

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

Christmas and Easter in the Initiatic Tradition



Izvor Collection

P R O S V E T A

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Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov



Chapter One

The festival of the nativity

The four cardinal festival days of the year – Christmas, Easter, St John’s and Michaelmas – do not owe their existence to chance nor to the arbitrary decision of some religious leader of the past; they correspond to specific cosmic phenomena.¹ During the course of a year the sun passes through four cardinal points (the spring and autumn equinoxes and the summer and winter solstices), and each of these four periods is marked by a tremendous input and circulation of energies, affecting the earth and its inhabitants – plants, animals and human beings. Initiates, who have studied these phenomena, tell us that if humans are attentive and receptive to these currents and prepare for their coming by tuning in to them, they can be transformed by them.

Christian tradition holds that Jesus was born at midnight on the 25th of December, when the sun had just entered the constellation of Capricorn. Symbolically, Capricorn is related to mountains and grottoes, and it is in the depths of a grotto that the child Jesus was to be born. During most of the year, people and nature are both very active, but, as winter approaches, many kinds of work are brought to a halt, the days grow shorter and the nights longer. The time is then ripe for meditation and recollection; it is time for men and women to enter into the depths of their own being and make things ready for the birth of the Child.

When the sun leaves Capricorn it enters Aquarius, and Aquarius is the water-bearer, the symbol of the waters of baptism, the outpouring of life, and the currents Aquarius brings are currents of renewal. Next, the sun enters Pisces, the sign in which the great draught of fishes occurs, which Jesus spoke of when he told his disciples he would make them ‘fish for people’.

But let’s get back to the birth of Jesus. Every year, at midnight on December 25th, the constellation of Virgo rises over the horizon (this is why Jesus is said to have been born of a virgin). On the opposite horizon can be seen Pisces, and in midheaven the magnificent constellation of Orion is visible, with the three brilliant stars of the ‘sword belt’ which, in popular tradition, represent the three kings or magi.

Whether or not Jesus really was born on December 25th at midnight is not particularly important. What is important, however, is that this is the moment at which the Christ-principle, the light and warmth that is destined to

transform all creatures, is born in nature, and that at this moment heaven itself is celebrating the festival of the nativity. All the choirs of angels sing their joy, and all the saints, great Masters and initiates rejoice together, praying and giving glory to the Almighty, as the Christ is born in the universe.

And what about human beings? What are the masses doing to celebrate the birth of Jesus? They are crowding into bars, night-clubs and dancehalls, eating, drinking and carousing – what a mentality! And the most astonishing thing is that even highly intelligent people seem to think that this is a perfectly normal way to celebrate the nativity. Instead of being awake to the importance of this event (which only takes place once a year), when the whole of nature is intent on preparing to receive the new life, people's minds are elsewhere. And this is why they not only receive nothing but even forfeit the grace and love of heaven. For what can heaven possibly give to creatures who remain insensible to its divine currents? Disciples, on the other hand, have been busy preparing for this event. They know that the Christ is born into the world on Christmas Eve in the form of light, warmth and life, and they take care to make everything ready within, so that the Christ may also be born in them.

Jesus was born two thousand years ago in Palestine, but that is the historical aspect of Christmas, and, as you know, the historical aspect is of secondary importance to an initiate. It is the cosmic event of Christ's birth which is of far greater importance, for it is the first manifestation of life in nature, the beginning of all outpourings. But the nativity is also a mystical event, for the Christ, the principle of divine light and love, must be born in each individual human soul. This is the true birth of Jesus, and so long as we do not possess that light and love in our soul, the divine Child cannot be born within us. We can celebrate and wait for its coming as much as we like, but nothing will happen!

Jesus was born two thousand years ago, and in memory of that event people go to church and sing that he came to save them from sin. And then, since they are already saved, they feel free to go on sinning, eating and drinking to their heart's content for the rest of eternity. That is how most human beings understand the birth of Jesus. Only very few ever think about working, studying and making a personal effort so that he may be born in every human soul and spirit. If the coming of Jesus into the world two thousand years ago was all that was needed for the kingdom of God to be

established, how is it that that kingdom is not yet with us? Surely, all wars, suffering and sickness should already have disappeared!

I am not denying that the nativity of Jesus was an historical event of first importance, but the essence of this event lies in the cosmic and mystical aspects of the festival, for not only is the Christ born each year in the universe, but it can be born at any moment in each one of us. You can reread the Gospel account of the nativity and sing ‘Unto us a child is born’ as often as you like, but if the Christ does not come to birth within you, yourself, all those other things are meaningless. What is needed, then, is for every human being to have the desire to bring the Christ to birth in their soul, to become like the Christ so that the earth may be peopled with Christs. Was it not this that Jesus was asking for when he said, ‘*Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these...*’. And where, I ask you, are works greater than those of Jesus?

For some, the Christ is already born; for others, it will soon be born, and for yet others, alas, it will be born only several centuries from now. What counts is our preparedness. It is extremely important to prepare ourselves for the festival of the nativity a long time in advance so that we are able to understand all that it means. For example, Jesus was born in a manger between an ox and an ass; what does that mean? And what do the shepherds and the three wise men mean? You will perhaps say, ‘Oh, everybody knows that!’ Well, we’ll see if everybody knows, and what they think they know!

Of the four Evangelists it is St Luke who gives the most detailed account of the nativity. The others mention it only briefly or not at all, beginning their Gospels with the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan by John the Baptist. So I shall now read you the account of the birth of Jesus in *The Gospel of St Luke*.

‘In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

‘In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Christ, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

*“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”*

‘When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

‘After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

‘When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”’

‘Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God saying,

*“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;*

*for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.’”*

You have certainly read or heard this account several times before. Many of the details it mentions are symbolical, and there are two passages in it that are very mysterious. Why, for instance, does it say that *‘Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart’*? It means that there was something that she could not talk about. If it had been what the shepherds had said, she would not have had to keep it a secret, for they told everybody. So it must have been something else, something that she treasured in her soul, something sacred. And the other mysterious passage concerns Simeon: who was Simeon? The Gospel says that the Holy Spirit was upon him, so he must have been very pure. But I cannot go into the question of Simeon for that would be dreadfully upsetting to Christian consciences. But who was he? And what was the connection between Simeon and Jesus?

And now you will begin to see whether you have ever really understood this chapter of the Gospels. First of all, who were Mary and Joseph? We may be sure that if they had been chosen to be the parents of Jesus, it was because they were already prepared for this role. To be worthy to receive Jesus, the Saviour of humankind, into their family, they must certainly have done a tremendous amount of spiritual work in their past lives. They were exceptional beings who had been set apart for this task. When Mary was still very young she had dedicated herself in the temple as a servant of the Lord. She had purified herself, therefore, and accepted every sacrifice in order to be worthy to receive in her womb a spirit as exalted and powerful as the Christ. People do not often think about this aspect of things. They believe that because God is all-powerful he does whatever he pleases, even the most improbable things such as picking any little upstart for the most exalted missions. No, in this respect there are rules and laws, and even God abides by them. It is a question of justice: God is the author of these laws, and he is not going to break them.

When God chooses one of his creatures for a mission, it is because that individual fills certain conditions. True, *‘God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham’*, but stones must, first of all, pass through the different stages of plant and animal life before they become human beings. In the same way, a child has to evolve from the sperm, through a variety of

different states and phases, until it becomes a human being. Jesus himself had to pass through different phases before becoming the Christ, and this, too, is something that Christians refuse to admit. They think that Jesus was God himself, that he was born perfect. But if that were the case why did he have to wait until he was thirty before receiving the Holy Spirit and working miracles? Even when God himself becomes incarnate on earth, he is willing to submit to the laws which he himself laid down.² Yes, because he respects himself, you see. This is how the initiates see things: in their minds everything is orderly, logical and reasonable.

To be worthy to receive Jesus, therefore, Mary and Joseph had undertaken a long period of preparation in their previous incarnations, so that they were already pure. So the question now arises as to whether it was the Holy Spirit that conceived Jesus in Mary's womb. Yes, indeed it was. On the divine level it was the Holy Spirit; but there still had to be something – or someone – on the physical level, so that the Holy Spirit might also be reflected on that level. There had to be a conductor of the Holy Spirit on the physical level so that the correspondences between the three worlds might be perfect, so that on the physical, spiritual and divine planes all might be holy, luminous and pure.

Possibly you will object that everything is possible to the Holy Spirit. That is quite true. I know. It could, for example, have taken a handful of matter from space and formed a body for itself that was not obliged to spend nine months in the womb of a woman. But a body formed out of etheric matter cannot last long, barely a few hours or a day at most, and then the particles have to be returned to the etheric plane. This is what happens in spiritualist seances. For a body to last it must be formed of material particles provided by the mother. This is why the Holy Spirit needed a woman of great purity in whose womb it could form his body. I shall not tell you more than that – it is up to you to discover the rest.

Once more then: was Jesus 'conceived of the Holy Spirit'? Yes, he was; to the extent to which his conception was unsullied by any suggestion of lust, passion or sensuality, it can be said that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And Mary's virginity must be understood in the same way. Virginity is primarily a spiritual rather than a physical quality. How many women there are who are physical virgins, but inwardly they are worse than harlots! There, I won't say any more. I have already said a great deal.

The birth of Jesus has to be understood in the three worlds: it is at the

same time an historical phenomenon, a psychic and mystical phenomenon and a cosmic phenomenon, and today it is the mystical aspect that concerns me.

Of the four Evangelists it was St Luke who was the most learned, and he begins his Gospel with these words: *‘Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the first, to write an orderly account for you...’* St Luke, therefore, unlike the other evangelists, had not witnessed the events narrated in his Gospel, but he had conducted his own research, and in his account of the birth of Jesus, he has retained only those images that find their echo in the soul of every human being. It is these images that we shall now examine together.

For the child Jesus to be born in us there has to be a father and a mother. Joseph, the father, is the intellect, the human mind, and Mary, the mother, is the heart, the human soul. When the heart and soul are pure, the child can be born, but it is not born of the mind and the spirit; it is born of the universal Soul, which is none other than the Holy Spirit in the form of fire, divine love – a pure flame that impregnates the heart and soul of a human being. The heart and soul represent the receptive, feminine principle, whereas the mind and spirit represent the masculine principle, which provides the right conditions for the Holy Spirit, the universal Soul, which is fire, to take possession of the soul, that is of Mary. When this is accomplished the infant-Christ is born. But, as birth is a phenomenon that takes place in the three worlds, the child must be born also on the physical plane. As you see, it is far more complex than you thought.

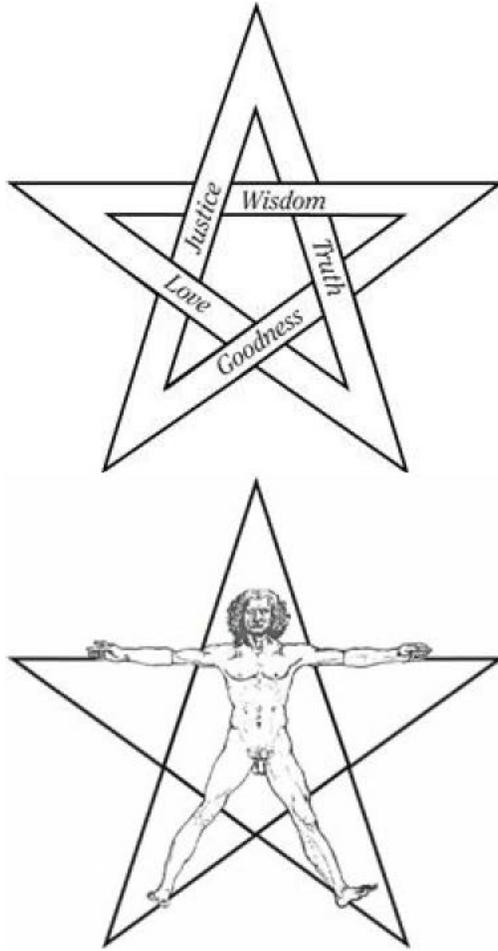
When Mary and Joseph sought refuge in the inn, they found that there was no room for them; in other words, when human beings are busy eating and drinking and amusing themselves, they have no room for the initiate who has received the Child. This divine Child, already conceived in him in the form of light, may be an idea, an ideal he has long cherished and nourished, but where can he find shelter for this divine Child? No one is ready to open their doors to him; in other words no one understands him. But then he finds a stable, and stable and manger are also symbols; symbols, first and foremost of poverty and difficult material circumstances. Yes, for someone in whom the Spirit dwells, this will always be the way: people will not appreciate them

and will refuse to let them in to their homes. But thanks to the Light that radiates from them and shines above the manger, others will see them and come to them from afar.

That light, represented in the Gospel story by the five-pointed star, is an absolute reality. It shines over the heads of all initiates in whom the feminine principle – their soul and heart – has conceived through the Holy Spirit and given birth to the Child Jesus. And when this happens, Joseph – the intellect – instead of being jealous and repudiating Mary, must humbly accept the situation. Instead of behaving like a brute and shouting, ‘That child you’re bearing is not mine; get out!’, he must say, ‘It is the Lord who has touched Mary’s heart and soul. I was incapable of doing so.’ The intellect, therefore, must not fly into a rage; it must understand what is happening and say, ‘There is something that is totally beyond me’ and keep Mary. To repudiate Mary is to repudiate half of our own being and become like those dried-up rationalists, who are all intellect, who have banished all emotion and receptivity from their lives, who have rejected the qualities of gentleness, humility and kindness. A great many people have repudiated Mary, because she delighted in receiving the Holy Spirit!

You must understand that Mary and Joseph are symbols of our own inner life: those who have repudiated Mary have shrivelled and dried up, they are all intellect, and the intellect does nothing but criticize and destroy; it is never content. But Joseph, you see, respected Mary; he kept her by his side, saying to himself, ‘She is expecting a baby, and I’m going to protect her, for she needs my help.’

And what about the star? The star is always present in the life of a true mystic, a true initiate, in the form of a pentagram of light shining over him or her. What is above is like what is below, and what is below is like what is above, so this pentagram must be twofold. In the first place, the human being is a living pentagram, and, secondly, when someone has developed the five virtues of kindness, justice, love, wisdom and truth to their fullest perfection, another pentagram on a subtler plane represents the person in the form of light.³

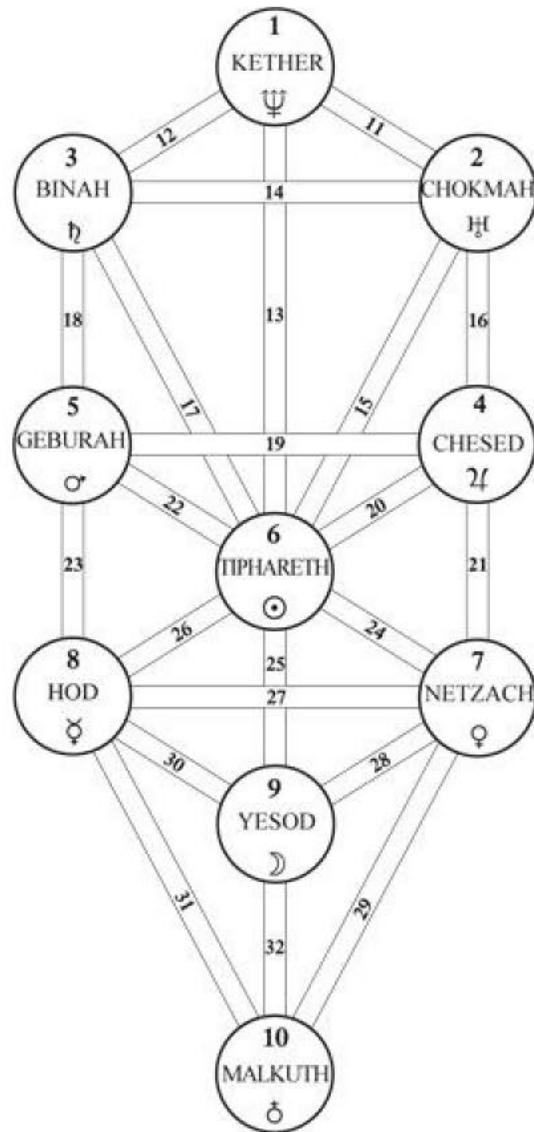


This light, this star that shone over the stable at Bethlehem, means that every initiate in whom the living Christ is present, radiates light; a light that soothes, nourishes and comforts, a light that heals, purifies and gives life. And one day this light is seen from afar by others, and they realize that something very special is manifesting through this being, and this 'something' is the Christ. Then those in authority, the rich and powerful, come to pay homage, and even the most exalted religious leaders, those who imagined that they had already reached the summit, sense that there is still something lacking in them, that they have not yet reached such heights of spirituality, and they too come to learn and to bow down and offer their gifts.

And this explains why the three wise men, Melchior, Balthazar and Gaspard, were also present at the birthplace of the infant Jesus. The three magi were the high priests of the religions in their respective countries, and yet they came to Bethlehem. Why? Because they sensed the presence of that light. Also, being astrologers and having seen some very exceptional

planetary aspects, they had concluded that an extraordinary event was about to occur on earth. The birth of Jesus also corresponds, therefore, to a phenomenon that occurred in the heavens two thousand years ago.

The three kings brought gold, frankincense and myrrh, and each of these gifts was symbolic. The gold symbolized the kingship of Jesus: gold is the colour of wisdom, and the brightness of wisdom shines over the heads of initiates like a crown of light. The frankincense was in acknowledgment of his priesthood: incense represents everything to do with religion, which also includes the heart, love. And myrrh is a symbol of immortality: it was used to embalm the bodies of the dead and preserve them from corruption. The three kings, therefore, brought gifts which corresponded to the three domains of thought, emotion and the physical body. And each of these gifts corresponds to one of the sephiroth: myrrh corresponds to Binah, which preserves; gold corresponds to Tiphareth, light, and frankincense corresponds to Chesed, the region of religion.⁴



Tree of Life

And now let's look at the question of the stable: in this stable there were no sheep and no shepherds, only an ox and an ass. Why was this? For centuries, humans have been repeating this story without understanding it because they have lost the universal symbolism. The stable represents our physical body. And what does the ox represent? Well, you know that in ancient civilizations the ox or bull was seen as the generative principle. In ancient Egypt, for instance, Apis the bull was the symbol of fertility and fecundity. The bull is ruled by Venus and represents sexual energy. The ass, on the other hand, is ruled by Saturn and represents the personality, our lower nature, the 'old Adam', who is obstinate and headstrong but a good servant.

And these two beasts were there to serve Jesus. But how could they serve him? Well, this is where I am going to reveal a great mystery to you.

When people first begin to work seriously to become better people, they come into sharp conflict with the forces of their personality and sensuality. An initiate is someone who has achieved the mastery of these two kinds of energy and knows how to put them to good use. They are not exterminated, you see; nowhere does it say that these two beasts were driven off or slaughtered: they remained there, in the stable. But what were they doing there? They were warming the infant Jesus with their breath. And this means that when an initiate manages to transmute their inner ox and ass and make them servants, the ox and ass keep the new-born babe in them warm and nourished with their breath. Their energies are no longer a source of suffering and no longer torment them and knock them off balance: they become lifegiving inner forces. Breath is a sign of life, and the breath of the ox and ass is a reminder of that breath through which God breathed a soul into the first human being. The ox and the ass served the child Jesus, and this means that all those in whom Christ dwells will be served by their personality and their sensuality, for these two forces can be extraordinarily useful once we know how to harness them to a task.

Then we read that an angel appeared to the shepherds who owned the stable. They were out in the fields keeping watch over their flocks, and when the angel announced the birth of Jesus to them, they were lost in wonder, and picking up some lambs they took them to him as an offering. This means that all those who have any rights over our physical bodies, meaning our familial spirits, whether reincarnated or not, and who possess some form of wealth (the wealth is symbolically represented in this instance by the shepherds' sheep, lambs and dogs), are told about what is going on. They are told because they have had a part in building that stable (the physical body), and they all come running, and exclaim with delight at the great honour that has befallen their stable!

So all your familial spirits, on earth or in the beyond, receive the good news that a splendid event has taken place in your heart and soul, and they come to bring you gifts and bow down before the Child. Yes, the whole world is eager to serve the Child. But don't count on their coming to serve you until you have brought the Child into the world! The angels only serve those in whom the Child Jesus has already been born, for it is not for you that

they come but for the Christ, the divine Principle, the Son of God.

And now let us have a look at the symbolism of the manger. Why was Jesus born in a manger, on a bed of straw, rather than in a palace, a temple or a large, sumptuously appointed house? Everything in the Gospels is symbolic, and there is an extremely profound meaning hidden in the account of Jesus' birth in a manger, but not many people have ever suspected this.

You will certainly understand where in your body the manger can be found if you remember my lectures about the *hara* centre, when I explained the role this centre could play in the spiritual life of an initiate who had learned to work with it. Although the name *hara*, 'belly', would seem to indicate that this centre, which is a few centimetres below the navel, is best known to the Japanese, in fact it has always been known to initiates. This is the centre Jesus was referring to when he said, '*Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*' The 'belly' is the *hara* centre, and the manger in which Christ will be born is there, between the ox and the ass, that is to say, between the liver and the spleen.⁵

I can see you are quite astonished by all this; perhaps you thought it would be more fitting for Jesus to be born in your head! But have you ever seen a baby born from its mother's brain? Nobody ever thinks about that. You think that anything to do with the belly and entrails is rather disgusting, but the fact is that the Lord has chosen that area for the perpetuation of the human race. And it is here, too, that a disciple must give birth to the new consciousness: the infant Christ.

Nothing is more vitally important than to work to bring about the birth of the divine Child within you. When this happens, heaven and earth break out in joyful song; from the four corners of the world, all those who have seen the birth of a new light come to visit you and bring gifts. Of course, there will also be a Herod (there always are a few Herods!) who will be enraged to learn of the birth of Jesus and, with the intention of killing him, will secretly call the wise men and tell them, '*Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.*' But, fortunately, there are also angels who will come and warn you as they warned Joseph: '*Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.*'

The wise men also received a divine warning not to return to Herod, and they departed to their own country by another way. And this means that all

those who approach Jesus, those who approach the Christ principle, will never again be able to tread the paths they trod before; they will have to go another way. You hadn't thought about that, had you? It is all so profound; so mysterious! I find it all truly extraordinary and, believe me, I am inventing nothing. I am simply handing on to you the knowledge that I have received. This is the true knowledge, for the sacred scriptures tell of events in terms that are comprehensible to most human beings, whose understanding is limited, but the content of these accounts is accessible to disciples, and the meaning is reserved for initiates.

And now, have you ever wondered what the traditional Christmas Eve party means? This, too, is symbolic. At the birth of the Child we have to celebrate by eating and drinking and singing – within limits, of course! When a child is born it must be fed, and its first food is its mother's milk. While it was still in her womb she fed it with her blood, but once it is born she feeds it with her milk. There are two colours here and they too are symbolic: at the moment of conception the red is supplied by the woman and the white by the man and, later, we find them again, when the mother nourishes the baby in her womb with her own blood and, after birth, with her milk. And, in fact, we find the same two colours in our blood, in the red and white corpuscles.

Red and white represent the two principles which are the foundation of all existence.⁶ Red, the blood, represents the life-force, love, and it is thanks to our blood, to our love, that the Christ Child can become flesh and blood within us. Once the Child is born it must be nourished with milk, that is to say, with purity and light, and this is why we go to watch the sunrise: in order to harvest the light with which to nourish the Child. And just as a mother continues to care for her baby after it is born, so we too must continue to care for the infant Christ once it is born within us, but in a different way.

This question of Christ's birth is extremely important, and it is something that all initiates must be concerned with. Remember what St Paul said, for instance: '*My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...*'. Yes, because Paul too had understood that Christ must be born in each human soul, and he explained all this to his disciples and even berated them, telling them to purify themselves and adopt an inner attitude of acceptance, submission and adoration, for without that they could not receive the divine seed. The human soul is like a woman. If a woman is aggressive and always refuses her husband, she will never have a child. And it is exactly the same with a human soul: it must become a tender,

adorable, receptive woman in order to receive the Holy Spirit. If it does not, well, so much the worse for it, for it will never bear a child!

Disciples have an obligation to pause and reflect on these great mysteries, and once they understand them they must draw them down to the level of their feelings and, finally, give them concrete reality on the physical level, and it is this that is the most difficult. Anyone can understand these things perfectly well intellectually, but a purely intellectual understanding has no effect on the emotional level: the heart has no grasp on it. Intellectual understanding must be extended to the level of the heart and, from the heart, reach down to the level of the will to manifest concretely on the physical plane. For the nativity of the infant Christ is an event that must take place on the three levels: mental, astral and physical. You will ask, 'But how can it actually happen on the physical level?' Well, I can explain it to you, but I wonder if you will understand.

Humans will never be able to bring Jesus to birth within themselves if they do not understand their mother, the earth. If they have no idea what the earth is and have never established a relationship of awareness, affection and respect with her, they will never be able to change anything in their physical body. Our body has close ties to the earth; it is a child of the earth, and one day it will return to the womb from which it came, and if our relationship with mother earth is not what it should be, the Christ cannot be born either in our acts or in our physical body. People never imagine that the earth is intelligent. They study it solely from the geographical point of view: so many inhabitants, so many seas, oceans and lakes, so many mountains and rivers, etc. The earth is the least known and the most neglected and despised of creatures, and a great many misfortunes stem from this ignorant attitude, this lack of respect for our mother earth, who gave of her own body to fashion our bodies.

A vast body of science exists concerning the relationship of human beings to the earth and the attitude they should have towards it: how to speak to it and thank it, how to draw strength from it, how to give it all their impurities to be transformed. For in the bowels of the earth are sewage works and factories in which it transforms all the impurities and waste products we send it. Whatever we dump on the earth is sent down to these factories to be transformed and used to produce flowers and fruit and all kinds of useful and beautiful things. Oh, yes, the earth is extremely intelligent!

And now I want you to consider the words the angels used to greet the shepherds: *'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among people!'* Do you understand these words? Why do they speak of peace among people and glory on high? Because when the divine Child is born, it glorifies God and brings enduring peace to the person in whose soul it is born. The Child brings peace because it brings fulfilment. Something is lacking for a man and wife who have no children, and when a child is born to them it brings fulfilment, the triangle on which the whole edifice is built. This is why the formula given by the Master Peter Deunov, *'Bojiata ljubov nossi palnia jivot,'* or 'Divine love gives us the fullness of life', has such profound meaning.

The soul must be receptive to divine love just as a woman is receptive to her husband's love. And this divine love that brings us the fullness of life is the love brought by the infant Christ. Love is nothing more than the foretaste, the precursor of the Child to come. This formula has very deep significance, and the Master did not give it to us so that we should simply repeat it mechanically. He gave it to us to work with and so that our souls should be touched by God's love and conceive the Child, the Christ. And when this comes about, what marvellous changes and improvements come with it in every area of our life: everything is transformed for the better, everything becomes transfused with light. It is well worth working for a whole year, for several years, for a whole lifetime, to bring the Christ to birth within us.

I have not interpreted the entire chapter from St Luke's Gospel for you. What I have tried to do is show you just one corner of your own inner life, so that you may realize that the nativity of Jesus is a mystical event which can occur in each human being. If you believe that the birth of Jesus took place once and for all two thousand years ago, then it explains nothing.⁷ In the first place it is quite incompatible with God's immense love. People say that God is love, and yet they think that although the human race had existed for millions of years before the birth of Jesus, God sent his Son to work in one little corner of the earth for a mere three years. But then what was God's love doing before Jesus came on the scene? And after his death did he again leave the world to its own resources for all the thousands of years to come? No, of course not; that is utter nonsense!

The truth is that the Christ has appeared on earth any number of times. In fact it has appeared on other planets and in every part of the universe and will continue to do so in the future. If you cannot believe this then you are not

really religious; you are not really a Christian or anything else! You are ready to believe all kinds of improbable things, but you refuse to believe what is common sense. People keep repeating, 'God is love; God is love'. But what is the use of repeating the words if everything we do goes to prove the opposite? You are asked to believe that that love manifested itself on earth just once – and you were not even there!

Now, I want to add just one thing more: you may doubt that Christ ever existed historically. Many people, in fact, have doubted this and have even produced evidence in support of their conviction – evidence that was just as scientific as that produced by those who believe the opposite! My answer to this problem is, very simply, that the historical aspect is not really so important. Suppose that someone produced absolutely irrefutable proof that Jesus never actually existed, that the whole story was a myth: there would still be one thing we would have to acknowledge, and that is the exceptional elevation of whoever composed the Gospels. The mere fact that someone was capable of inventing such a sublime story, of writing words so luminous and so profound is enough to take the breath away. It becomes superfluous to ask whether Jesus actually existed or not.

So treasure this image of the manger, with Joseph and Mary and the Child lying between the ox and the ass, and the star shining brightly overhead. Now you will understand it better.

Just as the birth of a child holds the promise of life, so the birth of the Christ in the universe each year contains the promise that God has not abandoned humankind. In spite of the fact that humans never stop breaking his laws, he continues to extend their credit by sending them a saviour, for he does not want a single human soul to be lost.⁸ Even those who have committed the most terrible blunders must get up and go on. They will have to suffer, of course; they will have to pay for their mistakes; they will have to make reparation for the damage they have done, but God always gives them an opportunity to advance. The only real tragedy would be if you lost heart and gave up trying to evolve.

And don't forget that the feast of the nativity lasts for several days after December 25th. A joyful celebration is going on in heaven, and you should be taking part in it, at least in thought. The pity is that so few are capable of taking part in it through astral projection, and as for the masses – well, the less said the better! They have eaten and drunk and indulged themselves to

the full, and now they are in bed with a bilious attack! But for you, that is all over: you must never again celebrate Christmas in that way. Be sure to get this firmly into your head! You are disciples, and you must work to bring the infant Jesus to birth within you. For the time being you must concentrate on getting things ready for him.

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‘God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham’ – *Matt. 3:9*

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‘My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth...’ – *Galatians 4:19*

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among people!’ – *Luke 2:14*

¹ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 12: ‘Malkuth, Yesod, Hod, Tiphareth, archangels and seasons’.

² See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 7: ‘The man, Jesus, and the cosmic principle of the Christ’.

³ See *The Symbolic Language of Geometrical Figures*, Izvor Coll. n° 218, chap. 4: ‘The pentagram’.

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⁶ See *The Living Book of Nature*, Izvor Coll. n° 216, chap. 9: ‘Red and white’.

⁷ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 5: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only son'.

⁸ See above, chap. 11: 'Jesus' sacrifice on the cross: the powers of blood'.

Chapter Two

The second birth

I

If you have read the Gospels, you will probably remember this passage in *St John's Gospel*:

'Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born anew." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit...' What great mysteries are contained in this phrase! Yes, the second birth for humankind is a result of the combined work of water and the spirit or, if you like, of water and fire, for fire is a symbol of the spirit.

I have often spoken to you of the initiatic teaching that the world is composed of the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. Earth, water and air are material elements that can be perceived by the five senses, whereas fire transcends the material physical plane. Fire belongs to the etheric plane, that is the subtler levels of physical reality. Fire and light are material, but the matter they are composed of is so subtle that even scientists have not really managed to study them in any detail.

In the language of symbols, water represents primordial matter and fire represents the spirit.¹ When fire and water work together they produce energy, which can be harnessed and used by humans. The steam engine was a vitally important discovery, but so far it has only been used to drive machines

and mechanical equipment, and that does not really amount to much. Water and fire represent matter and spirit; they also represent woman and man, the two principles, masculine and feminine, which must unite in order to produce the third principle: a child, energy. The only thing is that these two principles must combine in such a way that they do not destroy each other. Water and fire can combine to produce energy only if there is something (the thin wall of a kettle, for instance) between them. If there is nothing to keep them apart, the water will simply evaporate and the fire will be extinguished. And this is what happens with many married couples: in their ignorance, the man and woman put nothing between them, and the wife evaporates and the husband fizzles out!

How to combine fire and water and work with the two together: this is what we learn from an initiatic Teaching. For water and fire represent the heart and the mind; the heart is feminine and the mind masculine, and every human being has to learn how to work by combining the two, otherwise they will be forever a bachelor or a spinster! Yes, in this respect almost all human beings are unmarried. Some are all intellect and become as dry as dust. Others are all heart and become so 'damp' that they are full of fog and clouds, which keep out the light! Whatever area of life we investigate, it is obvious that human beings have not yet understood how to ally the two principles, fire and water, that is to say, the emissive and receptive aspects of their own being.

And now, if we consider the correspondences on the level of the divine world, we see that fire represents wisdom whereas water represents love. And the marriage of love and wisdom gives birth to truth:² truth is their child. Truth is the birth of the Child Jesus, that is, the birth of a new consciousness, for Jesus is not simply an historical figure but a symbol representing a number of aspects of the spiritual life. Of course, there is also the historical figure called Jesus, but when we are talking of the mystical aspect we no longer use the human name of Jesus: we speak of the Christ or the higher self. When we say that a person brings the Child Jesus to birth within themselves, that they become one with their higher self, that the Holy Spirit dwells in them or that they melt into the universal Soul, these are simply different expressions of the same reality. Of course, there are different shades of meaning in each of these expressions, but the divine Ego, the Holy Spirit, the universal Soul, sacred Fire or the supreme Mother can all be seen as aspects of the one unique principle.

The universal Soul is the ocean in which all created things live and move and find nourishment; it is the cosmic receptacle of primordial matter and sublime energy; it is the akasha of Hinduism, the pure ether in which we are immersed. The universal Soul is everywhere; it contains all knowledge and all created things; it transmits everything from one end of the universe to the other; it is all fullness, all quintessence, all omniscience. And within this Soul, within the subtlest region of this living Soul, dwell the heavenly Father, the supreme Mother, the Christ and the Holy Spirit. When St Paul said '*In him we live and move and have our being*' he was speaking of the universal Soul, that Soul which is not God himself but an emanation of God. We say that we live in God, but in fact, to be accurate, we should say that we live in the substance emanated by God.

In the beginning God emanated a material substance, and that original matter was pure light: this is the universal Soul.³ It existed before the sun or the stars, and with it God created all things. On the first day of creation, when God said, '*Let there be light*', the light that appeared was not what we see here on earth. The light that is visible to our physical eyes is a very pale reflection of true light; it can only give us a very remote idea of true light.

The universal Soul is that true light which God created on the first day and from which he made all other creatures. It gives nourishment to the whole cosmos; it contains all things, and all creatures live and move in it like fish in the ocean. This light is made up of different layers of varying degrees of subtleness, which can be compared to the different layers of the earth's atmosphere. The atmosphere, too, is a kind of ocean, and we are a different kind of fish, swimming and nourishing ourselves in the ocean of air. Beyond this airlike ocean stretches another, etheric, ocean in which other kinds of creatures dwell, and so on. So the universal Soul has different storeys or levels varying in density or subtleness, all the way to the very highest level, which is fire, and in which dwell the Holy Spirit and the supreme Mother.

What do we mean by 'second birth'? Every body knows that the first birth is that of a baby which comes into our physical world. It is born with arms and legs, a nose, a mouth and lungs, and it eats and breathes, walks and talks. For the second birth to take place there also has to be a conception, but it is a conception that takes place in another world, in a world in which the spirit weds pure matter and conceives a divine child. And when a child is born in the spiritual world, it too can walk and talk and work in that world. So this is

the second birth: to enter and start to live in a universe of another dimension.

When soul and spirit unite, they bring into the world a seed which grows into a new consciousness. And this new consciousness manifests within you as light so bright that it dispels all darkness; as warmth so intense that even if you are abandoned and alone in the world you never feel lonely; as superabundant life springing up wherever you set foot; as an uprush of strength and energy that you dedicate to building the kingdom of God, and as joy, an extraordinary sense of joy that comes from feeling that you are in communion with the whole universe and all advanced souls, that you are part of that immensity, and from the serene conviction that no one can ever steal your joy. In India this is the state known as buddhic consciousness and Christians call it the birth of Christ.

Yes indeed, the birth of the divine Principle is such an exceptional inner event that you cannot mistake it for anything else. You feel the presence of another Being, as though heaven had opened before you; a Being who encourages, protects and enlightens you and brings joy to your heart. In the midst of the most terrible circumstances, when your courage is at its lowest ebb, you can feel this Being beside you, helping you. Yes, that is what it is: the sense of a presence, a contact which is never broken. It is as though a bright lamp burned perpetually at your side. When you call on it, it is always there, ready to give you all the light and warmth you need, and even when you feel no special need to call on it, you sense that it is always at hand.

‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit...’ Initiates, who understand the language of symbols, know that the words ‘water’ and ‘spirit’ are not to be taken literally but correspond or relate to many different realities on different levels and in every domain. The same laws exist on all levels: if children are born into the physical world it means that children are born also into other worlds.

The second birth is birth into the divine world, and it is humans themselves who decide to undergo this birth and who accomplish it by their own efforts. When you were born into the physical world, nobody asked your opinion; you were called into being and fashioned by others, and you did not have much say in the matter. (Actually, of course, you did have your say in the matter, but just to make things simpler, let’s put it like that for now.) But, for this second birth, it is you who bear the responsibility, it is you who have to decide to be born into the world of light, it is you who work, consciously, patiently and intelligently, to fashion another body with which to be born into

the kingdom of God.

‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born anew.’ This means that we cannot be reborn if we do not possess the two principles within us. The second birth is the birth of Jesus, but the birth of Jesus is also our own birth. Our mother is water, that is, love, purity and life; our father is fire, that is light, the spirit. If you do not possess these two principles within you, the feminine principle of love and the masculine principle of wisdom, you cannot be born again. When a child comes into the world it is because it has a father and mother, and if you have neither love nor wisdom it means there are no parents and there can be no child! You have already been born, that is true, but you have not yet been born of love and wisdom. In order to be born again in the form of the Child Jesus, we need a father and mother more highly advanced, more exalted than our physical parents: we need love and wisdom, and when these are present the child that is born to them will be truth, the fullness of life, all that is true and genuine.

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‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God...’ – *John 3:5*

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‘Let there be light’ – *Gen. 1:3*

II

A child’s life does not begin when it first makes its appearance on earth. Before birth it already existed in a place where its mother could shape it. A birth is a little like an exhibition of a work by a sculptor or painter: the curtain that hid it from view is drawn aside and the finished work is exposed to public view. Yes, but the important thing is that the actual formative work began long before, when the child was no more than a germ, a seed. So, for this reason, if we want to understand the phenomenon of birth we must first try to understand what a seed is.

Imagine a liquid in which you have dissolved some salts; the solution is transparent and apparently pure, but in certain conditions – if you heat it, for instance – you will see crystals begin to form along certain lines of force, and before long they form into geometrical patterns. Each atom of a chemical element has the property of crystallizing in a specific pattern, and so that is

how crystals are formed, with each atom finding its place according to specific lines of force. The same phenomenon takes place in a seed: a seed is comparable to a chemical solution, with specific properties that manifest as soon as they are given appropriate conditions.

In fact I shall go even further and say that a seed is a talisman or pentacle which has received from the Creator the power to attract certain forces and elements from space. When you give a seed the right conditions; when you plant it in the soil, for instance, and give it the humidity and warmth it needs, it attracts the elements that correspond to its nature and begins to grow. The seed does not possess those elements to begin with; they are scattered throughout space, and the seed has to attract them from space. A seed can be as small as it is because it contains only the plan, the blueprint, of the tree that it will grow to be, with its roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit. And this is why I say that it is a talisman, which conjures up and attracts to itself forces corresponding to its own particular vibrations. In fact, the science of the initiates in relation to talismans and pentacles is based on a knowledge of the laws that govern the growth of seeds.

A seed, therefore, is simply a living being which draws constantly on the forces and elements available in the cosmos in order to accomplish its appointed task. And its task is to resemble its father, the tree that produced it. This is why, once a seed has been planted (unless, of course, it has some innate defect), its entire activity goes into fulfilling its vocation. It chooses from the elements around it only those that suit it and rejects the others, and in this way it ends by expressing all the tendencies indicated in its inner blueprint.

The very same pattern can be seen in humans. Since God created humans in his own image, this means that if they develop as they should, they can become like God. If, at the moment, human beings have so little resemblance to God, it is because when mothers and fathers conceive a child, they never think of giving it that perfect blueprint that would attract all the most sublime elements from the cosmos so that their baby can become a true son or daughter of God.

It is important that you get a good grasp of this notion. The germ of a child before birth is exactly like a seed planted in the soil: its mother gives it lots of light and water and protects it from insects – symbolically speaking – and it begins to grow. The forces contained in the germ start to vibrate and attract corresponding beneficial elements: purity, health, beauty, kindness,

intelligence and so on, or, on the contrary, vices and weaknesses. Nature is totally honest and precise, and when parents complain, 'Just look at that horrible child God has given us!' they should realize that it was not God who gave them that child. They fashioned it themselves and made it what it is. If they had been more aware of what they were doing and taken more care with it, things would have turned out much better.

A seed – the whole universe is condensed in a seed or a human germ. What human science can ever hope to lift the veil that conceals the mystery of the germ?

When I talked to you about conception and gestation⁴, I told you that the sperm given by the father to the mother at the moment of conception contains the blueprint or programme for what the child will become. As for the mother, her task during the nine months of gestation is to attract all the elements needed to shape the edifice not only of the baby's physical body but also of its subtle bodies. If she wants these elements to be of the best possible quality, it is important for her to be very careful about the quality of her thoughts and feelings.

The psychic life of human beings modifies the elements that go to make up the cells of their body, and immoral behaviour on the part of a pregnant woman produces changes in her organism that are extremely detrimental to the child she is bearing and nourishing in her womb. Such behaviour introduces certain elements into its structure which, later on in its life, will attract all kinds of harmful currents. Obviously, the majority of doctors have no inkling of this science. From their point of view, the moral life of a pregnant woman has absolutely no bearing on the health or wellbeing of her child. The only advice they give concerns the physical plane: food, exercise, sleep, etc. But the day will come when they will be forced to remedy this omission and admit that the destiny of a child depends to a great extent on the state of mind of its mother during the period of gestation.

The work of disciples is like that of mothers: they have to build up another body within themselves, but in this case it is a spiritual body, which will enable them to be born a second time. They are already in possession of the idea and the plans, plans for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, perfection and harmony. It only remains for them to give these concrete reality by bringing in the right building materials day after day. As a matter of fact, it would be more accurate to say that the building materials come of their own accord, for when you have the plans and lay them out ready for use,

the corresponding elements from the cosmos are drawn to them and distribute themselves according to the lines of force of those plans.

The second birth is a conscious undertaking based on the plans that we have within us, in our heads, and the work is based on the laws of galvanoplasty or electroplating, which are the laws of divine magic. Would you like to resemble some particular saint or great Master you feel particularly drawn to? If so you are like a mother who has a picture in her mind of the ideal child she is hoping for. All your subconscious powers are set in motion and contribute to making your dream come true. And even if you don't quite achieve your goal in this incarnation, all the spiritual wealth earned by your work will be credited to you in your next incarnation, and you will be able to go on with your work. But you must, at the very least, make a start today, otherwise the Christ will never be born within you. You are the only one who can ensure the conditions needed for its birth.

It goes without saying that when I speak of a mother forming the child in her womb, I am speaking of something that happens in the subconscious. A woman does not know how this formative work is done nor what her child will be like; it is the wisdom of nature that is in charge of everything. The mother continues to live more or less as she has always lived, unaware of all that is going on, and actually this is just as well, because the whole process is so complex that she would go out of her mind if she had to take care of every detail! Similarly, when disciples assume the role of the mother in order to give birth to the divine Child, they do not have to understand every detail of the formative work that takes place. It is enough for them to receive the germ and then to behave in a way that facilitates this work, by making sure that their thoughts, feelings and actions are always of the very best quality and capable of nourishing the Child with their subtle, luminous particles.

Our part, therefore, is simply to have the right attitude, to carry out instructions and to contribute the best and purest elements. Nature takes care of all the rest in the depths of our subconscious. As long as our attitude is what it should be, all the different processes that lead to the birth of the divine Child are set in motion and supervised by nature. This is why sages have always insisted on the necessity of having the right attitude, the only attitude capable of triggering beneficial forces. But people scorn their advice; they think they can do whatever they please, that none of it makes any difference. But after a certain number of years they are forced to acknowledge that it does make a difference. Eternal laws and rules are not

there to be discussed; they are there to be obeyed.

Whether we are talking of the inner life or of the physical life, the one thing that matters, if a child is to be born in good conditions, is the way its mother lives. It is this that determines that secret work that goes on behind the curtain until it can be drawn aside and the child is ready to appear. And when this day comes, heavenly entities gather round to serve it, for this is the royal infant, and all heaven is there, full of admiration and ready to provide for all its needs. From the first moment of its birth, the divine Child is fully independent; its life does not depend on the life of the disciple. Nothing is more glorious than to devote all one's time and energy to bringing this child to birth: nothing else counts.⁵

The Gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus may be historically true, but they are true, above all, from a symbolic point of view. It does not really matter whether the star, the angels and the shepherds, the manger and the ox and ass were really there on that particular night in Bethlehem. What does matter is the symbolic truth of the story: every time the divine Child is born in a human soul, the star shines overhead, the angels sing and the magi bring gifts and bow in homage before it. This has already happened more than once in the course of history when a saviour of humanity has been born, for Jesus is not the only saviour.

So, all that is asked of disciples is to go and get a few seeds from the granary and sow them (since they cannot sow themselves) and then to maintain suitable growing conditions around them. That is the sum total of their work. If they do this, the forces of nature will tell them, 'You can go and rest now. We'll do all the rest! The earth, the sun and the rain will all do their share.' You see? All we have to do is set the wheels in motion, and then nature comes and gets the work done. The pattern is the same as with a human child: the father sets the process in motion and the mother, who represents nature, takes care of carrying it to completion.

And now, you are surrounded by heavenly entities, ready to listen to you and accompany you, so it only remains for you to ask them to help you to carry out this enormous undertaking: the birth of the divine within you. And then, every day, you will continue to bring in the necessary materials, making sure that they are pure and harmonious. If you see anything that is not as it should be, you will clean or mend it or reject it. The difficulties of inner work are not very different from those of our physical work: there are always a few

stains or scratches asking for attention. But keep your eyes open, continue to work with the tools God has given you (intellect, heart and will), and as soon as you see something going wrong, put it right patiently, gently and carefully. If you do this, every day will be rich in blessings and light, and your life will be an extraordinary experience of joy, hope and love – and all because you will be doing the work God asks of you.

Yes, it is God himself who is asking you to do this work, and if you don't do it you will be refused admittance on high, in the glorious assembly of angels and archangels. In the Gospels, Jesus spoke of a man who was refused admittance to a wedding banquet because he was not wearing wedding robes.⁶ Obviously, this was symbolic: the wedding robes that we have to wear in order to be admitted to heavenly banquets are robes of light, the robes of the aura, symbol of all our qualities and virtues.

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Chapter Three

Birth

on the different planes of being

There are certain processes in the spiritual life which require a change of polarity. The disciple who wants to bring the Christ Child to birth within must start by seeking out the Child's father. If the disciple is a man, he has to switch to a negative polarity and become like a woman. In other words he must cultivate humility, docility and patience. When a man wants to create a child on the physical plane, he has to be active and emissive, but when he himself who wants to give birth to a child on the spiritual plane, then, in order to attract the cosmic Spirit, he has to adopt the feminine polarity and develop the corresponding virtues. When he does this and when the child has been conceived, then he can begin to nourish it, exactly as a mother nourishes a child in her womb, and avoid doing anything that would disturb the formative work going on within him.

And a woman can also create a divine child, but she too must switch her polarity. Conception on the physical plane is possible only when the woman is receptive, passive, but on the spiritual plane she has to become active and unite herself to the universal Soul. She has to woo and win the universal Soul, before the child can be born. I can see that you are all rather astonished; the idea of a change of polarity is quite new to you, but this is something you have to know about.

When a man and woman unite, the man's energies flow down to the base of the spine and, from there, are transmitted to the woman. They then flow up the woman's spinal column to the brain and, from there, are once again transmitted to the man. A woman, therefore, receives these energies on the lower level and gives them back to the man on the higher level, thus setting up a most wonderful circular flow of energies. But that is not all: if you look at how men and women are polarized on the different planes, you will see that there is marvellous interweaving. Men, who are emissive on the physical plane, become receptive on the astral plane, emissive again on the mental plane, and so on. Women, on the other hand, are receptive on the physical plane, emissive on the astral plane and receptive, once again, on the mental plane. Thanks to these inversions of polarity, men and women can have enormously fruitful exchanges with their partners on every level of their being.

On the physical level, the role of the woman is restricted to bringing a child into the world; she is not the one who provides the sperm. But it is important for her to realize that she is emissive on the astral plane and that if she wants to create a child she can fertilize the universal Soul. A man, on the other hand, who wants to give birth to a child, must unite with the cosmic Spirit on the astral plane. However, the cosmic Spirit will not be attracted to just anyone; the cosmic Spirit is a prince, and a prince does not go looking for a sweetheart in the slums or in brothels. So a male initiate who wants to attract the attention of the universal Spirit tries to make his soul into an exquisite princess, overflowing with love, humility and tenderness, always ready to accomplish the divine will, even if it means forfeiting her own life. This is why religion has always encouraged a receptive, devout, attitude of adoration before heaven: we are told to bow, genuflect and prostrate ourselves, in other words, to become a 'woman', symbolically speaking.

When the disciple's soul has become as lovely as a young princess adorned with pearls and precious stones, then the cosmic Spirit will come to it to fertilize it. But disciples must always be on their guard, for some people who claim to be seeking the Holy Spirit only manage to attract the devil! They manage to attract some spirits, it is true, but having forgotten all about purifying themselves to begin with, they attract spirits of darkness. How can you expect the Holy Spirit to come to you if you don't even try to live divinely?¹ But the very best way of attracting it is to have tremendous love for it.

When this union takes place the disciple feels that, for the first time, something truly beautiful, something immense and grandiose has come into their life; they feel their whole being vibrating through and through with joy and hope. Little by little the child takes shape within them, and then the disciple's energies are no longer wasted on foolish or futile activities but dedicated entirely to nourishing the child, exactly as the blood of a pregnant woman nourishes the child in her womb during gestation.

And if a male magus or white magician wishes to create children on the plane of thought he can do so also, for man is emissive on the mental plane: by his power of thought he fertilizes the universal Soul, thus peopling space with thousands of divine creatures. In any case, a true magus has no wish to have children on the physical plane; the only children he wants are spiritual children, spiritual entities, and for this reason he constantly unites himself with the cosmic Mother, the eternal feminine principle. A woman, on the

other hand, being receptive on the mental plane, can unite with the divine creative Principle and bear a child, the seed of which comes from God himself in the form of an ideal, a divine plan, for which the woman supplies the material elements it needs to become flesh and blood.² But, I repeat, if a woman wants to create children herself, she can do so on the astral plane by fertilizing the universal Soul. A man fertilizes the universal Soul on the mental plane and a woman on the astral plane.

All this is perfectly clear; it is just that no one is in the habit of thinking about these things. So now, let's sum up: on the physical plane a man creates children, whereas a woman can only form them and bring them into the world. On the astral plane the situation is reversed: it is the woman who creates and the man who forms children and brings them into the world. And on the mental plane we have the same polarity as on the physical plane, the man creates and the woman forms. It is important to grasp the difference between creation and formation for without a proper understanding of these changes of polarity you cannot obtain any significant results in the spiritual world.

The birth of the divine Child, the Christ, within us – this is what the Gospels are referring to when they speak of the second birth. 'But', you will say, 'am I born again or is another born in me?' The fact is that it really comes to the same thing. However, we can say that you are born again, because you feel that your consciousness changes, that your thoughts and feelings are different, and because you enter a world which has existed from all eternity but which you have not been able to enter before, because you had not been born into it through a second birth.

Our first birth brings us into the physical world, which we have to get to know and in which we have to work in order to develop. But that is not enough: there is another world, a world of pure light, pure love, pure beauty, and some day we are going to have to enter and explore that world too and get to know it, hear its music, smell its scents, gaze on its flowers, trees, lakes and mountains. Perhaps you will ask, 'Does that other world really have all those things too?' Yes, indeed it does. There are even immense shops in which you can buy whatever you want. 'And what kind of money will we use?' No need for money; your love will serve as money. In the world above, if you have a lot of love you are rich and can buy anything you want!

So, as I say, it is you who are reborn, but at the same time another is born

in you, a child whose father is God himself. The human soul becomes a mother, whose virtues attract the attention of the cosmic Spirit. The cosmic Spirit is always here, close beside us, ready to come in and bestow all its gifts on us, but how can you expect it to enter if everything is always locked up and barricaded? Only those who make up their mind to dedicate their life to bringing about the kingdom of God on earth can ever be visited by the Spirit, because this attitude opens a breach in their heart and soul, allowing light to pour out in a glorious display of flames and sparks to form a luminous crown over their head. And here and there, in the midst of this darkness represented by the world, in this starless night in which all humankind is crying out in pain and tearing each other apart, an occasional flash can be seen. A few beams of light shoot up into the night and serve as beacons, drawing the Spirit to come and take these beings under its protection.

Now, perhaps, you can understand why the symbol of great initiates, of truly great Masters, is an androgyne, that is to say, a being possessing both principles, masculine and feminine, in perfectly balanced harmony.³ For the divine Child to be born in them, they need to be both father and mother; as father, they initiate the act of conception and, as mother, they nourish and form the child. Initiates are beings who are perfectly fulfilled; nothing is lacking to them, and, possessing both principles within themselves, they do not need to spend their time looking for their ‘other half’ as most human beings do. Besides, the very fact that the world is full of ‘halves’ all looking anxiously for each other is a sure sign that human beings are still far from initiatic philosophy.

In speaking to you about these things I am gradually bringing back the initiatic Teaching concerning the two principles Melchizedek gave to Abraham when he brought him his offering of bread and wine. Yes, the way an initiate gives birth within to the divine Child, the Christ, is part of the initiation given by Melchizedek.⁴

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Melchizedek brings Abraham his offering of bread and wine – Gen. 14:18-20

¹ See *The Mysteries of Fire and Water*, Izvor Coll. n° 232, chap. 18: ‘The coming of the Holy Spirit’.

² See *Cosmic Balance – The Secret of Polarity*, Izvor Coll. n° 237, chap. 18: ‘Union with the universal Soul and the cosmic Spirit’.

³ See above, chap. 17: ‘The androgynes of myth’.

⁴ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 6: ‘Jesus, priest of the Most High according to the order of Melchizedek’.

Chapter Four

‘Unless you die you will not live’

You are waiting for me to talk to you... but what more do you want? Look around you; nature has already talked to us all. Have you noticed that all about you something is taking place, something called renewal? Ah, good! You had noticed. That’s excellent! You can feel that everything is beginning to move; a new cosmic wave is breaking over us, and before long the whole earth will be adorned with flowers and trees and birds. What finery! Renewal – one of the most extraordinary phenomena of life!

Each year everything renews itself – everything, that is, except human beings! Humans always stay the same, they are not in unison with the renewal that is going on all around them. They feel that there is something in the air, but they refuse to be influenced by it. But now it is time for them to open their doors and windows and allow this new life to penetrate and impregnate them too. This is the most important thing I could say to you this morning. It is such a pity that this renewal takes place only in nature, and that human beings are so intent on things of the past that they barely even notice it is happening. You must be free and unencumbered and welcome this new life with open arms. Of course, everyone is stirred to some extent, particularly the young: they don’t understand what is going on, but they feel a new ardour, a need to love. The voice that all the seeds hear calling to them to stir themselves, to wake up and begin to grow, is extraordinarily powerful, but most people are deaf to it and remain unmoved, like stagnant waters.

This period of the spring equinox is extremely important for initiates, for they know how to put it to good use in their work of purification and regeneration. Yes, for it is not enough to rejoice in the fact that the birds are singing, the flowers are pushing up from the ground and people are feeling a little happier than usual. There is important work to be done, a work of renewal. When you come up here to attend the sunrise in the mornings, this is the only thought you should have in your head: renewal. Put aside everything else, everything that is old and dusty and worn-out, and concentrate exclusively on the new life, and in doing so you will be in touch with this tremendous current of life surging from the heart of the universe.

Yes, rejoice! Spring has come! Sing and dance! Some of you will probably say, ‘Oh, we’re too old for that. Spring is all right for the young, but that’s all over for us!’ Well, people who reason like that are cutting

themselves off from life. Every single being must walk in step with this renewal; there must be no distinction here between young and old. Have you ever heard old trees protesting that they were too old to produce green leaves and flowers in the spring, that all that nonsense was only for the young saplings? Of course not! They put on their spring raiment of leaves and flowers just like all the others. So even the old grandmothers and grandfathers must join in and trot and skip and dance – symbolically speaking, of course – and if they do, they will find that many things in their lives will improve.

How can you be blind to the fact that the whole of nature is mindful of us? Every spring it supplies us with enough energy and enthusiasm for the rest of the year. It is up to us not to let all the gifts of spring pass us by without seizing any of them.

You have already received a great deal this morning, at sunrise. What can I possibly add to all that? I am here to interpret certain phenomena and explain a few things to you, to guide you: that is all. For all the other things you need you can go directly to the sun. Look at how the sun works on all the little seeds asleep in the ground. It calls out to them, ‘What are you waiting for? It’s time to get up and start giving. Come on, get to work!’ And they whisper, ‘We can’t. We’re too small and weak.’ ‘No, no. Just try and you’ll see. I’ll help you.’ And all those tiny seeds feel their courage growing. The sun talks to them and caresses them with its warmth every day, and before long you can see the magnificent flowers they have produced, and poets, painters and musicians gather round to admire and find inspiration in them. And if seeds can do this, why shouldn’t we?

We are seeds planted in a spiritual soil, and under the influence of the sun’s rays we can produce such exquisite colours and scents that even divine entities will be entranced. What is a flower, after all? It cannot sing or dance or play the violin, and yet singers and dancers and musicians go into ecstasies over it. So if we too can become like the flowers, why shouldn’t divine entities, which are far superior to us, come and marvel at our beauty? They will exclaim, ‘Oh, look. What a lovely flower!’ and then they will care for us and help us to become even purer, more luminous and more sweetly scented.

The moment of renewal, of regeneration, is upon us and it is this that should be our prime interest; all the rest we must leave to one side. The spring equinox is one of the most important periods of the whole year, and if the resurrection of Jesus took place at this time it is because, in reality, this is

the time the whole of nature has always celebrated its own resurrection, long before Jesus.¹ But the light of initiation has been lost, and Christians no longer understand the resurrection.

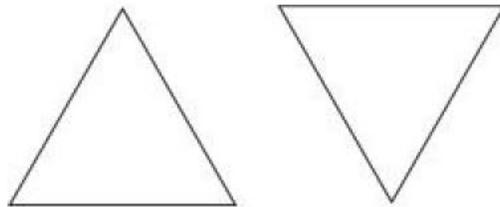
In all the sanctuaries of initiation in the past, well before Jesus' time, the hierophants revealed to their disciples the secret of how to rise from the dead and join the ranks of the immortals. And in their study of resurrection, as in all other questions, nature was their teacher. They only had to observe nature, and in the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly, for example, or the phenomenon of the grain, which has to die before it can bear fruit, they understood nature's lessons.

'Unless you die you will not live', said Jesus.² The notion of resurrection is necessarily linked to that of death and disintegration. As long as the grain refuses to die it is preventing the life-force buried deep within it from manifesting. And in humans, it is the lower nature that has to die in order to make room for the Spirit, the divine Principle, and give it the freedom to act and transform everything.

The secret of the resurrection is staring us in the face, in the whole of nature. It is just waiting for us to understand and make up our minds to die consciously so that the 'new man' or 'new woman' can emerge from us. Very few, even amongst initiates, have succeeded in rising from the dead and becoming immortal, because there is nothing more difficult than to defeat our lower nature. It is so skilful and has so many dodges up its sleeve: it knows exactly what to do to persuade us. It takes a great deal of discernment, unshakeable love and tremendous willpower to escape its wiles.

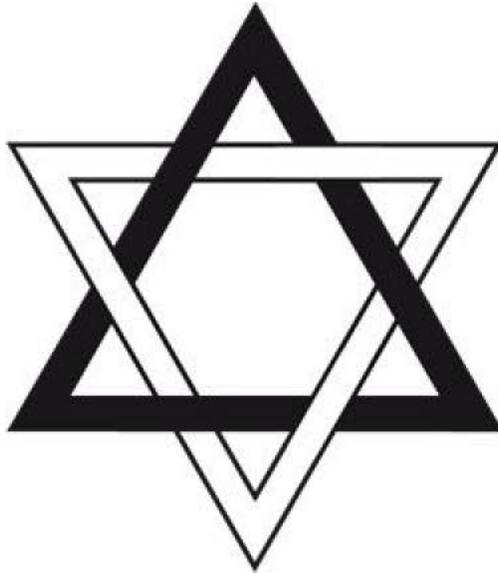
In certain initiations in the past, those candidates who had successfully measured up to all the preliminary ordeals had to face one final trial, that of death and resurrection.³ They would be placed in a sarcophagus, and there they stayed for three days and three nights, watched over by their Masters. By means of secret methods known only to them, their Masters kept them in a hypnotic trance and, detaching their astral and etheric bodies from their physical body, allowed them to travel through space and visit every region of creation. They saw hell and heaven; they were amazed, bemused, terrified and ecstatic in turn; they touched truth itself. And when their etheric and astral bodies were reunited with their physical body, the bonds that bound them to each other were of a totally different nature. Everything the disciples had seen, all the impressions and experiences they had lived through, were now recorded in their brain, and they could remember it all in detail.

Certain spiritual movements have preserved these rites of death and resurrection, but unfortunately, in most cases, they are an empty sham, for there are no more initiates and great Masters to show the way. All there is is some silly ass (forgive the expression!) in the sarcophagus, surrounded by people who go through the motions of supervising and directing operations. And the person comes out of it knowing no more than before! Such things can be no more than a remote reminder of the ancient rites until human beings recapture their long-lost sense of the sacred. But this is very difficult: those who want to discover and live that sacred science anew must disengage themselves from their lower nature, and those who are willing to do this are extremely rare.



Now, there are several ways we can use to resuscitate and achieve immortality, and they are revealed to us by the symbols of the two triangles: one pointing upwards and the other down.⁴ These two triangles represent the universal process of involution and evolution; the evolution of matter and the involution of the spirit. They teach us that we must raise ourselves to the Godhead and melt into it and, at the same time, draw it down into ourselves so that it may dwell and manifest itself in us. Saying, 'Lord, it is no longer I who live and reveal myself but your Spirit in me', you lose yourself and melt into infinite space until not an atom remains of your own old self and he, the great, the strong, the mighty One, comes and takes your place!

This is how we must understand the death that is required of us from the spiritual point of view. You must destroy not your physical body but the principle of death within you. This is the solve and coagula of the alchemists: you dissolve and melt into space, beseeching God, who is immensity itself, to come and incarnate within you. And now you can see how these two triangles, when joined into one symbol, represent resurrection. (This symbol is known as the hexagram or Solomon's seal, but it existed long before Solomon).



Obviously the true, complete and definitive resurrection of a human being does not happen all of a sudden; it is a gradual process. With a lit candle in your hand you know that you are capable of setting the whole world on fire, for you already possess a flame. Similarly, if you light just one cell in your heart or your brain, you can consider that you are on fire: even though none of your other cells are alight they can be lit. In Orthodox churches, on Easter night, the priest lights a candle, and then, with his own candle, he lights his assistant's candle, his assistant lights another person's candle, and so on, until everyone in the congregation is holding a lit candle and the church is as light as day.

And this shows what can happen within you: as long as you light just one little cell, your whole body can be set on fire and illuminated, on condition, of course, that your lower nature does not interfere and put a stop to the regenerative process. The final resurrection implies that several other resurrections have already taken place. It is important, therefore, that you succeed in resuscitating at least one cell, for that one cell can set alight the one next to it, and so on, until light spreads throughout your whole being.

'Unless you die you will not live.' To die means to empty yourself and melt into the infinite so that the Lord can come and take your place and reign within you. To die means that you no longer cling to your own existence, that you want to disappear, but on one condition: that God himself will take your place. And if you really insist he will be forced to give in, because you will be using powers of the same nature as his own. He can't say, 'Well now, let

me see. We'll have to think about it. We'll have to see how you have lived in the past.' There is no more past, no more anything: in the face of such a burning desire everything else is wiped out, and the only reality is the decision you make today.

As long as you refuse to let a being of a higher order, not even the Lord, take your place within you, you will always be vulnerable, puny, timorous and unfulfilled. No religion is more exalted than sacrifice, than being ready to die in order to live, in order to live with a life other than your own, in order to live with God's own life. You were willing to dissolve and disappear, and not only have you not disappeared but you find yourself more elevated and more alive than you have ever been. This is what heroism truly is. True heroes are those who are not afraid to disappear in order to make room for God.

And now let me give you an exercise to do: imagine yourself going up and up to a great height, and as you rise you spread out into infinite space and dissolve in the universal Soul and disappear without any fear or anxiety. Even if it feels as if you have lost all awareness of yourself, there is no need to worry. And as you are dissolving into space, imagine that the divine spirit is descending upon you, coming to live in you and work in you; that it is this spirit that speaks and acts and is expressed through you. There is no need to worry about what will become of you; you will always be you. Although you are no longer yourself, you will lose nothing of your true identity.

Show me something, anything in the whole world, that has more meaning than these two words: life and death. There is nothing to rival them. Everything is contained in these two processes: life and death – the two most powerful words that exist. It is enough to say the words 'life' or 'death', and you have said it all; people tremble or are elated at the sound of them. All the rest is nothing in comparison.

In order to possess true life we must die, and those who wish to live are already dying.

¹ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 8: 'Christmas and Easter: two pages in the book of nature'.

² See above, chap. 3: 'Those who want to save their life will lose it'.

³ See *Life and Work in an Initiatic School – Training for the Divine*, Complete Works, vol. 30, chap. 8: 'The meaning of initiation', part II.

⁴ See *The Symbolic Language of Geometrical Figures*, Izvor Coll. n° 218, chap. 3: 'The triangle'.

Chapter Five

The resurrection and the last judgment

There is a very interesting passage in St Mark's Gospel on the subject of resurrection.

'Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, his brother shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; and the second married her and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. In the resurrection, whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her."

Jesus said to them, "Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong."

I have no doubt that a great many theologians and preachers have studied and commented on this passage, but I have never read or heard a really satisfactory explanation. I am sure also that your own understanding of this whole question of the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment is very vague and unclear, so today I want to clarify the question for you.

There are several important points in the passage we have just read; let me take them one by one. Jesus replies to the Sadducees, *'Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?'* This is certainly an answer that should be very closely examined, for it may well be the key to understanding all the rest. Yes, the power of God; what part does the power of God play in the resurrection of the dead? This is what you are going to see.

Next, Jesus says, *'For when they rise from the dead...'* So he does not deny the resurrection of the dead, but he understands it differently. There must be resurrection, since he himself rose from the dead, but how is it to be

understood? *'They neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.'* But what are the angels in heaven like? They are without sex; they have no sexual organs. They have other, far superior organs, though, thanks to which they too have exchanges and intercourse with each other. For intercourse is not something that is restricted to the world of humans; it exists throughout the whole universe. No living creature is deprived of the ability to exchange love with others; it is simply the form, the quality and the expression that differ. If you only knew how the angels love each other! Perhaps you will say, 'Oh, we thought that they were so pure they didn't need love!' But God is love, and God permeates all his creatures, so how could they escape from love? The point is that we have to understand the nature of that love.

And concerning the resurrection of the dead, Jesus said, *'He is God not of the dead, but of the living.'* This, too, is something that has never yet been properly understood.

So there we have a few points that we must now study. They will help us to shed some light on this extraordinarily important question of resurrection, for it is something that has always remained very obscure. For the last two thousand years Christians have talked about the resurrection and have been reading the Gospel accounts of the resurrection of Jesus. The Gospels tell how some women came to the garden where Jesus had been buried and found an angel by the tomb, but the tomb itself was empty: Jesus was no longer there. Later, he appeared to Mary Magdalene and then to the disciples, and so on. But we shall not go into all that today, as it would only divert our attention from the passage we have just read. Let's concentrate on what Jesus meant by what he said to the Sadducees in that passage.

You all know how most Christians understand the resurrection of the dead: someone dies and is buried and then has to wait in the grave until the day of resurrection comes round. From the beginning of the human race, therefore, for thousands upon thousands of years, all those who have died are still waiting. The moment of resurrection has not yet come; in fact it will come only on the last day! Well, I for one just don't believe in that resurrection! Why? Because all those creatures are no longer there. And if they are no longer in their graves, where are they?

I am sure you all know how printers used to work in the days when each separate letter of the alphabet was cast in lead: they would set up the pages of the book to be printed with the different letters, and once the book had been

printed, the letters would be sorted out into little compartments and used again to compose a new book the following day. Well, this is exactly what happens with human beings. To compose a human body, printers come – the four elements – and using particles of earth, water, air and fire, they ‘set up’ a person’s body. Then, when the person dies, all those elements are dispersed; after a time, only the bones remain, and then even they disappear. Where have all those particles gone? Some have returned to the earth, rocks and trees, others have gone into oceans and rivers, others again have gone into the atmosphere, and still others have gone back to the sun, to the fire from which they came. And now, how could all those particles ever be found and brought together again in order to resurrect all those people who have been buried?

When you think of all the monsters, all the murderers and tyrants who have peopled the earth; when you think of all those whose bodies were sick and eaten away by gangrene and syphilis – I ask you! What a sight if they were all to be resurrected! A real abomination! If you had seen what I have seen in India: all those wretched beggars and lepers, their bodies mutilated, with no noses, no ears, and arms or legs missing... truly a sight to wring your heart. And are there to be billions and billions of such people brought back to life? Do you realize how many people have been born and have died since humankind first began, millions of years ago? The number cannot even be calculated!

But that is not all: where can they all be put when they come back? There will never be enough room on earth. Besides, the whole earth is going to have to be torn to bits in order to get back all the particles of their bodies from the trees, rocks, mountains, rivers and oceans. The whole earth is going to have to be turned upside down and inside out just to resurrect all those ruffians! Please understand and forgive me: I know that there are some saints and prophets in the lot, but they are such a small minority. They are lost in the midst of the crowd like a tiny drop in the middle of the ocean. I ask you, now, all you lovers of beauty, what do you think of such a prospect? Charming, isn’t it? Fancy seeing all those people standing there in flesh and blood, waiting to be judged! And what about the poor judges? Dear Lord, how I pity those celestial judges: apart from anything else, how are they going to be able to put up with the smell? Because everything has to be reconstituted. It’s obvious, isn’t it – how can you judge someone if you don’t know what they smelt like? You cannot pronounce sentence on someone until all the evidence and all the exhibits have been collected, and I just wonder how all those

sublime spirits are going to put up with all that hideousness.

Poor Christians! And to think that they rejoice at the idea that all those human beings are going to rise from the dead: all their uncles and aunts and grandfathers. At the moment they are completely quiet, just waiting; they have been asleep in their graves for millions of years! What a marvellous school for laziness the Lord has invented! And what patience he must have to keep all these people immobilized for so long, making no useful contribution to the cosmic economy! How can the Almighty, who is so active, tolerate such inertia, he who never rests, who is constantly at work creating a new heaven and new earth? You will tell me that, according to the Bible, he rested on the seventh day. True, but in point of fact, when he was apparently resting on the seventh day, he was actually doing another kind of work. If the Lord needed to rest I would not believe in him any more. I would think, 'Oh, poor God! If he is so tired it must be because he is like us and has a lot of impurities in his system!' No, God is absolute purity, and absolute purity has no room for fatigue.

I am perpetually amazed at how Christians understand things. They have reduced everything to human proportions. Instead of humans becoming like God, they imagine that it is God who behaves like a human. He is prone to all of our weaknesses, particularly anger; so much so, in fact, that Moses had to try to appease him and calm him down and talk him out of exterminating his chosen people. It's quite extraordinary! Personally, I don't believe a word of it. Forgive me if this scandalizes you, but I say that there was the Old Testament and the New Testament, and that there is going to be a third testament. In fact it is already being prepared. I am not denying that the first two testaments are full of things that are absolutely true; that is so. But they were adapted to the mentality of the periods in which they were written, but now times have changed and we need a Third Testament, and, as I say, it is coming. It will not refute the first two, but it will clarify, complete and correct certain things.

The New Testament does not really contradict the Old Testament, except on a few points perhaps, for at the time of Moses human beings were not ready to receive a teaching based on anything more exalted than justice. Later, Jesus came and softened the teaching of Moses by bringing his own teaching of love. And now times have changed even further; people have other needs and other aspirations, and the Christ itself, having never ceased to watch over humankind, is preparing a new testament. It is not necessary for

me to tell you how it will be written and by whom, but it will come. The Church will not be willing to accept it, because the Church has forbidden God to do anything new, just as the Old Testament forbade Jesus to meddle in the affairs of God. But whether the Church accepts it or not, what I am telling you will come about.

And now, to get back to the subject of the dead, who are already dispersed and scattered throughout nature, the question arises as to how they are going to be put together again, since nature has used the same materials over and over again to create successive generations of human beings. To put some of them together again will necessarily mean destroying others. So, you see, the theory of the resurrection of the dead as many people understand it is simply ridiculous: both logic and common sense show it to be untenable.

But suppose that the dead do rise again? What about the judgment? They have been in their graves, for thousands and thousands of years, and then, one fine day, they are to be judged for a life that lasted, at the very most, eighty or a hundred years. And even if some of them did live nine hundred years like Methuselah, that is still very little compared to all the centuries that have gone by since they died! So all these people lived and worked for a very short time and then slept for a tremendously long time. Well, all I can say is that, if they are going to be judged, I think they should be judged for having slept too long! Yes, because while they were asleep they were useless, and the worst sin of all is the sin of being useless. So, you see, they are already judged in advance; no need to bring them all together to pronounce sentence on them.

Then there is another thing (really, at the risk of scandalizing you, I must confess that I find this last judgment all nonsense) and it is this: instead of leaving all those men and women to sleep for thousands of years, couldn't they have been given an opportunity to redeem themselves by making reparation for their sins? Oh, no: no more chances; they are dead and buried and that's that! If you understand the last judgment like this, the main problem is that people are judged millions of years after they have lived without ever having had the chance to make reparation for their faults. No, to my mind, either the last judgment is impossible or it has to be understood very differently.

Let's see how things are done in the world, in a business or a government department, for instance. In every branch of government there are accountants or treasurers. Just think what would happen if there were no

regular control and that, thousands of years later, inspectors came to see what the treasurers had done with the money entrusted to them. Do you think the treasurers would have sleepless nights thinking about an audit that would only be done thousands of years in the future? Not a bit of it; they know they would be well away by then! I don't know exactly how these things are done in a government office – whether an audit takes place every year or every quarter – but I do know that there is some sort of verification and that it is a kind of last judgment. The merits of the treasurers are examined: their methods, their honesty, the order in their books, their attention to detail and so on; and depending on all these factors they either get a rise or they get the sack! But they do not have to wait a million years.

And, in the same way, if people had to wait millions of years to be judged it would all be too complicated. Besides, it would not help the education of these poor children of God, for they would only go on accumulating so many debts, they would be so overloaded by sin and crime that they would be incapable of making reparation or improving anything at all. The truth is that the last judgment does exist for everyone, in several different forms. When someone dies it is a last judgment: those in charge on high have judged that this person has lived long enough, that they have finished their work and are no longer necessary on earth, so they get their 'marching orders', and it only remains for them to obey. And when someone is ill, that is also a last judgment, valid for a week or a month or more. The person's judges convened in court, examined the situation and decided to put them to bed for a time, so as to make them eliminate certain impurities.

It would take an eternity to pay off all the debts accumulated during an eternity. So, to help us, Cosmic Intelligence always has some little ordeals for us: these are the last judgment. Naturally, they are not quite the last; let's say that they are the last but one. In any case it is always the last but one. Every time you are afflicted by failure, illness or any kind of suffering, it is because the law has judged that you have indulged yourself by eating, sleeping or working too much – or not enough – or that you have broken some other law. In all these judgments, you see, there is evidence of intelligence, love and exquisite educational method. Whereas the other last judgment simply doesn't make sense; I just cannot accept it because I know that whatever God does is unutterably intelligent and practical. Don't wait for the last judgment, therefore; we are constantly being judged without even realizing it.

And now, you must know that even the judgment of death is not absolute.

You must not imagine that once you are dead you are going to be allowed to stay and rot in your grave. No, no. It is only your clothes, that is to say, your body, that rots, but you yourself, that is to say, your spirit, will return to earth after a certain time. You will assume a different body and life will go on. Each new life is the result of the judgment pronounced on your previous life. And now, if you ask me what the resurrection is, the first thing I must say is that it is something quite different from what Christians think.

No one is ever going to rise from the dead to be judged, for there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead. The dead do not rise: life is finished for them. It is the living who rise. The souls that have shed their 'clothes' are alive, and it is they that rise again, not their physical bodies. God is not the God of the dead; he is the God of the living. The body, once dead, will not rise again. It is the soul that rises. And when will the soul rise? Well, all this is explained in the passage I have just read to you, but you have to understand and see how things all hang together.

In this passage Jesus says, *'For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.'* The question is, where have they been in the meantime in order to evolve to such a wonderful degree that they have become angels? Certainly not in their graves, anyway! There is no evolution possible in the grave; we stay as we are. So humans are not going to become like angels before rising from the dead by staying in their graves for thousands of years. How could they? In any case, if they have become like angels why judge them? The angels are not judged. We have to understand, therefore, that there is a period of time between death and resurrection during which human beings have a chance to transform themselves and evolve. Yes, because they reincarnate. Time after time they will leave this world and then come back before leaving again – and in this way they will become so perfect that they will become angels. This is the resurrection.

All men and women are predestined to rise again one day and become perfectly pure, like angels. But this resurrection implies reincarnation.¹ It is no earthly use trying to convince me that men and women are going to learn to become angels while they are in their graves. No, they will leave their graves and reincarnate, and in this way they will continue to learn and purify themselves until they become perfect. And this is their resurrection, this gradual improvement leading to perfection. This is the way all creatures will rise from the dead one day. But not the dead! The resurrection is only for the

living.

Listen to what I am saying and try to understand. When Jesus said, *'Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?'* what did he mean? What is the 'power of God' he was talking about? The power of God is precisely this: to lead all human beings to resurrection. The power of God is the power that transforms and sublimates. Yes, but that power is not in the grave; there is no resurrection in the grave, only the opposite: dissolution and disintegration. God only transforms the living. In fact there is another passage in the Gospels in which Jesus says, *'Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead!'*²

Reincarnation is not mentioned explicitly in the passage we read a few moments ago, but it is implied, for if I ask, 'What happens to a person between the moment when they are buried and the moment when they are transformed into an angel?' no one can answer me. We have to admit that something must have happened for them to have achieved such a tremendous transformation, but no one can say what it was. And this is why the teaching of the Church is ineffectual and incapable of bringing the kingdom of God to pass on earth: because the kingdom of God will not be achieved by lies. The Church must begin by revealing the truth of reincarnation. You will object, 'But since it is not mentioned in the Gospels...' Yes, it is; I have already shown you that it is mentioned in several passages in the Gospels.

In the eleventh chapter of the *Gospel* according to *St Matthew*, for instance, Jesus, speaking of John the Baptist, says, *'And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!'* And again, in chapter seventeen, when his disciples ask him, *'Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'* Jesus replies, *'Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands.'* And the evangelist adds, *'Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.'* Yes, why do you think that John the Baptist had his head cut off? It was because when he was the Prophet Elijah he himself had cut off the heads of four hundred prophets of Baal. Later, at the moment of his arrest, Jesus said, *'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'* And I could quote a number of other passages in the Gospels that mention reincarnation.

'For when they rise from the dead', said Jesus; *'they neither marry nor are*

given in marriage...' In one of your incarnations you marry one person, and in later incarnations you marry others. How could you possibly find the husband or wife you had thousands and thousands of years ago, when you have had so many others since? In any case, it is not worth the trouble to try and find them for nobody belongs to anyone else. Jesus does not say this in so many words, but he implies it. Everyone has married so many times; how could they claim to have rights over anyone else? Every man has had innumerable wives and every woman innumerable husbands, but the day they tire of all these costly and distressing experiments and promise themselves, 'Never again! I never want to be married in that way again', their concept of love will evolve so radically that they will become angels.

And what are angels like? What do they do? When two angels meet they fuse into one by means of their rays of colour and light, and a truly extraordinary exchange of love takes place between them. Then, going their separate ways again, they meet and embrace other angels in the same way. This is how angels have intercourse with each other, and they have no need to experience shame or regret. In the world of angels there are no wives armed with a rolling pin, waiting for an errant husband to return and muttering to themselves, 'Aha, he's not home yet. Which one is he kissing now, I wonder? He'll feel the kiss of this when he gets home!' The angels live in a continual exchange of love with each other without a trace of jealousy or lust.

So now you can glimpse the bliss that awaits you when you become angels! Because I know very well that all you men are just burning with the desire to love all women, and all women want to love all men. Even if you protest, 'It's not true; not at all! What a thing to accuse us of!' I shall not believe you. Just give men and women a little freedom, and you will soon see whether they are content with only one wife or one husband! But in view of their present stage of evolution it is much better that they should not have too many experiences in this area, otherwise they will soon become ill or unbalanced. It is preferable to wait. In fact I advise you to wait for a very long time, still! You have no idea of what joys God has prepared for you – but not yet. You are not ready for them; your present stage of development is not so wonderful! You must wait to be transformed, wait for your resurrection. Only when you have become like angels will you be free to approach and embrace and unite with others without any harm coming of it.

But let us get back to the resurrection. Jesus said, *'I am the resurrection*

and the life.' The fact that Jesus rose means that each one of us also can rise, that each one of us has the possibility of accelerating the process of resurrection, which will, one day, be complete for the whole of humankind. But in order to achieve this we must take care to improve the quality of our thoughts, feelings and actions. Resurrection has always been taught in the course of initiatic instruction in the temples, and many people have already risen. For it is not necessary to die physically in order to rise; you don't necessarily have to be in your grave. To resurrect or rise means to be freed from your old weaknesses and vices and from all illness. Before human beings can rise, their cells must be perfectly pure and must vibrate with great intensity. Those who live with great intensity on the spiritual level are preparing their own resurrection.

It will perhaps help you to understand the phenomenon of resurrection if I give you the example of a seed. A seed planted in the ground is just like a human being in the grave. When the angel of warmth comes, it awakens the seed with its caresses, saying, 'It's time to come out of your grave!' And, lo and behold, the life that was lying buried begins to stir: a tiny shoot divides the seed in two and pushes its way up through the soil, becoming a sprout, a stem, a sapling and, finally, an immense tree. That is the resurrection. But in order to raise someone from the dead their tomb has to be opened, and warmth is the only thing that has the power to open tombs. Those whose heart is brimming over with love – spiritual, disinterested love, of course – will open the tombs of their cells.

There are so many rotting, disintegrating cells in a human being. If you only knew how many coffins you are all carrying about with you: thousands of tiny tombs which must all be broken open! As long as your cells have not been brought back to life they will remain inactive and you will never know the inner wealth that you possess. But once they have been raised from the dead, once they have been awoken, your consciousness will expand and you will never again be as you were: you will find that you feel and experience everything in another, more spiritual, dimension. This renewal can only be achieved by means of warmth and water. For water is the substance that serves as a vehicle for life. Warmth gives the impetus, and water gives life.

So, here again, we have an example of the way the masculine and feminine principles work, for they are both present to shake the seed from its slumbers: then the tomb opens and the Christ, that little soul, that creature that seemed to be dead but was really only asleep, appears. This phenomenon

can be seen in all kinds of instances in nature. The image of the open tomb from which the risen Christ emerges is a universal symbol; its message is not restricted to Jesus or to Christians. A seed, any tiny seed, is also a tomb in which life lies buried until the angel of spring comes knocking to open it. How could the baby chick break out of the egg if the mother hen did not peck at it and crack open the tomb? And, incidentally, why do you suppose that we offer each other eggs at Easter? Precisely because an egg symbolizes the birth of life.

Let me illustrate this with yet another image: that of a butterfly. What is a butterfly? It is a creature that has already risen from the dead. It began life as a caterpillar bereft of all grace or beauty. Then, one day, it wrapped itself in a cocoon and went to sleep and, after a little while, emerged as a butterfly. What went on while the chrysalis was sleeping? How did this metamorphosis take place? The caterpillar was transformed simply because it had already set certain processes in motion which ended in its metamorphosis into a butterfly. Well, the same phenomena can be reproduced in disciples: at the moment they are caterpillars, that is to say, rather unbeautiful little creatures, only fit to crawl along on their belly and devour the leaves of trees. They are pests, and so they are persecuted, poor little wretches, until they change into butterflies.

Nature has left messages and clues everywhere to teach us how to bring about our own resurrection. What do you think you are doing when you meditate? You are like the chrysalis wrapped up in its cocoon, preparing for its own metamorphosis. If you have not already become a butterfly, it is only because you have not worked for long enough yet: you have gone back to your own affairs and continued to live with the mentality of a caterpillar, crawling along the ground and eating leaves. The next day you shut yourself up in your cocoon again and spin a few spiritual threads, and then, once again, back you go to your ordinary way of life, and the spiritual work has to wait. The following day, you begin again, and so on, until the day comes when you emerge from your cocoon a fully-grown butterfly! When that day comes you will not need to destroy leaves any more: you will feed on the nectar of flowers, that is to say, you will be nourished by all the most subtle elements in the heart and soul of the men and women you encounter, and you will never again devour or damage them in any way. For every single being possesses a delicious secret nectar in his or her innermost self, and once you are capable of tasting this nectar and finding nourishment in it you will fly

away into realms of happiness and light.

Resurrection is possible; it is a reality. A great many people have risen or will rise from the dead. The only thing you have to remember is that this resurrection does not happen in the grave. Once you have been buried it is over and done with: there you are and there you'll stay! Or rather, there your body will stay until it disintegrates and disappears. But you yourself will rise again, you will come back to this earth, because you still have a great deal to learn, you still have to get rid of all your weaknesses and wrap yourself up in a cocoon again, that is to say, to stop feeding on selfish, self-seeking thoughts and feelings. The whole meaning of prayer is just that: to teach people to nourish themselves with spiritual food. Those who have not understood this and are only interested in pleasure, those who spend their time amusing themselves or working at purely worldly things, neglect prayer and meditation, and that is a great pity, because it means they have interrupted the work of inner transformation and resurrection. I have seen this with my own eyes: it is meditation that transforms us. I have seen it both in myself and in others. When someone is really engaged in authentic meditation, their face glows with a light. Every time we meditate we should be intensifying the light within us.³ This is the light that goes to build up the body of glory, thanks to which you will one day rise from the dead.

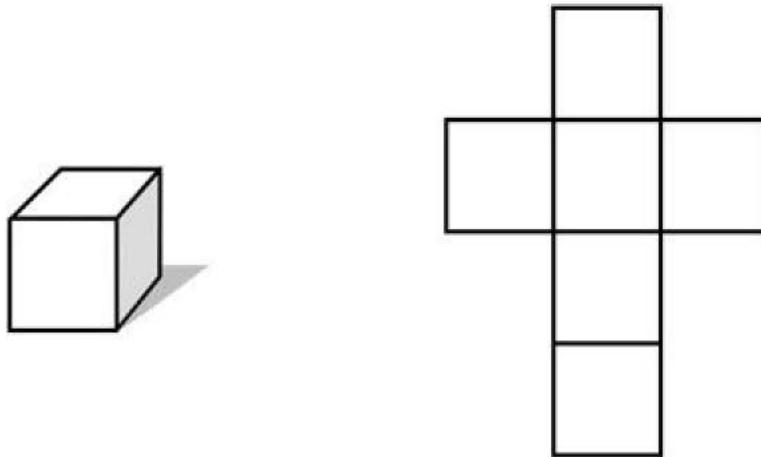
Those who have risen from the dead live a new life: they have other thoughts, other desires, a wholly different behaviour. Inwardly they are not the same; they no longer follow the same path; their goal is different. Jesus said, '*I am the resurrection and the life.*' Why did he not simply say, 'I am the resurrection'? Why did he add, 'and the life'? Is life something other than resurrection? No. It is the same thing. So when Jesus says, '*I am the resurrection and the life*', he is saying that resurrection is simply a renewed form of life, a purer, more intense form of life. And anyone who has attained that intensity of life will rise from the dead.

Resurrection is nothing more than a certain quality of life, the life of a child of God. There is no need to wait for hundreds of years before living that life. Christ is the resurrection and the life, so take Christ as your model, hold fast to him, live as he lived, and you too will be the resurrection and the life. These notions are new to you, aren't they? But if I am giving them to you it is because they are the only ones that are capable of getting you out of your graves. Yes, for, at the moment, you are still in your graves. And if you want

to stay there until the trumpets sound, you are going to have to wait for hundreds and thousands of years!

This was the power Jesus was talking about when he said that the Sadducees did not know *'the power of God'*, this power that is capable of transforming a caterpillar into a butterfly. Don't delude yourself by thinking that the caterpillar is clever enough to mix such gorgeous colours all by itself! No, it is that divine power hidden within it that does it all. And we too have that power of God within us, so let us abandon ourselves to it. It will know what to do to fill us with light and power; it will know how to resurrect us.

So, as you see, this passage from *St. Mark's Gospel* that we read at the beginning gives us some clear indications as to how Jesus understood resurrection. And there is another indication in the structure of the Russian and Bulgarian words for 'resurrection.' In Bulgarian we say *veuzkressenie*, and in Russian, *voskressenie*. The literal meaning of both words is 'to descend from the cross'.⁴ And what is the cross? The cross can be understood in the three worlds, but as I have already explained this to you in several lectures, I shall not go into it in any detail today. When you draw a two-dimensional cross you will notice that it is made up of six square surfaces, and if you fold it, it forms a cube.⁵



The cube symbolizes prison, matter, the number 4 and the four states of matter. Resurrection, therefore, is a release from the state of dependency, from slavery, from the prison of matter, from the prison of the physical body, for the physical body is also a cross. What a lot can be learned from that one word, *veuzkressenie*. When we talk about 'bearing our cross' it means that we

have to bear the difficulties of life, our physical and moral burdens. The cross is heavy, and when someone comes down from the cross it means that the prison doors have been opened and they are free, as free as a butterfly, because they have emerged from their tomb, that is from all those things that restricted and bound them inwardly.

So resurrection is something very real, but not the resurrection of the dead: there is no such thing. Resurrection only concerns the living; in fact it only applies to those who are the most intensely alive, those who live a divine, Christlike life. Everyone will be resuscitated, but some will do so much more rapidly than others; it all depends on how they prepare themselves. We prepare ourselves over the course of successive reincarnations, and, in fact, someone who makes a tremendous effort to purify themselves in their present incarnation may not need to reincarnate. Some true initiates do not reincarnate any more; they leave this world and never need to come back again in a physical body. Their spirit can come back and live in other beings so as to help and instruct and animate them, but they themselves do not need to assume a physical body.

If you don't interpret this passage from *St Mark's Gospel* as I have just shown you, the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment are totally incomprehensible. The last judgment, as it has so often been depicted, with all men and women who have ever lived coming out from the grave to be judged, simply does not exist. No, we are continually being judged: every ordeal, every form of suffering, every torment is already a proof that we have been judged and that we are paying our fine. When you have no more fines to pay you will never suffer any more.

Reread this passage and you will understand better the thought that was in Jesus' mind when he replied to the Sadducees. You will see God's plan very clearly and will understand how it unfolds and how you can experience resurrection. The interpretations that the Church gives us about resurrection go against common sense and logic: they make the Lord out to be a monster of stupidity, and as for the last judgment – it is quite absurd! So, relax: the last judgment will not happen. Ah, yes, but in spite of being relaxed, don't forget that there is another judgment waiting for you at every instant. If you are bitten by a flea, for instance, that is a judgment. 'What?', you will exclaim, 'A flea bite is a judgment?' Yes, naturally; if a flea bites you it is only after lengthy cogitation and because it has discovered some impurities in your bloodstream: when it bites you it is drawing your attention to them and

warning you that you must improve your way of life. If you purify your blood it will no longer tempt fleas.

There are masses of little things in our daily life that could help us to understand the resurrection and the last judgment. You meet a friend whose leg is all black and blue with bruises, for instance: 'What happened to you, my friend?' 'I bumped into something.' And there you are: everything I have been explaining is summed up in this situation. When you bruise yourself, a certain number of cells die and your skin is discoloured; then, after a while, the skin clears up and the discoloration disappears. This does not mean that the old cells have resuscitated; it means that they have been replaced by new, healthy cells, and it is these new cells that have healed the bruise and enabled you to walk again without pain. And there you have the process of resurrection!

And this process applies on every level of our organism. Many people have a lot of cells in their body that are already dead and never get replaced by new ones. Little by little the proportion of dead cells increases until they invade the whole body and the person dies. Others still have a great many living cells in their body at the moment of death; in fact doctors endeavour to retrieve them for use in organ transplants. This is the truth: some of the living have so many dead corpses in their organism that they are already almost dead; their dead cells have already begun to putrefy, and they are unable to replace them with new ones, whereas the cells of those who die in an accident, for instance, are almost all alive at the time of their death. Well, in the spiritual domain you have exactly the same phenomenon, only, in this case, it is not a question of cells but of entities.

Just as our physical body is composed of billions and billions of cells, so our spiritual being is composed of a multitude of entities. Often some of those entities die, and dark, malignant entities slip in and inhabit us, so then we have to replace them with new, pure, luminous entities. And it is this replacement that is the resurrection. It is not definitive and it is not complete, but this resurrection has already begun for some of you, and you must keep at it, keep working to replace your old, dead entities with new ones, and one day the final resurrection will suddenly appear. St Paul tells us this: *'...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.'*

In reality, though, the resurrection does not happen in the twinkling of an eye. You must understand what this means, and, this time, a comparison with

a chemical process will be useful. Suppose you have some acid in a jar and you put a few drops of litmus into it: it immediately turns red. Then, drop by drop, you start adding an alkali to the solution. To begin with there will be no apparent change, but if you continue adding drops of alkali, all of a sudden your red liquid will turn blue. Well, that is the resurrection! The red turns blue: the red represents the old Adam, and when he rises he is seen to have been transformed into the Christ, represented by the blue. You have to keep adding drops of alkali for a very long time before anything happens, and then, with the last drop, everything is transformed in the twinkling of an eye, and you resuscitate! Your resurrection began long before, therefore, but no visible change could be seen until the very last moment. What St Paul says is absolutely true, but it needs to be explained.

Is this clear to you, now? Your resurrection does not just happen all of a sudden, out of the blue. A great deal of work has to be done first, and resurrection is simply the last drop, which transforms everything. As to why we have to wait for the very last drop is a mystery even chemists cannot explain.

Many of you have already begun to rise from the dead; that is, you have begun to replace certain selfish entities of darkness and violence by others, more intelligent and luminous and loving, but you still cannot see any change in yourselves, you still feel the same. Be patient! You must wait for the last drop. It is that last drop that is the trumpet! No trumpet will ever raise the dead if the dead have not already done a great deal of work on themselves. The dead will not be raised by the sound of a trumpet. If you don't believe me, just try it: take your trumpet to a cemetery and blow it with all your might. Nothing will happen; no one will come out of the tombs – unless it be some poor down-and-out who had spent the night in the shelter of a gravestone and who suddenly appears before you, whiskered and bleary-eyed, as though risen from the dead!

So, you see how many examples in nature show us what the resurrection really is. In fact, I can tell you, the solution to the greatest initiatic problems is often given to me by caterpillars, moles, fleas or bedbugs. Yes, this is where I find the solution to the greatest problems. You are very surprised, aren't you? You ask, 'But bedbugs! And fleas! What can they possibly tell you?' 'Fleas and bedbugs have revealed to me all the laws of medicine that medical science has still not discovered.' 'Oh, so fleas and bedbugs are your Masters and teachers, are they?' 'Yes, why not?' 'Well, don't you learn from

anyone else? Don't you ask the leading lights of the medical profession?' 'No, because I know they would only lead me astray. I much prefer to study my little bugs: they're far more reliable!'

And now, wouldn't you like to know what bedbugs have taught me? Well, I'll tell you: they are guided by the same instinct as diviners. For example, if a bedbug gets into a dormitory where a lot of people are asleep, it pulls its little pendulum out of its pocket and consults it about all those bodies: 'No, not that one, he'd be too tough. Not this one, he doesn't look very appetizing. How about that one? Ah, yes! That's the one for me: here we go!' And having worked out the exact distances geometrically on the ceiling, our friend the bedbug drops onto its victim and begins feasting, and all the sleepers on either side are left in peace: no visit from the bedbug; no bites!

This is how bedbugs have taught me a great many laws and revealed to me the underlying principle of illness. They have taught me that illness is nothing other than an accumulation of certain kinds of matter that certain microbes or entities find particularly appetizing, and that if someone possesses a great deal of this matter these creatures come and feast off them. And how can someone who is ill cure themselves? Simply by getting rid of all that unhealthy food; then the microbes will die of starvation and the person will be cured. I have also studied ants, wasps and all kinds of other insects, and I have seen that if people leave peelings or rubbish lying about, these creatures smell it from afar and come swarming to feed on it. But as soon as you sweep up all the rubbish and leave the place clean the insects go away, because there is nothing for them to eat. And this is the great secret: don't give the entities anything to eat; in other words don't leave impurities lying about, and then they won't come and bother you! Now I ask you: would you find that in a medical text book? I know you would not! Besides, I never read medical text books!

Physical resurrection? Physical death and resurrection? No. It is spiritual resurrection that interests us, for there will not be any physical resurrection. For the dead, it is all over, as I have just said, but for the living, those whose soul is alive, there will be a resurrection, for God is the God of the living.

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Methuselah – *Gen. 5:21-27*

'Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead' – *Matt. 8:22*

'If you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come' – *Matt. 11:14-15*

'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' – *Matt. 17:10*

Elijah cuts off the heads of four hundred prophets of Baal – *I Kings 18:40*

'Put your sword back into its place' – *Matt. 26:52*

'I am the resurrection and the life' – *John 11:25*

¹ See *La réincarnation*, Brochure n° 312.

² See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 4: 'Let the dead bury their own dead'.

³ See *Meditation*, Brochure 302.

⁴ See *The Philosopher's Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor Coll. n° 241, chap. 11: 'The regeneration of matter: the cross and the crucible'.

⁵ See *The Symbolic Language of Geometrical Figures*, Izvor Coll. n° 218, chap. 6: 'The cross'.

Chapter Six

The body of glory

I would like to complete what I have already told you about the resurrection by speaking to you now about the body of glory, which enables a person to rise from the dead. It would make things clearer for you, however, if I began by explaining something about the etheric body.

When I was talking to you about the correspondences that exist between the different realms of nature and the human being's subtle bodies (the etheric, astral, mental, causal, buddhic and atmic bodies), I told you that water as well as trees and all forms of vegetation correspond to the etheric body. Just as plants are grounded in the soil while, at the same time, being in touch with the heavens, our etheric double is attached to our physical body while, at the same time, being in touch with our higher bodies. Without vegetation, life could not exist. Water and vegetation are indispensable to life on earth, and they correspond to the etheric body, which has a twofold role to play: to ensure the life of the system and to give it sensitivity. Just as water gives life to plants, so the etheric body gives life to the physical body. If you deprive the earth of water, all life will disappear. Similarly, if you remove a person's etheric double, he or she will die. Life is linked to the etheric body, and anyone who knows how to work on this body can prolong their own life.

Vegetation has a tremendously important task to carry out on earth. Earth needs to be moved about and transformed, and this is what plants do. Who else would be willing to take care of the earth? Not animals; animals are egotistical and quite content to eat matter that has already been elaborated by others. The most important, tenacious and devoted workers are the plants. They have adopted a lowly form, an attitude of humility, and set to work in every corner of the planet in order to transform it. In places where there are neither people nor animals, you will still find plants: wherever you go, you can see that plants populate the earth.

The ambition of plants – obviously it is not a conscious ambition, but rather a secret tendency built into them by Cosmic Intelligence – is to leave not a single atom of earth uninvigorated. And how can they achieve this ambition? By maintaining contact with the heavens. A tree communicates with the heavens by means of the tips of its branches and, at the same time, is anchored deep in the soil by means of its roots. The tips of the branches and the roots are the most important parts of a tree, for it is by means of these two

poles that the tree takes in energy. If you could only sense the tenacity and perseverance with which it does this! The branches of a tree are so many antennae, on the alert day and night to draw energy from the atmosphere, and it is the sap that carries these energies to the roots where the great work of transformation of the earth takes place. The earth is inert and passive, but it is full of substances, elements and forces, which it could never manifest if the plants were not there to act as intermediaries. So you could think of plants as alchemists: they are spread out over the surface of the earth in order to extract from it the materials it contains and offer them to us in the form of flowers and fruit.

The etheric body, like the earth's plants, penetrates the physical body but, at the same time, has ramifications in the higher regions, and it communicates the forces it receives from these higher regions to the physical body. So, like plants, it invigorates matter by bringing out its hidden qualities. It serves as an intermediary between the physical body and the subtle bodies. The true nature of the etheric body is still not well known, and orthodox medical science does not recognize that many physical anomalies are caused by problems in the etheric body. Even spiritual people attach less importance to it than to the astral or mental bodies. It is quite true, of course, that it is not as strong or as powerful as the astral and mental bodies, but it is essential to life. And what can we do without life? Life is the foundation of everything.

There are many different ways of strengthening the etheric body. As it is a body and, at the same time, a fluid, an energy, it has ties with all the different forces of nature and is extremely sensitive, therefore, to heat, light, electricity and magnetism. When you expose yourself consciously and intelligently – and at the right time of day – to the sun's rays, and when you do the breathing exercises, you are strengthening and activating your etheric body, and it is this that will keep your physical body in good condition.

You must learn to work on your etheric body: I have already given you all kinds of methods for this, using water, the earth or the flame of a candle, etc. If, for example, you have a pain somewhere, you can concentrate mentally on your etheric body and send it beams of light of every colour, and it will know what to do to remedy the problem. It will act on your cells; like the plant-life of the earth, it will serve as a link to restore communications between heaven and earth, and the part that was ill will once more be enlivened.

The physical body is linked to the etheric body by what is known as the silver cord, and it is thanks to the etheric body that the physical body

possesses both life and sensitivity. The silver cord has four branches, attached to four different points in the physical body: the first in the brain, the second in the heart, the third in the solar plexus and the fourth in the liver. These four points are, as it were, the germs or seeds of the four bodies: the physical, the etheric, the astral body or body of desire and the mental body. When humans come to earth to begin a new incarnation, they bring with them these four germs, minute atoms given to them by the great spirits of light on high, the twenty-four elders and the angels that serve them, and on which are inscribed and recorded all the physical and psychic characteristics needed. These sublime beings have examined all their previous lives and everything they have ever done so that the germs they receive correspond exactly to what they need and deserve.¹

A human's invisible bodies – the etheric, astral and mental – are formed according to the same laws and in exactly the same way as the physical body of a child is formed in its mother's womb. As soon as the father's seed enters the mother's womb, a tremendous work begins of which the mother is unconscious. Unknown to her, the forces of nature set to work within her, bringing just the right amounts and the right kinds of building materials, which correspond exactly to the requirements of the germ. You could also compare the germ to the lines of force in the mineral realm that determine the patterns in which particles come together to form crystals.

I have already spoken to you, a long time ago, of the experiments conducted by the eighteenth century German physicist and musician, Chladni. Chladni studied the vibrations of solids, and in one series of experiments he spread some powder or very fine sand on a sheet of metal and then, using a violin bow, he caused the metal to vibrate. Depending on the type of metal, its thickness and so on, the vibrations produced various geometrical figures in the sand, some symmetrical and others asymmetrical. This is because vibrations create lines of force which attract particles, and certain points of vibration known as 'live' points drive the particles towards 'dead', non-vibrating points, thus causing geometrical figures to form around the 'dead' points.

And this is how each thing in nature is formed. Each seed already contains its own particular lines of force, and as soon as the seed is warmed by the sun and moistened by the rain it begins to grow, and the elements that nourish it arrange themselves in the patterns determined by the lines of force, thus forming stem, branches and leaves and, later on, flowers and fruit. It is a little

like transistor radios: many years ago, radios were very heavy and bulky, but now, thanks to printed circuits, their size and weight have been reduced to an amazing degree. The more technology develops, the more it finds ways of using very fine, light, subtle materials, thus producing smaller and smaller appliances. Well, you could say that a seed too contains its own kind of printed circuit, like a transistor radio.

Everything that exists is built and functions in accordance with certain lines of force, all things unfold along certain lines of force, even destiny. There are predetermined lines and points, and events occur exactly according to these lines and points. A seed may be microscopic in size but it contains a highly complex organization. You only have to plant and water it and you will see that this is so! The mother is the earth, and when a seed is planted, she waters it and keeps it warm, and the plant that grows from that seed is called a child. The same laws apply in every area.

The *Emerald Tablet* says, 'What is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below.' The earth also possesses etheric, astral and mental bodies as well as other, subtler bodies that I shall talk about later. The etheric, astral and mental bodies, not only of the earth and the other planets but also of the sun and stars, pervade and penetrate man's body, nourishing him and causing him to grow. But although humans are born on earth, they are not yet born on other planes; a cord still binds them to other wombs, as though to other mothers. To be born into any given world they have to cut the cord and become independent. Humans are already independent on the physical plane, since the umbilical cord that tied them to their mother has already been cut. But the cords that tie them to other planes are still intact, so they are still not born, that is to say, not independent on the astral, mental and spiritual planes.

Before a child is born, the mental germ, which descends into the physical body, has to form its own body, and it does so within the womb of the cosmic mental body; this is the matrix in which a human being's mental body takes shape, and it is a process that takes some time. Later, on a much lower level, the astral body also takes shape within the womb of the cosmic astral body, and this too takes a certain amount of time. Then it is the turn of the etheric body and finally of the physical body, and the child is born on earth.

If I were to talk to you about each of our bodies: the material they are made of, the nature and functions of each one and how they all fit together, it would take too long. So, today, I shall talk to you only about the etheric body,

for it is the etheric body that enables us to understand the body of glory, the body of resurrection.

The etheric body is made of physical matter, but physical matter so subtle that we can neither see nor touch it with our senses. As I have already said so often, we don't really know even the physical world: we imagine that there is nothing more to it than matter in a solid, liquid, gaseous or igneous state. No, these are only the crudest and most inferior dimensions of the physical world. Matter is far richer and far subtler than this, for it includes also the etheric dimension, to which there are also four divisions.

The first layer of the etheric body is known to Initiatic Science as 'chemical ether'. It is this first division that governs the physical functions of growth and elimination, and it corresponds to the element earth. The second layer, called 'vital ether', is of a subtler nature and corresponds to water. The layer of vital ether makes possible the functions of procreation and gives the body physical sensitivity, the power to feel pain and so on. Next, on a much higher level, comes the 'etheric light', which sustains the warmth and vitality of the physical body and, more important still, is the seat of perceptions, and finally, the fourth layer, known as 'reflective ether', is the seat of memory. It is here, in this etheric layer, that every event in a person's life, all his or her thoughts, feelings and actions, are recorded. It is here, too, that the germ is to be found in which all the faculties and qualities of a body in the process of being formed are stored.

The pattern is exactly the same as in the case of a tree: each tree springs from a seed and, in turn, produces other seeds. The etheric body also has to produce at least one seed in which all its qualities and characteristics are concentrated. And it is precisely here, in this etheric seed, that the body of glory takes shape. This seed, which is no more than an atom, lies at the tip of the left ventricle of the heart and records every slightest movement of a person's life.

In actual fact, the germs or seeds of the different bodies – the physical, etheric, astral and mental germs – are all connected with each other, because they follow on from and communicate with each other. You can see evidence of this in the fact that a thought does not remain confined to your mental body but communicates with the adjacent realm of emotion, feelings, desires and passions, that is with the astral body; and from the astral body it is communicated to the etheric and, finally, to the physical body, and at that point you put your thought into effect. As you see, everything is all of a

piece.

Of course, our four bodies are not all the same size, nor are they all equally well developed or as strong as each other. We can see this from the fact that some people, whose intellectual faculties are very highly developed, are less developed in what concerns the heart. They are often selfish, avaricious, calculating and self-seeking and, sometimes even, vicious and cruel, whereas others, whose intellectual faculties are very feeble, are extraordinarily generous and kind-hearted. Yet others are strong, active and dynamic and enormously skilful at getting things done, but their faculties of heart and mind are not very highly developed.

So, although there is certainly a communication, a correspondence between the four bodies – the physical, etheric, astral and mental – yet they are often at different stages of development. This is the result not only of the lives people have led in previous incarnations but also of the circumstances they found themselves in, which drove them to develop in one area and neglect another. People have not always been able to develop equally in all aspects or regions of their being, and this is why they now show such an extraordinary diversity in their development and their manifestations.

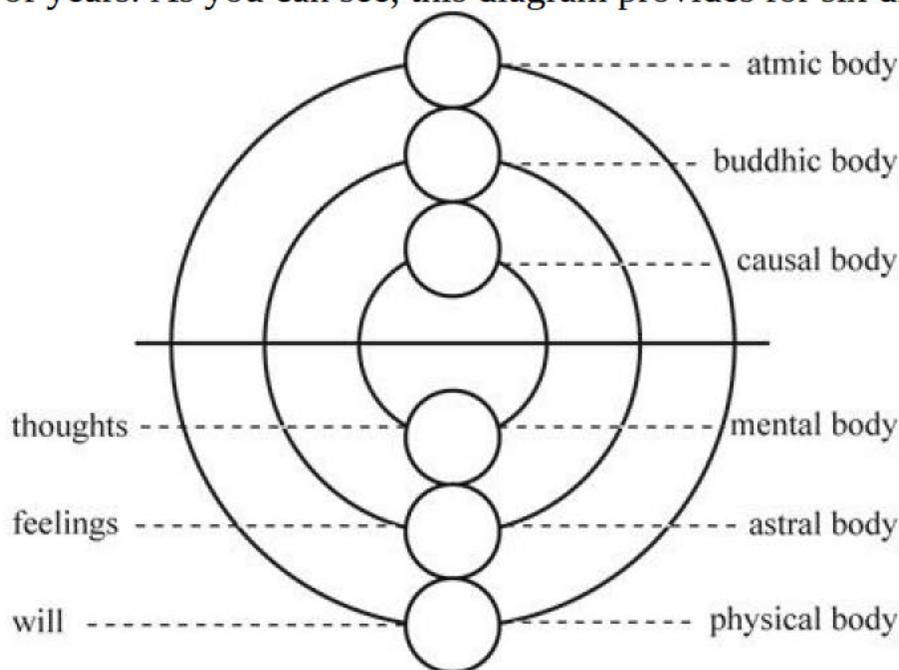
Now I would like to say a few words about the way in which our etheric, astral and mental bodies are joined to the physical body. The etheric body is attached to the solar plexus and the spleen. These two organs, therefore, are very important for the etheric body; it is through them that it receives energy from the sun and distributes it throughout the whole physical body.

You certainly remember that I have already talked to you about the solar plexus and told you how important it is for life. In Russian, the region of the solar plexus and belly is called *jivot*, and in Bulgarian, *jivot* means ‘life’. On the physical level it is the stomach that collects energy from food and distributes it throughout the whole body, even to the brain, whereas, on the etheric level, it is the solar plexus that collects and distributes energy. It is the solar plexus that restores crippled functions, cures infirmities and supplies the brain with energy. When you feel that your brain has come to a standstill, massage your solar plexus, and within a few minutes you will find that your brain is working smoothly again.

If the etheric body did not exist, we would be destroyed by our astral body. The etheric and astral bodies are constantly at daggers drawn, for the

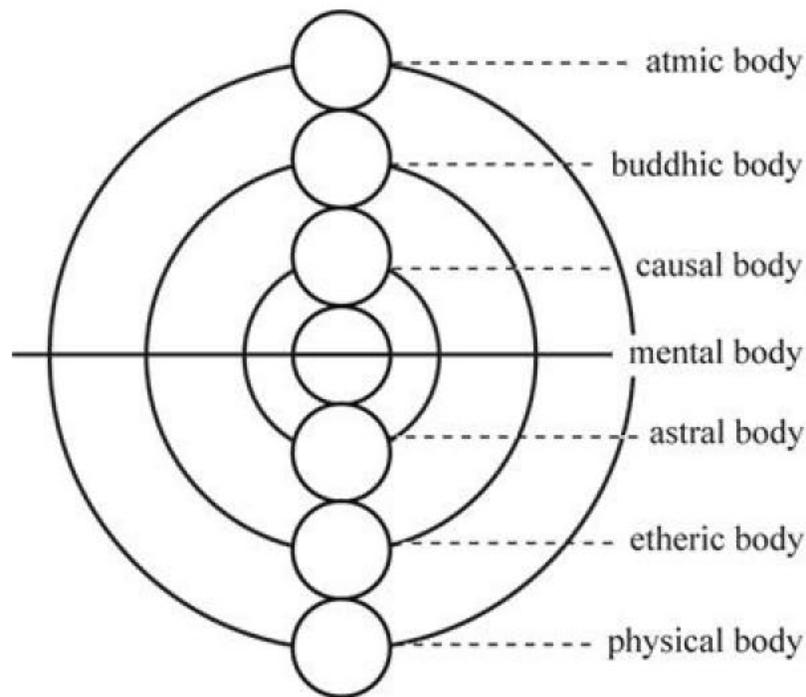
astral body continually expends energy and exhausts the physical body with a turmoil of emotions, feelings and passions, whereas the etheric body tries to restore order and get rid of the accumulated impurities during the night. So it is the etheric body that protects us; without it we would soon die of poisoning, for the astral body is connected to the liver, which collects toxic elements from the body in order to eliminate them. As you know, when the liver stops functioning as it should, it is often because it has been overloaded by the excesses of our lower appetites, disorderly feelings and desires, mental anguish and so on. The liver is one of the seats of the astral body; the other is the sexual organs. The organs to which the mental body is attached, on the other hand, are the brain and the spinal cord. So the etheric, astral and mental bodies are each attached to the physical body at two points: the etheric body, at the solar plexus and the spleen; the astral body, at the liver and sexual organs, and the mental body at the brain and the spinal cord.

And now, you can see a simple diagrammatic outline of the structure of a human being as it has been understood and analyzed by initiates for thousands of years. As you can see, this diagram provides for six divisions.



This figure, on the other hand, shows a system preferred by many esoterics and which provides for seven separate divisions, the etheric body being considered a separate entity, situated between the physical and astral bodies, and the mental body forming the dividing line between the human and divine

worlds.



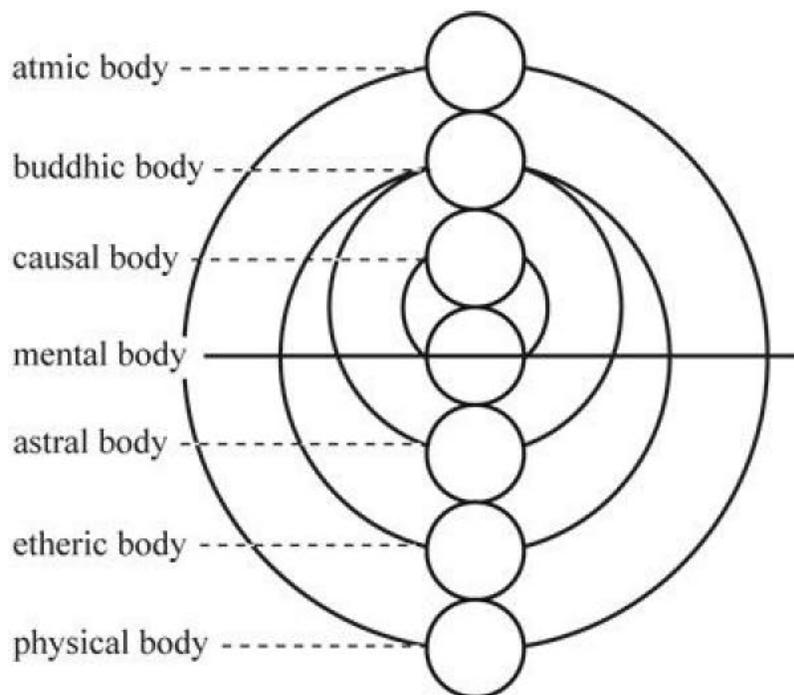
Personally, I use one or other of these diagrams depending on the particular aspect I am considering. Since the etheric body really belongs to the physical body, it is not always necessary to give it a category of its own, so this gives us: the physical body (which includes the etheric body), the astral and mental bodies and the causal, buddhic and atmic bodies.

I have already explained, in other lectures, that the highest level, the divine world, is linked to the lowest level, the physical world. We see, therefore, that the atmic and physical bodies are linked to each other, the buddhic and astral bodies are linked together, and the causal body is linked to the mental body. So, what is below really is like what is above, only reversed. The atmic body is a repetition on a higher key of the physical body; the buddhic body is a repetition of the astral body, and the causal body a repetition of the mental body.² Humans consist of three principles: will, feelings and thought, and on the higher level, the level of the sublime principles, they think, feel and act divinely.

And now let's look at the other figure: if we consider that the etheric body is on a plane of its own and we repeat the same system of correspondences, we see that it is linked to the buddhic body, and it is here, in the buddhic body that we must seek the body of resurrection, the body of glory.

But at this point I have to explain something: the different bodies are not separate from each other. On the contrary, they are all interconnected and mutually interactive: the mental body, for instance, acts on the astral body and the astral body on the physical body. Also, I have just spoken of the link that exists between the higher and lower bodies: atmic and physical; buddhic and astral, and causal and mental. So this means that there are two different kinds of connection linking our different bodies: the first kind links them vertically, and the second is indicated in the diagrams by the concentric circles.

This should help you to understand in what way the buddhic body is linked to the etheric body. Through the elevated emotions and feelings of their buddhic body, initiates act on their astral body to purify it, and the purified astral body then acts on the etheric body. It is quite simple, therefore: the astral body is the intermediary by means of which the buddhic body acts on the etheric body, causing the seed of the body of glory, concealed in the etheric body, to grow and become stronger.



As I said a few moments ago, the subtlest layer of the etheric body is called the reflective ether and is the seat of memory. But this memory is only the personal record of any particular human being. If you want to consult the archives of the universe, you have to go to the higher level of the buddhic

body, for it is on that level that the events of the universe are recorded.

The buddhic body is the body of disinterested love, of absolute bliss and purity. Christ and the Buddha were perfect examples of love, sacrifice and purity. And this is why disciples who learn this science must strive to cultivate the purest and most disinterested desires with which to nourish their etheric and buddhic bodies. They must nourish them as a mother nourishes the child in her womb: with their own blood.

I have already explained the process involved here when I talked to you about Christmas and the second birth, for, in reality, the second birth and the resurrection are simply two different ways of speaking about one and the same thing: a human being's regeneration and entry into the spiritual world. Depending on the quality of her blood, a mother will produce a healthy or a sickly child, and, in the same way, all human beings form their spiritual bodies with the nourishment they provide for them. By means of disinterested work, sacrifice and divine love, a person builds his or her body of glory and causes it to grow and develop in light and beauty and, thanks to this body of glory, will one day rise and become immortal.

This is how the resurrection of Jesus must be understood. It is clear from his words and from the life he led that Jesus, who was instructed in all these things, nourished the seeds of his etheric and buddhic bodies with such pure and luminous thoughts and desires that he formed his own body of glory. When he rose from the dead, therefore, it was not with his physical body: he rose from the tomb with his etheric and buddhic bodies. This is why he told Mary Magdalene not to touch him: he could not allow anyone to touch him until he had consolidated his body and made it more material. Later, he allowed Thomas to touch him, but to begin with it was not possible.

Besides, if you remember, when Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene she did not recognize him, and that can easily be explained: as I say, his etheric body was not sufficiently solid, and it did not immediately have quite the same features or the same appearance as the physical body of Jesus. That is why she took him for the gardener, otherwise how could she, who knew Jesus so well, possibly make such a mistake? When the etheric body has been fully materialized, it has exactly the same features and resembles the physical body in every detail, for it is the exact replica of the physical body.

You see: everything can be explained. Jesus did not rise with his physical body. No, he appeared with his etheric body, his body of glory, and he continues to live on earth with his body of glory: he has not left the world.

And then again, at the transfiguration, when he appeared between Moses and Elijah to his disciples, Peter, James and John, the light of his body was so dazzlingly bright and radiant that they could not bear to look at him and fell on their faces in fear. This transfiguration was also a manifestation of his body of glory. The time had not yet come for it to detach itself completely from the physical body, but it could already manifest itself. Whatever devout souls may say in attempting to explain this incident, the fact remains that it can only be explained by the vibrations of Jesus' body of glory, which had reached such a pitch of intensity that it had become all beauty, light and brilliance.

And since Jesus was able to form his own body of glory, thanks to which he rose from the dead, it means that if his disciples know how to do so and if they work with the same methods, they can do the same. Every one of Christ's disciples can be transfigured and resuscitated; it only depends on the intensity of their love and faith. But they must realize that they have the seed of this body within them and that it has to be nourished. And how do you nourish it? Whenever you experience a few moments of intense, ecstatic spiritual life, when you are listening to music, when you are moved by the sight of something very beautiful, at these moments you are nourishing and strengthening your body of glory. Feelings of love and wonder, mystical emotions and ecstasies are all elements that contribute to nourishing this body within you, just as a woman nourishes the child in her womb with her blood, but also with her thoughts and feelings.

You can only nourish your body of glory with the purest and most luminous elements. This is why you must be very careful to filter out all impurities of thought and feeling. And if you experience a difficult moment and feel troubled or overwhelmed by feelings of hatred, jealousy or revenge, try to change your state of mind immediately, just as soon as you realize what is happening. Remember that if you give in to such feelings you will delay the formation of your body of glory.

There are people who have seen the body of glory of certain initiates at a moment of spiritual ecstasy and rapture: their faces shone and light radiated from their whole being. Also, it is thanks to their body of glory that initiates are able to travel freely through space, to cross over high mountains and even to journey to the centre of the earth, for no material obstacle can stop the body of glory; it can even influence and help others from a distance. Yes, even if your physical body is a wreck, you can still send help to others, for

the physical body and the body of glory are two quite different things. Your physical body can be dying, but your body of glory is still untarnished, alive and radiant, and it can reach out and touch other creatures in space. It is even possible for humans to detach themselves completely from their physical body and live exclusively in their body of glory – and in their body of glory they can live for all eternity! Whereas with the physical body there are no two ways about it: you cannot renew its youth and strength indefinitely; it ages and grows weaker and finally dies.

As I have already said: what is dead cannot be brought back to life; only what is living can be resuscitated. True, some people have, apparently, been raised from the dead, but that was because they were not really dead: they were only in a coma. Only those who are not dead, that is to say, those whose silver cord is still intact, can be resuscitated. Once the silver cord has been cut, no one can be brought back from the dead. Once the soul has left the body, it is useless to go through all kinds of mock ceremonies to try and bring it back. A great many false stories about this question have been invented and spread by people who know nothing about it.

People tell of magicians and sorcerers, for instance, who have succeeded in bringing people back to life. The truth is that these are not true resurrections: the sorcerers simply use certain methods to call up earth spirits or subterranean entities, which enter the dead person's body and reanimate it. Sorcerers cannot force the spirit of a dead person to return to his or her body, but they can practise certain rites by means of which they get other entities to enter the dead body and reanimate it for a short time. Anyone who is reputed to have been resurrected was not really dead, even if they were pronounced dead because their heart had stopped beating. Death is final not when the heart stops beating but when it loses its last drop of warmth. Similarly, if people stop breathing it is not necessarily a sign that they are dead. As long as the heart still has some warmth in it, they can be reanimated by massage or other medical means, or even by the means of divine magic. But once all warmth has left their heart and the silver cord that bound their physical body to their etheric and astral bodies has been cut, nothing more can be done for them.

The great initiates have never been interested in bringing dead bodies back to life. Those who claim to do this are the necromancers, but, as I have said, all they do is get foreign entities to enter the dead body by tempting them with the kind of bait that interests them: food, blood and so on. Even Jesus

did not raise anyone from the dead. You will say, ‘What about Lazarus? He had been dead three days!’ No, his family believed that he was dead, but in fact he was still alive. Not that this diminishes Jesus’ merits in the slightest, for if he had not gone to rescue Lazarus from his tomb he would, indeed, have been dead. In fact, you may wonder whether all the things that have been said about Jesus’ own death were true. But I shall not talk about this: I don’t want to trouble too many Christian consciences.³

Those who are dead and buried do not rise again; it is the living who rise again, the living who are plunged in lethargy like the trees that ‘die’ in winter, or like a seed ‘buried’ in the ground. To all appearances the seed dies before it begins to sprout and grow, which explains the phrase ‘*Unless you die you will not live.*’ We have to die while still remaining alive. So the word ‘death’ implies a different form of life. When Jesus said, ‘Unless you die you will not live’, he was saying that if your selfish tendencies die you will live with the new life of the spirit, the life of glory. In reality, therefore, this is not really death, for someone who is really and truly dead does not rise again.

So now you understand that only the body of glory is immortal: Jesus did not rise from the dead in his physical body. But there is another thing that Christians do not know either, and that is that Jesus is still alive; he has never left the world. Didn’t he reveal this to his disciples when he said, ‘*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age*’?

Our body of glory is there, within us, in the form of a seed. And what do you do with a seed? You plant it in the ground, and then you take care of it and keep it watered so that it can sprout and grow and become a tree, that is to say, a strong, full-grown body. The full-grown body is already there; the seed contains it in all its potential: its full stature, all its beauty and its fruits are already there. But if we do not nourish it with our dew, that is to say, with our thoughts and feelings, our warmth and light, it will die.

We do not create our own body of glory; each human being is endowed with it from the start in the form of an atom, and the work of disciples consists in warming, protecting and nourishing it with their thoughts and feelings, their ardour and their sacrifices. When disciples nourish their body of glory with every drop of their blood and every ounce of their strength, it becomes their own body. They leave their physical body behind and take off into space in their light body, to dwell among the stars and visit the whole of

creation.

And that is the resurrection: that intensity of life with which men and women endow their body of glory by means of thoughts, feelings and actions that bear the imprint of the divine, that is to say, bear the mark of disinterestedness, abnegation and sacrifice. Whereas those who do nothing for their fellow men and women will be buried in death, for death is just that: the absence of love. All great Masters have always insisted on the necessity of giving, of being capable of giving up something of oneself to help others. Humans can only surpass themselves by giving in a spirit of the greatest possible light and purity. This is why, in the past, it was ordained that they should offer the first-fruits of their crops or the first-born of their flocks to the Lord: the first sheaf of wheat, the first bunch of grapes, the first lamb of the year, represented their purest and most precious possessions.

And you, too, as I have already said, when you delight in seeing something beautiful, when you are moved by a lovely poem or a piece of music, when your whole being thrills in response to beauty, remember to use those pure particles of joy emanating from you to nourish your body of glory.

Yes, just think of all the means that are available to you and that you can use to hasten this process. For, naturally, it takes a very long time to build this body: think how long it takes for an acorn to become an oak tree! So, you must give your body of glory nourishment more often and in greater quantities, and this means that you must organize your life in such a way as to create the best possible conditions for your spiritual life. I am sure that you now understand why I always insist so much on the importance of not cutting yourselves off from the Godhead, of never ceasing to give, to radiate, to project the best of yourselves.

At the moment, the body of glory is only a tiny seed within humans, but that seed is gloriously predestined to make gods of them.⁴ Jesus rose again, and this means that we too can rise again. I know that most Christians would say, 'Yes, but Jesus was the Son of God; he was already perfect when he came to earth, but we are not Gods, so stop badgering us!' And, in this way, they excuse all their weaknesses. No, my dear brothers and sisters, the Church has made a very great mistake in teaching that Jesus was the only Son of God; a mistake that has had deplorable results. Jesus was, indeed, the Son of God, but so are we; less exalted no doubt, not as great as Jesus, but we are, nevertheless, of the same nature and capable of becoming like him.

Jesus rose again, and we too can rise. For God has placed in each one of us

this minute germ, the atom that is the seed of the body of glory, capable of making us divine. This is why Jesus could say, ‘... *the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these...*’

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¹ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Coll. n° 236, chap. 15: ‘Binah: I The laws of destiny’.

² See *Man’s Psychic Life: Elements and Structures*, Izvor Coll. 222, chap. 3: ‘Several souls and several bodies’.

³ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Coll. n° 240, chap. 10: ‘Jesus, dead and resurrected?’.

⁴ See *The Philosopher’s Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor Coll. n° 241, chap. 13: ‘The growth of the divine seed’.

