

### *Man's Rebirth:*

#### *Journey to the Center of the Earth*



**U**NTIL MAN CONQUERS Death, his experience of incarnation is not complete. In time man must relent wholly to certain material forces in the right way so as to experience the dense body's full lower dimension and his spirit's indestructibility and omnipotence. The occult significance of the physical body lies in its profound relation to the Divine Spirit in man and to the Father aspect of the triune Godhead. These highest spiritual and lowest material components in man had their origin in the first or Saturn period of earth evolution.

It is helpful to understand that, at present, we do not experience flesh and bone in their basic character, as combinations of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, calcium and the like—elements and minerals, which are sites for contact with spiritual beings and spiritual operations. Instead, we experience *effects*, our own soul's response to the vibratory straitjacket of chemical and subphysical forces that, like a magnet, draw our consciousness down and out from the inner world of independent feeling and unclouded vision. As low-frequency vibration is painful to the whole body as well as to the sense of hearing, so the decelerated state of dense matter is a source of agony to the Spirit.

Human evolution calls upon the Ego to maintain clear contact with its I-identity while it experiences the dense body's greatest inertia and, mediated by the desire body (via the nerves), extremities of pain. It seems, in fact, that in the course of our incarnational pilgrimage, our Spirit is increasingly inhibited. We may draw less and less of the chem-

ical and life ethers to ourselves, building rather the soul body (composed of light and reflecting ethers), but our awareness of the confinement of the dense physical becomes increasingly acute. We descend in consciousness more and more to the condition of mineral matter.

Unless a grain of corn fall to the earth and die, it cannot be reborn. Is the grain of corn, we ask, not already "dead" after having been formed, ripened, and released from its parent plant? Not as dead as it must be. As a dry seed it is merely, we may say, asleep, dreaming of life. Its very organic form must begin to dis-integrate and revert to the primal mineral condition. But only begin. As Christ freely chose the cross, so man works and walks consciously toward death, dying to self that he may wake to new life. In the earliest phase of the seed's dis-organization, when it is on the verge of becoming chaotic and completely losing its contact with the etheric, then in its state of utter receptivity it is permeated by a cosmic impulse of life. On the verge of being extinguished, the latent etheric spark is quickened into a feeding flame and the seed draws together and becomes reborn, phoenix-like, out of its own dead body.

Incarnation is a continuous process. Taken to the conscious experience of death, it gathers for the

Ego strong and developed enough to endure the ordeal, forces that become a permanent component of its essential physical body, which is not visible, nor is it etheric: it is the quintessence of all the dense physical bodies worn by the Ego over its entire incarnational journey; it is the volatilized extract, the sublimated matrix, the composite force body. This is the resurrection body. It is the form of the first Adam, restored and regenerated, the New or second Adamic body made possible by the sacrifice on Golgotha.

As the aspirant works toward the death experience, he prorates the crucifixion. It may be drawn out over many years. For the whole initiatory sequence illustrated by the life of Christ Jesus was given in its most condensed form possible and in reality we may expect the sevenfold process of self-overcoming on the physical plane to require several lives of intense, unrelenting application. We may also expect the physical body to register a variety of disturbing sensations and sensitivities that are not directly attributable to any specific cause: vague malaise, indeterminate and shifting centers of strain and pain, sensory aberrations.

These quasi-somatic phenomena are to be distinguished from the more explicit dysfunctions and diseases which are simply a working through of the law of cause and effect in re-establishing physical equilibrium. Interestingly, these conditions of attenuated illness are most frequently associated with the energies proceeding from that area of the cosmic force-field known as Virgo, the sign of the Heavenly Madonna, the archetypal Virgin Earth, sign also of the Immaculate Conception of the Cosmic and individual Christ. For the two are intimately related. Here lies a great mystery of the etheric-physical polarity.

The subtle suffering deriving from the Spirit's assertion of its integrity and authority over the dense physical body is often experienced in reverse manner as an insurrection of the physical. "Psychosomatic" is the term physiologists and psychiatrists employ for an illness whose cause is not detectable, is psychic, or mental. And there can be the dismissive innuendo that the cause is imaginary. The causes, in fact, are very real; they are simply out of sight and nonphysical. The difficul-



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Engraving, From *Illustrations for the Bible*, Gustave Doré

### ***The Agony in the Garden***

*The artist has captured a gesture not commonly portrayed in depicting Christ's struggle unto, and with, Death that takes place in Gethsemane. (This is not a meeting with the Guardian of the Threshold, since Christ was without "karma" and without sin.) He declines intercession in His battle with the material forces focused in the human body. As St. Paul explains in Ephesians 6:12: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities [Lords of Mind—Hierarchy of Sagittarius], against powers [Lords of Form—Hierarchy of Scorpio]" whose influence ("spiritual wickedness) is experienced in human "flesh and blood." And while St. Luke writes that an angel strengthened him, he also describes the "agony": "and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." This is a graphic and literal description of the Christ Ego permeating His physical instruments with Spirit power, preparing for all humanity regenerated, new-Adam physical and etheric body prototypes. By refusing primary assistance, Christ gains for his younger brothers and sisters greater ability for them to overcome their fallenness.*

ties of neurasthenia and hypochondriasis may also be associated with the process of the Spirit's returning to its virginal purity, naturally becoming more sensitive to its state of corporeal imprisonment, the nervous system especially becoming delicate, responsive to subliminal stimuli—internal as well as external.

Nor does the spiritually evolved Ego cease its

descent at the nether point of physical death. It enters into the domain of the subphysical. As the ultra-violet band of light lies beyond the upper limit of what is visible to ordinary human perception and the infra-red band lies at the lower side of that visible spectrum, so too there are both upper and lower dimensions of the physical world that bound the visible material. Upon the death of the body of Jesus, the Christ Spirit submerged the mineral world. He descended into Hell and woke the dead by raising the vibratory pitch of the matter composing that sub-elemental sphere.

We see that death is a condition of not knowing that one is, that being is, that one is being. To overcome death means that the Ego shall never henceforth be subject to the loss of the consciousness of its being. It means that self-consciousness shall be uninterrupted. Sleep consciousness is so remote from waking consciousness, at most but a dream, because the being that experiences the realities of the desire world, the Ego, does not have the clarity and power of self-identity that being in the dense physical impresses on the conscious mind. One purpose of incarnation is to so develop and strengthen the I- or Ego-consciousness that it may in full security and self-control enter into and directly experience the realities of the desire world. Through initiation, the overcoming of Death, the Ego consciously bridges the invisible and visible worlds, the animal and the angelic.

There is a double action to the evolutionary arc of incarnation: While the Ego is endeavoring consciously through service and meditative study to dissociate its higher etheric from the dense physical instrument and its immediate source of life, the chemical and life ethers, this very loosening by the Ego may raise up into the sphere of its awareness profundities of the physical that were hitherto unconscious—the vital operations of the autonomic nervous system, processes controlled by spiritual beings.

Ultimately the crucifixion is experienced as an actual fact as the etheric members most deeply involved in their physical counterparts (the stigmatic centers of hands, feet, side and crown of head) undergo cleavage. Thus the paradox that in a deliberate dying to the physical one lives in it more

intensively and extensively than one ever did before making any effort to live elsewhere but in that body.

In normal waking consciousness it is not our physical or etheric body of which we are directly aware but the content of our desire body, through which we experience pain (via nerves) pleasure, passions, emotions, and sensations (mediated by the vital body). Present consciousness of the etheric is equivalent to that of dreamless sleep and the Ego does not typically consciously descend to that state; even less does it descend to mineral (physical body) consciousness, which is equivalent to that of deepest trance sleep. Thus physical consciousness is actually a misnomer. We are rather aware of the effects of our physical body as they are mediated and reflected by the etheric body and experienced by the Ego in the desire body as it is impinged upon by the etheric body. Thus true physical consciousness presupposes a power of penetration and perception far beyond the range of present-day humanity. For it involves the bringing of light to the condition of deepest sleep where the subterranean forces of the Satanic powers (a divergent group of beings in the Hierarchy of Scorpio, the Lords of Form) have their earthly foothold and from whence they exert their powerful influence on man to become exclusively materially oriented. They also engender in man delusive ideas concerning the nature of the physical world.

The fulfillment of man's incarnational career involves a repossession of his archetypal physical body in its redeemed form and the complete incarnation into the body of planet Earth by penetrating through its nine occult strata or sheathes to its Christ-abiding core. With the attainment of this feat, man's body and the Earth body will be permeated by his egoic consciousness and then subsequently the human spirit will have charge of the destiny of this star-forming world. □

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*I do not know what path in life you will take, but I do know this: if, on that path, you do not find a way to serve, you will never be happy. We are not alone. We are part of something bigger, and we experience the connection by giving with grace a portion of our time and talent to service.*

—Albert Schweitzer