

The Sacrament of Marriage

WHEN STRIPPED of nonessentials the argument of the orthodox Christian religion may be said to be as follows: First, that tempted by the devil, our first parents sinned and were exiled from their previous state of celestial bliss, placed under the law, made subject to death, and became incapable of escaping by their own efforts.

Second, that God so loved the world that He gave Christ, His only begotten Son, for its redemption and to establish the kingdom of heaven. Thus death will finally be swallowed up in immortality.

This simple creed has provoked the smiles of atheists, and of the purely intellectual who have studied transcendental philosophies which employ logic and argument; and even of some among those who study the Western Mystery Teaching.

Such an attitude of mind is entirely gratuitous. We might know that the divine leaders of mankind would not allow millions to continue in error for millennia. When the Western Mystery Teaching is stripped of its exceedingly illuminating explanations and detailed descriptions, when its basic teachings are stated, they are found to be in exact agreement with the orthodox Christian teachings.

There was a time when mankind lived in a sinless state; when sorrow, pain, and death were unknown. Neither is the *personal tempter* of Christianity a myth, for the Lucifer Spirits may very well be said to be fallen Angels, and their temptation of man resulted in focusing his consciousness upon the material phase of existence where he is under the law of decrepitude and death. Also it is truly the mission of Christ to aid mankind by elevating us to a more ethereal state



Absolon Stumme. From the Dome Altar, 1499, Pisa, Italy

The Marriage of the Virgin

After the Lord had willed a miracle to single out Joseph as Mary's husband, the high priest Abiathar joined them in matrimony. The incident is narrated in Pseudo-Matthew 8:4-5.

where dissolution will no longer be necessary to free us from vehicles that have grown too hard and set for further use. For this is indeed a “body of death,” where only the smallest quantity of material is really alive, as part of its bulk is nutrient matter that has not yet been assimilated. Another large part is already on its way to elimination, and only between those two poles may be found the material which is thoroughly quickened by the Spirit.

We have in previous articles considered the sacraments of baptism, and communion, sacraments that have to do particularly with the Spirit. We shall now seek to understand the deeper side of

the sacrament of marriage, which has to do particularly with the body. Paul preached in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, starting at the 35th verse, that in addition to the body of flesh and blood we have a soul body, *soma psuchicon* (mistranslated "natural body"), and a spiritual body; that each of these bodies is grown from a different seed atom and that there are three stages of unfoldment for Adam, or man. The first Adam was taken from the ground and was without sentient life. Soul was added to the second Adam; thus he had life within, a leaven laboring to elevate the clod to God. When the potential of the soul extracted from the physical body has been raised to the spiritual, the last Adam will become a life-giving Spirit, capable of transmitting the life impulse to others directly as flame from one candle can be communicated to many without diminishing the magnitude of the original light.

In the meantime the germ for our Earth body had to be properly placed in fruitful soil to grow a suitable vehicle, and generative organs were provided from the beginning to accomplish this purpose.

Like the other sacraments the institution of marriage had its beginning and will also have its end. The commencement was described by the Christ when He said, "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." (Matt. 19:4-6) He also indicated the end of marriage when He said: "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." (Matt. 22:30)

In this light the logic of the teaching is apparent, for marriage became necessary in order that birth might provide new instruments to take the place of those which had been ruptured by death; and when death has once been swallowed up in immortality and there is no need of providing new instruments, marriage will also be unnecessary.

Science, with admirable audacity, has sought to solve the mystery of fecundation, and has told us how invagination takes place in the walls of the ovary; how the little ovum is formed in the seclu-

sion of its dark cavity; how it emerges therefrom and enters the Fallopian tube; is pierced by the spermatozoon of the male, and the nucleus of a human body is complete. We are thus supposed to be "at the fount and origin of life!" But life has neither beginning nor end, and what science mistakenly considers the fountain of life is really the source of death, as all that comes from the womb is destined sooner or later to reach the tomb. The marriage feast which prepares for birth, at the same time provides food for the insatiable jaws of death, and so long as marriage is necessary to generation and birth, disintegration and death must inevitably result. Therefore it is of prime importance to know the history of marriage, the laws and agencies involved, the duration of this institution, and how it may be transcended.

When we obtained our vital bodies in Hyperborea, the Sun, Moon, and Earth were still united, and the solar-lunar forces permeated each being in even measure so that all were able to perpetuate their kind of buds and spores as do certain plants of today. The efforts of the vital body to soften the dense vehicle and keep it alive were not then interfered with, and these primal, plant-like bodies lived for ages. But man was then unconscious and stationary like a plant; he made no effort or exertion. The addition of a desire body furnished incentive and desire, and consciousness resulted from the war between the vital body, which builds, and the desire body, which destroys the dense body.

Thus dissolution became only a question of time, particularly as the constructive energy of the vital body was also necessarily divided, one part or pole being used in the vital functions of the body, the other to replace a vehicle lost by death. But as the two poles of a magnet or dynamo are requisite to manifestation, so also two single-sexed beings became necessary for generation; thus marriage and birth were necessarily inaugurated to offset the effect of death. Death, then, is the price we pay for consciousness in the present world; marriage and repeated births are our weapons against the king of terrors until our constitution shall change and we become as Angels.

Please mark that it is not stated that we are to become Angels, but that we are to become as Angels.

For the Angels are the humanity of the Moon Period; they belong to an entirely different stream of evolution, as different as are Human Spirits from those of our present animals. Paul states in his letter to the Hebrews that man was made for a little while inferior to the Angels; he descended lower into the scale of materiality during the Earth Period, while the Angels have never inhabited a globe denser than ether. As we build our bodies from the chemical constituents of the Earth, so do the Angels build theirs of ether. This substance is the direct avenue of all life forces, and when man has once become as the Angels and has learned to build his body of ether, naturally there will be no death and no need of marriage to bring about birth.

But looking at marriage from another point of view, looking upon it as a union of souls rather than as a union of the sexes, we contact the wonderful mystery of Love. Union of the sexes might serve to perpetuate the race, of course, but the true marriage is a companionship of souls also, which altogether transcends sex. Yet those really able to meet upon that lofty plane of spiritual intimacy gladly offer their bodies as living sacrifices upon the altar of *Love of the Unborn*, to woo a waiting Spirit into an immaculately conceived body. Thus humanity may be saved from the reign of death.

This is readily apparent as soon as we consider the gentle action of the vital body and contrast it with that of the desire body in a fit of temper, where it is said that a man has "lost control" of himself. Under such conditions the muscles become tense, and nervous energy is expended at a suicidal rate, so that after such an outbreak the body may sometimes be prostrated for weeks. The hardest labor brings no such fatigue as a fit of temper; likewise a child conceived in passion under the crystallizing tendencies of the desire nature is naturally short-lived, and it is a regrettable fact that *length of life* is nowadays almost a misnomer. In view of the appalling infant mortality it ought to be called *brevity of existence*.

The building tendencies of the vital body, which is the vehicle of love, are not so easily watched, but observation proves that contentment lengthens

Green Diamond

Assigned as I to Aries' constellation,
You are my soul's symbolic secret jewel.
Through creeping eons has your slow formation

Progressed in my alchemic laboratory,
In subterranean depths receiving fuel
From stellar worlds, for time's green-flaming glory.

No mines nor sands from mother India's rivers,
Though sifted from their deltas to their sources—
Nay, nor the Dresden stone whose beauty shivers

In Saxon vaults, sheer green as leaf of apple,
None concentrates as you the cosmic forces,
Transmuted jewel in my hidden chapel.

—Irene Stanley

the life of anyone who cultivates this quality, and we may safely reason that a child conceived under conditions of harmony and love stands a better chance of life than one conceived under conditions of anger, drunkenness, and passion.

According to Genesis it was said to the woman, "In sorrow shalt thou bear children," and it has always been a sore puzzle to Bible commentators what logical connection there may be between the eating of fruit and the pains of childbirth. But when we understand the chaste references of the Bible to the act of generation, the connection is readily perceived.

Astrology will reveal the temper and tendencies of each human being; it will enable two people to blend their characters in such a manner that a love life may be lived, and it will indicate the periods when interplanetary lines of force are most nearly conducive to painless childbirth. Thus it will enable us to draw from the bosom of nature children of love, capable of living long lives in good health. Finally the day will come when these bodies will have been made so perfect in their ethereal purity that they may last throughout the coming Age, and thus make marriage superfluous. The love of soul for soul, purged of passion in the furnace of sorrow, will be our brightest gem in heaven as its shadow is on Earth. □