

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

LIFE AND WORK
IN AN
INITIATIC SCHOOL
Training for the Divine

Part 1



Complete Works

P R O S V E T A

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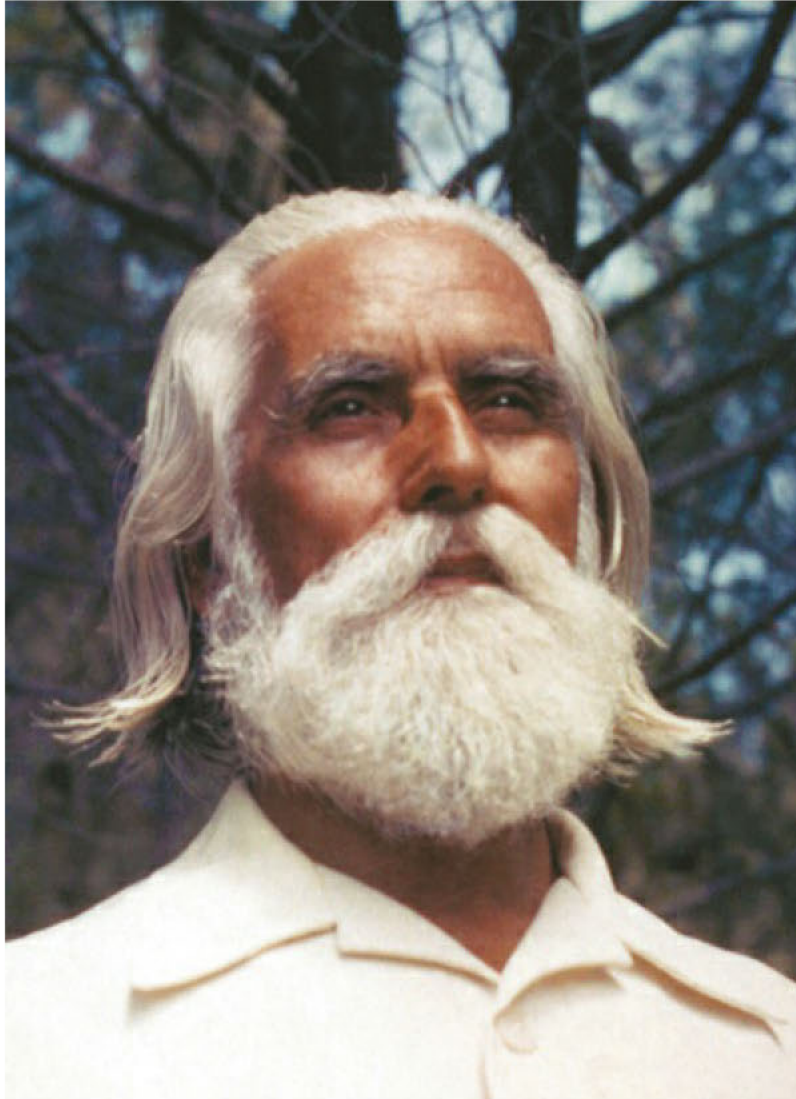
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Readers are asked to note that Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov's teaching was exclusively oral. This volume includes passages from several different lectures all dealing with the same theme.

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov



Chapter One

The international Day of the sun

Question: Master, my friends and I have been with you only a few days, but we are amazed by everything you have already told us. There is so much that is new and of great importance for our lives.

This year, France and several other countries have planned a special day of celebration of the sun. In this context, we should like to ask you to talk to us about the importance of the sun and of light in our physical and spiritual development.

The subject of light constitutes one of the most important chapters of spiritual science. There is so much to say about it, in fact, that I wonder how I can possibly answer you in a few words.

Before talking about light itself, we should talk about the sun, for light has its origin in the sun. Scientists still have no very clear idea of what the sun is. They say it is an immense furnace, that the temperature at the centre reaches some 15 million degrees centigrade, and that this heat is produced by a constant process of atomic fusion in which hydrogen is transformed into helium. The truth is that the only human beings who have actually visited the sun and the other planets, the only ones, therefore, who know their true nature, are the great initiates who are capable of journeying through space in their astral body. I have already talked a great deal about the sun (you will find some of those talks in my books, particularly in *The Splendour of Tiphareth*).¹ I have told you, for instance, that initiates consider light rays, which science describes as a stream of photons, to be like tiny vehicles, which not only transport the elements necessary to nourish and bring to full flowering the physical potential of animals, plants and human beings, but also contain many, far subtler elements we can use to further our spiritual growth.

You will, no doubt, be surprised to learn that gold, which has always been so greatly appreciated by human beings, was formed by the sun's rays. Just as there are factories on earth which turn out many different kinds of objects, so there are hidden factories under the earth in which millions of entities are employed in the production of gold by condensing the light of the sun.

You will say, 'But is it possible for gold to be a condensation of sunlight?' Indeed it is. In fact, it is quite simple. Take the example of a tree. The wood of a tree – especially such trees as pines, oaks or walnut trees – is so hard and compact that it can be used to build houses, boats, and so on. Because trees

grow in the ground, it is thought that they are made of earth, but it is not so. A tree is made of sunlight. If you burn a tree, however big and solid it is, it will produce a great quantity of flame, a lesser amount of gasses, even less water vapour and, finally, a small heap of ash. So much for the earth.

A tree, therefore, is composed of earth, water, air and fire, but it is the component of fire, sunlight, that is by far the largest. A tree is not made of earth, but of condensed sunlight. If you visit certain forests, such as those I have seen in India, Sri Lanka, the United States, Canada or Sweden, you will see that the trees – which must weigh millions and millions of tons – have not caused the level of the earth to sink one inch. If they had drawn all their elements from the earth, the surface of the soil would certainly have sunk several dozen – more likely, several hundred – metres. This is just one more proof that a tree consists of condensed sunlight. And since this is so, is there any reason why some of the entities that work under the earth should not condense the sun's rays and transform them into gold? Think about it!

I once knew a man who was obsessed by the desire for gold. He had acquired all sorts of books about hidden treasure and magical rites which were supposed to help him find it. For a long time, I left him to his quest without comment (and, of course, he never found anything), and then one day I asked him,

‘Why do you flirt with the chambermaid instead of trying to win the good graces of the lady of the house?’

He looked at me in great indignation, saying, ‘I’m a married man. I’m not flirting with anybody.’

‘I know you are married,’ I replied. ‘I also know that you are faithful to your wife, but I still say that you are trying to seduce the chambermaid.’

Well, of course, I had to explain what I meant.

‘You spend all your time looking for earthly gold, but gold is the chambermaid, whereas the lady of the house is sunlight, the sunlight that has been condensed in the womb of the earth and transformed into gold. When the lady of the house sees that instead of courting her you spend your time flirting with her maid, she is offended and turns you away from her door. From now on, address your attentions to the lady, to the light of the sun. Try to love her, to understand her, to win her favours. In this way, sooner or later, you will find gold. If you are the king’s friend, all his subjects respect you. But if you make friends only with the king’s door-keeper, nobody else will take any notice of you.’

My friend was very astonished by my explanations, and although he assured me that he understood, I rather doubt it, for he continued to send loving glances in the direction of the chambermaid.

So, as I say, gold is a condensation of sunlight.² And human beings are like trees, in that they consist for the most part of sunlight. This is why the more gold you have in your blood, the better your health.

The comparison with a tree can also help us to understand some of the things Jesus said. When the Pharisees, in the hope of tricking him into committing an indiscretion, asked if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, Jesus pointed to Caesar's image on a coin and said, '*Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*' The words are very well known and often quoted, but nobody has ever specified how much should be given to Caesar and how much to God. Who is Caesar? Caesar represents the physical body, the stomach and sex; they lay claim to everything, and most human beings respond by giving them all they have. But we must also give something to the Lord, to our higher self. The question is how much. Well, we have just seen that when a tree is burnt, only a handful of ashes remains on the ground; all the rest escapes upwards in the form of flames, gasses or water vapour. This is nature's answer to our question: we must give one quarter to Caesar and three quarters to the Lord.

Light possesses unknown powers, with which some of the ancient civilizations, notably Atlantis, were already familiar. We know, for instance, that they had immense crystals with which to capture and concentrate sunlight for the purpose of powering all kinds of machines and instruments. In our own day, scientists have developed the laser, a device producing an extremely powerful beam of light, with which many marvellous things can be achieved on the technical plane. But modern science still does not know all there is to know about the powers of light.

Now I should like to talk to you about the passage in the Gospels in which Jesus says, '*Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither worms nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.*' Jesus gave us this parable two thousand years ago, but it has never been properly interpreted; nobody has ever understood that thieves, worms and rust represent the dangers that threaten human beings in their three essential faculties: the mind, heart and will.

Now let us look at the danger that the rust, worms and thieves represent. It is well known that rust corrodes metals. The metal of a tool which is

constantly in use stays bright and shiny, but if it is left unused it becomes rusty. There are also many occasions in everyday life when we say that something or someone is rusty: the fingers of a pianist, for instance, become rusty if he or she does not practise regularly. And this applies to every area of life: those who are weak-willed and always ready to take the path of least resistance become rusty.

Worms are those little beasts that attack vegetable matter. They thrive in damp conditions, but dryness kills them. The animal kingdom, as you know, corresponds to the astral plane – the heart – and worms are the impure feelings such as hatred, jealousy, selfishness, contempt and revenge that consume the hearts of human beings and prevent them from producing succulent fruit. Only the warmth of divine love can kill the worms that live in our hearts.

And what about thieves? Thieves do their mischief when it is dark and nobody can see them; they symbolize the dangers that threaten the mind when it has lost its light. When human beings lose their light, thieves – mental aberrations, doubt and anxiety – invade them, robbing them of all their wealth, all their strength, sometimes even of their reason. A great many people are condemned to end their days in psychiatric care, because they have driven light from their mind and so invited thieves to take advantage of the darkness. If you want to defend yourselves against thieves, you must switch on the light. Take a lesson from shopkeepers who leave their lights on all night as a protection against thieves.

I once had a conversation with some police inspectors, and they were surprised when I told them,

‘You are mistaken if you think that you can combat crime by increasing the number of law-enforcement officers and improving your methods of surveillance and detection, for external means will always be inadequate in this area. The only truly effective means is light.’

They looked at me in bewilderment: ‘Light? But how?’

‘Think about it for a moment,’ I said. ‘If criminals are free to break the law and plan elaborate hold-ups, kidnappings and assassinations, it is because they know that most people do not suspect them. The average person’s intuition is not sufficiently keen to warn them to take special precautions. If they had an inner light, a sixth sense that warned them in advance and from a distance of a plan to rob or injure them, they could take precautions and the criminals would be foiled. The only way to eliminate crime, therefore, is by

means of light. That is why we have to teach people to enhance their inner light. This is going to take a long time, but it is the only reliable way.'

Needless to say, the police inspectors were considerably surprised. Such a thing had never entered their mind.

Until human beings enhance their inner light, which is the only thing that can enable them to see and foresee, they will continue to be taken unawares by criminals, who spend all their time and energy on planning their misdeeds. Even the most sophisticated technical means of protection against theft are inadequate, because the thieves also use them. Look at how many successful bank robberies there are every year! In spite of armoured cars, electronic alarm systems, and so on, the criminals succeed, because their technology is more highly perfected than that of their victims. Crime will be stamped out only when human beings decide to use light.

And if light is the most effective protection against thieves, it is also a protection against illness. Light bars the way to all the harmful elements, both physical and psychic, that attempt to enter and destroy a human being. We can be truly healthy only when we become capable of forming a pure and powerful aura containing all the colours of the spectrum. This is true medicine. Medicine is not to be found where people usually look for it. They continually break the laws of nature and commit every kind of self-destructive folly, and yet they still expect to be healthy. But their organism cannot stand the strain; everything breaks down. In spite of all the recent discoveries of medical science, there are always more and more new illnesses. The only remedy is to bring light into our thoughts, feelings and actions.

And now let us get back to the question of the sun. If I ask scientists who first initiated science, they may search their memories for a name, but in the end even they, who know so much, will have to confess that they do not know, because science was not introduced into the world by a human being but by the sun. People say that is impossible because the sun is not an intelligent being; it can neither think nor speak. Oh, of course, only ignorant human beings are intelligent, and this great being, which is the source of all life on earth, is not intelligent! But I say that the sun was, indeed, the first to initiate science. It is not difficult to understand this. When the sun gives its light, human beings can see objects, forms, contours, colours and distances. It is thanks to this light that they can see where they are going, that they can observe, compare and count. Without light science cannot exist. What can

you know in darkness? Nothing!

And now, if I were to ask what was the origin of religion, some self-styled philosophers would say that it was fear, the fear of the forces of nature. No, no, that is all nonsense! It was the sun that initiated religion. By giving human beings its warmth, it created within them a need for love and adoration, a need to unfold. Love cannot exist without warmth, and when human beings are warm, they experience a sense of wellbeing that causes them to unfold, and they begin to love. This was what gave rise to religion: warmth, love. For many it may begin as no more than an affection for a man or woman, or even for a pet – a cat, a dog, or a canary – but that does not matter; it is a beginning, and one day it becomes love and adoration of the Lord of the universe, of God.

Today, the predominant religion is the cult of money. Even those who claim to practise no religion pay homage to money: they build shrines in which they bow down and pray, meditate and invoke the power and the blessings of money. The god that reigns in their hearts and their heads is named Money. In fact, this is an indication that human beings instinctively adore the sun in the form of gold.

And now, what about art: who was the initiator of art? Once again, the answer is the sun, because it is the sun that gives life. With life comes the need to move, to act, to express oneself, and the result is dance, song, painting and sculpture. Art begins with life. Look at children: they are always moving, shouting, scribbling. Their shouts are the beginning of music; their scribbles, the beginning of painting; their little sand pies, the beginning of sculpture; their dolls' houses, the beginning of architecture; and all their fidgeting and jumping, the beginning of dance. Yes, art begins with life, and life comes from the sun.

The sun, which brings light, warmth, and life, is, therefore, the initiator of science, religion and art, but it is the last of the three – art – that human beings love and revere. This is why I would say to scientists, 'Forget about what you study in your laboratories and concentrate on the sun. The sun contains everything: health, wealth and the happiness of humanity.'

You will probably tell me that many astronomers and physicists study the sun. Yes, I know. I am aware of the scientific studies that are going on in the world, particularly in the United States and Russia. But they are looking principally for effective ways of defending their countries, and most of their work is destructive. Some are even using rats: they are studying the

possibility of sending rats to destroy submarines or nuclear power-stations by gnawing away the rubber insulation.

If I say that scientists pay no attention to the sun, it is because they have never seriously tried to find out what solar light is or how human beings can work with it, absorb it and thus strengthen and purify themselves. For the sun's rays, which are capable of reaching the depths of the ocean – thus enabling certain species of fish to capture and re-diffuse light – are also capable of penetrating the depths of those human beings who know how to receive them. And when this happens, they set in motion their psychic centres and light their inner lamps. For my part, as I have often said, the sun's rays are miniature wagons filled to the brim with foodstuffs – filled, that is, with all the elements and energies human beings need for their physical and psychic fulfilment. Our every need is contained in the light of the sun.

If I ask how long a human being can exist without eating, you will say thirty, forty, perhaps fifty days. And how long can we exist without drinking? Ten or fifteen days. And how long without breathing? Only a few minutes. It is clear, therefore, that the solid element – earth – is less important than the liquid element – water – and the liquid element is less important than the gaseous element – air. But what about fire? If I ask how long a human being can exist without fire, many people will say years, because they have heard of people who have survived for years without heating. No, I am not talking about that kind of fire: I am talking about the fire that burns within a human being. At the very instant that this fire is extinguished a human being dies. Yes, as soon as a person's heart loses its warmth, he or she dies. Fire, therefore, is the element that is most important for human beings. This is why they need to learn to nourish themselves with fire.

Here we have something that is completely new. Human beings have long been accustomed to nourishing themselves with the solid, liquid and gaseous elements. But what do they do with the fourth element: fire, light? Little or nothing. They have never learned to nourish themselves with light, and yet light is even more vital than air. This is why all those who criticize and ridicule us for attending the sunrise every morning are simply demonstrating their own ignorance. We attend the sunrise in order to be nourished by light. Instead of jeering at us they should do the same. Human beings need to nourish themselves with light, for light is the food of the brain. The brain, too, needs to be fed; and it feeds on light. It is light that awakens the brain's innate ability to communicate with the etheric plane. As long as human

beings are content to nourish their brain with solid, liquid and gaseous elements – those which it needs least – their understanding will always be very limited.

You will say that eating, drinking and breathing nourish the whole body, including the brain. That is true, but the result will be very different if you also feed your brain on the subtlest element, light. Tradition tells us that when Zarathustra asked the god Ahura-mazda how the first human beings nourished themselves, the god replied, ‘They ate fire and drank light.’ Fire and light are two different things. It is fire that produces light, but light is cold, whereas fire is hot. Fire is the masculine principle and light is the feminine principle.

In all their undertakings, human beings should always bear in mind that light is not only the most effective means to success but also the goal. Let me illustrate this. When primitive humans wanted to light a fire they had to rub two pieces of wood together, and the resulting friction first produced heat and then fire, light. The ultimate aim of everything we do, every gesture we make, should be to produce light. And this is especially true for lovers. They know how to produce heat, but it is obvious from their faces that they do not know how to produce light: they are neither enlightened nor illuminated. But I cannot explain this today; it would take too long.³

Initiatic Science teaches that each of our vital organs was formed with the help of the sun or one of the planets, and that the eyes were formed by the sun and moon together. Indeed, the eyes resemble the sun. We can see beings and physical objects only because light rays fall on them and make them visible. Without light we can see nothing. And this means that if there is a world that we cannot see, it is because we have not learned to project a ray of light onto the beings and objects that inhabit it. And if the initiates are capable of seeing so much that others cannot see, it is because only they know how to project light.

The world lives in ignorance of these truths. Indeed, is there anybody who would be willing to try and teach human beings how to project light through their heart and mind, their soul and spirit? It is so much more profitable to teach people how to get along in the material world, how to make money or secure a good job. The only trouble is that, however successful people may be on the physical plane, they are becoming increasingly ill and unhappy. This is why they need to make up their mind to work with light, and learn to project the light which alone enables us to see. Think of it: how is it that

nothing else – not even gold or precious stones, however exquisite and valuable – is capable of dispelling darkness? Why has the Creator endowed light alone with this extraordinary power? If you are familiar with the language of symbols, you will understand that by ‘darkness’ we mean all suffering and every form of weakness or illness, and that light alone is capable of protecting us from these things. It is useless to seek other solutions to your problems. Of course, when people want to explore an underground passage, a dark cave or cellar on the physical plane, they know that they need a light, but when it comes to their inner life, it never occurs to them to use light.

Only as our understanding of light grows can we also grow in our understanding of some of the things Jesus said. When he said, for instance, ‘*I am the light of the world*,’ what did he mean? Is it Jesus or Christ who is the light of the world? How is it that Christians have never realized that Jesus and Christ were two distinct entities working together? That Christ worked through Jesus? And Jesus is not the only human being through whom Christ has worked. If God really is love, as the scriptures say, how is it possible that he sent his son into the world to help human beings only once, two thousand years ago? After all, the human race has existed on this earth for millions of years, but according to the Church, no messenger was sent from heaven either before or after Jesus. The truth is that God has constantly sent his sons and daughters – for he has many – to help human beings, and if human beings are so stubborn as to refuse the help offered them, the blame is not God’s. Just as a Buddhist who attains perfection becomes Buddha, so can any Christian who lives in harmony with the divine laws become Christ. For Christ is not a human being but a divine principle, and every individual who is fit to do so can identify with him.⁴

Two different natures dwell in every human being: the lower nature, which we call the personality, and the higher or divine nature, which we call the individuality. Depending on their aspirations and activities, human beings give precedence to one or the other.⁵ In this, Jesus was no exception: he too had two natures. During his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, when his foreknowledge of the death he was to die caused him to sweat blood, Jesus begged his Father to spare him that torture. But if he had been God, would he have prayed to himself to be spared? No, the idea does not make sense. In reality, it was the man Jesus who uttered this prayer: it was his lower nature that begged to be spared. And when he was on the cross and cried out, ‘*My*

God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ this too was the voice of his personality. For the individuality is never afraid. The individuality of Jesus was Christ, and it is Christ, not Jesus, who is universal. It is Christ who is the light of the world.

If Jesus were God’s only son, how could God be the Father of all humankind? Christians are far outnumbered by Buddhists, Muslims, Jews and others who do not recognize Jesus. To believe that only Christians are God’s children is to say that God is not impartial. So, as I say, when Jesus said, *‘I am the light of the world,’* it was Christ who was speaking through him, that same Christ who gives light to the world through the sun. And it is precisely because the sun illuminates the whole world that it is the image of Christ.

But let us take our reflection a little further. During the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine and gave them to his disciples saying, *‘Take and eat, this is my body. Drink, this is my blood.’* At another time he said, *‘Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life.’* These words have been taken to mean that the bread and wine were the body and blood of Jesus. But this is incorrect. Here again, it was Christ who was speaking through Jesus. The bread and wine are not the body and blood of Jesus: they are the body and blood of Christ. In a few moments you will understand what this means.

The bread and wine are symbols of great significance, and they were known long before the time of Jesus. If you read the Bible, you will see that communion was first instituted by Melchizedek when he gave bread and wine to Abraham. Melchizedek was the king of justice (*malek* means ‘king’ in Hebrew, and *tsedek* means ‘justice’), and the name of his kingdom was Salem (a word that has the same root as *shalom*, ‘peace’). This is why Melchizedek is known as the king of justice and peace. He presented Abraham with bread and wine to reward him for his victory over the seven sinister kings of Edom. The seven kings represent the seven deadly sins, for you must not think that Melchizedek, the greatest of all initiates, went out to meet Abraham simply because he had defeated a few thousand enemies on the field of battle. Abraham lived in Ur in Chaldaea (ur means ‘light’). He practised magic and evoked the spirits, and it was on the advice of the spirits that served him that he went to Egypt to complete his initiation.

So, as I say, Melchizedek offered the bread and wine to Abraham. If you do not understand the value of these symbols, you might be tempted to think that it was a rather meagre reward. In fact, the bread and wine represent the

whole of Initiatic Science, which is based on the two cosmic principles perpetually at work in every region of the universe: the masculine principle (symbolized by the bread) and the feminine principle (symbolized by the wine). Bread and wine are solar symbols. It is not a question of physical bread and wine, but of the two properties of the sun – its heat and light – which together create life. The heat of the sun is love; its light is wisdom. Thus, Jesus was saying, ‘If you eat my body – wisdom – and drink my blood – love – you will have eternal life.’

In the last two thousand years, Christians have eaten tons of consecrated bread and drunk gallons of wine without obtaining eternal life – without even achieving any great improvement. They are still the same: still hostile, still jealous and cruel, still sickly and irresolute. And the Roman Catholic way of taking communion in the form of bread alone mutilates this great mystery of the two principles. The only way to obtain eternal life is to eat and drink the light and warmth of Christ, the solar spirit.

When human beings want to learn a trade, they know what to do and where to go: to learn to be a smith, they go to a smithy; to learn to paint, they go to a painter. But when they want to learn to live eternal life, they read books or look for answers proposed by people who are sick or who died centuries ago. Why do they never see that the only being who can teach us how to live eternal life is the sun, for the sun never dies? Why ask the poor how to become rich, the bald how to grow a thick head of hair, the weak how to become strong? Most people are taught to distrust those who are most highly evolved; they think they are not normal. They are ready to trust crooks, who are just waiting to despoil them, but they are suspicious of those who are not guided by self-interest, because they think it is not normal. They suspect anyone who seems disinterested of having some dishonourable ulterior motive. Poor, wretched human beings! They will always be deceived and despoiled, because they have no standards to judge by.

Bread and wine, wheat and grapes, symbolize the masculine and feminine principles. If you look at them closely, in fact, you will see that a grape seed is like a tiny phallus, and a grain of wheat resembles a woman’s organ. Wheat is white and grapes are red, and no child can be born without the white of the man and the red of the woman – the red of the blood which nourishes the child. The Bulgarians have a very ancient custom: at the beginning of spring, when life begins to be reborn, they wear two little pompoms, one white and one red. They may not know where this tradition comes from, but

they still follow it.

I should like to explain more about the true meaning of communion and how to approach it in a truly spiritual, divine way, but it would take too long. Human beings have reduced these symbols to their crudest and most material dimension, but they contain great wisdom and deep meaning – on condition, of course, that we understand them on the higher plane, not on the lower.

Priests bless the bread and wine so that they may be filled with divine life. I have no objection – nobody is more deeply convinced of the power of a blessing, the magical power of the logos – but I have to remind you that, since they contain life, it means that God has already blessed them long before the priest does so. Human beings do not have the power to confer life: they can only be intermediaries, the channels through which life is transmitted. If they were capable of conferring life, they would have the right to dispose of it as they please, and this, unfortunately – or perhaps I should say fortunately – is not the case. Life comes from somewhere else, from above. If a priest's blessing was truly potent, he could equally well bless and distribute some wood shavings or scraps of glass or metal. As you see, more light is still needed in this area. It is good to bless your food, but you must not imagine that it is the be-all and end-all. For God has already blessed it by filling it with life through the mediation of the sun.⁶

So it is the sun that provides light, warmth and life, and this can help us to understand one of the most obscure doctrines of Christianity: the mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

Christians, of course, have always claimed to believe in one God, but, judging from the way they speak of the Trinity, you might think that many of them believed in three: the Father, the Son (whom they identify with Jesus), and the Holy Spirit (and nobody seems to know exactly who the Holy Spirit is). If you refer to the image of the sun, you will see how much clearer the question becomes. The sun, which is one, represents the three manifestations of God: light, heat and life or, if you prefer, wisdom, love and truth. These are the three powers of one, unique centre. There is not a separate Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but a single God with a threefold manifestation. To take these three powers for three autonomous entities is a sign of extraordinary ignorance. Ask the sun and it will confirm what I say: there is one God, and this one God manifests in the form of light, heat and life – in the form, that is, of wisdom, love and truth.⁷

Each human being is also a trinity: they have a mind with which to think;

a heart with which to feel, and a will with which to act. Their mind, heart and will are not separate entities. In other words, a human being is created in the image both of the sun, which manifests itself as light, warmth and life, and of God, who manifests himself as wisdom, love and truth.

But although human beings were created in the image of God, they have not yet achieved a likeness to him. Genesis says that when God created humankind, he said, *'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness.'* And in the following verse it says: *'So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them.'* Why did Moses repeat the word image and leave out the likeness? This was his way of saying that although God thought of creating perfect human beings he did not do so; indeed, it will probably take humankind millions of years to attain divine perfection. At the moment, human beings are in the image of God: they think, feel and act. But as they are neither all-knowing, nor all-powerful, nor all-loving, they have not yet attained his likeness. They are on the way to achieving this likeness, however; through their successive incarnations they are advancing and coming closer to this ultimate goal. In fact, the law of reincarnation has to be understood in the context of this progression from image to likeness.

Consider an acorn: it is created in the image of an oak tree. It has all the elements it needs to grow into a tree, just like the one it came from, but it is not yet like it. Once it is planted and has had time to grow, it will begin to resemble its parent tree, but in the meantime it contains only its image; it has not yet achieved a likeness. And the same is true of a human being.

The sun is the most perfect portrayal of God in the visible world (in the invisible world God manifests himself in other ways). In reality, of course, nothing created can be the full and perfect expression of God – even the sun is an incomplete expression. It is beyond the powers of human imagination or understanding to have a clear notion of the breadth, length, height and depth of God.

One of the essential aspects of a solar philosophy is that it leads to the notion of universality. Just as the sun pours out its light and heat on all human beings, so does God's love embrace all human beings. This is why it is so ludicrous to try to get God 'on your side'. When two countries are at war, the priests of each country conduct solemn ceremonies in which they bless the army and its weapons and implore the Lord to grant them victory and annihilate the enemy. Each country addresses itself more particularly to

one person of the Trinity (one to the Father, one to the Son) and offers up whatever they think they should in the way of prayers or incense to mollify the Lord and get him on their side. And then what happens? No doubt Father and Son are constantly squabbling, each of them wanting to give the victory to his own protégé. No doubt this is what must have happened during World War II. The one who had taken the Germans under his wing must have pleaded their cause very effectively in the heavenly tribunals, for they began by gaining the upper hand. And then the situation was reversed, and the French finally won – with the help, of course, of the English and Americans, whose priests had performed similar ceremonies. What a deplorable mentality! You must never try to bribe the Lord. From an ordinary human point of view it seems normal to do so; people feel that they must look after their own interests. Yes, but if you rise to the level of the Lord, you will see that, like the sun, he is utterly impartial. In fact, he leaves human beings free to slaughter each other, since this obviously gives them so much pleasure.

Perhaps some people will say, ‘But the Lord himself is in favour of extermination and revenge. The Old Testament says that he even ordered the execution of every first-born in Egypt.’ No, I do not believe that; the stories in the Bible are there for a reason, but they must not be taken literally. Some are symbolic; others have been adapted to suit the mentality of a certain era; still others have been added by certain people with the intention of misleading human beings. But one day the light will come to illuminate the world and reveal everything, and then many errors will be corrected and truth will be reinstated.

The Old Testament often portrayed God as a fearsome, vindictive, jealous, destructive being, a consuming fire. And think of all the damage he managed to do, even though he was all alone! What would it be like if there were three such Gods? No, as long as this Old Testament image of an angry, jealous, cruel and vindictive God is not replaced by the image of the sun, human beings will continue to massacre and devour each other. They are doing no more than imitating their God – how can you blame them?

God is neither cruel nor jealous, nor vindictive. He never punishes anybody. But as human beings are so mulish and so much in need of some lessons, he sends some of his servants to administer those lessons. There are a certain number of inflexible laws in the universe, and those who fail to conform are ground to dust by them. And the Lord may not even know about this,⁸ for, contrary to popular opinion, God is not constantly spying on human

beings and recording all their crimes, all their filth and depravity. What a way that would be for the Lord to pass his time! Truly, if he preferred the spectacle of such horrors to the splendour of his angels and archangels, it would mean he had no sense of beauty.

I think you are beginning to understand me. The Old and even the New Testament will not be valid for all eternity, for a great many changes will come about before very long. There was a first Testament which was based exclusively on justice. Why did God accept a second Testament if the first was satisfactory? The existence of this second Testament shows that spiritual things, too, are subject to evolution. And since the second Testament seems to have been necessary, why should there not be a third, which will be even closer to the truth and to perfection?

Let us look at one or two examples. In the first Testament, Solomon says, '*There is nothing new under the sun.*' That is true, but there is no reason why the third Testament should not say: 'Everything is new in the sun.' Yes, it is just as true and much better to say that everything is new in the sun. Why should we remain down below forever?

In the second Testament it says: '*Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.*' But why should we not improve on this and say: 'Do not ask, and it will be given to you; do not search, and you will find; do not knock, and the door will be opened for you.' Christians, of course, will exclaim in horror that this makes no sense. Ah, but it does! Those who are already living a spiritual life, the life of Christ, do not need to ask; the invisible world knows what they need and gives it to them without being asked. Neither do they need to search, because thanks to their divine way of thinking, feeling and acting, they are bound to find the truth. And, as the life they are living is perfect, the invisible world will open all doors for them.

Those whose life is perfect have already achieved a great deal, whereas the others will never find or receive anything: no doors will open for them, no matter how much they search, or ask, or knock. In any case, they do not even know what they should ask for, what they should be looking for, or what they should knock on, and why. Inspired by this threefold precept, they start looking for money, women or pleasure. They ask for a position in society that will enable them to boss other people. They knock on their wife's or their neighbour's head (and behold, the prison doors open for them!). None of this has anything to do with what Jesus had in mind. What exactly did Jesus have

in mind? I will tell you.

It is the mind that seeks: it seeks the light, and when it finds it, it sees. All obscurity and darkness are dispelled. It is the heart that asks: it asks to love and be loved; it asks for warmth, joy, happiness and love – true, divine love. Finally, it is the will that knocks: it knocks to open the door of the cell in which human beings are imprisoned. The will knocks in order to be unshackled, released from prison so as to be free to act, to create.

It is not really so difficult to find the light; the trouble is that people make no effort to do so. I have met many highly respectable people, laden with decorations and honorary titles, who have told me they were seeking the truth. I would look at them, and ask,

‘But how old are you?’

‘Seventy,’ they might say.

‘Seventy! And you have still not found truth? I can tell you that truth has already presented itself to you several times, but you have always sent it away, saying, “You’re not the one I’m looking for. I’m looking for a truth that will do my laundry, cook my meals, give me children and money.” In other words, what you are looking for is a servant. But truth is not a servant. Truth is a queen, and you who must serve her.’

Of course, when I tell them this, such people are astonished, and often very offended. But I assure you, if people do not find truth it is because they are not honestly searching for it. If someone sincerely wants to serve truth, it presents itself to them at once.⁹

Other people come and tell me that they do not know what is right and what is wrong. They think that this entitles them to do whatever they please. I tell them, ‘No, you know perfectly well what is right and what is wrong, but you do not want to admit it. Suppose you feel an impulse to do something, and you are not sure whether it is right or wrong – let us say that you feel like hitting, or swindling, or seducing and then abandoning someone. Before doing anything, put yourself in the place of that person and imagine that it is you who receive the blow, you who are swindled, who are seduced and abandoned. If you did this you would soon see how painful, unjust and dishonest it would be.’ Why do people always justify their behaviour on the pretext that they do not know what is right or wrong? They only need to remember the precept: *‘In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you.’*

In winter, even though there are many seeds in the ground, nothing grows,

because the sun gives too little heat and light. But with the increased light and warmth of spring, these seeds begin to shoot up out of the ground. Everybody knows this, but they do not understand. If they understood they would have drawn the obvious conclusions and seen that the same phenomenon occurs in a human being. In every human being there are seeds, seeds of the qualities and virtues that God planted within us hundreds and thousands of years ago, but which have not grown because they have never been exposed to the spiritual sun. This is why, by going to see the sun rising every morning during spring and summer, we are trying to give these seeds the best possible conditions in which to germinate and manifest themselves, for we know that the sun is the most perfect image of the Deity. As for those who think that they are sufficiently intelligent and knowledgeable to scorn this practice, their seeds will remain buried for all eternity.

Expose yourselves to the sun's rays every morning, and your seeds will begin to grow. You will become a garden full of flowers and delicious fruit. Fruit that gets no sunlight remains green, sour and bitter, whereas when it is exposed to the sun, it becomes brightly coloured, sweet and tasty.

I know, of course, that many people sunbathe on the beaches, but they do so in the afternoon, at a time when the sun's rays are no longer beneficial, but actually harmful. You should expose yourselves to the sun in the morning, for it is then that its rays contain the most beneficial influences that can make you stronger and more lucid. Very early in the morning, of course, it is cold, and you have to dress warmly when you attend the sunrise, even in summer – although, in an attempt to discredit us, some people have spread the tale that we are naked during the sunrise. How strange that we never catch cold! Above all, how strange that the journalists' photographs have always shown us warmly wrapped up!

Actually, we do not attend the sunrise for the sole purpose of developing our qualities and virtues. There are other reasons as well, other exercises that are part of a true yoga – the yoga of the sun. While I was in India I studied the various forms of yoga – Karma-yoga, Agni-yoga, Bhakti-yoga, Shabda-yoga, Laya-yoga, Kriya-yoga, Raja-yoga, Jnana-yoga, Tantra-yoga, Hatha-yoga – but I have discovered a form of yoga that does not exist in India, the yoga of the sun, which I call Surya-yoga.

The thing that prevents Christians from making progress is the fact that they continually confuse Jesus and Christ. They think that because Christ shed his blood for them all their sins are washed away, and they are now free

to go on eating and drinking to excess, fighting, committing crimes and ruining their health. Well, in the first place, it was not Christ – who is a cosmic principle – but Jesus who shed his blood on the cross. Jesus shed his blood in order to blaze a new trail, a new path for humankind, the path of love, forgiveness, faith and purity, and human beings will be saved only if they walk that path.¹⁰ Jesus was neither omnipotent nor omniscient: only Christ has these attributes.

Years ago I knew a man who seemed very ordinary, very much like everybody else, except that he often prayed and meditated. And one day the spirit of Christ must certainly have visited him, because all of a sudden, by examining the iris of people's eyes, he could diagnose their illnesses and tell them how to heal themselves. Those who knew him were very astonished, because he had never studied medicine; in fact, he had had very little schooling of any kind. Unfortunately, his success made him very vain and self-important, and as it also made him rich, he began to indulge himself and live a very materialistic life. And the astonishing thing is that before long, as though the spirit had abandoned him, he lost his gift and became so insignificant that nobody would have anything to do with him anymore. Today he is destitute. This shows that he and the spirit were two quite separate beings; when the spirit withdrew, he no longer had the power to heal.

Christians are unwilling to understand that the spirit of Christ that dwelt in Jesus dwells, in reality, in the entire universe and manifests itself through the sun. The things they have been taught to believe in are of very slight importance: icons, candles, holy water, hosts, statues and churches built by human hands. But if you ask them to enlarge their concepts, to see that Christ manifests himself throughout the universe and that he can be found in the sun... Oh, no, no! That is against the doctrines of their religion. And this is why, in spite of their religion, Christians are always ineffectual and without resources.

I have often asked people why, if Jesus was God, he had to spend nine months in his mother's womb. And when he was born, did he have teeth? Was he immediately able to walk and talk, or did it take time for him to learn, just like other children? The answer, of course, is that he, too, had to learn; he, too, had to grow up. It was not until he was thirty that he received the spirit of Christ and began to work miracles. Why be afraid to recognize the truth?

I could reveal many other great mysteries to you if you were ready for them, but most of you are not yet able to bear them. Religion contains a sufficient number of profound truths, which are accessible to most human beings and can be very useful to those who make the effort to understand them.

Now, to those of you who are truly eager to advance on the path of self-mastery and perfection, I will give a key: the key of the human organism. Each organ of the body has its speciality and takes care of its own department without worrying about what the other organs are doing. We do not expect one organ to be concerned about the whole body. However, in order to ensure the harmony of the whole, the cosmic spirit has given human beings a higher intelligence, whose task it is to supervise and control the work of each specialized organ and ensure that it functions smoothly and contributes to the welfare of the whole.

Human beings are placed, as it were, between this intelligence and their physical organs, and if they give precedence to the stomach or the sexual organs, for instance, and neglect the rest of the collectivity, they will be overcome by chaos and disorder and will end in a state of inner anarchy. But if they give precedence to this intelligence, if they allow it to rule and to establish a state of equilibrium, they will experience an inner harmony that enables them to work and create tirelessly. Take the case of the sexual organs: do you think they care whether the person they belong to is a priest, a pastor or a cardinal? No, they are not interested in his religious convictions; their only concern is to act according to their nature. Their impertinence is such that they are liable to be aroused even when their owner is meditating or praying. Imagine what a state human beings would be in if there were no higher principle to control their organs and impose some kind of order.

I say this simply to show you how important it is for human beings to give precedence in their lives to the spiritual, divine dimension. All the disorder that we see around us in the world today comes from the fact that this spiritual element is not appreciated or considered important. Of course, I know that those who do not agree with me will say that I am contemptuous, cold-hearted and proud, that I refuse to recognize that there are so many marvellous beings in the world. No, no, you are quite wrong! I know all there is to know about human beings – all their strengths and all their weaknesses. You cannot imagine the wealth of experience I have had in the course of nearly eighty years. And it is this experience that tells me that it is impossible

for those who have not yet begun to vibrate in harmony with the spirit to see things from my point of view. Once you sense that the light of heaven has touched you, however, you will recognize the splendour, the immensity of the divine spirit at work in the universe, and then you will agree with me. You will see that those you associate with every day are often so lack-lustre, so intolerant, ineffectual and sickly.

And now, I want to give you this formula of the highest ideal, an ideal for you to follow and live by:

Have a heart as pure as crystal,

A mind as luminous as the sun,

A soul as vast as the universe

And a spirit as powerful as God and one with God.

Without this ideal you will always be a prisoner of your own opinions, your own purely personal point of view. You will never possess the truth.

Human beings are still like children – little girls who cry because a leg or arm of their doll is broken; little boys solemnly playing with their tin soldiers as though they were the only thing that mattered. They do not know that one day, as time goes on, their point of view, their conception of life, will change.

Let me give you some good advice. At every step of the way, ask yourself whether your opinions are in keeping with reality. Make up your mind to keep inquiring, to keep searching for someone whose understanding is closer to the truth. Unfortunately, people are too convinced that they are right, too attached to their mistaken opinions. They do not realize that these opinions are based on the appetites and the instinctual likes and dislikes of their lower nature. They spend their life clinging to their prejudices, their involuntary feelings of attraction or repulsion, without trying to see what things are like in reality.

Now I would like to tell you a little about Melchizedek. Melchizedek is the master of all spiritual masters; every great master is instructed by him. Melchizedek lives in the Himalayas, and St Paul says of him that he has neither father nor mother, nor beginning nor end of days. St Paul also says that Jesus was of the order of Melchizedek. The Eucharist, instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper, simply reproduces the rite learned from Melchizedek. It was Melchizedek who first instituted it.^{[11](#)}

It is extraordinary to see how ignorant Christians are about Melchizedek. No doubt this is because the Church has always tried to deny that he was superior to Jesus. But if, as St Paul says, Jesus belonged to the order of

Melchizedek, it means that Melchizedek was his superior. I have sometimes spoken to priests – Franciscans, Dominicans or Jesuits – about the passage in Revelation that describes the man with snow white hair who appeared to St John standing in the midst of the seven gold lamps, with a two-edged sword coming from his mouth and seven stars in his right hand. When I asked them who this person was, they all said that it was Jesus.

‘But poor Jesus!’ I would say. ‘What must he have been through to have hair so white!’

‘Well, if it was not Jesus,’ they suggested, ‘perhaps it was God the Father.’

No, it was not God the Father either, for nobody has seen the Father. It was Melchizedek. The seven lamps and the seven stars mean that he possesses all knowledge and all powers, and the two-edged sword in his mouth is the symbol of the divine Word, which has the power to create and to destroy. During the eighteen years that Jesus was away from Palestine he was in the Himalayas, being instructed by Melchizedek. It was he who asked Melchizedek to appear to his beloved disciple, St John. There is a manuscript in the monastery of Ladakh, in Kashmir, that tells the story of Jesus’ life. It tells of his first stay in India, from the age of twelve to twenty-nine, of his life and teaching in Palestine, of his crucifixion and, finally, of his second stay in India, where he died when he was more than a hundred years old.¹² When I was in Kashmir in 1959, I obtained permission to read the English translation of this manuscript.

St Paul also says of Melchizedek that he was ‘*priest of the Most High God*’. This function corresponds to the sephirah Kether. Each sephirah has its priests who offer sacrifice, and Melchizedek belongs to the highest sephirah. This is why it is he who instructs all the high initiates and prepares them for their task. One day he will enter and dwell in some of them in order to accomplish a tremendous work for humanity that has never yet been accomplished. It was for Melchizedek that Master Peter Deunov wrote his song, Ide, Ide, moshtnia, silnia, ‘He is coming, he is coming, the mighty one, the strong one.’

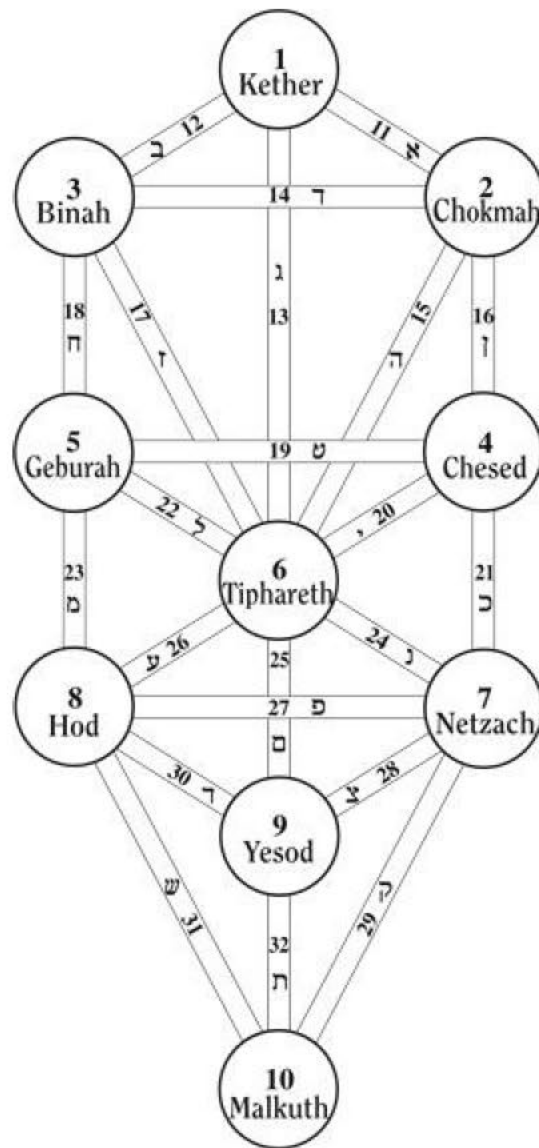
It is no wonder that human beings are so often in a state of anxiety and confusion, feeling as though light had abandoned them, for they have never learned to raise their consciousness above the clouds, where the ever-shining sun would illuminate them. The symbolism of clouds, which hide the sun, is easy to understand: you must keep looking for the sun if you want to be free

of the difficulties and inconveniences of life. The sun is always present, always ready to help and enlighten us: it is we human beings who are not present, who hide ourselves away goodness knows where! It is up to you now to understand what this means – and blessed are those who understand!

Let me give you yet another analogy. Which regions of the earth are the first to receive the sun's rays as it rises above the horizon – lowlands and deep valleys, or mountain tops? Everybody knows that it is the mountain tops. But if everybody knows this, how is it that they have never interpreted the meaning of this phenomenon? Why do they always conclude that it is the initiates who are mistaken and the rank and file of ordinary people who have the right point of view? Is it reasonable to suppose that the Lord would reveal himself to all kinds of people who have no higher consciousness, no moral sense, who stop at nothing to satisfy the appetites of their lower nature, and refuse his light to the initiates, who live lives of such purity and self-abnegation? Oh, yes, people believe that it is the initiates who are wrong. Ask anybody and you will see: the initiates are wrong and the masses are right. Can they not see how illogical their reasoning is? The truth is that the first to be illuminated, the first to vibrate in unison with light, the first to discover sublime truths are the initiates – the genuine initiates, not the false ones who are so numerous today. As for those who choose to remain on the lowest levels, who knows when they will see the light?

In my two books, *The Mysteries of Yesod* and *The Splendour of Tiphareth*,¹³ I explain several aspects of the sephirothic Tree or Tree of Life, and today I want to give you some food for thought by adding to those explanations.¹⁴

The Tree of Life rests on three pillars. On the central pillar are the five sephiroth, *Kether*, *Daath* (which is hidden in mystery), *Tiphareth* (the sun), *Yesod* (the moon), and *Malkuth* (the earth). What do these five sephiroth represent? *Kether* represents the spirit; *Daath*, the soul; *Tiphareth*, the intellect, the mental plane; *Yesod*, the astral plane, the heart, and *Malkuth*, the physical plane, the body. The relative positions on the Tree of Life of *Tiphareth*, the sun, and *Yesod*, the moon, show us that the light of *Tiphareth* passes through the purity of *Yesod* to illuminate *Malkuth*. Similarly, when the light of the intellect passes through the purity of the heart, it illuminates the body and all its cells, thus ensuring their health and vigour. The whole universe is flooded with light, but that light can penetrate us only when we are as pure and transparent as crystal.



chosen people of the Lord, loved and preferred above all others. To them, all non-Christians were unredeemed heathens. But now the sun comes along and tells us that the Lord has chosen not the few but the many. Just as the sun shines for all human beings, so is the Lord there for all his children. If this were not the case we should have to conclude that the sun is more loving and generous than God. The sun tolerates the just and the unjust, saints and criminals alike; it warms, illuminates and gives life to all. It is magnanimous, munificent and endlessly patient. For thousands of years it has been giving human beings its light in order to help them to attain perfection. This is why the mission of the third testament will be to unite all religions in the one, solar religion. Every day, the sun shows all the men and women of the world how to be luminous, warm and alive; how to do only good, so that everything on earth may grow and prosper magnificently.

The sun is always there, always alive. It is all the same to it if you fire your cannons at it – it just goes on smiling. If you do not believe me, look at the way children always portray the sun with a smile that stretches from ear to ear. ‘Hurrah for the sun,’ say children, and because of their love it will always be there, always the most perfect representation of the grandeur, the nobility, the love and might of the Lord. As for those who remain prisoners of their old, outworn notions, they are the losers. The sun does not care a jot!

You are probably astonished to see how the sun can correct many wrong notions, not only in questions of science, philosophy and the arts, but even in the area of religion. And if the teaching of the Universal White Brotherhood places so much emphasis on the sun, the only true representation of the might and magnificence of the Lord, it is because the sun teaches us to illuminate those who are in darkness, to warm hearts that have grown cold, to restore life to the dead.

May all the blessings of heaven be yours!

Waimanalo (Hawaii), 30 May 1979

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‘Take and eat, this is my body’ – *Matt. 26:27*

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

‘So God created humankind...’ – *Gen. 1:27*

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‘There is nothing new under the sun’ – *Eccl. 1:10*

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

Jesus, priest according to the order of Melchizedek – *Heb. 7:21*

The man with snow white hair – *Rev. 1:12-16*

Only the pure of heart will see God – *Matt. 5:8*

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

¹ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth – The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10.

² See *A New Dawn – Society and Politics in the Light of Initiatic Science*, Complete Works, vol. 25, chap. 6: ‘Gold or the light?’; *The Philosopher’s Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor coll., n° 241, chap. 14: ‘the gold of true knowledge: the alchemist and the gold prospector’.

³ See *Love and Sexuality*, Complete Works, vol. 15, chap. 4: ‘The goal of love is light’ and chap. 19: ‘Look for love at its source’.

⁴ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor coll., n° 240, chap. 7: ‘The man Jesus and the cosmic principle of the Christ’.

⁵ See *Man’s Two Natures, Human and Divine*, Izvor coll n° 213, chap. 2: ‘The lower self is a reflection’.

⁶ See *The Yoga of Nutrition*, Izvor Collection n° 204, chap. 9: ‘The meaning of the blessing’.

⁷ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth – The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 4: ‘The sun reflects the blessed Trinity’ and chap. 15: ‘The sun is in the image and likeness of God’.

⁸ See *Cosmic Moral Law*, Complete Works, vol. 12.

⁹ See *Truth: Fruit of Wisdom and Love*, Izvor Collection n° 234.

¹⁰ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor Collection n° 240, chap. 11: ‘Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross: the powers of blood’.

¹¹ See above, chap. 6: ‘Jesus: high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek’.

¹² See above, chap. 10: ‘Jesus: dead and resurrected?’

¹³ See *The Mysteries of Yesod*, Complete Works, vol. 7; *The Splendour of Tiphareth – The Yoga of the Sun*, Complete Works, vol. 10.

¹⁴ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor Collection n°

236, chap. 2: 'Introduction to the sephirotic Tree of Life'.

¹⁵ See *The Mysteries of Yesod*, Complete Works, vol 7, Part I, chap. 10: 'Blessed are the pure in heart'.

Chapter Two

The Bonfin

I

Today I want to say a few words to help you to make your stay at the Bonfin more agreeable, for the days you spend here will be quite unlike anything you might experience elsewhere. This is why I have to explain some things to you in advance, otherwise you will be bored, and then your time will be wasted. There are no recreational facilities here, you see – no swimming pools, cinemas, casinos or sports. How boring!

On an ocean-going liner, as you know, one of the main concerns of captain and crew is to see that the passengers are not bored. There are bars, swimming pools, dances, cinemas, sports and concerts. I once travelled on one of these ships and had the opportunity to see for myself what life on board ship was like. I was amazed at the number and variety of ways in which the passengers were amused and entertained, all day and all night. Well, this kind of shipboard life is a good illustration of the mentality of most human beings, who are always looking for new pastimes, new ways of amusing themselves. Nobody has ever told them that they have within themselves all the faculties and powers they need in order to transform their lives, to find peace, freedom and happiness. It only remains for them to awaken those inner powers. Nobody has told them this, so they continue to look for happiness outside themselves, and the result is that they are perpetually dissatisfied.

Of course, it is impossible to do without some external things, but we should give precedence to the resources of our own inner world, for it is essentially in that inner world that we exist. You are not perpetually touching, tasting, looking at or listening to something external, whereas you are always with yourself, and this self in which you are immersed is a world of thoughts and feelings you have not yet learned to use. As long as you rely on the world around you, you will constantly be disappointed. For a short while, perhaps, you may have the impression that you have a hold on something substantial, but before long that something vanishes and you are left with nothing. Human beings are always looking for fulfilment, but they do not know that the first place to look for it is within themselves.

You, my dear brothers and sisters, are no exception to this. You do not

really understand what is essential in life, what your primary concern should be. You still waste your time and energy on activities that you believe to be necessary to your happiness, but I very much doubt that they really are.

However much you gain in this way, it will not be the things you really need or want. I can say this because I know what human beings want. I also know what they need, even if they themselves do not know it. You will tell me that you know people who have no intellectual or artistic needs and certainly no spiritual needs; physical pleasure is all they need. Yes, of course, I know many people like that also. I have met a great many people in different parts of the world, and I know that there are all kinds.

But what you do not know is that all these people, however crude and unpolished they may be, were built in the same workshops as the greatest geniuses and initiates. The time has not yet come for them to manifest the same gifts and virtues, but it will come one day, and when it does, they too will seek immensity, fulfilment, the Godhead. One day, they will understand that the activities and objects of the material world are necessary only as a support, a vehicle, an outer shell, to sustain, protect and contain divine life, the life of the spirit. Once they begin to understand that the essential is invisible, and that what they took to be essential was no more than the outer wrapping, they will look at things differently. Yes, it is their point of view that will change: instead of paying attention only to the containers, they will pay attention to the contents. Or, as they will have emptied the containers of their contents, they will start to fill them again, and life will truly begin for them. You must not attach more importance to the container than to the contents, but neither must you neglect or destroy it, for then the contents will be spilled and lost.

Why am I telling you these things? Because the time has come for you to learn not to squander your energies, for they are very precious. Heaven gave them to you, and heaven is going to watch and see how you use them.¹ If you use up all the energies of your heart, mind and will in non-essential activities, they will eventually be taken away from you in one way or another. Of course, I know that many of you will find what I am saying extremely distasteful; you would much rather be sitting at a table laden with a good joint of ham and a bottle of wine – material or symbolic ham and wine!

People sometimes realize that they have gone astray. Their conscience tells them that their soul abhors the way they behave, and they resolve to return to the path of light. Then, after a while, they find themselves straying

once more, and once more they shed tears of remorse and pray for strength, and the whole pattern is repeated all over again. This means that their intelligence is sufficiently alive to the situation for them to recognize that their behaviour is neither virtuous, nor noble, nor even aesthetic. To understand this is already something, but it is not enough. They still need to run for shelter – that is, they need to frequent people or organizations that can help them. Unfortunately, this is not what men and women usually do. On the contrary, they tend to isolate themselves, thus becoming progressively weaker, for since they deprive themselves of their only protection, they are attacked by entities from the astral plane. This is why, when you sense that you are being threatened by hostile forces that are trying to trip you up, you must immediately run to the Brotherhood – if not physically, at least psychically – and ask for help. And as the Universal White Brotherhood is a bulwark, an impregnable fortress, you will be safe.

The great question is how to transform yourself. Let me give you an image. When a snake wants to go through a narrow opening, its head goes through first and, however long its body may be, its tail is obliged to follow. As a snake advances with a rippling, sinuous motion, the tail will often seem to be going in the opposite direction to the head, but it always ends by following the same path as the head. For head and tail are not separate; the tail always goes where the head goes. This example does not strike you as being very remarkable, and yet it symbolizes the whole of divine pedagogy. The head represents our ability to reason and reflect, and the rest of the body – that is, our actions – is obliged to follow our reason.

I can hear some of you saying, ‘Unfortunately, that is not how it works for me. Countless times, I have made up my mind to overcome my laziness or my sensuality, to be virtuous, kind and generous, but all my good resolutions have come to nothing. I am still lazy, sensual, unkind...’ Well, of course, changes of this kind do not take place overnight, but if you keep your resolutions always in mind, you will end by putting them into practice, just as surely as the snake’s tail follows its head. This is why it is so important to think correctly, even if, for the time being, your actions are still in direct contradiction to your ideas. Those who persist, who persevere in the right attitude, if only in their minds, end by overcoming all inner resistance and conforming their actions to the dictates of the spirit.

People still do not understand how important it is to have a good philosophy of life. Many people, especially the young, imagine that the ideas

in their mind have no bearing on their behaviour. But this is quite untrue. If they entertain anarchic or immoral ideas, sooner or later their behaviour will also be anarchic or immoral.² The tail follows the head. This law is as true for evil as for good. Besides, have you not all seen instances of this? Many really excellent young men have ended up as criminals, because they allowed themselves to be influenced by an ideology of terrorism.

Here, at the Bonfin, you will learn to adjust to the harmony of the cosmos, to model yourself on this infinite world, to renew your ties with the source of all life, with the universal soul, with God. For it is in this communion with universal life that you will find the true meaning of life. It is impossible to find fulfilment if you are isolated.

How difficult it is to get lovers to understand this! Their one idea is to find a secluded spot where they can make love without being seen. Instinctively, they seek to separate themselves from others, even from God. If they try to hide, it is because they sense that what they are doing is not very commendable. Does this mean that they should do it in front of everybody? No, certainly not! It means simply that their attitude should not be such as to cut them off from heaven and from all the intelligent forces that give them these energies, this love. Instead of hiding and carrying on their loving relationship on a subterranean level, they should make it an instrument of praise and thanksgiving to God, for any love in which the forces of heaven have no part carries within it the seeds of destruction.

Many people will object, saying that they have the right to live and love as they please. That is true, but that is how they ruin their lives, because they have always rejected the notion that they are part and parcel of the universe and should model themselves on the world above, the world of perfection. When Jesus said, *'Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,'*³ this is what he was implying: there must be a connection, a flow of energies between heaven and earth, so that the harmony, order and beauty from above takes root down below on earth – that is, in us. Jesus was not talking about a world external to human beings: it is within ourselves, first of all, that the kingdom of God must be established. It would be useless to establish the kingdom of God in the world while human beings are still so anarchic and violent, for they would instantly destroy it again. Only when it is established within human beings will it be reflected outwardly.⁴

Occasionally, in moments of special grace, you may have a sense of what this divine harmony truly is, for heaven is always with you, always trying to

slip into you, as into all living beings. Why do you always let your old habits and out-of-date ideas stand in its way? What a pity it is: each time heaven comes close to you, you slam your door and the occasion is lost!

It is no good hoping to find happiness if you continue to cling to this philosophy of separation. On the contrary, you will end up as microbes, and then you will be swallowed up by the earth, for heaven has given the earth the task of absorbing everything that attempts to impede its cosmic work. You may not know it, but the earth has a contract with heaven. It has pledged to absorb all impurities, and just as the dead bodies of animals, plants and even human beings serve to enrich the soil, so those who refuse to vibrate in harmony with heaven are used, spiritually speaking, as fertilizer.

Disciples who know this law try to work in the same way as the earth, eliminating all sombre, heavy, impure elements from their own physical and psychic organism. And when at last they are purified, it is heaven that begins to absorb them, and they are caught up in a current that sweeps them up towards the centre of the sun. Many clairvoyants have witnessed the spectacle of a host of beings singing choruses of joy as they are swept up to the sun, while others sink, amid tears and laments, towards the centre of the earth, towards hell.

Whatever else you do, you must always seek to improve your life, so that it becomes pure, fruitful, limitless. You must connect the tiny ‘bottle’ of your self to the divine source of eternal life, for only then can the water of life flow in an ever-fresh, inexhaustible stream within you. You will no longer be living your life, but the limitless life of God. If you try to keep your life for yourself, it will always be polluted – it does not take long for a tiny pool of water to be polluted. You must mingle your life with God’s; it must become one with immensity.

Jesus worked for the collectivity, for universality, but nobody understood that. It is up to us today to carry on his work, to establish within ourselves the harmony, abundance and perfect organization of the higher world. This is our agenda, the task that lies before us, and nothing is more important, for it is this work that gives eternal life.

The only ‘establishment’ that preaches the whole truth is the Universal White Brotherhood. Yes, I say this, but far be it from me to make the same claim as the Church, which says that only Catholicism contains the whole truth and all other religions are false. No, when I speak of the Universal White Brotherhood, I mean all living beings in the world who possess light

and who are working for the light. The Universal White Brotherhood is an immense entity which embraces all religions. Catholicism claims to be universal, but at the same time it excludes all non-Catholics and labels them as infidels, miscreants, heretics or schismatics, and this shows that it is actually a sect. The fact that Catholicism rejects the idea of reincarnation, for instance, means that it does not embrace all spiritual teachings; in other words, it is cut off, separated from them: a sect.

Jesus was not sectarian. He bore within himself the quintessence of all the religions of the past. His only desire was to open new avenues for the evolution of humanity. It was those who came after him who became bigoted and fanatical, because they did not understand his message. But before many more years have passed we shall see beings coming into the world who will promulgate the idea of a truly universal religion in which all can find shelter, and this will be the true religion of Christ. In the meantime, if you talk about this broader concept of religion, many people will be scandalized and take you for a poor benighted wretch who has been misled by Satan. They will tell you that they are 'practising Catholics'. For them, to go to mass on Sundays and take communion occasionally is to practise one's religion. But if you see how they live and behave, it makes you wonder just what it is they are practising.

Here, you are being given all the methods you need to reorganize and reconstruct your lives. You must not think about how long this will take, for the spiritual life is not like the world. In the world you can earn a diploma as a manicurist, a chiropodist or a shorthand typist in a few months. Some people may say that the training I am talking about takes too long. Besides, it is far from lucrative; at least a diploma gives you a profession and the means to marry. To marry? Yes, but later you may regret it, like the man who was asked if he was happily married, and who replied, 'No, I've never had much luck with women. I've been married twice. My first wife left me... and the second is still with me!' Or like the woman whose husband travelled a great deal and rarely spent the night at home. When a friend commiserated with her over his death, she replied, 'Don't feel sorry for me; at least now I know where he spends his nights!'

So, my dear brothers and sisters, when you begin to tire of so many useless activities, you will start to pay attention to what is essential, and what is essential is this: to be in harmony with all the forces of the cosmos; in other words, to be a conductor of God. There is nothing more important than this. I

keep telling you this; I keep insisting on it, and I shall continue to insist on it as long as I am with you. You need not expect anything else from me. In the world beyond our gates, all the literature that has ever been produced is available to you; feast on it to your heart's content. But I warn you that at the Bonfin you will hear about one thing, and one thing only: how to grow in perfection. The only activities here are those that offer you the opportunity to do this work of perfection. Perhaps you think you have already had your fill of such work, but that is because you have not yet acquired the habit. Once the divine forces are set in motion within you, you will find that our moments of meditation together in the dining hall or at sunrise are never long enough. You will always hunger for more. Every word I say will be like a current that fills you to overflowing, and you will want to come here for no other reason than to immerse yourself in that current.

Naturally, it all depends on your attitude. If you want to be with me only on the physical plane, let me tell you that I shall never be able to satisfy you, because I do not have the time to attend to you on the physical plane. When we meet I can give you nothing more than a hazelnut, a sweet, a smile. But if you rise to the level of thought, the level of the mind, there I can attend ceaselessly to all of you at the same time. Every day, at every moment of the day and night, you will receive something from me. For an initiate learns to work with thoughts and is able to create currents of forces on the subtler planes. This is why he can be in every part of the universe at once, permeating the plants, the oceans, and even the stars with his quintessence.⁵ You will think: 'What pride! What vanity!' Well, think what you will, but I am telling you the simple truth.

If you need to find me on the physical plane, I cannot be of much use to you, but if you are capable of seeking me on another plane, you will sense that I am always there for you. How is this possible? That is my concern. The only thing that interests me is to be of use to you – and to many, many others that you know nothing about. If you do not sense that you are receiving something, it is because your doors are closed; because you have not succeeded in rising to the luminous regions where you would understand that my only desire is to give you the most nourishing elements. I say this to you in all humility and candour: in the higher regions my care of you never ceases. And there are many others besides, many luminous entities, who are always there to look after you. But if you want to feel this, you have to rise to these higher regions.

From now on, when you come to the Bonfin, do not dwell on all that is lacking here, for in spite of – or because of – what is lacking, you can advance here as nowhere else. The will does not have the same opportunity to manifest and become stronger when material circumstances are ideal. It is when we are faced with difficulties and deprivation that we are stimulated to exert ourselves. The men and women who demonstrate exceptional strength of character in their lives are those who have experienced difficulties, privation, even persecution. The only conditions you should ask for are those that allow you to exercise your will and to be in contact with the divine world. These are the conditions the Brotherhood provides. You may not find the necessary conditions for anything else, but for your spiritual development nothing is lacking.

The Bonfin, 9 July 1969

II

If you want to gain from your stay here, you need to know certain rules, to have at least some notion of the possibilities open to you and of the conditions from which you can benefit. For, as I can see, many of you really do not know where you are or why you have come. And in this case, how can you expect to do yourselves any good by being here?

The Bonfin is a place where you come for a detoxification cure. You have spent the year in conditions that are not best suited to your health. Your physical body and, to an even greater degree, your etheric, astral and mental bodies, are saturated with impurities. And these impurities have to be eliminated before you can get back with renewed strength and vigour to the work God asks of you. While you are here you will eat good, pure food, prepared for you with great care by people who are full of love. You will breathe an air that is pure, and every morning you will be bathed in the purity of the sun's rays. All that remains is for you to make the effort to introduce purity into your own thoughts, desires, feelings and ambitions. Make the most of the peace you find here, of the silence of the forest, to meditate, review your life, and resolve to become true servants of God.

You have come here to purify yourselves in order to be capable of undertaking a task that is divine. For this reason you must take care not to disperse your energies in all kinds of activities that would allow elements that are alien to this programme to infiltrate you. This is why I consider it

preferable that you do not leave the Bonfin to go to the beach. At the moment, of course, you see no harm in this. You think it is beneficial to be near the sea and to dive into it. It is true, of course, that the sea is a magnificent element, endowed by God with great powers, but this is no reason to go and lie about on the beach like all those idle folk who spend hours and days stretched out on the sand. What good can such idleness do anybody? None at all. On the contrary, it only debilitates you and dulls your senses.

You are here for a purpose. You have an ideal before you, and since this is so, you should devote yourselves entirely to this ideal, at least for the few days you are here. Do not try to keep one foot in the Bonfin and the other outside, because the dichotomy will make it impossible to achieve anything worthwhile. Later, if you wish, you can dive into whatever you please, but while you are here, try to make a kind of retreat, to get in touch with your true self, to understand what and who you are, and even to have some conversation with the divine world. Believe me, I can see what goes on: when it is time to concentrate or meditate, many of you are absent; your thoughts are miles away.

It is preferable, therefore, to let yourselves be thoroughly impregnated by the new atmosphere that you find here, and if you feel you really must go for a swim, try at least to find a stretch of beach where there is nobody else. It can do you no good to mingle with all those crowds of people who have no spiritual ideal, who are there for the sole purpose of satisfying their appetites and their lust, for you cannot help but absorb their emanations, and that is certainly no way to purify or free yourselves.⁶ Of course, if you were already very strong, if you were capable of resisting these influences and of transforming the impurities that assail you, you could do whatever you please. But you are not strong. You are still weak and easily influenced, and when you get back here, everything seems drab, bland and boring. Whereas at the beach, there are crowds of people and plenty of activity and noise – there is always something interesting going on. So, since you are still weak, you would do better to stay here; otherwise, not only will you be influenced yourselves, but when you get back you will influence others who may be no stronger than you.

Try to understand what I am saying. If you want to go and swim in the sea, I have no objection, for water is a divine element. But if you do so, you must take care to find a spot where you can be in peace to communicate with the

sun, with the Creator, with the divine Mother. Then, when you get back here, you will be in a position to pour out to the other brothers and sisters all the freshness and purity you have received. But if you go to the beach and then bring back all those old influences that we are doing our best to get rid of, you will not be doing anybody any good. I do everything I can, every day, to give you the best possible conditions in which to do your work of regeneration; I give you all the explanations you could possibly need, but you fail to make use of them. You still want to live in the old way because you feel constricted here. Lord, how difficult it is to change human nature!

You are always hankering to get back to your old ideas, to your old way of life, and this is why you never find solutions to your problems: that old way of life has no effective solutions to offer. Make a note of this. Never forget it! It is useless to hope for or expect anything from that old life. Do you find it so difficult to live a new life? For my part, I find it is the easiest and most agreeable thing in the world. It does not even require an effort. It is the old way of life that is difficult for me. I look at people in astonishment when they say to me, 'You are so alive! You seem alive!' Certainly I am alive! Are they not alive? What strange creatures human beings are!

My dear brothers and sisters, you must not expect me to talk to you about anything that does not concern the new life and how to live it.⁷ If you do not like what I talk about, you would do better to go and look elsewhere for what interests you, because from me you will always hear the same things: the new life, and how to live, breathe, eat and radiate it around you. Nothing is more important. It is the only thing that interests me. If you live this new life, all the other branches of knowledge will one day be revealed to you. Yes, you will discover how all the most trivial acts of your everyday life relate to astrology, alchemy, the Cabbalah or magic. In respiration you will find astrology; in nutrition, alchemy; in your words and gestures, magic, and in your thoughts, the Cabbalah.⁸ Learn how to eat, breathe, act, speak and think, and you will possess the foundations of the four fundamental sciences. You will even have a better grasp of them than those who study them intellectually.

You continue to think that I am the one you have to learn things from. No, you must not expect to learn much from me: it is the new life that will be your teacher. My role is simply to lead you to that life; it is the new life that is your instructor and guide, the one, incomparable spiritual master.

When I was still in Bulgaria, I used to see so many brothers and sisters

constantly on the Master Peter Deunov's doorstep. They looked to him for everything, expecting him to heal and transform them without their lifting a finger for themselves. And when he left for the next world, they were the ones who were the most deeply disappointed, because they had not advanced a single step; they had learned nothing. They had spent years on the Master's doorstep thinking that in that way they would get everything they needed from him, and they got nothing! And yet, when the Master saw what they were doing, he warned them. But it is a thankless task to try and instil some light into the heads of human beings when they are not ready to let go of their old ideas!

It is one thing to love and respect a Master; it is quite another to expect him to do everything for you. It is up to you to set to work, and then your Master's treasures will begin to flow in your direction, and when the entities of the invisible world see your efforts, they will all come and help you. But first you have to work, because that is the only way to reach your true potential and for your dormant powers to reveal themselves.

Our activities at the Bonfin are based on the science of a harmonious and balanced development of the innumerable faculties with which human beings are endowed. Yesterday I met a new brother who said, 'I realize that, until today, I have always wanted to live an individualistic, selfish, useless life, and I see now that that was not really living. Now I am determined to live a universal, divine life in the collectivity, in the Brotherhood.' 'Bravo!' I exclaimed. 'Now you can be sure you will have every opportunity to progress.'

Another brother told me, 'It is truly marvellous, all that goes on here, and all that you reveal to us! It is hard to imagine that somewhere like this actually exists on earth. But (for there is always a 'but') when I think that I am going to have to go back and work with people who live such disordered, chaotic lives (I shall not tell you what his work is except that it is in the world of entertainment), I begin to wonder if there is any point in trying to transform my life. Since I have to go back and live the same kind of life as before, why try to change anything?' I could only look at him, and say, 'What you are saying proves that you have still not understood the real usefulness and validity of our teaching. For this is precisely what it does: it gives you the criteria and methods you need to face up to all the most difficult situations in life, whereas without it you would be swept away and drowned in an ocean of human passions and agitation. If you continue to reason along those lines you

cannot expect to feel any desire to learn and transform yourself.' What I said astonished him; it was quite new to him.

Life is difficult. It is difficult because we are constantly subjected to all kinds of temptations and pressures. But that does not mean we have to give in. All the more reason, in fact, to study and keep practising so as to be strong and capable of overcoming every difficulty. Of course, in order to succeed you need a philosophy, a high ideal, and also a Master. If you live without a system, without an ideal and without a guide, you will be tossed to and fro, always at the mercy of circumstances. If you want to be safe, you must cling to something on a higher plane so that the floodtide of human passions cannot sweep you away. You are always complaining about feeling depressed and dispirited and without inspiration. But whose fault is that? It is you who insist on remaining on too low a level. You have been given a ladder; you have been shown a safe refuge and the path that leads to it; why do you not try to climb higher?

The most important task of disciples is to learn to give priority to the divine principle, so that it may dwell within them and take possession of their being. Human beings are placed between the higher and the lower world, and it is up to each individual to vote for the divine principle. You will perhaps ask why this divine principle does not impose itself, since it is all-powerful. Yes, fire, too, is all-powerful; it can reduce whatever it touches to ashes. But light a candle and see how feeble the flame is; the least breath of wind can extinguish it. The spirit, like a flame, is also very weak. If you fail to nourish it, it is impotent. This is what you do not understand. You stand and wait, relying on the omnipotence of the spirit, but as you do not even let it enter you, naturally, nothing happens. The spirit is all-powerful in the world above, but here on earth it is powerless if you do not give it the conditions it needs to manifest itself. Nourish your spirit and give it the conditions it needs, and you will see what happens: it will take possession of every cell of your body, and they will have to obey it.

So give thanks, my dear brothers and sisters; give thanks all day long for the good conditions you have here. Heaven has taken you away from the noise and impurities outside and brought you here, so that you may find fulfilment and be in communion, at last, with the light. Why should anybody want to go back to that old life?

The Bonfin, 5 August 1962

III

Your entire destiny is being forged by the life you are leading today: by the orientation of your thoughts and feelings and the activities that absorb your energies. Depending on whether you are conscious and vigilant or not, you are either laying out a smooth path for your future or strewing it with all kinds of useless, even dangerous, obstacles that will hinder your development.

Yesterday, you should have spent your whole day preparing for today. This is the great secret: pause to ask yourself, several times a day, what you are spending your energies on, and having recognized your goals, apply some wisdom, some sense of economy to your life. This is the only way to ensure that tomorrow will always be better than today.

Many sisters and brothers attend the sunrise simply to give me pleasure, to show that they accept my philosophy and the ideal of this teaching. This is very kind of them, and I appreciate their good intentions, but at the same time I cannot help being unhappy about them, for this is not enough to enable them to receive the full benefit of the sunrise. They still need to become conscious, aware and dynamic; they still need to make up their minds to be active while they are watching the rising sun.⁹ Otherwise, believe me, if they are always half asleep, always passive, always without resolve or energy, they will never understand anything.

The key, the indispensable key, is to be always awake. Yes, to be awake even when you are asleep. Why does the Bible tell us to be vigilant, to watch and pray? Even spiritual people do not understand the importance of this precept. Why should we be always on the look-out? It is so tiring! By contrast, it is so wonderful to sleep, to let oneself sink into mental or physical idleness. And here you have the reason for the lack of progress of most human beings. In spite of the universe, of the stars and the sun that are there before their eyes; in spite of all the books and all the great spiritual masters of humanity who are there to enlighten them – in spite of all this, human beings make no progress because they are asleep. Always asleep! This is why you must endeavour to be alert and vigilant. Watch what you are doing and remind yourselves that the rising sun will be waiting for you tomorrow morning, that the angels will be coming with gifts, and that if you are asleep they will pass you by. Remind yourselves to prepare for the morning by taking care not to overload your system. Always choose the lightest and most

luminous elements – whether of food, thought or feelings – for it is with these that you can build up your brain, heart and lungs. If you remember to do this, you will always be active, even while you are asleep.

Yes, for there is more than one kind of sleep. One kind of sleep is leaden, as though you were plunged into nothingness. But there is another kind, a kind in which the mind is so luminous and lucid that it is possible to do one's best work and receive the most valuable instruction while sleeping. This does not mean you should sleep instead of reading or meditating. You will not have this kind of sleep if you do not start by being active, energetic and wakeful. Once you have learned to be vigilant you can be awake even while you are sleeping. While your physical body sleeps you can hear and understand and act on the other side of sleep. Yes, but for the time being this is still beyond you.

My dear brothers and sisters, you have come to the Bonfin to do some important work. Yes, yes, I know, you have been working all year. But believe me, the work you have been doing was no more than a preparation for the work you have to do here. You will complain that you need to rest and relax. Very true, and it is precisely in this work that you will find rest and relaxation, because it is a special kind of work.¹⁰ Some of you will be dismayed: 'What a horrible idea, to rest by working! I want nothing to do with such a thing. The only kind of rest I want is to do nothing.' Well, if they did but know it, most people spend their lives resting, even while they are working. They have never accomplished anything because they do not understand what work really is.

Wake up! It is time to understand that there is something to understand. It is time to stop living like robots and awaken to the fact that you are here on earth in order to get something done. You will say that everybody is active, everybody works. No, no, people still do not have the true awareness that alone makes it possible to do any real work. Their activity does not stem from their individual consciousness; either they are simply doing what everybody else does, or they are driven by a subconscious impulse. They are not even truly conscious of the life they live. They know that they are alive, but they live as though they were in a dream, a kind of torpor – you can see this in their faces.

But let us get back to the very important question of vigilance, the necessity to be vigilant in order to prepare for the following day. Perhaps you will say, 'But that contradicts what Jesus taught. There are several instances

in the Gospels in which he tells us not to worry about tomorrow.' No, there is no contradiction here. When Jesus said that we should not worry about tomorrow, it was because he saw that people were always anxious about the future: about whether they would always have enough to eat, a roof over their heads, enough money, and so on. People are so concerned about these material problems that they neglect the more important things: they are careless and improvident with their health and the objects they use, they ride roughshod over others, they break all laws of justice and of love, and they have no thought for the things of the spirit. By living in this way, they leave each day cluttered with unresolved problems, with faults that are left unredressed, and gradually there is such an accumulation of litter in their lives that they end up completely submerged.

This is why Jesus said we should not worry about tomorrow, for if you make sure that what you do today is properly done, tomorrow will be clear of debt, and you will be free for whatever work you choose while continuing to be careful not to leave loose ends lying about. In this way, each new day will find you well disposed, ready to breathe, to study, to rejoice, to sing. The whole of life will take on a new glow of happiness and blessing. This is how Jesus' words should be understood: when you are careful about how you live today, you will indirectly be taking care of tomorrow.

Do not think of tomorrow, therefore; think of today. If everything is as it should be today, it will automatically be so tomorrow. And as all our acts are recorded, once you have lived one splendid day, one day of eternal life, the record exists. That day will never die but continue to live and do its best to get other days to follow suit and be equally perfect. It will invite them to heed its example and allow themselves to be persuaded to be as well-balanced, orderly and harmonious as it is. You have never examined the magical aspect of this question, so you say, 'How can one day matter? Today was a mess, but tomorrow will be better.' Yes, it will be better as long as you make an immediate effort to restore order. Otherwise your days will be like a game of skittles: as one day falls it will bowl over a series of days, one after the other.

Many years ago, there was a sister who used to come to our meetings. She was a strange person. She had everything anybody could possibly need to make her happy: in addition to all her worldly wealth, she had this teaching. And yet she always had a sombre, anxious expression. One day, hoping to learn what it was that caused her sadness, I asked her a few questions and was really astonished by her answer. Apparently, she was always worrying

about the future, about all the terrible things that could happen: accidents, illness, death. She was poisoning her whole life by picturing the dreadful things the future might hold in store for her. I tried to explain to her that her attitude would not make anything better. Quite the contrary! 'It is perfectly true,' I told her, 'that we never know what the future will bring, but the best way to avoid the disasters you fear so much is to try to live sensibly in the present. Instead of making your life hell by living in a frenzy of anxiety about the future, try to think only of the present and make it as good as it can possibly be. In this way you will be building a good future.'

It is not possible to build a good future with the bricks and mortar of a bad present, for there is no line of demarcation between present and future. It is no good dreaming of a luminous future if your present life is wretched and meaningless. It would be like trying to build a palace on foundations of clay: it would simply collapse. Unfortunately, this is what all these builders do – not those who build cathedrals but those who build the future: they fail to see that one cannot build a firm future on a wormeaten present. So if you have behaved badly today, try at least to neutralize the negative effects before going to sleep by thinking about something positive, and making good resolutions for the next day. Like a swarm of bees, your good thoughts will work during the night to cleanse and repair the damage.

So, as I say, you have come to the Bonfin in order to give your life a new start. Without this new start you will continue to live in a state of disorder and suffering, blaming everybody else – even the Lord – for your misfortunes, for failing to realize that heaven and earth should be at the service of an impartial, upright and noble being such as yourself. No; it is time to discard all these groundless claims to special treatment and begin working to make this new life a reality. It is not easy, I know, for the old life is still there, and it is very tenacious. Just as the future is linked to the present, so the present is linked to the past. The great difference is that the present, which is the absolute result of the past, cannot be changed, whereas we can change the future.

Your physique – your bones and muscles, your circulatory, excretory and nervous systems – is the direct result of your past lives, and there is nothing you can do to change it. But the wonderful thing is that you can combine the elements at your disposal in innumerable ways. To take an example: suppose you are going somewhere by train. Once you board the train you have to go wherever it takes you, but this does not mean that you are tied to one seat for

the whole journey. You can always move to a different compartment or coach; you can walk from one end of the train to the other; you can read, look out of the window, keep quiet, or converse with your fellow passengers; you can make friends with a pretty girl or a good-looking boy; you can have a meal in the dining-car – you are even free to jump off the train and kill yourself. In other words, you are free and not free at the same time. Similarly, when you come into the world, the circumstances of your life and the elements at your disposal are predetermined, but you still have a certain freedom of action and movement. The great question is whether or not you will use that freedom to become freer or less free in the future.

Believe me, my dear brothers and sisters, you have here the best possible conditions in which to reach fulfilment. You should be thanking God, night and day, for such a privilege. So many people are plagued by noise and fatigue, while you are here, free, free as the children of God. You are free to pray and sing, with the light of the sun to nourish you from morning to night. How can you help but give thanks? What more could you ask?

When I tell people that it would do them good to come and spend a few days at the Bonfin, some of them accept my invitation, but others say they are too busy. And when I ask them why, they talk about their business affairs, their husbands, wives and children, their friends, and so on. These are people who have never learned to weigh all these obligations against such things as light, intelligence and wisdom. For them, the only thing that matters is business. Well, people who never have time for joy, peace and light will have time for suffering, illness and unhappiness. Yes, when you have no time for heaven, for the Lord, for freedom, it means you will have plenty of time to fry with the demons in hell.

You will ask, ‘But what is wrong with devoting my time to my work, my husband or wife, my children and friends?’ Of course, there is nothing wrong with this; it is to your credit if you have a sense of duty and are conscientious and hard-working. But it is not a reason to neglect heaven and the divine world; otherwise, as we say in Bulgaria, you will be neglecting the livestock in your farmyard and chasing after wild game in the forest. And people who do that come home empty-handed. However honourable and ethical people may be, if they neglect heaven, they are eliminating from their lives all that could give them inspiration, beauty and immortality.¹¹ They must seek a higher moral code, that of the initiates, which says that earthly, social perfection is not enough, because the vibrations of the earth are not always in

unison with those of heaven. The earth may vibrate with other, similar earths, but that is not good enough. You have to learn to attune yourselves to a different 'earth', to the earth that we call heaven; and it is here that you learn to do that.

Others stay here for a few days and then leave in anger. Why? Because they have been brought up to seek only comfort and ease. They are completely egocentric; they think that other people should be there to serve and pamper them, to make things easier for them and help them to avoid every inconvenience. And here, of course, they are constantly being told about the efforts and the progress they should be making, and that does not suit them at all. It is quite extraordinary! Some people say they are ready to adopt a spiritual way of life, but they are completely unaware that this will mean giving up some of the things they do and learning to do others.

The story goes that, when the famous cabbalist, Rabbi Akiba, founded his school in Palestine, he admitted only those whom he judged to be worthy of the great initiatic truths. When his disciples gathered to listen to his lessons, nobody else was allowed into the house. One of those who were excluded was a young boy who had a burning thirst for wisdom and light. His desire was so great that, one day, he climbed to the roof of the Rabbi's house, hoping that some scraps of the master's teaching would float up to him by way of the chimney. It was winter and very cold, so cold that the poor boy was discovered on the roof the next day, frozen almost to death. Rabbi Akibas, deeply moved by such a desire for learning, accepted the boy as his disciple, and he became the renowned Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai. Here you have a being who loved light and was capable of overcoming every material obstacle in order to win this treasure.

People tell me they are sometimes seized by an urgent impulse to leave the Bonfin, and they do not know why. I will tell you why: the life they have led previously in the world has laid them open to certain influences, some of which are very destructive, and it is these influences, known to Initiatic Science as 'undesirables',¹² which now dwell within them and which, being unable to bear the pure, luminous atmosphere we have created here, urge them to leave, so that they may continue to make use of them.

When I see some going away unhappy because they have not understood the good aspects of the Bonfin, I know in advance what their future will bring: they will never manage to resolve their problems. Even if they seem to be successful, they will always be unhappy. You will say that that is not true,

that you know so-and-so who left the Brotherhood and who is very happy. He has a beautiful wife, two or three children, and a prominent position in society, and he is now very rich. Yes, but this does not make his position very enviable, for all these things are burdens, responsibilities, and how can he hope to discharge them properly, since he has never prepared himself to face up to difficulties. The qualities that matter most in human beings are those that define their moral character. As long as they reason correctly and are capable of self-control, they will benefit equally from either success or failure.

In the world, when someone inherits a fortune or makes a brilliant match, their friends exclaim, 'What luck!' Only the wise reserve judgment until they know something about the character of the people concerned. If they are frivolous, selfish and easily influenced, they pity them, for they know that the higher they fly, the more terrible will be their fall. Their apparent good fortune is liable to destroy them. But when someone has lost their money, their honour and their good name and has become an object of pity to their friends, the wise will say, 'He or she is strong and has a high idea. This is the best thing that could have happened.' Why are people not brought up to look at things in this way?

Unfortunately, even astrologers have the wrong point of view. When a person's horoscope indicates sickness or poverty, they never take into consideration the fact that such difficulties can be a source of inner enrichment. The horoscopes of all the great men and women of history show that they had to overcome great trials and tribulations. It is impossible to insist too strongly on the fact that it is thanks to those trials that they attained such heights.

You must learn to make the most of the good conditions that the divine world gives you through the events – even the difficulties – of each day. For my part, I am convinced that heaven has always given me the best possible conditions, for it has led me by ways of poverty, disgrace and dishonour. Naturally, nobody enjoys living in such conditions, and I am no exception, but I can see now that they were what was best for me. It is only when we learn how to use certain conditions that we can see how useful they are.

The Bonfin, 31 July 1962

IV

When I came up to the Rock for the sunrise this morning, I was astounded by what I saw when I greeted you: I had never seen such an expression of fulfilment on your faces – all of you, without exception. How glad it made me to see that! No doubt it was the result of the little talk I gave you yesterday about learning to make a conscious exchange of light when you meet and greet each other. But I was amazed to see that you had put it into practice so promptly: your faces were alight and radiant. How did you manage to produce such a transformation so quickly?

Actually, there are all kinds of possibilities lying dormant in every human being, but most people never suspect how far-reaching those possibilities can be. It is only when they begin to feel their presence and seek to manifest them that these possibilities reveal themselves for what they are. This morning you decided to be more conscious of what you were doing, to make your eyes and your greeting convey more life, more love and light – and you succeeded. Perhaps you wonder whether this is really so important. Indeed it is. You have come here to learn exactly how important all these little gestures of your daily life are: every gesture you make and every word you say is important, but nobody has ever taught you this.

Look at the faces of the people you meet in the street or in trains or buses. How lifeless they look, or how tense, how angry! It is not a very pretty sight. Sometimes, even though you have absolutely no reason to feel sad or unhappy, you only have to go among them to be influenced by their negative vibrations. And then, naturally, you go home and pass on your mood to the whole family. This is how human beings continually poison each other's lives. How can you imagine that it is unimportant to show all those you meet an open, smiling, friendly face?¹³

The question is, of course, how to make a positive frame of mind last, for it should last; it should become permanent. Each time you succeed in living divinely, even if only for a second, all eternity is present in that second. You have made an imprint, a pattern, and this pattern will live eternally. This is true both of good and of evil.¹⁴

When you experience a moment of harmony and plenitude, the magic imprint of that experience is immediately created within you, and nothing can ever erase it again. 'Well, if that is true,' you will say, 'why does it not last? Why do I feel anxious and discouraged again, almost at once?' Because life is a perpetual flowing; moments follow each other in endless, infinitely varied succession, and you are not sufficiently vigilant to be able to hold on

to that magic imprint. Instead of concentrating on it, you allow yourselves to be swept along by other ideas, other feelings and other activities.

But what you must realize is that the imprints of those magic moments are all filed away inside you, just like a collection of recordings. And one day, remembering that you have a recording of a beautiful voice singing heavenly melodies, you can take it out and put it on your player, and there you are: captivated and entranced by the same beauty, reliving the same magic mood. You must remember to do this; you forget that you have this very powerful tool at your disposal. You should listen to those divine recordings over and over again.

The recordings within you can never be erased. We have evidence of this in the fact that it is possible for a person under hypnosis to describe things they have seen, done or felt in the past, as far back as their earliest childhood. Even if they have no present awareness of those facts or events, the memory of them is stored inside, smothered in dust, no doubt, but there nevertheless. Or think of the number of times you have tried unsuccessfully to remember the name of a person or place. If you ask the entities in charge of your archives to send you the 'file' in question and then go back to your normal occupation, without bothering about it anymore, the name will suddenly pop into your mind. This must have happened to all of you, surely? All this information is hidden away within you; you only have to go and look for it.

So keep all those precious recordings in a safe place and try to relive them as often as possible. In fact, try to live only those moments. You will say, 'But that is impossible. I could never do it!' Yes, you could. Not immediately perhaps, but, gradually, when you have acquired the habit of renewing and reliving these harmonious, divine states of mind, you will understand that it is possible. Of course, life can be very upsetting and fraught with problems, but, believe me, it is still possible to restore, retain and safeguard these moments of higher consciousness. It is simply a habit, a light of the mind that has to be acquired: to live in a state of vigilance, of permanent awareness of the divine world; to remember, as soon as you wake in the morning, to perform all the ordinary gestures of your day with your thoughts turned to heaven.

If you get into the habit of maintaining this attitude throughout the day, you will see that nothing will be able to upset you for long. Of course, some things – bad news, illness, or an accident – will still have the power to distress you briefly. But if you are accustomed to treasuring those higher states of consciousness, you will rise above such problems much more

quickly, because you will understand that God has given omnipotence to the spirit.

Unfortunately, most human beings have not been taught to think like this. They find it normal to let a higher state of mind slip away and go back to their habitual state of disorder and suffering. Their whole being lives in the constant flux and change of the external world. Like children, they are fascinated by all they see around them. And once they leave the safe, stable core of their being, they are vulnerable and incapable of controlling a situation. Human beings need to be educated in this sense. Those who have begun to understand can already feel that, whatever happens to them, they stay on an even keel, whereas others are knocked completely off balance at the first little difficulty.

So treasure for as long as possible all the divine moments you have ever experienced, for each one of them is eternal. Each one of them can be brought back to mind whenever you want it. It is etched into your being, and nobody can take it away from you. Start to look for it now, today. It is there.

Why am I telling you this today? Because I was so struck this morning by all that you had managed to achieve. I thought to myself: 'If I say nothing about this, I know what will happen: tomorrow that heavenly frame of mind will have disappeared without a trace. They will have gone back to what they were before, whereas they are capable of remaining in this state of joy, beauty and gladness.' This is why I decided to talk to you about it.

So there you are: you must begin at the beginning. And what exactly is the beginning? The beginning is to be wide awake, conscious, vigilant and attentive; to treasure each divine experience, and never, ever to think, 'Oh, it was all an illusion!' Human beings are really very strange! They always think that whatever is beautiful is an illusion, whereas unhappiness, pain and disaster – these are real enough. Well, for me it is just the opposite: the only reality is what is beautiful, good and divine. All the rest is illusion invented by human beings.

Why do people always have to tell each other about the sad, ugly things that happen? Wherever they go they take their little pains and problems with them: 'I have a pain here... I haven't got enough of this, that or the other...' Why do you always dwell on what is lacking instead of on what you have? I always remember a neighbour who lived near us when I was six or seven years old in Bulgaria. We lived in a small village in Macedonia at the foot of the Babuna Planina ('Grandmother Mountain'), and there was a woman in

the village who was really very poor. Her husband had gone away to earn money, and in the meantime she lived in utter destitution. But she never complained. When people asked her if she needed anything, she would always say, 'No, I have everything I need, thank you.' She never accepted anything from others; she always seemed to manage. This went on for several years, until, one fine day, her husband turned up with a great deal of money and brought her everything she could possibly need. At last she had everything; she needed nothing. When she lied so bravely she had been practising white magic, and now her lies had become the truth. So why not learn to do the same and make your lies become reality? That woman practised magic, the best kind of magic.

Should our Brotherhood not be unique in this world? When others come here and see the light and love that radiate from your faces, they will be astounded. There will be no need to explain anything; they will only have to see you to exclaim, 'Ah, now I understand!' They will immediately understand that while they were wasting their time looking for new ways to amuse themselves or conducting their shady business deals, you were working to transform yourselves. For my part, I need workers. I ask you, if you have any affection for me, to set to work without delay. It might be easier for you to make the effort not for yourself but for me, to help me. Perhaps you will have more success if you do it for my sake.

Give me the joy of seeing you again as you were this morning at sunrise. That is all I ask; it is not much, but it has an extraordinary, magical, potent effect on me. Do it for me; smile, be glad, joyful and elated all day long. Even if you go back to your tent and find that all kinds of things are missing – you have no way of making a cup of coffee, no camp bed, no sun lotion, no clothes, no husband, or wife, or children – none of that is important. Tell yourself, 'I have heaven and earth; I have the teaching of the Brotherhood; I have my arms and legs, a mouth, my eyes and ears. I am rich! Life is beautiful!'

Come back to this thought every day. Remind yourselves that you are the sons and daughters of God, that everything belongs to you, that you have the means again to be what you once were when you first came from the hand of the Almighty. You have lost that original, pristine state because of all the foolish things you have done and all the unhappy experiences you have had, but you can find that glory again.¹⁵ This is what we mean by 'turning back to the Father', 'the reintegration of beings': when humanity is all-powerful once

again, when human beings are again in control of all the forces of nature, again in possession of their dignity as God's heirs. This is the true destiny of humanity. And in the light of this, is it not nonsensical to moan and groan about all the little things we cannot have? We need to get back to true intelligence, and true intelligence is thinking, acting and feeling in conformity with our glorious destiny.

So, from now on, try to give me what I am asking for. Tell a few lies, if need be; smile, even if you do not feel like it. You will certainly do more good that way than by scowling at everybody to show what a bad mood you are in! Yes, this is a school in which you learn to lie, and if that scandalizes you, I am sorry, but there it is!

From now on, make sure you are always vigilant and attentive, so as not to lose this marvellous state of light and gladness. The Gospels tell us to watch and pray, because the devil, like a roaring lion, is seeking to devour us. Yes, and maybe that 'devil' is primarily those little demons of inattention.¹⁶ You come up here and listen to the most sublime truths, then you go down again to your prosaic everyday life, forgetting all you have heard, and in no time at all you are in the grip of these devils. For my part, I do not believe that devils are great, impressive beings. If they were, we would notice them more easily, and more easily defend ourselves, or even counter-attack. No, most devils are very small and very well concealed. Like microbes, they are invisible; this is why they can so easily ravage humanity. The answer is to have a microscope; otherwise they will always be swarming round you. One slip, one second of inattention, and you find yourself on the floor with a broken rib, symbolically speaking! Christians picture the devil with horns, claws and hooves. No, the reality is far worse: he is a multitude of tiny demons called 'inattention'.

The Bonfin, 19 July 1972

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Not worrying about tomorrow – *Matt. 6:34*

'Watch and pray' – *Matt. 26:41*

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² See *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 6: 'How thought is materialized on the physical plane'.

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- ⁵ See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor Collection n° 207, chap. 9: 'The universal dimension of a Master'.
- ⁶ See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol. 29, chap. 4-2: 'On the living knowledge'; *'In Spirit and in Truth'*, Izvor Collection n° 235, chap. 10: 'The perfume of Eden'.
- ⁷ See above, chap. 3: 'On building the new life'.
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- ¹⁵ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor coll., n° 242, chap. 1: 'God, the beginning and end of our journey'.
- ¹⁶ See *The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching*, Izvor coll., n° 215, chap. 9: 'Watch and pray'; *The Laughter of a Sage*, Izvor coll., n° 243, chap. 2: 'Like a shepherd watching over his sheep' and chap. 3: 'Protecting the frontiers of our soul'.

Chapter Three

Training for the divine

I

If you want to succeed in life, make money and achieve a position of prestige, you must not be too scrupulous. Those who refuse to go against their conscience will never be very successful in society; in fact, they often bring hatred and persecution on themselves. Outwardly, their situation is not very advantageous, but as long as they are in harmony with themselves, they can have a real sense of satisfaction.¹ Whereas those who are determined to succeed at all costs, even if it means being less than honest, may feel some satisfaction at achieving their goals, but at the same time they sense that something within them disapproves, and however hard they try, they cannot shake off this feeling.

Human beings are very good at obtaining material success. They have an instinct that tells them which association or political party to join in order to engage in all kinds of illicit activities with impunity. Whereas those who belong to no parties or associations of this kind are all alone. They have no human protection. Only heaven backs them up and gives them the strength to continue on their chosen path.

The truth of these laws is not obvious to you at once, perhaps, but as time goes on it will become more and more so. But this does take time. At the moment, you too are dominated by the drive to succeed, and the spiritual life has little appeal for you, for it seems so unprofitable. The trouble is, of course, that you are not reasoning correctly. You all know that those who rise on the social scale earn more money in return for less work. The chairman of the board, for instance, will sometimes spend only a few minutes in his office, just long enough to sign a few papers, and yet he is the one who earns the biggest salary. The doorman, who is on duty night and day, earns very little. Is there any reason why this law should not apply to the spiritual life? Here, too, you have to rise to a higher position in order to earn certain privileges.

True, those who commit themselves to a spiritual way of life have to wait for years before they see any results. And while they are waiting, they often give way to discouragement and decide that they are wasting their time and would do far better to work at something more concrete, where they can

expect quicker and more visible results. In reality, whatever your material achievements, nothing can ever equal a spiritual activity. If you follow the rules, the rewards you eventually obtain will be millions of times greater than if you had been content to work on the material plane, for you will be working with different values, and those different values lead to different results.

Take the example of a prospector who is looking for gold. He or she may find some and may even find a good deal. And now compare the prospector with an alchemist: day and night, for years and years, the alchemist searches for the philosopher's stone and finds nothing. They seem to be working in vain, but if they follow the rules, they are bound to find it one day, and when that day comes, they will be able to transform mountains of metal into gold. So what has the prospector gained in comparison with the alchemist? This is the comparison which best demonstrates the difference between ordinary work and spiritual work. The spiritual person, who works at what is essential, ends up becoming ruler of the universe.²

Some people say that they have no desire to venture into the spiritual world, because they cannot see exactly where they are going, and they are afraid of getting lost. Well, it is true that you can lose your way in the spiritual world, just as you can lose your way in a forest or at sea if you have no compass. But compasses exist in the spiritual world also, and the day you reach port you will be dazzled by the glory of what you find. Actually, it is possible to find your way without seeing exactly where you are. Take the example of a submarine: nothing is more difficult than finding one's way at sea, but the commander of a submarine has a number of navigational instruments that show exactly where they are, and thanks to those instruments everything goes well. Human beings are like submarines: they are equipped with instruments that enable them to find their way. The only problem is that these instruments have either become rusty – because they have not been used for innumerable incarnations – or, more likely, are not functioning properly because of the disordered way of life of their owners.³

It would be much easier to travel along a smooth highway that has signposts at every crossroad. Unfortunately, the spiritual life is not like that: it is a dangerous adventure. Because of the nature of the goal, it is impossible to reach it without a great deal of effort, particularly as there is not much traffic on the roads that lead to it, and for this reason they are not very wide or very safe. They are steep, hidden paths, running along the edge of

precipices and frequented only by initiates. But the more difficult the task, the more glorious the victory.

Nature gives no rewards without effort. Take the example of sporting contests: the high jump, skiing, car racing – are these things easy? No, they are highly dangerous activities in which the participants can meet with injury or even death. Why do people understand that it is normal for there to be difficulties when it is a question of sport, but not when it is a question of the spiritual life? They seem to think that in this area everything should be easy. No, nature has placed obstacles on the path so that she can see which of her children on this venture are capable of triumphing over all adversity and reaching the goal. It is nature that has put obstacles along the way, and given the splendour of the victory in prospect, these difficulties should not disconcert you; on the contrary, they should help to renew your courage.

It is important to remember, however, that you should not venture out without a guide. Everyone knows that if you want to climb mountains you need a guide. On the physical plane, people recognize that a guide is useful, necessary even, but when it comes to the spiritual life many people think that a guide can be dispensed with. For the exploration of the inner life, in which there is a much greater danger of losing one's way, being crushed by an avalanche or falling into a ravine, they think they need no help. It is precisely because of this that so many so-called spiritual people are unbalanced. They have launched out on their own without a guide and lost their way.

Think about the example of the prospector and the alchemist. Everybody would like to be rich. They think that once they have money they can buy all the other things they want. It is normal to want wealth, and, as most people equate wealth with money, they do everything possible to have more and more money. Unfortunately, they will not feel truly rich just because they have money. When I was very young, in Bulgaria, Master Peter Deunov showed me how to find gold in the ground by means of a little copper wand. I did what he told me – there was nothing difficult about it – but I was not interested in looking for gold, so I never followed it up. I do not know why the Master told me about this – perhaps to test me and see if I would be tempted. I experimented with it only once, when I was visiting the family of a banker, who were friends of mine. I asked them to hide some gold somewhere in the house, and I found it at once. Of course, they were thrilled, but that was as far as it ever went. Already at that age, although I was very poor, I knew that it was not gold I should be looking for.

The kind of wealth that can make us truly rich is the kind Jesus was meaning when he said, '*Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.*' It is God who put into the hearts of human beings the need to seek riches, and they are content to satisfy this need on the physical plane, instead of seeking on the higher planes for the only kind of treasure that can make them truly rich, happy and free. People often think that someone who is spiritual is supposed to despise wealth. No, spirituality consists in knowing where and how to find true wealth.

Sèvres, 31 December 1963

II

How powerful singing can be when conditions are right – not only material, technical conditions, but the psychic and spiritual conditions that are created when our heart, soul and spirit participate in the singing. In these conditions you can sense that the atmosphere is teeming with luminous currents and entities attracted by the harmony.

I am sometimes asked why we continue to sing in Bulgarian. People complain that they cannot understand it. Well, as I tell them, translations of the songs exist and they can easily consult them. But the more important answer to the question is that intellectual understanding is not of primary importance in music: what counts are the sensations called forth by the sounds, vibrations and harmony. Do we understand the song of birds, of a waterfall or of the wind in the trees? No, but we are entranced and captivated by such music. It is not necessary to understand in order to vibrate in unison with it.

When someone looks at you with love, can you say exactly what lies behind the expression in their eyes? No, but you are delighted and your being vibrates with it. And when the mass was said in Latin, do you suppose everybody understood the words? By no means! And now that it is in the vernacular many people are disappointed. They think it was better in Latin, and they are perhaps right, for the Latin gave it something that we no longer sense with the vernacular.

It is always better to sing songs in their original language, for even if you do not understand everything, there is a relationship between the words and the music which is destroyed by translation. Music is not meant to be

understood: it is meant to be felt. Even when it is accompanied by words, the sensation it creates is still the most important aspect. Of course, it is even better if sensation and understanding go hand in hand, but it is sensation that is the more important. Very often, when a man loves a woman, he does not say anything, but he looks at her, and the power of that look is enough to propel her heavenwards. Another man may compare her to the sun, the moon and the stars, and she will send him packing, because he is all words, and behind those words – nothing. Let him compare her to whatever he likes, but he must begin by sending the love he feels for her through his eyes, his expression, his vibrations.

In any case, the repertoire of songs you have here is truly marvellous. These songs are the music of the future; they will serve to educate the whole of humanity. By singing these songs, not only are you contributing to maintaining and enhancing light in the world, but you are also doing yourselves good. Each song has a beneficial influence on the singer; in fact, even if you do not actually sing, it is enough to let them run through your mind, for in this way they vibrate within you.

When you sense that your ideas are confused and you do not know whether you are coming or going, sing *Misli, pravo misli*, ‘Think straight’, and you will soon find that things become clearer. When you have the impression that nobody loves you, sing *Bog e ljubov*, ‘God is love’; what more can you desire when you know that God will never abandon you? And if you are feeling tired or unwell, sing *Sila zdrave e bogatstvo*, ‘Strength and health are wealth’, and when you sense the very walls and ceiling vibrating you will pick yourself up and go on your way with renewed strength. If life has lost its flavour and you find no more joy in it, sing *Krassiv e jivota*, ‘Life is beautiful’. And when you are happy, sing *Blagoslaviai douche moia, Gospoda*, ‘Bless the Lord, o my soul’. You have these magical means – a veritable arsenal of magic⁴ – permanently at your disposal. I wonder, do you think of using them? You must use them. My task is to keep reminding you to use the means that God has put at your disposal, all the gifts he has placed within you. All you have to do is open the cupboard and help yourself to what is there. But you always need to be reminded; that is why I keep repeating these things.

Perhaps you feel like saying that it would be much more interesting if I told you what kind of geological formation is likely to conceal uranium or oil; where you can find certain kinds of birds; which rivers contain certain

kinds of fish, or in what part of the universe you can find a certain galaxy. But what use will any of that be if you still do not know what exists within yourself? I am not saying there is nothing to be gained by such knowledge, but it is far more important to know the possibilities inherent within yourself. The knowledge of what you possess inwardly will make you the lord of the universe and give you the most extraordinary sense of satisfaction and dignity.

But this is possible only if you start by studying yourself and getting to know yourself better. Human beings are rarely conscious of their own mental habits. When faced with something new and unfamiliar, some people are always tense and irritable, others always react negatively and reject the novelty, and yet others are always discouraged. And as people are completely unaware of their habits, they are incapable of changing them. Whenever a new situation arises, they always find some reason to justify their reactions of irritation, discouragement or rejection. The first thing to do, therefore, is to study and learn to know yourself. Once you are capable of self-insight, you can take steps to remedy the situation, and you will immediately feel impelled to mobilize all the God-given potential of your subconscious, your consciousness and your superconsciousness.⁵ In this way, thanks to your habit of studying and being clear-sighted about yourself, you will make progress every day.

Nobody can give you more than the Creator has given you. He has designed everything in such a way that as soon as you are more enlightened and conscious you will be able to look into yourself and find the treasures hidden deep within you. The role of an instructor is simply to teach his disciples the most effective ways of bringing these treasures to the surface. Take the example of what I said earlier about the songs: were you already aware of the wealth that was there at your disposal? No. If you sensed the great wealth of these songs, you would make better use of them, and not only here when we are together, but when you are alone at home. It is a question of consciousness, of the ability to recognize the value of things.

So take heart, my dear brothers and sisters, for a marvellous, divine inheritance awaits you. If you have not yet come into your inheritance, it is because you have not yet come of age. You still need to grow and mature, and one day you will be called to the solicitor's office and told that you are heir to a fabulous fortune. Yes, this is the unadulterated truth: a divine inheritance is waiting for you. I cannot tell you exactly when you will take

possession of it. I can only say that as soon as you come of age it will be yours. It may be in twenty or thirty years from now; it may be in a future incarnation, but one day it will be yours.

Perhaps you are wondering how they will find you if you are living in a different country, with a different nationality. There is no need to worry about that. However much you may have changed, the heavenly entities will always be able to find you. Even if you move without leaving a 'forwarding address', they have all kinds of ways of finding you. They need only touch something that is impregnated with your scent – that is, with your emanations – to know where you are. Before the lords of karma send human beings down to earth, they give each one a special perfume. Then, when they want to find them again, it is very simple: they only have to send their hounds after them, and there you are! And if you do not believe me, you can always go and find out for yourself!

So think about your divine inheritance every day, for the mere thought of it will do you good. Why has nobody ever revealed these things to humankind? The things that human beings promise can never satisfy the immensity of human aspirations. A husband or wife of your own? A house? A car? What do such things amount to? Even when people have them they are not satisfied. Immensity, infinity, eternity: these are our inheritance; these are the only riches capable of satisfying human beings, capable of fulfilling all their aspirations. This is the inheritance I promise you.

Sèvres, 31 December 1963

III

Congratulate me! I have succeeded in making three people cry today. Yes, I seem to be getting better at it, both in quality and quantity. Before, I was always kind and gentle, but then I realized that my kindness was not really helping my brothers and sisters. So I decided to use other methods, and since then you have all made more progress. Oh, not the first day, of course, but as the days have gone on...

And now let me ask you something: would you prefer me to say only what is agreeable to you and leave you to flounder in your weaknesses? Or should I shake you up a little and point out certain defects that you may not have realized you had, but which are holding up your development? What do you say?

There has never been a human being who was perfect from the day they were born. Whether we try to conceal the fact or not, we all have at least one weakness – and probably more. Even the initiates have their weaknesses: for some it is fear, for others pride, avarice or sensuality. The superiority of the initiates lies in the fact that they are aware of their weaknesses and do everything in their power to overcome them. All initiates, however lofty their spirit, by the very fact that they have incarnated, receive a heredity from their parents, and that heredity has to be transformed, for it is inevitably tainted to a greater or lesser degree. But when, thanks to their other qualities and virtues, they succeed in transforming the raw, crude matter of that heredity into a fit instrument for their work, their stature is enhanced. In the lives of the initiates we see the power of the spirit at work as it establishes its pre-eminence, whereas ordinary human beings trail their weaknesses with them all the days of their lives, never succeeding in overcoming them.

So even initiates have to work to cleanse, purify and organize their inner life. I know that some of you will be surprised to hear me say this, for you imagine that the initiates are perfect, omniscient and all-powerful, needing neither to eat, drink nor sleep, and impervious to all temptation. But no such being exists, except in your imagination.

The greatness of initiates and spiritual masters lies, as I say, in the fact that when they come into this world they are faced with exactly the same difficulties as other human beings, but, little by little, they manage to rise above those difficulties. It is because they have overcome their own weaknesses that they have the right to instruct and even admonish others.⁶ Indeed, this is the only thing that gives one human being the right to preach to others. Those who attempt to cure other people of faults they have never managed to correct in themselves would do better to keep quiet, for the others will always sense that there is something not quite genuine in them, and heaven itself will lay traps for them. How can you expect to persuade others to rid themselves of a weakness if you have never managed to do so yourself? How can a coward lend courage to others? Will soldiers follow an officer into battle if they see his legs trembling under him? Believe me, only the victory over your own weaknesses can confer authority on you, and sooner or later this authority will be apparent – even if you try to hide it – through your eyes, your gestures, your face, your voice.

You must not imagine that the task of correcting other people's weaknesses is an easy one. It takes years and years of work on yourself

before you can even think of undertaking such work. This is why, for a very long time, I concentrated all my efforts on the work of improving myself. But now heaven has ordered me to tell you the truths you need to hear, and I shall obey that order. I know very well that this will not be to your liking. You will think, 'My God, how he has changed! How disagreeable he has become! He was never like this before.' But I know what I am doing, and I know exactly what it means. If I wanted your friendship I would have to flatter and deceive you and tell you I have never met such beautiful and intelligent beings before. If I searched through the dictionary to find the rarest and most poetical words with which to address you, you would adore me. I am not so stupid that I don't know how to turn things to my own advantage. In other words, I know what I stand to lose by telling you certain truths, but it is you who stand to gain, and I am ready to lose so that you may gain.

So tell me which you prefer me to do: smile and say kind words to you, or else explain why you have so many difficulties and problems, why you are always ill and unhappy, and tell you how to remedy the situation.

In coming here you have consented to leave your peaceful, comfortable house with all its modern conveniences, and after a few days you begin to miss that peace and comfort. It is such a bore to have to make a constant effort to put up with other people, to listen to my talks or be harangued by me. How much more agreeable it is to be at home and do exactly as you please! Oh, you do not have to tell me that; I understand perfectly. I too would find it more agreeable to remain quietly at home. However, we have not come to earth to take our ease and enjoy ourselves but to improve ourselves. Those who seek enjoyment are deceiving themselves. We shall find joy in the world above, and perhaps a little here from time to time if heaven is willing, but we should not look for it. We should look only for ways to develop and manifest the virtues and possibilities lying dormant within us.

The earth is a training school, and as is normal in a school everything here is a lesson. Fate will continue to torment you until you have grasped this. The invisible world sends humanity the spiritual masters it needs to help it to evolve, and if human beings reject those teachers, they will be sent others – failure, illness and poverty – and such teachers are merciless. If you do not want to submit to their fearful lessons, you would be wise to listen to me and my lessons. When human beings refuse to learn the divine laws of their own free will, those laws have to be hammered into them.

It would be very easy for me to decide not to intervene any more in your affairs, never to point out what aspect of your mentality or behaviour is holding up your evolution. But then you would gradually be buried under such a burden of error and confusion that you would end up totally crushed, and your situation would be inextricable. Would I have done you a service by remaining silent?⁷ Some of you, at least, are ready to admit that when I called your attention to a failing it did help you to solve your problems. When you know the true nature of the enemy hidden behind a failing, a bad habit or a wrong understanding of things, you are better able to take the right steps to combat it. But as long as you do not know where the attack is coming from, you will be at its mercy. There is nothing worse than not knowing where your difficulties, sufferings and misfortunes come from. If you cannot see your target, your bullets will miss their mark, and one fine day you will have used up all your ammunition and the enemy will still be there. At least, when you know where the enemy is and how it manifests itself, you can react, and sooner or later you will defeat it.

For years I have been giving you the means to get rid of the enemies that attack you from all sides, but instead of being grateful you hold it against me. I just wonder how long it will take you to appreciate what I do for you. Sometimes I almost feel like telling myself that it is stupid to persist and that I would do far better to leave you in peace. If I did this, my own life would be far more peaceful. I could very well decide to do this, and then nobody would resent me any longer; nobody would be made to cry – like those three who cried this morning – because I told them truths that could save them. When we meet I would simply say, ‘Read the Bible. Read the Gospels, and go and ask someone else for advice. For my part, I love you; I think you are just wonderful...’ Yes, and then you would think I was wonderful too, although I would have given you no advice and would have clarified nothing for you. Is that what you want?

There are difficulties here, I know. If you are really bent on going home, very well, go. But at home you will not learn what you learn here. Here you learn to be tolerant and to love others, whereas, all alone at home, you will shut yourself up in selfishness and intolerance. Of course, your life will be easier, but you will not learn to be more patient and generous; your consciousness will not continue to expand. If we gather together here, it is because we want to be creatures not only of the intellect but also of the heart, of love.

Are you grateful to heaven for giving you a Master on whom you can rely to tell you what is good or bad for you, who can teach you the best way to fulfil yourself? No, instead of being grateful you are angry with him. You feel much more comfortable with your inner enemies. You are always caressing them, feeding and strengthening them, and they take advantage of the situation to destroy you. Human beings are really extraordinarily attached to their lower nature, their personality. Instead of idolizing it as you do, kick it out. Tell it, 'It was because of you that I had to leave paradise. It is your fault that all my friends desert me, that I am always poverty-stricken and miserable. From now on, you and I must part.' And as soon as you free yourself from the tyranny of your personality, it will become your servant.⁸

But only the initiates have shown themselves capable of detaching themselves from their personality. Other people are all too willing to do what it tells them. When it tells you, 'Hit back! Take revenge! Knock them down!' you rush to obey, thinking that you are obeying a divine command. It is time you learned to analyze all these impulses and see where they come from. If you do this, you will soon see that, more often than not, it is your personality that dictates your reactions, and when this is the case the result is always bad. But such discernment is not acquired overnight: it takes years. To be aware of the personality is not easy, because it can be very subtle and assume many disguises and speak with many voices. Genuine initiates have spent their whole life learning to recognize whether their impulses are inspired by their lower or their higher nature. 'Is that all?' you will ask. Yes, that is all, but everything else depends on this discernment. Those who make no effort to acquire it will be forever weak, vulnerable and unhappy.

The time will come when you will understand me. Then you will say, 'It was a blessed day indeed when we met the Master! He taught us so many different ways to overcome our difficulties; he was always our best friend, but we understood him too late.' Yes, I keep insisting on this in the hope that one day you will eventually understand the exceptional, the truly unique opportunity that you have been given to resolve all your problems and advance on the path of evolution. It is all the same to me if you think, 'What pride! What vanity!' Think what you like, but pay attention to what I tell you and begin your work.

The Bonfin, 4 September 1966

Recently, somebody said to me, ‘The other day, you were told all kinds of negative things about one of the brothers, and afterwards, in your talk to us, you started to upbraid him without checking to see whether what you had been told was true or not. That was unfair!’

Well, this raises a point which the brothers and sisters have never understood: I make use of every circumstance and every situation to get you to reflect, to reason correctly and to mend your ways. Even if I am given information that is quite untrue about one of you, I may use that as an opportunity to help all of you to progress. I never mention names, and nobody should imagine that I am talking about a particular individual. I may very well be talking about someone whose situation is similar. If you have the impression that my remarks are aimed at you, perhaps it is because you are not wholly blameless. When you think you have nothing to reproach yourself for, you do not feel concerned. In fact, unfortunately, this is usually the case. Many of you listen to my talks and tell yourselves that what I am saying is not for you; it must be aimed at so-and-so. Well, you would do better to take what I say to heart for yourselves also.

You have no right to accuse me of censuring a brother or sister in public, for when I use such a situation I never mention names. I say to myself, ‘Ah, here is something I can use! I was just wondering what I should talk to you about, and here, thanks to the generosity of X, Y, or Z, I have a ready-made subject.’ How and for what purpose I use the material you provide me with is my business, for a Master can turn everything – even false accusations, lies and slander – to good use. Nothing is easier for him if he needs to know the truth, because he knows where and how to find out.

In any case, I always check the truth of what I am told about someone. I can assure you that I have had a great deal of experience in this area, and I have often found that what people say about each other is either exaggerated or completely false. Also, people have frequently tried to use me for their own ends. It is very convenient to take refuge behind your teacher in order to justify your own position: ‘The Master says this and that...’ I have even known wives who told their husbands, ‘The Master says that if you refuse to listen to me it is because you are an incapable idiot...’ And then the wretched husband comes to see me in a state of fury – or dejection, depending on his temperament – and finds out that I never said any such thing. His wife is simply trying to use my authority to get something from him. At other times

it is the husband who tells his wife, ‘You know what the Master said about you...?’ when, in reality, I had never said a word. Oh yes, I have often seen that people use me as a lever to get their own way.

Then there are those who never come to me to find out whether it is true that I have said something about them; they believe it blindly and are sometimes very unhappy for a long time until they find out that it was all a lie. So, as I say, do not let people mislead you; always check the truth for yourself. I have nothing to gain by lying to you. If I ever told someone an unpleasant truth about you, I would certainly not be afraid to repeat it to your face. I do not camouflage what I do; camouflage is for weaklings and cowards. My role is to say things openly and frankly.

Then, too, I have known some brothers and sisters to be very upset and unhappy because certain sisters, who claim to have received a direct message from me telepathically, have told them, ‘The Master has told me to give you such-and-such an opinion or instruction...’ How could they pick up a thought that had never crossed my mind? This is what puzzles me: how did they manage to find ideas that had never occurred to me? Yes, some things are still a mystery to me.

It is because of all these things that I am obliged to clarify the question here and now. Sometimes, before believing what you hear – and perhaps basing an important decision on it – you should come to me for confirmation. For it is true: brothers and sisters are very fond of using me, of using my name. It seems I am an authority – to think that I never even suspected it – and that my prestige can be used to obtain all kinds of impossible things. This has been going on for years and has already given rise to countless misunderstandings: one person reports that I have said this or that, and everybody accepts it. Fortunately, the truth reasserts itself before too long; otherwise the situation could be catastrophic.

Now, it is quite a different matter if somebody comes and tells me lies about another, and I think it necessary to listen to them and to use what they say. It may very well be a good opportunity to help and enlighten several people at the same time. Even if what I say does not actually apply to the brother or sister in question, it will always apply to others. If you are observant you will see that the outcome is always useful and beneficial. So let me do things my way; I know what I am doing. What is more, I have the right – yes, every right – to do whatever needs to be done to help my brothers and sisters. There, I hope the question is a little clearer for you now.

Do you not think that you should trust someone who has given proof, year after year, of selflessness, love and goodwill? I assure you, you are quite safe; such a person will never abuse your trust. He will always, in all circumstances, behave with fairness and impartiality.

In political systems, especially in a republic, such trust is absent. The constitution always provides for commissions to supervise and, if necessary, censure government officials. Nobody trusts anybody else. Even presidents are not free to do what they want. If they wish to introduce a reform that would be fair and beneficial to the people, it still has to be studied and discussed by others, and the final decision depends on a senate or a parliament. History has shown that it is very rare to find someone who is competent and detached, while at the same time consecrated to heaven; as a result, human beings have learned to trust nobody.⁹ Everything has to be scrutinized and supervised; nothing can be taken on trust. And people are quite right to be wary. Most people are so selfish, so inconstant and unjust, that a woman cannot even trust her husband, or a man his wife; children their parents, or parents their children.

And look what goes on in business and industry: for every person who works, another is there to supervise. And that is not the end of it, for the supervisor is also supervised, and yet another supervises the supervisor's supervisor, and so on. Nobody trusts the others to be honest and to work well. Distrust and doubt pervade the whole of society, because human beings no longer have an ideal; because there is nobody to provide a good example.

For my part, I cannot do my work unless you trust me. If I have still not proved to your satisfaction that everything I say can help to liberate you and contribute to your fulfilment, and make you happy and healthy, why go on? Why restrict yourselves? My work is to liberate you. That is love. Love liberates. Have I been a tyrant up to now? I may raise my voice from time to time, but that is no more than a means designed to get some of you to return to a more reasonable frame of mind. I was not born to impose my own will or ill-treat others. Some of the explanations and arguments I use are stronger and more convincing than others, but I have never treated you unjustly. I tell you sincerely: if you do not give me your trust I cannot do my work. I cannot! I work voluntarily, without payment, and with a great deal of love, but if I sense that you distrust or doubt me, I cannot continue. If you consider that I have not sufficiently proved that I am worthy of your trust, try taking my place for a few days and tell me how you get on. You will see that it is

not so easy to work at changing human nature.

The Bonfin, 28 August 1978

V

Many of you wonder how I am able to explain certain passages of the Gospels which have existed for two thousand years without ever really being explained. For instance, when Jesus said, *'My Father is still working, and I also am working,'* what work was he referring to? Or when he said, *'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you,'* what did he mean us to ask, search for or knock on? Then there are all the parables: the dishonest steward; the wise and foolish virgins; the camel that can pass through the eye of a needle, whereas a rich man cannot enter the kingdom of God, and so on.¹⁰ Jesus may have explained all these to his disciples at the time, but his explanations were not reported in the Gospels. So how can we know exactly what he meant?

I was very young when I first asked myself this, and although I collected all kinds of commentaries on the Gospels, I was never entirely satisfied with the explanations I found. Then one day, after thinking deeply about it, it was suddenly revealed to me that I should try to enter into the mind of Jesus, and I began to put my imagination to work. God has given us imagination, this extraordinary instrument that enables us to conceive of things we cannot possess or accomplish on the physical plane, and so create the conditions necessary for their ultimate realization. Unfortunately, human beings use this faculty only in the service of their baser instincts: their sensuality, their desire for possessions, domination or revenge. It is almost unbelievable the things that human beings imagine in these areas! This is why we need to train our imagination, so that it may be used only for divine purposes.

In order to enter into the mind of Jesus, therefore, I pictured myself in Palestine, in the different places mentioned in the Gospels (the towns and mountains, the shores of the Jordan or of Lake Gennesaret), and there I would repeat to my disciples the passages that I wanted to understand. In this way I saw myself entering Jesus' consciousness, and I could see, feel and think as he saw, felt and thought. Of course, I was not able to do this from one day to the next. I had to work at it for a very, very long time. Sometimes I succeeded and sometimes not. In any case, I can now say that if I sometimes manage to explain a little better than others the meaning of some of the Gospel parables,

it is thanks to years of practice at entering the mind of Jesus.

Now, let me speak about this exercise in more general terms. If you wish, you can enter the mind of your teacher so as to gain a better grasp of his ideas. You have a right to do this, but only on condition that your motives are truly pure and unselfish and that your goal is divine. For when you enter a person's mind, you take with you all the good but also all the evil that is in you. You may do it, therefore, only with beings who are so highly evolved that they are capable of transforming the impurities you communicate to them.

How little human beings know about such things! It never occurs to them that their thoughts and feelings might disturb or soil someone else. When a man resolves to follow the path of spirituality, something very beautiful, luminous and powerful radiates from him. And, naturally, women quickly sense his charm; their imagination is stimulated, and without realizing it, they create all kinds of temptations for him on an invisible plane. This is a woman's nature, and there is no point in trying to change it; when they sense an impulse of this kind, they have to follow it. But this explains why many initiates have succumbed to the ceaseless solicitations of women who begged them to love them. I am not saying that you should not love your teacher. Indeed, you should, but with spiritual love and the desire to sustain and protect him so that he might accomplish his mission.

If you want to enter the mind of an initiate, it is better to choose a very great Master such as Jesus, Hermes Trismegistus or Melchizedek, for they are beyond the power of even the most imperfect of beings to defile them or obstruct their work. I used to do the same exercise with my own Master, Peter Deunov, as with Jesus, but I always took great care to be in a suitable place and in the right frame of mind. I would never dare to enter my Master's mind except with an attitude of great respect and reverence. It is only on condition that you have this attitude of respect and veneration that the exercise can be truly beneficial, for then you vibrate on the same wavelength, and it is this attunement that enables you to explore the world of his mind.^{[11](#)}

What matters most, therefore, is to have the right attitude, and – as I have observed – very few are capable of this. Those who come to the Bonfin know very well that they are coming into a brotherhood, and yet many of them still have a distant, impenetrable attitude. They do not realize that such an attitude – cultivated in order to impress others – does not impress me at all. On the contrary, I can see immediately that they are people who follow the dictates

of their personality. I should add that they are not very intelligent, for it is a waste of time to come here with this attitude; they will not learn anything or benefit from their stay. Their mentality prevents them even from perceiving the treasures at their disposal. They could stay here for months and still not understand our philosophy – and whatever they say later about what they have seen or heard here will be completely false. They need to be more open, more trusting, and then what they learn here will not only enlighten them, but it will also transform them.

Unfortunately, it is obvious that even before coming they have decided to maintain this attitude. They do not seem to realize they are making it impossible for themselves to have any real understanding of what goes on here. The attitude they need is that of a medium. What do I mean by that? Well, in the first place, mediums are usually women, and they are so receptive that they instantly sense the physical and psychic state of the people they meet. Without necessarily going to such lengths, you must learn to be receptive, for only in this way can you have an accurate understanding of people or things. Even if you are the most intelligent person¹² in the world, if you are not receptive you will never understand other people. You will judge them according to external norms and will sense nothing. True knowledge is gained through the ability to sense things, not through the intellect. The intellect never really gets to the bottom of anything. But human beings prefer an attitude of distrust, thinking that it leaves them free to judge and analyse others. They consider receptivity to be an abdication of their independence.

Sometimes I see some of you looking at me as though I were an insect they would like to dissect in order to see how it works. They observe and analyse me, and examine my blood to see whether it is red or green. But one day they tire of this sport, and instead of analysing and dissecting me, they turn their attention to themselves, and then, when they remember all their transgressions, they are overtaken by regret and remorse. And yet they used to think they were perfect. What has happened to change them? They have received a gift of light. As long as human beings have no light, they think they are blameless and they presume to judge others. But once they have some light, they are not quite so self-satisfied or proud of themselves.

The Bonfin, 29 December 1979

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¹ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor coll., n° 242, chap. 9: ‘The light of the spirit should be our only guide’.

² See *The Philosopher’s Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor coll., n° 241, chap. 13: ‘The growth of the divine seed’.

³ See *Man’s Subtle Bodies and Centres – the Aura, the Solar Plexus, the Chakras...*, Izvor coll., n° 219; ‘*In Spirit and in Truth*’, Izvor coll., n° 235, chap. 2: ‘The Divine office of weights and measures’.

⁴ See *Chants de la Fraternité Blanche Universelle*, Double CD 1510.

⁵ See *Man’s Psychic Life: Elements and Structures*, Izvor coll., n° 222, chap. 11: ‘Consciousness’, chap. 12: ‘The subconscious’ and chap. 13: ‘The higher self’.

⁶ See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor coll., n° 207, chap. 1: ‘How to recognize a true spiritual Master’.

⁷ See above, chap. 6: ‘A Master is a mirror reflecting the truth’.

⁸ See *Man’s Two Natures, Human and Divine*, Izvor coll., n° 213, chap. 4: ‘Methods of escape’.

⁹ See *Love Greater Than Faith*, Izvor coll., n° 239, chap. 10: ‘Base your trust on vigilance’.

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

¹¹ See *What is a Spiritual Master?*, Izvor coll., n° 207, chap. 11: ‘Identification’.

¹² See above, chap. 8: ‘Disciples and their Master’.

Chapter Four

Hrani-Yoga

and

Surya-Yoga

I

While you are here, at the Bonfin, you should concentrate on two different kinds of yoga: Hrani-yoga,¹ which is the yoga of nutrition, and Surya-yoga, the yoga of the sun.²

Nowadays, many people, whose inner equilibrium is disturbed by the hectic pace of life, seek to restore balance to their lives with the help of yoga, Zen, Transcendental Meditation or various relaxation techniques. I do not want to imply that this is not a good thing – it is – but I have found an exercise which is far simpler and more effective, and that is to learn to eat correctly. People pay no attention to the way they eat; they gulp their food down in the midst of noise, arguments and nervous tension – and then they go and practise yoga! Is it so difficult to understand that every day, two or three times a day, we all have an opportunity to practise relaxation, concentration and harmonization of our cells?

For years I have been asking you to make an effort to eat in silence (not only not to talk but to avoid all noise with your utensils), to chew every mouthful a long time, and to breathe deeply from time to time. Above all, I ask you to concentrate on your food in a spirit of gratitude to the Lord for all these riches. As I have already explained, these exercises may seem very insignificant, but they are, in fact, some of the very best ways of acquiring true self-mastery. It is not easy to concentrate on one's food and on every little gesture throughout the meal, so that it may be perfectly quiet and harmonious, but it is precisely the mastery of these lesser things that will enable you to master greater things. When I see that someone is careless and clumsy in details, I can tell at once that they have lived in a state of disorder in the past. Moreover, these shortcomings are bound to have a very negative influence on their future, for everything is connected.

If, in spite of all I have said, you continue to make so much noise, it is because you do not know how to begin something properly. We start with a few minutes of meditation, followed by the formula of grace, and then we

begin our meal; this is the moment when you need to be vigilant so as to avoid making a noise. If you are not careful, you will make a clatter with your knives and forks, and once you begin like that you will continue in the same way throughout the meal. Of course, when this happens, I could remind you to pay more attention, but if I did that, the merit would not be yours. It is you who have to be careful.

So begin at the beginning, and do not expect to achieve anything momentous until this first point is established. There are some who do not even notice that we are trying to be silent in the dining hall; they make a noise with their utensils and even drop them on the floor, without in the least realizing that they are disrupting the atmosphere. They are so absorbed in the affairs of their own little personality that they neither see nor hear what is going on around them. Such people could live for a thousand years on earth and travel throughout the universe without noticing anything. Some people are so completely unobservant that they would be incapable of telling you the colour of their sweetheart's eyes. They have been embracing each other for years, but they still do not know what colour their eyes are! Poor humanity!

I realize that many of you were surprised to hear me say that meals can be an occasion for psychic and spiritual advancement. And yet that is the case. The problem is how to give human beings a sense of what is important and what is not. You often hear people say, 'Oh, this or that is a detail; it's not important.' But then what is important? A catastrophe? Yes, but a catastrophe is usually caused by a defect in some minor detail. The very universe is made up of electrons, which are minute particles, details. If you are careful to do little things properly, you will also succeed with big things. This is why children should be taught from a very early age to respect the rules of nutrition: by giving attention to these rules they will learn self-discipline. Human nature is so chaotic and anarchic that if they make no effort to control it today, it will be the cause of endless difficulties in the future.

When you are back in your own homes you can do what you like, but while you are here I ask you to respect the rules I have given you, so as not to disturb all the others, who also need to be quiet and to concentrate. Many people think, 'Oh, the others! What do I care?' Well, it is precisely because of this attitude that the world is in such a bad way: nobody cares about others. Human beings are incapable of living together because they have no respect or consideration for each other. This is why a collective life is such a magnificent opportunity to grow and to open up your consciousness. When

you live alone you can be as selfish as you please; you have no need to make an effort to be considerate of someone else's feelings. But if nature has given men and women the desire to start a family, it is precisely in order to make them think of others, but even then, some are incapable of doing so! Many married people live as though their partner did not exist, or as though he or she existed for the sole purpose of serving them and satisfying their every whim. Even in a collectivity, many people are still incapable of freeing themselves from their egocentric attitude.

A collectivity is not yet a brotherhood. The members of a collectivity do not necessarily have a sense of unity. A village or town is a collectivity, but do the people who live there know and love each other? Do they work for each other? No, they all have their own separate lives; it is not a brotherhood. A brotherhood is a collectivity whose members share the common bond of a broad, luminous consciousness and work with and for each other, and more than that, they work for the whole world. True brotherhood is universal.

It is a sign that people are highly evolved when they are conscious of belonging to a whole that is much greater than their individual self and are careful not to let their thoughts and feelings, activities or inner noise disturb the harmony of that whole. You will say, 'Inner noise – what do you mean by that?' Noise is the result of dissonance, and the dissonance of our thoughts, our anguish, our spirit of revolt, creates a noise which disturbs the psychic atmosphere.³ People do not even realize that their inner noise is also very detrimental to themselves and that it will eventually surface in the form of psychic, and sometimes physical, illness.

You will certainly find it surprising if I tell you that the laws that govern nutrition are identical to those that govern conception. You may see no relation between the two, but, in fact, the relation exists: when you eat, you are creating the conditions necessary for the birth of thoughts, feelings and actions. What can you produce if you do not eat? Just as the state of mind of the father and mother at the moment of conception determines the destiny of the child born of their union, so your state of mind while eating determines the nature of your physical and psychic activity. When you go back to work after eating in a state of anxiety, anger or discontent, you will sense a fever of discordant vibrations that pervade your being and communicate themselves to whatever you do. Even if you make an effort to appear perfectly calm and in control, you will emanate an atmosphere of tension and agitation. Whereas, when you eat in a harmonious state of mind, that harmony will carry over

into the rest of the day. Even if you are obliged to hurry from one appointment to another, you will have a sense of inner peace that cannot be destroyed by your activity.

You must never sit down to a meal, therefore, if your mind is full of anxiety. Dismiss your problems for the time being (you can always go back to them later), and after your meal, thanks to having eaten in a good frame of mind, the solutions to those problems will present themselves more readily. So, consider your meals as a special exercise: begin by excluding from your mind anything that prevents you from eating in a state of peace and harmony, and if you do not manage to quieten yourself at once, wait until you have succeeded; otherwise your inner disquiet will simply communicate itself to your food and poison it. The chaotic state that follows will be the direct result of having eaten in the wrong frame of mind.

But what a business to try and get men and women to understand this, when there are married couples who, even in the act of creating a child, detest each other. They have no idea of the abominable things they implant in their child in this way, and in later years that child will suffer from that poison and poison the lives of others. Heaven holds you responsible for what you implant in the heart and soul of your partner. All the rest is less important. It often happens that people seek relief from unhappiness by embracing their beloved when they are feeling depressed, but this is a crime, for in doing so they are giving all their filth to the one they profess to love. You must never embrace your beloved at a time like that. Love whoever you please. Embrace whoever you please. But before doing so, cultivate all that is best in your heart and soul, all that is most luminous within you, in order to give it to the one you love. This is the one condition that ensures that heaven will never condemn you for loving someone. Other human beings may condemn you, but if you fulfil this condition, heaven will applaud you, whereas in every other case it is disgusted by the filth of what you emanate and transmit.

Bear in mind, therefore, that nutrition is a form of conception. After nine months in its mother's womb, a child's umbilical cord is cut and it begins to feed itself. But in reality, even then, a human being is still within the womb of mother nature and continues to be nourished by means of another umbilical cord, the solar plexus. Very ancient techniques exist in India, China and Japan to help people to learn how to nourish themselves through the solar plexus. But how can you hope to use such techniques if you are still not capable of applying the rules I have given you when you eat?

You eat some fruit, and lo and behold, when it is digested and assimilated, that food contributes to the life of the whole organism. What unimaginable intelligence is capable of providing each organ of our body with what it needs in order to act, and think and feel? Thanks to this food we can continue to see, hear, breathe, taste, touch, speak, sing, walk about; even our hair, nails, teeth and skin receive the nourishment they need to go on with their work. But human beings eat with no consciousness of what they are doing. They take it all for granted, never seized with admiration for the divine intelligence that has so marvellously arranged all this. They are too absorbed in their own affairs, which seem so much more important!

Only the initiates are always mindful of this divine intelligence. Only they constantly endeavour to reach it, to link themselves to it, to be grateful to it and, from time to time, to ask permission to witness the work it is doing throughout nature. Yes, for as soon as we are ready, Cosmic Intelligence may admit us to its many workshops and show us the work it is doing, whether within ourselves or in the depths of the earth, where minerals, metals, crystals and precious stones are formed.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, make up your minds to use your mealtimes to become more peaceful, and learn to be more attentive, to acquire self-mastery. Handling your utensils and cutting up your food without making a sound demands qualities of attention, precision and foresight that will be useful to you for the rest of your life. Without these qualities your life will be an endless series of blunders; you will constantly come into collision with people and things, and your tactless remarks will drive away friends and cause many doors to be closed to you. It is only by beginning at the beginning, with little things, that we succeed in big things. Learning how to eat is as important as going to the sunrise. Little by little, through nutrition, watching the sunrise, deep breathing and meditation, many things within you will be harmonized. This is the luminous path laid out in the teaching of the Universal White Brotherhood.

The Bonfin, 5 August 1962

II

When we study the structure of the universe, we see that, as with the structure of the human being, it is based on the law of hierarchy. The universe is composed of denser, cruder matter on the lower levels and

becomes gradually subtler, purer and more luminous as one moves towards the summit. This means that in order to obtain particles of this pure matter we have to leave our present abode and rise to a higher level. And this is something that we can all do. Just as God has given us the means we need to manipulate and control the denser regions of matter, so has he given us the means to rise to the subtler regions. But we can do this only by moving to a higher level. This is what prayer is: a mental act by which we rise to the luminous world and draw on all the most precious treasures that the Lord has hidden there. God may not even know that we need something; indeed, there is no reason why he should bother about this, for as long as what we need is at our disposal, all we have to do is help ourselves.

Prayer, therefore, is not an occupation for the credulous, who have been told that the Lord has nothing better to do than listen to their mumblings. True prayer is based on a science which deals with the structure of the universe and the different states of matter. Above and beyond the realms of earth, water, air and fire are many, progressively subtler regions inhabited by all manner of luminous beings – angels, archangels, and so on. And just as we can draw what we need from the regions of earth, water, air and fire, so can we draw from these higher regions all the subtler things we need for health, happiness and fulfilment.

We need to know first, therefore, that the universe is hierarchically organized and, second, that an all-loving Being exists, who has distributed his gifts in every region of the universe in such a way that no creature need ever go in want. It is now up to us to exert ourselves and learn to reach these regions by means of thought, to take from them the elements our heart and soul desire and even, when necessary, to seek refuge in them.

Let me illustrate this with an example. Suppose you are being pursued by enemies and are running as hard as you can to escape from them. At last, breathless and bedraggled, you tumble into a party where people are eating, drinking and making merry, singing and dancing, amid the scent of costly perfumes. Nobody exclaims, ‘Hey, what are you doing here? Go away, you’re an intruder!’ On the contrary, you are made welcome, given water to wash with and clean clothes to change into and invited to join the banquet. In the meantime, your enemies are waiting outside, unable to get at you or harm you. Well, this is what prayer is: you run for dear life – that is, you run from the difficulties and dangers of the physical plane to the shelter of the place where the Lord dwells in the joyful company of his angels and friends. He

asks nothing better than to welcome you to the gathering, too. So you stay there as long as you like while your enemies retreat in disarray, and later you go home, feeling happy and fulfilled.⁴

You will probably say this sounds like a fairy-tale. Yes, that may well be, but what matters is that it is something you can understand. From now on, when you are feeling distressed and anxious, why not lift yourself up to another region and find help there? Why do you persist in snivelling and moaning about your troubles and swallowing tranquilizers instead of having recourse to prayer? Prayer is the marvellous and truly effective means taught by all the great Masters of humanity, but it is increasingly neglected. People say, 'How can any intelligent being of the 20th century continue to believe in things that were good only in the Middle Ages, when people were ignorant, credulous and superstitious?' Today, science has replaced prayers with pills, and people think that pills can cure everything. Unfortunately, this is far from true.

So, as I say, if you want to give yourself every chance of resolving your problems, develop the habit of lifting your thoughts to a higher plane every day. It is up to you to make the move; you must not wait for the Lord, in his great clemency and mercy, to come to you. The Lord will not descend to your level. Perhaps you will say that there is some mistake here, because the Bible says that at Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles in the form of tongues of fire. Yes, but in reality, human beings cannot receive the Spirit unless they have already risen inwardly to the celestial regions, where they become one with the Godhead. Those who purify themselves, who vibrate in unison with the Lord's will, live already in the most luminous regions. Although we speak of the Lord 'descending' into them, in fact, it is they who rise to the Lord and are filled with his presence.⁵

The universe contains everything: heaven, earth and even hell. It is up to you to choose your destination. If you have been so foolish as to stumble into hell, it does not mean that you will have to stay there forever. You can always get out again. If friendship obliges you to go for a drink with friends in a pub, it does not mean that you can never leave that pub again. Or suppose you go for a walk in the woods and are tempted to stay and pick the wild strawberries: there is nothing wrong in that, but you must take care not to linger too long; otherwise you will be unable to find your way out in the dark. Perhaps you regret some tactless words that came out of your mouth and think that they have spoiled everything. All you have to do is say other

words, words that will repair the damage. And if those unfortunate words were accompanied by a venomous look? Then you can restore the balance by increasing the proportion of loving looks that accompany your words.

Of course, if someone comes to me in distress, saying that they are convinced that they are damned, I would not attempt to contradict them, because it is clear that they are determined to be damned. I would simply explain that they are not damned for all eternity. You may be damned for a while, but then you will have to move on. If you fall into a swamp infested with snakes, mosquitoes, wasps, toads and locusts, it does no good to weep and pray for deliverance. You have to stir yourself, get out of the swamp and move to one of the many more peaceful, hospitable regions in the universe. Always remember, even in the worst possible circumstances, that nothing is final; you only have to move to another region.

I assure you, if the prayers of those who pray regularly are so rarely answered, it is because they see things upside down. Instead of going up to the Lord they implore him to come down to their level. In other words, instead of trying to improve their behaviour and correct their understanding – deciding on a change of domicile, as it were – they expect the Lord to come down and release them from hell and carry them up to heaven.

If you are living in a deep underground cave or tunnel, and you beg the sun to come and light up the cave, your prayer will not be granted. The sun will not leave the heavens and go underground for your sake. You will have to leave your cave and go out into the light. What do such things as caves and tunnels represent? They are forms of pleasure and certain bad habits that you are unwilling to give up. You make no attempt to change the way you live and behave, but at the same time you ask heaven to listen to your complaints, to enlighten, help, heal and enrich you. You are asking for the impossible. It is you who have to make up your mind to live a different kind of life.

What is the meaning of the early morning exercise we do every day? Why do we get up at dawn and go up to the Rock [The Rock is a rocky platform at the top of a hill near the Bonfin, where the Master and his disciples gathered every morning, in spring and summer, to meditate and watch the sun rise.] to see the sun rising? It is symbolic: when we get out of bed and leave our room – our ‘cave’ – and climb up to the Rock, we are showing that we are conscious of the need to get up and leave our present abode in order to find light, warmth and life on a higher plane.

As long as human beings refuse to abandon their old way of life and

continue to ask the Lord to come to them, it is as though they were asking the sun to come into their cave – they are wasting their time. It is up to them to move, to change their lives. Those who learn to move receive the light and warmth of the sun, and as the sun symbolizes the Lord, they receive the wealth that the Lord has distributed throughout the universe. Everything you need is there in profusion, but you have to go and get it. What pride to think that everything should flow our way, that even the Lord should come to us! And pride is the most stupid of attitudes! The highest wisdom, the most intelligent attitude, is humility. To be humble is to leave your cave, to make the first move, and in response you receive what you need. Can you not see how clear and logical this is?

Those who seriously want their prayers to be answered must stop clinging to the physical body, to their instincts, to the earth, and rise to the realm of the spirit. Just as you have to get out of bed and leave your physical house in order to go and see the sun rising, in the same way you have to leave your inner dwelling, for if you refuse to rise inwardly you will not receive much, even from the rising sun – a little light, warmth and life, perhaps, but no more. Most of the true riches will escape your grasp. You have to go much further, much higher. You have to rise to the source from which the sun itself draws life. So I am saying that it is not enough to sit up on the Rock and look at the sun. Many people have been doing this for years and are still unchanged: still selfish, prejudiced and cruel. You must go further. You must become a servant of God with only one ambition: to be a good example, a channel for all that the Lord wishes to send us. In other words, you must do what the sun does.

Now let me tell you about a method I practise myself that will make it easier for you to relate to the sun. I have never told you about it before, because one always has to verify a method hundreds of times before recommending it to others.

Let us say that you are sitting up here, wide awake and attentive, waiting for a first glimpse of the sun as it rises. As soon as the first ray of sunlight appears, you start to drink it, to suck the sun into yourself. Instead of only looking at it and breathing it in, you eat and drink it as well. In your imagination, picture this living light strengthening, vivifying and purifying all your organs as it courses through you, illuminating every cell in your body. This exercise is a great aid to concentration; the results can be truly marvellous. Your whole being quivers and vibrates as you are gripped by the

sensation that you are really and truly drinking light. Drink the sun! It will help you to remain vigilant, to keep your consciousness alert. The need to go on drinking will keep you awake.

When Zarathustra asked the god Ahura-mazda what the first humans ate and drank, the god said, 'They ate fire and drank light.' Is there any reason why we, too, should not learn to eat fire and drink light so as to return to the perfection of the first humans?

Learn to nourish yourselves with light, for behind that light are concealed the greatest blessings. If you do this you will feel so rich that you will begin to love all creatures. It is poverty that gives rise to hatred. The rich do not hate people. Of course, I am talking about the truly rich, the great spiritual Masters. They dwell in such an abundance of wealth that it overflows. How could anyone who knows such a state of fulfilment hate others? It is when people feel themselves deprived and in want that they become envious and resentful of others and begin to hate them. When you meet someone who does not love others, who shows no sense of nobility or generosity, it means that they are poor and in want.

You must never forget this. Once you begin to be conscious of all the riches God has given us, you feel your heart overflowing with love, and your only desire is to help and enlighten others. Since you possess such an overabundance of wealth, you feel that you have to give some of it to others. Whereas, when you think you are poor, you will, of course, resent the rich, and from there it is only one step to wanting to attack them and take their wealth from them. This is why I say that poverty – every form of poverty – is the source of all crime.

The Bonfin, 9 July 1980

III

Well now, how are you feeling today, my dear brothers and sisters? What a gift the sunrise was this morning! The air was so soft and pure and transparent! I could hardly bear to tear myself away. Indeed, I really do not feel like talking today. But never mind, in spite of this, I will say a few words.

Many decades ago, as you know, scientists discovered that space was filled with a network of waves. It was this discovery that led to the radio, the telephone, radar, and so on. The only real problem lay in finding instruments

capable of receiving and emitting those waves. But why, I ask you, should we allow science and technology to be alone in exploiting this discovery? The waves that criss-cross space are not only the kind that enable us to use the telephone or enjoy a radio or television programme: space also contains waves of a different, far subtler kind, and it is important that we learn to receive these waves, too. We have the means to do so. The Lord has placed within human beings instruments that make it possible for them to receive the waves emitted by initiates, angels, archangels – by heaven itself.

Unfortunately, instead of listening to these divine messages, instead of tuning in to these currents and receiving from them all they need in order to improve their health and their understanding, human beings have their minds on other things. They are tuned to other stations, to the stations of hell, and the only thing they receive is the noise of strife and revolt. And as they do not know how to change stations or turn off their radio, they are always anxious, ill at ease, unhappy.

The task of disciples is to become conscious of these things, to train themselves to an awareness of the riches of the universe and to realize that they are all there at their disposal. If they have not yet learned to benefit from all this wealth, it is because they are blind and asleep, their minds closed. They are like someone dying of thirst, even though they are up to their neck in water. Human beings spend their time complaining that they lack this, that or the other thing. In reality, they lack nothing: the lack is in their consciousness. This is why I have my own broadcasting station, high up in the mountains, and from time to time I go up there in my mind and broadcast a message to the world: ‘Wake up! Wake up! The sun is already rising over the world. You have come to earth to accomplish a gigantic task: to prepare the coming of the kingdom of God.’

When you come up to the Rock in the morning, remember that you are capable of receiving the waves the sun is sending you. Instead of endlessly brooding on your grudges and unresolved problems, tune in to those heavenly radio stations. If you do not do this, nothing will ever change for you: you will always be the same miserable wretches, and you will gain nothing from looking at the rising sun.

As it is, I know that some of you ask yourself, ‘What is the use of going up to the Rock every morning? It never seems to do me any good.’ Well, it all depends on how you see it. If you recognize in all sincerity that you are caught in the vice of endless problems and difficulties, and you go up to the

Rock to lay all these problems before the sun and try to find a solution, perhaps then you will find the answers you are looking for. Yes, believe me, in the morning, at sunrise, lay out your problems, and the sun, which can see you just as you see it, will say to itself, 'Poor, unhappy creatures! Let's help them! Let's give them some light.' For this is how the sun helps you: by sending you waves of light.

The trouble is that you still do not understand that light, all light, serves to enable us to see, and if you do not receive inner light it is because you have not washed the 'windows' of your consciousness, the dirty glass that prevents light from entering you. Nobody has the right to lay down the law until their consciousness is awakened to these things, for they are bound to be mistaken. This is why I keep telling you, over and over again, to prepare yourselves every day for tomorrow's sunrise, to entertain only the most positive thoughts and feelings before going to sleep. In this way, you prepare the ground during the night, and when you come up to greet the sun the next morning you are in the right frame of mind, wide awake and conscious that heaven is speaking to you, that the angels are sending you messages. Then you will be able to say, 'Thank you, thank you, Lord! Today I can become a little wiser, a little healthier, a little more loving.' If only you could pick up some of those divine waves, you would hear heavenly entities talking to you about your future, the riches you possess and the life that will be yours when your consciousness is fully awakened.⁶ Yes, heaven speaks; heaven sings to you. How can you still say that there is nothing there?

The first thing we should think of in the morning is the sun, for in this way its beneficial influence will be felt throughout the rest of the day. People today think that such things are of little or no importance, but they are wrong. It is not without significance who you meet when you first go out in the morning, for some people bring you happiness and success, while others bring unhappiness and failure.

When I was still a child in Bulgaria – of course, this was before World War II – there was an old custom that was very touching and pretty: on New Year's day, very early in the morning, young children were sent to wish a happy new year to their neighbours. Children were considered to be pure, and it was thought that only good things could come from their presence. Each child held a twig of a particular tree, sometimes with ribbons attached, and they would touch each person in the house with their twig, while wishing them health, prosperity and a good harvest. In return, people thanked them by

giving them fruit, some sweets or a bun, which the children tucked away in the bags they carried specially for this purpose – bags which were almost as big as they were!

I, too, when I was very small, was sent with my little twig to wish the neighbours a happy new year. I do not know why people thought that I could bring them blessings, but many families asked my mother to send me to them very early, before the other children. So she would wake me up and dress me, and it was a painful business for me, you know, because it meant going out in the cold and the snow. The winters in the mountains of Macedonia are not like winters on the Riviera! But I did it anyway: half asleep I would go into each house, touch the people there with my little branch, and mumble words I did not understand, but which I had had to learn by heart. Well, even so, it was a nice custom.⁷

And this is how it should be with the sun. The sun should be the first to come in to greet you in the morning and wish you a good day, and then everything will go right for you. This is why it is so important to prepare yourself the day before: to remember that you are going to meet God's most faithful servant and drink your fill of light, warmth and life. Try to put aside all your cares and anxieties so that you are completely open and at the disposal of the divine world and can commune freely with the beneficial forces in and around you.

Look at all the different ways human beings communicate with each other now that they have radio waves at their disposal. If they are in danger, whether in a ship, a plane or under the ground, they can call for help, and every day we receive messages by radio and television from other parts of the world. All this is excellent, but why should we communicate only with other human beings? Why should we listen to their uproar, their demands, their revolt, their threats? We should be using these instruments God has given us to communicate with the sun and with beings that are more highly evolved than ourselves. We should be using them to tune ourselves to their wavelength and allow something of their aura, their happiness, light and peace to penetrate us. And when we have gained strength from our communion with them, then we can begin to associate with human beings.

Some of you are wondering how long this talk is going to go on: 'He keeps talking about the sun, and meantime it's burning our heads!' So much the better – you are going to be cooked, well cooked, and ready to be eaten! For, you know, some intelligent spirits are like gardeners who visit their

orchards to gather the ripe fruit and enjoy its sweetness. ‘Oh,’ they exclaim, ‘what a delicious melon – or peach, or pear! What magnificent fruit!’ Yes, when they see human beings who have finally awakened to the spiritual life, they tend them with great care and find great joy in the light that emanates and radiates from them. All men and women are tended in this way by heaven’s gardeners. Perhaps you will say, ‘I have no fruit. I’m not an orchard. How can anybody hope to find something in me?’ But the truth is that there is something to be found in everybody. Even poisonous plants can be useful: they can be used to make medicines.

But I had better not let myself say any more on this subject; it is too fascinating. If I start talking about it I am liable to go on far too long. Human beings have no inkling that they are visited by creatures from other worlds. All of you receive such visits, because you are all like laboratories that contain many different chemicals. But this is not the moment for further explanations. I must wait until the most elementary questions are clear to you; otherwise you will never assimilate the more important things. When I see that you are still incapable of being fully awake for the sunrise, I cannot let you embark on matters for which you need the utmost mastery of your thoughts and energies.

In the spiritual life, even more than in other areas, it is dangerous to go too fast. If I gave you a talisman and told you how to use it to call up spirits, it would only destroy you, because you are still not strong enough, still too inexperienced. So what good would I have done you? No, no, you will be ready for these things only when you have taken in all that, for the moment, you consider to be insignificant and unimportant. I can understand that you do not find many of these things interesting, but they are what will be your salvation, whereas the things that interest you will bring you every kind of misfortune. We have to understand each other, otherwise we shall get nowhere, you and I. For I, too, can be very unyielding, very stubborn and persistent. And I tell you that you must go over in your mind all these questions I insist on, and stop treating them as though they were of secondary importance. You think they are not important. But then what is of importance in life?

But I still have great hopes for you. You are not here by chance, after all. God has sent you here to create a new humanity, to be part of a small corps of messengers bearing the seeds of a new way of thinking and behaving, until, like leaven in the dough, your message has an effect on the whole world.

IV

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘We are here between the four walls of this room at the Bonfin, but we are also in the town of Fréjus. Fréjus is in the Var, the Var is in France, France is in Europe, and Europe is one of the continents on earth. The earth belongs to the family of planets in the solar system, the solar system belongs to a galaxy, and that galaxy is a tiny part of the whole cosmos. Yes, the marvellous truth is that we are here in this room and, at the same time, in the cosmos.

What conclusion, if any, can we draw from this? The conclusion that, as cosmic beings, we must not forever confine ourselves to our own petty interests. We must open our eyes and remind ourselves that we have cosmic work to do. What is the use of belonging to the Universal White Brotherhood if we do not work for broader, more far-reaching goals, for the welfare of the whole world? From now on, try to change your mental habits and adopt a broader point of view: try to become more aware of being part of the cosmos, of being linked to the whole universe; try to see that this means that the things you do as well as the way you do them must change.’

Listening to what I have just read, I am sure that some of you will say that you know all that. It is nothing new. True, the fact is not new, but it is so important that we have to keep reminding ourselves of it. We have to keep working to harmonize ourselves with this universe of which we are a part and to establish a truly beneficial relationship of exchange with it. For the universe is a vital, vibrant, radiant entity, and any individual who fails to vibrate in unison with it is destroyed. It is not enough to know intellectually that we are within the universe; this knowledge must be ever-present in our consciousness. We must develop a sense of this immensity, of which we are a minute particle, so that the life of the cosmos contributes to our own fulfilment.

One of the things this text says is that the earth on which we live belongs to the family of planets of the solar system. Of course, everybody knows that, but here, too, the knowledge is not enough. What counts is to establish a relationship with the sun so that we may benefit fully from its life, warmth and light.

The particles of our physical body are completely renewed every seven

years. Have you never wondered why, since we are constantly being renewed, we continue to have the same habits, the same weaknesses, the same diseases? The answer is that the new particles are stamped with the imprints of the previous living matter of our bodies and are obliged to conform to the old ways. This is why our new particles can change neither our temperament nor our weaknesses.⁸

The situation is a little like that of a factory or business, in which, from time to time, owing to illness, age or death, some employees have to be replaced by others who are younger and healthier. As far as the work is concerned, the new employees have to do exactly what the older ones did: even if the personnel changes, the work they do is the same. And the same is true of the new particles that we acquire through eating, breathing, thinking, feeling, and so on. This is why, if we want our new particles to be truly new and to produce new results, we need to change the imprints, the old habits, and for this I have already given you many methods.

But let us go a step further. Suppose you are sitting in the sun, which is pouring out into space luminous particles of the utmost purity. What is to prevent you, at such moments, from concentrating mentally on expelling all the old, tarnished, worn-out particles of your body and replacing them with the new particles coming from the sun? This can be an extremely effective exercise to do at sunrise. With all the powers of your heart and soul you try to take these divine particles and fix them within you. In this way, thanks to the sun, you will gradually renew the matter of your being and begin to think and act as true children of God.

You all understand why the religion of the future will be a solar religion: through the sun, we can be in communion with the Godhead every day. A remote, abstract God cannot help human beings to change. But the sun is not abstract: it is always present, always real, powerful, superb. The power that works through the sun is the power of Christ.⁹ In light of Hermes Trismegistus's words – 'What is above is like what is below' – should we not understand that the sun below – the sun in the sky – is like the sun above – Christ? Behind the visible, tangible sun is the Lord. The concrete, physical world that we can see is the reflection of the abstract, invisible world. When you know how to observe the things of earth, it is possible to discover the things of heaven. This is how I proceeded. I did not go to books written by human beings to find the things I reveal to you: I found them in the great book of living nature, which is the reflection of the world above. You have to

learn to read the book of nature, of which we ourselves are a part.

My dear brothers and sisters, you must make up your minds to work divinely, with the light and warmth of the sun, in order to replace all your old particles. Illness is simply an accumulation of foreign matter from which your body has not managed to free itself, and if you want to be healed you have to get rid of that matter. This is what the healing process really is: a cleansing. Why is it so important to learn to absorb the particles that the sun sends us every morning? It is because they alone do not overload the system; they alone produce no impurities. All that we eat and drink, even the air we breathe, inevitably leaves some waste in the body. Only the sun's rays leave no waste. This is why it is vital to learn to nourish yourselves on light, the subtlest of the elements.

The stomach feeds on solid and liquid matter, the lungs feed on air, and the brain feeds on light. You will object that we also nourish the brain by eating and drinking. That is true, but only the least subtle parts of the brain are nourished in this way. For the brain is a complex organ in which the different zones are hierarchically organized: some contain centres that enable us to deal with the realities of the material and intellectual worlds; others contain centres that enable us to relate to the realities of the spiritual and divine worlds.

You will probably say that it will take several centuries to replace all our old particles with particles of light. No, not necessarily. The intensity of your love can accelerate the transformation process. The greater your love of light, the more light you will attract and absorb.

Most people have the same attitude towards the sun as towards food. They never think about the way they eat. They believe that their body will sort out and assimilate the elements it needs, even if they spend their mealtimes talking, fidgeting or quarrelling. And, to a certain extent, this is true: the body takes charge of the situation. But what people do not know is that our food contains subtle forces and elements from space, and that we can assimilate those elements only if we are conscious of what we are doing. These elements, which belong to the etheric, astral and mental planes, can help us to improve our thoughts and feelings, and even our behavior, but again, only if we learn to eat consciously.

The same applies when you attend the sunrise: you may be physically present, but if your mind is always busy with other things, you may receive some slight physical benefit from its warmth and light, but you will receive

none of the subtler elements that would help you to grow spiritually. By being conscious of the fact that the sun communicates its life, love, wisdom and beauty to you through its rays, you prepare yourself to receive them; you open thousands of doors within you, through which the sun's rays can enter and give you the treasures they contain. In this way your whole being is filled with the virtues of the sun.

This is why it is so important to be conscious of what the sun represents. It is the only way to receive the elements that will help you to comprehend the laws and the mysteries of nature, to know peace and happiness. You can continue to come to the sunrise every day, of course, but until you have this consciousness you will never make any real progress. I have had letters from brothers and sisters who tell me that they have never understood or felt anything at sunrise, and that it is therefore pointless to waste their time coming up here to watch it. What can I do about such an attitude? Lord above, how can I get human beings to understand, so that they can begin to receive and amass all those treasures that could transform their existence?

Just as the benefit to be obtained both from nutrition and from the sunrise depends on your attitude, on your awareness, in the same way you will understand me and learn to transform yourselves only if you have the right attitude towards my words. It all depends on you. If your thoughts wander, or if you consider that what I tell you is unimportant, my words will have no effect, and for the rest of your lives you will remain oblivious and impervious to the splendours of the divine world. But if you take what I say seriously, you will experience some extraordinary changes. This, again, is something that you have never understood. For years you have been listening to truths capable of moving worlds, but they have no effect on you, because you do not know how to listen to them and retain the essentials to be able to put them into practice. What do you expect me to do about it? I cannot change you if you yourselves do nothing.

The Bonfin, 8 April 1980

V

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

'The highest ideal is to model yourself on the sun. If you decide to imitate a scientist or philosopher, or even a hero, a saint or an initiate, you will no doubt receive a few particles of their virtues, but what you receive will never

be as abundant or as pure as what you receive when you take the sun as your model.

The image of perfection is the sun, and if you take it as your model and, like the sun, you think only of enlightening, warming and enlivening others, you will really and truly be transformed. Even if you never obtain the actual light, warmth and life of the sun, the fact that you yearn and strive to possess them is sufficient to raise you to heavenly regions, in which you will accomplish many marvels. Your desire to enlighten, warm and enlivening others will make you yourself more luminous, warmer and more alive.'

Here again we have a text that will shock some and surprise others. 'Model myself on the sun!' they will say. 'That's ridiculous! How can one model oneself on something that is neither intelligent nor conscious?' Well, that is where they are wrong. Of course, it is true that the visible aspect of the sun is a ball of fire. But what about the visible form of a human being – a body that works like a machine? The universe itself is like a machine. The world has even known a few geniuses who declared that the universe came about by chance. But is it not a little far-fetched to believe that chance is so wise and intelligent?

A machine cannot function unless there is someone to start it. You have never seen a machine start up without being triggered by some form of energy or intelligence. Matter always has to be animated by the spirit. This is why it is nonsense to think that the sun is no more than an incandescent ball of fire. The sun is a magnificent world inhabited by the very highly-evolved beings that rule the planets. It is the vibrations of these beings that are transformed in space into heat and light, but the temperature on the sun itself is not excessive. But who will believe this? Children, perhaps? As for adults, my advice to them is to go and find out for themselves. In any case, there are certain entities known as salamanders that live in fire. In fact, they are the most highly-evolved of the many creatures that dwell in the elements. Many initiates have seen and talked to salamanders and have received some extraordinary revelations from them.

I am not belittling the great spiritual Masters of humanity by saying that we should model ourselves not on them but on the sun, for this is exactly what they did. The fact that they illuminated the whole world with their wisdom, warmed the hearts of all human beings with their love and vivified all men and women, thanks to the purity of their lives, proves that they modelled themselves on the sun. Besides, the fact that the sun constantly

sustains life in the universe, ceaselessly pouring out its light and warmth, shows that it, too, has a model. The sun models itself on the Lord.

Imitation is an innate tendency in all creatures, and human beings are no exception. The only question is who to imitate. A movie star? A champion football player? A popular singer? People do not know who to take as a model. Above all, they do not know how important the choice of a model is for one's psychic life. When you are attached to certain friends, the mere fact that you spend a good deal of time with them means that, without realizing it, you receive some of their particles, some share in their virtues and vices. In the same way, if you spend time with the sun, if you are constantly entranced by the beauty, the luminous transparency, power and abundance of life that flows from it, you will gradually see all kinds of changes taking place within you, in the cells of your being. Something within you will begin to vibrate differently, and you will become more and more luminous, warm and enlivening.¹⁰

If you want to have a beneficial influence on other human beings, you must be in contact with the sun every day, so that it can give you some of its particles, which you can then pass on to others. The sun is the only being capable of creating the inner conditions that enable you to love and help human beings. Without this model of light and warmth, it is too easy to allow only one's lower tendencies to be expressed. Look at what goes on in the world: everybody tries to get some advantage from others, to use or dominate them for their own ends. It is not a very glorious sight! Whereas, in the sun, you have the spectacle of a radiant, generous being, and you cannot avoid being influenced by what you see. Even if the sun is not an intelligent, rational being in the accepted sense, it is undeniable that the contact with its warmth and light will make you feel more cordial towards others and you will gradually become more patient,¹¹ tolerant¹² and forgiving.¹³

One day, wishing to understand the sun's philosophy, I asked it for an appointment. Yes, we met in a pub, and while we drank our cocktails, I asked, 'Dear Sun, there is something that is not quite clear in my heart. I wish you would explain it to me: why do you shine so brightly?'

'Because I am aflame with love,' it replied, 'and love brings forth light.'

'But could you explain how you can go on loving and bringing light to human beings, when you can see more clearly than anybody how wicked they are.'

'Oh, I made up my mind a very long time ago that I would not bother

about whether they were good or bad. I am only interested in doing what pleases me, and as it pleases me to pour out the warmth of my love on them, I continue to do so. This is what makes me happy. I am not concerned about whether human beings appreciate me or not. It is all the same to me. And I advise you to adopt the same attitude, because if you start thinking about the way human beings are, you will not be able to endure them.'

So I decided to do as the sun does, and it is this that makes it possible for me to go on with my work. If you think that I am surrounded by people who appreciate me and want to help me, you are sadly mistaken. Indeed, I am an embarrassment to many; they would be only too glad to be rid of me. When I see how deceitful, malicious, self-seeking and ungrateful human beings are, I am sometimes tempted to think that I would do better to bow out and leave them to their own resources. Fortunately, the sun is always there to whisper in my ear and remind me of our conversation in the pub, so I say, 'Yes, yes, I remember...' and continue. Why should you not do the same?

Of course, there are always a few exceptional beings we can take as models of purity, kindness, intelligence or honesty. But perfection is something else again. Perfection supposes the full and equal development of all three faculties – mind, heart, and will – and it is precisely this that is so rare. Many people are extraordinarily intelligent and erudite, but they have no love for their fellow human beings. Others are overflowing with love but have no strength of will, and so on. The world is full of people who are outstanding in some aspects and sadly lacking in others. The sun, on the other hand, presents an image of perfection, for its light shows that it understands everything, its warmth speaks to us of its great love, and the life it bestows on the universe shows that it is all-powerful.

The sun is always there to illuminate and warm human beings, but their minds are busy with other things. It is this preoccupation that prevents them from becoming warm, luminous and immortal in their turn. The sun is there, always magnificent, always glorious, but nobody pays any attention – except for those who are trying to find ways of using solar energy instead of oil or coal. If there were no shortage of energy in the world, nobody would think twice about the sun. Today, people are interested in exploiting the sun, of 'bottling' and selling it, but it never occurs to them to use it for their own self-improvement. It is time human beings understood that they must not be content to use the sun for gain: they must learn to resemble it. Only then will there be abundance and peace in the world.

So, as I say, take the sun as your model. During the day, even when you are not directly in the presence of the sun, observe and analyse yourself. Ask yourself, ‘Am I radiating and diffusing light? Am I pouring warmth and love into the hearts of those around me? Am I giving them life?’ Ask yourself these questions at each moment of the day, for they are your key to perfection.

The Bonfin, 4 April 1980

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¹ See *Hrani Yoga – the Alchemical and Magical Meaning of Nutrition*, Complete Works, vol. 16.

² See *The Splendour of Tiphareth*, Complete Works, vol. 10.

³ See *The Path of Silence*, Izvor Collection n° 229, chap. 1: ‘Noise and silence’ and chap. 2: ‘Achieving inner silence’.

⁴ See *The Laughter of a Sage*, Izvor coll., n° 243, chap. 14: ‘Seated at the banqueting table’.

⁵ See *The Mysteries of Fire and Water*, Izvor coll., n° 232, chap. 18: ‘The coming of the Holy Spirit’.

⁶ See *Sunrise Meditations*, Brochure n° 323.

⁷ See *The New Year*, Brochure n° 301.

⁸ See *Life Force*, Complete Works, vol. 5, chap. 2: ‘Character and temperament’.

⁹ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 16: ‘Christ and the solar religion’.

¹⁰ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth*, Complete Works, vol. 10, chap. 20: ‘The sun teaches by example’.

¹¹ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor coll., n° 242, chap. 12: ‘Patience: its unexpected treasures’.

¹² See *Love Greater Than Faith*, Izvor coll., n° 239, chap. 9: ‘The greatest of these is love’.

¹³ See *The True Meaning of Christ’s Teaching*, Izvor coll., n° 215, chap. 7: ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’ and chap. 8: ‘If anyone strikes you on the right cheek’.

Chapter Five

The spirit of the Teaching

I

There is a tendency in human nature that urges individuals to contribute something of their own, something new and different to every situation; to show off their originality; to change and reorganize things according to their own point of view. If you observe what goes on around you, you will see that this is very common, that people are always eager to express themselves and impose their own viewpoint on others. Analyse yourselves, and you will see that you, too, would like to have a say in what goes on; you are always eager to modify, transform or reverse the existing order. This is a normal, natural reaction, and it is perfectly acceptable in the world. In the Brotherhood, however, the situation is a little different. We have had many visitors in the past who have come with their own very pronounced opinions and tastes and who considered that we should change all sorts of things. They even wanted to tell me what I should say or not say in my talks. If I had let them have their way, it would have meant the end of our Teaching.

You will say that everybody has the right to discuss things and express their opinion – that is how things are done nowadays. Yes, this is necessary in the world, where people have to exercise their minds, to try out different ideas and grope their way towards solutions. They know nothing about Initiatic Science; the truths of this science have not yet been revealed to them, so it is normal for each one to hold and express their own point of view. As long as they have not arrived at the truth, they need to try out ideas, to talk and discuss and get into ferocious arguments. All this is normal, indispensable even, for their evolution. By sharpening their swords and striking sparks as they fence with others, human beings have a chance of finding something better, of coming gradually closer to the truth. I understand and accept this.

But once you enter a school in which the great initiatic truths are taught, you must have a different attitude; it is a very bad idea to continue to argue and criticize and try to impose your own point of view. This is something that you still fail to understand. I repeat: in the world, diversity and plurality are not only acceptable but also desirable. We need thinkers, researchers and

teachers; they need to argue and dispute their theories. But one day they will discover truth, and then there will be no more arguments; they will all agree. In the meantime, heaven has given human beings the magnificent open ground of the world and the freedom to express all their most ludicrous ideas, until they finally arrive at the truth.

More and more, people are encouraged to criticize, challenge, protest, reject. This is all well and good – they need practice in order to learn discernment – but to maintain this attitude when you are in a school that teaches the eternal truths is an aberration. If there is only one instructor in this school, it is because you need only one instructor – as long as that person is genuine – to lead you to unity. Unfortunately, human beings like change; they like to go from one face to another, from one teaching to another. Just as they expect to see many different stars, many different faces in the world of entertainment, here too they want variety. Will that bring them any closer to the truth? No, but that does not bother them; they are quite content with falsehoods as long as they find them to their taste. Well, if what you are looking for is variety, go to a circus or a variety show, and you will have your fill of comic or dramatic turns and all the different stunts you want. But here you have to accept that there is only one face, that of the one who brings you the truth.

Often, when I listen to discussions on the television and compare what the participants say with the philosophy that I have received from above, I cannot help but think, ‘How far off they are! The poor things still need a great deal of practice. Perhaps, after discussing these things for thousands of years, they will finally come to the truth.’ They sit in front of the cameras, arguing and defending their ideas, and when they go their separate ways they have still not found a single solution. If only they knew that the fact of reincarnation explains many of the questions they debate! But they reject the idea of reincarnation; this is why so many problems remain unresolved.¹ I sometimes wonder if human beings are sincere in their quest for truth.

Everybody wants variety in their lives: different kinds of food, different clothes, different kinds of recreation, a different house, different friends – even a different husband or wife. The great thing is to have variety. Even in an initiatic school they want things to be varied. In the past, as I say, I have often had to stop people from trying to transform – or reform – what we have here. I told myself, ‘If I let them do it, the spirit of this Teaching will be completely effaced. Let them go and lay their eggs in somebody else’s nest!’

So they left.

Even now, among those who come to the Brotherhood there are some who, instead of trying to understand the work we do here, immediately want to introduce improvements. What kind of improvements? The customs of other teachings – sometimes even African or Haitian songs or dances, for instance. It is highly commendable to want to change things for the better. The great question is: what things? Things need to be changed only if there is really something wrong with them; in that case, we have every right to change them. But even then we must be careful how we do it. For example, do these reformers reflect that there is someone at the head of this Brotherhood, someone who directs it and is responsible for it, someone who has been entrusted with the task because he has been prepared for it and is fully qualified? Oh no, they never take the trouble to explain themselves to him, or to ask his permission for what they want to do. They immediately start exhorting the brothers and sisters – they are free, after all!

Well, it is precisely this spirit of anarchy, so common in the world today, that is the cause of so many catastrophes. People refuse to obey the rules even when they are magnificent and divine, and when they come to the Brotherhood, where we know and obey these rules, they try to spread the anarchic spirit that reigns in the world. But I am there to keep an eye on the situation. I know what these theories and practices lead to: they are capable of disrupting and demolishing all that we have worked so hard to build up. This is why I finally have to take a stand and put a stop to it. I tell such people: ‘Go somewhere else and leave us alone. There are all sorts of other places you could go to. It is too easy to descend upon a collectivity that is already well structured and try to take charge and dictate things according to your own ideas. You should do what I did. Take the trouble to organize your own brotherhood, and we shall see whether you succeed or not. As it is, your wife is the first to refuse to obey you – and your children follow suit! It is too easy to walk a path that someone else has cleared at the cost of such hard work and sacrifice. Try to build your own community, and we shall see how capable you are, how great your knowledge and love are. If you want to sow your seed in ground that has been tilled by somebody else, you should at least ask their permission!’

If you accept the music and dances of whatever part of the world without reflection, without discerning what influence they might have on you, in the end they will evoke all kinds of dark spirits. And the pity of it is that if I am

not there to keep an eye on things, you allow yourselves to be taken in by anybody. Somebody comes along and offers to teach you the magical practices and ceremonies of heaven-knows-what religion, and you are ready to follow him or her without giving a thought to the possible consequences of such practices.

You must always have the ambition to create and innovate, but the great mistake is to think that every idea that enters your mind is sublime. You should ask someone competent whether your ideas are really so marvellous, whether they will really help to create harmony, or whether, on the contrary, they will destroy it. But nobody ever asks for another opinion, and as they have not yet reached the higher level of consciousness that would enable them to distinguish between the good and the bad, they confuse everything. They understand nothing of our goal, of our work, or of our orientation, and yet they come and try to turn everything upside down. The fact that the Master Peter Deunov has entrusted me with the responsibility of preventing anybody from changing the spirit of this Teaching is all the same to them. They are bent on introducing practices from Japanese, Congolese or Moroccan religions. All these things are good in themselves, but they are not for our Teaching.

How difficult it is to teach human beings discernment! The other day I met a young girl of about twenty, who has been coming here for a number of years. Only last year she had something so charming and fresh about her, something pure and graceful. But when I saw her the other day, I was very struck by the change in her – her expression, the way she looked at me, the way she held herself. She seemed to have aged ten years. She told me she had taken up dancing, and when I asked her what kind, she replied that she was learning Moroccan dancing – more exactly, belly dancing! I looked at her in amazement and asked, ‘But how can you possibly fail to sense that this kind of dance awakens forces within you that are contrary to our Teaching? Don’t you realize that all that gave you such charm before has vanished? I am not against dance as long as the movements awaken divine impulses, but the dances you are talking about arouse only sensual, sexual impulses.’² Leave such dances for those who invented them; they are perfect for them, but not for us, not for our ideal. We have other ways of developing the faculties that are still dormant in human nature.

If you have not realized that the work we are doing here is very special, you would do better to go somewhere else. I have nothing against your

joining another movement; there are some that are truly magnificent. But leave me to get on with my work. Master Peter Deunov worked for years to prepare me to guard the spirit of this Teaching, but even the members of the Brotherhood do not understand that spirit. They allow themselves to be enticed in any direction by any Tom, Dick or Harry. They are incapable of recognizing what is best for their advancement.

Try to understand me, my dear brothers and sisters. I never oppose anybody who takes a constructive initiative. On the contrary, I need dynamic, active, energetic brothers and sisters, who are capable of creating, of achieving something truly great. Such collaborators will always be welcomed. But heaven would reproach me severely if I accepted those who want to introduce practices that oppose the spirit of our Teaching or turn us away from our work. Certain practices and rites – voodooism, for instance – reach a wide audience and have become very popular in the West, but that is no reason why we should adopt them. I have no objection to them if they stay in their own setting, but I will not have them here, for here we are working exclusively for light, for the Universal White Brotherhood on high.

Oh yes, I am fiercely intransigent, because I have the obligation to watch over the Brotherhood. I have already shown that nothing, no amount of money, will ever induce me to change the spirit of the Teaching. More than once in the past, rich men and women have tried to bribe me, but I have never accepted their offers. I am not here to please the few who want to use spiritual means for their own ends, but to do the will of the great spirits who sent me.

I repeat what I have often said: there is only one case in which you have the right to change anything, and that is if you yourself are a model of honesty, integrity and selflessness. If you have overcome all your failings, if there is no longer any darkness within you, Cosmic Intelligence gives you the right to introduce reforms and improvements wherever they are needed, but you have no right to do so until you yourself are irreproachable. You even have the right to kick and punch people if, by so doing, you are capable of transforming them. You have the right to fry people in boiling oil if you are capable of bringing them from the frying pan rejuvenated and reformed. If you cannot ensure this, you have no right to touch them. Suppose you slap someone's face: those who see you doing so will be scandalized. Yes, but the result of the slap is that his jaw, which was crooked, is now straight. So what crime have you committed? Perhaps you will say that it is against the law to

hit someone. True, but look at the result: you saw how crooked his jaw was before, and you can see how it is now. How is the law going to judge you: by your gesture or by the results?

Is it lawful to demolish somebody's house? Yes, if you are capable of building them a better one; otherwise you would do better to sit still and do nothing. You must be able to repair the damage you do. Some people think that, having burned down a neighbour's house, they only need to apologize and ask the neighbour for forgiveness. No, you can be forgiven only if you build them a new house. Forgiveness takes effect only when you have made reparation. People imagine that it is enough to say they are sorry. No, to say you are sorry is good, but if the house is burnt to a cinder, it is not enough.

I think this gives you some idea of how vast this question is. It is up to you now to study each situation carefully and see whether you are entitled or not to interfere and make certain changes.

The Bonfin, 4 January 1980

I

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Human beings always seek the path of least resistance, even in spiritual matters. They want to be given everything without the slightest effort of will or concentration. But things work differently here in our Teaching. Here you are shown the most difficult path, one that demands a constant effort, because this is the only way to change, to become strong and in control of oneself.³ Is this clear? This is why I cannot accept other philosophies. Those who are looking for something else should go and found their own schools and not try to insinuate foreign elements into ours. The emphasis here is on the will, on the practical application of our teaching.

Let me give you an example. Suppose I have an orange: science and all the various philosophical systems can explain a great many things about my orange. They can tell me where it was grown, which chemical elements it contains, how much it weighs, what its shape and size and properties are. They can tell me how to use it, its place in history, its symbolic significance, and so on. They have all the theoretical knowledge at their fingertips, but they forget the only thing that matters: they forget to taste it. As for me, I know none of the things they know, but I eat and enjoy my orange night and day. I recommend that you do the same: do not try to know so much; just eat!

Unfortunately, even when they decide to live the spiritual life, people's minds are already warped by the attitude so prevalent among academics, those who work so hard to collect as much knowledge as possible about everything, but who never make the slightest effort to work at their own betterment. Of course, it is thanks to its thirst for knowledge that the human race has made such tremendous intellectual progress, but it is an attitude that is very detrimental to the spiritual life.

If you want to do any serious spiritual work, you must limit yourself to one philosophy, one system, and go into it in depth; otherwise your psychic organism will suffer in exactly the same way as your physical organism. If you eat indiscriminately, you will vomit and feel ill. In the same way, your 'psychic stomach' will regurgitate the indiscriminate mixture of foods you force it to swallow. What do you expect it to do with a mixture of Egyptian, Hindu, Tibetan, Chinese, Gnostic and Aztec traditions, to which you add a little theosophical or anthroposophical seasoning? It might be different if your mental structure was sufficiently robust to enable you to find your way in the midst of all this, but most people have only a confused idea at best of even one philosophical system. How can they hope to digest a mixture of the Cabbalah, Zen Buddhism, voodoo, Druidism, alchemy, Catharism, Freemasonry and the tarot? No wonder people think that spirituality destroys mental equilibrium! You cannot blame spirituality if human beings refuse to understand that it is not a bazaar in which you can take your pick of all the different attractions – even such dangerous attractions as drugs, black magic or eroticism. True spirituality lies in becoming the living expression of the divine Teaching you are following.

When I first started holding meetings in Paris in 1938, they were attended by many men and women who had already tried any number of movements. They came to our meetings for a while, and then, thinking they had learned all they needed from us, they went elsewhere and learned other things. But how can one do any valid inner work in such conditions? Years later, I met some of these people, who had continued to wander from one teaching to another, and their ravaged faces showed all too clearly that they had made no real progress towards true spirituality.

I do not deny that it is interesting, sometimes even useful, to learn about the different ways in which human beings have attempted, for hundreds and thousands of years, to pierce the mysteries of the universe and approach the Godhead. But that is not enough. Since the religions and philosophical

systems of all ages present us with an ideal of splendour, perfection, divinity, we should exert ourselves to make this ideal a reality. Sometimes, when you hear people discoursing on the greatness and wisdom of the initiates of the past, it is astounding to see that they themselves are so obviously petty, narrow-minded, weak-willed and incapable of conducting their lives according to reason. Is it possible that they cannot see that they are making themselves ridiculous, that that is not spirituality?⁴

I hope you are now beginning to understand why I try to prevent the Brotherhood from becoming a kind of flea-market, in which every religious practice and theory is for sale. You will probably find some of our ideas and methods in other forms of spirituality as well, for there are certain fundamental truths common to all spiritual movements, but you must not mix everything up; the essential thing is still to work to improve yourselves.

The difference between intellectuals and truly spiritual people is that intellectuals choose the horizontal plane – in their desire to extend the scope of their knowledge, they develop on the surface – whereas spiritual people, who choose the vertical plane, keep digging deeper and deeper. One day, the people who are spiritual strike oil and become multimillionaires, while the intellectuals are still paupers, in spite of all the square miles of land they have acquired. It is up to you: if you want to work in depth, as we do, one day you will strike oil, and before long you will be in a position to give away your oil to the rest of the world. Iran and Saudi Arabia had better look to their laurels, because we shall soon be competing with them... free oil! Understand this as you please...

Each day you see how warped I am mentally. Yes, but my warpedness is one that can lead to happiness, freedom and peace for you.

At the moment it is the learned, the scientists and scholars, who receive the accolades of society. But this will not last; in the future it will be those who have worked to acquire qualities of goodness, purity, integrity and nobility who will be honoured by all human beings. This is why I say: know little, but attain self-mastery, for then nature herself will appreciate and listen to you; nature herself will obey you. Of course, the ideal would be to have both great moral qualities as well as great knowledge. True, but life is so short; we do not have much time.

Look at these two triangles – the blue one pointing down and the red one pointing up. I have already spoken to you about these two triangles and explained how they can help us to understand some of our more troublesome

problems. Let me decipher yet another aspect of what they have to teach us.⁵ The red triangle represents the orientation of the past, when human beings needed to strive upwards to develop their brainpower, their intellectual faculties. But the blue triangle, which points downwards, represents the new orientation, and shows that human beings must now act to make concrete all that they have conceived in their minds. It is no longer enough to understand things intellectually and discourse brilliantly on what we have understood; we have to bring our understanding down into our everyday lives. Intellectual understanding and words are no longer enough; the time has come to express our understanding in actions and gestures, in the very way we live. It is in this sense that our Teaching is unique.

The Bonfin, 10 August 1980

II

Oriental teachings are increasingly present in Western countries. I would be the last person to dispute the merits of these ancient disciplines and philosophies; the great religions of India, China, Tibet and Japan represent the pinnacles of human thought and spirituality. What I do dispute, however, is the efficacy of these oriental yogas when practised by Westerners – especially when one sees how they go about it – even though they may have been learned from Hindu, Tibetan or Japanese Masters. It is obvious to me that, for most people, these practices remain external, superficial. How can anyone imagine that they can transform themselves by practising a few asanas (postures) or mudras (symbolic gestures), or by reciting a few mantras (sacred formulas)? Some will say that the postures are those adopted by the Buddha when he meditated in the shade of a bodhi tree and received illumination. That may well be, but you have to remember who the person we call the Buddha was. It was not these postures or gestures that made him a Buddha; it was his own exceptional qualities, and those qualities would have manifested themselves whatever his postures.

I do not deny that there are certain postures and movements that can help human beings to be more sensitive to some particularly powerful and beneficial currents, but their importance is relative. There is no exercise that can compensate for the lack of a genuine bent for the divine life. This is why I keep reverting to the predominant role of the mother in determining a child's future. If she fails to sow seeds of a certain quality in her child, in

spite of the sun and the rain (symbolically speaking), that child will never produce any fruit. Whereas, in spite of being brought up in the most adverse conditions, there are people who have become saints and heroes because they possessed the seeds of sanctity and heroism within them. This explains also how some people succeed without any great effort in whatever they undertake, whereas others, in spite of years of study and practice, in spite of competent teachers, never succeed in anything. They do not have the right seeds within them.

When I was in Japan, I spent a few days in a Zen monastery. There were about a dozen monks, all of them very kind and friendly. They gave me a tiny temple a little apart from the other buildings, so that I would not be disturbed by the noise. Every morning I joined them for their meditation and religious ceremonies. And I trust that you will be pleased to know that every morning, in front of the assembled monks, a brief ceremony was performed in our honour. A recording of the *Marseillaise* was played, followed by the Japanese national anthem, and the flags of the two countries were raised. As you can imagine, this was all very unexpected!

But to get back to the meditation, or Zazen. It took place in a large room with bare walls. The participants sat round the room on cushions, in the lotus position, facing the walls. There is no point in describing the details of how one is supposed to hold one's head, shoulders, hands and so on, when in this position. What is interesting is that there was a monk in the centre of the room holding a long rod, and with this rod he would tap the shoulder of anybody who became drowsy or who failed to maintain the correct posture. For it seems that we have a very important nervous centre on the shoulder, and the blow with the rod is supposed to harmonize all a person's energies, thus arousing someone who is becoming drowsy, or relaxing someone who is too tense. Wanting to experience the effect, I asked the monk with the rod to tap my shoulder too, but he was very reluctant to do so. He said I did not need it. Finally, I insisted so much that he gave in. I cannot say that I felt anything very extraordinary – perhaps because I did not really need it – but I did feel some benefit from it.

The thing that surprised me most about the monks in this monastery – as indeed about most of the monks I have met who practise Zen – was the absence of expression on their faces after meditation. No light illuminated them, no life animated them; the features of many of them were very harsh. I do not wish to make a judgement about a discipline I know so little about, but

from the point of view of Initiatic Science, a meditation that fails to put one in touch with the divine world, and leaves no trace of an increase of love and light, is not very beneficial. You will say that the aim of Zazen is to arrest the thought processes, to create emptiness. Unfortunately, I find that in many cases this emptiness makes itself too strongly felt. You cannot make it a goal in life to sit and create emptiness. I am not saying that it is not sometimes useful to do so, but the question calls for a good deal of clarification. I will talk to you about it one of these days.⁶

As I say, I do not want to judge something that I know too little about, but I think that although both Zen and yoga are very ancient disciplines, which were originally perfected by people of exceptional spiritual elevation, they are no longer practised in the same spirit, even in their countries of origin. Also, the way in which many people from the West dash at these things causes me some concern. Without an accurate and detailed knowledge of human nature and of our relation to the cosmos; without certain very strict rules of life, and without a high ideal of love and brotherhood, we cannot obtain any great spiritual benefit from them. It is illusory to think – as many seem to – that a few special postures are all that is necessary to advance spiritually. In fact, this is as great an illusion as that of Christians who think that by attending mass on Sundays, by genuflecting and making the sign of the cross, blessing themselves with holy water and receiving communion, they will persuade the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in them.

The one thing you need to work at is life. Why life? Let me explain with the help of an example. Suppose you are sitting quietly reading a novel. Your book affects your intelligence, your feelings and also your will – if only because you have to hold it. All of a sudden, a picture falls from the wall, hits you on the head, and you faint. At that moment, neither your intelligence, nor your feelings, nor your will function, but life continues, and thanks to that life your other functions will soon be restored.

It is because this perpetual movement, the movement that is life, exists in human beings, that initiates make it the central point of their studies. This is why they tell their disciples never to forget that in giving them life, Cosmic Intelligence has given them the ability to continue their activities, whatever their circumstances. Nothing else can be relied upon. The only thing that will never let you down is this drive, this vibration that is life. It is this you must work to develop, for all true knowledge and all true power come from life.⁷ No gymnastics, or yoga or bodily postures can give us a truly effective and

complete solution to our problems. We have to seek solutions much further afield, in the life that flows from the fountainhead. The physical body was formed relatively recently by the spirit, and we must have no delusions about its powers, just as it is no good deluding ourselves about the powers of matter. However great they may be, they are not unlimited.

The physical body can manifest itself only because it is animated by something that we call the spirit, by the breath of life; when this breath departs, the body can no longer do anything. Indeed, the spirit could equally easily inhabit and work in a tree or a rock, but once it withdrew, the tree or the rock would again be inanimate.

I would like to say, therefore, to the adepts of Hatha-yoga or Zazen that the practices they teach are magnificent but that they will never lead to Buddhahood or enlightenment, whereas it is possible to become the Buddha without practising any of these disciplines. In fact, it is possible to go even further if you are afire with divine love. And that love does not find its source in the physical body. The physical body can do no more than receive it from above and benefit from it.

I am always astonished to see that very few people understand that the spiritual life is truly the life of the spirit. They burden themselves with so many things that limit them – and limit the spirit. So many things can intervene, for instance, to prevent us from doing the spiritual exercises that we are in the habit of doing, but does this mean that we can no longer be in touch with the spirit? Why do people attach so much importance to the attendance of mass or other rites and ceremonies? The spirit does not need any of these forms; it is above them all. Indeed, since it is the spirit that created them, it is certainly not determined by them. You can be in touch with the spirit whatever your physical posture and whatever the circumstances. To be attached to certain forms is to limit oneself, and the spiritual life is the realm of the limitless.

Life is what is important, for life belongs to all. Not all beings possess intelligence, love, beauty or faith, but all are alive. The first thing is life, therefore, for only when we have life can we reach out to all the rest. Yes, life; above all, life! Cleanse the spring so that life flows freely, and then you will have wisdom, power, love, beauty, wealth and happiness.

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III

Modern medicine has given human beings some very bad habits. When you have a headache, stomach cramps or some other malaise, you can always be sure that the pharmacist will have a remedy – there are even pills that can replace gloom with cheerfulness. In the spiritual life, unfortunately, there are no such pills. You have to work to develop for yourself the clairvoyance, magic powers or virtues that will make you an initiate. Even books will not provide any short cuts, though they will all give you certain exercises. Oh, of course, if you are really determined not to exert yourself, you can always find some charlatan who will promise you heaven and earth.⁸ But he will begin by taking all your money, and then, ‘Bye bye!’ and he will vanish.

A genuine Master will give you the methods you need, but it is up to you to attain your goal by your own efforts. A Master will not do your work for you. In fact, it would be useless for him to do so, for a spiritual or psychic gift has to come from within, from your own striving, your own work; otherwise it will not endure. Thus a Master can open doors for you, but it is you who have to enter of your own volition. He will not push or force you in any way, but when he sees that you have passed a first threshold, he will lead you to a new one. Every time you move forward, he will show you the next step, and it will be up to you to take it. Unfortunately, most human beings are like children: they want to be carried. They make no effort to surpass themselves, because they are too afraid. They love and desire perfection, and at the same time they are afraid of it; they never attain it, because there are still too many things that are unclear to them.

Stop waiting for someone to come along and bestow illumination on you by a touch of the hand or a magic formula. Nobody will do this, not even your Master. You must not wait for a miracle. The greatest miracles are already all around you, every minute of every day. People clamour for something sensational, but when something sensational does happen, they forget all about it as soon as it is over. There have been many initiates in the past who worked wonders. For a time, of course, people were impressed, but that did not prevent them from continuing with their frivolous or criminal activities.

Look at Jesus: he worked miracles for all to see, and people were full of wonder and admiration. When he entered Jerusalem, crowds greeted him with shouts of ‘*Hosanna to the Son of David!*’ but only a little while later that same crowd was shouting, ‘*Crucify him!*’ Miracles often do nothing more

than amuse the public. For me, the real miracles are the sun that rises, a flower that opens, a child that smiles, an insect that finds its way through the grass. The stars are miracles; a human being is a miracle; the human body is a miracle. And the greatest miracle of all is the transformation of a human heart. Why? Because there is nothing more difficult.

Each individual has to make the effort to transform themselves, for transformation cannot be achieved mechanically, by external means. When you understand this, something very important will have been achieved in the Brotherhood. Hindus have this very profound axiom: 'When a disciple is ready, the Master appears.' This expresses the notion that it is the disciples that must take the initiative and exert themselves to attract the help they need. Once you have made the effort, you can be sure that help will be forthcoming. There is a universal law of love and mutual assistance, but it becomes operative only when you exert yourself.

Stop counting on the miracles that, in your opinion, your Master should work for you, and you will advance much more rapidly, for he will be free to help you more effectively. This may seem mysterious, but it is a fact that you paralyse people if you keep your eyes riveted on them and expect them to do everything for you. They become powerless to help you, and you remain barren. Work, therefore, and prepare yourselves, for as soon as you are ready you will receive the help you need. This is exactly what happens in the alchemical process: when the matter is ready, the universal spirit enters and vivifies it, and, from then on, only a minute quantity of that matter is needed to transform base metal into gold.⁹

Christians are always so proud of their Jesus: 'Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus... there is none greater!' Yes, but Jesus is Jesus, and they – what are they? Fools and idlers who never make the least effort to resemble Jesus. It is not enough to acclaim Jesus as a divinity. Just because Jesus was very great, it does not mean that Christians are entitled to be pygmies; they too must become great. This is the true philosophy.

And Christians are not the only ones who err in this way: Muslims, Buddhists and Jews are also proud of Muhammad, the Buddha, Moses and their sacred scriptures. The fact that they themselves may be ineffectual, lacklustre and depraved is unimportant to them; the important thing is that they belong to a noble religion. This is what they parade before the world. Look at how Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is a great event – it calls for a party, a feast, revelry! How pleased Jesus must be to see that his

birth is celebrated by behaviour that is in direct contradiction to his teaching.

The time has come for men and women to stop relying solely on the excellence of their religion and its founder and start thinking about their own excellence. Of course, it is normal – desirable, in fact – that they should have great faith in the initiates and in the scriptures, but they must no longer be content to vaunt their religion while making no effort to rise above their own mediocrity.

I am well aware that many of you are the same. You say, ‘Oh, the Master is wonderful!’ but you make no attempt to become wonderful yourselves. I cannot say that it makes me particularly happy to hear your extravagant praise and to know that you make no effort to imitate either my actions or my point of view. It seems that what I do is right and proper for me, but you are entitled to go on doing exactly as you please. You put photographs of me everywhere; you are ready to fight, if need be, in support of your claim to have the best, the greatest, the most extraordinary spiritual Master. But to think and act as he does, to adopt his philosophy, his attitude? No, that is another matter. According to you, a spiritual Master is there to be acclaimed, not imitated. What a mentality! Can you deny that what I say is true? No! So to you, too, I say: stop singing my praises and make up your mind to take some of my ideas and put them into practice.

The time has come to stop behaving like children. What is the use of having a spiritual Master if you continue to live carelessly and do only what pleases you? In your opinion it is enough if your Master is blameless. Indeed, I know very well that if I allowed myself the merest suggestion of misconduct you would desert me in righteous indignation, saying that I had betrayed you by not conforming exactly to your personal idea of an initiate, a spiritual Master. I have to be faultless, but you can do whatever you like. You think that what you do does not matter. Well, I can tell you that it does matter. It matters a great deal. According to you, initiates are always pure and noble, because they belong to another world. Well, that opinion may be very flattering, but it would be far better if you decided to live in the world they live in, for then you would be obliged to improve your way of life.

From now on, you must learn to demand of yourself exactly what you demand of the initiates. Do you expect them to be honest? Do you expect them to help you and not mislead you? Very well: expect the same of yourself with regard to others.

Believe me, my dear brothers and sisters, if you take seriously all the

truths I have given you over the years, if you take just one idea a day and give it the same attention as you would give to a being from heaven, a new world will open up before you. Never forget that the entities of the world above see your attitude to the truths your Master brings you. A spiritual Master is an ambassador, an envoy sent to represent a country – heaven –, and the respect you have for him is a sign of the respect you have for the country that sent him. Heavenly entities inspire me to tell you what you need for your evolution. How can you convince them of your respect and love if you do not take what I say seriously? The answer is that you cannot, and when they see your careless attitude they will no longer help you.

If you want heaven to help you, you must begin at the beginning – that is, you must take its envoys seriously. You have no idea how many spirits have promised to help you through me. Yes, thousands of entities are constantly here to help you to evolve, and if you treat them with indifference the loss will be all yours, for, whether you understand or not, I will continue to do my own work. In fact, I will continue to do it in spite of you, and it is I who will benefit from it. I want you to benefit from it, too, but you must realize that this will be possible only if you begin to understand how many entities and forces are committed to the work of the great Universal White Brotherhood, and decide to change the way you live in order to participate in this work seriously.¹⁰

The Bonfin, 21 July 1962

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² See *Creation: Artistic and Spiritual*, Izvor coll., n° 223, chap. 8: ‘The magic power of a gesture’.

³ See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor coll., n° 242, chap. 5: ‘In the school of life: the lessons of Cosmic Intelligence’ and chap. 14: ‘Always reach for new heights’.

⁴ See *On the Art of Teaching – from the Initiatic Point of View*, Complete Works, vol. 29, chap. 1: ‘On the spiritual work’.

⁵ See *The Symbolic Language of Geometrical Figures*, Izvor coll., n° 218, chap. 3: ‘The triangle’.

⁶ See *Love and Sexuality*, Part 2, Complete Works, vol. 15, chap. 17: 'Emptiness and fullness: the holy grail'.

⁷ See *Sons and Daughters of God*, Izvor coll., n° 240, chap. 1: 'I came that they may have life'.

⁸ See *Love Greater Than Faith*, Izvor coll., n° 239, chap. 8: 'Unless you become like children'.

⁹ See *The Philosopher's Stone – in the Gospels and in Alchemy*, Izvor coll., n° 241, chap. 12: 'The May dew' and chap. 13: 'The growth of the divine seed'.

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

Chapter Six

Matter and light

I

It is said that God is a consuming fire. Indeed, the most powerful god in most mythologies is the god of fire. But fire in this context is not the ordinary, physical fire with which we are familiar: physical fire is simply an aspect of universal fire. There are many different kinds of fire: the fire that burns in the hearts of human beings, the fire that slumbers at the base of the spine, the fire of the sun, the fire of hell, the fire that is hidden in the heart of stones and of metals, and so on.

We can know fire only when it is accompanied by light; if it is not robed in light it can be neither seen nor known. Light, therefore, is simply the matter by means of which fire manifests itself. And if we transpose this image, we find that light is the matter that God, primordial fire, emanated in the beginning of the world, when he said, *'Let there be light!'* This light is the divine Word, the Logos, of which St John speaks in the prologue to his gospel: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things came into being through him...'* Light is the Word uttered by God, by which he created the world.¹

The physical world that we know is simply a condensation of this primordial light. God, the active principle, projected light, and with this light (which was already a form of matter) he created the universe. It is at this stage that the first manifestation of the two principles can be seen. God, fire, the masculine principle, draws from himself and projects the feminine principle, light, the matter with which he is going to create.

We are also told that God created the world from nothing – from nothing external, that is, and it is this that is so difficult for human beings to understand, for we can create only with the help of materials and tools that are external to ourselves. In actual fact, it is not possible to create something from nothing; the idea that God created the universe from nothing simply means that God drew the substance of creation from within his own being. The universe is this substance – the substance which came from God, which has become external to God, but which is still God.

What does a silk-worm use to spin its cocoon? What does a spider use to make its web? Or a snail to make its shell? It is a substance drawn from itself.

If you know how to observe nature, you will find any number of phenomena which reveal the truth of what philosophers consider to be the deepest and most impenetrable mysteries. Indeed, science will also discover one day that light is the primeval matter out of which the universe was created, and if human beings learn how to do this, they too will become creators like God.

Light is the subtlest, most tenuous form of matter, and what we normally call matter is the most highly condensed form of light. The entire universe is made of the same matter, the same light, in different degrees of subtlety or condensation. This is why all that exists in a condensed form on earth also exists in a purer and more refined form on the etheric plane. And this is precisely the point of spiritual work: to learn to find all we need in a subtle form that is closer to its original state.

When we go to watch the sun rising in the morning, it is in order to be nourished by the purest form of food: light. Have you ever known fruit to ripen without the light and warmth of the sun? No. Then why do human beings think that they can ripen without the light and warmth of the spiritual sun? Without this they will always be bitter, sour, inedible. They say it is society that has embittered them. That is not true: they are the ones at fault, because they have never exposed themselves to the sun. Only the sun's rays can transform their raw, indigestible sap into sweet juice.

Perhaps some of you will say, 'But we do expose ourselves to the sun. Everybody does – you only have to go down to the beach to see how many people are sunbathing!' Yes, they spend the afternoon lying on the sand, and when they go home they are completely limp, devitalized, without energy. Birds know when it is time to wake up and sing for the sun. In the morning, when human beings are still asleep, they are already up and about. And other animals know when it is time to go into the forest or down to the streams and watering holes to catch their prey. They do not go at other times, because they would return home with nothing. Humans are the only beings who do not know what time of day they should expose themselves to the sun in order to be nourished by its rays.

'All right,' you will say, 'the sun is always there – that is normal. What is so extraordinary about that?' But why do you all take the sun for granted? Perhaps it is because it is too simply dressed. It never wears a hat, or rings or medals. It is simply a ball of fire, and human beings think that fire has nothing to teach them. The truth is that fire is a door that opens on to another dimension: it represents the frontier between the physical and the etheric

worlds. Through fire we can more easily communicate with the divine world.² Why do initiates always light a flame of some kind before beginning an important spiritual work? Because they know that only fire enables them to enter and make their voice or their thoughts heard in the subtler regions.

With fire, then, we begin to leave the physical world and enter the realm of the spiritual. And this brings me to the question of cremation. I have often been asked whether it is better to cremate or to bury the dead. Actually, there is no absolute answer to this question. The first thing you must know is that all human beings are linked to the four elements, but that each individual has a special link with one of them. This link may exist for karmic reasons, and it can sometimes take the form of a threat, a menace that hangs over their head. And, since each of the twelve signs of the zodiac stands in relation to one of the four elements, anyone who is sufficiently skilled in astrology only has to study a person's horoscope to see whether they are destined to die from the action of fire, water, air or earth.

As to whether it is better to bury or to cremate the dead, I can say that burial is preferable for most people, because it takes a good deal of time for them to leave their physical body. They are so strongly attached to material possessions and physical pleasure that even after death they remain close to their body. Having never believed in another world or the afterlife, to begin with they are completely bewildered. They have no idea where they are and must wait for entities from the invisible world to come and enlighten and guide them. If their body is cremated, therefore, the separation of soul and body is so brutal that their suffering is even greater. For initiates, on the other hand, who have spent their lives learning to detach themselves from material things, cremation is preferable, because the fire helps them to sever their bonds with the physical body more rapidly.

In cutting themselves off from the spiritual sun, human beings have become so cold and so hardened, that even when they want to give a new form to their desires and ambitions they are incapable of doing so. They are trying to deal with matter that has become like tempered steel, which has to go back into the fire before it is sufficiently malleable to receive a new form. So, like steel, human beings have to be plunged into fire before they can remodel their matter. But, as I have often said, there is more than one kind of fire. Many people reject divine fire, spiritual fire, so they are obliged to pass through the fire of suffering. Suffering is the fire that softens and melts their matter until they make up their mind to change. Someone who has ruined

their life through their own folly brings suffering on themselves, and, thanks to that suffering, they decide to live more wisely. Another, who may feel that they have driven all their friends away by their selfish, thoughtless behaviour, resolves to be kinder and more affectionate.

Suffering is the only thing that can induce human beings to mend their ways; without it they would never change. Instead of rebelling against suffering, therefore, you should try to see how useful it is, for it is a fire that consumes our impurities. Also, it is important to know that one of the properties of fire is that it never destroys something that partakes of its own nature; it only burns impurities. When fire enters a human being, it consumes only their inner impurities. All that is pure remains intact and becomes luminous; fire cannot consume it because it vibrates on the same wavelength. It is this pure matter that forms the body of glory, the body of light, which is spoken of in the Bible. An initiate who succeeds in lighting this fire begins to shine like the sun.

So you must not be afraid to light this fire. It will burn only your defects and impurities and transform all that is divine in you into a blazing furnace that nothing can extinguish.

One way to cultivate a closer relationship with fire is simply to gaze at it. If you have no fireplace in your house, light a candle, look at the flame and meditate on it.³ Remember that its essence is that of the sun, that it has the same powers as the sun. The flame of a candle is small and delicate – the slightest draught can blow it out – but once a flame is strong, draughts and strong winds will make it even stronger. This means that if you are weak, the slightest adversity can put out your fire (your inspiration, your enthusiasm). But if you are strong, your fire will become a furnace that feeds on difficulties and obstacles.

If you are defeated by all the little problems of life, it means that your flame is very weak, and you must feed it with wastepaper and twigs, even big branches. You will ask how you can do this, since you have no fuel. But how can you say you have no fuel? What about all the rubbish stored away inside you: all the dead branches and scraps of wood, all those base desires and appetites? Into the fire with them! This is how you can feed your flame. This is what we call sacrifice. If you do this, not only will they no longer burden you, but they will also provide you with warmth and light. Those who are too fearful to sacrifice anything will always remain cold and in the dark. There can be no fire without sacrifice.

Leave other people to get on with their material activities – for I do not deny that they have some use – but you, as members of the Universal White Brotherhood, must start working in ways that others have never envisaged. Then, when you meet in the future, there can be an exchange between you: they will show you what they have discovered in the objective world, and you will show them what you have discovered in yourselves. What a splendid exchange it will be: both parties will sample each other's fruits and find them fragrant and sweet to the taste. And for those who are capable of working on both the inner and outer fronts at the same time, it will be even better!

The Bonfin, 24 August 1979

II

Many people long for the divine world to be revealed to them, long to experience inspiration and ecstasy, but they imagine it must be extremely difficult to achieve such things. In fact, it is very simple; so simple, indeed, that most people will not believe you if you tell them so. And because they cannot believe, they will never make the necessary efforts and will never know the splendours of the divine world.

Many years ago, when I was a young disciple of the Master Peter Deunov, I asked him, 'What is the most effective way to link myself to God and cultivate the spiritual faculties and virtues?' He answered, 'Think of light. Concentrate on the image of light, and picture the whole universe bathed in light.' I worked with this image of light for a very long time, and in doing so I learned a great deal. Actually, God is not light: he is much more than that. We can neither know nor even imagine what God is. In any case, Genesis says that God created light on the first day, so he cannot be light. But he created the universe out of light.

God is not light, then, but as light is the first divine emanation, it contains all the qualities and virtues of God. This is why we can know God only through light.

And now let me give you an exercise which you can do at any time, any day, several times a day. Whenever you have a moment, think of light: concentrate on light, rest in light, melt into light, soak yourself in light, picture the whole universe bathed in light. Little by little, you will sense that things slip into place within you, that the light brings you true knowledge, true peace, inner balance and power.

Instead of wasting your time in all kinds of useless activities, think of the light, which illuminates, vivifies and pacifies. The meaning of life cannot be found in the absence of light. Take a very simple example from everyday life. If you have to get up in the night, the first thing you do is turn on the light. Once you have some light, you can see what you are doing, but in the dark it is so easy to knock something over or stumble and hurt yourself. The lesson of light is obvious, and yet most people have never understood it and do everything in the dark, metaphorically speaking. They cannot see where they are, so they stumble and hurt themselves.

You must seek light. Concentrate on light, drink it, eat it, value it above all the treasures of the earth. Whenever you have a free moment, close your eyes and concentrate on a mental image of this light, which impregnates everything and contains all blessings. When you are waiting in a railway station or at the dentist's, instead of wasting your time leafing through some silly magazine, make those few minutes serve a useful purpose by thinking of light.

Suppose you sense that negative thoughts and feelings threaten to overwhelm you while you are out shopping or walking in the street. Well, of course, you cannot stand still and close your eyes in the middle of the road. You would soon be surrounded by a crowd of spectators – some would even bring chairs with them, to be able to sit and watch you better – and the traffic would be brought to a standstill. So what should you do? Well, there is nothing to prevent you from stopping in front of a shop window as though you were looking at the goods on display (not a window through which people inside can see you, of course). Then you can concentrate and fill yourself with light. After only a few seconds you will feel cleansed and unburdened and can go on your way.

People have no idea that methods such as these are available to them. They will go on walking for an hour or more, feeling more and more tense and agitated, unable to shake off their negative state for the rest of the day. It never occurs to them to make a detour through a park, for instance, in order to change their vibrations through contact with trees, flowers or a fountain. No, they are more likely to go to a bar and watch the passers-by (like cows watching the trains go by), until it is time to go home, their negative state still intact, and pour out all their inner poison on their husband or wife, who in turn will pass it on to the children. And so it goes on, because people live stupidly, in a state of unawareness.

Even while I am talking to you about this, I am not at all sure that you will ever learn to enjoy concentrating on light and seeing for yourself how it can fashion, purify, enliven and revive you. Human beings are always ready to open their doors to anything that disrupts and complicates, but they have no time for light. And it is precisely because of this that they are always ineffectual and unhappy: they have never opened their heart, mind, soul and spirit to the only thing that matters – to light.

The exercise I have just explained is valid in all the circumstances of life. When you are cooking or writing letters, having a bath, dressing or undressing, you can always take a few seconds to imagine the light, in which the universe is bathed. There are clairvoyants who have seen this. They have seen that every being and object that exists, even stones, is not only bathed in light but also emanates light.

This is what has been called astral light, because it is similar to the light of the stars. But above and beyond this light is another, subtler light. Sometimes, during meditation or when you have been in a highly spiritual state of mind, you may have sensed that you became luminous, as though you were lit from within by a sun or by a multitude of lamps. You may even have sensed that this light shone out from your face. Whenever you rise to the higher levels of goodness, generosity, tenderness and purity, light begins to shine within you; you begin to see it, and everything becomes clearer and brighter. Whereas when you indulge in feelings of jealousy, selfishness or greed, you have no need to look in a mirror to know what is happening to you: you can feel the darkness on your face.

Of course, you must not generalize about this. When you see a shadow on someone's face, you must not imagine that they are necessarily harbouring negative feelings or intentions. No, if this is the only indication you have, it is not enough to judge by, and you may interpret it quite wrongly. They may not be in darkness: someone else may be casting the shadow, or it may be the effect of a passing cloud. On the other hand, if a person's face seems to be alight, it could be that someone is playing with mirrors, and the mirrors are throwing light on their face. They may not be creating that light: it may be that a passing entity is playing light on their face, and when that entity has gone away again, there will be no more light. You cannot judge from someone's face unless you can see beyond the outward appearances. However, you can take it as a general rule that your inner light will vary according to your thoughts, feelings, desires, plans and intentions.

There is one question that plays a very important role in the acquisition of this inner light, and that is the question of love. It is essential to be on very good terms with this question, for only when you understand love correctly, when you learn how to manifest it and how to let it flow through you, will you become luminous. You cannot see the connection? Well, let me explain.

You all know that primitive human beings produced fire by rubbing two bits of wood together. The friction produced heat and, eventually, fire. There are three phases, therefore: movement, heat, and light. If we interpret this phenomenon, we could say that movement corresponds to the activity produced by the will, heat corresponds to the feelings produced by the heart, and fire – light – corresponds to the thoughts produced by the intellect. In the domain of love, human beings go no further, metaphorically speaking, than the phase of movement. True, this movement produces some heat, but they need to go much further if they want to penetrate the mysteries of the universe: they need to go beyond the phase of sensation and reach the realm of light. Love can lead to light, but only on condition that you cease to consider it as no more than an agreeable effervescence. There is a vast body of science that can teach you how to produce light, but in order to do so, you must no longer seek pleasure alone, for pleasure drains the energies and prevents light from manifesting.⁴

When we are gathered together in silence, leave all other considerations to one side and concentrate on light, as though everything, your very life, depended on it. Think of it as though you were living your last moments. Imagine that you are about to leave the world, and light is the only thing that can save you. Bind yourself to light – cling to it. Nothing else matters. There is no exercise more marvellous than this.

You can picture a white, incandescent light and, joining your voice to that of the initiates, say, ‘I am a fragment of the fragments of the incandescent soul.’ If you prefer, you can picture purple, blue, green, yellow, orange or red light, but it is really best to work with white light, for white combines and unites all the colours. White light can give you the omnipotence of purple, the peace and truth of blue, the wealth and eternal youth of green, the wisdom and knowledge of yellow, the health, vigour and vitality of orange, and the activity and dynamic energy of red.⁵ So, above all, work with white light. Once you succeed in concentrating completely on light, once you are able to sense it as a vibrant, pulsating ocean of peace, happiness and joy, then you will also begin to sense it as perfume and as music, that cosmic music that we

call the music of the spheres, the song of the universe.

There is no more worthy, more glorious or more potent work than this work with light. If you seriously want to devote yourself to something truly great and noble, this is it; there is none other. Every other activity has both a good and a bad aspect. If you are honest with yourself, you will have to recognize that after a few years, whatever your profession, your work will have taken its toll: it will have cost you your strength, health and beauty. Of course, it will also have brought you some benefits – money, no doubt, and perhaps fame or recognition – but if you weigh all that in the divine scales you will be forced to admit that the little you have gained does not compensate for the riches you have lost.

Unfortunately, human beings are not in the habit of weighing things up in this manner. They do all kinds of other calculations perhaps, but when they want money, honours, fame or knowledge, they never weigh them up against all the losses involved: their peace, health, joy and purity. They may manage to get what they set their hearts on, but a few years later you will find them in hospital or in a psychiatric clinic, unable even to eat and drink and enjoy themselves normally. It is when this happens that they begin to realize the value of what they have lost. ‘Ah, if I had only known...,’ they say. But by then it is too late. They should have known before. So you – who do know – you must devote more and more time to thinking about light. It is the only activity that can make you truly rich and healthy. Believe me, all other activities, even those that bring you a few little advantages, rob you of so many other, far more precious things. Cast your mind back over your past life and you will see how true this is.

From now on, when you feel the desire to embark on activities that are calculated to bring you worldly advantages, take the time to weigh up what it will cost you in at least two other areas: your health and your evolution, your spiritual evolution. My task is to give you the criteria you need for entering into the new life. If I had to try and please you by preaching the rules of the old life, it would not be worth it – I might as well close up shop at once! So, I shall go on teaching you the laws that can help human beings to live more wisely and find their way back to heaven. The fact that there are very few who are interested in abiding by these laws is beside the point: my task is to go on giving them to you.

From now on, whether you are here, at home or anywhere else, remember to link yourself to this source of all blessings: light, nothing but light.

Many years ago, when I was about twenty, I found a quotation from the Zohar which I have never forgotten. It was in Bulgarian, of course, but let me translate it for you: *‘In the sublime heights are seven lights, and in them dwells the ancient of ancients, the hidden of all hidden ones, the secret of all secrets, Ain Soph.’* I only had to say these words for everything within me to vibrate and tremble. Ain Soph is the infinite. The Cabbalah speaks of Ain Soph Aur, ‘unlimited light’. This is the light that we must contemplate.⁶

If you understand the value of what I have given you today, you will possess an infallible tool. If you fail to get results at once, it is because you have been without light for too long. You have filled yourself with so many opaque elements that the light cannot penetrate; your walls are too thick. You will have to help it to break through by purifying yourself. In this way your walls will become progressively thinner and more transparent. One day, when light breaks through and floods everything, it will be the triumph of the Universal White Brotherhood throughout the world. But this cannot happen unless there are countless living lamps like the rabbi, Simeon ben Yohai, who was known as ‘the holy lamp’ because he radiated light. When he died, people said that the lamp had gone out. But this lamp is still alight in the next world.

The Bonfin, 26 July 1962

III

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘Nothing can equal the speed of light. It is this that gives light its tremendous superiority. Yes, because speed is a criterion of perfection. If your mental processes slow down, if you cannot rely on them for a rapid and accurate view of a critical situation, you are likely to have an accident or fall into some kind of trap. Similarly, when your inner, psychic life slows down, everything becomes more difficult.

Yes, light is a yardstick, a criterion. Light is not weighed down by all kinds of negative ideas: it is free and disinterested, totally without selfish thoughts or desires – this is why it is always first at the finishing post! You must understand that if you are interested in exploring the human heart, the wide universe, all the treasures of the universal soul, you can only do so if you possess the speed and intensity of light.’

Light travels through space at a speed of 186,000 miles per second, faster

than anything else in the physical world. Why did Cosmic Intelligence endow light with a greater capacity for speed than anything else? With the exception of the initiates, who have always given first place in their philosophy to light, nobody has ever paused to wonder why this is or to reflect on the consequences for the spiritual life.

The various kingdoms of the universe are differentiated by the intensity of their life, the intensity of the vibrations that animate their physical particles. From the mineral to the human kingdoms and beyond, through the ranks of the angelic hierarchies to the throne of God, life is expressed with increasing intensity and subtlety. This is why it would be true to say that the degree of evolution of a being can be judged by the intensity of its life. Very few human beings understand this. They live in slow motion. Their hearts, lungs, livers and brains, their mental processes – everything – stagnate, and they do not realize that there is nothing more dangerous. Someone who lives in slow motion is like the wheel of a car that is going too slowly: the mud sticks to it. Accelerate, and the wheels will spin faster and throw off the mud. Surely this is not difficult to understand?

Are there not a few ‘wheels’ among you who are still moving along in bottom gear? Where does this habit come from? People believe that they are living with intensity only when they are in the grip of a strong emotion, in a fit of anger, for instance, or in bed with their beloved! No, tears, anger or transports of passion do not indicate intensity of life. A truly intense life is almost imperceptible. Those who live life with intensity may make no outward movement at all, but inwardly they vibrate at the speed of light or even faster. For, although it is true that light is faster than anything else on the physical plane, human beings can reach far greater speeds on the etheric, astral and mental planes: by means of their thought and their spirit, they can move at a speed of millions of miles per second. The light of the sun takes about eight minutes to reach the earth, whereas thought can reach the farthest point of space in a flash. The spirit, therefore, can move far more rapidly than light; but in the physical world, light is still our best example of speed, our best reminder that we must live with greater intensity.

If you apply the criterion of the speed of light to all the circumstances of life, you will learn to reason more logically, your reflection will be more fruitful, and you will be in a better position to analyse the phenomena of your inner life. And this is important, for after experiencing some particularly sublime moments you should be able to judge whether or not you are capable

of maintaining that state of consciousness. You have all noticed that there are days when a certain piece of music thrills you and transports you to seventh heaven, and on other days you feel hardly anything. Well, you must learn to be aware of this kind of reaction in every aspect of your psychic life, to recognize the intensity of your emotions. Lovers are perhaps the only ones who are capable of saying whether it was the first or the last kiss that was the most intense. They, at least, have some basis for comparison!

So disciples must observe their inner reactions and, particularly where their meditations are concerned, discern whether the subtlety and intensity – in a word, the spirituality – of their states of consciousness is increasing or whether, on the contrary, it is slipping back into low gear. Yes, this is one of the great qualities you must develop: discernment. You should know, day by day, month by month and year by year, whether you have made progress, whether you have reached a higher level in comparison with the day or the month or the year before. There is a tremendous diversity of events and elements in the psychic life, so there are always thousands of things to be studied, analysed and classified.

Once it becomes habitual for you to live with intensity, you will make all kinds of discoveries about your inner life, for that intensity constantly reveals something new. Perhaps you will say, ‘But how can I discover new things in myself? I quite see that if I read or study I will find out things I never knew before, but can I really discover anything new in myself?’ Yes, indeed you can! A life lived with intensity is the path that leads to the essential truths of the universe. You will never discover these truths if they do not come from within, if you do not actually experience them. Of course, if you have someone who can reveal them to you – especially if it is someone you love and trust – so much the better, but even then you are going to have to verify each truth for yourself.

Why are people perpetually in the grip of uncertainty and doubt? Because they look for truth outside themselves, and what is outside us can never be totally reliable. The inner route alone makes doubt impossible. Even if you wanted to doubt your inner experience, you could not do so: when you have toothache, for instance, do you doubt it? Do you say, ‘Just a moment... Let me see... Does it hurt or doesn’t it? Yes? No? Maybe?’ Unfortunately, in such a case there is no room for doubt. So we can always be sure of what we experience in our inner sanctum. This is why the only path to take is the path of an inner life as intense, as strong and as radiant as light. This is what we

should wish and pray for; this is what we must prepare ourselves for, so that it can become firmly established within us.

Take an example. Suppose you come up here in the morning to watch the sun rise. If you are drowsy and unenthusiastic, you will end up going to sleep, but if you are wide awake and intensely alive, your whole being will begin to vibrate and to sense the life of the sun. If your life is not intense, you will not get to know the sun, the stars, God, the scriptures, your Master or anything or anybody else.

So how do we begin to live a life of intensity? The first step is to accept the idea and to see it as something very desirable and advantageous. Secondly, you must begin to love it and long for it. Finally, you must determine to give it concrete reality. If you do this, all the rest will follow on, little by little. The really important thing is to begin by accepting the notion of intensity, because until you do this you will continue to live in slow motion, to stagnate. Some people are conscious of receiving inspiration from heaven, but they do their best to reject it, saying that it is not normal. Would it be better, then, to be as unfeeling as a stone? Many people distrust and try to avoid any contact with currents of heavenly inspiration, simply because some ignorant individual has told them that such things are dangerous and can lead to insanity. Since when has an intense spiritual life endangered anyone's sanity? I ask you, do you think that all those who are in psychiatric care have been driven crazy by an intense, divine spiritual life?

If light can move so swiftly it is because it is disinterested: it has only the noblest and best intentions in its head. You are probably a little surprised to hear this; you have never heard anyone suggest that light had a head! Yes, light can move so fast because it is free of all base elements, of all that is animal or even human: it has no burdens. Have you ever seen an athlete who was capable of running very fast with a heavy load? It cannot be done. If you want to run fast, you have to be free and unhampered by anything heavy. This is why light, which is very intelligent, has never wanted to assume any useless burdens that would delay it. This is why it can move so fast.

The ideal of a disciple is to resemble light. Of course, this is not so easy. As long as we are in the world, in the material dimension, we have to contend with countless restrictions and obligations. But those who are conscious and who decide to take light as their guide begin to free themselves and to vibrate so intensely that nothing can hold them back. They fly through space, visiting and observing everything and, thanks to their inner swiftness, are able to

discover all the hidden marvels of the universe. Compare disciples like this with people who have no ambition to move out of their rut: they have never travelled, never left their village; they have spent their whole life with their pigs and cows and sheep – what can they possibly teach you? They have never visited or seen anything, whereas light goes everywhere and sees everything, constantly learning. This is why we should address all our questions to light and ask it to tell us what it has seen and learned on its way to us. But human beings are a long way from using methods of this kind: nobody thinks of asking a sunbeam what it has seen or what it has brought back from all the places it has visited. Still less does anyone decide to behave like a sunbeam!

Every morning at sunrise you have the ideal conditions for beginning to live your life with intensity. But you must first learn to free yourselves from greed for material things, for it is only if you are content with very little in the way of material possessions that your thoughts and feelings can increase in intensity and you can begin to travel through space. Jesus, who was familiar with this law, expressed it in a parable, saying that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.⁷ At first sight this is quite absurd: how could a big, bulky camel ever go through the eye of a needle? And what is to prevent a little runt of a millionaire from going through an immense doorway? The answer given by Initiatic Science is that Jesus was talking not about the physical body but about the astral body: when a person's astral body is swollen by all kinds of material desires, they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; they cannot get through the door. A camel, on the other hand, a very abstemious animal which contents itself with just enough food and water to cross the desert, symbolizes a being whose astral body is very slim.

Yes, all initiates agree on this: the more deeply attached human beings are to the things of the world, the less they are able to live with intensity and vibrate in unison with light. Think of all the tycoons in the world, swollen with their ambitions to possess the earth! True, they make a lot of noise, issue a ceaseless stream of commands and travel from country to country; there is no denying that their activity is intense. But that is not the life of intensity I am talking about. The intense life is not expressed in words, gestures or movement. If you live with the intensity of light, you can just be there quite quietly, without moving a muscle, and yet be in touch with the heart of the universe. But this is something you will understand only if you actually

achieve it. It is as difficult to put into words as it is to express those rare moments when a man and woman who love each other exchange a wordless look that is destined to echo in their hearts forever. Not a word, not a gesture, passes between them; nothing can convey the intensity of the love they give each other. Of course, this is something rare, very rare, whereas a young man may go down on his knees, stuttering and stammering, 'I love you. I adore you! Your eyes, your hair, your smile... I'll give you heaven itself. I'll willingly die for you!' and the 'adored one' thinks, 'What a lot of noise!' and feels like sending him packing!

But am I not like that young man? I never stop talking and explaining, explaining, explaining. Heavens, what a job! How I look forward to the day when I need say nothing; when we can just be here together in silence! Yes, but you still have to prepare yourselves for this. You still need more preparation in order to be capable of receiving, sensing and understanding all that I could give you in the silence.

You see, I have this great body of knowledge, this tremendous programme I am following. Some of you are not very satisfied. You would like me to talk differently, to speak about other subjects, to make other decisions. I am well aware that successful lecturers in the world always try to satisfy the desires of their public, but this is not my approach at all. My programme is based on something very different; I do not try to cater to the tastes and preferences of people who are not always very enlightened. If they are not happy about it, it just cannot be helped. I can never accept the suggestions of those who want me to talk about the kinds of things you learn from books. The people who ask for this are too used to seeing everything from an intellectual point of view, without putting anything into practice: they do not pray, they do not meditate, they never do any spiritual exercises or try to change. All they are interested in is knowledge. They read, they record, they conduct inquiries and keep informed about current events, but that is not the best way to evolve and free oneself. They will find this out one day, for they never do anything concrete; they never put their knowledge into practice in their gestures, their acts, their general behaviour.

People know everything and do nothing. They know that with patience they could work miracles, but they are not patient. They know that they could do wonders with gentleness, but they are always flying into a rage. They know... they know... they know..., but when it comes to giving concrete expression to all that knowledge they lose interest. Well, if they want to go

on like this they can please themselves, but that is no way to change. On the contrary, if they continue in this way they will always be weak and vulnerable, lacklustre, ailing and miserable.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, model yourselves on light, for light alone can show you how to live with intensity. From now on, measure everything in your lives against this yardstick of intensity. I know that a great deal of scientific research is being done on light, and I applaud these efforts, for they have already led, and will continue to lead, to great technical progress. But the thing that interests me is how to apply what we discover about light to the moral sphere, to the way we behave.⁸ At the beginning of the 20th century, cars travelled barely more than twenty miles an hour, and today there are planes that travel faster than sound. Everybody knows how to speed things up in the external, objective world, but in their inner lives they continue to behave as though they were in a stupor. ‘To be in a stupor’ means ‘to live in slow motion’. You will not find this definition in a dictionary today, but in the dictionaries of the future there will be many new definitions of this kind.

Stop living in slow motion. Human beings are born on earth in order to rise above the purely human level, in order to train themselves to live with greater and greater intensity, in order to become divinities. Yes, divinization is simply an intensification of the vibrations of the spiritual life.

The Bonfin, 24 August 1979

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‘It is easier for a camel...’ – *Matt. 10:25*

¹ See ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’ – *commentaires des Évangiles*, Œuvres Complètes, Tome 9, chap. 1: ‘*Au commencement était le Verbe*’.

² See *The Mysteries of Fire and Water*, Izvor coll., n° 232, chap. 10: ‘The essential role of fire’.

³ See above, chap. 13: ‘A candle flame’ and chap. 14: ‘How to light and tend a fire’.

⁴ See *Cosmic Moral Laws*, Complete Works, vol. 12, chap. 9: ‘Do not stop halfway!’

⁵ See *The Splendour of Tiphareth*, Complete Works, vol 10, chap. 11: ‘The spirits of the seven lights’.

⁶ See *Angels and other Mysteries of The Tree of Life*, Izvor coll., n° 236, chap. 6: ‘Ain Soph Aur, Unlimited Light’.

⁷ See *New Light on the Gospels*, Izvor coll., n° 217, chap. 5: ‘The narrow gate’.

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Chapter Seven

Purity and light

I

All initiates have spoken about the universal soul or, as it is sometimes called, the cosmic ocean, whose countless drops are individual souls. These souls constantly leave the cosmic ocean to journey through space before returning once more to the ocean. When they first leave the cosmic ocean, they are perfectly pure. Like drops of water, they evaporate and rise into the atmosphere, from where they fall to earth. Here they stay for a little while before sinking back once again into the ocean, until the time comes for them to rise into the atmosphere, fall to earth, return to the ocean, and so on, again and again. This, then, is the life cycle of a soul until it finally attains perfection. But perfection of what? Of the soul or of matter? The question is unclear to many.

Alternation, the to and fro between earth and heaven, between the visible and the invisible worlds, is a pattern that we find in our everyday lives. When we go to sleep at night, our soul leaves our physical body and is re-absorbed into the universal Soul. While the body is resting, a considerable work of purification and cleansing goes on, and once this is done the soul can return, take up its functions again and manifest itself in various ways in the material dimension. This process repeats itself every night and even, for some people, during the day. During the night, therefore, the soul leaves the body (although it remains attached to it by a subtle bond known as the silver cord), and when it comes back in the morning it finds its house swept, cleaned and washed, and it can take up its work where it left off.

If the soul did not leave the body, we would be asphyxiated and die of poisoning, for the necessary cleansing process could not take place. Perhaps you wonder why there is this danger of poison. Simply because life is combustion. The physical, emotional and mental activities which we refer to as 'life' produce energies, but they also produce ashes, waste, and it takes time for this waste to be eliminated. The soul has to absent itself so that the body may be cleansed. That is nature's solution to this problem of life. During sleep, then, each individual soul spends a few happy hours in its homeland, the universal Soul, before being obliged to return to its physical body.

Thus waking and sleep represent the daily journeys of the soul between the world above and the world below. And then a day comes when it is time for the true departure, and the soul has to absent itself for years and years before coming back to earth in a new body. The process is always the same: life and death, arrival and departure, waking and sleep. The only thing that changes is the duration of each phase. Even if you drop off for only a few seconds, your soul leaves your body.¹

Now, as we have seen, it is the impurities that invade the physical body that oblige the soul to absent itself, and this means that as human beings become purer and more transparent, it becomes less necessary for their soul to leave their body in order to allow the cleansing process to take place. On the other hand, when people overload their systems with heavy, indigestible food (not only physical, but astral and mental food as well), the cleansing process takes a long time. This is all quite easy to understand: when the cleaners come bustling in with mops and pails and dusters, the master of the house has to leave his study and go somewhere else while they are cleaning. In the same way, the soul is driven out of the body so that the cleaners can do their work. However, during this phase it is not inactive: it travels, it contemplates immensity, it converses with heavenly spirits, and it grows in love, wisdom, and truth.²

When the soul returns to the physical body after a few hours of sleep, it brings back the memory of all the treasures it has seen and tries to imprint them on the brain. Even if you are not immediately aware of it, you receive these indelible etheric imprints, and sooner or later they will rise to the surface of your conscious mind. This explains the occasional flashes of insight you experience: they are manifestations of sublime truths that your subconscious had been treasuring for a long time. You were not aware of them before, for the time was not ripe, but then a moment came when your brain was well disposed, and all of a sudden the truth flashed before your eyes. Of course, if you are already accustomed to working with your physical body to purify it and make it more sensitive, your soul will have less difficulty in imprinting the realities of the sublime world on your consciousness. This is why it is important to give your physical body pure food and drink and pure air, as well as pure thoughts, feelings and activities.

Spirituality does not consist in neglecting the material dimension and thinking only of the spirit, for the manifestations of the spirit are determined by the degree of evolution of the physical body. The spirit possesses all

powers, true, but it cannot manifest its powers if the corresponding organs in our body have not been awakened. Alchemists understood this. This is why they spent their time transforming, purifying and sublimating matter, to make it subtler and more pliant. But all that work with metals in their crucibles, stills and athanors was symbolic. What they were really doing was working on their own physical body: working with water, air and fire to make their body capable of reflecting and transmitting celestial light and the virtues of the spirit.

The spirit does not need to evolve. On the contrary, its role is to ‘involute’, that is, to descend into matter and animate it. In its own sublime region it is perfect. This must be quite clear in the mind of a disciple: the spirit is all-powerful on its own level, but it is powerless on the physical plane if the organs of the physical body cannot provide it with the channels it needs to manifest itself. It is extremely important to understand this, for human beings are influenced now by materialistic philosophies, now by false notions of spirituality, and they have great difficulty in getting the two in perspective. All the different processes carried out by alchemists were expressions of the one idea. They were saying that human beings must work on matter in order to make it more and more subtle and transmute it into pure gold, the symbol of perfection.³

So it is not so much the soul and spirit we should be concerned about but the physical instruments through which the soul and spirit manifest themselves, and one of the most important of these instruments, of course, is the brain. When a person is slow mentally, it is not the spirit which is at fault – their spirit may be that of a sage – but the instrument with which it is expected to manifest itself, their brain, which is not functioning correctly. Even the greatest violinist in the world cannot play if the strings of their violin are slack. And the spirit is a virtuoso who needs a good instrument in order to produce good music. People expect too much of the spirit: they give it a broken-down body and expect it to do wonders. It cannot do it. It is like trying to get a spark from a damp match: it cannot be done.

On days like today, when the weather makes you drowsy, you can make use of that drowsiness just as you can make use of sleep. Do not try to concentrate or meditate, because you will not succeed – the conditions are not conducive to mental activity – just let your soul slip out of your physical body and go off into space. When it comes back it will bring you some of what it has gleaned from the great truths it has contemplated. This is how

mediums contact the invisible world. The only question is (and it is an important one): when the soul leaves the body, does it always make contact with the universal Soul, or does it simply wander about in lower regions? The answer depends on the individual concerned, on the nature and quality of their thoughts, feelings and desires.

The main thing that prevents human beings from receiving revelations from heaven is that they are incapable of freeing themselves from their material preoccupations. I can see this so clearly in you, when you are here: instead of concentrating on making contact with the divine world or with the sun, you continue to fret about what you should do to settle this or that personal or professional problem. I am not saying that you should abandon all your worldly affairs, but you could at least lay them aside for a little while, just as you would lay aside a heavy burden. Take an example from the porters who carry huge loads of equipment on a mountaineering expedition: from time to time they lay down their loads, breathe freely for a few minutes, sit down and refresh themselves with some food and drink, and then they load up and off they go again! Could you not do as much? When you come here, leave your worries behind you for an hour or two. I promise you, nobody will steal them while you are not looking. There are not many people who are eager to assume other people's burdens. So lay them down – they will still be there when you come back – and concentrate on putting yourself in touch with heaven. Otherwise you will be like snails, which are obliged to carry their houses on their backs because they are afraid to leave them. This is why snails move so slowly. And materialists are the same: like snails, they are afraid that somebody might steal their burdens, so they plod slowly along, carrying them on their back. There is at least one thing you will learn here, and that is to free yourselves from your burdens so that you can walk faster.

The Bonfin, 26 July 1962

II

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

'Heaven is neither cruel nor deaf; the barriers between us are our own doing. We have surrounded ourselves with such dense layers and strengthened and consolidated those barriers so much that heaven cannot get through to us. We are immersed in the divine world, it is all about us, and if we feel isolated and apart from it, it is because the dense layers formed by our

own baser thoughts and feelings form a screen cutting off all communication. In reality, heaven, light and joy are all round us. If you make up your minds to purify yourselves and work at making your subtle bodies more sensitive and receptive, you will find that there is no gulf between you and heaven.’

Can there be any more impossible task than to try to convince human beings that they live in a world of light, abundance, happiness and eternal life? They refuse to believe it because they cannot see or feel it. In any case, how could they see or feel it, since they have surrounded themselves with so many opaque layers?

No more than a few decades ago, when people used oil lamps to light their homes, the glass chimneys had to be cleaned every evening, for all combustion produces wastes, and the burning oil left a layer of soot on the inside of the glass. Even if it was lit, the lamp could give no light until the glass was cleaned. The same phenomenon exists in each one of us, for life is combustion. All our thoughts, feelings and actions, all our manifestations, are the result of combustion. In order to produce light – the flame, the energy that animates us – something has to burn, and that burning necessarily entails waste products, which then have to be eliminated. Just as a lamp produces too little light if its glass is coated with soot, or a stove produces too little heat if it is cluttered with ashes, so human beings who neglect to purify themselves sink deeper and deeper into the cold and dark and end by losing life itself.

Unfortunately, most people, who have never considered this analogy, imagine that they can do whatever they please without bothering about getting rid of their impurities. They wash themselves every day, because they know that, unless they wash, the pores of their skin will get clogged up, and this is bad for their health. But as they never bother to wash inwardly, the pores of their spiritual skin get clogged up and there is no communication between them and the divine world.

It is extremely important for human beings to know how to eliminate impurities from their psychic bodies. This is why exercises of purification figure so largely in the life of a disciple – not only the physical exercises of purification, such as fasting, deep breathing, ablutions⁴ and so on, but also spiritual exercises, such as concentration⁵ and prayer.⁶ These are the means that disciples can use in order to absorb a special substance that dissolves and washes out all harmful foreign substances.

Purity is essential to the welfare of a human being. Without it you cannot be truly fulfilled: you cannot enjoy health, strength, beauty, intelligence, joy

or love. Unfortunately, it is only when people are paralysed, incapable of thinking, or loving or doing anything, that they begin to realize how important purity is. Disease, unhappiness and mental derangement are all caused by foreign bodies that invade and disrupt a person's organism. Expel these foreign elements and everything goes back to normal. But who has any idea of the power of purity? Who is willing to understand how important it is for the health and wellbeing of both our physical and psychic bodies? They swallow every kind of dirt, and then they are astonished when they fall ill. Pay attention to purity, and all the rest will come to you.

As disciples, your first task is to understand the importance of purity. This is why I have often given you exercises to do with the four elements: with fire, which burns; air, which blows things away; water, which washes things, and earth, which buries things. Try to find my explanations of these exercises and start using them.⁷ It is in your own interest to do so. Every day, several times a day, remember that your physical and psychic activities are the result of combustion, and that they produce waste, which you have to get rid of. The waste may amount to no more than a thin film of smoke to begin with, but you know what that film of smoke will become if it is allowed to accumulate, day after day.

Take an example from everyday life which you have never thought of interpreting. We all eat, but when we have eaten there is always a certain amount of matter that has to be evacuated; this is a law which is binding on all creatures. If you study the human digestive system, you will see that it has been perfectly designed to take in food and also to eliminate anything that it cannot assimilate. And if something you eat damages the kidneys or the intestines and they are unable to function correctly, you will gradually be poisoned. This is true on the physical level, but it is equally true on the etheric, astral and mental planes: if you fail to eliminate the impurities that exist also on those levels, they will gradually poison you. Countless men and women are suffering from psychic poisoning, because their etheric, astral and mental bodies are overloaded with impurities! They have never learned that on those levels, too, there are elements which have to be eliminated, so all their ducts are dirty and blocked up. They need to be cleaned and unblocked so that things can start flowing again.

All this goes to show the truth of the passage I read to you earlier. We are immersed in a world of abundance; everything we need is there, but we have no sense of this abundance, because, as I say, our channels are blocked up;

communications have broken down. This is why the essential function of initiation is to teach disciples that the only way to restore communications and open the way for divine life to flow within them once again is to purify themselves. When life is allowed to flow freely, it supplies all the essential elements needed by the cells of the body. When it ceases to flow, death follows. This is something that should be explained even to children. Yes, even if they cannot really understand, it should be explained to them so that, when they are old enough to understand, the knowledge will come to the surface of their mind and they will see it as natural.

All that I have revealed to you here is inherent in nature, but you have never taken the trouble to understand why Cosmic Intelligence designed it in this way. Study the life cycle of the different species, and you will see that, at one time or another, all creatures without exception have to eliminate something. Every day of your lives, therefore, several times a day, think about cleansing and purifying yourself. Open up the flood gates and let the heavenly waters flow over you; imagine you are immersed in a rushing torrent of water or under a waterfall and that all your impurities are swept away. Or imagine you are a crystal: you are beginning to dissolve all the dirt you have collected by associating with certain people, eating unhealthy food or living in an unhealthy atmosphere, and you are gradually becoming transparent. Oh, of course, you will not become physically transparent, but a clairvoyant would see that on the etheric, astral and mental planes you are as pure and transparent as a crystal, and that heavenly energies are flowing through you, just as light flows through a prism and is refracted in the seven colours of the spectrum.

Since these methods exist – and are very effective – why not use them, instead of continually suffering and lamenting and making a general nuisance of yourself? The first step is to cleanse your system. When someone has swallowed poison, the first thing you do is induce vomiting. Many physical complaints – migraine, dizziness, even depression – can be caused by the inadequate elimination of the body's wastes; this is why a purge is often a more effective remedy than any amount of pills. Waste products, when allowed to ferment in the intestines, can have very harmful effects on the brain and on the psychic system. Or if you have a feverish cold, for instance, instead of taking pills to bring your temperature down, drink several cups of hot water and have a foot-bath, as hot as you can bear it. This will induce sweating, which will cure you by washing away all the toxins from your

body. The foot-bath is particularly effective, because it influences the solar plexus (which is linked to the feet), and the solar plexus in turn influences the rest of the body.⁸

You must remember to purify yourself every day, for you receive layers of impurities from all directions every day. You are constantly being poisoned not only by the physical impurities that come from eating, drinking and breathing, but also by the psychic impurities produced by your own thoughts and feelings and those of others. So keep your eyes open: be careful and discriminating about the books you read, the films you watch and the people you associate with. Above all, keep a watch on your thoughts and your daily habits, for it is only if you are vigilant in this way that you will become pure – spiritually pure. And this purity will be a source of countless blessings not only to you but also to others. Everything and everyone you meet will benefit from your purity, which will cleanse and illuminate them.

You must never forget that your inner state does not concern you alone: it also influences others. If you are impure, your emanations will soil others. You may want nothing better than to help them, but you cannot do so unless you are pure. So, there it is, if you really want to help humanity, you can do so through your purity. Even if you never say a word to anyone, your purity will contribute to the purification of the earth's atmosphere. Your presence alone is sufficient. Equally, if you are impure, that is to say, if you are depraved, unjust, greedy and unscrupulous, you will be helping to poison the entire world. You may not believe what I say, but that does not alter the facts. I believe – or rather, I know – that it is true.

This is why I advise you to re-read *The Mysteries of Yesod*. It will help you to understand the importance of the much-despised virtue of purity. Everybody wants intelligence, strength, will-power, love and money – particularly money! Oh yes, everybody is in the sweepstakes for money. But how many are ready to put themselves out for purity? And yet purity is the foundation of all the rest. If you concentrate on purity, all the rest will follow automatically. Purity will make you healthier, stronger, more beautiful and more intelligent, whereas impurity will paralyse all your good qualities.

You must work every day, therefore, to make yourself open to light. Sweep, scrub and wash away all impurities every day, as though you were professional house-cleaners. 'What?' you will exclaim in horror. 'We intend to become princes and princesses, and now you tell us to become sweepers and cleaners!' Why not? There is no reason why a cleaner should not become

a prince or princess. Once you have cleaned and polished yourself, you can throw off your old rags and put on royal robes.

This question of purity is very far-reaching, for in reality it is not enough to work at our own purity; we also have to be capable of transforming the impurities that come from our surroundings: from the food we eat, the air we breathe, even from the thoughts and feelings of other human beings. We have to learn to transform all the criticism and hatred that other people throw at us. You cannot imagine the stones and rocks that have been thrown at me from every direction – mountains of them! But I have found a way to transform all those rocks into precious stones. The gems I give you every day are the stones that were once thrown at me. This is true alchemy. Since the earth is capable of transforming ordinary stones into gems, why should we not learn to do likewise? It is simply a question of remembering to do it; you have all the powers and forces you need within you. Even the philosopher's stone, the stone that turns everything to gold, is within you. Convince yourselves of the truth of what I am saying, for until you adopt this philosophy you will always be unhappy and vulnerable, and every little criticism will discourage you.

You have not yet understood the significance of an obstacle. Why do ships float and move through water? Because the water provides resistance. And the same is true of aeroplanes: the air provides resistance. It is not possible to advance without some material resistance. You have to understand that obstacles and difficulties are natural phenomena, and that those who know how to make use of them progress and develop much more quickly.

The Bonfin, 12 April 1975

III

The Master reads the meditation for the day:

‘One of the functions of the aura is to enable the stars outside us and the stars within to communicate. If our aura is impure and clouded, it cannot receive beneficial currents, only destructive ones. It is often said that certain planets are benefic while others are malefic. But if this is so, how is it that a particular planet may have a favourable influence on some and an unfavourable influence on others? It is simply that some people are receptive only to the negative currents of a planet; they are unable to receive its positive currents. In reality, all the planets are benefic, but their influence depends on the aura of each individual. If your aura contains elements that

resist beneficial currents and prevent them from entering you, those currents will be impaired and refracted, and their effects will be harmful. Whereas, if your aura is strong and pure, all influences, even harmful ones, will be beneficial to you.'

I have already spoken to you about the aura,⁹ about its function and how to use it in order to communicate with the forces and spirits of nature. The state of mind of human beings (good or bad, harmonious or disharmonious) depends on the quality of their auras, for the aura is like an aerial or antenna: it receives waves from the atmosphere, and the quality of what it receives depends on its purity, power and scope.

You should not be surprised to hear that there are planets in us as well as in space. Human beings are a reflection of the cosmos, and the planets that exist in the universe exist also in human beings, and, as in the universe, they spin in orbit round our inner sun. Much could be said about these things, for there is a whole body of science that deals with them – a science which was known in the past and, although it has all but disappeared today, will be known and taught once again in the future.

Mars, Saturn, Uranus and Pluto are considered to be malefic, and in fact they are malefic for those who are unreceptive to their virtues. The good qualities of Mars are a strong will, fearlessness, resolution in the face of difficulties, and perseverance in the pursuit of a goal. The negative aspects of Mars are, as you know, cruelty, violence and destructiveness. The good qualities of Venus are beauty, charm and consideration for others. The negative aspects are sensuality, frivolity and infidelity. Depending on the purity – or lack of purity – of their aura, human beings attract and manifest the good or the bad influences of these planets because of their affinity with one or the other.

The same can be said of all the planets. It is the quality of our aura which attracts the virtues of Saturn (patience, stability, a thirst for knowledge) or its vices (melancholy, obstinacy and bitterness). Similarly, we attract either Jupiter's virtues (greatness of soul, generosity, kindness and clemency) or its vices (ambition, vanity and the wish to dominate and crush others). The whole question for you as disciples is to learn how to work to develop your aura so that it attracts only the favourable influences of the planets. For, contrary to the opinion of most astrologers, the good or evil influence of the planets does not depend exclusively on a person's sign and the house in which they are placed or on their aspects in relation to each other. The

planetary influence will manifest very differently, depending on the degree of evolution of the individual. This is why it is said that the stars influence but do not determine us.

The thing to realize is that the condition and quality of your aura, its purity and transparency, depend on how you live. When people give way to vices such as inner sloth, materialism, even bestiality, their aura becomes like a cloud of poisonous, nauseating gas, and the stench can actually be perceived by others. Even if people cannot see anything – and it is very difficult to see auras unless we are clairvoyant – they can sense the presence of something dark and oppressive like the foul exhalations of a swamp. Whereas an initiate or spiritual Master, who has been striving for hundreds and even thousands of years to develop the virtues of love, wisdom, purity and selflessness, possesses an immense aura, and innumerable creatures come and steep themselves in its light. In it they feel nourished, soothed, strengthened and borne on towards a heavenly goal. If disciples are conscious of their Master's aura, they can receive great blessings from it, but if they are not awakened to this reality they will remain impervious to his influence, no matter what he does to help them.

However, disciples must not be content simply to benefit from their Master's aura. They must also strive to develop their own, and this they can do by concentrating mentally and seeing themselves, in their imagination, surrounded by the purest and most beautiful colours. This method is mainly external, of course, and the effects will not last unless, at the same time, they strive to practise the virtues that correspond to those colours. Another way to develop the aura is to cultivate those virtues, and this is what really matters in the spiritual life. Those who work to cultivate the divine virtues will attract into their auras all the glorious colours that correspond to them, even without concentrating or making any special effort to do so. And as long as they persevere in the practice of the virtues, the colours in their aura will become brighter and ever more beautiful.

The ideal is to combine the work of thought and imagination with the practice of the virtues,¹⁰ in the knowledge that it is not the work of imagination that is the more important. For if people never do anything to change their mediocre way of life, with all its weaknesses and stupid contradictions, they will effectively destroy any good they may accomplish through mental work. People pray and meditate and practise the different positions of yoga, but unless they make up their mind to change their life,

none of their meditations and postures will do much good. This is particularly obvious with respect to meditation. It has become fashionable today to meditate. The subject has never been so popular before, and Transcendental Meditation is spreading world-wide. And yet people are not being changed, because they rely on meditation and make no effort to improve themselves inwardly. The same is true in the field of medicine: if people are content to take medication and refuse to change the way of life that has made them ill, the medication will never be more than a palliative.

But it is very difficult to get human beings to see that the only really effective method is to change the way they live. For example, many people come and tell me all about the mishaps and difficulties of their lives, and it is obvious that they expect me to work miracles for them. But surely you can understand that I cannot waste my time listening to people who want to talk about their problems but who never do anything to find solutions for themselves? I am not about to work miracles for them; life will take care of them and administer the lessons they need, and those lessons will be terrible indeed. Instead of waiting to be shattered by the sledge-hammers of life, they would do better to hurry up and learn the lessons of this Teaching.

There is not a being on earth who has not suffered some ordeal at the hands of life or been given some problem to solve. All the great initiates agree on this: life is the great universal master. Sages can instruct human beings, because they are highly evolved beings who have worked hard and long and suffered a great deal, so they can share their experience with others. But even the great sages cannot compare with life. Life is their master as well.

Human beings think that they can do what they please with life, but it turns out that it is life that has something to teach them. In fact, the best lessons are those we learn from life, for it knows exactly what each one of us needs to learn. True, a spiritual Master instructs his disciples according to their age and degree of evolution, but very often he does not have the conditions he needs, whereas life always has the means it needs. It knows exactly where, when and how to reach people. For some, it is through their health; for others, through their intelligence, and for others again, through their emotions or their wallet.

This is why, rather than learning from books, which are often written by people who are sick, warped or even insane, the initiates take life as their master. They study life and try to live according to the counsels of divine life.

This is where they find their remarkable knowledge. And this is why I keep begging you to transform your lives and bring them into harmony with the divine life that manifests itself on high, for when you do this all knowledge and all virtues will come and dwell within you.

The only thing you need to think about is life. Imagine someone possessing extraordinary gifts and talents who has been knocked unconscious and is lying lifeless on the ground: it is as if they have nothing. But bring them back to life, and they will once again enjoy all their powers. Anybody can cultivate great gifts, but if these gifts are not accompanied by life they are worthless. You all know this, but you do not draw the right conclusions from your knowledge. People never consider the importance of life. They look for pleasure or material possessions, and they squander their life – the most precious of all their possessions – in order to pay for things that are utterly worthless in comparison. This is how, without realizing it, they destroy themselves.

How stubborn and opinionated human beings are! They think they know everything, and then, when their life is wrecked, they weep and wail and refuse to understand that their defeat comes from their failure to live in harmony with the laws of nature. They clamour for this, that or the other thing and do everything possible to get what they want. Refusing to see that the laws of nature disapprove and oppose the satisfaction of their inordinate demands, they continue to insist and are finally broken on the reefs of their own desires. Why do they refuse to understand? Well, I do not want to bore you by repeating what I have told you twenty or thirty times already. If only the Lord would give me something new to talk about! Then I would not have to repeat the same things over and over again.

Actually, I know very well that there is no lack of new things to talk about, but as you have still not understood the ‘old’ things, what is the good of looking for something new? I have to keep repeating the same old things in the hope that, when you hear them for the fiftieth time, you will begin to understand. Since we are on the subject, how many times over the years have I spoken to you about the aura? And what have you ever done to put any of it into practice?

If your aura is pure, your own inner life will be the first to benefit from it, and in transforming your inner life you will also transform your emanations. When this happens, other people will begin to appreciate you. Without knowing why, they will feel a certain comfort in being with you. What they

feel, in fact, is a presence, the presence of the luminous beings that have been attracted by your aura, for heavenly entities are attracted by pure colours, and when they see someone surrounded by the light and colours they love, they come flocking to them. You have probably heard that sorcerers and witches use filthy, repugnant things to attract entities of darkness. Conversely, a pure and luminous aura attracts angels.¹¹ Unfortunately, human beings are so ignorant, they do not even know how or why they attract good or evil.

So we are going to have to work for years to improve ourselves, until our aura becomes an antenna capable of attracting all that is most beautiful and beneficial in the universe. If I ask you, ‘Are you seriously interested in your health, beauty, peace and happiness? Do you really want to be loved?’, you will certainly reply, ‘Yes, of course! That is all we want from life!’ But if you really want these things, why do you do nothing to obtain them? They will not just fall from heaven by chance. The best way to obtain them is to develop a beautiful aura: bring it alive through your love, make it brighter and more luminous through your wisdom, reinforce it through your strength of character, and make it pure and translucent through the purity of your life. The qualities you transmit to your aura depend on the virtues you develop in yourself.

You must not think that it is sufficient to cultivate just one virtue in order to win all blessings. No, everything in the universe fits into a pattern, and each virtue brings the corresponding blessing. I do not have time today to enlarge on the different aspects of this, but you can reflect on it for yourselves. If you are observant, you must already have noticed this in the ordinary circumstances of life. You hear someone talking with tremendous conviction, for instance, and you can see that the strength of their conviction convinces others. But if you analyse their words, you realize that much of what they say is nonsense. On the other hand, you also know people who think and speak very intelligently but who never manage to convince others; nobody seems to listen to them. The power of persuasion, you see, is one thing, and intelligence is something else again. This is how different virtues create the different qualities of the aura.

You must think about this, and above all try to understand that it is this work on your aura that will ensure that you obtain what you desire. Suppose, for instance, that you want to be able always to distinguish truth from falsehood. For this, you need a reliable yardstick, a point of comparison. Well, you can only acquire this point of comparison if there is blue in your

aura, true blue; it is this blue that will be your guide. Or you might desire wisdom and intelligence, and for this your aura must contain yellow.

There are many different means by which we might obtain what we want, but we do not have the right to use evil or underhanded means. If this were not so, I would be the first to scoff at all laws, both human and divine, but unfortunately – or fortunately – it is not allowed, and this is what I would like to tell all human beings. But how can I reach four billion individuals? And how could I tell them about their aura? Never having seen it, they would refuse to believe that it exists. They believe only what they can see. Very well, but suppose I wait at a dark corner of the street one night, and when one of these intelligent beings who profess to believe only in what they can see comes along, I jump out at them and hold them up at gunpoint: ‘Your money or your life!’ What do you think they will do? They will give me all their money, of course – all that visible, tangible money – in order to save a life that they have never seen! How logical human beings are! So, my dear brothers and sisters, work on your aura. That is the best way to obtain the qualities you desire.

The Bonfin, 17 April 1977

¹ See *Looking into the Invisible – Intuition, Clairvoyance, Dreams*, Izvor coll., n° 228, chap. 14: ‘Sleep, an image of death’.

² See above, chap. 15: ‘Protect yourself while you are asleep’ and chap. 16: ‘Astral projection while asleep’.

³ See *The Philosopher’s Stone – from the Gospels to Alchemy*, Izvor coll., n° 241, chap. 9: ‘The work of the alchemist: 3 over 4’ and chap. 11: ‘The regeneration of matter: the cross and the crucible’.

⁴ See *The Mysteries of Yesod*, Complete Works, vol. 7, Part 3: ‘Fasting - Washing - The real baptism - The angels of the four elements’.

⁵ See *Meditation*, Brochure n° 302.

⁶ See *La prière*, Brochure n° 305.

⁷ See *A New Earth – Methods, Exercises, Formulas and Prayers*, Complete Works, vol. 13, chap. 6: ‘Methods of purification’.

⁸ See *Spiritual Alchemy*, Complete Works, vol. 2, chap. 7: ‘The feet and the solar plexus’; *Harmony*, Complete Works, vol. 6, chap. 9: ‘The solar plexus and the brain’.

⁹ See *Harmony*, Complete Works, Vol. 6, chap. 12: ‘The aura’.

¹⁰ See *La pédagogie initiatique*, Œuvres Complètes, Tome 28, chap. 3:

‘L’imagination formatrice’.

[11](#) See *The Wellsprings of Eternal Joy*, Izvor coll., n° 242, chap. 18: ‘Visits from angelic beings’.

Chapter Eight

The meaning of initiation

I

Initiation is nothing more than an expansion of consciousness. There are, of course, different degrees of expansion, and the supreme degree is that attained by those who merge with the universal Soul, who vibrate in unison with the cosmos, immersing themselves in the realm of absolute harmony, the realm of the music of the spheres. This is the supreme initiation. Needless to say, it is extremely difficult to reach this level, but there are many different steps or degrees between the ordinary level of consciousness and this sublime level. Our task in life is to scale as many degrees as possible and gradually to enhance our consciousness until it is so clear and limpid that the universe itself is reflected in it. As long as human beings continue to move in the narrow circle of themselves and their personal interests they exclude themselves from initiation.

It is possible, of course, to give different definitions of initiation. Some would say, for instance, that it consists in developing certain chakras or of acquiring certain psychic powers, and they would be right. But I think that everybody would agree on this fundamental definition – an expansion of consciousness – because the expression embraces all aspects of initiation. It is when you begin to throw light on all the mechanical, instinctive, automatic movements within yourself – above all, when you begin to be conscious of all the heavenly messages, currents and entities that surround you – that your full potential begins to develop. Until this happens you resemble an insect.

Insects and other animals are not conscious: they act instinctively, without knowing why, impelled by their group soul. It is only on the level of human beings that individual consciousness first appears in the scale of beings. The consciousness of plants and animals is outside the individual; they are governed by a collective soul, which tells them when it is time to grow, or open their petals or procreate. And as human beings have inherited many tendencies from the animal kingdom, they, too, are often moved by unconscious, instinctive impulses and appetites.¹ This is why the work of disciples must always lead both to greater awareness and greater control. Insofar as they become conscious of the phenomena that occur within and around them and can identify, organize and harmonize them – and even call

on them at will – disciples can be said to be initiates. Never forget this!

Now, a word of warning to those of you who are tired of having to make an effort, and hanker after a way of life governed by your instincts and passions: if you follow that path you will regress. I am not denying that it is more agreeable to give a free rein to your inclinations – no more constraints, no more rules, no more instructors to be obeyed! What happiness!

Unfortunately, this kind of life becomes more and more complicated. All the things within you that were beginning to take shape, to be more luminous and more harmonious, become dark and twisted. And later, when you want to return to the upward path, you will find to your sorrow that you are too weighed down; there are too many obstacles in your way, and you can no longer pull yourself up. You will not suffer from your decisions immediately; the suffering will come later. While you are sliding down, you experience only delight – the joy of children tobogganing in the snow! Yes, but what pain and toil when you have to climb up again!

You will say that I keep repeating the same things. You are right; I do have to say the same things over and over again, because you have still not understood them. If you understood, I would not have to repeat them. But I am under the guidance of entities of the invisible world; they direct all that I do, and they urge me to keep coming back to certain subjects. I do not decide what to talk about: they do. When they see that you have not understood certain questions or have not yet learned to make use of certain methods, they keep insisting on them, using me as their mouthpiece. And if I need proof that this insistence is necessary, I find it in the fact that brothers and sisters often come and tell me, ‘Today, for the first time, I understood what you were saying.’ They may have already heard it four or five times, but today, for the first time, they understand.

Yes, I am wholly in the hands of the invisible world, and if the entities of that world judge that you need to know something, or if they want you to understand it in greater depth, they inspire me to talk about it. I am not following a programme of my own. When I come in here, I do not even know what I am going to talk about. But heaven sees into your hearts and knows what is distressing or worrying you; it knows what you need, and it tells me what to talk about. Sometimes, people tell me that I have answered questions that they had in mind that very morning or the evening before. So it all depends on you. If you become more aware of the value of this teaching, heaven will prompt me to reveal unimaginable things to you. Even I shall

learn from my words! Truly! Listening to myself I shall be astonished. I shall learn something new.

This is why I want you to understand how important it is to create a sacred atmosphere here. I know that this is not usual in the world. When people gather for a meeting of some kind, they feel no need to share in a common sense of respect, devotion or admiration – except, perhaps, at certain concerts or religious ceremonies. In fact, when they sense that they are expected to contribute to creating an atmosphere of harmony around someone, they are afraid of being manipulated and exploited. Even in the presence of a spiritual Master, they feel obliged to adopt an attitude of independence, sometimes even of hostility and provocation.

Disciples in the sanctuaries of old were taught to be receptive, humble and responsive. This was the training that made true priests and kings of them, capable of ruling and assuming responsibilities. Do you imagine that you can become a leader without first learning obedience? Of course, you can always threaten and brutalize people, but at the first opportunity they will turn on you and tear you to pieces. If, before assuming a position of power, you have not first learned to be receptive – the characteristic trait of the feminine principle – you will inevitably meet with disaster.

The atmosphere of harmony that disciples in these ancient sanctuaries learned to create was so perfect that it attracted luminous entities and enabled the Master to manifest his powers to the full. Those who sensed or saw luminous beings all around them and to whom mysteries were revealed certainly did not feel exploited or restricted. On the contrary, they realized that they, too, were learning to use certain powers. But how can human beings be brought to understand how beneficial it would be to create this atmosphere of trust, harmony, and oneness? They are so rebellious and unruly; they all want to do only what pleases them, and the divine manifestations that an initiate is normally capable of triggering become impossible, for one false note is enough to disrupt everything.

Yes, miracles could happen if the disciples knew how to create a sacred atmosphere. The thing that makes this impossible here is that those who have just arrived for the first time mingle with those who have been coming for twenty or thirty years. In the old sanctuaries, new candidates had gatherings of their own, and the instruction they received was adapted to their level. In this way their presence could not create dissonance and disturb the work of the others.

Nowadays, conditions are very different, and we have to make do with the means we have. But instead of helping my work, many of you hinder it. Oh, of course, it is quite unintentional. You are innocently oblivious and unaware of what you are doing, but even so... My desire is to help everyone. I want to welcome everybody who comes here, but some of you behave like unlicked cubs. It takes a great deal of time and effort on my part to 'lick you clean', to wash and instruct you, and in the meantime, many others are obliged to wait endlessly for this sacred atmosphere that never comes.

It is up to you now to see where your true interest lies. Is this climate of trust going to make slaves of you and deprive you of the use of your faculties, or are you going to use it to stimulate your desire to participate in order to see more positive results? My wish – it is only a wish; I will not force it on you – is that you should all take part in the work I do in the periods of silence, that you should be in union with me, sharing, even amplifying, my thoughts.

We are working to create a future in which the whole world may live in universal brotherhood, in which all boundaries are abolished and war and poverty no longer exist. Is there any harm in dedicating oneself to such an ideal? In any case, as I have often said, even if we fail to attain this goal – because there are four billion stubborn people in the world who are not about to change their point of view – we, at least, will benefit from our work. Even if we fail to achieve paradise on earth for all human beings, at least we can achieve it within ourselves. It is the ideal that is all-important. If your ideal is to work for light in the world, for harmony and happiness in the world, you may not see any very tangible results, but you will sense great forces beginning to stir within you.

Twentieth-century human beings are no longer capable of an attitude of veneration for the most profound truths. They are lost on the fringes of reality, on the outer fringes of their own being. They know everything, but they have lost all sense of the sacred. And it is precisely this sense of the sacred that is the first condition for initiation.²

The Bonfin, 26 July 1972

II

Do you want to know what I am thinking about today? I am thinking about the far-off days of the mysteries, the ceremonies that took place in the temples of ancient Egypt, and the ordeals that disciples had to endure before

being worthy to take their place among the initiates.

You have all heard of the mysteries, into which such illustrious figures as Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato and Apollonius of Tyana were initiated. For centuries, those who wanted to receive instruction in the highest principles of science, philosophy and religion went to Egypt. Even Moses was taught by Egyptian priests. It was in Egypt that he learned the magical skills that enabled him later to work so many miracles to save his people and lead them to the land of Canaan. The different rites and precepts contained in the books of the Pentateuch and the symbols Moses used were inspired by the knowledge he had acquired in Egypt and, later, from Jethro, the high-priest of Midian, who was the father of Zipporah, his wife.

Thus, for as long as the priests were able to maintain the pure tradition of the mysteries in their temples, many of the great initiates of the past received their training in Egypt. And even when the mysteries were no longer celebrated, the tradition continued to influence philosophy and religion. Although the essence of the priests' teaching was always kept secret, some aspects of it were spread abroad in symbolic or veiled forms. Herodotus, the Greek historian, who spent some times at Saïs, knew something about the Egyptian initiations, and Manethos, an Egyptian historian, himself a high-priest at Heliopolis, is considered by many scholars to be a precious source of information about them.

The influence of the mysteries can be seen in the work of Plutarch (a high-priest of the temple of Apollo at Delphi, who travelled in Egypt and wrote a treatise on Isis and Osiris) and, later, in that of such thinkers as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Plotinus, Porphyry, Jamblichus and Proclus. In *The Golden Ass*, the Latin writer Apuleius describes certain rites of the cult of Isis. In fact, the whole of the esoteric tradition bears signs of the Egyptian influence. It would be impossible to enumerate all the authors concerned, but let me mention at least John Trithemius, Agrippa of Nettesheim, Paracelsus, Saint-Germain, Cagliostro, Claude de Saint-Martin, Swedenborg, Goethe, Novalis, Balzac, Gérard de Nerval, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Huysmans, Fabre d'Olivet, Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, Stanislaus de Guaita, Papus, Eliphas Lévi, Rudolf Steiner and many more, but that is enough for the moment.

It is important to realize that the teaching dispensed in the temples was not exclusively theoretical. Initiation was a discipline that concerned the mind, heart, will, spirit, soul and body. The disciples had to show that they were capable of overcoming all the manifestations of their lower nature, their

instincts and their passions. This is why I want to give you some idea of how the ordeals were conducted in the temples. I was fortunate enough in my youth to come upon some initiatic books and manuscripts which taught me a great deal about these ancient initiations. Also, I was able to recapture many memories of my own remote past. It is possible, therefore, that you could find much of what I say in the books of several well-known authors, but the way in which I present it remains my own.

Those who, urged on by a burning desire for truth, wanted to brave the ordeals of initiation would address their request to a priest of one of the great sanctuaries and, if judged worthy, would be led to the great pyramid at Giza. On the sixteenth tier of the pyramid was a three-foot opening in the wall, through which the neophyte and his guide entered. Once inside, they found themselves in a long narrow passage lit only by a small lamp. Making their way along this dark, damp passage, they found that it ended in a deep well from which rose a thick cloud of smoke. By the light of their lamp, they could barely see the ladder leading down the side of the well. The pupil followed the priest down the ladder and into another corridor, which, after much twisting and turning, brought them to a closed door made of two great bronze panels. At this point the priest turned to the neophyte, saying, 'I am not allowed to go any farther with you. From now on you will be alone. But before I leave you, you must make your will and tell me your last wishes, for the path that lies ahead is very difficult, and you run the risk of dying or of going out of your mind.'

Once the priest had gone, the two panels of the great door swung noiselessly open; the neophyte entered, and they closed behind him with a fearful clangour, which warned the priests in the sanctuary beyond of the arrival of a bold – or should I say reckless – candidate in search of truth. For the moment, however, he was still alone. Continuing to advance along yet another corridor, he passed recesses hollowed out of the walls on both sides, from which peered faces twisted into horrible grimaces, which seemed all the more hideous and hostile because of the flickering light of his lamp. Although the faces belonged to lifeless statues, it seemed to the neophyte that they were the souls of the dead come to prevent him from passing, and he had to struggle to overcome his terror and continue on his way until he reached yet another door. Guarding this door were three men armed with swords and wearing helmets in the form of a jackal's head. One of the men advanced threateningly upon him, saying, 'If you have the courage to go on, you may

do so now. At this moment, you are still free to turn back, but once you have passed these doors you will be obliged to go forward. If you fail in this venture, you will never be allowed to leave the temple again. You will spend the rest of your days here as a slave. Day and night we are here to guard this door.'

If the candidate decided to continue, the guards stood back and let him pass, and he entered a great chamber, lit only by the flames of an immense fire, through which he had to pass. The flames were fed by branches of certain bushes that are native to Egypt – the Egyptian thorn, gum Arabic and tamarind. Although, at first sight, it seemed that there was one great fire, if the neophyte had the courage to approach it, he saw that this was an optical illusion; in reality, there were two smaller fires, with a narrow passage between them, through which he could slip rapidly.

Once past the fire, he had to cross a dark, evil-smelling pool of water. Undressing, he folded his clothes, put them on his head and crossed the pool, guided by the lamp held high above his head. On the other side of the water he came to a platform, and climbing on to this platform he saw before him a door of richly carved ivory, which he attempted in vain to open. All of a sudden, he noticed two metal rings gleaming in the half-dark, but as he clutched them, the floor on which he was standing suddenly gave way beneath his feet, and he felt himself plunging into a bottomless pit, shivering in the blast of an icy wind. How long would his fall last? Would he have the strength to maintain his grasp on the rings in such cold? Without warning, he found himself once again on firm ground. A great door swung open before him, and, chilled to the bone and exhausted by his ordeals (ordeals by fire, water, earth and air), he entered a vast hall, in which two rows of priests in sumptuous vestments were waiting to welcome him. The head-dress of the priests bore the symbol of Osiris (the eye within a triangle), and the neophyte could see from their attitude that they were satisfied with the way he had faced his trials. Then one of the priests led him before the statues of Isis, Osiris and Horus and told him to kneel and recite a prayer to Isis, asking the goddess to give him success in the trials that still lay before him – for they were not over yet!

The neophyte then approached yet another door and, knocking on it, heard a voice which struck terror to his heart. 'What do you want?' said the voice. And he replied, 'I am a sinner. I have committed many crimes, and now I want to expiate my crimes and purify myself.' At these words, the door

swung open, and on entering he found himself in the presence of three priests seated in the manner of judges. The priest in the centre wore a gold chain from which hung an enormous sapphire on which was engraved the figure of a naked woman looking at her reflection in a mirror. This was the symbol of the neophyte's conscience as it examined itself and weighed up its merits, and he began to give a detailed account of all that he had done during his lifetime, all his deeds, both good and bad. The judges were initiates who, in addition to being skilled in phrenology and physiognomy, were also clairvoyant. They had no difficulty in discerning whether he was telling the truth or not, and if they judged him to be sincere he was accepted.

Then his judges gave him two goblets to drink from. The rim of the first goblet had been rubbed with a substance that was sweet to the taste, but the liquid it contained was bitter. When he drank it, all the crimes and faults of his past were swept from his memory. The second cup, whose rim had a bitter taste, contained a sweet nectar which caused him to remember only the good and true things in his past. Of course, these two cups also had symbolic meaning. The lesson to be learned from them is that those who seek only pleasure end by finding bitterness, whereas those who accept difficulty end by finding joy, power and freedom.

It was only after this that the worst and most terrible ordeals began. You will have some idea of the sufferings the neophyte had to endure if you have read the tales in Greek mythology of the torments of Tantalus, Sisyphus or the Danaïds. Tantalus was condemned to stand for ever in a pool of water beside a tree laden with fruit. Whenever Tantalus, suffering from hunger and thirst, bent to drink or stretched out his hand to pluck a fruit from the branches over his head, the water receded and the wind pushed the branches out of reach. Sisyphus was condemned to roll a great rock up a hill, but every time he reached the top the rock rolled down to the bottom, and he had to start all over again. The Danaïds were condemned to fill jars with water from the river, but as the jars were riddled with holes, as fast as they filled them, the water drained away, and they had to keep going back to the river again and again.

These Greek myths, which seem at first sight to be tales intended to provoke mirth or shivers of fear in those who listened to them, had, in fact, their origin in the rites of initiation.

After drinking from the two goblets, the neophyte came to a beautiful garden in which young men and women were dancing, frolicking and

embracing. Laid out on the lawns were baskets of succulent fruit and pitchers of exquisite wines, but although he was famished and burning with thirst he had to resist all these temptations. He also had to resist the charms of the lovely young women, clad only in veils of transparent gauze, who beckoned to him as they reclined seductively on their couches. If he succumbed to the temptations they represented, he would be lost and would have to remain in the temple forever as a slave. Then these ravishingly beautiful girls stripped him and flogged him with rods, while he struggled to overcome the pain and the urgings of his carnal desires. At last, when he had proved himself invincible, the priests used their knowledge of the magical powers of certain sounds to put an end to his ordeals and plunge him into a state of harmony, in which he became conscious of the reality of the divine world.

There! This gives you some idea of the ordeals that candidates for initiation had to endure. Those who came through their ordeals successfully walked out of the sanctuary robed in white and preceded by the priests in ceremonial vestments. A crown of myrtle was put on their head and in their hand they held the palm fronds that symbolized victory. As the procession moved through the town, onlookers in the streets and on the balconies of the houses they passed acclaimed the new initiates by name, and even the Pharaoh sent gifts.

Actually, the ordeals I have just described were no more than the preliminaries required of all disciples before they were entitled to aspire to the higher degrees of initiation. The last ordeal of all was the experience of death and resurrection. The candidate was led into the sanctuary where he was told to lie down in a sarcophagus, and, by the recitation of certain formulas, the priests induced in him a death-like state of lethargy. His etheric and astral bodies left his physical body and were free to travel through space, to contemplate the different regions of the universe, and to see and understand the laws that govern it. And all that he saw was recorded in the memory of his etheric body. As there is always a danger in such circumstances that the cord linking the subtle bodies to the physical body might break, the priests watched over him while he stayed in this state for three days and three nights. At the end of this time, other formulas were used to bring him back into his physical body.

This last experience was one that the candidate could never forget, for it made a truly new being of him. Indeed, the experience of death and resurrection, although in a different form, lies at the heart of the Christian

religion. Jesus said, *‘Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.’*³

Once their long apprenticeship was over, the new initiates took leave of their teachers. Some would go on to Persia, to be initiated into the mysteries of Mithra; others to India, to receive the teaching of the Brahmins. Before leaving the temple, they had sworn on pain of death not to disclose the secrets that had been revealed to them. If they ever spoke of what they had learned and experienced, they used myths and parables which served to obscure or veil the reality while at the same time revealing it. This is why the origin of the verb ‘reveal’ is said by some to mean ‘re-veil’.

The tarot, for instance, which so many occultists have attempted to decipher, is simply a digest of the immense science of Egyptian initiates condensed in a few symbolic images. Perhaps you think that this is not possible? Indeed it is. Nature is the master of all initiates; they learn by observing and imitating nature. And what does nature do? Take the example of a tree: as a tree grows, it produces leaves, flowers and fruit. In the fruit are seeds or a kernel, which contain a summary in miniature of the parent tree. When you hold an acorn or a beechmast in your hand, you are holding a potential forest. How can nature condense all these forces and properties into such a tiny space? It is a mystery. But initiates, who observe the ways of nature and have learned to imitate her ways, are able to condense the whole of their knowledge in a few pictures or symbols. This is why I say that a lifetime would be too short to interpret these symbols and apply them to all the areas of life to which they refer.

Although I spoke earlier about some of the authors who were influenced by the Egyptian mysteries, I want to make it quite clear to you that you cannot become initiates by reading initiatic books. Initiation is a constant labour of organization, purification and self-mastery. The phenomenon that we see today – the ever-growing interest in books dealing with the occult – is not the expression of a need for a genuine spirituality but of a fascination for the unknown, the mysterious, the forbidden. And the results of this fascination are obvious: such books will not make anybody wiser, better balanced or purer. On the contrary, they only serve to release the dark forces lurking within human beings, to create disorder in their ideas and bring them under the influence of lower entities that seek their downfall.

For centuries, the Church has made the mistake of combating the initiatic tradition. But the present state of affairs – in which the occult sciences are

accessible to anyone, however weak, depraved or malevolent they are – is not the ideal solution either. Intensive research is going on in some countries into the powers of thought, so that they may be used for destructive purposes, and this is just as dangerous as, and even more morally reprehensible than, research that is aimed at the development of atomic weapons. Human beings do not have the right to use the divine faculty of thought for an evil purpose. This is black magic, and those who practise it do not realize that, sooner or later, it will backfire on them in the most terrible way. For all the thoughts and feelings, whether good or bad, that emanate from a human being follow a circular course through space and end by coming back to their starting point, and by the time they reach that point they are greatly amplified.

The goal of initiation is, first, to awaken the consciousness of disciples to the existence of the higher world, and second, to make their physical body a fit dwelling place for the Deity. This is what we are doing here, in this divine school: we are opening our consciousness to the divine world, and building our inner temple with all the purest materials, so that the Holy Spirit may be drawn to us and dwell within us. I have already spoken to you about your inner temple, your body of glory, and explained how to gather the heavenly particles you need in order to build it.⁴

Many people are seeking spirituality today without the least realization that they have never gained a single victory over themselves. They do not know what initiation is. They are still the victims of their own lower nature – always in rebellion against something, always feeling sorry for themselves and lamenting their fate, always demanding something from others. Every difficulty, every humiliation, every loss, however slight, bowls them over completely. Is this initiation?

In our day, the ordeals of initiation no longer take place in a temple, but in the ordinary circumstances of life. It is in our daily living that we are tested by the four elements. When human beings were expelled from paradise, they lost their power over the elements, and now they have to learn to control their own physical body (earth), their feelings (water), their thoughts (air) and their sexual energies (fire). But can you expect people to listen to someone who talks about controlling sexual energies at a time when all the rules are being swept away? Young people and adults alike are bent on the mindless squandering of this energy, this quintessence, this condensed form of the sacred fire, and in doing so they are allowing disease and death to gain a hold over them.⁵ When I was sixteen I came across a little book by Paracelsus in

which he said that the loss of a man's semen is a loss of life. This reflection had a decisive effect on me; I thought about it a great deal, and it enabled me, later, to accomplish many things.

Let me tell you a little story. Once upon a time there was a monk who was so lacking in intelligence that he could be trusted to do only the most menial work in his monastery. He spent his days sweeping, washing the dishes, emptying the rubbish bins. In spite of his limited brainpower, however, he had understood one truth (only one, but he never lost sight of it). When he was washing the dishes, he would say, 'Lord, as I wash this plate, let my heart be washed clean.' As he swept the floor, 'Lord, as I am sweeping this cell...' and so on. After many years of persevering work, his purity was such that he became clairvoyant and so wise that even cardinals came to the monastery to ask for his advice. Ah yes! Just one truth! And what about you, my dear brothers and sisters? You, who know so many truths, what are you waiting for? Why do you do nothing? Why does it all remain theoretical? Choose just a few truths and work at them night and day, and you will see the results.

Videlinata (Switzerland), 14 March 1976

III

A human being is a microcosm. The whole of nature (the macrocosm) is represented within each one of us, not only in our physical body but also in our subtle bodies (the astral, mental, and causal). So far, human microcosms are not capable of reflecting the splendour of the macrocosm, because they have lived in ignorance and in the grip of their desires, appetites and evil intentions for so long. Because of their way of life they have gathered around themselves too many dark, even diabolical elements, and these elements now cling to them, deceiving them, robbing them of their lucidity and their freedom and paralysing their will. The first thing that has to be done is to get rid of these elements. The initiates of old instructed their disciples in purification practices, which consisted not merely in ablutions or immersion in a river or the sea, but in a way of life, in a way of working, reasoning and feeling. This purification was a process that lasted for years and involved a veritable science.

Each thought, feeling or desire has the ability to attract material elements of a like nature. When you have good thoughts, feelings and desires that are

upheld by a firm intention, they attract particles of pure, eternal, incorruptible matter, and if you work with perseverance to acquire this pure matter, it will cling to you and permeate your whole organism. When this happens, when it is established within you, it drives out all your old, dusty, mouldy particles and completely renews every aspect of your being – your physical, etheric, astral and mental bodies.

One of the things you still have to learn is that each particle of matter is linked to a corresponding force. The purer the matter, therefore, and the more intense its vibrations, the more strongly it attracts kindred forces of purity. When you replace your old, worn-out particles with new, pure particles drawn from heavenly regions, you are also attracting to yourself currents and forces from above. The whole of nature is ruled by the law of hierarchy. Everything that exists – the stars, rivers, mountains, precious stones, fruit, the different parts of our physical body – is arranged in such a way that the denser, heavier elements sink to the lower level, while the lighter, purer elements rise. This means that a disciple who wishes to capture the subtlest particles must acquire the habit, through meditation and contemplation, of rising to the sublime regions of the divine world. And since these subtle particles are linked to kindred forces and energies, the purer they are, the purer the entities associated with them. In this way, by replacing the old particles of your body with new ones, you will, at the same time, be introducing visitors of a higher order, more highly evolved entities, into your psychic organism.

Cosmic Intelligence has given us the most effective means for moving about the universe and finding what we need, namely, the faculty of thought.⁶ If you are in pain, or unhappy or worried, you can concentrate mentally on your distress and picture your thoughts penetrating, illuminating and warming it. When you do this, the particles of your psychic and physical organs are harmonized, and before long your distress is eased. Thought possesses untold powers. However, if you want to use thought effectively, you have to be able to focus it so that it is capable of penetrating the organ that has been invaded by negative elements. This is one of the great truths of Initiatic Science. Put it into practice and you will see how effective it is. If your attempts to use this extraordinary weapon have not yet been successful, it simply means that you have not practised sufficiently.

When we rise to great heights and contemplate the divine world of light, beauty, music and harmony, we receive new particles, and as each particle is

alive, it is accompanied by kindred forces, energies and spirits. Nothing we do in life can equal this. Nothing is more important than exchanging our old, tired, ailing particles for particles that are new and radiant with heavenly light. This is the work of construction, the building of the inner temple that I mentioned earlier. Disciples build their temple with materials that, like precious stones, are transparent and impervious to decay or corrosion. And after working for years to cleanse, purify and sanctify themselves, the temple is ready.⁷ But all this work represents no more than a first phase, a preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Once the temple is pure and has become a luminous dwelling place, the Holy Spirit is drawn to it. And, of course, when it comes it does not come alone. The Holy Spirit is always accompanied by a host of angels and archangels, by a whole heavenly hierarchy, as well as by countless nature spirits that are there to serve it. Thus a disciple becomes a sanctuary, a dwelling place of the Deity, and their whole life is ruled, ordered and given direction by the indwelling Spirit. All personal desires, all passions and vices and all immoral or mundane attitudes have disappeared. They are completely free. Their only thought is to help others and contribute, as far as they are able, to the coming of the kingdom of God.

This second phase is of the utmost importance, for once the Holy Spirit dwells within a disciple, he is constantly guided and protected and, as the years go by, manifests this divine presence more and more perfectly. These, then, are the two great tasks of every disciple. Nothing else equals them; they are the highest peak, the perfect fulfilment of human endeavour.

Perhaps you are wondering whether it is really necessary to go to such lengths for something that will last for only one lifetime. Life is so short; is it really worth it? It is indeed, for human beings have more than one lifetime, and this is the only work whose results endure. If those who have achieved this degree of perfection before leaving the world have to reincarnate, they come already equipped with this indelible imprint; they do not have to do the same work all over again. From the moment of conception and gestation, their new body is modelled and fashioned exactly according to the degree of perfection attained in their previous incarnation. You are perhaps surprised by the notion that even the changes wrought previously in the physical body are permanent. This is so because the physical body becomes pure and invulnerable only when our other, subtler bodies are purified and perfected. It is the work on these other bodies that is eventually reflected in the physical

body. None of your efforts on the spiritual plane is ever wasted. To make our body a temple of the Lord is the only work that is valid for all eternity, the only enterprise that can produce results of such magnitude.

Of course, in order to attain perfection you also have to know a certain number of things. You have to know, for instance, the nature of what you allow to enter your being, the quality and degree of purity of what you eat and drink, of the air you breathe and of your thoughts, feelings and desires. You will find information about all this in our Teaching. Over the years my talks have often explained exactly how to discern whether something is pure or not. It is up to you to study this question of purity and perhaps to read *The Mysteries of Yesod* again two or three times, until you understand things that you did not understand when you read it for the first time, skimming through it perhaps, as if it were a novel.

Blessed are those who have understood today that there is no activity more sublime than this work of renewing and refashioning their whole being. Replacement of the old by the new is a process that has always been used by Cosmic Intelligence, particularly in our physical body, where all the cells are replaced and renewed every seven years. When you consider that our cells are constantly being renewed, you cannot help but wonder why we ourselves are not renewed; why we continue to be as sickly, vulnerable, hot-tempered, sensual, avaricious and envious as ever. The fact that this is so simply shows that while the cells of our physical body change our other, subtler bodies have not been affected. Our memory and our habits are unchanged. The construction of our inner temple, therefore, is not simply a question of the transformation of our physical body by the renewal of its particles – in any case, this happens without our conscious participation – it is a question of effecting the same renewal in our other bodies. And this has to be done consciously. This is the only way we can gradually construct our body of glory (also known as the body of immortality, the body of Christ, the buddhic body).⁸ Once this body is formed, nothing can tarnish or soil it, for purity is established on all levels.

From now on, as disciples, you must cling to this idea that purity is the key to everything: eternal life, clairvoyance, health, joy, power and knowledge. When you purify yourself light can go in and out of you more readily, and you begin to see reality more clearly, with greater lucidity. The diseased particles that made you ill are expelled, and you become healthier. Those that weighed on your will are cleared away and you become resolute.

All that is dark and shadowy disappears, and if you were sad you become joyful, for joy is simply another aspect of purity. The more you purify yourself, the more you will feel happy, light-hearted and joyous. The absence of purity leads to putrefaction, disintegration and death, whereas purification leads to immortality. Thus immortality, joy, happiness, knowledge, power and health are simply different aspects of purity. This is Initiatic Science in a nutshell. And now it is up to you to verify the truth of it for yourselves.

I know that you cannot yet understand the inestimable value of the treasures I give you. If I continue to do so in spite of your lack of understanding, it is because it gives me so much pleasure, so much joy. I am the one who finds fulfilment in giving you these riches. All I ask is that you set to work.

Naturally, however much goodwill you bring to the task, you will not be victorious immediately. You will meet with many defeats, many falls, many moments of discouragement. But you must not let these things stop you; you must pick yourselves up, begin again, persevere, and in the long run the last word will be yours. You will reach final victory. As you see, I am not so naïve as to think that once you have listened to this talk the outcome is guaranteed, that from one day to the next you will be capable of going on from here and overcoming all obstacles. Unfortunately, our old tendencies, our ingrained needs, desires, weaknesses and appetites are still there, but this is not something to fret about continually. You must tell yourself, ‘This is the way I am today; I have this need, this fault, this failing, but in the Teaching I have a formidable weapon with which to gain the victory.’ And you will keep working for however long it takes. My Master, Peter Deunov, used to say, ‘Vreme, vera, rabota’, ‘Time, faith, work!’ That is all. You are going to work; you are going to have faith in your work, and as time goes on you will find yourself changing. Indeed, you will be astonished to see how much you change.⁹

I am in a good position – perhaps better than most – to know some of the difficulties life has in store for each one of us. Yes, I know them, and I do not think that those who submit passively to defeat have chosen the best way. The best way is to struggle and do one’s best every day, and, in so doing, to verify for oneself the power of the human spirit. If you have not had much success so far, it is because you have always doubted this power and, consequently, have never experienced it for yourself. The day you begin to believe in it you will find out how real it is. And as the days and years go by,

you will see it more and more clearly, in all its splendour.

Believe me, if you continue to link yourself to light, if you love this Teaching and never abandon it, you can be absolutely sure that all your difficulties, whatever they may be, will be transformed into happiness, success and magnificent achievements. Never abandon the Teaching. Of course, you are entirely free to leave it if you feel that it is getting in your way and preventing you from doing something more interesting in the world, but you will soon see what you have lost. You will soon realize that you have made a terrible mistake. For my part, I hope that you will never abandon this Teaching, because it is a link with heaven, a link that enables you to learn and to advance even without knowing it. Believe me, however glorious the position the world offers you, if you break this link you will be lost, for you will be putting yourself outside the light. If there is one truth indelibly engraved in my being, it is this. It has been so deeply ingrained within me for hundreds and thousands of years that I could never erase it. What I am telling you is an absolute. Think about it. Do you imagine that you would be better off without this light, without these great truths? Well, time will tell!

I am very glad to have been able to come and talk to you today. Some of you think that if I do not come every day it means I have abandoned you. No, it is simply that I have a great deal of work. In fact, when I am not talking to you or having lunch with you, I am often closer to you than if I were physically present. You have to sense this. You must begin to grow, to advance and to understand that the physical presence is not everything.

The Bonfin, 4 April 1976

IV

We cannot understand the structure of a human being if we do not already know how the universe is structured; at the same time, we cannot understand the structure of the universe if we do not know the structure of a human being. Human beings manifest as spirit, soul and physical body (intelligence, feeling and will), and this means that they exist simultaneously in three worlds: the divine, the spiritual and the physical. The structure of the human being and the universe has always been the subject of study and meditation by initiates, and they have found it to be an essential key. Everything that exists conforms to this pattern: the world of principles, the world of laws and the world of phenomena.

Phenomena exist in incalculable numbers, but the laws that govern them are far fewer in number, being ruled by no more than a handful of principles, which form the one supreme principle, God. The world of phenomena, of physical objects, is the world of dissemination, whereas the divine world is the world of unity. This is a very simple key to the solution of all your problems. When people complain that they feel lost in darkness and chaos, it is because they fail to take into account the existence and structure of these three worlds. If you limit yourself exclusively to the material, physical world, you will inevitably be overwhelmed by the multitude of things that exist only on earth. Think of the flora and fauna of the world – all the different species of trees, grasses, and flowers; the countless species of insects and fish! Botanists and entomologists have still not succeeded in cataloguing the infinite varieties that exist.

As long as you remain on the level of objects and events, you will never see things clearly or be in control of the situation. In order to see things clearly – and, indeed, in order to act and create as well – it is essential to rise by means of thought to a higher plane, to the level of principles, which is ruled by the spirit, by the light of God. Unfortunately, most people prefer to confine themselves to the physical world, groping for the truth on this level, where, for all their searching, they will never find it. The wholeness, the unifying web, the essential structure of the universe, cannot be seen from this level. It can be seen only from the highest level.^{[10](#)}

If the high initiates of Egypt chose to build their monuments in the shape of pyramids, with four faces that slope upwards to meet at the apex, it was precisely in order to teach us to seek that apex, that highest point. A great many people have written books about the pyramids, but what are the features that interest them? The techniques that were used to put these immense blocks of granite together without cement; the plans and dimensions of the various corridors and chambers that have been discovered, and the objects found in them. They make detailed sketches of all these things. They study the exact position of the openings in the walls of the pyramids in relation to the points of the compass or certain constellations, and so on. Certainly, their books contain extraordinary treasures of learning, but, for my part, I know nothing about these details – I leave all that to the scholars. I have looked for something very simple, the one thing that will enable me to solve even the most complex problems.

And do you know what the pyramid tells me? Many things, but this above

all: that as long as politicians fail to understand the message contained in its structure they will never resolve the problems between nations. When I hear all those diplomats and economists discussing the formation of the new Europe, it is obvious to me that they are all bent on defending the interests of their own country. In such conditions, I assure you, they will never reach an understanding – never – because they confine themselves to the lowest level, the level of facts and events. It is impossible for people to understand each other and create unity if their understanding and attitudes are not based on a higher point of view. It is essential to work on a higher level, on the level, first, of the laws that govern the facts; then on the level of the principles that govern these laws and, finally, on the level of the one supreme principle, the eternal Spirit.

Only on the highest level can human beings resolve all their problems, even political, social and economic ones. If they continue to be ruled by their instincts, by greed, self-interest and prejudice, they will never reach agreement. If you want to understand human beings, you have to begin by approaching them on the level of feelings, of the heart, although even this is imperfect. Unity is still impossible on this level, because people are guided by their likes and dislikes, their sympathies and aversions. So the only way is to move to a higher level, to the level of reason, of wisdom, the level of principles. On this level everybody has the same view of reality.

You will say that it is impossible for everybody to understand things in the same way. Of course, if you limit yourself to the level of facts, you will see others as different, even hostile; they are the enemy and you have to oppose them. On the level of feelings, you will like and accept some and dislike others; you will be able to work harmoniously with some, but not with others. In other words, this is still a region of disunity. But if you succeed in rising to the divine level, to the level of the spirit, you will discover that we are all brothers and sisters. Then we can all understand and accept each other; there are no more enemies to be killed. How could anybody want to kill their brother or sister? But if you abandon this higher point of view, you will inevitably become enemies and start slaughtering each other all over again.

This, then, is the method sanctioned by the initiates: to rise to where we recognize that we are all one. When we do this, conflict ceases and unity is achieved.¹¹ Until such time as human beings arrive at this higher view, they will never get along together. They may make certain concessions for the sake of political, economic or military advantage, but that will not prevent

them from detesting each other. People sometimes have to compromise even when to do so goes against their deepest feelings, so this is obviously not the solution.

I know the true solution, but humankind will find it only when light, love and brotherhood exist throughout the world, when every human being begins to climb towards the apex of the pyramid, the only position from which they will have a clear view of the whole. When you are on top of a mountain you see a vast panorama, but as you begin to descend you see less and less. From your own position you see one part of the country, and someone who is a little farther down sees another, and as each one sees something different and is firmly convinced that what they see is the truth, they end by slaughtering each other. True understanding brings with it true happiness, but how can we get human beings to see where this true understanding is to be found? They still need to tear each other to shreds, to make each other suffer. But sooner or later events will oblige them to accept this philosophy.

To sum up, then: as long as we remain down below, on the physical plane, it is impossible to have a clear view of reality; we see the world as absurd and war as inevitable. We have to rise to the plane where we can see that all human beings are one, that we are all children of God. And so, as I say, the Egyptian initiates chose to build their sanctuaries in the shape of a pyramid so that human beings might learn a lesson from the lines of the structure, which, as they rise towards the sun, converge in a single point at the apex. This is a truth that should be taught even to children.

The pyramid symbolizes the hierarchical structure of the universe. Whatever our line of work, the pyramid can always help us to rise from the lower level of multiplicity and dispersion to the higher plane of unity. It is when we have this clear, unimpeded view of reality that we can act divinely. We have to learn to make the lines of our lives follow the lines of the pyramid. Or, to use a different metaphor, instead of remaining on the surface and confining our attention to the skin, the outer husk of reality, we must penetrate the flesh and sinews, in which the forces of life flow. In fact, we must go even deeper and enter the very kernel of life, the living spirit.¹² Before judging a situation and deciding on a course of action, you must rise and view it from the summit. I do this very often. You are inclined to become impatient and wonder why I do not make a decision about something at once. You do not realize that if I behaved like everybody else, none of our problems would ever really get resolved.

Vidélinata (Switzerland), 8 March 1980

V

This will be my last talk at Videlinata this year, but if any of you are wondering what to do with yourselves at Easter or in the summer, you can always come to the Bonfin. I shall be giving more talks there, so if you feel like being pestered and tormented again, you know where to come.

Ah yes, my dear brothers and sisters, I am constantly thinking of this one question: how can I be of use to you? Each time I talk to you I try to think how I can give you something new, a new element, a new truth that was absent in all my previous talks. A new truth? Yes, because there are so many different truths, and, like the billions of cells that go to make up a living organism, all these different truths are part of the one Truth. We can have no direct knowledge of this one, all-embracing Truth. All we can know are the lesser truths which can bring us progressively closer to the one, ultimate Truth.

For years, my only care has been to explain countless truths relating to the other worlds – the physical, astral, mental, causal, and so on – in the hope that you will one day arrive at the one great Truth that embraces and includes them all. In the Egyptian initiations, Truth was represented by Isis unveiled. Isis is the symbol of nature, and no ordinary human being can penetrate the mystery of nature. This is the task of a disciple: to draw back the veils that conceal nature, so that she may appear in all her nakedness, in all truth.¹³

If human beings learned to observe and interpret the details of their everyday lives, they would see, for instance, that such a simple thing as dressing or undressing indicates that they, like nature, are wrapped in veils, the veils of their different bodies. When we get up in the morning, we re-enact the process of our descent into matter. Just as, when dressing, we begin by putting on the lighter articles of clothing (underwear, shirt or blouse, and so on) and end with an overcoat, so, when we incarnate, we clothe ourselves in progressively heavier, denser bodies, ending with the physical body. This is why human beings do not yet know themselves, because they are concealed by so many layers of clothing. To know themselves, they have to strip away all those clothes. To know the naked truth means penetrating to the level of the divine, to the causal, buddhic and atmic planes. Once there, the initiate beholds Isis unveiled.

You will perhaps say that you know nature. No, not really. You do not really know nature, for she is veiled. You can only know her by stripping away her veils. The earth, with all its oceans, forests and mountains, is nature's overcoat. You have to be able to see beyond this to the etheric body of the earth, with its vibrations and emanations. To behold Isis unveiled is to behold nature as she is on the subtler planes, for all these visible, material layers are her veils. Even the etheric body is a veil, an illusion; you have to reach the truth that lies behind that veil. Nature's truth can only be found if you strip away all these veils, all outward appearances. This is what was explained to the candidates for initiation. They were told, 'You are clothed in several different bodies, and these bodies form a hard shell, which prevents you from seeing and understanding yourselves as you really are. On the higher plane you are beings of splendour, of light and immensity, but as you always see yourselves through the distorting prism of your denser bodies, you can see nothing admirable about yourselves.'

We are not yet capable of seeing either ourselves or others as we really are, and this is what leads to so many errors and misunderstandings. The ugliness or beauty we see in others is not that of the inner being but only the outward appearance, and this, naturally, misleads us. So many people have experienced this. They believe in someone who seems trustworthy, only to find themselves cheated or betrayed. Or, on the contrary, they distrust someone, only to regret it years later, when they realize that the person had no bad intentions.

So, as I say, the hierophants revealed to their disciples that a human being is made in the image of nature. Under the layers of matter dwells a spirit, a living spark, an indestructible, all-knowing, all-powerful being – God himself. And if, through austerity, prayer and renunciation, disciples learn to obey the dictates of the spirit, they become one with the Godhead. For the one desire of this immortal spirit, which is pure light, is to return to its Creator and be one with him. As long as human beings do not know that their spirit aspires to this fusion with the Godhead, they do nothing to bring it about. They confine themselves to satisfying the demands of their lower bodies, for they too make demands, and their demands are far less noble and unselfish than those of the spirit.

Disciples, who know that we are all on this earth for a very short time, realize that it is not worth wasting energy in the pursuit of worldly honours, titles and possessions, which will have to be abandoned when they die. They

prefer to invest all their energies in acquiring eternal, indestructible riches, which will continue to bear fruit as long as they are on the physical plane. In this way, although they may possess none of the things that human beings most covet, they gain such wealth in their subtle bodies that on leaving this world they go straight to the luminous regions where the particles with which they have built these bodies came from. This is a law: if you receive celestial particles into your being, the law of affinity will oblige you, one day, to go to the region from which they came and to spend an eternity of joy in the discovery of the splendours of the universe.

Those, on the other hand, who do not possess the light of Initiatic Science, and who spend their lives in the pursuit of fleeting satisfactions, will arrive in the next world naked and in a state of utter poverty and wretchedness. They will be obliged to go to the region we call hell, where the dark particles they amassed while on earth came from. They are sent there because they have to suffer and, above all, because they need to witness and endure in their turn the suffering they inflicted on others. They never realized what pain they caused others; this is something they can understand only when they experience it for themselves. After a period in hell, they pass through the region known as purgatory, where they are purified, before finally reaching paradise. And here they are free to rejoice in all the good they did while they were on earth.¹⁴

Many people scoff at the notion of hell, purgatory and heaven, saying that they do not exist and that they were invented by the Church. No, it is absolutely true; they do exist. Some of you may wonder what happens to tiny children who die before committing the slightest fault. Well, since their astral bodies have not been defiled by their instincts and desires, there is no need for them to go through purgatory – still less through hell – in order to be pure. They go straight to a region similar to paradise, where they lead a very happy existence until it is time for them to reincarnate. They are cared for by angels during this period of waiting and suffer no deprivation or sense of loss at being cut off from their parents; indeed, they frequently visit their parents and surround them with affection. Many parents are unconscious of this, but others are more sensitive and sense the presence of their child as though it had never left them.

When these children return to earth, they remember nothing of the heavenly existence they led on high. In order to grow and evolve, they are once again obliged to confront difficulties, suffering, illness and loss. It is on

earth that human beings evolve, not elsewhere. Even those who have suffered in hell for a long time have to come back to earth to make reparation for their crimes. For it is not enough to suffer for the evil we have done: we also have to make reparation. And this must be done on earth, since it is on earth that our crimes were committed.

Take an example: if a boy seduces a girl and, after promising to marry her, abandons her with a child, he will have to make reparation for his fault. He will have to meet her again, marry and take care of her, and perhaps suffer for her sake. In any case, the need to make reparation is the only explanation for the existence of reincarnation. If it were not so, why should we return to earth once we have expiated our faults on the astral plane? There is a law that decrees that you have to make reparation for your misdeeds in whatever region of the universe those misdeeds have caused harm.

The question, as you see, is graver and far more complex than people suppose. The earth is the place of our evolution, because that is where human beings have to live; it is here that they have to grow and fulfil themselves. It is on earth that all the beauty, light and intelligence of heaven must be given concrete reality. Once this goal is achieved, humanity will leave the physical plane and begin to live and learn to manifest on the etheric plane. After the etheric plane, it will rise to the astral plane, and finally to the mental. But before reaching this degree of evolution – which will take thousands and thousands of years – all our striving must be focused on the physical plane, so that the earth and our own physical body may become luminous and subtle and begin to vibrate in harmony with the divine world.

If you feel strongly drawn to truth and light, and if you work steadily in that direction every day, you will already be attracting and amassing very pure elements with which to build a sublime world in and around yourself. At the moment, none of this is visible to you, but once you leave this earth you will be able to see the reality of your work. Once we have sloughed off our physical body – and even our astral and lower mental bodies – we perceive every slightest influence and begin to vibrate in response to even the faintest celestial waves.

This, then, is the truth that the initiates of ancient Egypt presented to their disciples under the symbolism of Isis unveiled. If all you ask for is light and the sublime life, nothing can prevent you from rising to these regions, and when you leave your physical body you will dwell in the midst of beings who possess the splendour you have always longed for.

To strive for light is the best and most perfect activity. And if you are sometimes discouraged by the difficulties inherent in such an undertaking or by the ordeals you have to endure, tell yourself, in the words of the song: *Pri vsiškite uslovja na jivota, ne gubi svoja mir*, 'Whatever the circumstances of life, never lose your peace.' For if you are not linked to light, firmly attached to something immortal, the least little annoyance will bowl you over. But if you have a high ideal, that ideal will be like a rope attaching you to heaven. And as it is a living entity, it will influence and sustain you and restore your balance.

Now you must take the time to meditate and assimilate these truths. If some of you have the impression that you already know them, it is because this is not your first life on earth. Yes, all of you have already experienced the truth of these things. All of you, without exception, have already visited every one of these regions, including heaven, and now you are all back here again. You are encased in a shell which prevents you from remembering these truths on the conscious level, but they are already etched into your being. Some of you, indeed, who are less attached than others to material considerations are able to bring them to the surface.

If you have understood what I have been saying today, if you accept the idea that thought is a very real and powerful factor, you will make great progress. Instead of allowing your mind to drift in a mist of useless and even harmful considerations, you will try to train and guide it so that it is permanently turned towards a sublime goal. When you achieve this, you will have in your possession the key to all powers. Only light heals; only light makes all things new; only light leads to perfection. And yet, what occupies the minds of most human beings? Darkness! They open their arms to darkness, and the darkness engulfs them. So make up your mind to forge ahead and work with the truths I have given you today.

Once you are really conscious of the immense task that lies before you, you will begin to contribute actively to your own evolution and that of the whole of humanity, in order to bring about the kingdom of God on earth. When Jesus said, '*Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,*' he was simply emphasizing a process that is already taking place.^{[15](#)} Jesus could not ask for something that was foreign to God's plans. The fact that he said, '*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,*' means that he knew that in God's plan the evolution of humankind was to be achieved through the mastery and the spiritualization of the physical world. And when

that goal is reached, matter will be transformed and radiant. Even trees, even rocks, even our physical body, will become crystalline.

Videlinata (Switzerland), 21 March 1976

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