

THE BECOMING

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INTRODUCTION

The Becoming

The course *The Becoming* was written by Sr. Santiago Bovisio (Don Santiago), the founder of Cafh, around the end of the decade of the 1930s. It gathers together general knowledge of the esoteric tradition and knowledge that he personally received and developed. This knowledge is composed of a body of teachings that relate the world that we do not perceive with the perception that we define as our reality. This course is not given as an instrument of faith, but rather as a means to stimulate our interest and our reflection. Above all, it is given as a means to broaden and deepen the way we conceive of the world and life.

The Teaching of Cafh includes courses like this one which refer to aspects of reality that the majority of us do not perceive, as well as others based on the knowledge offered to us by advances in science and experience. The first group broadens our vision of life with possible alternate descriptions of the world in which we live and what we may encounter after death. The second group gives us a solid basis for working in our everyday world, for evaluating this work, and also for adjusting our vision of reality according to discoveries and truths that are verifiable.

Is there experimental evidence of a world that we can not perceive? In many cases, physics and mathematics measure and describe a reality that we cannot see, touch or hear a reality whose existence can only be substantiated by inference. Our eyes see only a small fraction of the radiation of light that passes through our universe. Astronomers' instruments allow us to observe many different radiations that, through inference, give us evidence of a gigantic cosmos of which our visible universe is only a small part. However, scientists have not yet been able to observe or make experimental contact with other forms of life like those described in the course *The Becoming*.

What evidence is there for what is described in this course?

As far as our accepted, everyday knowledge is concerned, there is no scientific or experimental evidence for what is described here. Given the current condition of our perception, it seems that the instrument for perceiving these aspects of reality is the student himself. The teachings of *The Becoming* make us receptive to this possibility in our perception of reality.

The worlds of science

Present day advances in science also open the way to new possibilities of perception. Little by little they are expanding the experience of the tangible beyond what known civilizations have ever reached before: invisible universes, the relativity of time, the experimental evidence of a particle existing in two places at the same time, contact with the residual radiation of the origin of the universe, instant global communication, personal or robotic interplanetary exploration, photographs of the surface of Mars, probes to Venus, exploration vehicles that leave the solar system and journey off into interstellar space. And in the realm of biological investigation, there is the human genome, cloning, laboratories studies exploring and measuring all the functions of the human body, en vitro fertilization, as well as the investigation of death itself and the world of dreams. A few years ago many of these advances would have sounded stranger than the worlds described in *The Becoming*. In the analysis of

“what we do not see” don’t forget the studies in paranormal psychology, the investigation on the effects of meditation on the mind and behavior, and the connections between mental illness and the hormonal and chemical balances of the body.

Science is bringing us closer than ever before to the mystery of life. The map of the universe that it outlines is expanding continually.

Cafh in human culture

When in our description of knowledge we arrive at the field of the exploration of the mind, we are confronted by the great mysteries of existence: the experience of life, destiny, the past in which innumerable beings have existed and to which we become integrated little by little in the course of our lives, only to finally disappear into the mystery of death.

From the most distant past, souls advanced on the spiritual path have bequeathed to their disciples and to future generations descriptions of the universe and of human beings that they have discovered with the help of their disciplines and experiences.

The founders of the great religions taught some of the aspects of the wisdom of the ages. This wisdom can be found in the teachings of today’s religions, although they can appear contradictory and even antagonistic when compared with each other due to the changes that this knowledge has undergone over time.

Today some of the consequences of these changes tend to stand out in our minds. For example, distortions can be found in extremist and fanatical versions of great movements of ideas and concepts. On one hand, there is materialism, consumerism, hedonism, the unequal distribution of wealth, and on the other, extremisms, fanaticism of creeds about what is true and what is false, about good and evil and about what is just and unjust.

Within the equation of all that we are able to understand, we have left behind the grand vision of philosophy and esoteric knowledge which describes a universe infused with spirit, order and wisdom. There are a number of reasons why this has occurred. These include persecutions by wars for expansion, the burning of the Library at Alexandria that contained 700,000 volumes of the philosophical and scientific wisdom of Rome, Greece, India and Egypt; the break in communications between the East and West, and the predominance of the teachings of Aristotle, who unlike his master Plato, emphasized the world of the senses and experience through the senses.

Aspects of the esoteric tradition appear in Chaldea, Persia and Babylon, as well as in the teachings of Zoroaster. Egypt was the depository of traditional wisdom for centuries. The Kabala and the Torah of the Hebrews contain its principles. In the East we find precepts of the ancient wisdom in Confucianism, Buddhism and in the teachings of Lao Tse and Shankara. Plato, Pythagoras and Plotinus initiated their disciples in the principles of this wisdom in the ancient schools of Greece. The first Christian Gnostics kept many of these principles of the ancient wisdom. There is evidence in the Gospels and the Epistles that Jesus taught his direct disciples much more than he transmitted publicly, and that he himself studied in the esoteric schools of the Essenes.

The origins of teachings such as *The Becoming* are found in antiquity, in the initiatic temple of

Egypt. However, its historical documentation does not follow modern orthodoxy, but is rather knowledge transmitted from one generation to the next through the great sacrifice and selfless dedication of sages and saints in order to keep esoteric knowledge alive.

The teachings of those times are called esoteric because in order to avoid the risk of being destroyed, they were entrusted to only a few advanced and faithful students. They were kept hidden from other human beings.

Beginning from the initiatic schools of Egypt and continuing throughout history, the sages of Greece, the spiritual guides of India and pre-Columbian America, and the thinkers, priests and Masters of all times continued to transmit their knowledge from generation to generation.

During the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, with the gradual growth of communication, mass media and ever faster travel to different parts of the world, esoteric teachings began to become public.

Helena Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society, Max Müller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the disciples of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, and more recently, Yogananda and Suzuki Roshi among others, spread a knowledge in Europe and the Americas that until then had been the privilege of very few and was practically unknown in the West.

Esoteric knowledge in the Teaching of Cafh

Don Santiago studied these ancient traditions and when he founded Cafh in Argentina in 1937, he expressed them with the elements of the spiritual culture of this place and time. Thus he created a vehicle for the transmission of esoteric knowledge, the world and life, together with a method which allows each one to verify interiorly and personally what that teaching states. In this introduction, we are concerned with the esoteric teaching transmitted by Don Santiago, remembering that he taught us to study and apply the teaching in our lives. He did not emphasize interest in phenomenal experiences, which are sometimes confused with esoteric knowledge. Rather he guided us to distance ourselves from those experiences and stimulated us to focus our spiritual work on the expansion of our state of consciousness and in deepening participation.

The teachings of Cafh that deal with themes about superior worlds and what happens after death – such as the course *The Becoming* – have some aspects in common with descriptions that have reached us from the wisdom of antiquity and with what is said in agnostic and theosophical texts. However, they differ in other aspects since they express what Don Santiago perceived and experienced directly, and thus described. An unlimited field of exploration is opened to us when we study these descriptions of unknown aspects of existence.

Yet it is not good to be taken by the illusion that leads us to believe that what one book affirms is true based on the writer's authority. When they give us new knowledge, the teachings provide us with instruments with which to verify, investigate and experiment. Knowledge acquired only through information that is received is not to be an article of faith.

Without imposing as dogma what they present, without denying what others affirm or discover, and by giving us instruments for inner work, the teachings of Cafh gradually reveal a message that is inclusive: all the great religions and spiritual paths contain descriptions of ultimate reality that help us to understand, love and unfold.

As Sons and Daughters, we are faithful to the doctrine of Cafh and adopt the Method of life that Cafh offers to us as the most suitable for us. At the same time, we respect all existing religions

and spiritual paths because we recognize the divine presence revealed in the wisdom of all times.

But above all, the members of Cafh value the intention that moves those who search for wisdom. Those who use their gifts and knowledge for the good of all are a true blessing for a world which is so needy of understanding, love and selfless action.

We close this Introduction with the following quote:

..... *An uncaught bird is ever hovering, hovering,
High in the purer, happier air.*

*From imperfection's murkiest cloud,
Darts always forth one ray of perfect light,
One flash of heaven's glory.*

*To fashion's, custom's discord,
To the mad Babel-din, the deafening orgies,
Soothing each lull a strain is heard, just heard,
From some far shore the final chorus sounding.*

*O the blest eyes, the happy hearts,
That see, that know the guiding thread so fine,
Along the mighty labyrinth.*

.....

Walt Whitman, Song of the Universal, Poem Number 1968

DEATH

1st Teaching

For the materialist, death is a black moment, an explosion of sensations, a void and nothing else. For the religious person, death is the way to a higher, more perfect and happier life. But no one knows exactly how to answer the basic questions: Where do we come from? Why are we here? Where do we go after death?

If the universe is thought to be a wonderful harmonious whole that unfolds a particular plan of evolution for the purpose of coming to Being, a vaster horizon opens before the eyes of the investigator and one envisions the reason for this continuous becoming.

Death can come about in three ways: through violent death, natural death or ecstatic death.

The first commandment of all religions is “Thou shall not kill.” Religions also condemn suicides and acts involving bloodshed. They consider violent death to be a divine punishment, even if it has happened accidentally.

Violent death causes a sudden separation of the astral body from the physical body. Whoever dies by accident or by suicide returns once again from the etheric plane to the physical plane. Violent death hinders them from establishing in their new body a harmony of gravitation that will synchronize them with the vibration of the state they have entered. Since they have no physical body in which to manifest their gross sensations, nor are they completely ready to withdraw from that situation, they are in a sort of state of suspension. They think they are still alive, without realizing that they now participate in a new state of consciousness. This is why these beings suffer. They return to the place where their death occurred, while the events preceding it are reflected and replicated in their astral bodies. The Invisible Protectors can not do much for them, since often reject their help. They suffer because they are outside the general laws that rule subtle beings. If the being who dies violently has not attained a certain spiritual advancement, this martyrdom is prolonged. Passion attracts them to what is grossest. What is grossest charges them with materializing particles, and that life, which is no life, is thus prolonged. Only when the material substance of their etheric body is completely spent are they liberated from that suffering and able to enter a peaceful sleep. More advanced beings, even if they die violently, can more quickly end this situation, because they have the habit of directing their thoughts to a spiritual ideal. This also happens with those who die for a noble cause.

The Holy Scripture says that the death of the just person is peaceful in God's eyes. This means that a natural death is the desirable one for everyone. Who would not like to die like those who, when they felt the moment of death arrive, ready themselves for it with serenity, resignation and peace?

A long illness predisposes the soul of the dying one and effects a prior dematerialization of her physical covering. The sick person becomes easily accustomed to the new vibrations, listens docilely to the invisible guides and meekly allows him/herself to be lead toward the new world.

The being who is familiar with spiritual subjects easily develops the astral senses when the hour of death arrives. There are remarkable cases of dying persons who testify that they are surrounded by saints, protectors and relatives who have previously died; or that they hear mysterious voices inviting them to the beyond. Sometimes they themselves appear simultaneously in various places and to different persons.

Some strong and spiritually advanced beings abandon their physical body when they believe their hour has arrived and they have finished their mission. This death takes place ecstatically. Through mental concentration, a wealth of vital energy of such magnitude arises that when the physical body can no longer tolerate it, it separates from the astral body and dies. Present-day cases of this type are exceptional. Nevertheless, this will be the way of death of the beings of the future. When clothes are old, one must leave them aside and put on new ones.

Death does not take place when one's heartbeats stop, but only after the astral cord has been cut. The latter is a silver filament that links the astral body to the physical body. When that filament is cut there is a sparkling little explosion similar to what happens to a short-circuited electrical connection. Often the physical body is already cold before the astral body has separated itself from it. In certain cases days pass before the separation occurs.

The Gospels give an excellent example of this phenomenon. When Jesus arrived at the house of Martha and Mary in Bethany, he wept when he heard of Lazarus' death, which had taken place three days earlier. Why did Jesus cry if he knew he was going to revive him? As a matter of fact, Jesus would not have been able to return the spirit to the body if Lazarus' astral cord had been cut. He performed the miracle because when he arrived at the grave his clairvoyant eyes perceived that Lazarus' astral body was still connected to his physical body.

Definite separation of the two bodies usually occurs seven minutes after the heart has stopped beating. The astral body floats like a vague mist to some three meters from the corpse; then it slowly rises, becomes subtle and harmonizes with the state to which it corresponds.

Immediately at death beings remembers at great speed all the events of their past life. The Law of Consecutive Predestination requires this great retrospective examination so that they can continue onward. This examination, which religions call the "Judgment of God," results in a new state with subtler or denser vibrations, according to how the being has lived.

The weeping, sighing and wailing of persons who accompany the dying are always harmful. Only silence and the absence of all adverse thought are to accompany the human being at the final hour.

Prayers, sacred chants, tapers and flowers, if they are accompanied by noble feelings, are always useful and stimulating.

Where the law allows it, it is convenient that for the burial to take place three days after death. Also, where the law allows it, those who arrange for cremation of the body should state in their will that it is not to take place sooner than eight days after their decease.

No matter how death comes about, its arrival always marks a solemn hour. Perhaps it is the most solemn of all hours, for it is one step further toward the arrival at Being.

THE ELEMENTALS

2nd Teaching

The ancient legend introduces the elementals created by Prithivî, the earth element, as diminutive beings of a grotesque appearance with long beards. Popular fantasy surrounds them with tales and mysteries, calling them dwarfs, elves or gnomes. Although they sometimes have the custom of materializing, they are not visible to human beings with ordinary vision.

Gabriel, represented in the figure of the Archangel who holds a lily in his hand, governs the elementals created by Prithivî. He is called Indra in Hindu mythology.

Earth elementals are the guardians of terrestrial movements, vegetative growth, and the preservation of lands that must not be contaminated by human beings.

In a deep dark cave in “Der Ring des Nibelungen” by Richard Wagner, dwarfs guard the sacred treasure that no one must touch. This work describes, through legend, one of the missions of the terrestrial elementals: that of watching over and preserving certain magnetic spots on the earth. For example, in the province of La Rioja in Argentina, there is a place that cannot be seen by human beings. It is watched over by earth elementals which would most certainly materialize to any person who approached that site, for the purpose of not allowing him/her to pass.

Because the human being has his/her own mind, while elementals have a collective mind, earth elementals blindly obey the magus who devotes him/herself to the practice of mastering them.

Divided into groups, earth elementals mainly direct the transformation of metals. When the Count of St. Germain showed a friend of his the coffers where he kept gold, precious stones and metals of incalculable value, the visitor asked how he had been able to gather such wonders. The Count laughed slyly, replying that his servants of the earth had brought them to him.

Apas, the water element, also creates elementals. The Archangel Raphael, called Varuna in Hindu mythology, rules over them. The Bible tells of Raphael, who presented Tobias with a wonderful fish.

Water elementals rule the rhythmic movement of waters, rains, electrical storms and tempests. If the forms of these elementals materialized, they would look like suggestive undines, enchanting sirens and diaphanous nymphs. Their images may also be seen in the changing forms and colors of the clouds, to which so little attention is paid.

Water elementals are very reluctant to interact with human beings; if they do, it is in order to destroy them. It is necessary to have a thoroughly tried Control Wheel if one is to master the water elementals. Jesus, the strong one, mastered them and thus was able to walk on water.

Tejas creates the fire elementals, the luminous salamanders, the burning satyrs and the terrible erinniae. These elementals adore the courageous and repudiate the coward. Any strong soul can master them. Thus saints who were not afraid of death were able to walk on burning coals and pass through flames without becoming burned, as Shintoist fire worshippers still do in Japan and China.

Fire elementals love human beings, but they immediately sacrifice those who are fearful. They are true servants of the strong Archangel Michael and of the ever-courageous and resplendent Agni.

Vâyu, the element of air, creates the forms of sylphs, phantoms and wandering ghosts. They are directed by the entity called Archangel Seraphiel, also known as The Scout.

Air elementals are neither enemies nor friends of human beings, but flee from them constantly. They are very useful to the magus who can master them, for they fulfill his/her commands with fantastic rapidity and serve him/her blindly. They move speedily away when they are left at liberty, for their only yearning is to wander and wander. Shakespeare described them unsurpassably in the character of Ariel in "The Tempest."

Air elementals tend to clothe themselves in the cast-off bodies of humans and animals that swarm on the seventh plane of the astral world. They take bodies from the etheric and astral scoria of those who have continued onward in their evolution. Azrael, called the god of death, kindly sees to it that these scoria are dissolved and restored to the Cosmic Ether. But when they have already taken on a strength such that they resist disintegration and are able to progress, he helps them form a dwelling-place worthy to be inhabited some day by a human mind.

The Host of the Shadow rules over elemental beings and keeps them circumscribed within its magnetic field. They are thus kept from doing harm to the human beings who do not know about them and cannot perceive them.

EARTH'S INTERNAL LIFE

3rd Teaching

A nitric fire created an immense heat in the earth's interior during the time of the Atlantean race. The atmosphere was covered with dense clouds and vapors that kept the planet from receiving the sun's heat. Vegetation grew from the effect of internal heat, causing the exuberant and juicy roots of to be the most developed part of plants. By contrast, flowers were meagerly colored and scentless.

The earth's internal heat also supported life in the depths of seas and oceans.

The great seismic commotions, the sinking and elevation of continents actually buried the vegetation cover under vaults. The remains of the antediluvian monsters and Atlantean skeletons were left buried there, awaiting other similar movements to return them to the surface.

Coal deposits were formed by the fermentations and gases produced by internal heat. Present-day temperature and atmospheric conditions could not reproduce this phenomenon. Beneath those deposits there are gold, orichalc, platinum, copper, manganese and other minerals. Further down there are luminous caverns of basalt, produced by volcanic lava from the time of the Lemurians, the Atlanteans and the Silurian transition.

In those depths, the colors of the Great Element, given life by the action of the earth in conjunction with the solar action that penetrates there, produce fantastic scenes of lights and colors. This results in a harmony difficult to imitate—from the yellow of Prithivî to the blue of Vâyû.

Half-blind, half-conscious, deformed and totally instinctual beings exist in the earth's interior. They are remnants of the Lemurian races, which remained entombed in those immense galleries and have gradually been degenerating over the course of millennia.

In his book *The Future Race*, Bulwer Lytton described beneficent and powerful elementals that live in the depths of the earth. However, they do not resemble those this Teaching mentions.

Even deeper in the earth one finds great corridors which inspired the building of the Pharaonic tombs. They are actual chambers in which the Queen of the Planet dwells, the all-powerful Prithivî, the Mother Bhûmi: the potential vegetative essence which gives life to the earth.

Fire, the vital spirit of the earth, still burns in the center of the planet. Igneous bubbles, traversing the mysterious corridors and internal chambers, detach themselves from this central fire, rising gradually through the backbone of the planet to the surface, there to connect with solar rays and stimulate natural life.

When this blaze has been totally consumed, the planet will die in an explosion. The vital essence of the flame will then pass to another negative center of the universe to give life to a new world.

THE ASTRAL WORLD

4th Teaching

Thousands of souls leave their bodies every hour. While open graves receive the physical bodies, the thought of those who survive knocks at the tombs with an anguished question: Where have they gone?

How disconsolate death is for those who believe that everything disappears when the physical body dies!

Death afflicts even those who have faith in life after death, for they fear eternal condemnation. Religions assure a happy existence after death only in exchange for absolute submission to their beliefs.

Lately parapsychology and other branches of science have contributed some valuable experiments and studies to demonstrate that a subtle part of the being subsists after death. They have even published books with testimonies of persons who have had related experiences. The seer is able to soar easily to the higher planes and experience them directly.

Described in this Teaching are the stages that ordinary human beings traverse after death. It does not speak here of very evolved beings.

The being passes to the astral state after the first moments of confusion at death. The first thing s/he discovers is a different gravitation. S/he wants to walk and cannot, but when s/he thinks about walking s/he moves as quickly as if s/he were flying.

The lower part of the astral world is a world of strange colors, terrifying images, rumbling noises—a truly Dantesque inferno. Here is where the being becomes acquainted with the first difficulties. The etheric bodies of elementals, nature spirits and poorly evolved beings clash continuously together, causing explosions and changing the appearance of the phantasmagoric landscape as rapidly as their gross sensations succeed each other. Those who in life believed in the existence of punishments after death imagine that they have arrived at the place of torment. Their anguish is so intense that they suffer, as it were, a second death.

After this first experience, the disincarnated soul passes into the state of astral sleep. Once she abandons her etheric body, and after a certain amount of time has passed, the Invisible Protectors cause her to forget everything so that she may move on to the higher planes.

It is very harmful to evoke with strong thoughts the soul of a deceased person who has already entered this state, for the being awakens and answers the call, seriously delaying his/her spiritual progress.

The place of astral rest is so sacred that only those who have the duty of watching over the sleepers may enter. Not even the high entities may penetrate there.

The artists who conceived the images adorning cemeteries were certainly seers. Silent angels cover tombs with their wings, as if they wished to shelter the sleep of the deceased; inscriptions lead to recollectedness and evoke the period of rest of disincarnate souls.

Beings awaken from this sleep to a new life and have totally forgotten their previous experiences. According to the degree of their evolution, they dwell on the higher astral planes or on the planes of

the mental world with other beings with a similar spiritual advancement. They create their paradise with their thoughts. They surround themselves with the landscapes and objects they most desired during life. The artist encounters his/her masterpiece; the explorer discovers the land s/he dreamed of; the saint reaches his/her heaven; the rebel has his/her reign. All desires are satisfied.

However, the germ of disgust lies in the satisfaction of one's desires. The soul thus begins to dream of new possibilities until her dreams, increasingly more persistent, impel her to a new life on the physical plane. It is a new ideal that will have its awakening on earth.

THE ASTRAL DIVISIONS

5th Teaching

The universe is based on a sevenfold plan. The material, energetic and astral states are separated into seven divisions and these are divided in their turn into successive subdivisions.

Human beings are already familiar with five material elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. They must still find an additional two elements in order to be masters of the material world and to know the totality of the Cosmic Element.

The seven material elements are followed by the seven energetic elements. They compose a higher energy. They are not related to energy as presently known.

After these come the seven astral elements. Each of the fundamental elements has seven subdivisions. These, in their turn, have seven subdivisions, and so it goes. Each astral element is differentiated from the others by its vibratory tonic. That is how they remain perfectly separate from each other, even though they may be in the same place. Something similar happens between the world of human beings and that of ants: they can be in the same location but carry on completely different lives. With regard to the spatial dimension, the astral state does not have a particular place inside the earth or beyond the atmosphere, in spite of the fact that it is just as real or even more real than the physical state. The astral state lies outside terrestrial dimensions; since its vibrations are much more subtle than those already known, it cannot be limited in the way that physical space is defined.

Regarding the temporal dimension, astral time should be called duration rather than time. That world is ruled by emotions; therefore the duration of time depends on the state of soul one is experiencing. Human beings are already familiar with the variable duration of time when they say, "This moment of suffering seems eternal" or "This time of joy has really flown by."

The high vibration of the astral world does not allow for a particular dimension. The size of the astral world and its inhabitants becomes rapidly larger or smaller, depending on how long and hard the observer concentrates.

In the astral world, therefore, nothing can be defined as high or low, great or small; the dimensions vary in tune with the mental matter which is used to be able to see. This characteristic way of perceiving the astral world presents difficulties to the students who begin to frequent the astral planes. For example, they see an ugly-looking animal and curiosity makes them pause to observe it; as they watch, the animal gets bigger, which terrifies them; fear increases their concentration on the animal and this makes the animal seem even bigger. In another example the student encounters a loved one and is moved by the sight; the emotion takes away his/her peace, spends energy and in the end causes him/her to see the loved one rapidly diminishing in size.

The astral world has seven main plains and countless subdivisions.

The divisions of the astral world are described here solely with a didactic end in mind, since the separations are produced only by the different vibratory tonics.

The directing entities are to be found *on the first plane of the astral world*. These are the superior beings who leave the mental world voluntarily in order to work in the astral world.

Very highly evolved beings are encountered *on the second plane of the astral world*. They are directed by high entities and prepare the works as well as the technical and social advances that take place on earth. The Initiates of Fire act here before reincarnating.

Strong and courageous beings are to be found *on the third plane of the astral world*. These are intrepid souls who sacrificed their life for an ideal but were too attached to it. However, their effort was not in vain, for in their next incarnation they will expand the ideal they tried out in their previous life until it encompasses all humankind.

On the fourth plane of the astral world souls exist who are evolved but who have not overcome their passions. They prepare themselves there in order to act again on the physical plane and dedicate their efforts to the arts.

Souls who are not very evolved are to be found *on the fifth plane of the astral world*, those who after a brief rest must return to earth; they are beings who hardly realize where they are. They believe they are in the place that their religion or beliefs assigned them in their previous life to dwell after death. This plane has a grayish tint of perennial melancholy.

The sleepers are to be found *on the sixth plane of the astral world*. In peace and astral repose they cast off their gross astral body so as to be able to elevate themselves eventually to the planes to which they correspond.

Criminal beings are *on the seventh plane of the astral world*, along with those who have scarcely evolved spiritually; those who have recently disincarnated; elementals; and nature spirits. This is the plane that has most contact with the physical world. Here are to be found the apparitions mentioned in ancient religious legends, the ectoplasms that appear in spiritualistic sessions.

A being on a lower plane cannot communicate with those on higher planes; but beings on the higher planes can communicate with those on the lower ones, when such communication is necessary for the fulfillment of a task.

THE MENTAL WORLD

6th Teaching

The separation between the astral and mental worlds is arbitrary and is made only with a didactic end in mind. If one wished to represent the difference between the two worlds, it could be said that one is the flower and the other its scent; one is the note and the other its sound.

All beings who dwell in the astral world are directly influenced by the mental world. However, for each being this influence is of a different density that accords with the plane to which s/he belongs.

The beings of the second and third astral plane actually dwell in the mental world. When they concentrate their will they pass to the astral world; when they expand their consciousness they pass to the mental world. For them the day, wakefulness, is the astral world; nighttime, sleep, is the mental world.

The beings of the seventh, sixth, fifth and fourth astral planes also pass, though unconsciously, through the mental world. Otherwise it would be impossible for them to take the energy necessary to face a new life on earth.

The inhabitants of the first astral plane are in almost continuous contact with the mental world. It is enough for them to concentrate their thought to make the beautiful colors, varying forms and sustained astral sounds disappear, and to find themselves then in the world of perennial light. Nevertheless, these great beings suffer enormously as they pass from the mental world to the astral one, from the state of mind in itself to the state of the defined mind. Although many of them never assume physical vestures, it is already a great sacrifice for them to take on the astral vesture. On this plane souls are seen as resplendent lights. When they work they expand and reflect all other souls in themselves. When they concentrate they become small, for they acquire the greatness of the spirit. Their language is creation; their acts take shape in the material world.

Souls in the mental world recognize each other by the brightness of their lights, and they love by reflecting themselves in each other.

In the mental world there is no time. Only duration exists. In contrast to the astral world, dimensions do not expand, multiply or diminish at will.

In the mental world souls live in perfect and continuous ecstasy, truly a foretaste of eternal beatitude.

It could be said that here also there are seven distinct planes, and that the plane to which the soul belongs depends on her unfolding and the duration of her ecstasy.

THE CAVE OF RAS

7th Teaching

Everything that is occult will one day be revealed. Jesus said that even the most insignificant acts of creatures would be known.

Esoteric Symbology gives the name of Cave of Ras to the place where the past and present acts lived by all beings are registered. This Cave belongs to the seventh plane of the mental world. It is called Ras because Ras is the symbol of the sun, of the mind.

The Initiate who has reached a very high state of evolution encounters a place in his/her ascent to the higher worlds that is wonderful and impossible to describe, and which powerfully attracts his/her attention. The following description can only give a vague idea of the Cave of Ras.

It may be said that the being finds him/herself in a fantastic and immense cave, similar to caves of subterranean water. The lights are not produced by the reflections of water on the walls, but are instead due to vibrations so elevated that not even astral beings can endure them. Once the Initiate becomes accustomed to the place, s/he notices that in the center of each point of light is an extremely bright light. Reflected microscopically upon this light are visions of persons, peoples and places of other times.

Four dimensions exist there. If the being concentrates, each event is reproduced from the moment it began until the moment it ended; if s/he relaxes his/her attention, the events are shown retrospectively. If some aspect of a particular event calls his/her attention, that aspect is thoroughly revealed in all its details. If s/he proposes to do so, the Initiate can see what s/he pleases, from the beginning of worlds and the first manifestations of life.

No entities remain permanently in the Cave of Ras. It is guarded solely by the Lords of Destiny.

Very few beings enter the Cave of Ras. When the high entities visit it, even they are guided by Higher Masters. Nevertheless, the seer may have glimpses of the wonderful scenes registered in the Akashic Records of the Cave of Ras.

In *The Secret Doctrine* H. P. Blavatsky wrote, “Scenes, races and lost civilizations pass vertiginously before my eyes.”

THE WORLDS OF THE DEVAS

8th Teaching

The spiritual monads that have transcended the plane of humankind dwell on higher planes called “Worlds of the Devas.” Three chains of builder Hosts exist on them: the Host of the Shadow, the Host of Humankind and the Stellar Hosts.

The heavenly Host of the Shadow directs the unfolding of the elementals of the terrestrial wheel. They are radiant angels that influence the material world solely by concentration. Their thought concentrates on the task they are to carry out. When they have generated forms that can unfold only for a certain interval of time, these angels concentrate deeply on themselves, lose all control of the life they manifested around them and remain introspectively fixed, receiving the message of the Host of Humankind.

The Host of Humankind is composed of archangels who direct their task through their intermediary: the Host of the Shadow. All the waves of human life pass through the sevenfold prism of their consciousness and will. This is reflected in the material world in the evolution of the human groups and the different types of beings.

These archangels do not have periods of active concentration and periods of passive concentration; they only possess consciousness in itself which, when passing through their minds, takes up the will to action. This excellent state of continuous meditation is continuous; it always exists and is expressed in the world only by reflection through the Host of the Shadow.

Just as a drop of water reflects the sunlight, the happiness of these archangels is to reflect in themselves the spiritual image of the Stellar Hosts, the Principalities.

The Principalities are the builders of the planetary chains. Every heavenly body, every star, every planet constitutes their material body. Nevertheless, that material body does not affect them because they are of a substantially divine nature.

The Host of the Shadow is periodically will and periodically consciousness. The Host of Humankind is consciousness and will simultaneously. The Stellar Hosts are only consciousness. The beings of the present state of evolution cannot experience these divine states; they can only intuit them.

The great Solar Initiates transmit the light of the Stellar Hosts and the Lunar Initiates reflect the Light of the Host of Humankind. The Initiates of Fire, great transmuters of the elements, are influenced by the Host of the Shadow.

Although no being will enter the World of the Devas until after having passed through the whole cycle of terrestrial life, many great beings, upon reaching its threshold, perceive to a high degree the influence of this spiritual world. Some reach an intermediate state, where they encounter the words “You may not go beyond this point.”

Following are the names of the other existing Hosts, although they do not belong to the Worlds of the Devas. After the Stellar Hosts comes the Host of Forms or Powers, the Host of Language or Virtues, the Host of Thought or Dominions, the Host of Lineage or Thrones, the Host of Sound or Seraphim and the Host of Numbers or Cherubim.

THE COMPLETE HUMAN BEING

9th Teaching

The being is a microcosm, a universe in miniature. To know well the human being's external and internal complex is to know the universe.

The being is equal in form with the cosmos: threefold and sevenfold in its structure.

There is really no diversity in the being but there are, rather, different tonalities of vibrations, from the strongest and most sustained to the mellowest and most imperceptible.

The being comes from the Eternal Source and becomes densened through multiple forms and expressions. Once having become subtilized, it returns to that Source, without having ever changed in fundamental substance.

In order to understand these changes it is indispensable to divide and study them separately.

The threefold Being is:

- 1 Spirit
- 2 Soul
- 3 Body

The body is the part of the human being that is already known. All beings are ruled by the same biological law that differentiates them according to their group, climate and time to which they belong.

The soul is the human being's mind; it is real by the manifestations that determine it, although it is invisible in its species.

Spirit is the divine substantial essence in the human being. It expresses itself in the soul of the being only as unitive and inherent potential, or as individual creative activity. In itself Spirit is simply what it is and remains eternal, invariable, indivisible and unknown.

Everything changes; the human being's body and soul are in continuous transformation; but Spirit always remains in its original state.

The threefold Being is simultaneously sevenfold if it is divided into the following parts:

- 7 Physical Body
- 6 Astral Body
- 5 Energetic Body

The above three parts constitute the human being's body.

- 4 Instinctive Mind
- 3 Understanding Mind
- 2 Intuitive Mind

The latter three parts constitute the human being's soul.

- 1 Spirit

These six principles, crowned by the Spirit, form the complete human being.

The physical body is the instrument; by means of it, the soul acquires exterior experiences and becomes skilled in the management and mastery of the elements.

The astral body is a subtle and perfect mold of the physical body. The vibrations of its aura allow the soul's desires to be transmitted to the body and allows the results of bodily experiences to be known by the soul.

The energetic body is the luminous and subtle part of the complete body; it unites the inferior and material part of the being to the animic (soul) part of the being. Among these different bodies there exist molds or bonds of connection, similar to the membrane attached to an eggshell.

The instinctive mind is the soul's storehouse. All past experiences are registered there; from there also spring the impulses that express themselves in the being. The instinctive mind is the great registry of the subconscious.

The understanding mind is the part of the soul that analyzes ideas and controls feelings; it observes expounded material, considers the results and does not allow instinct to prevail over understanding.

The present-day human being is developing that part of the soul. Although s/he is still unable to master all the manifestations of the instinct, s/he is no longer purely instinctual.

The intuitive mind, which future human beings will develop, is the potential of the soul who knows things in themselves and expresses them without variations.

FROM THE HUMAN BEING TO THE COSMOS

10th Teaching

There is no law which does not have another one similar to it. The great is summarized in the small and the tiny is an image of immensity. A single, basic and invariable principle expands to the infinite and contracts to the infinitesimal. From this point of view it can be said that there is nothing new under the sun.

The Cosmic Principle which, potentially, contains no differences, is expressed in the Universe as mind, energy and matter; movement, rhythm and form.

These three fundamental substances succeed each other uninterruptedly during the whole of Cosmic Manifestation, approaching, merging and separating. From the smallest to the largest they are in continuous becoming —creating, forming, preserving and destroying all forms of life.

As the Cosmic Principle identified itself, it manifested itself and created the Universe outside itself. With this Spontaneous and Pure Act it was imprisoned in a Great Divine Karma which will be exhausted at the instant Creation is completely —“by itself”— restored to the bosom of its Creator.

The human being is an image of the Macrocosm. In him/her are all forms and possibilities. The human being is the culminating point that indicates the end of involution and the beginning of evolution, for s/he epitomizes the most diminutive forms and is, at the same time, a reproduction of the Cosmos. His/her bones recall the passage through the mineral kingdom; his/her organs and intestines recall the ancient vegetable kingdom, and his/her various impulses of passion span the entire range that exists on the zoological scale. The human being has conquered his/her free will at great cost and throughout an arduous path. The Arbitral Law of Possibilities holds out before them immensity of the mental field with which s/he is to experiment.

The soul of the human being traverses the path of evolution to the pulsation of the movements, rhythms and cosmic formations in stages, cycles and changes.

The fundamental stages of human life correspond to the great dual vibratory movement that sustains the Universe through the rhythmic expansion and absorption of the Cosmic Substance. The potential state succeeds the active state, and so it goes successively, from Eternity to Eternity.

In its trajectory of expansion through the Universe, the Cosmic Substance disperses into seven different forms —as a ray of sunlight divides into the fundamental colors when it passes through a prism— and forms the seven cosmic rays that compose all the expressions of life.

Human happenings, like the zodiacal and solar systems, are also subject to the sevenfold rhythm.

On average, the baby cuts his/her first tooth at seven months of age; at fourteen months s/he begins to walk. At the age of seven years s/he recognizes him/herself as an individual entity and becomes an adolescent at fourteen.

The changes in manifested life are countless, but they are always sevenfold. Continuous becoming is what constitutes the beauty of the worlds.

Transformations in the human being are ceaseless. S/he knows not what awaits him/her in the next instant, but s/he knows there will be changes. And the being moves toward Unity through changes, rhythms and stages.

FATALISM AND ORIENTATION

11th Teaching

By the Law of Consecutive Predestination, beings are born in the round and the group to which they belong. These, in turn, endow them with their characteristic qualities and deficiencies. Yet within that orbit beings possess their own magnetic field. There they may unfold freely and develop fully the potential that the Arbitral Law of Possibilities offers them.

In spite of all the pathological, psychic and spiritual burdens that beings might bring with them from the beyond, there is a wonderful spark hidden within them. At each step that spark inspires them to try hard and progress, as if it were telling them, “You are free; you are part of the Divine Being. Struggle and you will overcome.”

Belief in an inexorable destiny has caused unhappiness and fostered slavery. Religions teaching that destiny is irrevocable foment tyranny, cowardice and inertia. Blindly accepting what fate hands out does not encourage progress; on the contrary, it stimulates irresponsibility and, in many cases, cowardice disguised as boldness. Casting oneself to a blind death in a reputedly holy war because it “is written” in destiny is not the way to promote the unfolding of nations.

The belief that all which happens is the result of destiny moves one to look on human suffering disdainfully, without the least compassion. This attitude has led nations into backwardness.

In order for the human being to discover the scope of his/her possibilities, s/he had to abandon the idea of an inexorable and divinely preestablished destiny and plunge even deeper into matter. Thus arose the 19th century positivist: The attentive investigator who, by ignoring the past and discarding creeds and customs, developed his/her capacity for analysis, penetrated the mysteries of matter, and demonstrated the human being's willpower and free will.

For centuries civilization advanced very slowly, but in the past hundred years the affirmation of human power led the world to astonishing progress.

Nevertheless, the human being cannot trust only in his/her free will and will power. S/he cannot do everything. Moreover, s/he fails to understand a great deal of the world around her. S/he is still unable to answer fundamental questions, such as what happens after death and the reason for the manifestations of nature.

It is necessary to learn to harmonize the law of Consecutive Predestination with the Arbitral Law of Possibilities. The first law explains the becoming of the human being, the origin of life and that which awaits him/her after death. The second places the scepter of power and dominion in his/her hands and offers them infinite possibilities.

DESTINY

12th Teaching

The being goes through countless experiences and trials along the path that leads him/her to liberation. S/he has to be born many times and thus have the experience of being a man, a woman; great, small; rich, poor.

The variety of human destinies can only be explained if it is agreed that life is subject to a plan of evolution.

Everything that happens is the result of a vibration that materializes and then returns to its primary state. Today's established fact is the result of what happened yesterday; the thoughts and work of this moment will give their fruit tomorrow. The misery and sorrow that a human being experiences today, others have suffered in the past or will experience in the future. There is no injustice; only variability as to the moment in which each human being has his/her experiences.

All human beings, at one moment or another, go through the same experiences. They descend from the Spirit to matter and from matter return to the Spirit. This plan of evolution is called the Law of Consecutive Predestination.

This Law is threefold and is divided into:

- 1 Personal Law
- 2 Causal Law
- 3 Collective Law

Personal Law is concerned only with beings and their evolution. Human beings forge in their consciousness the desires that motivate them to act in a particular way. Their future life depends on the way they act.

The human being of today is the result of the desire, thoughts, feelings and actions of yesterday. The human being of tomorrow is the effect of the causes s/he produces today.

Human beings can influence their destiny. Through right action, good thought and by freeing themselves from the slavery of their desires, they generate a felicitous destiny. That is the reason all religious instructors have so insistently established healthy and noble customs among peoples.

The Causal Law binds the fate of each human being to the actions of the group to which s/he belongs. Through it, the human being expiates the events dictated by the group in place and time in which s/he chances to live, even when those events are outside the scope of his/her personal will. For example, in a nation in which capital punishment is in force, those who condemn others to death participate in the Causal Law and not the Personal. Another example is that of people who eat meat. They take on the burden of responsibility for slaughtering animals; however, since that act is circumscribed within the evolutionary plan for the present day, and to the unfolding of the group to which they belong, the responsibility is merely causal. The sacrifice required to live in society, in accordance with the conventions of the age, is also a result of the Causal Law.

The Collective Law ties the human being's destiny to the effects of his/her acts on human groups at large. An evil ruler, for example, prepares himself a destiny of sorrow, for the antipathies

engendered by his acts endure in other lives. On the other hand, a ruler who acts with justice and diplomacy generates a good destiny.

The Collective Law is also expressed in the responsibility assumed as a whole by a nation, a people, a community or a family. When a country declares war, the whole nation is collectively responsible for that war.

Although it is good to think that human suffering is the fruit of past actions, one must not work selfishly, contriving to achieve a good destiny for oneself. That selfishness would generate an even more difficult destiny to bear. What truly liberates is to labor in an upright way, to work for the sake of working, without becoming attached to the fruit of the work.

THE GREAT ILLUSION

13th Teaching

The philosophers of pantheistic religions hold that if God is the Undifferentiated, the Unknowable, to define Him would be to deny Him. From this point of view all that exists, which is defined and variable can be no more than a chimera. On the other hand, dualists and deists would blaspheme if they were to say that all that is created is illusion, for they consider that all that exists is an integral part of God.

What is it that surrounds us, then, a reality or an illusion?

Universal Manifestation cannot be a unique reality as an end. To think so would be to limit the idea of God, who is outside every concept, to a something. But the wonderful succession of events that constitute the life of the universe cannot be illusion either.

The manifested universe is a reality, as real as the Undifferentiated, the Unknowable; but it establishes its reality on continuous becoming. Is what exists reality? Yes, it is reality —not because it is the Eternal in itself, but because it is the Eternal in its manifestation. God is Unmanifest, Indefinable and Indescribable: Immobile in Him/Herself. The visible Universe is its inversion, the Divine Expiration. What comes from the Eternal is also eternal and real; it is not reality in itself, but it is the becoming of the Only Reality. This Reality is illusion in terms of the idea of continuous change. It is called illusion not because one wishes to attribute a negative value to it, or because it is considered a dream or a phantasmagoria, but because of its continuous movement, its variability.

The Vedanta concept of Maya, illusion, refers to continuous becoming, the perennial transformation of all things.

God may not be named, He is That which never varies in His nature; but His manifestation is Ired, that which changes continuously. Therefore He is accessible to knowledge as a Unity expressed by antithesis.

Divine Manifestation is the Great Illusion which descends from the Root Principle in continuous vortices and reascends to the Eternal Principle.

Universal manifestation cannot be denied, for it is the foundation human beings are given from which to learn to rejoin the Divine step by step through knowledge.

Nevertheless, to limit oneself within the concept of manifestation would be to halt on the road, for the path of evolution is a continuous march to the Eternal.

The Great Illusion is changing reality. Its name holds the secret of the unknowable when it becomes knowable.

LIBERATION

14th Teaching

Despite the fact that human destiny is liberation, the slavery of desire weighs gravely upon human beings. Instead of gradually disengaging themselves from the ties which bind them, they increasingly bind themselves with the chain of sorrow.

Even when human beings clamor for freedom, this freedom is for them a sphinx; it is a veiled Isis. Humankind is a slave to the instincts, to sickness, to old age, to death.

Human beings yearn to free themselves, and therefore give extreme importance to the idea that they will achieve happiness in the future life in the higher worlds. But if desire is not eliminated in this life, hope for happiness in the beyond is a chimera and does not help one to liberate him/herself; it simply encloses him/her in a bigger cage. One escapes the material cage only to enclose oneself in a mental cage.

Nor is liberation attained by trying to detach oneself from life by stating that all is illusion, that nothing is worthwhile, that to love and suffer are bonds. If the human being refuses to fulfill the laws of life, s/he easily falls into the limitation that indifference and apathy produce. Liberation is only attained by the absence of desire and not by rejecting everything so as to avoid the consequences of desire.

Liberation is attained by living life without desiring it, embracing sorrow knowing that it is the force that motivates one to overcome human miseries, and, especially, working for the sake of working, without waiting for rewards. One does not overcome illusion by casting it off but rather by knowing it; and one knows it when one is not tied to it.

The absence of desire allows for inner liberation because it causes the soul not to identify with the objective of her experience.

To live and to love is to participate in Eternity, if one lives and loves with one's thought placed only on the real end. When life does not bind, when the being passes over the roads of Manifestation knowing, realizing, fulfilling, but without attaching him/herself to anything, s/he identifies with the Divine Will, which is the portal of Eternity. Schopenhauer rightly said that the beginning of the manifest was will, and that by will the Universe was made.

Absence of desire, which leads to Divine Union or Liberation, is arrived at by one of four paths:

- 1 By the path of Real Love
- 2 By the path of Assistance and Work
- 3 By the path of Mystical Asceticism
- 4 By the path of the Teaching

These four paths are really one, for although they indicate different ways, they all lead the soul to spiritual realization.

One day a sage and a saint met and, after conversing, realized that both of them knew the same truths. The sage asked the saint, "How do you know what has cost me so many years of study?" The saint replied, "I know it because I feel it, just as you feel it because you know it."

Love is the beginning of the path.

Everything in the Universe is the expression of a single love. Human love is a miniature of Divine Love; therefore s/he who loves can reach liberation.

Heroic acts are done for love; for love faults are forgiven, virtues are practiced, ugliness is beautified. Love unites the good and the bad, the soul and the Spirit, the finite and the infinite.

Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, “You have been forgiven much because you have loved much,” and Ramakrishna stated, “One begins with love and ends with love.”

Innumerable souls, apparently ignorant, without having done extraordinary things, reached Divine Union through love. Thérèse of Lisieux said it well: “My vocation is to love.”

Assistance and Work is the path of the courageous. It is difficult to traverse; it is full of trials and difficulties. The road of action is difficult, but in the end it transforms the objective of the work into the ideal of Divine Union.

The paladins of civilization and progress have always worked tirelessly, though they have often been scorned and abused. They persevered because they did not expect immediate satisfaction from their work; they knew that the real fruit of work always remains, even though it may not always be accessible to near-sightedness human vision.

The path of Mystical Asceticism is the most arduous but the most certain. It is difficult to maintain a continuous introspection for the purpose of knowing oneself and attaining spontaneous self-control, but doing it gives surprising results and leads to inner liberation. The beings who follow this method break themselves down physiologically, psychically and astrally, until they attain spiritual liberation.

The steps followed on this path are: Meditation, Concentration, Contemplation, Ecstasy and, lastly, Divine Union.

Some persons believe that the path of Assistance and Work is more useful than that of Mystical Asceticism, for it helps humankind more directly. But they forget that fundamental help emanates from the mind, from the strength of thought. Direct action is undoubtedly indispensable; but so also is mental work. Without it no work would be sustained. The Solar Initiates of the Fourth Category help humankind directly with their public work of Teaching and Sacrifice. However, in order to maintain the Mother Idea upon earth, the Solar Initiates of the Third Category are permanently engaged in an exclusively mental work.

The path of Teaching is that of study and knowledge. The attentive investigator, the persevering scientist, the philosopher and the theologian create, with their effort, new inroads of development in the mental field of humankind. In that way they continuously multiply human possibilities.

Continuous study allows for the understanding of the mysteries of Nature and the Cosmos. Knowledge illumines the mind and leads to inner freedom. Jesus said, “Knowledge will make you free.” With long years of illuminative speculations, the student comes to discover the fundamental truths of the Universe. That permanent expansion of knowledge indicates a sure path to liberation.

REINCARNATION

15th Teaching

The soul evolves through numerous reincarnations until attaining liberation.

Although human beings certainly do not remember their past existences, they still retain the spiritual fruit left to them by former experiences.

Even though it is not possible to enumerate the lives of a being upon earth, it may be said that the soul began to incarnate when she was completely ignorant; and that she will cease incarnating when she is liberated from the desires that periodically cause her to return to earth.

Souls who are not very evolved are hindered by passions from elevating themselves to the higher planes. Passions, moreover, move them to reincarnate. In many cases, souls anxiously seek a physical dwelling and reincarnate after a very short rest on the sixth astral plane.

Very evolved beings may also return rapidly to earth if they have to fulfill a special mission. They are not attracted by physical matter, but they might reincarnate because they are capable of easily divesting themselves of their subtle bodies, and that allows them to acquire a physical body.

Sometimes astral anomalies occur which leave room for exceptional cases. For example, a person who remembers his/her previous incarnation, which took place a very few years before. This concerns beings who die and return rapidly to earth without first passing through the sixth astral plane or disengaging themselves from their etheric body and thus remember their previous life.

In the majority of cases, beings reincarnate seven times in the feminine aspect and seven times in the masculine aspect. The Great Initiates are an exception to this; they take the aspect most suitable for the realization of their mission.

Ordinary human beings reincarnate periodically approximately every seven hundred years; but the most evolved human beings delay a long time in reappearing on the earth. Before returning, they await the circle of souls to which they belong. Sometimes whole groups incarnate together.

One never reincarnates in the same group or in the same country, except in cases in which the being has left undone the task s/he was supposed to carry out in his/her previous life. Often one finishes in one life tasks begun in another. Some tasks need several lives before they are fulfilled.

Beings do not return alone to life on earth, but come with a particular group of souls with whom they will then have family ties, emotional ties and bonds of friendship. There are many cases of beings who jointly carry out the same task over several incarnations.

Those who are gathered together today do not know each other from today or yesterday only, and death will not hinder them from being together.

Some beings, even without having attained liberation, do not return again to earth, for they are now prepared to continue their work from the astral planes.

The belief in reincarnation is extremely consoling, for it very logically explains the reason for human inequalities.

THE DESCENT TO EARTH

16th Teaching

Souls on the higher planes enjoy a free and limpid atmosphere. Nothing reaches these very high regions where beings shine like stars. But when those beings, even those of great spiritual advancement, exhaust the spiritual treasury that caused them to dwell on the first plane of the Astral World, a vague desire for action begins to stop the wonderful revolving of lights. Memories of love and life perturb the peace of the environment and move them to return to the material plane. A sort of deep sleep envelops these souls and makes their radiance dimmer and weaker. Like new Valkyries lulled by the voice of love, they descend from the mental planes and concentrate all the strength of their consciousness on the first plane of the Astral World. From there they descend to the second and third Astral planes, where souls' possibilities join the mental factors they left behind in their ascent to the higher planes. They are now ready for human life.

Correspondingly, the aspiration of the souls of less evolved beings reaches the third Astral plane before reincarnating so that they may concentrate the potentials of the new life they will carry out on earth.

On successive astral planes, the soul clothes herself in the energetic body and the astral body that are appropriate for the mission she has to fulfill in the world. On the seventh Astral plane, she awaits the instincts and bad works that have not been expiated. There she forms the etheric body, which is the definitive mold of the physical body.

Once again souls will have to forget the spheres of light where they had dwelled and will put on the mantle of flesh, blood and pain. They will have to begin again, to struggle and see how life runs through their hands, leaving them only the essence of memories.

It is the solemn hour of the sacrifice of crucifixion: a divine spirit is nailed upon the cross of flesh.

The soul had endeavored to liberate herself forever. But destiny calls her and forces her to descend from the heights of divinity to the shadows of matter.

All the beings on earth have enjoyed perfect peace for a certain time, in accordance with their spiritual advancement. Nevertheless, that joy is not the final spiritual realization. True liberation is beyond all desire, including that of perfect peace. The liberated soul comes into contact with the universal, eternal serenity.