

Doing on Earth as in Heaven

IN THE FIVE KINGDOMS of need, we have before us all that must be overcome upon earth. Now, in the last exercise, nothing remains but life: heaven upon earth. That which the first exercise for the will awakened in us as a common aim for life has now been fully unfolded.

We practice all these exercises for the will in such a way that we first place the individual historical picture vividly before our souls. Through the need in the individual picture we see the world's need, the mighty kingdom of evil that must be overcome. We ask ourselves if we really will earnestly that this opposing world shall be overcome. We answer this question with our whole will. Thus our will acquires the greatness which acts more and more upon our everyday wishes. But now we call to life within us the example of Christ. In Him heaven fights for earth. We enlist on His side against the whole world. As if from the other world we work with Him. With our ego and with our best selves we are already beyond the grave. Our "citizenship," as the Bible says, is in a higher world. As we look at Christ our will gains the pure, fiery essence, the true, divine warmth. But the more we see in the details, see in the small things the greatest and last things, the decisive struggle for the world, so much the more does our will gain the strong power through meeting great obstacles. And thus again in each single exercise we go the way from the spirit, through feeling to willing:

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Oil on Wood, Gerard David, Altarpiece of St. Michael, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

The Archangel Michael is the cosmic prototype for what St. Paul enjoins each Christian: that we cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. So do we live in the spirit of Michael.

from the great aim, through the great example, to the great power.

This means to live in the spirit of Michael! To work in the spirit of the Archangel who was always regarded as the great champion of Christ in the earthly world. We should ever renew our resolve to think and work in the world in the spirit of Michael. The spirit of the age demands this of us. It means also: to live apocalyptically.

At the end of such an exercise one may retain only the will, and feel it in all its greatness, warmth and power. The earthly kingliness of such a will streams through us. But we feel it, not only as coming upwards from beneath, but above all as

coming down from above. It reveals itself as the noblest sap of the life of the divine which wills to work in us. Especially when we feel in this will the being of Christ shall we have such an experience. One can let this will stream out from the head, in which one gathers it together in the middle of the forehead, throughout our whole physical body, throughout our whole spiritual body....And we can attempt this also: to let such a will flood through us out into the world. Thus Buddha in his meditation sent out sympathy in all four directions. Thus Christ said, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" Even when with this will we can will and accomplish no particular thing, yet we can let this good will be in us and stream out from us. By this we can learn still better how to "pour...good will into our words and acts." Through this we procure divine power to create new possibilities. Our will is a spiritual reality which is offered, is sacrificed to the higher powers, which will the Good. Only in a close communion of life with Christ can any step be taken which ought to be taken in the service of a renewal of the world. Even he who has not yet regarded Christ as a divine personality will, out of all this, be able to take for himself that which he can do in order to become strong in the service of what is good.

Since today all kinds of occultism are showing themselves among us, let us here point this way to a white magic. In all details the following guiding lines must be observed: strict fidelity to truth, respect for all men's freedom, and a striving for the perfecting of the world in the spiritual goodness which is in Christ.

The safeguard against all misuse lies in the prayer: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in the heavens." In this prayer we have now conquered the passive tolerance, the egotistical narrowness, which is so often put into it by men. We have led it upwards to the heights upon which it was lived out in the Gospels. If we allow Christ Himself to pray it in us, we can bring to a close our exercises for the will, as we summed up our exercises for the spirit in the prayer: "Hallowed be Thy name," and our exercises for the feelings in the prayer: "Thy kingdom come."

When we now survey the whole, the question

comes to us: who will really go the way which is here described? Possibly few. But these letters may become a help to religious development, even when one only reads in them from time to time and allows oneself to be touched by the spirit of Transubstantiation out of which they were born.

But we will take courage to go to the end, to speak for the few who will wish to draw from this book something stronger to help their self-training. They will ask, "How shall we best take all this into our lives?"

To this we should like again to repeat and lay down more definitely this piece of advice: that it is good three times a day to enter into the highest. For many it will be hardest to find rest and time at the midday hour. He who is able might dedicate to the training of his higher self a quarter of an hour in the morning and evening, and at least a few minutes if not a quarter of an hour at midday. Still better would be at morning and evening half an hour, and at midday at least a quarter of an hour.

These times of the day are completely different. We cannot describe the difference more clearly than in connection with the Christian conception of the Trinity. Let us begin the day with the evening. At evening time, when a man must give himself over in trust to the powers of the night, he is nearest to the divine power which holds and bears up all, which has given him the body, and has restored it; into which he sinks at death as well as in sleep. An abysmal trust, a perception of hidden glory, a feeling of union with the ultimate source of all being, will then spread itself over his soul. It is one of the most intimate experiences of meditation that we meditate best in the evening, as if from the cosmic sound of the Divine Father.

The morning is quite different. It is a solemn experience to feel the flashing up of the ego in the human body. One is again upon the earth. One returns to the earth. In this alone there is something Christ-like. In wonderful purity one can hear the voice of one's higher being.

In it is our higher ego, which is united with Christ. We are ourselves new-born every morning. We become a son. We become also a sun. The light dawns in us, as it has dawned around us. We can feel in the morning that during the night we have

been in spiritual regions, but that Christ must be sought upon earth. Here He has His work. Thus the morning meditations are strongest and most successful when we meditate out of the cosmic sound of the Divine Son. That which we have just expressed need not always be thought out in detail. But it helps us to discover this sphere of life.

But at midday the sun shines hottest. Life is oppressive. We are in the midst of material existence. It is hardest for us to get out of it. We must call the Spirit to our aid, must awaken ourselves to the Spirit. One can have this feeling: just as outside everything is lying in brightest light, so must you let still clearer light shine into yourself, if you will be great enough for your day. Spirit, Holy Spirit against matter, against the illusion of the senses. Humanity has placed the festival of the Holy Spirit near St. John the Baptist's day, when the sun shines most brightly. In this is expressed the same need that we met just now in our meditation.

When we are in a position deliberately to place over against the outward brightness the light that radiates forth the Spirit, when our looking upon the world is permeated by the light of the Spirit, then shall we first know what the Holy Spirit is. Therefore we ought not to omit at midday also to carry our meditation, at least so far that we do not miss this cosmic sound in our life.

These things of which we speak here are more delicate shades in life than are common to the present age. But this passing through the three spheres, this daily baptism in the three worlds of God, contains something which blesses marvelously. It raises life to a sublime height. It crowns man with divinity. And man will learn that in the night he is taken up into the unity of the Three, that he experiences like music the community and interpenetration of the three divine worlds. He then lives in the Divine Ground of the World. He is seen, he is blessed, he is meditated, as he himself has meditated. After he has by day, according to the law of the earth, passed successively through the three worlds, he feels himself in



Composite art by Reinhard Ponny

the night to be beheld by a primal divinity, whose life he shares. He may live in this unity, even if only vague perceptions of this occurrence of the night shine into his day-consciousness.

The year also, in the same way as the day, is in itself living. If we would carry through the meditations in connection with the course of the year, then from Advent through Christmastime to the beginning of Lent the "I am" are nearest to the soul. The outward world sinks into darkness. So much the brighter shines the light within. On Christmas night and during the twelve holy nights, the "I am" shines in the darkness of the world with spiritual power.

When the Passion weeks begin, and up to Ascension and Whitsuntide, is the time when the meditations from the Washing of the Feet up to the Resurrection and Ascension are naturally fitted into the course of the year. The outward sun is then sacrificing itself to the earth. And man answers it with an inward course of sacrifice. Passiontide and Spring, seeming contradictions, chime together when one looks at the spiritual. But for the meditations for the will, the best time is towards Autumn, when the days grow shorter, when man must oppose greater inward force to the decreasing of the outward light, to the dying of the earth, when he feels that now Michael will become his spiritual protector in order that he may not sink down into the sadness of the world which is breaking upon him, that he may bring forth the inward

Easter as answer to the outward Easter which was proclaimed to him half a year before.

All this need not be practiced by rule. In a high degree man can make himself independent of the course of the year. It would be well, especially, if a man once went slowly through all the exercises, even if it took years. He may remain at each individual exercise until he grasps its meaning and has won its first blessing. He will then most quickly come to feel the benefit and scope of the whole.

But once again, in conclusion, be it said—Someone may remain at the two first exercises, “I am love” and “I am peace,” all the days of his life, and let the others serve as the illumination and filling out of these two fundamental exercises. In any case it is good that one should never give up these two meditations but bear them always as basic elements in one’s soul. It is actually true that these two meditations bring about a communion, a receiving of the body and blood of Christ, as we have explained. We have in them, in higher form, that which was in the old mysteries awakened in the soul as pity and fear. Aristotle says that about tragedy. Through them the Mysteries work openly. Out of fear comes reverent worship. Out of pity comes love that streams forth. That is the inward frame of mind in which the body and blood of Christ give themselves to us.

If anyone should feel the need of having in addition to the meditation “I am peace” in the evening, and “I am love” in the morning, a meditation of the same kind for midday, it would be: “I am the word,” thought of as a creative spiritual act. This would unite us to the Holy Spirit in the same way as peace unites us to the Father and love to the Son.

When I wrote these letters, I had before me the picture of a far future. I thought...of the spiritual character of a Russian culture which is to come, which is to be expected only after many centuries. Then, indeed, one will be able to say much better things than in these letters. On the other hand, not



Polyptych of the Apocalypse (detail), Jacopo Albreghno (died 1397), Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice

God the Father Enthroned

The four iconic figures of the Zodiac are synthesized in the Sphinx and thus offer the answer to the riddle posed Oedipus, whose answer—Man—is the glorious manifestation of twelve creative hierarchies.

even that which is here described is entirely possible in our time. Ought one therefore to leave it unspoken? When I had already almost resolved to do this, I saw that it was not permitted. Then let it go forth and itself seek out the people to whom it means anything. For many, perhaps, it is already valuable to see that there can be a life quite different from that which they live to-day, and to recognize that this life need not be led in cloisters and hermitages, but that the strength of inwardness can be built up in active outward life.

Then let us say one last thing. We connect it with a great symbolic figure in world-history which has been handed down to us from ancient times, the Sphinx...we have heard that in the figure of the Sphinx there stands before us the emerging of man from the animal world, more spiritually than it is present in the ideas of present-day science. That

which in the animal world exists as the eagle's capacity to raise itself from the earth, as the power of flight to the sun, has been changed by man within himself to the power of the spirit, to the will to strive upwards, high above the earthly. That which in the animal world exists as the lion's courage, as instinctive leaping passion, that has man spiritualized to the capacity for noble feeling; that which in the animal world lives as the bull's strength, as physical energy and external impetuosity, that man could change into spiritual will.

In ancient times...they tried in the Mysteries to see to which kingdom men's powers were most nearly related, and then trained the pupils of the Mysteries to be sages if they bore within themselves principally the eagle-powers of the spirit; or to be physicians if the capacity for feeling was the ruling force in them; or to be magicians, if one trusted their power of will. But those in whom these three gifts were balanced were men in an especial sense. In the symbols given to the four evangelists these perceptions drawn from the Mysteries still work.

One may regard this as only a historical picture. Even then it makes clear to us from a new side the training for humanity which we are here seeking with the help of John's Gospel. It is the highest wisdom which comes into being for us out of these "I ams." In our age, when harm is being done in the great cities by so-called Yoga teachers, when exercises are being spread broadcast whose motive power is the egotism of social ambition, of the acquisition of strength and of superiority, wisdom in its bright purity lives in these "I ams."

He who builds this temple around him will have the feeling that he has a sheltering spiritual home. All occult practices whose meaning and aim one cannot completely perceive, ought to be strongly discouraged....Here rules the spirit which alone may lead us in this realm: selfless seeking for the spiritual basis of the world, the attainment of accord with the moral order of the world, the applying of the will, not to subjective efforts, but towards the divine goal of the world. Only in such a spirit can one enter the occult realm without danger. Our exercises do not combat this, they train for it. To have the spirit of the wisdom of the "I am"

shining around one is more important and gives more illumination to one's actual life than if one tried to compel by doubtful means the reception of impressions from hidden worlds. If here we are trying to educate the "wise man," there is also a training, suited to the time, for the "healer." It takes place here in connection with the revelation of Christ in Passion and Resurrection. It lies not in surging feeling, in which we feel ourselves happy, but in a mood, essential for life, which is born out of the sacrificial spirit of divine love. So comes into being true goodness which brings healing to the world.

But our exercises for the will, in connection with the working of Christ Himself, train us for playing our part with mighty powers of will in that battle for the world which is awaited by the divine powers, and raise us to be real fellow-workers with the Godhead. Out of Christ's earthly actions we draw powers to train us to a new "white magic." That these are the same powers which live in the seven sacraments of the Christian Community can only be indicated here.

If one looks at these sacraments, or as we might also say, these supersensible acts of Christ, in the following order: Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, The Lord's Supper, Marriage, the Consecration of Priests, Extreme Unction, then there works on in them that which was once active in the seven great acts.

Perhaps some will need a longer time to become familiar with this world of the sacraments. Our aim might be to fill, through these exercises, the three first petitions of the Lord's Prayer with the rich content of the Gospels themselves. In unison with the Lord's Prayer, the spirit of Christ itself seals us with that which we are here trying to do:

Hallowed be Thy name
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven.

The course of the Act of Consecration of Man corresponds in the same way to our exercises: from the Word to the Sacrifice, and through the Transubstantiation to the Communion, the ultimate re-union.

Thus we can feel ourselves enfolded in the radiant form of Christ, and in it live our lives. □