boasting that you have such and such a degree, or have read or even written such and such a book but, at the same time, your inner landscape is a shambles, it simply goes to show that you are lacking in intelligence. For intelligence, as it is understood in Initiatic Science, is not the faculty located in the brain. True intelligence brings with it health, balance, joy and every blessing.⁷

The few words I have been saying to you today were a sort of trial balloon, a test. I wanted to open up a new path for you, but I am wondering if it is not a little premature and if this question of the negative dimension will be clear to you. Good, what is on high is only a half, and we cannot neglect the other half. The only thing is that you must always protect yourself by beginning with what is on high, with good.

When you have hornets or wasps in your house and you want to get rid of their nest, you call in the fire brigade, and the firemen are protected by their thick clothes and fire-hoses, otherwise they would be in danger of being stung to death. If divers or speleologists want to go down to the seabed or into a deep cave they put on special protective equipment. In other words, before doing something dangerous you have to prepare and protect yourself. But people imagine they can go down into their own depths quite easily and without danger. Well, if they did but know it, the greatest dangers of all are there, and they must be properly equipped. And you who are here today, you

are beginning to equip yourselves, for the way to equip yourself is to work with the forces from on high: with light, love, purity and kindness. This is all the equipment, the only masks or weapons you need, and with them you will soon be able to descend into the depths, into the dark, damp caves, where everything is slippery and slimy; you will be in no danger because you are allied with heavenly entities. And the heavenly entities will never abandon you; they know that, before reaching the last degrees of initiation, you have to explore the depths of your inner abyss.

The two principles of good and evil coexist in each human being. Possibly the evil is chloroformed or locked up in a cage like the animals in a zoo. Yes, the tigers, wild bears and cobras may all be under lock and key, but they are there, nevertheless, in every one of us. ⁸ The proof of this is that, given the right conditions, you will find that the sweetest and most virginal girl or the purest and most adorable young man can turn into a demon. When it happens you say, 'But how is it possible? It's incredible! No one could have expected anything like that...' Well, that is just the point: you should have expected it, for the wild beasts are all there, within us. They may not have had a chance to manifest themselves yet, but once they get a chance you will be staggered to see what they can do!

These diabolical tendencies, which are anchored in a remote past, exist in every creature, even the best. The thing is, now, you must not let them out all of a sudden, on the pretext that you are going to use them. You have to put down a tiny tube and siphon up just a few elements. Don't think you have to launch rashly into the fray and declare war against the powers of hell, for if you do you will simply be devoured. You have to know how to set about it. And this is why you must continue to work with the forces from on high, with prayer, harmony, the sun and love, and, from time to time, when something with nails and claws and fangs comes creeping up from the depths and tries to beguile you into doing something stupid, catch hold of it and bind it and take it into your laboratory; there you can study it at close quarters and even make it secrete some of its venom for you to use! But, I repeat, be careful! Don't use what I have been telling you as an invitation to go and pit your strength against evil. I don't want to hear you say, 'Aha, now I understand. Well, just watch and you'll see...' for it may be the last we hear of you! This has happened to many: they thought themselves very strong, but

they were not sufficiently firmly anchored in good, in the light, and now the poor things are in a piteous state. The forces of evil have played havoc with them.

There are thousands of men and women, these days, in the throes of madness and psychic turmoil because modern music, films, books, theatre, dance and painting are all bent on releasing the powers of hell, the powers of the astral world. Almost all contemporary artists, whatever their form of art, seek inspiration in the demonic underworld. It may be original, it may be interesting, but human beings need to be forewarned and forearmed, otherwise they fall prey to the forces of these regions. They are always looking for novelty, so far so good, but instead of looking for it on a higher plane, they all go plunging down to the lower planes. With the novelties they find there, they release astral forces throughout the whole of nature, and as they have no idea how to protect themselves they succumb. And this is why the influence of religion is weakening; people have less and less moral sense and even ordinary, common sense has disappeared. Wherever you look, you see discouragement, despair and madness. The astral world is invading humanity.

The Universal White Brotherhood alone is capable of remedying the situation. And this is why I keep telling you: 'Prepare yourselves to be examples for all those who are to come.' There are more and more unbalanced people in the world, and no wonder, for the human nervous system is not built to stand up to such severe shocks, and if you are to be capable, at the very least, of showing people the right path, you must prepare yourselves. Here, therefore, there should be a marvellous climate of harmony, an extraordinary cohesiveness and agreement, for then the angels and archangels, the initiates and great masters and all the patriarchs and prophets will come to our assistance and help us to drive these forces back underground. This is what is written in Revelation. All these beings, symbolized collectively as the Archangel Michael, are a figure of the forces of good which will come to bind the dragon. But workers are needed to call on these forces, and the workers are this brotherhood: the Universal White Brotherhood.

The task is so immense and glorious that you must, at last, make up your

minds to do better than you have done so far. You should say, ‘Yes, I want to take part in this, too. I want to ally myself with the heavenly workers who are working all over the world to enlighten human beings.’ If you do this, the forces of light will always be with the Brotherhood.

Sèvres, December 29, 1968

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

Jesus descended into Hell – *Ephesians 4: 9*

The Archangel Michael casts out the Dragon – *Revelation 12: 7-10*

¹ See *True Alchemy or the Quest for Perfection*, Izvor Coll. n° 221, chap. 10: ‘Vainglory and divine Glory’, chap. 11: ‘Pride and Humility’, chap. 12: ‘The sublimation of sexual energy’.

² See *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol. 28, chap. 10: ‘Le modèle solaire’.

³ See ‘*Et il me montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’ Synopsis Coll., Part VI, chap. 2: ‘Le travail sur le subconscient’.

⁴ See *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 10: ‘The hara centre’.

⁵ See *Truth: Fruit of Wisdom and Love*, Izvor Coll. n° 234, chap. 17: ‘Truth transcends good and evil’.

⁶ See *Love Greater Than Faith*, Izvor Coll. n° 239, chap. 3: ‘Constructive doubt’.

⁷ See *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 8: ‘The human intellect and cosmic intelligence’.

⁸ See *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete Works, vol. 11, chap. 19: ‘Your inner animals’.

Chapter Five : Presence and absence

These last few days I have been talking to you about attention. In the army or in schools for instance, they use the roll-call to make sure everybody is there, and as each name is called out, its owner answers, 'Present'. And if nobody answers to a name, the person is said to be absent. All that is very simple, childishly simple, in fact. Yes, but in reality these two words, 'presence' and 'absence', explain a great many things. If you are not paying attention to what you are doing during a meal, for instance, you will knock the cutlery and dishes together and make a noise. And this is true in every area of life: if someone is just 'not present', if their attention wanders, if vigilance or consciousness are absent, they are lost. When you are absent, anything can happen: a fall, a collision, a misfortune of any kind.

Let's take the word 'presence' as a starting point, and you will see how many interesting facts we'll discover. Suppose we look at the phenomena of life, for instance; what do we see? We see that if oxygen is present, life can go on, but if oxygen is absent and carbon dioxide is present, our health deteriorates. In the presence of a spark, oxygen and hydrogen can produce water, and then again, in other circumstances a spark will provoke an explosion. Yes, the presence of a spark!

If we don't get enough vitamins we can suffer from a deficiency and all the anomalies that follow from it. When there are ants about, snakes disappear: the presence of ants causes them to flee. Hens and other birds seek shelter when their instincts warn them of the presence of an eagle. The presence of a dead body attracts vultures. Honey attracts bees, whereas dirt attracts various other insects. The presence of a very pretty girl inevitably arouses jealousy, backbiting and anger in other girls and quite different feelings in young men. If she is innocent, ingenuous and defenceless they will be eager to show their chivalry and generosity; they will want to protect her. But if she has too much charm they will be caught in a whirlwind of sensuality. Obviously, this depends on the girls and boys concerned, but, generally speaking, young men become more attentive and chivalrous in the presence of young women. And what about gold? What does the presence of gold arouse? Greed: people begin to plot and plan and become dishonest. But the presence of flowers,

colours and so on triggers different emotions again.

Whatever kind it may be, a presence always provokes change. This is why the word 'presence' becomes extremely significant when you begin to study its effect in different domains and in different shapes and forms. We know that the presence of water causes plants to grow, that the presence of sunlight ripens fruit, that the presence of nourishment and air gives life and that their absence causes living things to die. But nobody goes any further than that. It is time we understood that the word 'presence' can be applied not only to the physical plane but also to the other planes. If you are in a gathering with other people, for instance, and a diabolical thought or desire is present within you, do you have any idea how it will reflect on the other people there, or what the results will be? Nobody, probably, will realize what is going on inside you, because they are not very highly evolved or clairvoyant, but their instincts will put them on their guard, and they will dislike or distrust you because of what you are secretly hatching within yourself. If they were clairvoyant, on the other hand, they would see the devil-fish, snakes, tigers and wild boar, all those horrifying entities that are on the rampage within you.

Human beings are so ignorant of what goes on in the invisible world that they don't know what kinds of thoughts and feelings attract undesirable entities or repulse luminous entities, and vice versa; so, without knowing it, they attract to themselves dark, noxious entities. Presence! Yes, indeed: the space in and around us is filled with malevolent entities, and those who are sensitive are often ill at ease, sensing the horror of their presence and the stench, the noxious currents flowing from them. If, when they felt these things, they knew how to react with prayer and meditation, they could improve matters, but they don't, and they let these venomous entities continue to darken and destroy their inner life. And the results, of course, are extremely negative.

You have all had similar experiences: there have been days when you have felt something heavy in the atmosphere, the presence of something that troubled you, but not knowing what it was, you have not known how to defend yourself against it. And on other days, you have had just the opposite experience: perhaps you have been looking at gorgeous colours or listening to

beautiful music or inspiring words, or you were in a mystical state of admiration and ecstasy. On days like that you attract entities of light and glory, and their presence, also, makes itself felt: you feel expansive, filled with wonder and light, and you decide, at last, to live a sane, intelligent life; you want to embrace the whole of creation and be in harmony with the whole universe. You may not know it, but these feelings are the result of the presence of those entities.

A presence can be external but it can also be internal. This is why the presence most ardently sought by initiates, the presence they do everything in their power to obtain in their heart and soul, is that of the Lord himself. Day and night, they work and study and purify themselves in order to transform their whole being into a temple in which the Holy Spirit may dwell. A genuine initiate desires no other presence than that of the Lord, for they know that when they obtain the divine presence they can obtain everything else, and that their work will benefit the whole world. The only thing is, though, it is not so easy to obtain the presence of the Lord! The Lord is all-knowing and all-powerful, but he has great good taste, and he cannot possibly go anywhere where he would be assailed by foul odours, dirty, ugly colours, discordant movements or chaotic states of mind. He could never be persuaded to go where conditions are not right for him.

Actually, if it were not so difficult to attract the Lord, every human being would be filled with his presence, for everyone is capable of understanding how it could improve and embellish everything within them and, therefore, how desirable it is. Whereas, the presence of an evil spirit in a family or a house calls down every kind of affliction. Yes, failures, accidents, sickness and financial ruin can all be caused by the mere presence of such a being. For each and every thing has its own specific properties. The presence of a rose – especially a Bulgarian rose – perfumes the atmosphere of a whole room and enchants all who enter it, whereas the presence of a foul odour is enough to make everyone hold their nose and flee!

Meditate on this word, ‘presence’, and ask for the Lord’s presence within you. Why? When a monarch goes somewhere, they never go alone: immediately, all the dignitaries and important citizens flock to their side and crowds gather to look and cheer. So do you think that if the Lord goes

somewhere he will go alone? No, he will always be surrounded by a multitude of other creatures and, as every one of these creatures radiates, emanates and disseminates an aspect of God, every single one of them is a blessing. The divine presence, therefore, brings with it blessings in every domain. But, as human beings do not know how to attract the divine presence, they continue to attract the presence of darkness, which they are then unable to shake off. For the rest of their lives they are miserable and do nothing but complain because they don't know what remedy to apply. The presence of dark entities can only be dispelled by purity and light, but human beings are not particularly keen on developing these virtues, so their unholy guests remain. What happens when a germ, a virus, a malignant cancer is present in your bloodstream? And when it is no longer present? So, you see, presence and absence; they explain everything!

Presence! Ah, yes: the presence we must all long and pray for, is the presence of the Lord. Of course, the Lord is not easily moved to visit one of his creatures, but he will send at least one of his representatives. Incidentally, have you noticed that the word 'representative' includes the notion of presence? And a present also: for it signifies the presence of the giver. And when heaven calls out our name... ah, how marvellous it would be if we could instantly reply, 'Present, Lord!' Unfortunately, at these moments we are always absent.

Sometimes, if I want to know what state my brothers and sisters are in, and I am at Sèvres or at the Bonfin, and they are at home or in their respective towns and cities, I look at the Brotherhood as a whole and then I can see that those who have not wavered, who are still treading the path of light, are present; I can feel their presence. Whereas I no longer feel the presence of those who have weakened along the way, who have not remained faithful: they are absent, and that is a very bad sign! When disciples stop coming to their Master, the Master does not have to ask why, he knows already: something is holding them back. And what is that something that is preventing the disciple from being present in the chamber of light? It is certainly neither goodness nor purity nor divine love that have bound their hands and feet and prevented them from being there: an initiate knows the entities who do this. To excuse their absence, people say, 'Oh, I simply couldn't come!' Nonsense, there are no excuses. You should be there. Of

course, I am not talking of physical presence; I am talking about spiritual presence.

Yes, my dear brothers and sisters, there are all kinds of gatherings going on in the other world, and those who are true and faithful are present in their spiritual entity. And I know that those who are absent have been held back by their desires and passions or by other entities of darkness that have chained and imprisoned them. So, when I look at all the brothers and sisters who are not physically present (and this is the least important aspect), and I see that they are not spiritually present either, I know that it is a very bad sign for them. And, as a matter of fact, it often happens that shortly afterwards I hear they have been doing something stupid. Yes, that is how it is!

Wherever light is absent, darkness is present; wherever health is absent, sickness is present; wherever intelligence is absent, folly and stupidity are present. And the same is true for anything else you can think of. The presence of something always implies the absence of another. The presence of money drives out poverty and destitution. And the same is true on the spiritual plane: where you have purity, impurities withdraw; when you feel hatred, love withdraws, for love and hatred cannot live together. These are such basic, obvious truths. But you still have not acquired the faculty of using all the events of your everyday lives in order to draw conclusions for other planes of existence. Only sages, initiates and Masters discover the most extraordinary truths from the ordinary facts that are plainly visible to us all.

Of all the activities I have described to you: how to eat, breathe, love and so on, the best and most important is how to work to obtain the presence of the Lord – and never to lose it again! Of course, as I have said, it may not be the Lord himself who comes to dwell in you; God cannot go and dwell in every Tom, Dick and Harry or in every Mary, Jane or Sarah. How could he bear it: he would have to put up with such a stench of rot and corruption. But if the groundwork has already been done, he will at least send some angels to represent him. Of course, I know: an angel is not the same thing as God himself, but through their emanations they represent him.

I have already told you that the Russians and Americans have recently confirmed the truth of a phenomenon that has been known to initiates for ages, and that is that human beings are capable of using the power of thought

to emanate certain waves and particles and project them to great distances. Take the American experiment, for instance: they chose two people with mediumistic gifts and designated one to send messages and the other to receive them. The 'emitter' was kept in Washington under tight surveillance by a team of experts who checked and verified everything that happened. All the messages sent were written down and locked up in a safe so that it was impossible to cheat or fake anything. The 'receiver', who was thousands of miles away in a submarine submerged to a great depth in the Pacific ocean, received the sender's messages and wrote them down, and these too were locked away in a safe by a supervisory committee. At the end of the experiment, when all the messages sent were compared with those received, it was found that there was only a very slight percentage of error.

This experiment proves that humans are capable of emanating certain particles and projecting them to great distances in space. No one knows how far they can go, just as no one knows how far the rays of light from the sun or a star can travel, for the light of a star which has been extinct for thousands of years continues to travel through space. And it is the same with human thought, for our thoughts are nothing less than the rays of a sun: the sun of our spirit. The sun projects a quintessence of enormous potency, which its rays (like so many little wagons loaded with food and treasure) convey to the farthest reaches of space. And our spirit, like the sun, sends out rays in the form of thoughts, carrying with them all the good or evil with which they have been charged.

And what is extraordinary is that it has been demonstrated that whereas alpha, beta, gamma and x-rays cannot penetrate water to any great depth, human thought can. It can go to great depths. Thought, therefore, has greater powers of penetration than all these rays. However that may be, thought is capable of setting in motion an extraordinary number of mechanisms in another person's brain, and this means it is extremely powerful. Remember what I was saying yesterday: if you see someone sucking a lemon, even though you only see it and cannot taste it, the image received by the retina of your eye is transmitted to the brain, the brain triggers the secretion of the salivary glands, and your mouth begins to water. Isn't that an extraordinary transmission? And just through the eyes!

The phenomenon of telepathy proves that thought is powerful enough to have a long-distance effect on other brains. You have a thought: instantly, before you know it, it has gone from you, out into the world where it is affecting other people's minds. It is a power. By means of your thoughts, therefore, you can trigger all kinds of mechanisms of which you know nothing. And what conclusion must we draw from this? The conclusion that when we harbour negative, dark or destructive thoughts, we set the law of affinity in motion, and thoughts of a similar nature enter the minds of thousands and thousands of others in the world. Even if we are unaware of what we are doing, this is what happens. And we are the ones responsible. We are the ones who will be punished for it, for we have no right to exert a negative influence or destroy something good in a human being.

There is such a thing as a moral law, not the moral law created by ignorant human beings, but one created by Cosmic Intelligence. It is a law that is unshakeable, indestructible and absolute, and sooner or later we are all going to be obliged to acknowledge it and abide by it. One of the tenets of this law is that we reap whatever we sow.¹ If you sow thorns, you will be the first to be scratched by your own thorns. A word of warning, therefore: be careful about what thoughts and feelings you project!

Presence! You must meditate on the word for a long time if you want to understand all that is hidden in it. If you put a magnet somewhere it instantly produces certain effects. Even the use of talismans is based on this principle of presence: the presence of a force that Hermes Trismegistus called *telesma*, from which the word 'talisman' is derived. The ancients knew how important it was to carry with them something that was impregnated with this force. If you have a talisman which is impregnated with a beneficial force it emanates and radiates particles which attract kindred forces and repulse hostile ones. The presence of that beneficial force is a magnet that attracts elements with which it has an affinity.²

Presence and absence: these two words say everything. We say, 'I haven't got enough money'. In other words, money is absent. Ah, what a misfortune! And what if there is a lack of intelligence, or a lack of health? Oh, what suffering and deprivation: we can no longer do any of the things we want to do! So everyone wants this or that or the other thing: coal, water, electricity.

And, above all, a husband or a wife. Yes, when a husband is present in the home, a woman can be at peace. He does not even have to do anything, just be there; it is enough that she feels his presence. Some women weep for nights on end because of the absence of a husband at their side, and to replace him they get a dog or cat or a canary or a rabbit, and they say, 'At least it's a presence!' Isn't that true? It is, indeed: very true! People understand instinctively what presence and absence mean, but only when it comes to material things, of course. You will hear them say, 'I haven't got any weapons; how can I fight?' Oh yes, on the material plane the young and the old, the learned and the ignorant all understand what it means to have or not to have. But don't ask them to go a little further and understand the importance of presence and absence in the sublime world.

And yet, it is presence in the divine, celestial sphere that interests me. The Emerald Tablet says that when an alchemist possesses *telesma*, that 'strength of all strengths which overcomes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid substance', they will 'possess the glory of the brightness of the whole world, and all darkness will fly from them'. The mere presence, therefore, of this strength of all strengths is sufficient to drive out all darkness, and 'darkness' means every weakness, illness or difficulty.

And, speaking still of *telesma*, Hermes Trismegistus also says, 'Its father is the sun, its mother the moon, the wind carried it in its womb, the earth is its nurse.' Those who are capable of interpreting these words, those who know where the sun and the moon are in their own body, who know how the wind carries it in its womb and where the earth that must nourish it is, those who know these things will obtain this strength of all strengths which will drive out all darkness and bestow on them the glory of the brightness of the whole world. Here, in a nutshell, is the true science. When humans succeed in obtaining the inner presence of the sun, then, and only then, will that strength of all strengths emanate from them. Outwardly, the sun's energy is present in the form of *prana*, and if you know how to capture this energy it can strengthen you and be very beneficial to you, but *prana* is not the same thing as that universal force of *telesma*.

I repeat: meditate on the importance of this word, 'presence', and long for the presence of the Lord who will rectify and bring back to life everything

within you. When Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they began to prophesy and speak in tongues, to heal the sick and drive out devils. This was the Holy Spirit manifesting itself through them. So pray, pray day and night to receive this presence of the Lord which soothes and enlightens. Unfortunately, human beings are turning away, more and more, from these great truths; they are getting further and further away from the presence of the Lord, which would still have protected them, and plunging into all kinds of anarchic, chaotic activities, and this is why they are constantly assailed by every sort and kind of tribulation and powerless to free themselves. Humans will never attain true liberation until they raise their eyes, once again, towards the Lord and implore his forgiveness for having abandoned and forgotten him; until they beg him for the gift of his holy presence.

No creature is more powerful than the Lord; no one can resist his power, and when he is within us all difficulties smooth themselves out. But if we are alone and dependent only on our own limited resources, we will never be able to surmount the obstacles in our path; however intelligent and knowledgeable, however wealthy and socially prominent we may be, we will never be out of danger. For other forces that we cannot see will come and undermine us. When people rely on their own resources they are liable, at any moment, to falter and collapse. You must never rely on anything but the presence of the Lord, for whatever does not vibrate in harmony with that one force is fated to disappear one day.

Invisible spirits are not so stupid; they know perfectly well where they can enter without danger to steal and erode, and they know, too, that if they venture into the presence of that divine power they will be struck down and ground to powder, so they keep well away. They are like wild animals, which are afraid of fire and refuse to go near it. And as physical fire is a symbol of celestial fire – it is said that God is a devouring fire – these wild animals, by which I mean the wild, violent, terrifying spirits of the invisible world, dare not go near a soul in which light, the divine fire, is burning.

The presence of Jesus drove out evil spirits, and wherever he went he spread joy, peace and hope. And now, each one of you can imitate him. You can take blessings with you to distribute wherever you go, but on one condition: that you are inhabited by this one force, this celestial light, the

presence of the Holy Spirit, otherwise you will spread nothing but misfortune around you. It has even been said that grass will no longer grow, trees no longer blossom, birds no longer sing and rivers no longer flow where someone who carries darkness within them has trodden. Do you think that is an exaggeration? No, not at all. Whereas, a true initiate, a son or daughter of God who has purified and consecrated themselves, is like a swiftly flowing stream which bathes the tired limbs and slakes the parched throats of all in its path. They are a light, and wherever that light falls, all is gladdened and made beautiful and joyous. But to reach this degree of elevation, how much hard work, how much discipline, tenacity and love are needed! But once the voice of light sings in a disciple's heart, 'Here I am! I am present. I am present!' they will spread joy and blessings wherever they go.

This is the direction you should be working in. Why try to imitate people who are totally ignorant of these tremendous truths? Because they own factories, mansions or big bank accounts? What if they do? That is no proof that they have the divine presence within them. The only proof of that is peace and harmony. When someone brings peace and harmony with them, it is a sure sign that all the rest is there, too. Sometimes, somebody comes into your house and you feel that your peace has flown out of the window; you become irritable, tense and anxious. And then someone else only has to glance at you and the raging tempests within you are instantly calmed: it proves that that person is inhabited by the divine Spirit.

But how can you attain this? The first condition is to have a high ideal. Those who nurture a very personal, egocentric ideal will never reach these heights; they are predestined to grovel and drag themselves along on the lowest levels of existence. Only a high ideal can raise and uplift them, a high ideal woven from the splendours and wonders of heaven, and from love as disinterested as that of the sun, whose one desire is to give, give, give. Oh, of course, there are all kinds of ideals which people consider to be very exalted: some want to become president of their country, others want to be a conquering hero, and others an oil tycoon! And they all consider these to be high ideals: yes, they are splendid ideals from a purely human point of view, but the truth is that they are not really so wonderful, because each one is only thinking of themselves. Each one wants to be strong, powerful and rich for their own satisfaction and for nobody else. What benefits do any of them hold

for others? You must understand this and not confuse an ideal with an ambition.

Presence and absence: I can explain everything with just these two words. Someone may come and tell me about all their tribulations, and when I have listened to them, I tell them, 'This, that or the other is lacking in you, that's why you're in such a sorry state.' And then, to someone else who, on the contrary, is happy and fulfilled, I say, 'The presence, the divine presence is in you; this is what gives you such joy!' Yes, as you see, I like to sum everything up in a synthesis. These two words, 'presence' and 'absence', say it all. And I have summed up all the world's religions and all humankind's sacred books in just two words, also: unity and multiplicity; in other words, how human beings return to heaven through simplifying and unifying and how, on the contrary, they get farther away through complicating and diversifying. ³ To attract the divine presence into themselves disciples must prepare themselves in silence and harmony; they must purify themselves, make sacrifices and strengthen their will.

Suppose someone were to throw a handful of sneezing powder into this room; immediately everyone would begin to sneeze. That is another kind of presence! And now, suppose that a sublime entity were to manifest its presence: immediately, many of you would vibrate differently because of the emanations and radiations of that presence.

I have just said the words 'emanations' and 'radiations'. People often use these two words without really knowing what they mean, so let me explain them to you. If you look at the sun you can see two kinds of light: rays or beams of light shooting straight out into space, and concentric circles, like the circular ripples formed when a stone is dropped into water. These waves or circles of light spreading outwards are emanations, whereas the rays of light travelling in a straight line are radiations. Radiations correspond to the masculine principle and emanations to the feminine principle. The sun, therefore, manifests itself under the form of both principles, and humans are like the sun: they are capable of emanating waves and also of projecting rays.

We find the same contrast between heat and light: heat spreads in circular waves, whereas light rays travel in a straight line. And now, look at some facts which you have never noticed. If you have a stove in your room and you

put a screen in front of it, the heat will go round the screen and reach you anyway, whereas if you put a screen in front of a lamp, its rays will not reach you. You see, the properties of heat and light are quite different. Heat is feminine and light is masculine. And it is the same thing for electricity and magnetism: electricity moves in a straight line and magnetism moves along a curve. If you observe iron filings attracted by a magnet, you will see that they line themselves up on a curve; so magnetism is feminine and electricity is masculine. If you are overweight and want to be slimmer, become more electric: many of your particles will disappear and you will lose weight. And if you want to put on weight, become magnetic: your magnetism will attract extra particles to your body and you will become fatter. Science has never explored any of these questions, and yet how true they are! Yes, these are some of the mysteries of light.

I began this lecture by talking about the necessity of paying attention during meals: watch what you are doing and gauge your gestures carefully so as not to make a noise with the utensils. Yes, the presence of that attention takes care of everything. The presence of the Holy Spirit, obviously, is not so easily obtained, but if you manage to eat your meals in silence and perfect harmony, not only outwardly but inwardly, that is to say in a harmony of thoughts and feelings, you will also manage to attract the presence of the Holy Spirit.⁴ And with that divine presence, heaven itself will be within you, and all that celestial wealth will pour, emanate and radiate from you. You will be emanating and radiating both at the same time: emanation and radiation will become marvellously joined within you, in order to produce life, peace and fullness. Emanation and radiation are both necessary, just as both man and woman are necessary: if one of them is absent there can be no child. Generally speaking, woman is more magnetic and man more electric. A woman attracts whereas a man repulses. You will often see a woman mending an unfortunate situation that her husband's clumsiness has created; she goes and talks to the person he has insulted or crossed, and with a smile and a few well-chosen words everything is put right, and her husband has got his job back! How does she do it? The Lord alone knows! And her methods are not always wholly blameless. But however that may be, she is magnetic, and manages to say things magnetically, whereas he was too electric and too outspoken and lost his job... until his wife got it back for him! Of course, sometimes it is exactly the opposite, for there are electric women and

magnetic men, but I am speaking in general.

But, let's get back to those two words, 'presence' and 'absence'. Never forget that the mere presence of a malicious creature is sufficient cause to fear the worst, for this means that all the conditions required to produce a disaster are there, whereas a beneficent presence can make everything all right again. And this is what you have not yet learned to value sufficiently highly: the presence of the sun, the presence of a good thought or of a luminous idea, the presence of messengers from heaven. When we raise our hands to greet each other, I am consciously sending some particles of my being to all my brothers and sisters, and those who know how to receive have already the presence of something of myself starting to vibrate within them. But no one appreciates this; no one is conscious of it. If only you received my greeting differently, it would not be long before you started receiving revelations. You may say that you can't see what I am sending you. No; well you can't see a microbe either, can you? But it can do a great deal of damage! And what I send you is even capable of destroying a microbe, but the trouble is that the necessary understanding is not there. From now on, if you have more light in you, you will receive much more of what I send you and receive it much better. You have to learn how to receive; otherwise it all falls by the wayside. But you must also learn to give. And what must you give? Friendship? Trust? Respect? I am not going to tell you; it is up to you to find out, but, for my part, I give you all kinds of wonderful things several times a day. If you could only feel them you would be vivified and resuscitated and full of light.

So, from now on, you must realize that if you feel yourself expanding and full of light and a sense of wonder, during our meetings or our exercises of meditation, contemplation and identification; if you feel stimulated, enthusiastic and full of new life, it is because your silence, your songs, your attitude of respect, love and trust towards all that is sublime and sacred has succeeded in attracting the presence of divine entities. And if you continue, if you cultivate even greater respect, love and trust, these presences are capable of manifesting themselves and materializing before your eyes.

The Bonfin, September 20, 1968

¹ See *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 1: ‘As you sow, so shall you reap’.

² See *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226, chap. 5: ‘Talismans’.

³ See ‘Know Thyself’: *Jnana Yoga*, Complete Works, vol. 17, chap. 9, Part II: ‘Truth’.

⁴ See *Hrani Yoga – The alchemical and magical meaning of nutrition*, Complete Works, vol. 16.

Chapter Six : Thoughts are living entities

I

Let me begin by reading this thought to you:

‘When you are capable of true inner silence, you will be capable, too, of creating truly beautiful things by means of your thoughts; one will create splendid colours, another divine music, yet another the New Jerusalem, and in this work of creation you will find happiness, strength and peace.’

Believe me, my dear brothers and sisters, this is absolutely true. Try to remain in silence, to draw this silence into yourselves, for when you succeed in doing this, your thought frees itself of all those bonds that are holding it down and becomes capable of the most beautiful creations. It is all those petty little things from below that deprive thought of its possibilities; all your prosaic preoccupations, worries and woes. Yesterday, I told you that if you want to create a high ideal, if you want to strengthen and amplify and embellish it more and more each day, if you want to intensify and divinize it and to keep adding something more beautiful, purer and more disinterested to it every day, you are going to have to set your powers of thought free. For an ideal is a living being; it is real, it is powerful, and its home is in the celestial regions. From on high it watches over you and takes care that you don't get lost; it protects, instructs and inspires you.

The very first thing you have to understand is that each thought is a living entity which can travel through space and influence other creatures. Yes, thoughts are creatures, living beings, and let me tell you that it is not we who create them; all we do is create the possibilities for them to come and visit us. Thoughts are entities which have been created by other beings. They can come and visit us, they can take up their abode in us, they can help and sustain us, but it is not we who have the power to create them. The situation is exactly the same as for children: a man and woman cannot create a child; they cannot create its soul and spirit. All they do is build the hovel, palace or temple (the physical body) in which the soul and spirit will dwell, and the quality of the building will depend on the materials they have managed to collect.

It is not people, therefore, who create their thoughts; they simply attract or repulse them, for in this area as in all others there are laws of attraction and repulsion. If it were you who created your thoughts, you should also be capable of destroying them as you please. But certain thoughts often besiege you like a swarm of wasps or mosquitoes and you are incapable of driving them away! Why is this? Because you have created the conditions that attract them; you have left some dirt lying about and it has attracted all the little vermin that love dirt. If you clean up all that dirt, you will see what kinds of thoughts start coming to you! There are thoughts in every region of space, all the way to the platonic 'world of ideas'. What are ideas? Ideas are principles, archetypes or powers which work to form and fashion the universe. They are divinities. Each idea is a divinity.

You will ask, 'But then how do we attract thoughts? Do we create some thoughts which then attract others?' No, the fact is that when we come into this world we already have some thoughts within us; they are like workers who work with us. In fact, each one of us is a thought. The whole universe is inhabited with nothing but thoughts, God's thoughts; God thinks, and creatures are his thoughts; spirits are his thoughts. There, that is the truth of it. God is the only one who thinks and we think only to the extent to which we possess his Spirit. As long as the divine Spirit is not in us, other beings think through us and use us for their own purposes. When a child is in its mother's womb, does it feed itself? Does it breathe by itself? No, its mother eats and breathes and lives for it. Its life is one of total dependence. And as long as humans are not yet independent, that is, as long as they have not been born for the second time – what we call the 'new birth' – other beings think in their stead and eat and breathe in their stead, and they, poor wretches, do not know this; they think they are independent and consider themselves very fine!

Well, that is the truth of it: humans have not been born yet. You will object, 'But they have, their umbilical cord has been cut; they are alive and independent!' Oh yes, of course, they are. But there are different degrees of independence. Humans have come from the womb of their human mother, but they are still in the womb of another mother, mother nature, and the umbilical cord that ties them to this mother is still intact. One day they are

going to have to cut this cord so as to be independent. And now I can hear you asking, 'And will they be really independent, then?' No, there will be other cords to be cut before they become as independent, as free as the Lord himself. Until then they will always be bound to nature; even if they reach the higher planes of nature, it is still nature, and there will always be other cords to cut. A woman, a mother, is a figure, a reflection of nature, and the image of a child in its mother's womb symbolizes processes which exist on other planes as well. Humans are still dependent, therefore, still asleep like children in their mother's womb, and their umbilical cord has still not been cut.

You know that when a child is born it comes from the womb head first; have you ever wondered why? If you really want to know the reason I will tell you, although, actually, if you knew how to reflect, you would be able to find the answer for yourselves. This position of a baby at birth has deep significance: have you ever seen someone diving? They plunge into the water head first, don't they? And when they come up to the surface, they come up head first, too. So why does a child emerge head first? Because the spirit, which comes from a higher, subtler region, has to dive into a much denser world, the earth. The baby's position, therefore, symbolizes the spirit diving into matter. And conversely, when a person dies, they leave the denser world of earth and rise into a subtler region, just as a diver emerges from the water into the subtler element of air. So, you see, birth is a dying: the birth of a child is its death in a subtler region, and death on earth is birth on a higher plane.

But let's get back to the question of thoughts. When you feel joyful, expansive and filled with wonder, when you have very lofty, very generous thoughts and are filled with the desire to work for the kingdom of God, it is not you who have created these thoughts. These thoughts are spirits, and sometimes, in fact, they are very great and powerful spirits who come to you briefly, in order to influence you and create this marvellous state of mind in you, and then they go away again. Why are you unable to recapture such states of mind? If you were their creator you would surely be able to recall them whenever, however and as often as you wanted to. But you cannot! Because they were visitors. They have their own route mapped out and their own programme. And if you get everything ready inwardly, in advance, as they go by they see that conditions are favourable, so they call in on you and

leave their blessings and then go on their way. For you, who understand next to nothing of their power and their reality, they are simply a few thoughts without much consistency. If you were clairvoyant, you would see them as angels, as divinities robed in splendour: as it is, you barely acknowledge their existence with the comment, 'I had a lovely thought today'.

I have already told you that we have the power only to prepare the right conditions for thoughts to come to us. But we do have some entities permanently at our service, also, and these entities are feelings, thoughts and emotions, and their work is to help us to attract other entities. Suppose you have servants and you tell them to prepare a banquet and then to go and invite the guests. Well, your guests are not you, and your servants are not you, either: you are the master or mistress of the house and they are your servants. Similarly, from the moment of birth, humans have a certain number of servants within them that are separate entities: thoughts, feelings and forces. I realize, of course, that it is very difficult for you to accept notions like this, because they are in contradiction with all that you have been taught. There are even scientists who say that thought is nothing more than a secretion of the brain, just as bile is a secretion of the gall-bladder! What a peculiar idea! And doubly peculiar since it has no foundation in fact. If it is true, why are we unable to 'secrete' whatever thoughts we like when we like? Of course, I know: they'll say that it is all a question of chance!

Just as we have a number of servants within us, therefore, so we have the possibility of preparing the necessary conditions for heaven to come and visit us and make its dwelling in us, in the form of virtues, gifts and powers. And when we stop being reasonable, these entities leave us, because they cannot abide to live in the squalid conditions we provide: they cannot stand the ugliness or the nauseating stench of rot, so they go somewhere else. If it were we who created them, we would be able to make new faculties for ourselves or, at least, retain the gifts we have and not let them slip away from us. But a great many people are known to have lost their talent as singers, painters and musicians, or as healers and clairvoyants. Naturally, official science has never studied this question; with the limited resources at their disposal they are not in a position to verify truths of this kind, whereas, for thousands of years already, initiates, who possess faculties far superior to any microscope or telescope invented by man, have been able to see these things for

themselves.

We are never without visitors. There is a constant coming and going within us, for we are like a boarding-house with several floors and swarms of tenants in every room. Yes, and often, the wretched landlord is shut up in a little cell where nobody sees or hears him or pays attention to him; his servants and lodgers have taken over the house and forced him to submit to them. They have fomented a revolution, put him in a dungeon on just enough bread and water to sustain life, and now it is they who 'rule the roost'! If only he knew how to stand on his own two feet and get in touch with heavenly regions to call for help, they would send entities to free him. But the poor man is so downcast he does not even realize it is in his power to get help, and the result is that the others, his lodgers, the anarchists, continue to lord it over him.

Don't you believe me? But there are lots of people who are no longer in charge of the situation, who are no longer monarch of their own kingdoms! They are completely under the thumb of those who dwell in them, who eat and drink and have fun at their expense, and they, poor, dethroned monarchs, can do nothing to prevent it; they have no voice in the matter. For who listens to a dethroned monarch? Why are these people in such a sorry state? Because they did not live reasonably; they gave themselves up to their lower appetites, to their selfish whims, with the result that they became progressively weaker, and the mob, the demos, seeing that they were unfit to rule, has taken over the reins of government. This is exactly what happened in the course of history with human monarchies and aristocracies: the kings and nobles were overthrown because they were cruel, unjust and greedy. Nothing that has happened in history is without its parallel in human beings. Everything that takes place in the world – every political event, every revolution, every change of government, etc., – is a repetition, a pale reflection of what happens in each human being. And this means that if you can correctly decipher and interpret world events, you can also understand the events that take place within each one of us, for the laws are identical.¹

Today, monarchies have been replaced by many different kinds of government: democracies, republics, oligarchies. Yes, or perhaps by anarchy! Why? Because the kings and princes who were in power before had grown

weak and were unfit to rule, so when their subjects, who could see how they lived, rose up in rebellion, they could no longer keep their hold on power and were obliged to capitulate. If, on the other hand, someone is really strong and fit to govern, it is extraordinarily difficult to undermine them. Look at the example of the Lord himself: he, too, is a monarch, and when the angels rebelled (for, don't forget, there was a rebellion amongst the angels!), they were unable to depose him because the Lord has never committed a fault of any kind. He has no weaknesses. When a being is worthy of their role, they cannot be vanquished: thanks to their moral qualities, thanks to the light and strength that dwell in them, they are invincible. But if your virtues and qualities are inadequate, the day other forces attempt to take control of you, you will be obliged to capitulate. If rebellion breaks out within you, you will be completely wiped out. Make no mistake about it: you cannot win!

This is one thing you must know: whether or not you are monarch of your own kingdom. If you sense that nobody listens to you, it means you are already a prisoner: you still have the power to see what is going on, but you cannot change anything. So now, if you want to restore order, you are going to have to send all kinds of secret messages; you must look for ways to circumvent the intrigues of your gaolers and dig a tunnel, break through the walls of your cell, or file through the bars, and escape like the prisoners in adventure stories!

Disciples, therefore, must know how to find allies and friends to help them drive out their enemies and regain control of their kingdom. You must not wait, you must react immediately; otherwise things can only go from bad to worse. So many give up the struggle: they lose all hope of remedying the situation, and they watch themselves degenerating and going downhill until they are in the gutter. They may be very unhappy about it but they are powerless to stop the process, and others can only look on equally helplessly. How many wonderful poets, painters and musicians have allowed themselves to go under in this way! Some were ruined by alcohol, others by gambling, others by women. Their friends tried every way of saving them, but to no avail! Whereas those who refuse to give in, even if they are imprisoned and in chains, in the end get back on their feet and regain control of their kingdom. And what a victory when they find themselves in charge again! Far too little is known about this whole question.

Yes, indeed: what takes place within humans is exactly the same as events in the history of societies and nations. Sometimes, when I see the brothers and sisters of the Brotherhood falling prey to their own lower tendencies, I try to warn them. I don't tell them outright that in no time at all they will be inwardly fettered, but I try to make them understand, in different ways, the dangers that threaten them. And, believe me, the worst dungeons are those within us. External, concrete prisons are not nearly as bad; on the contrary, in them people may sometimes free themselves from their inner prisons. In fact, I know some who have benefited from a period in prison, for it taught them to enter into communion with God and acquire the spiritual arms and all the means they needed to become sons of God. But it is extremely difficult to break out of an inner prison. It is an undertaking that demands a great deal of sacrifice and renunciation; without that, the spirits from on high will not collaborate and help to release you.

I can sense that it is very difficult for you to understand that it is not you who create your thoughts, but this is the truth. Humans have innumerable thoughts at their disposal, which are there to serve them, just as a father might have a dozen children who help him in his work, but he did not create them. He created their physical bodies, of course, but their souls and spirits came from somewhere else. In fact, let's take the question of familiar spirits: you have probably read, in occult literature, that every human being is accompanied by several familiar spirits which help and serve them. Was it the person who created them? No, but they are there, at his or her service, nevertheless. And insofar as we are spirits, we, too, are a thought; but it is not we who created that thought either; it is not we who created ourselves, it is the Lord. So each one of us is a thought, a powerful, well-armed thought with many other thoughts at our service.

We are God's creation; he alone creates thoughts and sends them out into the universe. Angels and archangels are also thoughts created by God, and the universe is the temple which the Lord has populated with his thoughts, that is, with servants, entities and spirits. So, the Lord created thoughts and spirits, and the universe is their home; it was formed to be their dwelling place. As I have already told you, creation is not the same thing as formation. Creation is the work of the Lord, whereas formation is the work of the divine

Mother. So it is the divine Mother who formed the dwelling place, and the heavenly Father who created the entities destined to live in it.

Creation and formation, spirit and matter, God and the universe, everything that exists, down to the least little cell, is a reflection of this. Each cell is like a tiny house inhabited by a soul; everything finds its explanation in this pattern; everything is a repetition of this same model. The universe is a dwelling place, and in it are a myriad other dwelling places. When Jesus said, *'In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places'* and *'I go to prepare a place for you'*,² he was referring to material conditions. He did not say, 'I go to prepare spirits' because he could not do that, but he could prepare a place.

In the same way, humans only prepare the physical conditions, a dwelling place for thoughts. They do not create thoughts any more than they create the life they transmit to their children. And yet there are people who are so ignorant that, when they are in a rage with one of their children, they threaten them, saying, 'I gave you life and I can take it away from you again!' Well, if they are really capable of giving life, why is it that when the time comes for them to die, they are incapable of prolonging their own life even by a few minutes? Obviously, it is because they have no control over life. So it is not they who give life to their children; it is given by others. All they have done is build the house. Can't you imagine what would already have happened if humans had been the masters of life? They would have gone up to the Lord, long ago, and tried to unseat him. I can just hear them: 'Come down from there and make room for me. That's my place!' But the Lord foresaw this, so he kept the control of life for himself, and now he distributes it as and how he pleases.

This does not mean that men and women cannot build something themselves: they can. But they build with the life that God has given them, for true life comes from God. Parents who think they have rights over the life of their children are dreadfully ignorant. Parents are stewards and tutors; that is all. They have been entrusted with a being whom they have to care for and educate, and one day they are going to be asked for an account. If they have been negligent and careless they will be punished for it, but if they have been loyal guardians they will be rewarded for their good work. Besides, parents receive the children they are sent, but they don't even know who they are or

where they come from. So what do they take themselves for? They are tutors, nothing more.

Well, there you have a few words about thoughts. Each thought you send out floats about in your vicinity or flies far away. Thought is capable of expressing every possible quality, whether positive or negative: it can be beautiful or repugnant, luminous or dark; it has colour, perfume and music. Never forget that your thoughts are living creatures!

The Bonfin, September 9, 1970

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

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

II

If there is one thing you must never forget, it is that every one of the thoughts you form, however insignificant and frail they may seem, are a reality, a reality that can be seen; in fact there are people who do see them. A thought is a living being. Of course, you cannot get hold of it or see it acting on the physical plane, but in its own subtle dimension, with the subtle materials of which it is made, it is alive and active. It is important that you should know this, for ignorance of this truth is the cause of a great many misfortunes. You do not see your thought, you cannot feel it working, building or destroying and disrupting, so you allow yourselves to think whatever you like. But a thought is a living reality, and this means you must be very careful to emanate and project only the very best thoughts: thoughts of love, kindness, light and harmony. This is the beginning of true knowledge: the awareness of the fact that thought is a reality. Once you have understood this you will be ready to advance much more rapidly on the path of evolution.

For no other reason than that they are annoyed, angry, jealous, vindictive and ignorant, humans harbour the most abominable thoughts that poison the whole world and prevent the kingdom of God from being realized on earth.

This must not be! They must keep a guard on their thoughts. You will say, 'But surely, since our thoughts can be neither seen nor touched nor weighed, it doesn't matter what we think!' That is no argument. God has given the mightiest, most potent form of power at his disposal to thought, that is to say, to the spirit, and as every one of our thoughts is impregnated with the all-powerfulness of the spirit which brought it into being, that power is constantly at work, building or destroying. Knowing this, each one of you has the possibility of becoming a benefactor of humanity: by projecting your thoughts to the farthest limits of space, you can send messengers of light to help, comfort, enlighten and heal others. If you do this work in the full knowledge and awareness of what you are doing, you will be drawing closer to the Godhead. Otherwise, you will live for a long time without ever knowing what you are, where you are or what you are doing, and, since everything is recorded, one fine day accidents and illness will start raining down on you, simply because you were ignorant of the only thing that mattered.

If only official science would decide to study this all-important question of thought! But no, at the moment it is only interested in making rockets and bombs. It has even invented the telephone for the one purpose of getting on everyone's nerves! Isn't that so? Isn't it the bane of our lives? Do you really think it is useful? Yes, as long as you don't have one in your own home! No, of course, I'm not saying that seriously: the fact is that the telephone has made many things in life much easier. If you want to insult someone, for instance, you no longer need to waste time taking a bus all the way to where they live: all you need do is pick up the phone and let them have it! And when it is done, you can sit back and enjoy your cigar and think what a fine person you are! Who says the telephone was not a good invention! Of course, the possibilities it offers for communication are extraordinary; when you think that, in the past, news took months to reach you, and now you can be in communication with the moon instantaneously. I am sure you have all heard how the cosmonauts talk to the technicians in the N.A.S.A. control room.

No, it is time, now, for science to study thought, which is an extraordinary means of communication. I know, of course, that a few scientists have already done some work on the question. If you remember, I have already talked to you about the experiments in telepathy carried out by the United

States and Russia. But that is not enough; far too little is known about the power of thought, and there is a whole science to be rediscovered, which was known to the ancients of Lemuria and Atlantis. They knew, for instance, how to materialize thought, but as the knowledge was used to serve human passions and ambitions, its adepts often resorted to black magic. This is why the great initiates will never reveal the secrets of the powers of thought to their disciples until they are really pure and have acquired sufficient self-mastery.

Believe me, my dear brothers and sisters, this question of thought is of the utmost importance, and if I am talking to you about it at some length, it is because I want you to make up your minds to project only those thoughts which will have happy, beneficial consequences. When you feel you have lost control of things, that your brain is secreting (for the sake of argument, let's suppose that it is the brain that secretes) thoughts of darkness and destruction, get a grip on yourself and try to orientate them differently. If you are not aware of what is happening, if you don't even notice the bad thoughts escaping from you, they will go off and start working to your detriment. In the Bible it says, '*Be alert*'. And this means to be vigilant about what is going on inside us, not about what is happening on the outside. We are not really in any great danger from the outside; we don't always have to be on the alert in case someone is waiting to attack us on a dark street!

Vigilance! Yes, it is the spirit, our thought, that must be vigilant. This admonition to be alert applies to our inner life far more than to our external life. ³ In your external life you are pretty safe; you are not in danger of having your throat slit every day. But you are constantly under attack in your inner life: you are perpetually being stung, bitten and torn apart; buckets of boiling water are poured over you and then you are plunged into freezing cold water: it is Dante's *Inferno* all over again! And you have no idea how to escape from it all. Well, all these torments are simply shreds of past thoughts which have gone out from you at some time and are now ricocheting back at you. You must know this law and understand, from now on, that nothing is more important than to be wide awake and keep a careful watch over your thoughts.

Obviously, this is not something you can learn to do overnight. You are

still going to suffer certain tribulations, but at least, if you know this law, you will have the possibility of becoming master of the situation, one day. It is time you got rid of all these entities. It was you who attracted them in the first place and then sent them out into space, and now they are crowding back on you and pestering you like swarms of flies or wasps. This is why you should no longer use the excuse, 'It's my parents' fault. They have left me a terrible heredity!' No, no. You cannot blame your poor parents; they did what they had to do by giving you exactly what you deserved! If you deserve to be a musician or painter of genius, you reincarnate in a family that can give you the conditions you need to do so. But if you deserve to be weak, stupid or ill, divine Justice sends you into a family with all kinds of defects, which it will hand on to you. You must not blame your parents: their responsibility is only apparent. This is a fact that is unknown to official science, and scientists never take it into account in explaining the question of heredity. Although they may not know it, parents are simply executors, and all human beings are responsible for the weaknesses and handicaps with which they are born; they were all formed by their thoughts and feelings a long time before. But no one knows this either.⁴ Is there any wonder that Hindu philosophy claims that ignorance is the cause of all evils. Yes, ignorance!

You have probably read esoteric books which speak of the 'guardian of the threshold', who is represented as a terrifying being whom every man and woman must confront at some time or another. Well, the guardian of the threshold is nothing more than a part of ourselves; it is the accumulation or condensation of all that is evil and vicious in us. You must know that in humans, just as in nature, all that is evil congregates and accumulates in one spot, and all that is good, too.

I have already spoken to you about the Mulakurumba tribe that lives in the Nilgiri mountains in India, and I have explained that if they are so dangerous, it is because they have become depositaries of much of the evil that is committed in the world; part of the hatred, revenge, impurity and base desires abroad in the world has accumulated in them. In fact, they have accumulated so much poison that they are capable of killing an animal and even a person, just by looking at them. There are certain plants, too, such as belladonna, datura or hemlock, which have accumulated and condensed poisons, whereas others such as the rose are the depositaries of all that is good, beautiful and

luminous. Well, of course, you must not expect botanists to explain things like that! But it is extremely important that you understand that the evil we do forms a dark, heavy mass, which has to accumulate somewhere.

So it is all this evil accumulated from one incarnation to the next that is represented by our guardian of the threshold. In other words, the guardian of the threshold is also ourselves. No one really understands the true nature of human beings or knows how they are made up of two regions: one region which is indescribably ugly and the other which possesses all the splendour of heaven itself. For all good goes one way and all evil the other; they do not mingle. They go in opposite directions because their nature is different; there is a natural sorting out which takes place automatically. And the same pattern is found throughout the universe: each thing goes to its allotted place just like in a shop, where the articles for sale are put on different shelves according to their category. In the same way, our thoughts go to the region where they belong according to their nature and their quality. Yes, indeed, it was not humans who invented the idea of sorting things into categories: categories exist in the universe as a whole.

Besides, I am quite sure that all of you have already realized that there are two natures, two beings in you. Some days you feel so small-minded, so repulsive, hypocritical, vicious and unjust, that you are horrified with yourself and feel almost ready to commit suicide. At other times, on the contrary, you feel yourself to be a child of God. Well, there you have the two natures showing you their two faces. And, unfortunately, when diabolical creatures show themselves, you don't know what to say to them to drive them away. You brush them aside, perhaps, but after a while they come back again. You push them away again, and back they come! And, in fact, you even begin to believe what they tell you, because their arguments are so convincing: they are based on the Gospels and the scriptures and, above all, on public opinion! And before you know it, you have lost your head!

How many people have committed suicide because they were completely demoralized by these malevolent creatures and unable to stand up to them! And yet many of these people were geniuses. How can you explain this? Of course, psychoanalysts and psychiatrists will give you all kinds of explanations, but the trouble is that their explanations explain precisely

nothing, because they do not understand the structure of a human being; in fact, sometimes, they do a lot of harm. When you don't know how a human being's psychic structure is put together, how can you heal it?⁵

So what should you do when these evil creatures of darkness come and bother you? The best method is to humble yourself, to say, 'Yes, I know: I am weak and useless. I am an abominable creature. But God is good; he is all love, and he will help me.' In the face of such humility there is nothing they can do, so they go away: your humility and your trust in the love and kindness of God renders them powerless. But, above all, don't try to retaliate; don't try to stand up to their bullying, otherwise you will only make them worse. Say, 'Ah yes, all that is true. In fact I'm even worse than that, far worse!' I have often reacted in this way with certain beings who had come to tell me what a monster I was. I would say, 'What you say is true, but it's not the half of it! I know myself and I'm far worse than that!' They were so astonished they put on their hats and went away again. So, there you have a trick for putting your enemies to flight. The trouble is you don't realize the power of humility. When a hurricane or a tornado is blowing, do you go out and try to stand in the teeth of the wind? Of course not; it would be the very worst thing to do. You have to bow before it and let it pass, and when it has gone you can stand upright and shout, 'Flatfoot, yourself!'

But perhaps you don't know the story; I must tell it to you. One day a man went to buy some shoes, but he couldn't get anything to fit him. The poor fellow had flat feet! The salesman went up and down the stairs a dozen times with boxes of shoes, and, finally, he was so exhausted he exclaimed, 'That's enough. You can't try on any more. Go away, flatfoot!' So the wretched man went away, too humiliated to answer back, but then, when he had gone two or three miles, he found himself on top of a hill, and drawing himself up to his full height, he shouted, 'Flatfoot, yourself!' After that he felt better and went home, happy and proud of himself. You see? That is what you have to do. Obviously, it is just a funny story, but still... you can learn from it. Do the same, bow your head, go on walking, and when you get home you can say, 'I'm not the flatfoot. It's you! My feet are more beautiful than yours!' And then you can stroke your feet and say something nice to them. Do you talk to your feet from time to time? You should, because they are very intelligent members. We depend very much on our feet, for it is they that put us in touch

with the ground, with the earth, and we must be sure to take good care of them.

Do you know what I feel like doing now? I feel like prophesying to you! What do you say to that? I feel like prophesying that spring will come, that the flowers will bloom and the birds sing. My prophecies have always been faultless so far, haven't they? For instance, when I said that spring would come, have I ever been mistaken? 'No,' you will say, 'but as far as that goes, we can all be prophets!' All right, but then why don't you prophesy? How can anyone tell that you are prophets if you never say anything? Yes, winter will not last for ever; spring will soon come. Isn't it much better to think about the positive side of things? In fact, don't think you have said it all when you have prophesied that spring will come. Why not prophesy something really good for yourself? Why not say, 'One day I will be wise, luminous and powerful. One day I will be a monarch, a prophet. One day I will be a priest of the Almighty'? At least that is something worth looking forward to. Why do you never have thoughts of this kind? Work and wait, and one day it will come true.

You must get away from the negative side, and, instead of constantly thinking you are beaten and worthless, be like children living a fairytale. Tell yourself, 'Fine! From now on, even if it's unreal, I'm going to fill my mind with every kind of marvel, simply because it's a good exercise!' Yes, it will do you good. This reminds me of the woman who said to her lover, 'Darling, tell me you love me. I know it's not true, but say it anyway; it does me so much good to hear it!' She preferred to feed on lies rather than on truth; but aren't we all like that? Don't we all have that tendency? And if so, why not put it to good use? Why not give our thought some useful work to do and spend an hour every day creating a wonderful future?

People always live in the past; they keep repeating their past. And suffering and mistakes are the past. Whereas, to live in the future, is to live in everything that is most splendid and marvellous, everything that does not yet exist. But if we live the future mentally, then it already exists. So launch out into the future; live in the future and the future will become the present. Whereas the present that you have at the moment is the past. You are continually repeating the past, and you must not.⁶

You probably know the story of the young woman who went off to market carrying a jar of milk on her head, and on the way she thought of all that she would do with the money she would get for her milk. She imagined herself buying some eggs and then some hens, and then some pigs, and she was so delighted she started to skip, and the jar of milk fell on the ground and broke. You see? She was already living in her plans for the future and that was good, but she should not have started skipping! And the same goes for you: live in the future, but don't skip! By which I mean, nourish all kinds of plans, but don't behave as though they had already come true, otherwise they will all come to nothing. If you go into a shop and say, 'I'll buy this... I'll buy that. I'm a billionaire!' when, in fact, you haven't got a penny, or if you proclaim, 'I'm the world's greatest scientist!' when you are just an ignoramus, that would be skipping, and you would either be put in jail or taken for a mad person!

So, my advice to you is this: don't skip, work! Work every single day to create the future. Through thought, savour the most marvellous future here and now, and, above all, never forget that thought is a reality and that each one of your thoughts is a power, capable of destruction or construction.

Sèvres, January 2, 1971

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

'Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour' – I Peter 5: 8

¹ See *A New Dawn: Society and Politics in the Light of Initiatic Science*, Complete Works, vol. 25, chap. 4: 'Communism and capitalism' and chap. 7: 'Democracy and aristocracy'.

² See '*Au commencement était le Verbe*', Complete Works, vol. 9. Chap. 12: 'Il y a plusieurs demeures dans la maison de mon Père'.

³ See *The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching*, Izvor Coll. n° 215, chap. 9: 'Watch and pray'.

⁴ See *Youth: Creators of the Future*, Izvor Coll. n° 233, chap. 11: ‘Did you choose your own family?’.

⁵ See ‘*Et il montra un fleuve d’eau de la vie*’, Synopsis Coll., Part III: ‘L’homme dans l’Arbre de vie’.

⁶ See *The Seeds of Happiness*, Izvor Coll. n° 231, chap. 21: ‘We are the artisans of our own future’.

Chapter Seven : Unwanted guests

I

In the text by the Master Peter Deunov that I read to you this morning, there is a passage I would like to come back to. It says, 'Evil can be compared to lodgers who come into your house and stay for years without paying rent.' This is a notion that may astonish a great many of you, for the idea that a human being can be inhabited by other entities is not very widespread. And yet, it is very important for you to know this. Important for what reason? For your health, your freedom and your salvation.

I have already talked to you about this question, many years ago, and I told you that we call these creatures 'unwanted guests'. I also explained what you should do to avoid attracting them, but you didn't pay attention to what I said. And yet, if you had understood nothing else, just this one question of our lodgers, our unwanted guests, you could have transformed your whole life. Must I repeat what I have already told you? It seems that I must, for your lives are so cluttered up with problems and worries of every kind that you neglect these all-important questions, and the results are very detrimental to you. So, once again, I will try to show you how important this question is.

In the Gospel it says, *'Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.'* From this we can see that men and women are constructed in such a way that it is possible for other entities to dwell in them. And if this is possible for the Lord, for the Holy Spirit and for Christ, it is also possible, unfortunately, for demons and diabolical spirits. The Gospels are very clear on this subject.

You all know the story of Mary Magdalen, whom Jesus had delivered from seven demons. We speak of seven, but as each demon had countless servants, Mary had been inhabited by a whole legion of unwanted guests. Yes, but these unwanted guests had been very much wanted to begin with, for, after all, she had done everything in her power to attract them, to invite them. Perhaps you will say, 'But that's not possible! She didn't even know they existed.' And that is just the point: she was too ignorant to know that her way

of life, the fact that she lived by seducing men, was a standing invitation to malicious spirits. And once they have been invited somewhere, these creatures settle down and expect to be given free board and lodging; they eat and drink and lay their dirty hands on everything and break the furniture and the dishes (symbolically speaking, of course!). But when Jesus met Mary Magdalen, he saw that she was not a bad woman, that she was kind-hearted and generous, and that it was perhaps because of these qualities that she had agreed to be 'kind' to so many people – in her own peculiar way, of course! As a matter of fact, if you observe women like that who have become prostitutes, you will see that they often have outstanding qualities. But, at the same time, the poor things are so lacking in intelligence, and so weak and easily influenced, that they become victims, for there are always others who are ready to exploit them and take advantage of their weaknesses, and society, too, is very cruel to them.

So Jesus decided to deliver Mary Magdalen from these evil spirits because he could see that, once free, she would do a great deal of good to other women like herself. Yes, because every being has a special relationship with the other inhabitants of the region or milieu to which they belong. When they fall they drag many others after them, and the same is true when they lift themselves up. And this is why good and evil are both so powerful: because they are never isolated. Evil has incalculable ramifications, acquaintances and alliances, and so does good. This is why every creature is responsible for what they do and think and for the sensations they experience.

You also know the story of the Gadarene man who was possessed by the devil. When Jesus asked the spirit that inhabited him to tell him its name, it replied '*My name is Legion*', because many demons had entered him and made him do all kinds of insane things: he ran wild in the mountains with no clothes on, shrieking aloud, he slashed himself with sharp stones, and so on. But it is not necessary for me to tell you about all the cases of possession recounted in the Old and New Testaments: these two examples are quite enough. In occult literature you will find many accounts of how spirits have taken possession of certain people and tormented and weakened them until, finally, they destroyed them.

Unwanted guests, therefore, are creatures of a lower order which get into a

human being and lead him or her to commit all kinds of insane and reprehensible deeds, even to the point of destroying themselves. For once a person is inhabited by these spirits, he or she is their prisoner and cannot get rid of them. Sometimes, by the grace of God, or if a person has already paid their karmic debt and the time for their release has come, some heavenly allies will come and help them to drive the spirits out. But this is rare, very rare, and in any event they must have earned it by their own efforts.

Now, naturally, if you go and tell human beings that they have invited malicious spirits to come and dwell in them, not only will they refuse to believe you, but they will either laugh at you or be very indignant.

Unfortunately, though, this is the unadulterated truth. I am not going to describe these spirits to you, what they look like or the emanations coming from them, because the simple fact of speaking of them creates a bond with them, vivifies them and attracts them to you. But I will just tell you how men and women attract them. Every time someone is less than impeccable in their thoughts, feelings and acts, they prepare the conditions these undesirable guests need in order to infiltrate them. Take an example: if you keep your table clean and scrubbed it will not attract flies or vermin. But if you are careless and leave food lying about, you will immediately see how many little creatures of all kinds arrive, especially if they find little holes or cracks they can get in through.

This is why you must not allow impurities into your thoughts and feelings, because they attract lower spirits, which come and attach themselves to you in order to be fed; nor must you leave openings through which all kinds of animals can sneak in. And when I say you must not leave openings, I mean that your aura must be strong and luminous; it must be an impenetrable barrier against the intrusion of harmful, malevolent beings. But this, too, is a subject that is totally unknown to most human beings. ¹ They have never heard of the aura so, of course, they have no idea how to extend or purify it or make it stronger and more intense. I do not intend to talk about the aura, today; I simply wish to repeat what I have already said: when someone is vicious, jealous or envious and devoured by all kinds of lusts, they tear holes in their aura, and this is how those unwanted guests get in.

The physical body is like a house with several different floors, and each

floor is fully occupied. The cellar, the ground floor, the first, second and third floor, and so on, all have their inhabitants. And even up in the roof-garden are certain inhabitants that have instruments for observing the sun, moon and stars and transmit messages to us. I have already explained to you that what distinguishes one category of human beings from another (brutes, ordinary men, men of talent, geniuses, saints, initiates and masters) is the quantity and quality of inhabitants they have attracted into their houses and the greater or lesser degree of harmony that reigns amongst them. The phenomenon can also be compared to family life. Of course, nowadays, the members of a family do not always live together, but in the past everybody from the great grandparents to the great grandchildren all lived together in the same house. This is what the human house is like.

Sometimes you say, 'I don't know why, but I have the impression that there are two different people in me. When one of them is uppermost I am kind, gentle and sympathetic, and everybody loves me! And then, when the other one comes along, I'm perfectly vile!' Well, there are a great many more than two that are liable to manifest themselves, but, for the moment, let's just say there are two. Neither psychoanalysis nor physiology can explain the existence of these contradictory manifestations in human beings. People study the cells of the body, but nobody knows about all the inhabitants of those cells. When biologists study cells, what they are studying, in point of fact, is the house of the being that inhabits it, and they are content to describe its shape (hexagonal, spherical, etc.) and structure (membrane, protoplasm and nucleus). They know nothing about the soul that dwells in that house or about the life circulating in that soul. And yet that is where they would find the explanation of all that goes on in the human being. We are made up of a multitude of inhabitants, and all these inhabitants can be divided into two major categories: the good and the bad, and both categories manifest themselves in turn.

Take the example of a family in which there are two brothers: one of them is a marvellous creature and the other almost a monster. Naturally, if the parents are good, honest, intelligent people, they are going to tear their hair out, because they don't understand where that dreadful child comes from, nor how two brothers could be so different. But it is simply that the parents invited both of them. In what way did they do this? In a past incarnation, not

being very well informed about the laws of karma, the parents became indebted to an entity which has now come to them to be housed and fed and clothed. That is why they now have to look after this child, worry their heads over them and pay for all the mischief they do.

And we ourselves are like a large family, with children, parents and grandparents all together. And it is truly amazing what you can find out about that inner family if you observe yourself! Every member wants their turn to speak, gesticulate and complain: it would almost be worth writing it all down! All those unwanted guests, therefore, who have taken up their abode in you are beings you have attracted by breaking certain laws, and now they are there it is up to you to educate them. It is extremely difficult to get rid of them; the best thing we can do is simply educate them and make great sacrifices for them, because we owe them something. Obviously, these creatures delight in sneaking in wherever they can, under false pretences, but it is up to us not to let them in. Luminous spirits will never go where they have not been invited, but the others have no respect for laws of any kind, so they force their way in without waiting for permission.

Initiates sometimes use magic rites and pentacles against these malicious spirits. If you have read *Faust* (of course, Faust was not an initiate, but he had a certain knowledge of the occult), you will remember that he put a pentagram over the door of his house in order to prevent elementals from entering and good spirits from leaving. ² There are all kinds of pentacles that can be used to protect oneself once they have been prepared with certain formulas and magic rites, and many occultists use the pentagram. In everyday life we see signs like 'Private property. Keep out', 'Smoking prohibited', 'Trespassers will be prosecuted', etc. Well, it is just the same in the spiritual domain, only in the spiritual domain the notices take the form of symbols and talismans, which the spirits understand and respect, whereas the signs that human beings put up are not always very effective. Even if a notice says that you are not allowed to dump refuse, people go and do it at night; smoking is forbidden in trains and buses, but everybody does it anyway, etc., etc. Whereas, initiates have ways of protecting themselves that are far more effective than these notices, and if spirits disobey them they are severely punished.

Is the question becoming clearer to you now, I wonder? People don't like to believe in the existence of these unwanted visitors, but whether you like it or not, a great many manifestations and phenomena prove their existence. Vices, for example: what is a vice? Everybody recognizes that vices are all too real, but what exactly are they? Here is a man who is very kind and intelligent; he is well-educated and has many other good qualities, and yet, at the same time, he has a terrible vice which he is powerless to overcome. It is not for lack of trying: he makes heroic efforts, but each time the occasion arises, he simply cannot resist. He may be exceptional in every other area; he may have great talent and be an accomplished musician or artist, for instance, but he is also a confirmed drunkard; he cannot stop drinking. The great singer, Chaliapin, was like that: what a voice he had! But he drank. Others cannot stop gambling. They will stake their last penny on anything: roulette, baccarat, the horses. How can you explain it? Nowadays, I know, people will say that someone like that has a complex or that he caught the habit from his family or the environment, but the fact is that that explains precisely nothing!

Official science is not yet equipped to explain these phenomena. Only Initiatic Science is capable of doing so, and it will tell you that vices are beings that humans are obliged to nourish, because they invited them in the first place, and which they have strengthened to such an extent that they are completely subjugated by them and incapable of shaking them off. Yes, my dear brothers and sisters, vices are nothing more nor less than creatures that inhabit human beings and make them their slave. It is possible to overcome and control them, but exceptional willpower and knowledge are necessary in order to do so.

What means must we use, therefore, to avoid attracting these uninvited guests? The first and most important is purity (purity in every domain)³ and then heat and light. Purity entails their death from starvation, for where there is purity there is nothing for these unwanted creatures to eat. Light terrifies and drives them away, and heat sears and burns them. Of course, this is a manner of speaking. To possess light is to know things as they really are and, therefore, to know and understand this whole question clearly; heat means to have a great love for a divine ideal, and purity means to live in an exemplary way so that these creatures cannot get hold of you or sneak in. And in any case, even if they did try to slip into you they would immediately be ejected,

because these qualities of purity, intelligence and love repel them.

So, you see, the Teaching gives us the elements we need in order to understand all this. It shows quite clearly that it all depends on us and that, even if we have committed faults in the past which opened our doors to unwanted guests, something can still be done about it. We have to get these creatures to listen to reason and convince them that, instead of ransacking their abode within us, they would do far better to help us to embellish it by contributing their talents: if they are musicians, they can give us music; if they are painters, they can paint pictures for us; if they are scholars, they can reveal the secrets of nature to us. For amongst all these creatures there are certainly some which are very knowledgeable and very capable, but, as things stand at present, instead of helping us they drain all our strength away. Whereas, when luminous spirits come and dwell in us, they give us all they possess. Besides, many of the good spirits that come to help us are members of our own family: they are grandfathers and grandmothers who want to help their children or grandchildren. These are what we call the ‘familial spirits’, and some of them are disinterested and highly evolved, whereas others are a little less so. When a grandfather, for example, has smoked a pipe all his life, he wants to go on doing so through his grandson, and then the grandson starts smoking a pipe! And he cannot get rid of the habit, because his old grandfather is very attached to his pipe and very obstinate!

Some people may say, ‘Oh, all those unwanted guests... I’m not interested. I can’t be bothered...’ Little do they know! For they are in them and have a very firm grip on them! This is why, one day, you are all going to have to do something serious about this question. You are going to have to learn how to deal with these mischievous entities, how to educate and enlighten them. For, as I have said, it is difficult to get rid of them, and sometimes when people try to do so, they only make things worse. So you have to help them and even pray for them and show them great good will and much love, otherwise they become furious and devastate you. You have to be very, very strong, really powerful, if you want to drive them out, so before you try to do that the best way is to talk to them and try to reach an understanding with them. Clairvoyants have sometimes actually seen this. When someone who was tormented by an evil entity talked to it, prayed for it or read it a passage from the Gospels, they saw that the entity listened and, sometimes, went away. The

person in question, of course, saw none of this; they only felt that their situation had changed for the better, but the clairvoyant actually saw the entity go away.

I have often had the opportunity to verify these things, and, as far as I am concerned, there is absolutely no doubt about any of it; I am completely convinced. And you, too, must believe it; otherwise you will never be able to improve your situation. These creatures really do exist. Some of them are quite enlightened and highly evolved and capable of understanding you, while others are of an inferior order and there is nothing to be done with them; even if you explain things to them they cannot understand, so you have to use quite different means. But, above all, never try to fight them; it is too dangerous, and you will only be vanquished. So, what should you do? You should call on other very luminous, powerful spirits to come and dwell in you and fight in your stead, for they can do this: they have all the means and the arms they need. But you, yourself, must never combat these unwanted guests! Yes, as you can see, this is a very vast science and I cannot explain it all to you in a few minutes, but what I have told you is the essence of it, and if you believe me you will soon make fantastic progress in your evolution.

Today is Easter Sunday, and I must tell you that the resurrection is also linked to this question of unwanted guests. This should not surprise you for, as you know, everything is all bound up together. Resurrection is a process of liberation. Just as the chrysalis emerges from its cocoon to become a butterfly, free, beautiful and full of light, so humans must emerge from the tomb (symbolically speaking) and become free, in order to become a son or daughter of God.

Yes, the feast of Easter is here, and it is an invitation to us to reflect.⁴ This process of liberation is going on in the whole of nature, and humans, too, must free themselves from the creatures that are clinging to them and holding them prisoner of their own passions and lusts, simply because they do not know what to do about them or how to educate them and render them harmless. So you see, for me, everything ties in together. Resurrection is a natural process of liberation, which takes place in all those who have reached a very high degree of light, detachment and purity.

Sèvres, Easter 1962

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

‘Those who love me ...’ – *John 14: 21-24*

Mary Magdalen whom Jesus delivered from seven demons *Luke 8: 2*

The story of the Gadarene man possessed by the devil – *Mark 5: 1-20*

II

A human being, as I have already said, is like a house with a multitude of lodgers of all kinds who have made it their permanent abode. Some of them make a lot of noise and spend their time amusing themselves and destroying everything they can lay their hands on, while others, on the contrary, are helpful and kind and do all they can to repair the damage. You have read in the Gospels how Jesus cast out demons, and every religion has its rites of exorcism with special prayers and formulas.⁵ From the beginning of creation it has been known that humans are not alone, that they harbour a great many inhabitants within them.

As long as official science refuses to admit the existence of these creatures, as long as it continues to reduce everything that happens in a human being to a chemical or physical process, it will not obtain any great results. In reality, as I have already told you, chemical and physical processes are, themselves, the consequence of psychic processes: yes, they are simply consequences. Obviously, biologists have never seen any of these unwanted creatures on their scalpels or under their microscopes and lenses, but that is no reason to deny their existence; the fact that they have never seen them does not prove that they do not exist.

If you knew how many entities clairvoyants see entering and making their homes in human beings! The people themselves, of course, cannot see them, but if they were more vigilant, if they were in the habit of analysing

themselves, they would be aware of it when a negative entity entered them and would realize what turmoil it would cause. When you suddenly feel yourself troubled and sad, or invaded by the lowest kinds of feelings and desires, it is a sign that some unwanted guests have turned up. And why have they suddenly decided to enter you? Because you have laid out a meal for them.

The study of zoology shows us that each animal species (insects, beasts of prey, mammals, reptiles and birds) has its own particular type of food. Some eat grains, others grasses, flesh or worms, and some, like jackals, hyenas and vultures, feed on carrion. So if you want to feed animals you have to know the right kind of food to give them. I have also called your attention to the fact that if you leave remnants of food in your room, you will be invaded by insects. How can they know from a distance that there is something there for them? What fantastic antennae they must have! And as soon as you clean things away, they all disappear. Well, this is a language, but it is a language that you are incapable of deciphering. This phenomenon tells us that if we harbour certain thoughts, desires or feelings within us that are neither pure nor luminous, we will very quickly be invaded by entities that delight in impurities and come to feed on them. And if you purify yourself and start to live more sensibly, those entities will go away again and you can breathe more freely. Do you see? Isn't that marvellous? But very few know how to read the book of living nature which lies open before our eyes. You will perhaps say that these are just details; true, but they are of immense importance when applied to our psychic life.

Every thought and every emotion that passes through humans emits electro-magnetic currents conducive either to good or to evil. This is how humans attract the most luminous, highly evolved spirits and rejects noxious creatures, which are banished to the centre of the earth; or, on the contrary, they attract astral spirits, elementals and demons, and, in this case, the beautiful, luminous spirits which had come to help them, leave them, because they cannot abide the sickening stench that emanates from the others. Unfortunately this is a domain which is largely unknown, and this ignorance is the cause of a great deal of misfortune.

It is time that all this was very clearly explained and, above all, that people

made up their minds to find out for themselves how real these creatures are. And this is easy. But it is not necessary for you to ascertain the existence of the evil spirits; it is enough for you to verify that the luminous spirits exist, and you will see how many blessings they can bring you. Of course, this takes time, and if anyone imagines they can get results in just a few hours, they are going to be disappointed. It takes a long time to get results; you have to have perseverance, tenacity and stability, the qualities of the sephirah *Binah*. Those who are impatient can never verify anything.

I have already explained to you that whatever you want and whatever you think is already there, a reality. It may not be present on the physical plane; you may not be able to see or touch it, but it is there. Whatever you wish for, whatever you think, whatever you imagine, already exists in a very subtle region, and if you persevere in the same direction for a long time, realities which begin by existing only in the invisible world are going to come closer and closer to realization on the physical plane, and then – whether for good or for evil – it is extremely difficult to prevent them from materializing.⁶ The evil becomes obdurate and unyielding and the good, also; you cannot get rid of it!

I know that you don't believe me. Most people think it is not possible that what they wish for already exists. But that is so: it has already come about. Take the example of someone who wishes for something which is not very recommendable: if they were clairvoyant they would see the entities that prowl round them and dog their footsteps wherever they go, trying to get things ready so that the things they wish for may come about. If they were even just a little more sensitive than they are, they would at least sense that they were there. But as they are neither sensitive nor clairvoyant they see and feel nothing, so they imagine that nothing is happening. Ah, but those entities exist, they are a reality. When you pray and ask for all that is most sublime and divine, even if you think, 'There's no hope of my prayer being answered, I'm too great a sinner', in fact, there are lots of marvellous beings already dwelling in you, but as you cannot feel their presence you don't rejoice in the fact. But keep on praying and, one day, all that you have prayed for will materialize. If you believe me you already possess a powerful key.

And now I want to talk to you about something you have certainly never

thought much about. No doubt you have all met someone who says that they prefer not to be with others; that they prefer their own company because, at least, when they are alone, no one bothers them. The collectivity has no attractions for them for they don't enjoy the presence of others or, as they would say, the promiscuity! If they only knew in what promiscuity they were living within themselves! There are swarms of dreadful, repulsive, vicious creatures inside them, which they carry about with them wherever they go, nourishing and supporting them – actually, they no longer have any choice in the matter! How can someone like that put up with that inner promiscuity? They simply don't realize they are living in an illicit union with creatures who are almost monsters, and that it is these that have turned them against a fraternal, collective way of life, a life of harmony and light, because they themselves would be disturbed by it; they would no longer be able to enjoy themselves at the person's expense or eat away their substance and drain them of all their strength.

As human beings are blind and ignorant, they have not noticed that it is these other beings within them that urge them to keep themselves apart, and that they do so because it is in their interest to encourage men and women in their vices so that they can go on feeding on them. People who feel like this imagine that they themselves are repulsed by the Brotherhood, whereas, in reality, they are driven into that position by other creatures, other lower creatures that cannot bear light, wisdom, harmony or love and keep repeating, 'Don't stay here. This is no place for you!' Yes, because light, purity and harmony drives them out, and they don't want to be driven out! Really, people are too ignorant! They have no idea why they like this or dislike that; they never even wonder why. As long as they have a taste for this, that or the other thing, they consider that it is perfectly normal, natural and legitimate. What criterion do they apply? They don't even bother to know if there is one.

This is why, when I see men or women who are very introverted and uncommunicative and who have no taste for fraternal communion, it is a sign that tells me they are living promiscuously with all kinds of shady characters within themselves. I know that they seek refuge in solitude in order to conceal their laziness and their unwholesome fantasies from others. They are introverted, they say nothing and they avoid others, and the others think it is because they are shy. Not a bit of it! And even if those who are blind and

ignorant are fooled by appearances and fail to interpret this attitude correctly, there are also initiates in the world, and you cannot fool an initiate. Criminals, for example, can be recognized instantly; their whole attitude, the precautions they take, their way of looking about them and protecting themselves show that their conscience is not clear. Police and detectives can pick them out at once. They say, 'That's one who should be followed; he's trying to hide something!' The more precautions you take, therefore, the more you give yourself away! Ah, how true that is!

And this is why, believe me, all those who live an abnormal life and take advantage of their solitude to give themselves up to sloth, immoral practices and all kinds of fantasies, very quickly become victims of spirits which drain them of everything they have got, and they come to a bad end. What a long way you are from understanding the ways human beings manifest themselves! I always have to be there to point out how narrow your knowledge and point of view are. So this is another aspect of things for you: when someone is too eager for solitude it is a very bad sign.

Obviously, when I say this about people who prefer a solitary life, I am not talking of ascetics or hermits, or of those who seek solitude in order to study, meditate or create works of art; they are perfectly justified in wanting to be alone for those reasons. No, I am talking about those who dislike the company of others simply because they are lazy and selfish or for some other, even more shameful reason. When someone isolates themselves in order to meditate or work, in other words, in order to concentrate on something useful, beautiful and noble, they are engaged and occupied, so there is no room in them for malevolent entities, and this is what matters. But if work is not their motive for seeking solitude, then there is no justification for it, and they must be warned that they are nourishing lots of undesirable guests and that, if they go on like that, the day will come when they will no longer be able to save themselves.

In order to save themselves, humans must agree to enter the Brotherhood – not to enter it externally but internally, with all their heart and soul. Yes, the Universal White Brotherhood can save human beings from all that torments them, because it teaches them to enter into communion with all that is best and most luminous in the universe. ⁷As I have already told you: life is a

sympiosis, a perpetual to and fro of communion, and if you are not in communion with the spirits of light, you will necessarily be in communion with the diabolical spirits of darkness. It has to be one or the other; you cannot avoid all exchange or communion.

Be very careful, therefore! If you want to free yourself from the creatures that are persecuting you, learn to enter into communion, into a symbiotic relationship with the world of beauty, harmony, love and wisdom; enter into communion with the sun and the stars, with the saints, the great Masters and all the heavenly beings.

The Bonfin, August 24, 1971

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Jesus casts out demons – Mark 1: 23-27, Matt. 12: 22

¹ See *Notre peau spirituelle, l'aura*, Brochure n° 309.

² See *The Symbolic Language of Geometrical Figures*, Izvor Coll. n° 218, chap. 4: 'The pentagram'.

³ See *The Mysteries of Yesod – Foundations of the Spiritual Life*, Complete Works, vol. 7.

⁴ See *La fête de Pâques – 'Je suis la résurrection et la vie'*, Brochure n° 308.

⁵ See '*Cherchez le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice*', Synopsis Coll., Part VI, chap. 2: 'Le baptême' ; '*Et il me montra un fleuve d'eau de la vie*', Synopsis Coll., Part XI, chap. 4-I: 'Les pouvoirs de l'eau'; *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226, chap. 17: 'The exorcism and consecration of objects' and chap. 18: 'Protect your dwelling place'.

⁶ See *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 6: 'How thought is materialized on the physical plane'.

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

Chapter Eight : The strength of the spirit

Question: ‘Master, one day you promised to talk to us about strength and to tell us how initiates conceive strength and where they find it.’

This is a very vast question; it would take me hours and hours to answer it, although, of course, I could tell you in just two seconds, but then it would not be clear to you. To explain this clearly I will have to begin by showing you how human beings normally behave, where they go to seek strength and how they manifest it, and then explain what initiates think of true strength.

It is a problem that has always deeply preoccupied me. My constant observations of human beings and their behaviour have shown me that, without exception, they all want strength. Yes, but where do they hope to find it? In machines, tools and arms, always in things outside themselves. Of course, to all appearances, they can find strength in these things, and when they have it they can dominate and destroy others. But that is not true strength. You may feel strong if you possess money, machines, aircraft, rockets and machine-guns – or atom bombs! But it is a delusion, for all these possessions are external. What happens if they are taken away from you? Where is your strength then? If you think you are strong because of all the things you possess, it is an illusion: do these things make you any more capable of lifting greater weights, of throwing a stone farther than before, or of removing from your life certain things which cause you difficulty or suffering? So you do not really possess strength. You possess the external means, the trappings of power, but what will you do if you lose them?

Initiates have understood for a long time that, instead of spending their lives seeking powers that will never really be theirs, it is far better to work for the acquisition of inner power. This is what they work for; this is the goal of all their exercises. They know that true strength lies within, in the living, thinking, moving being, for it is this being that decides, that uses objects, that builds. This is why they have established rules and given us methods we can use to achieve the complete, perfect, absolute manifestation of the one being that contains all things, that disposes of all things: the spirit. You know the Master Peter Deunov’s formula: *‘Niama sila kato silata na douha, samo*

silata na douha é sila bojia’; ‘There is no strength like the strength of the spirit, only the strength of the spirit is strength of God.’ This is where humans should seek strength: in the spirit. True strength is in the spirit, in the will and intelligence of the spirit.

Take the example of a microscope: those who look through it are lost in admiration of its power of magnification, but (as usual) they have forgotten the one thing that is essential! They have forgotten that they could not see anything at all if it were not for their own eyes; that if they had no eyes, all the microscopes in the world would be useless. Why are we lost in admiration for an external instrument whereas all the merit, all the glory, should be attributed to the one who can see? And the one that sees is the spirit: it sees through our eyes, for even our eyes are not what is most important. What is most important, the only thing that is essential, is the spirit, but we pay no attention to it; it is constantly ignored, because people are in the habit of ignoring what is essential. If you want proof of this, look at chemical formulas: there is a letter for every element, but not for fire. And yet fire is the one factor without which no reaction is possible. It is as though fire did not exist, whereas, in fact, it is precisely the most powerful factor.

This attitude is the result of materialistic philosophy. Materialistic philosophy has led people astray by turning them away from their own inner selves, and now they are lost in the fog of matter and can no longer find the fundamental truths which would permit them to solve all their problems.

It is essential that understand this: nothing external to us can ever really belong to us. External things are only lent to us for a brief interval, and we will never find true strength in them. True strength can only be found in the author of all these things, that is, in the spirit which manifests itself. In proof of this you only have to look at a someone whose spirit has departed: all their organs are still there, but nothing functions; the stomach can no longer digest, the heart is no longer beating, the lungs have stopped breathing and the brain has stopped reasoning. If you weigh the person, you will see that their weight is still the same; nothing has changed. And yet they are dead! Yes, they are dead because the living being within them that thought and felt is absent; and it was this being that was essential.

I have given you this example many times! A man has a ravishingly

beautiful, charming wife, and he simply adores her. But if she dies, what does he do with her body? He may keep it a few hours or even a few days, and then he lets it be taken away to the cemetery. What was it he loved? It was the life, the living being that dwelt in his wife and gave such charm to her voice, her look, her gestures. And when that being has gone, what happens to the remains? They are buried. Isn't this perfectly straightforward, clear and obvious? What really matters, what is essential, is life, the living spirit. And if this is so, why not seek for what is essential? The only difference between an initiate and an ordinary man or woman is that the initiate does exactly that, seeks what is essential. An initiate seeks the spirit and endeavours to give the spirit every chance to develop and blossom and to manifest all that it contains, all its hidden treasures.

Let's take the example of the skin. It is the skin that formed the senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight and even the brain. Must we now say that that is the end, that the skin will not produce anything else? No, the skin still has unknown possibilities, but it all takes time. Perhaps, one day, we will have six, seven or eight senses. Now, the skin represents matter. Anything that wraps or envelops represents matter; in a cell, for instance, matter is represented by the external membrane. The protoplasm represents the soul, and the nucleus the spirit. Yes, in every cell we find this same pattern: spirit, soul and body.¹ This is why we can say that the body is the skin of the soul, and life, with all its forces and energies, circulates in the soul, whereas the nucleus, the spirit, is the seat of the intelligence, whose role is to create, order and organize.

The nucleus, that is to say, the spirit, acts on the protoplasm, thereby forming the outer membrane, and, little by little, the sense organs have grown from this membrane. It is the nucleus, therefore, that creates, and it does so by means of the protoplasm, which serves as matter to the nucleus. All strength, all power, is to be found in the nucleus, that is to say, in the spirit. The spirit is constantly seeking to manifest itself and provide the impulse for the creation of new forms, for the fashioning of matter. If humans have reached their present degree of development, it is thanks to the work that the spirit has effected on matter in the process of manifesting itself. All powers and possibilities belong to the spirit, and one day it will find the means of infiltrating all matter and organizing it in such a way that it will become

indescribably beautiful. When that day comes we shall witness the glory of God.

The spirit seeks to dominate matter in order to manifest itself in the fullness of its power; in doing so it produces impulses and inspirations in us. Now that you know this, you will understand that when you feel inspired, when you feel a force within you urging you to act nobly, to help others, to unite yourself to the universal Soul, it is a manifestation of the spirit. But when, on the contrary, you feel fatigue, apathy, uncertainty or doubts and suspicions, when you feel tempted to give it all up, then you can be sure that it is matter that has got the upper hand and is opposing the work of the spirit. What can you do when this happens? To make it simpler I must explain briefly that it is the intellect that must act to remedy the situation.

The intellect is situated between the spirit and the heart, that is, between the spirit and matter, and this is why it is in a position to intervene. When it sees that matter has succeeded in dominating and blocking the impulses of the spirit, the intellect can intervene to reinforce the spirit and open doors that have been closed to it. The spirit never ceases to grow and push upwards within humans, but they are not aware of it and they do not realize that they can facilitate God's work and promote the upward thrust of the spirit or, on the contrary, oppose it by giving greater scope to matter. If initiates have always had schools, it is for precisely this reason: to teach people to work at themselves, to teach them how to control and purify themselves and, in doing this, allow the spirit to manifest itself. If humans did not have the power to act by means of their intellect and will, initiates would never have attempted to make them aware of their role in the universe, and everything would have happened without their participation. But men and women do have a role to play in the evolution of creation and God takes their existence into account. If God has created human beings, it means that they can contribute to the realization of the cosmic enterprise.

God gave inertia to matter and impetus to the spirit, and he placed man in between the two. Outwardly humans are enveloped in matter, but inwardly they are immersed in the ocean of the spirit. They are subject, therefore, to this twofold influence: one moment God is manifesting through them, and, the next, matter is trying to engulf them and draw them back into primeval

chaos. Humans are in a constant state of conflict, and if they are not enlightened and constantly active, they can slip into inertia and become a veritable swamp, swarming with tadpoles, frogs and mosquitoes. This is what happens to those in whom matter is allowed to get the upper hand, because they do no intellectual, spiritual, divine work, and they become like evil-smelling swamps and sewers. Whereas, disciples who are enlightened and guided will not oppress the spirit; on the contrary, they will give it every opportunity and open all their doors to it, and when the supremacy of the spirit is assured in this way, it works to harmonize, embellish, illuminate, vivify and resuscitate every part of their being. These transformations can be accomplished quite rapidly, just as long as we give first place to the spirit. Matter only knows how to engulf, absorb and deaden, whereas the spirit knows how to organize, vivify and resuscitate; in fact, this is all it knows how to do, and it is precisely for this reason that we must give it priority.²

So many people have been turned to stone because they prevented the spirit from manifesting itself in them! They failed to recognize it; they even laughed it to scorn. As Mullah Nashrudin (* *A popular figure of fun in Turkish folklore.*) would say, ‘What do we need the sun for when it’s daylight?’ Ah, yes! As we can see, in spite of the contemporary civilization and culture of which we are so proud, human ignorance is still very great.

But let’s take this further. Given the fact that although all power resides in the spirit it always manifests itself through matter, it is impossible for us to conceive of the spirit in the pure state, totally free of matter. If pure spirit exists anywhere, it is certainly not here, and we do not know where it is. Here, spirit and matter are linked; everything you see and touch is composed of spirit and matter, combined in one form or another.

Take the example of the atom bomb. People believe that it is matter that produces explosions, but that is not so. Matter is simply the form which contains, restricts and compresses the spirit. An atomic explosion is actually an eruption of the spirit manifesting itself in the form of heat and fire. For an explosion to be possible, the spirit must be present, compressed into a material form, for matter alone can do nothing; it is merely the vehicle, the receptacle. But as the spirit is volatile, if matter were not there to contain it, it would escape. Scientists are mistaken to be lost in admiration at the power of

matter. They have failed to realize that the forces released from matter are, in fact, the forces of the spirit, which had simply been enclosed in matter until it was time for them to manifest themselves. The proof of this can be seen in the fact that, once released, these forces can no longer be recovered; when the spirit escapes it cannot be recaptured, and it simply goes back to where it came from. As for matter, there is nothing left of it; it has been pulverized, for the strength of the spirit is such that, once it is given the chance to do so, it annihilates even matter.

Often, when we were sitting round a blazing fire, I have talked to you about that special noise that burning branches make. Humankind has used fire for thousands of years, but how many have ever understood what this crackling means? Or, for that matter, how many understand what a tree is? A tree is a receptacle, that is all: just a receptacle. It collects and contains energy from the sun. You look at a gigantic tree, weighing several tons and think you can build a house with it; well, you can, but in reality, that tree is simply a reservoir, an amazing reservoir of solar energy, and you can see that for yourself if you burn it.

When you burn a tree you are simply setting off a chain reaction by which energy is released. In another form, it is the same phenomenon as nuclear fission. The energies locked up in the tree escape, bursting their bonds with a rattling and crackling, like prisoners shaking off their fetters with a clanking of chains. This crackling is the sound of the solar energies escaping, and they escape in the form of heat, which can be used by humans. And, as you see, the steam, air and gases rise from the burning tree, whereas the ashes, which are earth, remain on the ground. The amount of ash left on the ground is far less proportionately than the amount of water and gas which escapes into the air. This is just one more proof that the spirit is held prisoner within matter.

Human beings do not know how to read the pages of the great book of nature; nor can they interpret the phenomena taking place before their eyes which would help them to understand the most complex philosophical questions. You must learn to look beyond the physical phenomena and discover what they mean in the regions of the soul and spirit, and understand that the laws are the same above and below. Most people sit in front of a fire without seeing what is going on; they are quite satisfied to be there, to feel a

certain comfort, a certain well-being, to feel that they are drawing some energy from it, and they go no further. But that is nothing compared to all the work an initiate can do in front of a fire! If you only knew what happens in the soul and spirit of an initiate in the presence of fire! Oh, I know: you want me to tell you, don't you? Not today, though. Not yet.

This is clear, therefore: the energy that is released when a tree burns comes from the sun: it has been stored up in the tree, but it does not 'belong' to the tree. Matter cannot produce force: force comes from a different region and matter is there simply to contain and protect it. Scientists have a lot of mistaken notions, which lead them into many false conclusions. They have confined their attention to the visible, external aspects of things, in other words, to the husks of reality; they do not possess the philosophical system which gives initiates a different vision of the world. Scientists conduct experiments from which they obtain certain results but they do not yet possess true science. Oh, I agree that they discover a great many things this way (although they also make mistakes from time to time), but when they understand where each thing fits in the overall plan, they will make discoveries of far greater significance.

As I have already said, the most eloquent proof that spirit and matter are two distinct realities is given to us by the fact of death. In the ordinary way people get everything mixed up: spirit and matter is all the same to them. But when death comes, the difference becomes too obvious to be denied. Otherwise, why can a dead person not move or speak or think any more? Because death signifies the absence of life; because the spirit has been separated from the matter.

When a person is alive, spirit and matter are united in them, welded together, clasped in a close embrace, 'married' as it were. True, but that does not make them identical, and when they are separated the person dies. Spirit and matter are like man and woman; although they have in common the fact that they are both human beings, one is positive and the other negative; they are not identical either. But I do not want to go into the philosophical problem of the relationship between matter and spirit, today. I have already explained, in other lectures, that it is the spirit that produces matter – for matter is simply a condensation of the spirit – and that they are polarized in

relation to each other.³

So let's get on... When the initiates made a close study of the different manifestations of life, they decided to give human beings rules and exercises which would enable them to recover their primordial force. For, in the beginning, humans possessed this force and the whole of nature obeyed them. It was only later that they lost it, when they allowed themselves to be dragged down by the weight of matter, and this is what we call the Fall. So man and woman committed a fault: they lost their force by allowing it to descend into a denser, less subtle matter. Before this, they already lived in matter, but a very light, etheric matter with which they could do marvels. This is why the Bible says that man and woman lived in paradise, in the garden of Eden, in nudity, purity and light: at that time, they had no acquaintance with either illness or death.

It was only when human beings insisted (in spite of God's warning) on descending into denser layers of matter in order to explore it that they lost their original lightness, liberty and immortality. At that point they began to be subject to illness and death. And now, thousands of years later, this is still the way of it: suffering, sickness and death, and this will continue until they set foot on the path that will lead them back to their original way of life.⁴ This is what initiates call the 'reintegration of beings': human beings' return to their original glorious state. And there you have the whole of the philosophy of initiates. They tell us: 'You are situated midway between spirit and matter, so you have to reflect and examine your position each step of the way so as to know which side is the stronger in you: spirit or matter. If you sense that certain thoughts and feelings that weigh you down and torment you are beginning to stir within you, you must try to counteract them and not let them gain the upper hand.'

Those who allow themselves to be subjugated by matter lose their light, their liberty and all their beauty, whereas those who manage to disengage themselves from matter in order to give priority to the activity of the spirit become free, luminous and strong. Strength is to be found in the spirit. So you should enter more and more deeply into yourself in order to find that divine principle within you, and, one day, a spring will begin to bubble up within you, quenching your thirst and sustaining you with an inexhaustible

flood of strength. But if you forget the spirit and rely exclusively on external things (money, houses, machines, arms), then strength, the true strength of the spirit, will desert you. Why? Because you are doing nothing to keep it alive, because you don't think about it, you don't call on it, you don't communicate with it. With the remnants of strength left to you, you may drag on for a little while, but you will not get very far; you may still believe that you are strong, but once you have broken contact and the spring has dried up you will see how strong and mighty you are! Swept away and rubbed out: that's what you will be!

Most human beings rely exclusively on external things, but how long can they go on relying on them? In this life they may have plenty of arms and money; all well and good, but as they cannot take them with them and as they have not worked during their time on earth to strengthen their spirit, they will be very, very weak when the time comes to leave for the next world! When this happens, they will realize that the days when they thought themselves to be so strong and mighty are over, and they will begin to suffer and regret their mistakes – that is what hell is. They will begin to frequent the world of the living again and try to communicate with their wife or children, but no one will hear them. Then they will go to spiritualist seances and try to send their message through a medium, to tell others that the life they led was senseless and warn them not to do the same, but here, again, no one will believe them. And finally they will reincarnate and have to begin from scratch, because thieves will have robbed them of all the wealth they had amassed.

Perhaps, now, you can see what disillusionment awaits those who have never known initiation; they are really to be pitied. But what riches for those who have worked to acquire faculties, virtues and qualities! Even if they have nothing outwardly, they are rich in knowledge and inner strength, and when they leave for the next world they take all that wealth with them. They worked hard to develop it while they were here, so it will now be theirs for ever; no one can take it away from them. In fact, everything that they longed for on earth will be given to them in abundance. Those who loved light and colour will be able to contemplate them ceaselessly. The stars and the whole universe will sing for those whose souls are full of music and symphonies. Those who are full of love will receive all the means they need to help others.

To those who dreamed of knowing and understanding will be revealed all the secrets of creation. And that, my dear brothers and sisters, is the truth!

True strength is to be found in the spirit, for the qualities of the spirit have a special relationship to strength. Intelligence, wisdom and purity confer great powers, and if you have great love as well you will also be capable of overcoming all your negative states: heartache, sorrow, anger and hatred, because love is an alchemist capable of transmuting everything. But true strength is to be found in truth, for truth is the veritable domain of the spirit.⁵

Jesus said, *'You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'*⁶ In order to be free one needs the true strength which wisdom alone does not possess; a great many sages never found true freedom. And even love alone cannot free you completely. Only truth can do this; in other words, only the union of love and wisdom. This is the teaching of Initiatic Science. But people neglect love, they neglect wisdom, and they think it is money that will set them free! Don't you believe it! Money, on the contrary, will enslave them, for it will give them every possibility to eat and drink and amuse themselves, to throw themselves into orgies of pleasure and even to take revenge if need be. In other words, money will open the road that leads straight to hell. Obviously, for those who are wise and in control of themselves, money can help them to free themselves and do a great deal of good. But give money to the weak and you will see whether it frees them or not! Outwardly, perhaps; they will be able to shake off someone who was bothering them, they will be able to flee persecution, but inwardly they will be no freer from their own weaknesses, vices and torments. Money may enable them to get away from home, but wherever they go they will take all their troubles with them. Very often, it is the wealthy who are held by the strongest bonds; those who are poor but intelligent are far freer.

In order to understand this, you have to put everything in its rightful place, and this is precisely what the school of the Universal White Brotherhood teaches. It will teach you nothing about zoology, botany, ethnology, geography or history, but it will teach you how to live. Yes: how to live. No subject is more neglected than this. There are schools for everything else, but can you show me one example of a school where you can learn how to live? No, because there are none! Except here... Yes, here we are in a very rare,

exceptional school which teaches how to think, how to feel and how to behave. Unfortunately, very few appreciate its true value; the others will understand when the time comes for them to leave this earth, but then it will be too late.

At the moment, human beings are still a prey to that materialistic philosophy which puts true strength beyond their grasp, and they are growing continually weaker. But a few years hence, materialism will be banished and rejected by all, and in its stead, universities, schools and families will teach human beings the science of the spirit. Then they will realize that, for centuries, they have simply been marking time and that all their technical and scientific discoveries do not really constitute progress. True progress is progress of the spirit; there is no progress except that of the spirit. Write these words down, if you like; they constitute a formula for the future. New discoveries are being made all the time, but the advantages they give us are purely material and add only to our physical comfort; they do not contribute to the improvement of the human race. On the contrary, human beings become more and more egotistical and vindictive, more and more vulnerable and prone to disease and, at the same time, prouder, vainer and more licentious. This is the fruit of our so-called progress which is not, therefore, the progress of the spirit.

The progress of the spirit is about making human beings better, giving them thoughts and feelings of a higher quality so that they can always be in good physical and psychic health, whereas the much-vaunted 'progress' being made at the moment consists largely in opening new and more sophisticated hospitals, clinics and prisons. Instead of looking to the spirit for remedies, instead of straightening out something inside themselves, everybody rushes about looking for solutions on the outside. Nobody looks within for their solutions, nobody, that is, except a few mystics and 'sun-struck' fools like us! But I say, 'Listen, all you chemists and pharmacists; the minerals and metals you dig up from the earth and study so intently all existed in the sun, first of all. They only condensed gradually, going through the gaseous and liquid states before hardening into their present state. All that the earth possesses comes to it from the sun.' And this being so, since all the elements that exist on earth existed in the sun first, is it so ridiculous for us to want to go straight to the source to find them in all their original freshness

and purity? People are always ready to laugh at us and hold us up to ridicule because we go and contemplate the sun, because they have never understood how vitally important the sun is for humans. Well, let them laugh and we shall simply go on collecting gold.

Yes, the sun's rays are gold-dust, and with that gold-dust we can buy all kinds of marvellous things in the heavenly shops where it is appreciated at its proper value. I know of many shops up there, where everything is all laid out in profusion, and if you possess the gold that comes from the sun you can buy whatever you want with it. If you want to buy some peace, for instance, what shop in this world could sell it to you? Would you go and ask for a pound of peace at the chemist's? They would only laugh at you. But in those shops I am talking about, not only will they not laugh at you, but they will give you some peace in exchange for some of the gold-dust you have collected.

If human beings were enlightened, instead of laughing at us they would come and beg us to reveal the mysteries of living nature to them. Who knows the work that can be done when you are by a lake, for instance? All kinds of treasures are hidden there. And in forests, mountains, rocks and caves, too, are untold riches, but humans, unconscious and unaware, walk blindly through them all and receive nothing.

True strength comes from the centre, and as the spirit is attached to the centre, it follows that we must seek out the spirit and ally ourselves with it so that it may lead us to the centre, to the fountain-head, where we will find all the elements we need.⁷ I do not deny that there are certain elements on the periphery or, if you prefer, on the surface, but they are the least important. What is real has been placed in the spirit; all the rest is tainted or diluted to a certain extent and is, therefore, impure. Even gold and precious stones, which are the purest things nature produces, have to be extracted from their gangue of earth and stone. Everything that is not exactly at the centre, everything that is far from the source, is mixed with impurities and has to be cleansed and decanted. Only those who drink directly at the source receive a water that is absolutely pure.

When the sun's rays leave the sun they are pure, but on their way through the earth's atmosphere they collect many impurities, and then, after travelling to other planets where they rid themselves of these impurities, they return to

the sun. Does it surprise you to learn this? When the blood is pumped from the heart it is pure, but as it flows through the arteries, taking nourishment to the whole organism, it collects all kinds of wastes and toxic substances, and before going back to the heart it has to go through the lungs to be purified. This is exactly what the sun's rays do: they go back to the sun, but only after going through other planets to be purified. This is a fact, but, once again, scientists do not know it. In fact, if we were to tell them this they would not believe it; they would say it was all nonsense. But initiates have gone much further than scientists, and they have known for a long time how light travels to earth, the path it follows and how it goes back to the sun.

Some people will probably object, saying: 'You put the inner, subjective dimension of life first, but we have always been taught to be objective. In fact we are told to try and free ourselves from the subjective because only objective truth is scientific and real.' Well, I would tell those people that that is a stupid remark which proves that they have never understood the meaning of the words 'objective' and 'subjective'.⁸ What is the objective aspect of reality? That which is stationary and immobile, that which can be measured, weighed and examined with various instruments; in other words, the objective aspect is the aspect that can be studied because it is dead. The subjective aspect, on the other hand, represents life, the emotions, consciousness, the spirit. People say they cannot study the subjective because it is variable; it is not perceived in exactly the same way by everybody, so it is not possible to grasp it in order to measure and classify it. But that is not so. If the subjective aspect is perpetually changing, it is because it contains everything and because everything it contains is alive. In studying it, therefore, you are studying life itself.

Of course, this distrust of the subjective is partly justified because there are so many foggy mystics, so many lunatics and hysterics who are victims of their own unhealthy subjectivity. But what an error of judgment to draw conclusions based on creatures like that! Why have people not studied, instead, those who live a true spiritual life, those whose spiritual life is highly organized? There is nothing foggy or vague or unbalanced with people who have an authentic spiritual life. A true inner life is harmonious and trustworthy and has clearly defined contours, and there is a science that studies it in spite of the fact that it is constantly varied and in motion. The

only thing is that this science requires instruments that are far more sophisticated than those used by scientists.

If you want to study inanimate objects it is not necessary to have very sophisticated instruments, but when it comes to studying psychic life, when it comes to detecting and tracing the movements of the soul and the spirit, you need instruments that are far subtler and more sensitive than any that have yet been invented, and humans are not yet capable of building them. This is why scientists have abandoned this other science, and their abandonment is proof of their incompetence, proof that their intellects have capitulated; they do not know this, but I know it. They should have reacted differently; they should have said, 'It is possible that this domain contains prodigious treasures, treasures of true science, but the present state of our skills and the means of investigation at our disposal are inadequate. We don't have the instruments we would need to explore it. We will certainly get there one day, but for the time being we had better stick to the study of what we can perceive with our five senses.'

This is what they would have said if they had been wise, and it would not have been a capitulation. But one day I will blame them publicly: I will say to them openly what I have just said to you, and they will have no grounds for objection because, by then, so many other discoveries will have been made which demonstrate the truth of our philosophy. They will no longer be so foolhardy as to repeat what they have said in the past: 'It's all utter nonsense, quite impossible!' Instead they will take refuge behind the phrase, 'It's possible'. As a matter of fact, they have already ceased to be quite so categorical, because, while they have been making discoveries during the past few years, they have come to realize that there is more and more that is still unknown. They are just beginning to venture into the etheric, subtle dimension, which is, precisely, the subjective dimension, and one day, as I have said, they will raise no more objections for there will be too many obvious proofs of the truth of our philosophy.

And now, listen carefully to what I am about to explain. In the subjective dimension we have to start by crossing through a foggy, misty region of clouds and dust. This is the sephirah *Yesod*, the region of the moon. Initiates know that every kind of aberration, the wildest fantasies of the imagination

and every kind of madness can be encountered in this region. So we must not stay there but go through and beyond it to the higher reaches of *Yesod* where all is clearly defined and full of light. Scientists who have tried penetrating this region and floundered about in its lower layers without exploring any further have been horrified by what they found and taken refuge in *Malkuth*, the earth, the densest form of matter. But those amongst them who have dared to go further have seen that the sun was always shining above the mists and that in its light all was mathematically clear and precise.

So there is another science, the science of the spirit, of which our scientists know nothing. But they are beginning to put out feelers towards it, as we can see from a recent remark by a Russian scientist: 'We know what matter is, but we have no notion of the spirit; we must now turn our attention in that direction.' So they are beginning to understand, and the science that lies before them, waiting to be discovered, is the Initiatic Science that certain privileged people have known for centuries.

Those who work with and for the spirit, who give the spirit every opportunity to manifest itself fully, will one day possess true strength, whereas those who make no effort will not reach the goal. Illustrations of this are many and easy to find. If you always go everywhere by car and never walk any more, what will happen? Not only will your legs become weaker and weaker, but the lack of activity will end by causing harm to your whole body. Or suppose someone has all kinds of machines to do their work for them, as they will have practically nothing to do they will become soft and stupid. In fact, ever since humans have written all their knowledge in books, their powers of memory have greatly decreased. There are still a few tribes left in the world who have no form of writing and who hand down all their knowledge from generation to generation by word of mouth: thousands of poems, formulas and secrets are kept alive this way. Their memory is prodigious! This was the case with the Druids: they refused to resort to writing because they knew that as soon as human beings began to rely on books they would lose much of their psychic faculties. In fact I have noticed that a lot of people who have never been to school and can neither read nor write have an exceptionally good memory. It seems as though books weaken one's memory. This does not mean I am opposed to books. I am simply saying what seems to be true, and, of course, memory is not the only thing

that counts.

So there it is, my dear brothers and sisters: you must not seek true strength anywhere but inside yourselves.

Of course, there is a lot more to be said. In every corner of the universe and in every aspect of the human being the two principles of life and death manifest themselves. When life begins to blossom, opposing forces are aroused and exert every effort to hold it down and destroy it, and life has to defend itself. It is a constant to and fro of action and reaction. And if people are not watchful they are in danger of being swept away by the forces of death. How many precious lessons can be learned from this truth!

A sister comes to see me, for instance, and tells me she is disappointed and discouraged because nothing seems to go right for her. Then I look at her and tell her, 'It is because you are in the wrong school; you are in the school of weakness.' 'What school do you mean, Master?' she asks. 'I went to school as a child, but I'm not going to school now.' I tell her, 'Yes, you are in the school of weakness', but as she still does not understand, I explain: 'In the school of weakness no one makes an effort, no one takes any exercise, whether physical or spiritual; everybody lounges about in armchairs, interested only in comfort and laziness. All right; wonderful! But what is the result? The result is that all inner movement slows down too; the intensity of life, of thought and of the spirit is diminished, and this leaves the door open to negativity, which slips in and begins to leave traces of dirt and impurities of every kind, which you do not know how to get rid of. Life must be lived with intensity in order to dispel all the dirtiness that keeps trying to sneak in and create problems within you. So, put yourself down for the school of strength; in other words, maintain a high level of activity, vigilance, dynamic energy, courage and enthusiasm.'

Once you know that the two principles of life and death are constantly warring within you, you will realize that you must not give way and allow negative forces to invade you and put their shackles on you. It may be pleasant, to begin with, to let yourself go, but later you end up paralysed: your blood and all your cells stop vibrating and can no longer resist or struggle against the inevitable invasion of dust, mould and mildew. When a wheel spins rapidly mud cannot stick to it, it is flung off at every turn, but as

soon as the wheel slows down it begins to be clogged with mud. Have you understood? There is a wonderful philosophy and the most extraordinary science hidden in this image. So it is now your responsibility to keep up your efforts, for it is very much in your own interest to avoid becoming soft and lazy. You have to exercise every part of you: your limbs and lungs, your thoughts and emotions, your soul and your spirit.⁹ If you do this you will be maintaining a vibratory state of such intensity that it will reject every impurity and you will be able to keep working for a very long time.

For years I have been telling you: ‘Get a move on! Go and sign up at the school for strength. Make an effort!’ Yes, because it is lethal to do nothing. One day you will find out for yourselves that it is vital to live with intensity. And this is why your lives must be marked by enthusiasm; this is why you must never abandon love, spiritual love, for it is love that creates this necessary state of outpouring and radiance which rejects everything negative and obscure. Those who pride themselves on being intelligent and wise while, at the same time, thinking that love and kindness are pointless, have signed their own death warrant – for their spiritual death, first of all, but the other kind of death will follow before long.

And now, my dear brothers and sisters, you should be able to say, ‘Today I have understood where the meaning of life, health and strength are to be found.’ Strength is to be found in the activity of the spirit.

The Bonfin, August 2, 1965

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

‘You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free’ – John 8: 32

¹ See *Man’s Psychic Life: Elements and Structures*, Izvor Coll. n° 222, chap. 6: ‘Body, soul and spirit’.

² See *The Philosopher’s Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor Coll. n° 241, chap. 3: ‘You are the salt of the earth’ – I. Marking matter with the seal of the spirit’.

³ See *'Know Thyself': Jnana Yoga*, Complete Works, vol. 17, chap. 3: 'Spirit and matter', and *Cosmic Balance – the Secret of Polarity*, Izvor Coll. n° 237, chap. 3: 'One and zero' and chap. 4: 'The role of the masculine and the feminine – Adam and Eve: Spirit and matter'.

⁴ See *The Fruits of The Tree of Life – The Cabbalistic Tradition*, Complete Works, vol. 32, chap. 6: 'The fall and the redemption of man'.

⁵ See *Man's Psychic Life: Elements and Structures*, Izvor Coll. n° 222, chap. 2: 'The synoptic table'.

⁶ See *Truth: Fruit of Wisdom and Love*, Izvor Coll. n° 234, chap. 18: 'The truth shall make you free'.

⁷ See *'In Spirit and in Truth'*, Izvor Coll. n° 235, chap. 3: 'The link with the centre'.

⁸ See *'Et il me montra un fleuve d'eau de la vie'*, Synopsis Coll., Part VII, chap. 3: 'La vérité de la vie. Objectivité and Subjectivité'.

⁹ See *A New Earth – Methods, exercises, formulas, prayers*, Complete Works, vol. 13.

Chapter Nine : Sacrifice

Every kingdom of the natural order (mineral, vegetable, animal and human) strives to get closer to the kingdom immediately above it. Stones, for instance, have been on this earth longer than anything else; they are inert, insensate and incapable of movement or growth, and their ‘ideal’ is to become like plants.

The ideal of plants is to become animals. Being attached to the ground by their roots and incapable of enjoying the mobility or the feelings of animals, their ambition is to be free to move. But the only way they can evolve is for their cells to be assimilated into the body of an animal. The way of evolution for plants, therefore, is the way of sacrifice: to be eaten or burned.

The ideal of animals is to become human; the ideal of humans is to become angels, and the ideal of angels is to become archangels or divinities.

Each category of beings possesses qualities which have not been given to the category below it, and each one strives to rise above their own level and move onto a higher level. Before they can become angels, however, humans have to become Masters, for a Master is the link between the world of humans and the world of angels. When I told you, a few days ago, that a human being’s ideal was not to accomplish God’s will, you were very surprised, for this seemed to contradict everything I had ever said. The truth is that humans are predestined, first of all, to study, know and understand. Only angels can accomplish the will of God. So the accomplishment of God’s will is, certainly, our ultimate ideal, but our more immediate ideal, our present ideal, is to study. This is the first thing that is asked of us. To accomplish God’s will is the work of angels!

In Bulgarian, the word for ‘angel’ is *anguel*; ‘fire’ is *ogan*, and ‘lamb’ is *agné*. If you associate the words *ogan* and *agné*, they will help you to understand many things. You will understand why the Christ, the son of God, was compared to the lamb which had to be sacrificed before the world began.¹ Where does this tradition come from? In the past, some countries had the custom of pouring the blood of a lamb over the foundations of a house

that was being built, in order to give it stability and protection. It was a way of reminding people that a lamb or other living creature had had to be sacrificed before the creation of the world in order to ensure that it would be built on safe and solid foundations.

The Christ is the divine lamb, the spirit of love, the focal point which attracts, integrates and supports all things. He is the foundation of love on which creation is built, who sacrificed and immolated himself and who impregnates every particle of the matter used in the construction of the edifice. Everywhere, whether in stones or in the stars, it is this love that cements the whole together. If love were to disappear, our bodies, too, would begin to disintegrate and disappear, for it is love that holds our cells together. Love is the great secret of the universe.

Just as the lamb gave himself up in sacrifice, so man and woman, too, must sacrifice themselves. This is why the initiates invite us to offer our bodies and hearts in sacrifice to God. But humans have not yet understood the true meaning of sacrifice, which is the most elevated, most noble and divine manifestation possible. Nowhere in the whole universe will you ever find anything greater or more sublime than sacrifice; sacrifice is the Omega, the last letter, there is nothing higher than this, and Jesus came in order to speak that last letter. Others will come after him to carry it out, to put it into practice, but they will never add anything to it or surpass it; for all eternity, sacrifice is the most sublime act possible.

Very few people understand what sacrifice really is. You will often hear someone say, 'I sacrificed myself for this or that', but was it true sacrifice? Let me give you a criterion to judge by, but I warn you at once that it is a criterion you can only use for yourself, not for others, for unless you are a Master or a clairvoyant you can never know whether someone is genuinely sacrificing themselves or whether their actions contain an egotistical element of self-interest. True sacrifice is a gesture, a movement, a thought or feeling that is absolutely disinterested. If you try to analyse yourself honestly, you will have to admit that in most instances your lower nature manages to mix some of its own ulterior motives with what you had thought was an act of pure disinterestedness. And this shows you exactly what you must work at, for evolution only truly begins at the point where a person starts to act in an

impersonal, disinterested manner.

Look at how children behave: they cry, scream, demand and threaten. They have no consideration for either their father or mother or for their brothers and sisters. They think everybody should obey them and they can be really terrible: real tyrants! Their whole attitude is eloquent: 'Why aren't you doing what I want? You're there to help me grow, and I have my own ideas about what's good for me! I'm going to be king or queen of the whole world!' And they stamp their little feet, and clench their tiny fists and refuse to take no for an answer. What strength! What determination! They are ready to stand up to all comers and refuse to obey or let themselves be swayed. Of course, they are so adorable, everyone forgives them their tantrums and hurries to give them whatever they want. But as they grow older they begin to notice that the world is not exactly as they imagined and that others are beginning to demand certain things of them: they are told to take a glass of water to their old grandfather, to do one or two little chores, to wash themselves and tidy away their clothes. Oh, there is no question of sacrifice just yet; children obey in exchange for a piece of chocolate; they are told they will have a reward if they are good, so they work in order to earn their reward.

And then, one day, they go to school where they meet other children like themselves and they begin to think. They become aware that they are going to have to change their methods, that they are going to have to make concessions: if they want to play with other children they are going to have to get along with them. So, every now and then they will pull out their handkerchief to wipe away a few tears, but they will learn to give in. Yes, but even when they give in to others they always have their own idea at the back of their mind. The years go by, and one day they pick up their pen, take out a clean sheet of paper and start writing a poem: they will swear that they are full of pure, disinterested love. But don't believe them because, as I have said, in the last analysis there is always a hidden motive, hidden even from themselves!

At last, one day, children become adults; now it is their turn to have children, and, at this point, they begin to make sacrifices in order to clothe and feed and educate them. And yet, if you analyse their attitude closely, you will see that even now it is not entirely free from ulterior motives: their

children are going to grow up and they may well turn out to be very remarkable people; the parents themselves are going to get older and run the risk of falling ill or of needing financial support, and so on and so forth. Yes, except in very rare cases, there is always an ulterior motive.

If you pursue your analysis further, therefore, you will have to conclude that sacrifice does not really exist; there is always a hidden motive. It may not always be a gross, material motive, of course; it may be a very subtle form of self-interest, such as to advance one's evolution, for instance, to gain more light and grow in perfection. And the great difference between the two forms of self-interest is that this second form, being spiritual and pure, is not prejudicial to anyone; in fact, it can be a benefit to the whole world, whereas the satisfaction of the first kind of self-interest is necessarily detrimental to others.

So there are two kinds of self-interest or ambition: one which only concerns the personality of the person involved and another which is so vast and broad that it touches the interests of the whole collectivity. This second kind is the only kind that is acceptable to the Universal White Brotherhood. You will never be blamed if you are filled with a desire for wisdom, love, peace, purity and kindness, because these virtues can never be harmful to anyone: you are doing no harm, you are not destroying anything, you are not disturbing the collective evolution of the cosmic organism; on the contrary. But if your ambition is purely selfish, you must realize that you are still a long way from divine evolution such as initiates conceive it. Analyse everything you do, everything you think and feel; examine everything relentlessly and search for the self-interest that is so well hidden. You will see that very few things can stand up to this examination and show themselves to be pure and impersonal!

And now, if you want to know how to recognize the manifestations of your higher self, let me tell you that it is very easy, for it makes an unmistakable impression. Yes, you will recognize it because of the sensation that accompanies it. Suppose, for instance, that you feel moved to give something to a friend: if you have a feeling of pure joy undiluted by reservations or ulterior motives, then you can be sure that it is a manifestation of your higher self. The symbol of the higher self is the sun and that of the lower self, the

earth. Look at the sun; what does it do? It gives. It is forever giving, whereas the earth never stops taking. These two gestures express the philosophy of the sun and the earth,² and the phenomenon repeats itself throughout creation. Look at a family, for instance: the parents give ceaselessly; they give food, clothing, education and instruction, whereas the children take, eat and are continually getting dirty. It is the pattern of the sun and the earth! But one day the earth, too, will become a sun, and when a child becomes a mother or father, it too will be a sun.

And what about a disciple? And a Master? The Master is the sun, for he is forever giving something to his disciples: he instructs and protects them, he endeavours to bring them up and enrich them spiritually, whereas disciples are exactly like the earth: they take. Perhaps you find that the disciples' philosophy, as I describe it, is very inferior. No, no. It is absolutely normal; it is simply a phase through which they have to go first; later, like the earth, they too will become suns. At this point you are probably saying to yourselves that my words are in direct contradiction with everything that astronomy tells us, for have we not all read that, a few thousand years from now, the earth is going to cool down and die? Well, this is an area which is not properly understood yet. The science of astronomy is still in its infancy and astronomers still have a lot to learn; so far they have concentrated all their attention on outward appearances, on the shell of reality.

The earth is not moving towards extinction: the opposite, in fact. The earth is still a very young child which spends its time eating, drinking and taking all it can for itself; it is a little girl, but it is going to grow up and become warmer and more and more luminous until, one day, it becomes a sun. This is what true science teaches. Oh, you can believe what the astronomers tell you, if you wish, but what we know, we know well! Yes, in the future, the earth is going to grow up and become a sun because the light and heat – that is to say, the love and wisdom – that it receives ceaselessly from the sun is accumulating in its depths and gradually transforming the matter of which it is made. But, of course, we are going to have to wait millions of years before this transformation takes place; it cannot happen all at once. The earth is a fruit which still needs to ripen, and once it is ripe thousands of beings are going to eat it. Yes, one day it will be juicy and delicious, whereas at the moment it is still green and very sour and bitter. This is why it is known as a

‘vale of tears and suffering’: because it is still an unripe fruit and its juice is bitter and indigestible.

The sun is ceaselessly accomplishing a tremendous work on the earth with its love (heat) and wisdom (light), and the earth absorbs and digests all the new qualities received from the sun and passes them on to its inhabitants. And the evolution of humanity follows, step by step, the evolution of the earth. Let me explain that: as the earth evolves, the minerals and vegetation on the earth are gradually transformed also. It is the earth which, through the course of the centuries, introduces new properties and virtues into the stones and plants, for it receives the forces coming from the sun, makes them its own and sends them on to the plants. And this is how the people and animals that eat this vegetation are in constant contact with the minerals and metals of the earth and are obliged to change. This means that humankind cannot pursue its own ‘private’ evolution; the evolution of humanity depends on that of the earth, it is part and parcel of it. If the earth did not evolve, humankind would not evolve either, for no one can suddenly cut themselves off from the earth in order to reach the sun. Only very exceptional beings manage to free themselves from this dependence on the earth.

A disciple is like the earth: they have to digest the food their Master gives them and let it work in them to nourish their own minerals, plants, animals and humans. And where are these minerals, plants, animals and humans? They are our own physiological systems: the skeleton, the muscles, the circulatory and nervous systems, etc. Yes, everything is there, within us, and, like the earth, humans have the obligation to nourish all their inhabitants, and they nourish them with love and wisdom.

Of course, I know that scientists will never accept such a theory. They will simply scoff: ‘What on earth are you talking about? That’s utter rubbish! Scientific research tells us that planets are born in such and such a way and die in such and such a way...’ Well, the truth is that if you see how things happen in nature, if you see how a tree develops, for instance, starting with the bud, then the flower, then a fruit and after the fruit the seed, which contains the blueprint for the whole tree, then you can know what to expect with the planets also, because the laws that govern the life of the planets are the same as those that govern life on earth. Yes indeed, you do not need to

visit a planet in order to study it: everything is reflected in miniature on the earth.

Only the great initiates possess the means of learning from direct contact with life on other planets; they congregate in one place, and, through the power of thought and of the word, they delegate one of their number to go and study things on the spot; then, this one comes back and reports on what has been seen. Following this, others are sent to confirm and compare their observations. In this way a great many beings have been sent into space, and, without exception, they have all brought back the same information. This is how the initiates have built up a science which they hold secret. And there is only one key to this science, the magical key of pure sacrifice, pure selflessness; these are the only things that can open the door of this secret science. If you still have even a trace of unwholesome, egotistical self-interest, you will never be able to pierce the secret of this science and know things as they really are.

And it is thanks to these expeditions into space that the initiates could compare what happened on earth with what they had seen elsewhere, and say, with Hermes Trismegistus, 'What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below.' And when Jesus said, '*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,*'³ he was really saying the same thing. The earth is so closely bound up with heaven that it follows its every movement; it is like the betrothed who follows her beloved wherever he goes, or like a child who runs after its mother because it cannot bear to be separated from her. The earth follows every movement of heaven, every vibration or disturbance, every imperceptible tremor.

You must work at this question of sacrifice. When you act with total disinterestedness you are flooded with an immense joy, which can be compared to no other joy on earth. You will say, 'But eating is a joy too; it gives me great pleasure and makes me happy. And smoking or drinking or sleeping with a pretty woman... they all give me joy!' True, there are all kinds of joys, but none of them is greater than the joy of sacrifice, the joy that comes from giving. Only, as I have said, you must be capable of giving without ulterior motives or reservations of any kind. If you feel a certain reluctance it means that your gesture is not totally impersonal. A lot of people

behave like the man who prayed to St Nicholas to help him cross a river, saying, 'O blessed St Nicholas, if you help me to get across the river safely I'll give you my horse.' Once he was safely on the other side, though, he thought better of it and said, 'St Nicholas, you don't need a horse in heaven, do you?' and kept the horse for himself!

People make promises, but when the time comes to give their hand shakes; it is not easy to give. You can tell exactly what your actions are worth from the degree of hesitancy you feel in accomplishing them: if you feel a slight tug of sadness and regret when you give, it means you are not disinterested; whereas if you feel a tremendous surge of joy, it shows that your giving is a manifestation of your higher self. Yes, the higher self manifests itself in disinterestedness. For the time being, to be sure, it is inevitable that our lower self should make itself felt at the same time as our higher self: the latter gives, like the sun, and the former takes, like the earth. But, one day, the lower self will resemble the higher self.

When human beings are capable of depriving themselves in order to give to others it is proof that they are no longer children. If you claim to be older, more highly evolved or better than other people, all I can say is, 'Prove it by making greater sacrifices'. If someone is capable of sacrificing their time, their health, their money and their knowledge, it means that they are really very highly evolved. And this is why, when a disciple has spent years learning from a Master, he or she must, in turn, become like their Master and never stop distributing their light and warmth. When they reach this point, the joy they experience through giving surpasses everything else; they need no other reward.

Everybody is always very surprised that a Master should work without asking anything in return;⁴ it seems to them to be a stupid waste of time and effort. But those who think this have adopted the philosophy of the lower self, and this is why they will never know joy or happiness. Joy and happiness will never be found through selfishness; it is forbidden. You think that when you sacrifice something you have lost it for ever; on the contrary, it is precisely at that moment that it truly belongs to you. Only the things you have sacrificed will ever really be yours; the rest will never belong to you. The good you have done by sacrificing yourself will always be with you; it

will follow you like your shadow until the end of time.

You will never taste pure, deep joy until you have learned how to give without asking or expecting anything in return. Actually, of course, when you give in this way you will certainly receive something in return, and when you do receive it, so much the better, you can rejoice, but you must never expect or ask for anything. The day you find yourself capable of such detachment you will experience immense joy. Ask a mother who deprives herself of a morsel of bread for the sake of her child if she is unhappy! Her heavenly smile is answer enough, isn't it?

Jesus knew how much work would be done one day by all those disciples who accompanied him, drinking in his words. He knew that their work would be as impersonal and disinterested as his own, because he knew the great mystery of how seeds are propagated. Every seed yields a fruit of the same species as itself, and as sacrifice was the seed with which Jesus nourished his disciples, it could only produce pure sacrifice in them. When a mother sacrifices herself for her children, her example leads them to do the same later on. When they have seen how she fed and cared for them, how she would get up in the middle of the night without complaining or thinking of herself, even if they are naturally selfish they will be obliged to imitate her one day, for she is a symbol of sacrifice that will live eternally in their soul.

And you, who spend your lives in close contact with a Master who gives you an example of the happiness and joy that accompany a life of perfect sacrifice, you have the obligation to think about it and ask yourselves where that happiness and joy come from. And this is just the point: they come from his total disinterestedness. In time, all his disciples will resemble him because the seed he is planting in them is the seed of pure love, and it will go on reproducing itself eternally. The black lodge can never eradicate this seed however hard it tries. Wherever there have been initiatic schools and centres in which the seed of disinterested love was cultivated, the black lodge has tried to destroy it but without success, for it is a very hardy, tenacious plant. The love of an initiate, therefore, is like a seed planted in each disciple, and, one day, they will be like their Master.

Why not start immediately, today, to do something disinterested? If you do, you will see that new springs will begin to flow within you. For this is the

one great spring: disinterestedness. A spring is also an image of the sun. The other representatives of the sun on earth are air, which gives itself to be eaten and drunk, and a tree, which gives fruit. So a disciple must become like air, like a spring, like a tree. If you have a spring within you, a generous spring of pure water, it means that your higher self is present and active within you. But if you are dry and arid, it means that your higher self, the sun, the spring, the tree, are not present within you, and you will not know the taste of true joy, for joy is a gift of the sun, the tree, the spring.

The secret of joy is to give without regret or reservation. Those who manage to do this are most highly privileged: they have understood the meaning of life and are capable of being mothers and fathers. Everybody knows that there are mothers, fathers and children, but no one has ever thought that there are tremendous discoveries to be made thanks to this simple picture of a family. Why are there fathers and mothers? The father, the mother and the child symbolize and sum up a whole body of teaching. Those who are ripe, those who are capable of giving others their fruits to eat, are fathers or mothers. But those who think only of themselves and have nothing to offer others are still children. They may look like fathers or mothers on the physical plane, but it is an illusion, and the invisible world will not be taken in.

To become a father or mother is a high ideal to be achieved, but to be a child is not an ideal. The ideal is to be a father or mother first of all, and only to become a child later. But you are still unable to understand me... If you are a fruit, you can become a seed; it is your right. But if you have not yet become a fruit it is no good wanting to be a seed; it is impossible, for seeds come after the fruit, and to give fruit you have to be a father or mother; in other words, you have to be capable of impersonal love. The ideal, therefore, is to become, first of all, a father or mother so as to give birth to a child, that is to say, to give birth to sacrifice, the impersonal fruit of the enlightened father and mother. Anyone who has never accomplished a truly impersonal action is still immature; they have never brought a child into the world.

The period of puberty, which a child reaches at about thirteen or fourteen, is a period of transformation: at puberty a human being ceases to be purely selfish and personal and becomes capable of productivity, that is, of self-

sacrifice. Before the age of puberty children are incapable of sacrifice; they are barren land with a constant need to take for themselves. But after puberty they are capable of producing both physical and psychic fruits. And this is why I can say that if this spring does not flow within you, in other words, if your love is not pure and disinterested, you will dry up and yield no harvest; you will produce neither flowers nor fruit; you will be a desert, a barren waste. And who wants to live in a desert? Nobody but initiates and ascetics.

And do you know why sages retreat into the desert? You think that it is to be left alone in peace and quiet, but that is not the real reason. For the first time, let me tell you the true answer to this question. It is the invisible world that urges them to go into the desert, saying, 'You are a spring; you are a sun. Go out into these barren lands and take life to them, so that it may flow through them and that, one day, culture and civilization may be born again!' Initiates are all messengers sent by heaven to revivify places where brilliant civilizations and splendid cities flourished in the past but which, because of the faults committed by men and women, are now nothing but weed-choked ruins or vestiges buried in the sand. Everything in them is dead. So God sends these springs, these suns, the initiates, saying, 'Go and live there and pray and meditate so that one day water will begin to flow once again and these lands will once again be fruitful orchards.' No, they do not go into the desert simply to get away from other people, as you imagined; in fact it is quite possible that they themselves do not know the real reason; they simply feel this secret urge which drives them out there, but the true reason is the one I have just explained to you.

If you have understood me today, nothing on earth will persuade you to renounce the joy that can be yours thanks to an impersonal action. It will make no difference if everyone tries to buy you, to persuade you to give up your disinterested work and take a job that would bring you riches, fame and power. You will tell them, 'I'm not interested in your money, fame and power. I have no intention of losing the immense joy I get out of disinterested work for the divine ideal of true sacrifice. What you are offering me would rob me of that joy which is constantly with me; you can keep it, thank you!' Whoever you may be, you can all verify the truth of my words for yourselves.

Most human beings want it to be known when they give something; they want the newspapers to report it so that everyone can comment on it. But those who understand the true meaning of sacrifice would never spoil their own joy by saying, 'You know, I was the one who gave you this or that. Without me you wouldn't have had any of it.' Analyse yourselves and you will have to agree: it is impossible to know true joy if you behave like this, whereas if you do good in secret you will get immense joy from it. If you have never experienced this joy it does not say very much for you; on the contrary, it proves that you are still a child, because you still need to take things for yourself. You are a child who has not even reached the stage of puberty: the seed has not yet taken shape within you; you are still barren and incapable of producing crops or fruit of any kind. The eternal truths are etched into every phenomenon of life, and it is from the natural phenomena, from even the smallest events of their everyday lives, that initiates draw their knowledge and their philosophy.

You can try every imaginable means to find other joys, other forms of happiness, but it will do you no good; you will not find them. Why not? Because true happiness is born only of sacrifice. No pleasure or joy which is not the fruit of sacrifice possesses these three elements: strength, heat and light. A joy that fails to expand and enrapture you, a joy that fails to teach you something is an ephemeral joy. And the whole world is immersed in these ephemeral joys. Human beings do not know the joy that cannot be destroyed or spoiled. True joy, that which cannot be taken away from you, is the joy that comes from sacrifice, from working for the kingdom of God; I know no other. And this is why I drink, now, from this inexhaustible spring which leaves no after-taste of regret or sorrow. God allows us to drink from this spring all the time and all together.

If I had more time I could reveal so much more to you. One of the greatest sorrows for most men and women is to disappear without leaving any offspring, and this is not a question of chance. In the past, a childless couple was held in very low esteem by others; you only have to read the Old Testament to see that this was so! The greatest joy of a father, even when he was dying, was the thought that he was leaving noble and intelligent children behind him. They were his pride and joy, and he could comfort himself, saying, 'I am leaving worthy successors.' Similarly, the greatest sorrow for a

tree is to bear no fruit. Any tree that is not a fruit tree is on a lower level of evolution, and if you want to be nice to a tree, you can do nothing better than to say to it, 'My dear little tree, I hope, with all my heart, that one day you will become a fruit tree.' When it hears this, the tree will tremble with delight, because it is the one thing it wants; its ideal is to become a fruit tree. And this is all the more true for a Master: the greatest joy of a Master is to have good, intelligent disciples and to be able to stand in the presence of the heads of the Universal White Brotherhood, surrounded by his disciples, and to say, 'These are my sons and daughters!'

All those who have not understood the value of sacrifice are laying up grief and sorrow for themselves. You are called to become mothers and fathers, if not physically, at least spiritually. ⁵Therefore, you have to prepare yourselves for your task; you have to go beyond the phase of puberty and offer your lives as a gift to heaven, saying, 'From now on, I am going to work for the kingdom of God and abandon all those passing joys and pleasures which are so unprofitable.' And then, little by little, you will begin to sacrifice many things: tobacco, alcohol, meat, gambling and many, many more things. Why? Because in this way you will be releasing the spiritual forces which have been hampered and enslaved by these bad habits, for it is habits like these that prevent men and women from bearing fruit. Look at a tree: when it is overrun by insects it cannot form fruit, and the invaders have to be driven off with insecticides. And you, too: rid your body, your heart and your will of all those senseless pleasures which are draining you of the sap intended for the nourishment of your higher self. You cannot give fruit or make sacrifices if you continue to harbour foreign entities within you that drink up all your strength. You must get rid of all those caterpillars and bugs.

The great book of nature lies open before you every day, and all the marvels of knowledge and eternal wisdom are there, for all to see, inscribed by God on every stone, every branch, every star. Why can't you understand them? Why don't you use your eyes to see or your ears to hear? Because you are too busy with joys and pleasures that prevent you from seeing and hearing. When you finally decide to sacrifice these pleasures, tremendous forces will be unleashed, your eyes will be opened and you will be able to read what is written in the book of nature. This is the secret.

Sometimes you find yourself faced with a question that is entirely incomprehensible to you, and you say, 'Other people understand this. Why can't I?' Well, you should be able to answer that question for yourself: 'Because I am still indulging myself in inferior joys and pleasures which rob me of all my strength. That is why I have none left for my inner eyes.' There is no other explanation for your inability to see. Your energies have to be released and allowed to flow in another direction and awaken other cells. But people are very ignorant, and they think, 'I'll just give myself this little pleasure. It would kill me to give up my one little joy!' ⁶ What ignorance! On the contrary, don't you know what joys await you? The more a human being renounces his or her fleeting, superficial joys, the more they are flooded with true joy. If one amongst you understands what I have revealed to you today, they will change their life completely, for this is not just a question of words: it is reality. At present, neither scientists nor philosophers know the true origin of our weaknesses and vices, and they offer all kinds of false explanations for them. The only explanation for our weaknesses is that we are being drained by uninvited beings to whom we have offered 'room and board'. The solution is to get rid of these unwanted guests.

But what strange ways people have of explaining things. It reminds me of the man who complained to his valet, 'James, just look at those chairs. They're covered in dust!' 'Oh, that doesn't surprise me, sir', said his valet. 'Nobody has sat on them for at least three weeks!' He was going to wait for somebody to sit on them to get rid of the dust! Well, it is a strange way of looking at things, but then we hear many explanations that are like that.

When a young man declares to his sweetheart, 'I love you so much, I would die for you!' it is a stupid thing to say. What good would it do her if he died? And what good would it do him? What he should say is, 'I love you so much that I'll live for you!' This is how we should understand love. But people are afraid of impersonal love, because they confuse it with grief, sorrow and death. This is a wrong conception. Love is life, and pure love contains everything; pure love implies no privation. Some people pity me and say, 'Oh, the poor man. He deprives himself of everything!' But I pity them twice over, because in reality they are the ones who deprive themselves of everything by choosing to have just a few meagre pleasures. That is real privation, whereas my life contains everything; I have a tremendous choice

before me.

I am not preaching death; I am preaching life, and what is more, life properly understood. It is light that gives us life and love. Heaven does not ask us to kill ourselves; it only asks us to refine our pleasures, to choose subtler, purer pleasures. And do you think that those who spend all their time with their noses in books are very highly evolved? The greatest discoveries are not to be found in printed books but in living books and, especially, in our own book. Yes, the best book of all is with us, in us and around us, but nowadays everybody reads more and more books from libraries and understands less and less. Humans have not been sent to earth in order to shut themselves up in a library and forget all the rest. Their wife and children are marvellous books, but they never read them. They read encyclopaedias and journals and spend their days underlining important passages and making notes; they love doing that, and yet they are not happy. Why? But when I say this about books and libraries, don't misunderstand me: I once met a very wealthy woman who never read anything for fear of harming her eyes! That is not what I am advising: if you never read anything it is not good either.

I have never said that you should ration or renounce joy or pleasure, only that you should refine them and replace them with greater joys and pleasures of a higher order. And amongst all the joys that exist, the greatest lies not in listening to music or in painting or reading, but in sacrificing oneself and working with complete disinterestedness for the kingdom of God. There is no greater joy than this, but sacrifice and true joy are only for highly evolved beings.

Sèvres, May 2, 1945

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

‘Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven’ – *Matt. 6: 10*

¹ See *The Book of Revelations: A Commentary*, Izvor Coll. n° 230, chap. 8: ‘The scroll and the lamb’.

² See *The Key to the Problems of Existence*, Complete Works, vol. 11, chap. 3: 'Giving and taking'.

³ See '*Cherchez le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice*', Synopsis Coll., Part II, chap. 3: 'Sur la terre comme au ciel'.

⁴ See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor Coll. 207, chap. 1: 'How to recognize a true spiritual master'.

⁵ See *Le grain de sénévé*, Complete Works, vol. 4, chap. 12: 'Croissez et multipliez'.

⁶ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor coll. n° 240, chap. 3: 'Whoever would save his life will lose it'.

Chapter Ten : A high ideal

What a glorious day, today! How could anyone not be happy on a day like this? And see how kind the angel of air has been, to sweep away all the clouds and leave everything bright and shining. In such splendid conditions it is easier to work well.

As I have often told you, everything depends on what a person wants from life, on the goal they have chosen: their aim, their ideal, what they hope to achieve. A person's ideal determines all the rest, for it is an active agent in their life and produces specific results, digging deep into their being and cleansing and organizing all the disparate elements into a harmonious whole. Every aspect of a person's life is arranged, fashioned, modelled and formed in accordance with their ideal. If, rather than being very elevated and noble, it is prosaic and materialistic, then all the rest of their life, all their thoughts, actions and emotions will conform to it, and you need not be surprised if, in their later years, they are unhappy! I advise you to meditate on this: you will see that there is much to be discovered here.

It does not matter if your ideal is clearly impossible, unworkable and unattainable. Your only concern should be to make sure that it is sublime, perfect and divine. And you need not worry about how long it is going to take to achieve it; that is not important. But human beings are always discouraged by this aspect: if a goal is difficult or impossible to reach, or too far off in the future, they simply give up.

But what exactly is an ideal? It is a living, powerful, real being that is capable of fulfilling all our needs. This is something that humans have never been ready to understand, with the result that they have deprived themselves of the best by choosing an easy, rapidly attainable material goal which ruins their lives. There is magic virtue in an ideal; it weaves a web of very close ties with every aspect of our lives, and if it is something very lofty it keeps us constantly supplied with beneficial currents and particles. Since we ourselves have given it being and keep it constantly in our minds and hearts, its beneficial influence is always with us, disposing and improving conditions until, one day, we find ourselves in entirely new conditions that it has

prepared for us. But this will only happen if we love our ideal, constantly thinking of it and nurturing it and, in spite of its immensity and the tremendous gulf between us, if we cradle it in our heart and soul. Herein lies the greatest wisdom and the highest truth!

From now on, you must learn to break through your own limitations, surpass yourselves and overcome every obstacle in order to give form to that ideal, knowing that it already exists in the divine world and that, thanks to the close bonds between you, it will rescue you from all possible complications, mishaps and woes. It comes and whispers in your ear, 'Here I am. Have you forgotten me? Try to think of me from time to time', and that is enough to revive your inspiration. The only trouble is, who has enough faith, knowledge and willpower to form such an ideal?

Those who do not know these great truths work with crumbling, unreliable materials in very precarious conditions, and then they complain bitterly when they begin to suffer. But who is to blame? They never aimed very high; they were content with shoddy little things, never realizing that these things would, necessarily, be made of very ordinary materials. Yes, because the law of affinities is operative here as well: a second-rate ideal attracts flimsy, second-rate elements. Humans have to go very high, higher and higher, to find the materials they need to form all the organs of their body and brain; they must seek those particles in heaven, in the light, in immensity and in the depths of their own being. But this they cannot do if their heart is not set on the most sublime, exalted ideal.

Most people imagine that when they manage to practise their chosen trade they have achieved their ideal. But, in that case, why do they also complain that they feel empty inside, as though something important were lacking? It does not seem logical, since they have already obtained all they dreamed of. The fact is that they will always feel this emptiness if they do not give themselves a high ideal, for a high ideal is the only thing that can fill every void in humans. It slips in to every nook and cranny and brings perfect fulfilment. Of course, I am not saying that you must not have a profession, that you should not be a scientist or an artist, etc. Not at all. But the point is that you will not find immortality, eternity and fulfilment in a profession. A profession is necessary in life; every profession has its merits, but if you set

your sights no higher and expect to find happiness, light, knowledge, power and total fulfilment there, it is just not possible, for that is not where God has put these things. He has put certain possibilities there, but not the absolute possibilities that our soul and spirit need. Something else, something more is needed to achieve total fulfilment.

So the best solution is this: have all you need on the material level, but do not make this your ideal. Your ideal should be so elevated you cannot even reach it! If this is the kind of ideal you have, then you are on the right path: you know you will never reach it, even in thousands of years, but you treasure it, picture it to yourself, hug it close to you and talk to it. It is your ideal that will keep things on an even keel within you, that will give you heavenly joys, transform all the evil in you and, one day, make a divinity of you.

The highest form of wisdom and the greatest secret of magic is to know, in advance, that you will never attain your high ideal but that, by thinking of it constantly and cherishing it, you are already achieving it in another way, for it makes you ever more transparent, luminous and pure. Your ideal remains totally inaccessible, but that does not matter; it is not necessary to attain it since you already benefit from its wealth. In what way? In all kinds of ways. This may seem absurd to you, but it is precisely in this absurdity that humans stand to gain enormously. Those who have never understood this and who have adopted the ordinary, down-to-earth philosophy of the masses will never find what is essential.

Some of you will probably say, 'Yes, but I know what I'm like. I'm so weak and stupid... and not even well educated. I'll never get there!' And this is how people give up because they have not understood what it is all about. It has been drummed into their heads that they are dust and destined to return to dust, that they are weak, mortal and sinful and that there is nothing to be done about it; they just have to accept the situation, to accept that they are fated to be unhappy, ugly and criminally inclined! Why this philosophy? Because humans have only paid attention to one aspect of their nature, the physical, material aspect. For millions of years they have seen the weakness of the physical body, and they think that that is the whole story. No, that is false! In addition to their physical body God has given men and women a

soul and spirit which he himself has formed for them. But this has never been explained; people have been left to flounder in their weakness, they have been conditioned to think they are sinners and criminals and that they will never be anything else. And the poor wretches have had no choice but to say 'Amen!' People's faith in their own divine nature has been destroyed; they no longer know that deep inside them is a divine spark, which they must tend and blow into a flame. No one knows any more that men and women are sons and daughters of God.¹

From now on, you must adopt this philosophy, which teaches that we, too, are the heirs of our heavenly Father, that we are destined to resemble him and that, one day, all his knowledge, all his love and all his power will be ours. This is the way to come closer to our high ideal, by taking the Lord as our model and example instead of conforming to patterns of weakness, sickness and death, and by modelling ourselves on a truly divine, heavenly ideal which smiles on us, protects and consoles us and gives us everything we need. If you refuse to understand me today, all your problems and worries, all your despondency and woe will be with you for a very long time, because you will be refusing the gift I am offering you: the best philosophy that is, was and ever will be. Analyse yourselves, see where you stand, what you want and hope for from life and how you envisage things, and you will see the tremendous gap between your attitude and what I have just been saying.

Whatever happens you must maintain this high ideal. Of course, you will say that the reality is none too good, that your physical body is unhealthy and weak. But that does not matter; it is only the outward appearance. You may say, too, that you have no money, that you are unhappy, downtrodden and dejected. But this, too, is only an illusion. If you continue to nurture your ideal within you, it will end by delivering you from all your torments, and one day you will actually feel that you are a child of God and that you have immense riches at your disposal. Where will this feeling come from? From above. But you never look upwards for what you want; you are always looking for things down below, and the things you find down below are very unreliable; they break or crumble away. So don't put all your trust in what is below.

So, as you see, things have to change, and change radically, and this is the

reason you are here, at the Bonfin.² So make the most of it. Make the most of the sunshine, the peace and purity of the atmosphere and, above all, make the most of the lectures. But as soon as a lecture is finished, you begin to talk about all kinds of other things, as though what I had been saying were useless and uninteresting. But don't you realize that you should be concentrating on these ideas all day long? While you are working, preparing the meals, washing or dressing, you should be reflecting on all these ideas, convinced that in them lies your salvation. But you don't do this. In fact, I find that you have no idea of how to work effectively or in depth because you are dominated by your instinctive love of pleasure! Instead of taking this work seriously in order to transform yourselves and become those new beings the world needs so urgently, you just waste your time. It seems that the only thing you know how to do is waste your time. But you are here to work, my dear brothers and sisters, to work on yourselves more intensively than ever before, and if you make up your minds to do it seriously, you will be astonished at the results!

Whatever you do, don't follow those who never take into account the fact that they have a soul and a spirit, that there is another world beyond this one to which we must conform. Everything they do is for the benefit of their own physical bodies, for the earth or for human society; and it is true that, in those areas, we have everything we need. And yet, on the inside, nothing is as it should be! So don't follow their philosophy; adopt the divine philosophy that I am giving you. Adopt a high ideal without bothering about your own inadequacies and failings. Cultivate the notion that you are a potential divinity, and one day, by working, learning, praying and living reasonably, you will have outstripped all those who have got themselves enmeshed in supposedly 'proper' forms, for it is these old-fashioned, obsolete forms that hold them back and prevent them from advancing. Look at how so many women behave: when they are young they use makeup and perfume and take great care of their appearance; they learn to draw, dance, play the piano and do the hundred and one things that have to be done to seduce a man. But they only do all this until they are married. Once they are safely married, what would be the point of going on? They are married; they have their own home; isn't that enough? So they begin to become dull and dowdy and put on weight and abandon all those things that contributed so much to their charm, delicacy and poetic appeal. But why do they let themselves go to seed, like

that? They don't realize that they should keep up all these things, that they must never let themselves go. Even when you are ninety-nine years old you must not let yourself go, because it is precisely then that conditions are most favourable for beginning! Before then you will not have accomplished much, nor learned very much, but at that age, at last, the time is ripe!

This is my point of view, and why should I be the only one to think this way? I would like to have friends round me who share my opinion. Perhaps you think that solitude is a burden to me? No, not at all; in fact, I prefer my solitude because I am never alone. If you only knew how many beings are with me and all round me; if you were clairvoyant you would be astonished at the sight! In fact, my hope is that one day you will become clairvoyant, for I am sure we shall get along better then! As long as you cannot see and understand, as long as you have no intuition, I assure you, whatever I do will not make things any better. So it would be to my advantage if you were to become clairvoyant; indeed, if you follow certain rules, it is bound to happen: Cosmic Intelligence has planned it. Cosmic Intelligence has foreseen everything and has plans in store for you of which you can have no notion. If you follow the divine rules, I promise you, marvellous treasures that have remained hidden for thousands of years will be revealed to you. But, of course, if you adopt the workaday, materialistic philosophy of the crowd, if you are only interested in what is close at hand, easy and tangible, you will be blind to anything that is very subtle, and your lives will be ordinary, mediocre and very limited.

But let me get back to the high ideal, for I can sense that you have still not grasped how important it is for you to form a high ideal and to nurture and cherish it with all your strength and all your soul, for it is all-powerful; it is your high ideal that will be your salvation. I have often used the analogy of deep-sea divers, who go down to look for pearls or treasure on the sea bed. They are connected by cables and air pipes to a boat from which others keep an eye on them and stand by, ready to pull them up or send them oxygen. Well, most people are like divers who are lost on the sea bed; there is no one on the surface to help them, because they are not connected to a high ideal; they are all alone, left to their own resources and in imminent danger of drowning. Whereas, those who have a high ideal can dive and come back to the surface and dive again; they can breathe freely and are in no danger,

because their ideal is always there to back them up and give them subtle particles still unknown to humans. They are children of God and they breathe a purer atmosphere.

Or you can compare a high ideal with a transformer, which modifies the voltage of an electrical current. You have probably heard of the occasional aircraft crashing for no known reason: it is because it had flown into a region of dangerous electrical disturbances, which had gone undetected by the radio equipment on board. Similarly, the fluidic and psychic atmosphere in which we are immersed is criss-crossed by extraordinarily powerful vortices, which sometimes cause sudden strokes or heart-attacks which nobody can explain. It is simply that the victims of such attacks have fallen into an 'air pocket' and been struck down by the lethal power of these currents. In this psychic ocean in which we are immersed, our only protection is a high ideal, which acts as a transformer and reduces the voltage of the currents that threaten us. But nobody wants this high ideal. People are lazy; they don't want to make an effort and they are dazzled by appearances. And if you ask me why, I would have to tell you it is simply because they still need to suffer.

I could talk to you for hours and still not exhaust or explain all the wonders that a high ideal is capable of achieving in us. It is like a sculptor that models and fashions us, and this is the highest form of art: to sculpt or paint oneself, to write the book of oneself. I have great affection for artists; art is a door opening onto heaven, a path to the Godhead and yet, in spite of this, there are other, higher degrees of art. Artists create beauty, but it is a beauty that remains extraneous to their person, because they do not work on their own matter. And since their works are not an integral part of themselves, they will disappear one day, and when the artists come back to earth they will be obliged to begin all over again. Whereas, a true painter or sculptor, a true poet works to fashion their own substance, and they will never be separated from their pictures, statues or books; they will take them with them when they leave this world and bring them back again in their next incarnation. This is what true evolution is.³

I don't deny that artists have left many immortal masterpieces which inspire people and contribute to the evolution of all humankind, but, according to Initiatic Science and according to Cosmic Intelligence, which

has revealed to me the goal of creation, I think that this is not enough: there are higher degrees of art. Of course I admire the wonderful cathedrals, symphonies and statues that humans have created, but the true ideal is to accomplish all these splendours in oneself: to be a poem, a statue, a piece of music, a dance, inside oneself. You may think that no one would benefit from these hidden works of art, but you would be mistaken. The great instructors of humankind who created themselves, who wrote their own book, revolutionized the whole world by the simple fact of their presence on earth, for all the colour, form, poetry and music of the universe could be seen and heard through them. Beings who create themselves, who write their own book, do far more for humanity than all the libraries, museums and masterpieces of art in the world, which are dead, whereas they are alive!

The truth is that none of this is new: Jesus knew it, and all I have done is enquire what he meant when he said, '*Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*'.⁴ He gave his disciples no explanations or details about how they were to do this, so, a long time ago, I went and asked him. I told him, 'Lord, you are asking too much of us! Surely you know human nature better than that? You know how weak and limited men and women are. How could you give them such a precept? You are asking us to lift the world, but we are not nearly strong enough!' And his reply was this: 'Yes, you're quite right, but only because you are looking at the earthly, outward appearances. If you judge from what you see on the surface, that is true: people are very weak. But I look at the all-powerful, eternal element in them, their spirit, and I know that their spirit is capable of giving them the power of heaven itself. This is why I told men and women to seek this high ideal.' When I heard this I was dumbfounded, and then I understood, too, that although Jesus had not explained everything to his disciples, he was ready to explain things now to anyone who asked him.

Today, without a word of psychological, scientific or philosophical explanation, Christians are told to be as perfect as their heavenly Father! But how can anyone be perfect? One thing is clear enough, and that is that we cannot be perfect like the heavenly Father if we do not take him as our model, if we do not make him the very core and centre of our life. Humans will never reach the perfection of their heavenly Father, because they have not taken him as the yeast which, alone, is capable of making the dough rise.

They have picked any rotten, worm-eaten little ideal, and now they expect it to give them solid, lasting results. But you cannot use a straw as a stick, and it is no good building a house of ice or wax; you have to find solid, durable materials which will stand up to anything; this is the true science.

The true science is to form within ourselves, within the very core of our physical body, that perfect body known as the body of glory, the body of immortality or light, the body of Christ; this is the only body that is made of materials capable of resisting all wear and tear. And in order to form it we have to learn how to love, how to think and pray; we have to be constantly in touch with heaven. As long as we fail to fulfil the necessary conditions we will never achieve anything great.

Try to choose and form within yourself the highest, most sublime ideal: the ideal of Christ. How did Jesus become the Christ? Ask him, and he will tell you: 'I have left a mark on the earth and that mark cannot be erased, because I formed in myself the body of glory. I loved the Lord and took him as my model, and a host of spiritual forces and beings came to my assistance. All I did was to think and to love, but I was not alone; I called on all the heavenly hierarchies, and while I was busy contemplating and loving and conversing with God, they came and replaced all the particles of my body with luminous, divine particles. They came and sanctified everything within me. My ideal was to resemble my heavenly Father, and that is what happened. And now you can do as I did!' This is what Jesus told me. And if you, too, love this high ideal, it will send you a hierarchy of angels to purify and transform you, until there is not a trace of all the old materials that your heredity had allowed to accumulate within you over the centuries. In order to become like his heavenly Father, Jesus too was obliged to cherish this high ideal, but he did not have to replace each cell and particle of his body; no one can do that. There are other beings that know how to transform the structure of matter, and our share of the work is simply to call on them to help us; they do the rest. What do farmers do? They sow the seed, and that is half the work; the other half is done by the sun and rain and all the innumerable entities that inhabit water, air and earth and come and do their work with the seeds in the ground, and the farmers have no part in this stage of the work; it is not their business. Their business is to sow the seed.

When the father has sown the seed in the mother's womb, do you imagine that she is responsible for combining, adjusting and calculating every atom and molecule needed to form a beautiful, healthy baby? Of course not. There are others, thousands and thousands of others, who take care of that. In the same way, an initiate sows seeds, sets certain processes in motion and points them in the right direction, and then the whole of nature, all the powers of the cosmos, take charge and do the rest. This is what Jesus explained to me.

And now, why not ask Jesus whether you should listen to the Master who is before you at this moment, whether you should follow him? He will tell you, 'Your Master is my servant, and he has learned many things from me which he passes on to you, and if you listen to him you will advance much more rapidly in your evolution!'

May light and peace be with you!

The Bonfin, July 12, 1970

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' – Matt. 5: 48

¹ See *The Faith That Moves Mountains*, Izvor Coll. n° 238, chap. 9: 'Proof of God's existence lies within us.'

² See *Life and Work in an Initiatic School – Training for the Divine*, Complete Works, vol. 30, chap. 2: 'The Bonfin'.

³ See *Creation: Artistic and Spiritual*, Izvor Coll. n° 223.

⁴ See 'You Are Gods', Synopsis Coll., Part I, chap. 1: 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect'.

Chapter Eleven : Peace

These last few days I have been talking to you about the Beatitudes; the Beatitudes of Buddha and those taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. You will certainly have noticed that there are several differences between them and, of course, this is only to be expected, since Buddha lived some five hundred years before Christ. The times they lived in and the tasks entrusted to them were very different but, basically, they have a great deal in common.

Take, for example, these words of Buddha: ‘Blessed are those who love peace, who shun all ill-will, pride and hypocrisy, who practise compassion, humility and love’. Jesus simply says, ‘*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*’ There are all kinds of different versions of this text, but I prefer this one, which uses the word ‘peacemakers’ or ‘those who bring peace’, because that is what I want to talk about today: peace. Jesus knew the teachings of the great Masters that had gone before him and he knew, therefore, how greatly Buddha treasured peace. And he himself often said, ‘Go in peace’, or ‘Peace be with you’, and at the end of his life he said to his disciples, ‘*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you...*’ Why did Jesus say this only at the end of his life? He could have given them peace before that; they all needed it so badly!

And nowadays, wherever you go, the one thing that people are looking for is peace, but the trouble is that they understand it only as something external. You will hear people say, for instance, ‘For heaven’s sake, leave me in peace!’ which, of course, means that they want to be left alone. But peace is so much more than that! If you want to know what peace really is, you have to study it from the esoteric point of view, and this is one of the most difficult things to do. How do initiates understand peace? That is what interests me. There is no difficulty in finding a so-called ‘peaceful spot’; all you have to do is go out into the desert or up onto a mountain. But that will not guarantee that you will find inner peace. Why not? Because you still have your ‘transistor’ with you, that transistor that you carry about with you in your head wherever you go, which never stops spilling out its noise. As often as not it is tuned to an infernal transmitter, and there is music, all right, but what music! It would be more accurate to say, ‘What a racket’! And yet, there you

are, in outward peace and quiet and silence. Yes, outwardly, all is calm and quiet, but there is a storm raging within and everything is in turmoil, because of that transistor which never stops blaring out noise. Why don't you switch it off? Simply because you are ignorant: you don't know how to; when people are ignorant they can never make anything work exactly as it should.

The human organism is a miniature or microcosm of the universe, the macrocosm, and the two are inextricably bound together by a complex web of correspondences.¹ And esoteric science is based, precisely, on the law of correspondences. Each person is a minute element in the immensity of the cosmos, and each organ of their body has a special correspondence and affinity with a specific region of the universe. Of course, you must not imagine that the universe has organs like ours, but in their essence the organs of the cosmos and ours are identical; they correspond absolutely one to the other, and, through the law of affinity, we can, therefore, contact the centres and worlds throughout space which correspond to certain elements within us. A knowledge of these correspondences, therefore, opens up unheard of possibilities.

Esoteric literature mentions a great many things which have not yet been fully explained. You will keep running across these two words, 'microcosm' and 'macrocosm', but very few really know what the microcosm and macrocosm really are or how to relate them one to the other, so as to work with them and obtain results. And now, suppose, for instance, that I were to reveal to you that the microcosm is reversed in relation to the macrocosm, that what is below in the microcosm corresponds to what is above in the macrocosm! Think about it, and you will see that this completely changes your understanding of things.

Jesus said that those who made peace would be called children of God. Why? And what does it mean to be a child of God? To be a child of God means to be like God himself; it means to be in the image of God, just as the microcosm is in the image of the macrocosm. Only, in this case, the correspondence no longer belongs to the physical, material plane but to the plane of the spirit. On this plane, too, we find the same correspondences. God is the greater; the child of God is the smaller, but they are similar. So, microcosm and macrocosm concern the material dimension whereas child of

God and God concern the dimension of the spirit.

And now let's try to understand what peace is.

The human body is composed of a great many interdependent organs and although each one has its own special work to do, they all have to be in harmony with each other, otherwise the result is disorder or – to put it in musical terms – dissonance. We can only be healthy and in peace if each of our organs does its work disinterestedly and selflessly, for the good of the whole. But that kind of peace and health is purely physical. To obtain peace of the soul and spirit, we have to go much higher: all the different elements which go to make up that other whole, our psychic organism, must also vibrate in unison, selflessly, impartially and without friction, just like the organs of a healthy physical body. Peace and harmony, therefore, are higher states of consciousness, and as our state of consciousness depends to a great extent on the health of our physical body (for the least little problem on the physical plane produces an echo on the psychic plane) the physical and psychic organisms must be in harmony with each other before true peace can dwell permanently in us.

Peace as most people understand it is not true peace. Even when the problems and anxieties which trouble you vanish for a few minutes or a few hours, this is still not peace, for it does not last. Once true peace dwells in you nothing can ever dislodge it again. No, peace is not a question of feeling at ease, of being calm and carefree for a few minutes; it is something much more profound and much more precious. Peace, as I have said, is already a result. But a result of what? You will soon see.

When all the instruments in an orchestra are perfectly tuned to the same pitch, when all the musicians have already practised under their conductor and learned to know, love and obey him or her, the result is perfect harmony. And in a human being, peace is also harmony, this perfect accord that reigns amongst all the various elements, forces, thoughts and feelings. This deep, indescribable peace is very difficult to attain; it requires tremendous will-power, patience and love as well as great learning. When a disciple begins to know and grasp the nature and properties of their every element, thought, feeling and desire; when they have learned to refuse admittance to anything that might disturb their inner harmony, and when they have finally managed

to rid their organism as well as their thoughts and feelings of all discordant elements, then, and only then, will they possess true peace.

If people smoke or eat and drink without discrimination, they are feeding their organism on harmful elements which, in the long run, will ruin their health and destroy every chance of their ever knowing peace. If they have a toothache or are suffering from colic or palpitations, how can they be at peace? They must first get rid of the putrid matter festering inside them and upsetting their whole system. And the same law applies on the psychic plane: as long as people are ignorant of the true nature of their feelings, thoughts, desires, passions and instincts, as long as they continue to inhale their noxious fumes and feed on them without knowing whether they will harm them or do them good, they will never possess peace.

Peace, therefore, is the result of a precise understanding of the nature of the elements. But, as I have just said, knowledge is not enough: you have to be extremely vigilant and strong-minded if you are to refuse entry to every element liable to do you harm or unsettle you. When people have reached the stage of being reasonable, prudent and aware, when they have learned to exercise constant vigilance over their kingdom, the kingdom of their own inner self, then and only then will they obtain true and lasting peace. And what can I say about that peace? That it is bliss beyond the power of words to describe, that it is an endless symphony, a sublime state of consciousness, in which all the cells bathe in an ocean of light, swim in living waters and feed on ambrosia. Possessed of peace such as this, humans live in such harmony that all the glory of heaven is reflected in them: they begin to discover all the splendours which their inner turmoil had hidden from them by preventing them from focussing their inner, and even their outer, vision on the reality around them.

If a man is absorbed in his worries, if he has just learned that he has lost all his money or suffered some other grievous misfortune, he can walk through a garden of delights filled with flowers or ravishing young girls as though he were blind, perceiving nothing of all that beauty before his eyes, because his whole being is concentrating on something else. Peace is the only thing that allows us to see and understand the presence of the subtlest realities, and this is why, when initiates begin to taste true peace, they begin to discover the

marvels of the universe. Whereas, everybody else rushes around in such agitation, so anxious and tormented that they have no time to stop to read and decipher the book that lies wide open before them and within them; they go through life seeing nothing.

So peace gives light, a clear vision of reality and, at the same time, it enables humans to experience ecstasy. It is impossible to know ecstasy if you are troubled and overwrought. All the saints, prophets and initiates who experienced ecstasy had to begin by preparing themselves at great length, through prayer, fasting and meditations. By these means they restored within themselves a stable condition of peace and perfect harmony with the universe and with all its subtle worlds teeming with sublime beings. No one has ever been known to experience ecstasy without, first of all, restoring the necessary inner conditions, the most important of which is peace.²

But peace can only come to us when all our cells have begun to vibrate in unison with a sublime, disinterested idea. This is why the initiates are telling us no more than the truth when they say that humans cannot know peace until their whole being, even the cells of their physical body, are steeped in thoughts of love, that is, in mercy, generosity, forgiveness and abnegation. No other way is possible; these thoughts alone can bring peace. Suppose you hold a grudge against your neighbour; you cannot find it in your heart to forgive them and keep trying to devise some way of getting your revenge... or someone owes you money, and you keep brooding about it and worrying about when they are going to pay it back. You will never know peace, because these preoccupations are too personal, too selfish.³ You may have a few moments or a few hours of calm tranquillity, but that is not peace; it is no more than a respite, a lull (which even the wicked enjoy at times), and those moments soon give way to renewed torment and mental anguish.

True peace is a spiritual state, which can never be lost once it has been obtained. When you are bent on doing God's will, when the one thing you most desire is to do good to all humankind, to love, serve and forgive all people, this desire is enough to make all the particles of your being vibrate on the same wavelength and to bring you peace. And once you have obtained such peace, it will always be with you wherever you go: you felt its presence yesterday, it is with you again all day today, and tomorrow it will be waiting

for you when you wake up in the morning. You will even be astonished to find that you no longer have to make an effort to feel its presence. Before that, when you wanted to recapture a feeling of peace, you always had to concentrate for a long time and pray and sing – and even take some tranquillizers – whereas, now, none of that is necessary.

You must keep working, faithfully and persistently, at this idea of being full of love, kindness and forgiveness, until it becomes so powerful that it pervades every fibre of your being and makes all your cells vibrate in unison with it. The peace that will be yours, then, will never abandon you again; even if certain circumstances or events disturb and distress you, you will be able to look into yourself and find that peace is still there. For at this stage it is no longer simply a self-imposed calm, a forced respite which lasts only as long as you sustain your effort. Have you ever watched the behaviour of lions and tigers in a circus? As long as their tamer is there they make a show of friendliness, but as soon as the tamer's back is turned they start snapping and snarling and are ready to tear each other apart. Well, that is exactly how the cells of our bodies behave: as long as you exert yourself, as long as you repeat certain formulas or do certain exercises, they behave themselves to a certain extent, but as soon as your back is turned, as soon as your thoughts wander to other things, the hubbub begins all over again. You can see this same pattern being repeated in every human society, as well as in families and schools. Yes, especially in schools! Look at schoolchildren in a classroom: when their teacher is with them they stay at their desks and work quietly, but as soon as the teacher leaves the room they start running about and shouting and squabbling.

And this is the way, also, with your own cells: as soon as your attention wanders they get up to mischief. So you have to take care of them constantly, keeping them in order, washing and feeding them as though they were your own children or your own pupils. Yes, and once you have brought them up properly, once they are capable of working together without quarrelling or arguing, then peace will reign, that deep peace of which Jesus and Buddha spoke. For Buddha, too, had to work for years in order to obtain that peace; for years and years, he struggled and suffered before managing to dominate and harmonize all the elements of his being. Peace, you see, will not be obtained by pride or maliciousness or hypocrisy. Buddha was truly

enlightened when he said that in order to obtain peace humans had to divest themselves of all ill-will, pride and hypocrisy and cultivate compassion, humility and love, for these three virtues alone are capable of unifying and harmonizing everything. Jesus simply said, *'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God'*, but he obviously implied the same thing. Before you can possess peace, you must possess humility, compassion and love, for without these virtues you are in a perpetual state of agitation. Another difference between Jesus and Buddha is that Buddha never spoke of rewards; he simply said,

'Blessed are those who hand on what they know with gentleness and sincerity.'

'Blessed are those who gain their living without harming or wounding any living creature.'

'Blessed beyond all description are those who break the bonds of personality.'

'Blessed are those who reach ecstasy through the contemplation of the deep and authentic truth concerning the world and our existence.'

Whereas, for each Beatitude, Jesus mentioned a reward:

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.'

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.'

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.'

I realize, of course, that what I have been saying about peace is not particularly new to you; you have already heard it more than once. But you are going to have to hear it again and again until you succeed in achieving that peace within you. Only, as I have already said, before you can obtain peace on the physical plane, you must know the rules that govern nutrition, and before you can obtain peace on the astral and mental planes, you must know the nature of thoughts and feelings.

The human being and the universe, the microcosm and the macrocosm, are bound to each other by bonds of an absolute correspondence, but, because of the way they live, humans have broken these bonds: they are no longer in tune; their organism is no longer in its original state of ideal, perfect harmony with the macrocosm, with God. And it is this condition of harmonious correspondence that humans must now re-establish. As soon as their vibrations are, once again, in rhythm with those of the angels and archangels, with the vibrations of the divine world, they will be, once again, children of God. But this is something that human beings are never told. At school or at home, children are taught everything except how to vibrate in harmony with the heavenly principles, with all the divine entities that inhabit the universe and with the Master of the universe himself. There are very few beings on earth who make any effort to obtain this peace, who try to reach a state of ecstasy in order to resemble their heavenly Father, their Creator, and yet, when someone does achieve this, they are given all powers, and the angels serve them just as they served Jesus when he reached perfect harmony with his heavenly Father. Yes, when Jesus achieved this state of inner peace, the angels began to serve him.⁴ Humans can only obtain authentic spiritual powers when their vibrations are in harmony with the whole of creation. Until then, until they have left anarchy far behind them, they will continue to be rejected, opposed and defeated. These are absolute laws; I am not inventing them. In fact, all of you can discern them at work within yourselves.

When man and woman first came from their Creator's workshops, they were given everything they needed to develop and to find their way back to their heavenly homeland. When a child comes into the world, it too has everything it needs; sometimes the heart is slightly too far to the right, the stomach too small or the kidneys not quite up to the mark, but the fact is that it has a heart, a stomach, kidneys and lungs and all the rest. It is all there. Similarly, when a soul incarnates on earth, it possesses all the organs and instruments that correspond to the qualities and virtues that exist above, in heaven. And this being so, every possibility is open to it. Not all at once, of course, but progressively; and the very first step is to know the laws. But what are these laws you have to know?

Suppose you have two pianos tuned to exactly the same pitch, and you put

them in the same room at a certain distance from each other: if you strike a key on one of them it will play the corresponding note, but you will also hear the same note coming from the second piano, as though you had struck the same key on it. This is the phenomenon we call resonance and is familiar to us all, but no one ever stops to examine it more closely or to see how the same phenomenon occurs in humans. If you tune your piano, that is to say, not only your physical but also your psychic being, to the same pitch as that grand piano we call the universe, you will be able to establish a relationship of communication and exchange with the heavenly powers, a relationship which will be a source of great comfort and strength for you. Yes, it is a means of communication: you speak and the other hears you. And, in fact, you can even set up a resonance with certain forces in the universe so that they come and put themselves at your disposal. It is precisely in these forms of exchange that God has placed the greatest possibilities for human evolution, but human beings know nothing of all this and so they do not even try, consciously, to play the highest notes of their keyboard. On the contrary, they play the lower notes, thus establishing communications with the infernal regions below. They rarely play the notes that could put them in touch with heaven.

You will probably be wondering exactly what you should do in order to tune your piano, but you need not worry: it will tune itself. If you cultivate love, selflessness, mercy, forbearance and broad-mindedness, your organism will begin to tune itself, because you will be working with forces which automatically harmonize everything else. Suppose you have upset your nervous system: did you do it knowingly and scientifically? Did you know exactly where and how you were disrupting its functioning? No; but when you allowed all kinds of bizarre thoughts and feelings into your inner fortress you upset the whole system. It was as simple as that: you had no need to know exactly where each centre of your nervous system was. In the same way, you will tune your entire organism to the right pitch simply by entertaining thoughts and feelings of a higher nature, which will set all your spiritual centres vibrating harmoniously.

I can sense that because I have spoken about these things and shown you the tremendous importance of this work, many of you are going to make up their minds to dedicate more time to it, in the knowledge that this is where

your future lies, that a happy, glorious, splendid future depends on this. It is not surprising that when human beings do not know the reality of things they neglect to cultivate certain qualities, with the result that they drag their way through life in bitterness and disappointment. And, since nothing seems to go right for them, they spend their time complaining that life has no meaning and God does not exist. But the fact that they are stupid, ill and unhappy is no proof that there are no intelligent, healthy, happy people anywhere in the world! It is their reasoning that is at fault. They have never learned to reflect and study, perhaps because they have never had intelligent friends or teachers, so they go on forever repeating the same silly theories. They do not know that it is in their power to work at themselves and learn to strike the higher notes on their keyboard, so as to touch off a response from the 'grand piano' and get help, comfort and strength from it. They don't know this, so they spend their time weeping and wailing and wasting their time doing nothing, while others are working and getting results. Why don't they, at least, go and ask the others how they could change their lives? Not them! They never move a muscle to help themselves; they will never improve their lot!

Ah yes, you have to move. You have to dislodge yourself, change your position. Suppose you are very unhappy and tormented, and nothing is going right... What can you do? Well, instead of going round and round in circles, always on the same spot, why not go and ask for help from somebody who is capable of giving it to you? You will ask, 'Where are they? How can I find them?' They are there, always there, with you. And all you have to do is go to them in thought, and, thanks to the acoustical law of resonance (or, as I often call it, the law of affinity or sympathy), you will reach them. Once people know this law, they are obliged to reach beyond themselves, to surpass themselves, so as to strike the subtlest, most sensitive chords of their being and set them vibrating, knowing that they will awaken a response from forces and entities and higher regions.

Haven't I spoken to you time and time again about the acoustical law of reverberation or echo? You call out, 'I love you', and, even if you are all alone, a throng of voices replies, 'I love you'. And if you shout 'I hate you', the voices will echo, 'I hate you'! If this is a reality on the physical plane, why should it not be equally real on the mental plane? Take a ball and throw

it against a wall: if you don't get out of the way, it will bounce back and hit you, because the same law is at work here, too, the law of repercussion, rebound or echo. Yes, here too, people know this law on the physical plane, but it never occurs to them that the same law is operative on the psychic plane as well. But it is! And if you emit something evil, as you don't know how to escape into another region in order to avoid the rebound, some day or another it will bounce back and hit you. This explains everything, and, knowing this, shouldn't you make up your minds to go about things differently, to work with other methods so as to obtain quite different results? There is no other possible conclusion to be drawn.⁵

As long as you have still not grasped the magical secret of this law of affinity, you will never get any really substantial results. Every feeling or emotion you experience has its own specific characteristics and, in virtue of this law, inevitably awakens forces of a like nature in space, which rebound onto you. If your feelings are negative, the results will be negative; if they are good, you will receive something good. Thanks to this law we can draw whatever we want from the great reservoirs of the universe, on one condition: that we emanate and project thoughts and feelings of the same nature as those we wish to obtain. Our own thoughts and feelings go out and select elements and forces from space which are their exact equivalent, and, sooner or later, once these forces have been set in motion, they will reach us.

This law of affinity is, to my mind, the most important key, the greatest arcanum, the magic wand. I have founded my whole life on it. Knowing this law, I work in a particular direction with the thought of all that is best and most beautiful in mind and wait for it to materialize. Many things have already materialized, and many others are still to come. I can explain everything to you, thanks to this law: the structure of human beings and all their intelligence, kindness and viciousness, all their fortunes and misfortunes, all their wealth and their poverty – everything!

Look at the fish in the ocean: the ocean contains every chemical element and mineral that exists, but some fish form brilliantly coloured, phosphorescent bodies, whereas others are dull and dingy. Why this difference? Because each kind attracts the particles that correspond to its nature. This happens without any consciousness on the part of the fish, of

course, but each fish takes the elements which correspond to its nature from the sea. And where we are concerned it is exactly the same: we are fish swimming in the etheric ocean, and as this ocean contains every element dispensed by the Creator, we become like this or that because of the type of elements we have taken to form our bodies. This explains everything. For example, suppose someone is ugly, miserable and always ill; this does not come from this incarnation but from former incarnations in which they were never properly instructed or enlightened and, in their ignorance, attracted various pernicious elements from the environment and then did not know how to rid themselves of them. But now, knowing this law of affinity, which is the most wonderful law of magic and the foundation of the whole of creation, you must immediately begin your work of transformation, and although it is not possible for absolutely everything to be put right in this incarnation, it will be in the next.

Without the knowledge of this law, my dear brothers and sisters, I tell you, and I repeat and insist, no one will ever get very far. But if you believe in this law, which is an absolute, and if you begin, from today, to play on the higher notes of your keyboard, you will start to attract such luminous, precious particles that everything in and around you will begin to improve. To start with, things will improve on the mental and astral planes and, eventually, even on the physical plane, for people will see that you have changed, that you are much more attractive, more radiant, more intelligent and even more powerful, so they will have another opinion of you and treat you differently, and your destiny will be changed. Everything in life is connected.

As long as people are ignorant of the laws on which the whole of life is based and lay waste to everything around them, the forces of nature cannot continue to help them for long; they are obviously going to have to abandon them at some point. Nature can help for a time, but if it sees that they continue to destroy all that God has given them, it will simply leave them. And then what sorrow and woe! They will experience the pains of hell itself. I am sorry to say that there are a great many people in this situation; I myself have met many. And they never know how or why they managed to get into such a state. In fact, it was out of the question to try to explain any of it to them, their heads were too full of obscurity and illogical notions; they could see no meaning or order in anything. I would have had to start from the very

beginning and instruct them for years and years! But, above all, they would have had to show the necessary goodwill and readiness to listen, and that, unfortunately, they did not have! I could not tell them everything in five minutes: how and when they had begun to go astray and how, step by step, they had reached their present deplorable situation.

Very few people are capable of accepting this logical sequence of cause and effect. Even when they are shown arguments and proofs that are almost tangible, they refuse to admit it. The truth is that every single thing that happens in our lives or in the universe was prepared in advance. Yes; write that down, for this great truth, as well as many others, will be written in the Third Testament as an incontrovertible fact. Nothing takes place in social, economic, political, psychic, religious, artistic or scientific life without prior cause; every event is the outcome of a preparatory sequence of conditions and factors. If you imagine that things just happen, like that, without rhyme or reason, you will never be accepted in an initiatic school. The prior condition required by the great Masters of humankind is this knowledge of the succession of cause and effect: you must know that nothing happens without a cause. If you know this, they will accept you, and once they have accepted you they will work on you and help you to improve. But if you do not believe this law, it makes no difference who you are, they will never accept you. The door will be closed to you, because they consider you to be dangerous! Yes, and this is another thing I know that you don't know.

What I have given you here is the most powerful means, the greatest occult key there is, but how many of you are going to use it? Use it! If only to ascertain for yourselves that nature is faithful and true, that all that is written in the sacred scriptures comes about and that the initiates have never deceived humankind. No one has ever prepared the proper conditions necessary to ascertain the truth of the Gospels, so, of course, nobody takes them seriously. But prepare the right conditions and you will soon see that everything in them is absolute.⁶

The Gospels say, for instance: *'Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.'*⁷ If you think that people are ready to put this assurance to the test! And yet some have done so; some have sought only the kingdom of God, and they have seen that

all the rest was, indeed, given to them. In fact, for my own part, I feel that all those other things are simply not worth a moment's thought. What can they add to one who already has the kingdom of God within them? Besides, the Gospels do not say that all these things will be added to you once you have *obtained* the kingdom of God, but as soon as you *seek* it. In other words, even before you have found it, if you look for the kingdom of God, if you concentrate on it, long for it and wish for it with all your strength, without letting yourself be seduced or distracted from it, then all the rest will be given to you. And what are 'all these things' that are not the kingdom of God? They are favourable conditions: money, time, health, friends, freedom and so on, all the right conditions we need to obtain it. For once you have the kingdom of God nothing else can equal it. The kingdom of God and his righteousness (yes, his righteousness, not ours, for ours is always based on self-interest) is a state of bliss, harmony, peace, love, purity, perfection and total fulfilment. What else is there to wish for? The kingdom of God includes it all! But, until such time as we have obtained the 'all', we need the means, the conditions, and that is what is meant by 'all these things'; that is what is given to those who seek the kingdom of God.

Now, you must try to ascertain the truth of all this for yourself. The trouble is, though, that most human beings are fascinated by all that glitters before their eyes, and there are not many aspirants to the kingdom of God. Only those who are really enlightened seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, because they know that when it is theirs all heaven and earth will be theirs, too. Of course, this will not happen in two or three days, but for those who hunger and thirst for the highest things nothing is more desirable. Try! Launch yourself on this quest, and you will see that everything else pales beside it; you will realize that, until now, what you had sought was nothing but illusions, shadows, emptiness.

Human beings are forever seeking what is perishable and illusory, what can never bring them anything but pain and sorrow. But it is difficult for them to understand this and to change. You have to have suffered, to have known disappointment and distress, to have been ground down by others, before you can understand. I am not blaming or criticizing anyone; all I am saying is that it is not given to those who are young to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. You have to be old, very, very old, both inwardly

and outwardly, to aspire to such things. Those who are young are still playing with their dolls or their little toy soldiers and sand castles; their youth does not allow them to be concerned by anything more profound, but when they have matured they will abandon these games for higher things. Yes, humans need to suffer greatly and to experience bitter disappointment; they even have to reach the depths of despair before they can understand that the things they had set their heart on can bring them neither peace, nor power, nor fulfilment. But it is not possible to explain this to those who are too young; they need to experience it for themselves. For them, all this seems so far away! It has no connection with their age. They say, 'Yes, that's all right; it's all very profound and wise; I realize that, but it doesn't interest me. I want to have fun and enjoy myself!'

This is why it is not possible to instruct and enlighten everybody. Each person has to tread their own path. Perhaps you will say, 'But then, if what you say is true, why do you still talk to young people – to adults who are still young – who still need their dolls and their little tin soldiers?' Let me explain why: I know human nature, I have travelled many, many roads and have had sufficient experience to know that neither lectures nor sermons nor books nor anything else will ever persuade certain people to abandon their bad habits and harmful pleasures, but I shall continue to instruct them, because, after all, it may be useful one day.

Look at all the children who are here, listening to me. Of course, they cannot take all that I say seriously, but even so, my words will be recorded in the depths of their unconscious memory, and later on, when they begin to suffer and burn their fingers because they have transgressed certain laws, these truths they are hearing as children will rise to the surface of their consciousness. This does not mean that they will be able to extract themselves immediately from their errors; no, they will probably stumble again and again, but they will say to themselves, 'Well, I didn't behave too well this time but next time I'll do better.' So, the truths recorded in the depths of their being may not be sufficient to turn them away entirely from their baser inclinations, but, all the same, the light will always be there as a kind of attraction that continues to influence their decisions.

You have all heard about the liner that struck an iceberg and sank because

a tiny splinter of iron had been left in the compass. Well, this is the same phenomenon, but in reverse. The speck of iron caused the needle of the compass to deviate imperceptibly so that the liner went very, very slightly off course until, after several hundred miles it was a long way from where it should have been. For, after all, even if the angle of deviation is only a thousandth of a degree, when you have travelled several billions of miles, there is such a gap between the point where you should be and the point where you actually are that it could accommodate several solar systems! Now, suppose that an initiate slipped a speck of gold dust – symbolically speaking – into the mind of someone who is heading straight for hell; this speck of gold would cause the needle of their compass to deviate, and, one fine day, instead of being damned they would find that they were saved! They would exclaim, ‘That’s strange! I was heading straight for hell, and now look where I am! Look at all these people waiting to put crowns and garlands on me... What has become of me? This is not where I planned to be at all!’ And yet, that is where they have ended up, simply because someone slipped a speck of pure gold into their head. Of course, all this will only succeed after a great many ups and downs!

So this is how a Master can still do something for people, even though he knows perfectly well that he will not be able to help everyone immediately. A great many people have come to me, and there are some to whom I have never managed to teach the laws on which life is based. If they had been able to understand they would have avoided a great many misfortunes, falls and blunders, but they weren’t. And if you ask again, ‘Why did you fail with these people? You have so many arguments and methods that have been very effective in many other instances.’ Ah, I’m afraid the answer is a rather sad one: it is that some people come into the world with a terrible karma, and it is karma that prevents them from understanding. If they understood, they would be able to escape from their sufferings, and then their karma – how shall I put it? – wouldn’t succeed in making them suffer and their debt would not be paid. But as they are obliged to pay, karma dulls their understanding and does not allow them to see the truth of my words. That is the answer.

For more than fifty years, now, I have had the opportunity of studying human beings and observing how their lives unfold, and when I see how some have ended badly and others, on the contrary, have made a success of

their lives, I see how true all this is. But my conclusion is still that we must do everything possible to help human beings. Even if conditions are deplorable, even when it seems quite useless, we must always try to give them just one little element, to sow a tiny seed in their souls or their subconscious, so that, one day, they will remember that someone had tried to do something for them. You only need to make a gesture, however small, or give them a friendly word of advice or a smile, and, one day, perhaps when things are going terribly wrong for them, they will remember it. I have often experienced this: many people have come back, years and years later, simply because, one day, I gave them some tiny little thing: a kind word or a piece of advice, and that tiny gift grew in them until, one fine day, they remembered. And this means that you, too, should always try to sow something good in the minds or souls of those you meet; you must never be intransigent, inflexible or implacable, even towards those who seem to be fated to fail to find the right path in this incarnation; you never know what might happen.

But, let's get back to the question of peace. It is no good thinking that you will find peace by changing houses or friends, by getting a new job, a new country or a new religion... or a new husband or wife! If it were as easy as that I would have been the first to do it! But I don't believe that peace has anything to do with changes of that sort, and you would do better not to believe it either. They might give you a breathing space, perhaps, a brief respite, but in no time at all, wherever you go, other problems are going to crop up and begin tormenting you all over again, because you have not understood that peace can only be obtained by a change in the way you think, feel and behave. Change your thoughts and feelings and the way you behave, and even if you stay where you are and are confronted by all the same difficulties, you will know peace. True peace does not depend on external circumstances; it comes from within, and all the turmoil and agitation of the whole world cannot prevent it from surging up and flooding your innermost being. It is like a great river pouring down from above. And once you possess that peace and are capable, in turn, of pouring it out on others and communicating it as a tangible, living reality, once you start working for the good of the whole world by giving peace to others, you become a different being. You rise to a higher level in the hierarchy of beings, you become a son or daughter of God and his representative on earth, for in virtue of the law of universal correspondences you are distributing the very same blessings,

treasures and splendours as those in heaven.

But because of their selfishness, pride and wickedness, human beings never find peace. Just go and have a look! They do everything in their power, but they cannot find it because they don't know what it is. Sometimes they gain a short breathing space like prisoners who are let out for their daily exercise, or like horses or dogs allowed to run free in the stable yard and making the most of it because they know that after a few minutes they will be put back in their kennel or tied up again. But they are not really free, and human beings are not free either, because they are being exploited by inferior forces.

One day I was talking about this to a writer. I had said, in my lecture, that humans were used and enslaved by astral entities, and he objected to this with great indignation. He refused to accept the notion that spirits used and exploited human beings. I let him talk for a few minutes, and then I told him, 'You write books, but what a long way you are from understanding things correctly! You are astonished and indignant at what I have said, and rightly so, but let me show you something you have never seen. Do you know that there are people who skin animals in order to sell their fur? And do you know that there are others who kill them to make sausages and hams with their flesh? And aren't these people exploiting animals in order to feed themselves or make money? Well, if human beings can be so cruel and unjust towards their little brothers, the animals, why should there not be creatures in the invisible world who do as much to human beings – who steal their flesh to make sausages from it, or who tear off their skin in order to sell it? There are traders in the invisible world, too, you know!' Well, of course, he did not know what to say to that!

But let me pursue the question a little further: how many thinkers and writers have stolen other people's research and used it to gain renown or wealth for themselves, without realizing that they are behaving exactly like those who make ham and sausages from the flesh of animals. Where is their honesty? Where is their integrity? You see? I have plenty of arguments! People ask all kinds of questions and get indignant about many things, but it is because they have not studied what happens in nature. And now, if there are certain questions that are unclear to you and make you indignant, come

and talk to me about them. I can, perhaps, show you some tiny detail that you had never noticed and that will answer the problem. Yes, if humans are to be released from worrying about all kinds of insoluble problems, they must enter an initiatic school, for it is only in such a place that they can learn the great laws of life and how each thing fits into the whole, and in this way they can advance and solve all their problems.

When Buddha said, ‘Blessed are those who reach ecstasy through the knowledge of the deep and authentic truth concerning the world and our existence’, he was speaking of the knowledge of correspondences, that is, the knowledge of that network of exchange and affinities between human beings and the universe. Peace is the prior condition for this ecstasy: peace opens the door to ecstasy. But in order to obtain this peace you must prepare the terrain, by which I mean that you must free yourselves and pay all your debts, so that no one can come and disturb your peace by clamouring for their rights. How can you expect to find peace if you are being pursued by a pack of creditors? Perhaps you think you can run away somewhere and hide from them. With human creditors that might work, but what about those you are carrying about inside you? All those thoughts and feelings that pursue you wherever you go: how can you get away from them? This kind of reasoning, therefore, shows a total lack of true knowledge. Don’t delude yourselves: your thoughts and feelings will always catch up with you!

Before you can obtain peace, therefore, you must first free yourself by settling all your problems. And when, at last, you are free – free of suffering, free of worry, illness, debts and weaknesses, finally and fully free – then, yes, you can really and truly be at peace. This is the truth, my dear brothers and sisters; don’t let yourselves be deluded into believing anything else; get these great laws firmly into your heads. In order to be at peace, in order to be a son or daughter of God, you must readjust your bearings and restore harmony between yourself and the divine world. The only thing, of course, is that you need someone to explain all the connections, affinities, correspondences and lines of force which tie everything in together. For me this is all clear, very clear; I can see the whole framework and how the whole universe is constructed and how everything is connected. But, unfortunately, this knowledge is often lacking. I have known a great many scholars, writers, artists, philosophers, professors and doctors, and I have seen that the

knowledge I am talking about was totally lacking in them. True, they knew a great many other things, but they did not have this divine Initiatic Science. People are always very proud of what they know because it opens all kinds of possibilities to them and, especially, money and social prestige. They are all very proud of their diplomas or medals and honours, but these things cannot give them fulfilment or liberation or joy. And so I conclude that this knowledge is excellent, useful, indispensable even, since it procures certain material advantages, but that it is not sufficient, for it does not improve its owners, it leaves them just as weak, wicked, avaricious and egocentric as ever. Whereas the knowledge of initiates will give you neither money, nor a job, nor a profession – none of that – but it will bring you peace, liberation and inner plenitude.

As a matter of fact, I am in favour of both. I think that orthodox knowledge is necessary in order to have a profession like everybody else, so as to earn one's living and not be a burden on others, but that without Initiatic Science there is no sense to life. If you talk about Initiatic Science to orthodox scientists, they simply don't understand; they think that what they have is sufficient. But then why is it incapable of transforming anyone? You can read all the books ever written and know all the sciences, and you will still be the same, even though the brain is capable of containing a hundred times more than all the science known to humankind. Yes, nature has made the brain in such a way that it can absorb all that men and women know today and all the books in the world and still have room for more. The power of the brain is absolutely phenomenal!

In reality we have another brain, one that is even older and more important than the one we know, and in which are hidden the most tremendous powers and the greatest treasures. This brain which is located a little below the heart and lungs, close to the centre of our body, contains knowledge that has been recorded and condensed in it for millions of years, but it would be too long to talk about that, today.⁸

As I have said, therefore, you will never improve or transform yourself by accumulating knowledge in your head. To be sure, this knowledge can broaden your mind and your point of view, but that is only on the surface. You will always be the same underneath: remarkable as far as general

knowledge is concerned, a veritable one-person information bureau! But as far as character, virtues and qualities are concerned, nothing will be changed; you will be just as timorous, weak, sensual and wretched as ever. Whereas spiritual knowledge, the divine science, obliges you to penetrate to the depths and climb to the heights, and it is not possible to be unchanged by it. As soon as you have certain truths firmly anchored in you, you find yourself obliged to transform yourself, to become better, and then you are able to help and save others. You have become a sun!

‘Blessed are those who are capable of casting off illusion and superstition’, said Buddha. Well, orthodox knowledge is illusion, maya. Illusions, like suffering, are necessary in life as stepping stones to the Godhead. Yes, they are necessary, even if they are illusions, but one day we are going to have to discard them.

How wonderful it would be if you understood that it is necessary to have both kinds of knowledge, official and initiatic. I have always said this to those who asked me whether they should abandon their university studies and dedicate themselves entirely to our Teaching. I tell them, ‘Orthodox knowledge, diplomas and so on, are necessary for your life on earth. So, go on with your studies and get your degree; there is nothing to stop you from having the other kind of knowledge as well.’ I have never advised people to abandon their school or university studies, except in a very few, special cases, whereas I am sure that if someone else were in my position they would advise everybody to abandon everything and only study here. So you cannot accuse me of narrow-mindedness or fanaticism or bigotry. I am very, very broad-minded. But it would take much too long, now, to go into all the details of the programmes in schools, to see whether what is required of the students is based on an authentic understanding of human nature, or whether the opposite is true: that the consequences, which are often disastrous for the mental and physical health of the students, show that they are in direct contradiction with Initiatic Science. For Initiatic Science aims to produce divinities, not invalids!

So, this is what I wanted to say to you, today, about this question of affinities. For me, this is the most highly significant, the most magical word. And it is up to each one of you, now, to draw from the cosmic ocean all the

best, all the subtlest and most radiant elements with which to build your body of glory, the body of immortality and light that is in every one of us. This body of glory is mentioned in the Gospels, but they do not give us much information about it. I remember, one day, I had been talking about it at Videlinata in Switzerland, and one of the best-known pastors of Geneva, a very broad-minded, tolerant man, who had been at my lecture, came up and talked to me afterwards. He had been entranced, delighted by what he had heard, but he said, 'No one has ever explained what this body of glory is, but that is what interests me. Can you tell me something about it?' You can imagine that I did, indeed, tell him something about it! And I was very happy to talk to someone like that, for his whole being was vibrant, radiant with spiritual life.

The body of glory: each one of us carries it within, but we still have to give it all the materials it needs to form itself fully. How do we do this? Well, how does a woman form the child in her womb? By eating, drinking, breathing and thinking; simply by living, she gives it the materials it needs, and gradually the child grows and develops. She forms her child, but she does not create it. And this is true, also, for each one of us: we cannot create the Christ within us. In order to conceive him, our soul must first be fertilized by the cosmic Spirit, and then, like a mother with her human child, we form it by emanating the best of ourselves, by living in the best possible way.⁹ When, from time to time, we experience a very elevated state of consciousness, when we feel the desire to embrace the whole world, to work for the Lord, to strip ourselves of self and do something really noble and great, then the particles that emanate from us go to feed our body of glory. This is how we contribute to its growth. It can use only what is best in us, and if we nourish it for a long time with our flesh and blood, with our own fluid, one day it will begin to shine and radiate light. It will become very strong and powerful, invulnerable and immortal, because it will be formed of materials that never rust or corrode or tarnish, and it will accomplish marvels, not only within us but also all around us. It is through this vehicle of the body of glory, the body of light, that Christ can work miracles.¹⁰

Every human being bears within themselves a seed of Christ which they can cause to grow and develop. And this brings us back full-circle to the law of affinity. You can only form this glorious body within you with the highest

thoughts and feelings and if you are constantly anchored to the divine world of light. Even when you find yourself assailed by dreadful thoughts or feelings you must try to rise above them. Yes, you must get a grip on yourself and say, 'It won't get the better of me; I'll rise above it; I refuse to drown!' You will be like the baby frog that fell into a jar of milk: it could not get out again and it seemed certain to drown. But it struggled so hard, its legs flailing to left and right so desperately, that the milk began to turn to butter, and it was able to climb onto the butter and with one jump it was out of the jar! Human beings can always remain afloat, always extract themselves from every difficulty as long as they remember to get a grip on themselves and make an effort like that little frog, otherwise they will drown!

When a man or woman has succeeded in transcending themselves, they can draw all the most luminous particles from the etheric ocean and incorporate them into their glorious body and, in this way, become a son or daughter of God.

And we can obtain these particles already, today – in tiny quantities to begin with, but gradually, day by day, we can obtain more and more. That is what we do every day at sunrise. Leaving the earth behind us we make contact with heaven and with the sun, and the sun gives us some of its bright, shining particles to add to our body of glory. But whether we are in our own room, up on the rock of prayer, in a church or on top of a mountain, the process is the same: we can always seek, find and draw into ourselves some perfect particles.

This, again, is a page from the book of true knowledge which is unknown to the majority of human beings. People strut about, bluffing and showing off their knowledge, but the truth is they don't have the dimmest notion of what true knowledge is. I am afraid that the 'Blessed are those who know...' does not apply to them! Oh yes, they have studied everything, everything, that is, except themselves and the living, intelligent nature that surrounds them.

I have no wish to minimize the value of all those who have contributed to the advancement of science. I am full of admiration, for example, for the work of people like Jean Henri Fabre, who studied insects. There are so many things we can learn from them! There are scientists who devote their entire lives to studying mosquitoes or rabbits or toads, and others who study

nothing but microbes. Imagine forgetting all about the Lord for the sake of just one species of microbe! But everybody thinks that this is a glorious, magnificent, extraordinary thing to do. Of course, it is normal to want to rid humanity of those creatures that create such havoc, but nobody does anything to rid humanity of other kinds of microbes, which ravage and destroy a person's soul and spirit.

Human beings must learn to concentrate on what is essential, that is, on what is capable of transforming their lives. Will it transform your existence to know all about toads? Even how they pee? And yet it is the scientists who study these things who receive honour and renown. And who honours them? Those who are ignorant. For what is so glorious about spending all one's time on one tiny creature, while the whole world is crumbling away and slipping into darkness? Perhaps people think that if they study mosquitoes they will be able to save people from malaria. Well, that is a very good idea and highly commendable, but I believe that malaria will always exist, because it is not caused only by mosquitoes; it also comes from the deplorable state of human consciousness. If human beings would only put their own inner house in order, mosquitoes would be unable to give them malaria. That is my philosophy.

Why are mosquitoes so powerful? And why do hundreds of thousands of human beings die every year from diseases caused by insects and microbes of all kinds? It is because they are ready for them; they are wide open to these diseases; their blood is not pure. If their blood were pure, no insect, no microbe would ever be able to harm them. Let me give you an example to illustrate this. Suppose you have some gunpowder: if it is dry and you put a match to it, it will explode. But if it is the slightest bit damp it is useless; you cannot make it explode. This illustrates the fact that certain things will only happen if the right conditions are present. Why is a person's blood liable to become infected? Because it contains impure elements. If these were rejected, if the blood were purified, microbes would have no effect, and the person would be protected and invulnerable. This is why, instead of studying mosquitoes, we should be teaching people to purify themselves... and leaving the mosquitoes alone! But, above all, as I have already told you on other occasions, we should be getting rid of the swamps which are the breeding grounds of mosquitoes: as long as there are swamps there will be

mosquitoes.^{[11](#)}

A swamp is a symbol of the deplorable conditions that reign within us. As long as we fail to change these conditions evil will continue to exist and, with it, war, poverty and disease. The important thing to understand is that we must first get rid of the causes of human beings' weakness and vulnerability, and more often than not these causes are not where we think they are. We don't look for them in the right places. If, one day, we manage to drain the swamps, the mosquitoes will all disappear, because they will no longer have the conditions they need. When I visited Israel I was shown rich, fertile stretches of land that had once been swamps. Before they were drained they had been breeding grounds for all kinds of unhealthy, unpleasant things, and now they were gardens full of flowers and fruit! Ah, if only people knew how to do the same thing inwardly! Outwardly, to be sure, it is not difficult: everybody knows that if you want to get rid of your mosquitoes you have to drain and fill in the swamps. But I am speaking of a domain which men and women know nothing about. They don't take enough care of their inner life to improve it by getting rid of certain weaknesses, so these weaknesses continue to play on the lower notes of the 'piano' we were talking about earlier and set up vibrations, attracting harmful elements which cannot be shaken off. This is why you must rid yourselves of all your weaknesses and pernicious tendencies, and then there will be nothing more within you to attract evil entities, for it is these bad elements that attract insects, wasps and ants. How often have I found this to be true!

Look at what happens in my own cottage: it is well built, there are no holes in the walls or the floors, and yet, if I leave a few crumbs on the table or the sideboard, in no time at all the ants arrive. Where do they come from? How did they find their way? They followed the information that their antennae gave them. They must be very skilful scientists, for they discovered antennae and radar long before humans; otherwise, how could they see through walls to know that there was food there? If I removed the food, they would disappear again, but I leave it there and tell them that they have an hour in which to eat it and disappear. But first of all I summon their leader – for they always have a leader. I don't give my orders to the others, but to their leader, and he communicates them to the others. How does he do this, do you think? By means of electrical currents? The question has not yet been properly

studied. In any event, I tell the leader, 'If you are not out of here in one hour, look out! I'll drown you or I'll spray you with insecticide. I shall show no mercy! I give you just one hour!' Then I go about my business, and when I come back there is not an ant to be seen! They have all gone. But if I don't order them out they stay for days. Well, all that made me think and discover many things.

We can – in fact, we must – learn great truths from the smallest phenomena of life. But, of course, we have to pause and think about them, and people never pause. Newton was the only one who ever wondered about the apple that fell off the tree. For thousands of years people had seen apples falling off trees and paid no attention. What was so extraordinary about that? It was only normal. But there is still so much to discover; if you were to pause and consider many other simple, natural things you might well outstrip Newton!

But let's leave apples alone, for the moment, and get back to the question of peace: how to obtain it, how to get rid of our bizarre, egotistical desires that prevent it from entering into us, how to be in tune with all creatures and with the whole universe. And you could also reflect on the body of glory and, above all, on that important law we spoke about: the law of affinity, because it is this law that makes it possible for you to transform yourselves and build the future that you long for.

You might also pause to meditate on the words 'microcosm' and 'child of God'. As I have said, God is the macrocosm and 'child of God' is the microcosm, but in the domain of the spirit. A child of God is a microcosm, which is in absolute correspondence with its Father. We are all sons and daughters of God, but still only in potential; we have not yet reached maturity, because we still do not vibrate in perfect harmony with him. As we are today, weak, ignorant and malicious, we cannot yet be true sons and daughters of God. A true child of God can be neither ignorant nor weak nor evil. For me, this is quite clear! And if I succeed in making it clear for you, too, then I think I shall have accomplished my task. Clarity; yes, clarity and order! Where things are no longer disjointed and scattered, the bricks in one direction and the mortar in another, but each element in its rightful place as in an edifice.

For years and years I worked with only one idea in mind: to contemplate and comprehend the structure of that marvellous edifice, the universe. Yes, for years, it was the only thing that interested me, and I spent days and nights out of my body, learning and striving to acquire a clear vision of that structure. I knew that everything else was unimportant compared to this, that what mattered was to comprehend this structure. There is nothing wrong in studying the multiplicity of facts and phenomena of the physical plane, but the only way to have a clear vision of how the whole universe is put together is to rise to the world of laws and principles. It took me years to achieve, but now that I have it I am in a position to instruct, enlighten and advise you, because I have this model to refer to constantly. As long as you look for answers only in the world below, the world of phenomena, as long as you take your models only from the world of appearances, you can never know the deep reality of things, and sooner or later you find yourself in a dead end.

What a lot there is to be revealed! There are still only a few who recognize the value of this philosophy I am bringing you. But there are other forces in the world more powerful than humans, and it is these that will, one day, oblige them to appreciate the true worth of this Teaching. This is why I don't worry about it. I live with the conviction that, sooner or later, all things will be in their rightful places. For the moment, everything is upside down, anything of real value is despised and rejected, while things of no value are given priority. Just look at what people prize most: gold, jewellery, houses and cars! And ideas? No, ideas are totally unimportant! Well, this is just the reverse of what I saw in the cosmic edifice: up there, in the divine world, it is an idea, a truth that holds the highest place.

Yes, this is what is most highly valued in the world above: an idea. Everything else is secondary. But human beings have turned everything upside down and given first place to those things that Cosmic Intelligence puts last, and vice versa. But things will not go on for ever like that, for here, too, there is a law, the law of correspondences, which decrees that inner beauty should be clothed in outer beauty and that outer beauty should express inner beauty. This is how Cosmic Intelligence has ordered things. But in the world of humans, as you know, it is often the opposite: the most vicious and diabolical people live in the midst of rich, sumptuous surroundings, whereas

those whose inner qualities are far superior have none of the external trappings that correspond to their qualities. Being completely above human acquisitiveness, they do nothing to obtain the wealth that is lacking to them and possess only the barest necessities on the physical plane. Outwardly, nothing in their way of life corresponds to all the splendour within: everything is upside down.

In the distant past, when things were given their rightful place, those who were inwardly poor were also outwardly poor, and those who had inner wealth also enjoyed external wealth. Like the Lord himself! God possesses all qualities and all virtues, and he also possesses all the wealth of the universe. It is only here, amongst human beings, that this order no longer exists. But as the law is absolute (all that is below must, one day, be like what is above), another order will eventually prevail, and each being will be given their rightful place. Those who are rich in intelligence, kindness and nobleness will also possess all outward riches, and those who are lacking in these qualities will be destitute. Naturally, it will not be up to human beings to put things right, for they do not know who is deserving and who is not; it will be the work of Cosmic Intelligence, for indeed the law of correspondences is an absolute law of the universe. At the moment it prevails everywhere except on earth, but one day it will be re-instated even on earth.

You may ask, 'But why is this law, which can be seen in the worlds of plants, animals and minerals, not respected by human beings?' The answer is that human beings have worked so long and so hard to camouflage themselves in order to deceive. With humans everything is disguised; everything is pretence! God gave men and women the power to dissimulate. But, in spite of this, they will not be allowed to go on much longer; even amongst humans, the intelligence of nature will restore the correspondence that exists everywhere else. Look at how it is in the animal kingdom, for instance: a savage or poisonous animal can be recognized from its outward appearance, so you can take the necessary precautions against it or get out of its way. Vultures, snakes, scorpions or devil-fish all have something frightening or repulsive about them; their outside appearance is in exact correspondence with their inner nature. And the same is true of minerals: precious metals and precious stones possess virtues which ordinary metals or stones don't have. This is a very rich, vast field of study, and I must say that I

am very tempted to explore it, one day. But it is the principles which interest me above all else: the rules, exercises and methods which can be used by men and women to make progress and transform themselves. The rest are just scraps of esoteric science; they are not essential. What is essential is the principles.

If you have understood me, you are in a position, henceforth, to achieve substantial results by using your thoughts and feelings to produce vibrations and emanations of a higher and much more harmonious nature, and to send them far, far away into space to seek out, from amongst the billions of elements that exist, those that correspond to them. The law of affinity: yes, you can do everything with this law, but you have to know this, and you have to persevere. Today I have given you a key, and with that key it is possible for you to rebuild and transform yourself and become an archangel, a divinity. Yes, indeed, this is possible, but of course it takes time.

Suppose you have ordered a palace to be built for you; perhaps it is already under construction, but it has not yet materialized on the physical plane, and in the meantime you are still living in your tumbledown shack. But your palace will come, one day. Since you have ordered it and paid for it, it will certainly come. In other talks I have explained how the will works on our faculty of imagination,^{[12](#)} but you must realize that it takes a long time for the subtle, etheric dimension of thought to be condensed and materialized. So you must not let the fact that your wishes have not yet become visible, tangible realities in the physical world mislead you into forgetting that they are already taking shape in another dimension. Oh yes, a great many things are already on their way, my dear brothers and sisters; it is just that you cannot see them yet.

Time and again I have heard you say, ‘I’ve been praying and meditating for years and years without results: I have nothing to show for it!’ And I say, ‘How mistaken you are!’ If you really think that, it means you have still not understood the first elements of this extraordinary Teaching. Yes, for if there is one thing you must know, it is that it takes a great deal of time for spiritual work to produce material results. I sense that you sometimes think this about me, too. You think, ‘You say that you are working, but what do you have to show for it? There are no visible results.’ Yes, that is perhaps true for the

moment, but the thing is that I am not interested in undertaking something easy that can be achieved rapidly. I have embarked on what is most difficult and takes a very, very long time to achieve. And this is why you cannot see much in the way of results. But I can; I can see the progress you are making, the transformations that are taking place. If I had wanted easy results, they would have been visible and fully achieved much sooner, like certain plants which produce fruit in only a few months. Yes, but my plants are of a kind that requires much more time to grow and produce fruit. But what fruit, when it does come!

If you think that I am deceiving you, well, you are perfectly free to go on thinking that. But I know what I know. The only things that interest and attract me are those that are very difficult, almost impossible to achieve. Why ask for things that are easy to obtain and don't last? Isn't it worth working exclusively for something so glorious that it is beyond all imagining? Take the case of someone who is prepared to spend five or six years becoming a doctor, engineer or chemist: what are five or six years? Why not concentrate on some quality that you can only really develop by working at it for centuries? Divine intelligence, heavenly kindness or self-mastery for instance. Do you think you could earn a degree in self-mastery in five or six years? These are the things you should be striving for, the things that are not easy. You can get a diploma as a manicurist or 'pedicurist' in only a few months. That is easy – too easy! I invite human beings to enter other fields now, to undertake other activities, and we will see whether, in five or six or even ten years, they will have earned their diploma. No, it takes centuries to obtain this kind of diploma! Ah, but it is well worth it!

As for myself, isn't it true that I have undertaken the most difficult task of all? It is almost impossible, unattainable, to transform human beings, but that is what tempts me, that is what I want to do: to transform you, all of you without exception, and make you happy, healthy, free and rich, to give you absolute fulfilment. Is it possible? Yes, it is, thanks to your good will.

Now, suppose certain 'philosophers' think I am making a big mistake picking a task that was proven to be pointless a long time ago, and that I am to be pitied for continuing to believe that human beings can be perfected, that a divine spark dwells in each one of them and that the kingdom of God will

be established on earth, whereas everything that is happening in the world goes to prove the opposite. To this I can only reply that human nature is liable to make mistakes, that many people do, in fact, make mistakes in life, but that each person has the right to make their own mistakes in their own way. And since others have chosen to make their mistakes in politics or in the field of art, science or religion, why should I not have the right to be mistaken in cultivating my dream of transforming human beings? So, I am in error and illusion (granted!); I am wasting my time (that's obvious!); I am chasing the wind (there is no doubt about it!), and yet... and yet it is with these 'errors and illusions' that I am happy, that I find myself fulfilled and steeped in light. What a worry for all of you who are in danger of falling into the same illusions and errors, yes, in danger of finding the same indescribable happiness I have found! This is why I advise you to take every possible precaution and all the safety measures you can think of while there is still time, for soon it will be too late. You see, I am being honest with you: you will have been warned!

May peace and happiness be with you!

The Bonfin, August 10, 1968

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

'Blessed are the peacemakers' – *Matt. 5: 9, p. 237*

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you...' – *John 14: 27*

'Blessed are the meek' – *Matt. 5: 5*

'Blessed are those who mourn' – *Matt. 5: 4*

'Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness' *Matt. 6: 33*

¹ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 11: 'The body of Adam Kadmon'.

² See *The Path of Silence*, Izvor Coll. n° 229.

³ See '*Cherchez le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice*', Synopsis Coll., Part V, chap. 2: 'Aimez vos ennemis'.

⁴ See *Le grain de sénevé*, Complete Works, vol. 4, chap. 6: 'Les trois grandes tentations'.

⁵ See *The Book of Divine Magic*, Izvor Coll. n° 226, chap. 11: 'The three great laws of magic'.

⁶ See *The Philosopher's Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor Coll. n° 241, chap. 1: 'On the interpretation of the Scriptures'.

⁷ See '*Cherchez le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice*', Synopsis Coll., Part IV, chap. 1: 'Le Royaume de Dieu et sa Justice'.

⁸ See *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 9: 'The solar plexus and the brain' and chap. 10: 'The hara centre'.

⁹ See *The Seeds of Happiness*, Izvor Coll. n° 231, chap. 20: 'Fusion on the higher planes'.

¹⁰ See '*You Are Gods*', Synopsis Coll., Part IX, chap. 4: 'The body of glory'.

¹¹ See *The Living Book of Nature*, Izvor Coll. n° 216, chap. 3: 'Spring water or stagnant water'.

¹² See *La pédagogie initiatique*, Complete Works, vol 28, chap. 3: 'L'imagination formatrice'.