

## **Philosophic Encyclopedia**

### **Core Concepts**

#### **Rebirth And The Law Of Consequence [6/21]**

Only three theories worthy of note have ever been brought forward to solve the riddle of Life and Death.

In the previous [article](#) we have, to some extent, explained one of these three theories—that of Rebirth, together with its companion law, the law of Consequence. It may not be out of place to compare the theory of Rebirth with the other two theories advanced, with a view to ascertaining their relative foundation in nature. To the Christian Mystic there can be no question. He does not say that he "believes" in it any more than we need to say that we "believe" as to the blooming of the rose or the flowing of the river, or the operation of any of the visible workings of the material world, which are continually going on before our eyes. We do not say of these things that we "believe;" we say that we "know," because we see them. So the Christian Mystic can say "I know" in regard to Rebirth, the law of Consequence and their corollaries. He sees the Ego and can trace its path after it has passed out of the dense body at death until it has reappeared on earth through a new birth. Therefore to him no "belief" is necessary. For the satisfaction of others, however, it may be well

to examine these three theories of life and death in order to arrive at an intelligent conclusion.

Any great law of nature must necessarily be in harmony with all her other laws. Therefore it may be very helpful to the inquirer to examine these theories in their relation to what are admitted by all parties to be "known laws of nature," as observed in that part of our universe with which we are more familiar. To this end we will first state the three theories:

(1) **The Materialistic Theory** holds that life is a journey from the womb to the tomb; that mind is the result of certain correlations of matter; that man is the highest intelligence in the Cosmos; and, that his intelligence perishes when the body disintegrates at death.

(2) **The Theory of Theology** asserts that at each birth a newly-created soul enters the arena of life fresh from the hand of God, passing from an invisible state through the gate of birth into visible existence; that at the end of one short span of life in the material world it passes out through the gate of death into the invisible beyond, whence it returns no more; that its happiness or misery there is determined for all eternity by its actions during the infinitesimal period intervening between birth and death.

(3) **The Theory of Rebirth** teaches that each soul is an integral part of God, enfolding all divine possibilities as the seed enfolds the plant; that by means of repeated existences in an earthly body of gradually improving quality, the latent possibilities are slowly developed into dynamic powers; that none are lost by this process, but that all mankind will ultimately attain the goal of perfection and reunion with God.

The first of these theories is monistic. It seeks to explain all facts of existence as processes within the material world. The two other

theories agree in being dualistic, that is, they ascribe some of the facts and phases of existence to a superphysical, invisible state, but they differ widely on other points.

Bringing the materialistic theory into comparison with the known laws of the universe, we find that the continuity of force is as well established as the continuity of matter and both are beyond the need of elucidation. We also know that matter and force are inseparable in the Physical World. This is contrary to the materialistic theory, which holds that mind perishes at death. When nothing can be destroyed, mind must be included. Moreover we know that mind is superior to matter, for it molds the face, so that it becomes a reflection or mirror of the mind. We have discovered that the particles of our bodies are constantly changing; that at least once in seven years there is a change in every atom of matter composing them. If the materialistic theory were true, the consciousness ought also to undergo an entire change, with no memory of that which preceded, so that at no time could man remember any event more than seven years. We know that is not the case. We remember the events of our childhood. Many of the most trivial incidents though forgotten in ordinary consciousness, have been distinctly recalled in a swift vision of the whole life by drowning persons, who have related the experience after resuscitation. Similar experiences in states of trance are also common. Materialism is unable to account for these phases of sub- and superconsciousness. It ignores them. At the present stage of scientific investigation, where leading scientists have established beyond a doubt the existence of these phenomena, the policy of ignoring them is a serious defect in a theory claiming to solve the greatest problem of life—Life itself.

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We may therefore safely pass from the materialistic theory as being inadequate to solve the mystery of life and death and turn to a consideration of the next theory.

One of the greatest objections to the orthodox theological doctrine, as it is expounded, is its entire and confessed inadequacy. Of the myriads of souls which have been created and have inhabited this Globe since the beginning of existence, even if that beginning dates back no further than six thousand years, the insignificant number of only "one hundred and forty and four thousand" are to be saved! The rest are to be tortured forever and ever! The devil gets the best of it all the time. One cannot help saying with Buddha, "If God permits such misery to exist He cannot be good, and if He is powerless to prevent it, He cannot be God."

Nothing in nature is analogous to such a method of creation in order that destruction may follow. It is represented that God desires **all** should be saved and is averse to the destruction of any, having for their salvation "given His only Son," and yet this "glorious plan of salvation" fails to save!

If a trans-Atlantic liner with two thousand souls on board sent a wireless message that she was sinking just off Sandy Hook, would it be regarded as a "glorious plan of salvation" if a fast motor-boat capable of rescuing only two or three people, were sent to her aid? Certainly not! It would more likely be denounced as a "plan of destruction" if adequate means were not provided for the saving of at least majority of those in danger.

But the theologians' plan of salvation is vastly worse than this, because two or three of two thousand is an immensely greater proportion than the orthodox theological plan of saving only

144,000 out of all the myriads of souls created. We may safely reject this theory also, as being untrue, because unreasonable. If God were all-wise He would have evolved a more efficacious plan. So He has, and the above is only the theory of the theologian. The teaching of the Bible is very different, as will appear later.

We turn now to consider the doctrine of Rebirth, which postulates a slow process of development, carried on with unwavering persistence through repeated embodiments in forms of increasing efficiency whereby all are, in time, brought to a height of spiritual splendor at present inconceivable to us. There is nothing unreasonable nor difficult to accept in such a theory. As we look about us we find everywhere in nature this striving for perfection in a slow, persistent manner. We find no sudden process of creation or destruction, such as the theologian postulates, but we do find "Evolution."

Evolution is "the history of the progression of the Spirit in Time." Everywhere, as we see about us the varied phenomena in the universe, we realize that the path of evolution is a spiral. Each loop of the spiral is a cycle. Each cycle merges into the next, as the loops of the spiral are continuous, each cycle being the improved product of those preceding it and the creator of those more developed states which succeed it.

A straight line is but the extension of a point. It occupies but one dimension in space. The theory of the materialist and that of the theologian would be analogous to this line. The materialist makes the line of life start at birth, and to be consistent, the death hour must terminate it. The theologian commences his line with the creation of the soul just previous to birth. After death the soul lives on, its fate irretrievably determined by the deeds of a few short years. There is no coming back to correct mistakes. The line

runs straight on, implying a modicum of experience and no elevation for the soul after death.

Natural progression does not follow a straight line such as these two theories imply; nor even a circular path, for that would imply a never-ending round of the same experiences and the use of only two dimensions in space. All things move in progressive cycles and in order to take full advantages of all the opportunities for advancement offered by our three-dimensional universe, it is necessary that the evolving life should take the three-dimensional path—the spiral—which goes ever onward and upward.

Whether we look at the modest little plant in our garden, or go to the redwood district of California and examine one of the giant Sequoias with its thirty-foot diameter, it is always the same—every branch, twig or leaf will be found growing in either a single or a double spiral, or in opposite pairs, each balancing either, analogous to ebb and flow, day and night, life and death and other alternating activities in nature.

Examine the vaulted arch of the sky and observe the fiery nebulae or the path of the Solar-Systems—everywhere the spiral meets the eye. In the spring the Earth discards its white blanket and emerges from its period of rest its winter sleep. All activities are exerted to bring forth new life everywhere. Time passes. The corn and the grape are ripened and harvested. Again the busy summer fades into the silence and inactivity of the winter. Again the snowy coverlet enwraps the Earth. But her sleep is not forever; she will wake again to the song of the new spring, which will mark for her a little further progress along the pathway of time.

So with the Sun. He rises in the morning of each day, but each morning he is further along on his journey through the year.

Everywhere the spiral—Onward, Upward, Forever!

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Is it possible that this law, so universal in all other realms, should be inoperative in the life of man? Shall the earth wake each year from its winter sleep; shall the tree and the flower live again and man die? It cannot be! The same law that wakes the life in the plant to new growth will wake the human being to new experience, to further progress toward the goal of perfection. Therefore the theory of Rebirth, which teaches repeated embodiment in gradually improving vehicles, is in perfect accord with evolution and the phenomena of nature, which the other two theories are not.

Regarding life from an ethical viewpoint, we find that the law of Rebirth coupled with the companion law of Consequence, is the only theory that will satisfy a sense of justice, in harmony with the facts of life as we see them about us.

It is not easy for the logical mind to understand how a "just and loving" God can require the same virtues from the millions whom He has been "pleased to place in differing circumstances" according to no apparent rule nor system, but willy-nilly, according to His own capricious mood. One lives in luxury; the other on "kicks and crusts." One has a moral education and an atmosphere of high ideals; the other is placed in squalid surroundings and taught to lie and steal and that the more he does of both, the more of a success he is. It is just to require the same of both? Is it right to reward one for living a good life when he was placed in an environment that made it extremely difficult for him to go astray, or to punish the other, who was handicapped to such an extent that he never had an idea of what constitutes true morality. Surely

not! Is it not more logical to think that we may have misinterpreted the Bible than to impute to God such a monstrous plan and method of procedure?

It is useless to say that we must not inquire into the mysteries of God; that they are past our finding out. The inequalities of life can be satisfactorily explained by the twin laws of Rebirth and Consequence and made to harmonize with the conception of a just and loving God, as taught by Christ Himself.

Moreover, by means of these twin laws a way to emancipation from present undesirable position or environment is shown, together with the means of attaining to any degree of development, no matter how imperfect we may be now.

What we are, what we have, all our good qualities are the result of our own actions in the past. What we lack in physical, moral, or mental excellence may yet be ours in the future.

Exactly as we cannot do otherwise than take up our lives each morning where we laid them down the preceding night, so by our work in previous lives have we made the conditions under which we now live and labor, and are at present creating the conditions of our future lives. Instead of bemoaning the lack of this or that faculty which we covet, we must set to work to acquire it.

If one child plays beautifully on a musical instrument, with hardly an effort at learning, while another, despite persistent effort, is a poor player in comparison, it merely shows that one expended the effort in a previous life and is easily regaining a former proficiency, while the efforts of the other have been started only in the present life, and in consequence we see the uphill work. But, if the latter persist, he may, even in the present life, become superior to the former unless the former constantly improves.

That we do not remember the effort made in acquiring a faculty by hard work is immaterial, it does not alter the fact that the faculty remains with us.

Genius is the hall-mark of the advanced soul, which by hard work in many previous lives has developed itself in some way beyond the normal achievements of the race. It reveals a glimpse of the degree of attainment which will be the common possession of the coming Race. It cannot be accounted for by heredity, which applies only in part to the dense body and not to qualities of the soul. If genius could be accounted for by heredity, why is there not a long line of mechanical ancestry previous to Thomas Edison, each more capable than his predecessor? Why does not genius propagate itself? Why is not Siegfried the son, greater than Richard Wagner, the father?

In cases where the expression of genius depends upon the possession of specially constructed organs, requiring ages of development, the Ego naturally is reborn in a family the Egos of which have, for generations, labored to build a similar organism. That is why twenty-nine musicians of more or less genius were born in the Bach family during a period of two hundred and fifty years. That genius is an expression of the soul and not of the body is shown by the fact that it did not gradually improve and reach efflorescence in the person of John Sebastian Bach, but that the proficiency which reached its highest expression in him towered high above ancestors and descendants alike.

The body is simply an instrument, the work it yields being dependent upon the Ego which guides it, as the quality of the melody is dependent upon the musician's skill, aided by the timbre of the instrument. A good musician cannot fully express himself on a poor instrument, and even upon the same instrument, all

musicians do not and cannot play alike. Because an Ego seeks rebirth as the son of a great musician it does not necessarily follow that he must be a still greater genius, as would be the case if the physical heredity were a fact and genius were not a soul-quality.

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The "Law of Attraction" accounts in quite as satisfactory manner for the facts we ascribe to heredity. We know that people of like tastes will seek another. If we know that a friend is in a certain city, but are ignorant of his address, we will naturally be governed by the law of association in our efforts to find him. If he is a musician, he will most likely be found where musicians are wont to assemble; if he is a student inquiry will be made at public libraries, reading-rooms and book stores, or if he is a sporting man we would seek him at race tracks, pool-rooms or saloons. It is not probable that the musician or the student would frequent the latter places and it is safe to say that our search for the sporting man would not be successful if we sought him in a library or at a classical concert.

Similarly, the Ego ordinarily gravitates to the most congenial associations. It is constrained to do so by one of the twin forces of the Desire World—the force of Attraction.

The objection may be urged that there are people of entirely opposite tastes, or bitter enemies even, in the same family, and if the law of Association governed why should they be attracted thereto?

The explanation of such cases is that during the Ego's earth lives many relations have been established with various people. These relations were pleasant or otherwise, involving on one hand obligations which were not liquidated at the time; or on the other

involving the infliction of an injury and a feeling of very strong hate between the injured and his enemy. The law of **Consequence** requires an exact adjustment of the score. Death does not "pay it all" any more than moving to another city will liquidate a monetary debt. The time comes when the two enemies will meet again. The old hate has brought them together in the same family, because it is the purpose of God that all shall love one another; therefore hate must be transformed into love and though, perchance, they may spend many lives "fighting it out," they will at some time learn the lesson and become friends and mutual benefactors instead of enemies. In such cases the Interest these people had in one another set in action the force of Attraction, and that brought them together. Had they simply been mutually Indifferent they could not have become associated.

Thus do the twin laws of **Rebirth and Consequence** solve, in a rational manner, all the problems incident to human life as man steadily advances toward the next stage in evolution—the Superman. The trend of humanity's progress is onward and upward forever, says this theory—not as some people think who have confounded the doctrine of **Rebirth** with the foolish teaching of some Indian tribes who believe that man is reborn in animals or plants. That would be retrogression. No authority for this doctrine of retrogression can be found in nature or in the sacred books of any religion. In one (and one only) of the religious writings of India is it touched upon. In the Kathopanishad (ch. V, verse 9) it is stated that "Some men, according to their deeds, go into the womb and others into the 'sthanu.'" "Sthanu" is a Sanskrit word, which means "motionless," but it also means "a pillar," and has been interpreted to mean that some men, because of their sins, go back to the motionless plant kingdom.

Spirits incarnate only to gain experience; to conquer the world; to overcome the lower self and attain self-mastery. When we realize this we shall understand that there comes a time when there is no further need for incarnation because the lessons have all been learned. The teaching of the Kathopanishad indicates that instead of remaining tied to the wheel of birth and death, man will at some time go into the motionless state of "Nirvana."

In the Book of Revelation we find these words: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go no more out," referring to entire liberation from concrete existence. Nowhere is there any authority for the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. A man who has evolved so far as to have an individual, separate soul cannot turn back in his progress and enter the vehicle of animal or plant, which are under a group-spirit. The individual spirit is a higher evolution than the group-spirit and the lesser cannot obtain the greater.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his beautiful poem, "The Chambered Nautilus," has embodied this idea of constant progression in gradually improving vehicles, and final liberation. The nautilus builds its spiral shell in chambered sections, constantly leaving the smaller ones, which it has outgrown, for the one last built:

Year after year beheld the silent toil  
That spread his lustrous coil;  
Still, as the spiral grew,  
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,  
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,  
Built up its idle door,  
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.  
Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,  
Child of the wandering sea,

Cast from her lap forlorn!  
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born  
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!  
While on mine ear it rings,  
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:  
Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul!  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
'Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

The necessity, previously referred to, of obtaining an organism of a specific nature, brings to mind an interesting phase of the twin laws of **Rebirth and Consequence**. These laws are connected with the motion of the Cosmic bodies, the Sun, the planets and the signs of the Zodiac. All move in harmony with these laws, guided in their orbits by their indwelling spiritual Intelligences—the Planetary Spirits.

On account of the precession of the equinoxes the Sun moves backward through the twelve signs of the Zodiac at the rate of approximately one degree of space in 72 years, and through each sign (30 degrees of space) in about 2,100 years, or around the whole circle in about 26,000 years.

This is due to the fact that the Earth does not spin upon a stationary axis. Its axis has a slow, swinging motion of its own (just like the wobble of a spinning top that has almost spent its force), so that it describes a circle in space and thus one star after another becomes Pole Star.

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Because of this wobbling motion the Sun does not cross the equator in the same place every year, but a few hundred rods further back, hence the name, the "precession of the equinoxes," because the equinox "precedes"—comes too early.

All happenings on the Earth in connection with the other Cosmic bodies and their inhabitants are connected with this and other Cosmic movements. So are also the laws of **Rebirth and Consequence.**

As the Sun passes through the different signs of in the course of the year, the climatic and other changes affect man and his activities in different ways. Similarly the passage of the Sun by the procession of the equinoxes, through the twelve signs of the Zodiac—which is called a World-year, brings about conditions on the Earth of a far greater variety. It is necessary to the growth of the soul that it should experience them all. In fact, as we have seen, the man himself makes these conditions while in the Heaven World between births. Therefore, every Ego is born twice during the time the Sun is passing through one sign of the Zodiac; and, as the soul itself is necessarily double-sexed, in order to obtain all experiences, it is reborn alternately in a male and a female body. This is because the experience of one sex differs widely from that of the other. At the same time, the outside conditions are not greatly altered in one thousand years and therefore permit the entity to receive experience in the same identical environment from the standpoint of both man and woman.

These are the general terms upon which the law of **Rebirth** operates, but as it is not a blind law, it is subject to frequent modifications, determined by the Lords of Destiny, the Recording

Angels, as, for instance, in a case where an Ego needs a sensitive eye or ear and there is an opportunity for giving it the required instrument in a family with which relations have previously been established. The time for the re-embodiment of the Ego in question may lack, perhaps, two hundred years of being ripe according to the average period, but it is seen by the **Lords of Destiny** that unless this opportunity is embraced, the Ego will perhaps have to spend four or five hundred years in heaven in excess of the time required, before another chance will present itself. Therefore the Ego is brought to rebirth ahead of schedule time, so to speak, the deficiency of rest in the third heaven being made up at another time. So we see that, not only do the departed work on us from the Heaven World, but we also work on them, attracting or repelling them. A favorable opportunity for procuring a suitable instrument may attract an Ego to rebirth. Had no instrument been available, he would have been kept longer in heaven and the surplus time deducted from his succeeding heaven lives.

The law of **Consequence** also works in harmony with the stars, so that a man is born at the time when the positions of the bodies in the solar system will give the conditions necessary to his experience and advancement in the school of life. That is why Astrology is an absolutely true science, though even the best astrologer may misinterpret it, because, like all other human beings, he is fallible. The stars show accurately the time in a man's life when the debt which the Lords of Destiny have selected for payment is due, and to evade it is beyond the power of man. Yes, they show the very day, although we are not always able to read them correctly.

Perhaps the most striking instance known to the writer of this inability to escape what is written in the stars, though perfectly

cognizant of it, occurred in Los Angeles, California, in 1906. Some instructions in astrology were given to Mr. L., a well-known lecturer. Mr. L.'s own horoscope was taken up, because a pupil will be more interested in that than in the nativity of a stranger. He is also enabled to check the accuracy of the interpretation of the signs which are given to him. The horoscope revealed a liability to accidents and Mr. L. was shown how accidents and other events in the past figured to the time of occurrence. In addition, he was told that another accident would befall him and that it would occur on the twenty-first of the following July, or the seventh day after, i.e., on the twenty-eighth, the latter day being regarded as the more dangerous. He was warned against conveyances of any kind and the place of the threatened injury was designated as the breast, shoulders, arms and lower part of the head. He was thoroughly convinced of the danger and promised to remain at home on that day.

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The writer went north to Seattle and a few days before the critical time wrote to Mr. L. and again warned him. Mr. L. answered that he remembered the warning and would act accordingly.

The next communication in regard to the matter came from a mutual friend, who stated that on the 29th of July Mr. L. had gone to Sierra Madre on an electric car which had collided with a railroad train, Mr. L. sustaining injuries of the exact description mentioned and also having a tendon cut in the left leg.

The question was why Mr. L., having entire faith in the prediction, had disregarded the advice. The explanation came three months later, when he had recovered sufficiently to write. The letter said, "I thought the 28th was the 29th."

There is no question in the writer's mind that this was a piece of "ripe" fate, impossible to escape, which was accurately foreshown by the stars.

The stars may therefore be called the "Clock of Destiny." The twelve signs of the Zodiac correspond to the dial; the Sun and the planets to the hour hand, indicating the month of the year when the different items in the score of ripe fate allotted to each life are due to work themselves out.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasized, however, that though there are some things that cannot be escaped, man has a certain scope of free will in modifying causes already set going. A poet puts it thus:

One ship sails east and another sails west  
With the self-same winds that blow.  
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale  
Which determines the way they go.  
As the winds of the sea are the ways of fate  
As we voyage along through life,  
'Tis the act of the soul that determines the goal,  
And not the calm or the strife.

The great point to grasp is that our present actions determine future conditions.

Orthodox religionists and even those who profess no religion at all, often bring forward as one of their strongest objections to the law of Rebirth that it is taught in India to the "ignorant heathen," who believe in it. If it is a natural law, however, there is no objection strong enough to invalidate it or make it inoperative. Before we speak of "ignorant heathen," or send missionaries to them, it might be well to examine our own knowledge a little. Educators

everywhere complain of superficiality on the part of our students. Professor Wilbur L. Cross, of Yale, mentions among other startling cases of ignorance, the fact that in a class of forty students, not one could "place" Judas Iscariot!

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It would seem as though the labors of missionaries could profitably be diverted from "heathen" countries and from slum work to enlighten the college-bred individuals of our own country, on the principle that "charity begins at home," and "as God will not let the ignorant heathen perish" it would seem better to leave him in ignorance where he is sure of heaven, than to enlighten him and so render his chances of going to hell legion. Surely, this is a case of "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise." We would be doing ourselves and the heathen a signal service by letting him alone and looking after the ignorant Christian nearer home.

Moreover, to call this heathen doctrine does not disprove it. Its assumed priority in the East is no more an argument against it than the accuracy of the solution of a mathematical problem is invalidated because we do not happen to like the person who first solved it. The only question is: Is it correct? If so, it is absolutely immaterial whence the solution first came.

All other religions have been but leading up to the Christian religion. They were **Race Religions** and contain only in part that which Christianity has in fuller measure. The real Esoteric Christianity has not yet been taught publicly, nor will it be so taught until humanity has passed the materialistic stage and becomes fitted to receive it. The laws of Rebirth and Consequence have been secretly taught all the time, but, by the direct Command of Christ Himself, as we shall see, these two laws have

not been publicly taught in the Western world for the past two thousand years.

## **Wine As A Factor In Evolution**

To understand the reason for this omission and the means employed to obscure these teachings, we must go back to the beginning of man's history and see how, for his good, he has been led by the Great Teacher of humanity.

In the teaching of Mystic Christianity the stages of development on the earth are divided into periods called "**Epochs.**" There have been four of these **Epochs**, which are designated as follows, respectively: **The Polarian, the Hyperborean, the Lemurian, the Atlantean.** The present Epoch is called the **post-Atlantean Epoch.**

In the **First or Polarian Epoch**, what is now humanity had only a dense body, as the minerals have now, hence he was mineral-like.

In the **Second or Hyperborean Epoch**, a **vital body** was added and man-in-the-making possesses a body constituted as are those of plants. He was not a plant, but was plantlike.

In the **Third or Lemurian Epoch**, he obtained his desire body and became constituted like the animal—an animal-man.

In the **Fourth or Atlantean Epoch**, mind was unfolded and now, so far as his principles are concerned, he steps upon the stage of physical life as man.

In the present, the **Fifth or post-Atlantean Epoch**, man will in some degree unfold the third or lowest aspect of his threefold spirit—the Ego.

The student is requested to strongly impress upon his mind the emphatic statement that in the process of evolution up to the time when man gained self-consciousness, absolutely nothing was left to chance.

After self-consciousness there is a certain scope for the exercise of man's own individual will to enable him to unfold his Divine spiritual powers.

The great Leaders of mankind take everything into consideration, the food of man included. This has a great deal to do with his development. "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are" is not a far-fetched idea, but a great truth in nature.

The man of the **first Epoch** was ethereal. That does not contradict the statement that he was mineral-like, for all gases are mineral. The Earth was still soft, not yet having solidified. In the Bible man is called Adam and it is said that he was made of earth.

Cain is described as an agriculturist. He symbolizes the man of the **Second Epoch**. He had a **vital body** like the plants which sustained him.

In the **Third Epoch** food was obtained from living animals to supplement the former plant food. Milk was the means used for evolving the desire body, which made the mankind of that time animal-like. This is what is meant by the Bible statement that "Abel was a shepherd." It is nowhere stated that he killed animals.

In the **Fourth Epoch** man had evolved beyond animals—he had mind. Thought breaks down nerve cells: kills, destroys and causes decay. Therefore the food of the **Atlantean** was, by analogy, carcasses. He killed to eat and that is why the Bible states that

"Nimrod was a mighty hunter." Nimrod represents the man of the **Fourth Epoch.**

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In the meanwhile, man had descended deeper and deeper into matter. His former ethereal body formed the skeleton within and had become solid. He had also lost by degrees the spiritual perception which was possessed by him in the earlier Epochs. Thus it was designed. He is destined to get it back at a higher stage, plus the self-consciousness which he did not then possess. He had, however, during the first four Epochs, a greater knowledge of the spiritual world. He knew he did not die and that when one body wasted away it was like the drying of a leaf from the tree in the autumn—another body would grow to take its place. Therefore he had no real appreciation of the opportunities and advantages of this Earth life of concrete existence.

But it was necessary that he should become thoroughly awake to the great importance of this concrete existence, so that he might learn from it all that could be learned. So long as he felt that he was a citizen of the higher Worlds and knew for a certainty that physical life is but a small part of real existence he did not take it seriously enough. He did not apply himself to the cultivation of the opportunities for growth which are found only in the present phase of existence. He dallied his time away without developing the resources of the world.

The only way in which an appreciation of concrete physical existence could be aroused in man was by depriving him of the memory of his higher, spiritual existence for a few lives. Thus, during his Earth life, he came to hold no positive knowledge of any

other than the one present physical life, and was in this way impelled to earnestly apply himself to living it.

There had been religions previous to Christianity which had taught **Rebirth and the law of Consequence**, but the time had now come when it was no longer conducive to man's advancement that he should know this doctrine, and ignorance concerning it came to be regarded as a sign of progress. This one single life was to be made paramount. Therefore we find that the Christian Religion, as publicly taught, does not embody the laws of **Consequence and Rebirth**. Nevertheless, as Christianity is the religion of the current post-Atlantean human races, it must be the most advanced Religion, and because of the elimination of this doctrine from its public teachings, the conquest of the world of matter is being made by the post-Atlantean races, in which this phase has been carried furthest.

As some new addition to or change in the food of man has been made in every Epoch to meet its conditions and accomplish its purposes, we now find added to the food of the previous Epochs a new article—**wine**. It was needed on account of its benumbing effect upon the spiritual principle in man, because no religion, in and of itself, could have made man forget his nature as a spirit and have caused him to think of himself as "a worm of the dust," or made him believe that "we walk with the same force with which we think"—indeed, it was never intended that he should go so far as that.

Hitherto only water had been used as a drink and in the ceremonies of the Temple service, but after the submergence of **Atlantis**—a continent which once existed between Europe and America, where the Atlantic Ocean now lies—those who escaped destruction began to cultivate the vine and make wine, as we find

narrated in the Bible story of Noah. Noah symbolizes the remnant of the **Atlantean Epoch**, which became the nucleus of the **Fifth Epoch Race**—therefore our progenitors.

The active principle of alcohol is a "spirit" and as the humanity of the earlier Epochs used the articles of food best suited to their vehicles, so this spirit was, in the Fifth Epoch, added to the foods previously used by evolving humanity. It acts upon the spirit of the Fifth Epoch man, temporarily paralyzing it, that it may know, esteem and conquer the physical world and value it at its proper worth. Thus man forgets, for the time being, his spiritual home, clinging to this form of existence, which he has previously despised, with all the tenacity born of a feeling that this is all there is—or at least, preferring the certainty of this world to taking chances on a heaven which, in his present muddled state, he does not understand.

Water only had been used in the Temples, but now this is altered. "Bacchus," a god of wine, appears and under his sway the most advanced nations forget that there is a higher life. None who offer tribute to the counterfeit spirit of wine or any alcoholic liquor (the product of fermentation and decay) can ever know anything of the higher Self—the true Spirit which is the very source of life.

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All this was preparatory to the coming of Christ, and it is of the highest significance that His first act was to change "water into wine." (John 2:11.)

In private He taught Rebirth to his His disciples. He not only taught them in words, but He took them "into the mountain." This is a mystic term meaning a place of Initiation. In the course of Initiation they see for themselves that Rebirth is a fact, for there

Elijah appeared before them, who, they are told, is also John the Baptist. Christ, in unequivocal terms, had previously told them, when speaking of John the Baptist, "this is Elijah who was for to come." He reiterates this at the Transfiguration scene, saying, "Elijah has come already and they knew him not, but have done to him whatsoever they listed." And following this, it is said that "they understood He spake of John the Baptist." (Matt. 17:12-13). On this occasion, and also at the time when Rebirth was discussed between Him and His disciples, they told Him that some thought He was Elijah and others that He was one of the prophets who had been reborn. He commanded them to "tell no man." (Matt. 17:9; Like 9:21). This was to be, for thousands of years, an esoteric teaching, to be known only among the few pioneers who fitted themselves for the knowledge, pushing ahead to the stage of development when these truths will again be known to man.

That Christ taught Rebirth and also the law of Consequence is perhaps shown in no other place as clearly as in the case of the man who had been born blind, where His disciples asked, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2).

Had Christ not taught **Rebirth and the law of Consequence**, the natural answer would have been, "Nonsense! How could a man have sinned before he was born, and have brought blindness upon himself as a result? But Christ does not answer in that way. He is not surprised at the question, nor does He treat it as being at all unusual, showing that it was quite in harmony with His teachings. He explains, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of (the) God should be made manifest in him."

The orthodox interpretation is that the man was born blind in order that Christ might have the opportunity of performing a miracle to show His power. It would have been a strange way for a

God to obtain glory—capriciously condemning a man to many years of blindness and misery that He might "show off" at a future time! We would consider a man who acted in such a manner a monster of cruelty.

How much more logical to think that there may be another explanation. To impute to God conduct which, in a human being, we would denounce in the strongest terms, is surely unreasonable.

Christ differentiates between the physically blind body of the man and the God within, which is the Higher Self.

The dense body has committed no sin. The God within has done some deed which manifests in the particular affliction from which he is suffering. It is not stretching a point to call a man a God. Paul says, "know ye not that ye are Gods?" and he refers to the human body as the "temple of God," the indwelling spirit.

Finally, although most people do not remember their past lives, there are some who do, and all may know if they will live the life necessary to attain the knowledge. This requires great strength of character, because such knowledge will carry with it a knowledge of impending fate that may be hanging black and sinister over one, which will manifest in dire disaster. Nature has graciously hidden the past and the future from us, that we may not be robbed of peace of mind by suffering in anticipation of the pain in store for us. As we attain greater development we shall learn to welcome all things with equanimity, seeing in all troubles the result of past evil and feeling thankful that the obligations incurred thereby are being annulled, knowing that so much less stands between us and the day of liberation from the wheel of birth and death.

When a person dies in childhood in one life, he or she not infrequently remembers that life in the next body, because children under 14 years do not journey around the entire life cycle, which necessitates the building of a complete set of new vehicles. They simply pass into the upper Regions of the **Desire** and there wait for a new embodiment, which usually takes place in from one to twenty years after death. When they return to birth, they bring with them the old mind and desire body, and if we listened to the prattle of children, we should often be able to discover and reconstruct such stories as the following

### **A Remarkable Story**

One day in Santa Barbara, California, USA, a man by the name of Roberts came to a trained clairvoyant who is also a lecturer on Theosophy and asked for help in a perplexing case. Mr. Roberts had been walking in the street the previous day when a little three-year old girl came up to him and put her arms around his knees, calling him papa. Mr. Roberts was indignant, thinking that someone was trying to father the child on him. But the mother of the child, who came up directly, was equally put out and tried to get the child away. The child, however, kept on clinging to Mr. R., insisting that he was her father. On account of circumstances to be told later Mr. R. could not put it out of his mind, and sought out the clairvoyant, who accompanied him to the house of the child's parents. Where the girl at once ran up to Mr. R. and again called him papa. The clairvoyant, whom I call X, first took the child over to the window to note whether the iris of the eye would expand and contract when he turned her to and from the light, in order to see whether another entity than the rightful owner was in possession of the child's body, for the eye is the window of the soul and no "obsessing" entity can secure control of that part. Mr. X. found however, that the child was normal and next proceeded

to question the little one carefully. After patient work carried on intermittently during the afternoon, so as not to tire the child, this is the story she told:

She had lived with her papa, Mr. Roberts, and another mamma in a little house that stood all alone, where no other house could be seen; there was a little brook close to the house where some flowers grew (and here she ran out and brought in some "pussy-willows") and there was a plank across the brook which she was cautioned against crossing, for fear she might fall into the brook. One day her papa had left her mother and herself and had not returned. When their supply of food was exhausted her mamma lay down on the bed and became so still. At last she said quaintly, "then I also died, but I didn't die. I came here."

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Mr. Roberts next told his story. Eighteen years before he lived in London, where his father was brewer. He fell in love with their servant girl. His father objected, so he eloped with her to Australia after they had first been married. Here he went out into the bush and cleared a little farm, where he erected a small cabin by a brook, just as described by the little girl. A daughter was born to them there, and when she was about two years old he left the house one morning and went to a clearing some distance from the house, and while there a man with a rifle came up to him, saying that he arrested him in the name of the law for a bank robbery committed on the night Mr. R. had left England. The officer had tracked him here, thinking him the criminal. Mr. R. begged to be allowed to go to his wife and child, but, thinking this a ruse to entrap him into the hands of confederates, the officer refused and drove him to the coast at the point of the gun. He was taken to England and tried and his innocence proven.

First then did the authorities take heed of his constant ravings about his wife and child, whom he knew must starve in that wild and lonely country. An expedition was sent out to the cabin, when it was found that only the skeletons of the wife and child remained. Mr. Roberts' father had died in the meantime, and though he had disinherited Mr. R. his brothers divided with him and he came to America a broken man.

He then produced photographs of himself and his wife, and at the suggestion of Mr. X. they were mixed with a number of other photographs and shown to the little girl, who unhesitatingly picked out the photographs of both her alleged parents, although the photograph shown was very different from the present appearance of Mr. Roberts.

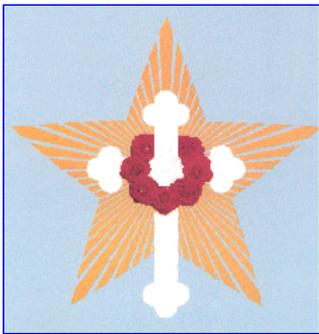
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