

The New Song

○ Sing unto the Lord the New Song, sing unto Him
○ ye people! Sing of His Goodness and His Love
made manifest in the Christhood!

○ Sing unto the Lord the New Song, the Song which
the Angels sang! For in Bethlehem the Christ is born
whose name is called Jesus.

○ Sing unto the Lord the New Song, the Song which
the Shepherds will hear! That in the City of David
there is opened up the Fountain for all wounds.

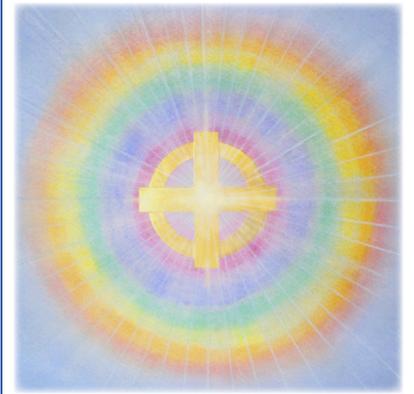
○ Sing unto the Lord the New Song, the Song which
the Shepherds once heard! That from the City of
David He should arise who would find healing for all
people.

○ Sing unto the Lord the New Song, the Song which
the Angels sang! When they spoke of the birth in The
Bethlehem of Him who would redeem.

For they sang of that Estate known as Jesus, wherein
the Soul finds Peace; and of that higher Estate known
as Christhood, when the Soul beholds the Divine.

They sang of the Estate known as Jesus, when the life
is purified; and of the beautiful Christhood, whose
glory reveals the Divine.

Herald 32 page 101



The Order of the Cross

Spiritual Reflections

**December 2016 -
January 2017**

Thoughts on the Teachings

John
Pignéguay

THE CONJUNCTION OF CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR is an interesting one. They may seem to be two separate events and the link between them may not necessarily be very apparent. The outer Christmas story, with its focus on birth and new life does have a charm and sweetness all its own, though it has to be said that any approach to trying to understand what it all means is very often drowned out by the rampant seasonal commercialism. Nonetheless, something of the “message” can get through, if only in the depictions on Christmas cards and in cribs. The presentation of the Christmas scene has a wholesome and reassuring unity, and the peaceful scenes of the creatures attending the birth of the Christ-child, and the choirs of angels, touch all of us, prompting thoughts on further, deeper meanings.

This sense of ‘new life’ leads into thoughts of ‘new times’ as the New Year becomes a reality. In spiritual terms, this ‘newness of life’ is powerfully expressed in Our Friend’s words in our cover-extract, which is actually Psalm 38 in the Order of the Cross’s book of ‘Psalms and Canticles’. And the fact of having the musical accompaniment to the singing of the words of the psalm brings a vivid reality to the depiction in art of the ‘choirs of angels’ at the birth of the Christ-child. Of course, the quiet or silent reading of just the words themselves (alone or in company) brings a special perspective to the symbolism of the image and is an inspiration in itself.

All of which calls each of us back to a greater understanding and realisation concerning ‘the Estate’ of which the Angels sang. We may speak of this in the past tense but surely it goes without saying that they sing *now*, and every day, and within each one of us. In a very real sense, the season of the Christ-mass is *always* with us, to our great blessing and joy – we have only to realise this spiritual truth and to always listen anew to ‘the Song which the Angels sang.’ In so doing, our inner and outer lives will increasingly reflect the nature of ‘that Estate...wherein the Soul finds Peace...and whose glory reveals the Divine.’



La Anunciación Fra Angelico

A Meditation for Christmas

My Soul doth magnify the LORD, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in
GOD my Saviour.

Mary the Mother of the Lord

Mary, the mother of the Christ-child, is the Soul as to her innermost Divine Nature. *She is ever Virgin.* What is conceived within the womb of the Soul is always of the Holy Spirit (unless the Soul loses her Divine Nature). It is Mary who hears the message of the angel announcing the coming to birth of the Christ-child. It is Mary who is astonished when the angel informs her that she is to bear the Christ-child. It is Mary who marvels that she should be counted worthy to receive so great an honour as the birth of Christhood would confer. It is Mary who sings the song of the Soul in the beautiful Magnificat. It is Mary who bears the Christ-child and nourishes him through the goodness of the Divine Love.

The function of Mary is most important; she bears the Lord in Life. She brings unto the fulness of spiritual unfoldment the Divine Powers latent within her; and in her experiences she reaches the holy estate of Christhood, which is the manifestation of the Lord in Life. She is, therefore, the Mother of the Lord in Manifestation. And the thought is most beautiful, one full of blessing and hope.

Could there be anything more wonderful, more truly glorious for the Soul, more truly blessed for humanity than this vision of the nature and function of the Soul, and her attainment through inward realization of the estate of Christhood, the manifested Life of the Lord whose Presence is within her? Could there be anything more beautifully spiritual, more transcendent in conception concerning the purpose of the Soul and the realization of the approach of the Divine and ever Blessed One unto her to enable her to rise into the blessed Life implied in Christhood, and even to that higher and still more sublime consummation when the Christhood is clothed with Divine Attributes, even as was the inner Life of the blessed Master? Could there possibly be a nobler vision presented to the Soul than this in which her own Divine Nature is manifested, and the wonderful and holy purpose of her creation set forth? Does it not transcend any mere material history, even though such might have been associated with the outward life of the Master, and show the birth incidents to have a value for the Soul surpassing anything that any outward history could have?

A Virgin Soul

A Virgin Soul is one in high estate. But first of all remember that every soul is Virgin. The beautiful meaning of the word has come to have what I have to name materialized and even degraded associations, wherein men and women are thought of as other than virgin if they enter into human relationships for purposes of generation. The latter is not the meaning of the word, though it has come to be so applied. In its very constitution a Soul is born of Virgin States, Virgin Elements - Elements in Virgin State; that means they are virginal in their belonging to the first quality of Divine Waters, Divine Elements, Divine Potencies, Divine Substances. Every Soul in the Principle of its Being is Virgin. Man did not make the Soul. It is the offspring by a process first of emanation and then of magnetic

play - so I have to name it - crowned by electric force. The Soul is the child of the Eternal. It has the potencies within it from the very beginning to make it in the fulness of its time into the very Image of Deity and an exposition of the Most Holy Mystery we name the Father- Mother.

But though every Soul is virginal in the very constitution of its nature, it is not accounted a Virgin in estate until it attains that exalted realisation of the Eternal One named Christhood, Celestial and Divine. It then becomes in the Presence of the Sacred Mystery one in whom as a virginal Soul built up of Divine Elements, Waters, Substances and the potencies given to it as an inheritance, its inherent Divine Consciousness, Attribute, Power, even Vision are polarised into its magnetic pole, and that Soul realizes that with which the Father-Mother endowed it, and all its virginal qualities come forth through realization into manifestation.

A Virgin Soul is one who has attained to that estate of the realization of the Divine potencies within wherein its substance is not only of the quality of the Eternal, which the substance of every Soul is inherently, latently, potentially, but it has risen up into that estate wherein its substance can endure even a Divine Involution. Such an Involution does not mean it is accommodated to the kingdom wherein the Soul becomes, as it were, born into manifestation and grows at first, nor even to the kingdoms through which it has to pass through great Ages before it attains its Divine Virginal Estate, but becomes within the Soul who is able to function in High Celestial Realms, even upon the threshold of the Divine World itself, wherein its substance is capable of receiving the Involution direct from the Presence and not accommodated down to the lower and outer kingdoms of a World like this, apart from the Solar Body.

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu,
Alleluia

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space,
Res miranda

The readings come from: *Songs of Israel* page 73
Mary the Mother of the Lord - *The Master* pages 181-182
A Virgin Soul - *Herald* 32 pages 103-105
There is no rose - anonymous circa 1420



“Now, the birth of the holy states of Jesus, Christ, and the Lord is after this manner.

Maria being great with child, having conceived within the womb of the Soul, and of the Holy One who overshadows her continually, that Life which shall be named Son of God, goes up into Bethlehem that she may bring forth the child begotten within her from the Highest.

And Ioseph also goes with her, being espoused unto her that he may minister unto her in the days of her travail, and companion her. For unto him doth the Angel of the Lord appear to instruct and counsel him what to do in his espousal of Maria, and to inform him of the nature of the holy thing to be born of her.

And they go up to Bethlehem together. And there Maria brings forth her first-born, even Jesus. But he is born in lowly state as becometh one who would love all creatures; for in the blessing of the new-born Soul-state all the creatures are to have a share.

For, finding that the Inns whither they go have no room for them, they seek a lodging with the lowly ones, and so make the Manger the cradle of their first-born.”

The Holy Family

The picture of the Holy Family is ever an engrossing one. It has attracted to its service the genius of some of the greatest artists who have endeavoured to embody their ideas in most beautiful works of art. There has always been a great charm about the subject. Alas! that so few have discerned what it all meant. Mary, Joseph and the Christ-child have always been regarded as persons, rather than as individual parts of the system of the Soul itself representing distinctive states of spiritual experience. That there was a very real “Holy Family,” into which the blessed Master was born, is quite true; but it was not that holy family that is intended in the birth-stories. For all that is meant by the holy family is potentially in every man, and shall ultimately become so in realization. The holy family is a Soul subject, and not simply something personal. It is an inward beautiful Soul realization, and not merely an objective experience in several lives related to each other in the flesh. It is a purely subjective history, and is not something found upon the material spheres. Let this be clearly understood; for to get the true

inner meaning, everything personal and material must needs be laid aside.

Joseph the Father of the Lord

...Joseph was not a mere man any more than Mary was a mere woman; that the one who is presented as the foster-father of the Master was the *Mind*, that mind whose function it is to reflect purely the spiritual and Divine things which were given unto it, and whose office is that of reflector of the light of the Soul who is illumined from the Divine Lord. The *Mind* is the masculine aspect of the inner life, as the Soul is the feminine aspect. Joseph is said to have been well on in years, whilst Mary is represented as being young; because, whilst the Soul is ever young, the Mind grows aged with heavenly wisdom. But the aged Mind is not to be understood as implying what is meant by aged when applied to the body of man; for there is no loss of power, no lack of strength, no diminution of vital energy. Indeed when the Mind is in the state represented by Joseph, its strength is Divine, its vital force is Divine, its power is Divine; it is great with years whose ripeness is found in the heavenly wisdom learnt as the Divine Love, Light and Life have come to be realized ever more and more. It is no misfortune to the life to be aged in a heavenly sense, but a great and glorious blessing. For in such a condition there is no impoverishment, but an ever-increasing wealth; there is no decrease of vigour, but a power growing more and more spiritually mighty as the life approaches the realizations implied in Divine Soul-consciousness.

The state of life represented by Joseph is therefore beautiful, and one to be eagerly sought for. It is the state of a purified Mind, because all the life is set Zionwards — that is, to the realization of the Divine Presence within; a state which has to be attained as the Soul travels along the path of its true evolution unto its perfect fulfilment.

A Friend of the Creatures

The life of that one in whom the Christ-child is born must be a friend of the creatures. It could not be otherwise. The ox in the stall, the ass in the stable, the sheep in the byre, the dove in its centre, and all creatures in their several degrees of unfoldment,

are related to such a life by indissoluble ties, even that of *the Oneness of all true life*, and by the fact that the gentle creatures have been the venues through which the Soul has passed upwards in its true evolution before the Divine Love. To be born in the stable or byre, and cradled in a manger, therefore, means very much more than to be born amid lowly conditions. For the Soul truly was cradled amongst the creatures. And when the Christ-child is about to be born within the Soul, the life awakens to the consciousness of its relationship to all the creatures, its duty unto them, and the service it must perform in making manifest the Divine Love then awakening within the Soul.

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What a profound meaning is to be found in the picture of the birth of the Christ-child within the refuge for the creatures, and His cradling in the Manger! Great is the depth of meaning that may be found in this story which makes the birth of the Master and His cradling to have taken place amongst them! When we know its inner spiritual significance, the literal story is changed into a veritable treasure-house full of invaluable riches. In the Advent the creatures were concerned as well as the Human Races. In the birth of the Christ-child and the full Manifestation of Christhood lay the hope of the groaning Creation. Unto this end was the story told; unto this end is it now interpreted.

*Hasten to Bethlehem, all ye who hear this song,
And share the glory shed by the Heavenly Sires;
Find ye within the Hostel of the Soul
Divine Maria, Mother of the Lord made manifest,
Whom I-O-Seph, the Overshadowing One,
Hath caused her to bring forth as Christ—
Great Son of David, the Beloved One.*

The readings come from: *The Logia* page 92
The Holy Family - *The Master* pages 180-181
Joseph the Father of the Lord - *The Master* pages 182-183
A Friend of the Creatures - *The Master* pages 135-136 & 137
Hasten to Bethlehem - *Herald* 8 page 186



Adoration of the Shepherds Gerard van Honthorst

“And the Shepherds made haste and went up to the Bethlehem; and there they found it even as the Angel of the Lord had said unto them. And great was the joy within them because of all that had come into their lives.”

Who were the Shepherds

Who were those Shepherds of Bethlehem? The beautiful story found in the New Testament, as you must all be aware, became associated with the thought of Eastern earthly Shepherds, and that upon the plains where they dwelt they were administering to sheep like cattle herds. It is said that they were keeping watch during the night and longing for the dawn. Towards the hour of dawn there came to them a tremendous experience. The Heavens above them became open to their vision. They heard voices; they beheld Angels, they even saw the Angel of the Lord - the Lord in fashion. They heard an astonishing song sung, and the transmission of the marvellous message that there had been born within the City of

Bethlehem a new Life who would prove the salvation of Israel, and who would become recognized as Christ the Lord.

The presentation in the New Testament is beautifully poetic, though far from correct. The poetic story presented in human speech does not concern itself with Shepherds upon the Earth Planes.

Who were those Shepherds if they were not earthly herds in the ordinary historical sense? They were glorious beings who had attained to high spiritual estate in other realms.

You must know that all spiritual estate is realised in consciousness. It is experienced through manifestation in embodiment, and interpretation in ministry. The Shepherds were Souls known as Celestials. They belonged to a glorious Celestial Realm, and were not Children of the Earth. The Land of their Nativity was not the Land of Judah - this Planet. They grew up in Life and consciousness as Children of the Sun. When they attain again unto the realization of their ancient Life-estate, they will be most radiant embodiments of Life wherever they are.

The Soul becomes a Celestial and an Immortal in the process of its Divine growth and evolving. In its growth it ingathers. Through that which is gathered in it evolves into another degree of consciousness. In so evolving it gains another arc of ascension of being, and attains to that estate wherein it can function within the glorious Celestial System. Now, the Shepherds were such Celestials. They were Sons of God.

Bethlehem

Bethlehem is associated in the historical records with the birth of the Master known as Jesus Christ. But Bethlehem was not only a place which received the name, but it represented a spiritual experience. The word is full of beautiful Soul meaning. "Bethel" signifies the "House of the LORD", and "Hem" expresses where that House is. It is the House on the outer, or lower, circle. Every World in its constitution has a Bethlehem. It is a place visited by Angels and Sons of God. And it is the place within ourselves where the Divine Nativity takes place. For Jesushood is always born in Bethlehem. How beautiful this is for us all! In the state of Bethlehem we are sharers of the one beautiful Life given from the

FATHER-MOTHER, which expresses His Own mystery in us; and in that state of Child-Life to HIM the Heavenly Hosts are near, and there are times when the Angelic Songs may be heard. For the Angel of the LORD overshadows the Soul when the Christ-Child is born within us. From this interpretation of the meaning of Bethlehem will come to you the true significance and deep meaning associated with the birth of the Master. As a Son of the Highest, His first great conscious manifestation of Childhood to the FATHER-MOTHER was in the little Village of Bethlehem. That is, it was in the state signified by the beautiful name. And what he experienced is that which comes to everyone who would follow the Path that leads to the highest Heavenly Places.

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Beloved ones, ever faithful through the ages to that which was highest and best, Joyful and Triumphant come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem! Not merely to the Earth's Bethlehem which has had to be restored, but come even in these Sacred Hours of our communing together, back to the Bethlehem where once we all stood, Worshipped, Served, and Prayed. Come back in the motion of your Being to make your Divinity manifest upon the Earth, and create Divine harmony, thus contributing to the coming Glory of the Holy Mass of the Heavens.

*Hear them, O Israel!
Their song has one great theme; 'tis of the Word
Made Flesh, the concrete exposition of the Lord of Love,
The Heavens are all in motion as they sing
Gloria in Excelsis Deo, calling all to share
The Song of Adoration, Worship, Thanksgiving, Praise;
And to the Shepherds on the Plains, a plea
To join them in the gladness of the hour
And learn anew that in the Word made Flesh
Christ hath again appeared unto them,
Though manifest in lowly state as Jesus.*

The readings come from: *The Logia* page 90
The Story of the Shepherds of Bethlehem pages 5-6, 7, 8 & 15
Herald 13 pages 83-84 and *Hear them, O Israel - Herald* 8 page 186



Adoration of the Magi Fra Angelico

There dwelt once, in an ancient City of the East, men who were full of wisdom and who sought out the deep things of God: these were interpreters of the Stars, and watchers for the coming of divine events.

* * * *

Now, these three Kings of the East beheld upon the spiritual heavens the arising of a Star, and knowing well its meaning, being interpreters of such wonders, they watched its progress, and followed it as earnest Souls.

The Magians

The story of the Magians is a beautiful one. It is beautiful even as it is found in the present Gospel Record, notwithstanding its materialization. It is beautiful even as an outward history when applied (as it now is generally) to the event of the birth into this world of the Master. But if it be beautiful as a story of such outward events, what must it be when its real meanings are beheld by the Soul and realized as an experience? If its charm as an outward history associated with the birth of the beloved Master into these outward spheres, be so great, what shall we say of its spiritual charm and its transcendent glory when it is understood in its true inward meaning? If as a literal story its wonderfulness is beyond the understanding of many, is there any wonder that its inner meaning should appear beyond the apprehension of all who have never gazed into the spiritual heavens, never beheld the angelic objects of those heavens, never seen a star upon those heavens, and know not the meaning of such an appearance?

Yet the story may be understood by all who have functioned upon the angelic spheres and beheld the heavenly visions there. For the Star which it is said the Magians beheld in the Orient, has once more been seen. The Magians who then beheld it and went to Bethlehem to find the newborn Christ, have beheld its arising once more and have gone forth to seek out the one born in Bethlehem who is to be Redeemer and Christ. For it is the age in which that Star was again to make its appearance; and those who have scanned the Heavens, as anxious observers seeking to discover some new object on the celestial spheres, have beheld it rising above the eastern horizon, the place of Divine Manifestation. They have interpreted its heavenly meaning and have now set their faces towards Bethlehem, led by the Star, carrying with them treasures of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, to lay at the feet of the new-born Christ. The star which the Magians beheld in the Orient was that of the Christhood. The star denotes Christhood. *“He who leadeth many unto righteousness, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament”* — shall be as a Christ, full of the Light of the Divine. *“Unto him who overcometh will I give the bright and morning Star”* — the Christhood estate whose Light is of the nature of the Everlasting Day.

“And I beheld a wonderful sign in the Heavens; behold there appeared a woman clothed with the Sun, her feet resting upon the Moon, and upon her head a crown of twelve Stars” — a wonderful picture of the attainment by the Soul of an exalted Christhood, when the glory of her life is the Divine Love; her Understanding (or as it is named there, the feet) resting upon the Moon or Mind whose office it is to reflect into the Understanding the light which is broken upon it from the Sun or Divine Love; and her head or Life crowned with the twelve-fold attainments of spiritual realization, when all those graces known as the Christian or Christ graces become an absolute inheritance.

The star arising was therefore the Christhood arising before the vision of the Magians. It was the Christhood of the blessed Master which they beheld arising in the Orient of the Heavens, that is, in the Divine; for the East denotes the Divine. It was His Christhood to which they were attracted, the outshining of the Divine Light which was in him, the sacred star whose light had been kindled from the Divine. He was the star of Bethlehem which shone so brightly in the heavens, the star of the Redeemed Life whose purity was beautiful to behold, the star which attracted Souls to Bethlehem (the Redeemed Life) when the Christ-child was born within the Soul.

Who were the Magi

But, as with the Star, so with the Magi. Here likewise we have to pass from the outward spheres, to the inward; from the phenomena upon the physical planes, to those of the spiritual; from the region of mere astrological study and speculation, to that of the Soul; from the action of three earthly ancient potentates, to that of the three beautiful Soul-powers represented by the three disciples who were said to have been the most intimate of all the Master’s followers — John, Peter and James, disciples who beheld the Christ transfigured, who witnessed the Master’s Gethsemane, and who are said to have shared the Cup of which He drank and the Baptism with which He was baptized. For the three Magi, most ancient watchers of the spiritual heavens, readers of the history of the Soul and the Planet, and indeed the whole of the system of Sol, as that history was found written upon the spiritual heavens of the Planet and the Soul; the three Kings of the East, potentates of a Divine Order who gave up

their lives to the pursuit of celestial things, who beheld the star in the Orient, who followed it unto Bethlehem and the manger, were none other than *the three Divine Principles within the Soul*, the representative *trinity* within the perfect human microcosm — the Love principle, the Intuition or spiritual perception, and the Spirit of beautiful fidelity to the Divine, “the faithful one” within. These are they who truly watch for the arising of the star, who scan the spiritual heavens of their own system for the arising of the light of Christhood within them, who know His star and follow it whithersoever it leadeth, who always find their way to the little city of Bethlehem where Christhood is born, the city of a life purified within every sphere. For it is the Love-principle directed upward and inward to the Divine, that seeks unto finding the highest realization; it is the Intuition purified through seeking only the purest and most beautiful ways in life, that always recognizes, through its spiritual power to discern, the meaning of Christhood; and it is the Spirit within the Soul itself, ever faithful to the way of life unto which the Divine calls it, which enables it to set out and follow the path by which the Christ-child can be born within, then found or realized in fulness of Christ-consciousness.

Such is the inner meaning of the Magian story, the reality of the picture which has been presented as an objective history, having its full meaning upon the physical planes.

His Star shall guide you thither to the place
Where Majesty sublime in lovely guise doth dwell,
And where the Radiance of God’s Cloud doth shine,
Making of Hostel-Soul His Regal Courts,
Shrine of His Throne, and Altar of pure Fire
Where Sacrifice of Being is made for Him.

The readings come from: *The Logia* page 98
The Magians - *The Master* 129-130
Who were the Magians - *The Master* 132-133
His Star shall guide you - *Herald* 8 pages 186-187



Adoration des rois mages (section) Domenico Ghirlandaio

Song of the Angels

I dreamt that the heavens had opened,
That a cloud descended to Earth,
That on it were seated four angels,
All shimmering pure and white.

‘O Children of Earth’, said the angels,
‘Let your hearts be filled with joy
For your Heavenly Father sheddeth
Upon Earth His glorious ray.’

‘O Children of Earth hear the story,
The angels have come to tell
That the Earth from the sleep of darkness
Is waking, to greet the Light.’

‘O wake! O wake! from your slumber
All ye who hear the call,
From out His Cloud of Radiance
The Lord of Love appears.’

This poem is one of many in a book of poetry written by an early Scottish Member. The author is not known, but it is possibly Bessie Mackintosh.

The Soul's Awakening

Donald
Crabb

TO SPEAK OF THE SOUL'S AWAKENING implies that the soul has been asleep, and also that there was an earlier time when the soul was awake. Our Teachings speak of such a primeval time, allegorically called the garden of Eden, when man walked with God and was conscious continually of His Overshadowing and Indwelling Presence. The eventual consequence of the tragedy we call the fall was that the human soul could only dwell upon this planet in a vehicle of a physical nature; most of the life of this world is conducted through the outer vehicles, physical body, desire body, mortal body, functioning on their own, whilst the soul with its spiritual planes of functioning, such as the intuition and perception, lies asleep within.

Of course there have been through the historical ages and there are now, many souls who have awakened in some degree, as evidenced in the seers, saints and poets, but mainly they have been prophets calling in the wilderness, and we are taught that only now can we recognise a New Age in which the waters of Truth can be fully poured forth and the soul awakened to receive them.

Allegorically the awakening of the soul has been expressed as the birth of Christ. Most of you will be aware that in using the term 'Christ' we refer not to a man, not even to a Divine Messenger, but to a high state of consciousness in which the soul recognises and embodies its sonship to the Father-Mother and all that is implied in that estate. The Hebrew prophets did indeed foretell the coming of a messenger to the earth, but their prophecies are of universal validity and speak of the Christ within the soul.

Behold, a virgin soul shall conceive and bring forth into manifestation His Son. He shall be named of Him Immanuel.

Isaiah page 373

A virgin soul is one who has retained or regained the primal estate of its substances and potencies. In the gospels such a soul is represented allegorically by the name Mary or Maria. The birth of the Christ is heralded by an Annunciation. Maria, the soul, is visited by the Archangel Gabriel:

All Hail Maria. My Lord has sent me unto thee to inform thee that thou art honoured and chosen by Him to be the vehicle of His Manifestation. Henceforth thou art to be consecrated unto Him; for He shall overshadow thee through His Holy One. Thou shalt conceive through His overshadowing that which shall be called the Son of God. And thou shalt bear and bring him forth into manifest life as Jesus Christ and the Lord. And it shall not be of any man that thou conceivest and bringest forth; for that which is to be born into manifestation through thee is from the Lord of Glory.

The Mystery of the Light Within us page 42

Of course these words are allegorical. It is unlikely that any awakening soul actually sees an archangel and hears these words. Certainly for some the soul's awakening does come in a vision with a flash of illumination, but for most, probably, the annunciation and the birth are a gradual process, covering many years or even several lifetimes. The soul's response to the annunciation is a joyous one, joy expressed in the Magnificat, again to be thought of as a universal allegory, not as a song only applicable to an historical event.

Our Friend identified three veils which often come between the soul and the annunciating angel. There is the veil of blood, fashioned out of the practice of war and flesh eating and the destruction of life; the veil of materialism fashioned out of the spirit which changes the things of the soul into the things of the senses and the outer life. Such a veil was made by those who changed the spiritual teachings of the Master into records of his personal life. And there is the veil of idolatry, creating false gods to replace the one true God. Certainly these veils have not prevented some great souls from arising, but only now are they being drawn aside for many awakening souls.

The fourth gospel tells the story of one who 2000 years ago experienced the soul's awakening. He was called Nicodemus. He recognised the Master as a teacher from God, but found many aspects of the teachings difficult. To him the Master said 'You must be born again to understand these things.' Nicodemus naturally thought that physical reincarnation was referred to, but this was not so.

Nicodemus then said: "But how can these things be attained? Must a man pass through the womb again to be born into the life of which thou speakest?"

The Master said unto him: "The life born from ties of the flesh has the life of the flesh; but the life born from the Spirit has the Life of the Spirit. Unless a Soul be born of the Spirit it cannot perceive the heavenly nature of these things.

The Logia page 72

And such a birth is not an isolated event but is repeated many times as the soul is reborn into different realms of consciousness. And many of us will have recognised the truth of the saying concerning the way of the spirit. We affirm its origin, calling it the Arche, and also its consummation in the Amen, but we can never visit either of these. All we can recognise is the motion which carries us forward from an origin of which we can have no recollection to an ever unattainable end. It is the motion of the Life Eternal.

To what then is the soul awakened? Not certainly to be a knowledge of its own incarnations. Many of course have wished to know who they were in previous lives, and indeed to some has been given the faculty to recover such knowledge. Some experience may be of value to some, but it is of the order we usually speak of as occult and is quite irrelevant to the wakening of the soul. The mystical presentation of the story of the birth of Christ ends thus,

And the child grows and waxes strong, growing in grace and wisdom, and in the fear of the Lord. And he abides at Nazareth with his parents, being subject unto them until the day of the appearing of the Angel of the Lord unto him when he should go forth to make manifest the way of salvation for all peoples, and cause the Light to shine upon the ways of the Gentiles that they may come to know His saving grace.

The Logia page 92

Nazareth, where the child abides, is the state that is despised. It represents self-denial, purity, aloofness from the world life, separateness from the traditional ecclesiastical systems and schools.

He is subject to his parents. Birth is followed by a growth in a life of purity and humility and by manifestation of those qualities which are of the Christ.

Ye behold of what nature the Life is unto which ye are called.

The many who are wise after the ways of the flesh, and the mighty of this world, and those who account themselves noble, are not called to have any part in it.

The things which God hath appointed to be accomplished, are foolishness unto those who are children of this world; for these would account it as shame to pursue them.

The lowly life is one that is despised by those who are the wise, and the mighty, and the lovers of this world; for they account it as naught. In such a way there is no gain for them; it bringeth not the glory which they seek.

Yet God willeth that there shall be no such glorifying after the manner of men in those who are the called of Him; but that all who follow the way of Life should glory in the Lord of Life only, who, through the estates of Jesus Christ, becometh our Redemption, Sanctification, Righteousness and Wisdom.

The Logia page 148

Many, like the gnostics of old, have sought knowledge of the secrets of God. But that knowledge which is the Wisdom of God, does not come through seeking it for its own sake, but by leading the life of lowliness and self-sacrifice. But though the way of Christ is a life of humility, yet the re-birth of Christ may call into manifestation the gifts of the Spirit.

Concerning the gifts of the Spirit it is well that ye understand; for all gifts are not of the same order, though the uses of all are for the great ministry.

And these gifts are bestowed according to the order of life in the recipient, and the degree unto which the life has attained.

There are diversities of nature, and order, and state; and according to these so are the gifts bestowed.

The Logia page 164

Even within an awakened soul it is all too easy for the Christ to fall asleep. To illustrate this I will refer to the allegory of the stilling of the storm on the Sea of Galilee. In that allegory the sea is the mind, the little ship upon it is the soul, the disciples are the soul's attributes, the teacher is the Christ within and the winds and waves are thoughts and problems of the mind. An interesting aspect of the allegory is that the disciples knew that the Christ could save them if awakened. Once the Return has begun even the mind knows that allegiance is owed to the Christ within and is prepared to call for help when in distress; their faith is not little; help comes in the Silence.

“A great Teacher who was sent from the heavenly Father-Mother entered into a little ship with His disciples, and launched into the Deep.

When in the midst of the Deep, a storm arose, and it grew more and yet more tempestuous, until it was so great as to almost overwhelm the boat; and fear laid hold of the disciples.

But the Teacher was asleep in the hinder part of the ship.

Then the disciples came unto Him in great distress, and called unto Him to save them.

And when the Teacher was awakened He asked them, saying, ‘Why were ye so fearful? How was it that your spiritual vision was so easily obscured?’

‘O ye whose faith is not little, wherefore do ye doubt?’ And the Teacher arose and spake unto the storm-tossed waters, saying unto them: ‘Peace! Let there be stillness.’ And there was the Great Silence in which the winds and the waves grew calm.

The Logia pages 126 and 128

GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

December-January

30-4 New Year Gathering in Swanage

February-March

11-13 Family Gathering in Swanage

April

13-16 Easter Gathering at Sarum College

17 Family Service at Sarum College

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

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