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## **Rays From The Rose Cross Magazine**

### **The Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions & Answers How the Length of Earth Life is Determined**

Select Core Concepts..... ▾

Go

*Question:* Is there any limit set to the Earth life before we are born? (Vol. I, #47)

*Answer:* Yes, at the time when the Ego is coming to rebirth, it forms the creative archetype of its physical form in the Second Heaven with the help of the Creative Hierarchies. That archetype is a singing, vibrating thing, which is set into vibration by the Ego with a certain force commensurate with the length of the life to be lived upon Earth, and until that archetype ceases to vibrate the form which is built of the chemical constituents of the Earth will continue to live.

The law of cause and effect, however, is the arbiter of the way the life is to be lived, and certain opportunities for spiritual growth are set before the Ego at various points in its Earth life. If these opportunities are made use of, the life will continue along the straight path, but if not, it diverges, as we might say, into a blind alley where the life then is terminated by the creative hierarchies, which destroy the archetype in the Heaven World. Thus we may say that the ultimate length of an Earth life is determined before we are born physically, but the life may be shortened if we neglect

certain opportunities. There is also the possibility in the case of a few, where the life has been thoroughly lived, where it has been very full, and where the person has endeavored in all cases to live up to his opportunities, that more life may be infused into the archetype than had been done in the first place, and so the life may be prolonged, but as said, that is only in exceptional cases.

## **Reducing the Interval between Earth Lives**

*Question:* Is it possible to shorten the time between death and a new birth, so as to hasten one's evolution, and if so, how? (Vol. I. #48)

*Answer:* Yes, it is possible for everyone who will take the pains to review this life every day, in the reverse order, from evening until morning, judging himself for the things he has done amiss, promising himself to rectify his mistakes and doing it to the best of his endeavor. When he does that he or she will eradicate the sins he or she has committed from his or her life and he or she will steadily become a very much better man or woman than those who do not perform this simple exercise. Thus the sins which would otherwise be expurgated in Purgatory have been already dealt with in life and so the Purgatorial existence will be materially shortened. When at the time of the evening exercise, the man reviews the good he has done and promises himself to endeavor to do even better in the future he is also assimilating the good he has done each day, and will therefore make enormous strides in soul growth so that he will also obviate the necessity for life in the First Heaven. Such a man will then be definitely treading the path of initiation; he is then in reality outside the ordinary laws which govern mankind, for he is a helper in evolution and will, therefore, be given the opportunity to return to Earth in that capacity much sooner than would otherwise be the case.

## **Why Children Die**

*Question:* Why do children die? (Vol. I, #51)

*Answer:* There are many causes for the death of children. We will give a few of the principal ones. In the first place, when an Ego returns to Earth life, it is drawn to a certain family because it can there get the environment which is calculated to further its progress, and where it may liquidate a certain amount of the fate generated by itself in previous existences. Then when parents make such radical changes in their lives that the Ego would not be able to get that experience, or liquidate that fate, the Ego is usually withdrawn and sent to another place where it may get the right conditions for its growth at that time. Or it may be withdrawn for a few years and reborn in the same family when it is seen that the conditions can be obtained there at that late time. But there is a cause that is responsible for infant mortality which lies much farther back, namely, in previous lives, and to understand this cause it is necessary to know something about what takes place at death and immediately after.

When a spirit is passing out of the body, it takes with it the desire body, the mind and the vital body, and the vital body is at that time the storehouse for the pictures of the past life. These are then etched into the desire body during the three and one-half days immediately following death. Then the desire body becomes the arbiter of man's destiny in Purgatory and the First Heaven. The pains caused by expurgation of evil and the joy caused by the contemplation of the good in life are carried over to the next life as conscience to deter man from perpetuating the mistakes of past lives and to entice him to do that which caused him joy in the former life more abundantly.

When those next of kin to a dying person who are present in the death chamber burst into hysterical lamentations at the time the spirit passes out, and keep that up for the next few days, the spirit which is at that time in exceedingly close touch with the Physical World will be much moved by the grief of the dear ones, and will not be able to focus its attention closely upon the contemplation of its past life, and thus the etching made in the desire body will not be as deep as it would if the passing spirit were left in peace and undisturbed. Consequently the sufferings in Purgatory will not be as keen nor will the pleasures in the First Heaven be as great as otherwise and therefore, when the Ego returns to Earth life, it will have lost a certain part of the experience from the previous life. That is to say, the voice of conscience will not speak with the same emphasis as would have been the case had the Ego been left undisturbed by lamentations.

In order to compensate for this lack, the Ego is then usually brought to birth among the same friends who lamented over it, and it is then taken away from them while yet in the years of childhood. Then it enters the Desire World, but, of course, a little child has not committed any sins that need to be expurgated and so its desire body and mind remain intact; it then goes directly into the First Heaven to wait until a new embodiment offers, but this waiting time is used to school it directly in the effect of the different emotions, both good and evil. And often a relative meets it and takes it in charge, having the task of teaching it that which it had lost through the lamentation that person indulged in, or else it is taught by others. At any rate, the loss is more than made up, so that when the child returns to the second birth it will have as full a moral growth as it would have had under ordinary circumstances, had there been no lamentation at the time when it passed out.

## **The Effects of Cremation Upon the Physical Body**

*Question:* Does the cremation of the dense body after death affect the spirit in any way? (Vol. I, #53)

*Answer:* During life and in the waking state of consciousness, the vehicles of the Ego are all together and concentric, but at death the Ego, clothed in the mind and desire body, withdraws from the dense body, and as the vital functions are at an end, the vital body also is taken out of the dense body, leaving it inanimate upon the bed. One little atom in the heart is taken out and the rest of the body disintegrates in due course. But at that time there is an extremely important process going on, and those who attend the passing spirit in the death chamber should be very careful that the utmost quiet reigns there and in the whole house, for the pictures of the whole past life which have been stored in the vital body are passing before the eye of the spirit in a slow and orderly progression, in reverse order, from death back to birth. This panorama of the past life lasts from a few hours to three and one-half days. The time is dependent upon the strength of the vital body which determines how long a man could keep awake under the most severe stress. Some persons can work for fifty, sixty and seventy hours before they fall down exhausted, while others are capable of keeping awake only a few hours. The reason why it is important that there should be quiet in the house of death during the three and one-half days immediately following death is this: During that time the panorama of the past life is being etched upon the desire body which will be the man's vehicle while he stays in Purgatory and the First Heaven, where he is reaping the good or ill that he has sown, according to the deeds done in the body.

Now, where the life has been full of events and the man's vital body is strong, a longer time will be given to this etching than under conditions where the vital body is weak, but during all that time the dense body is connected with the higher vehicles by the silver cord and any hurt to the dense body is felt in a measure by the spirit. So that embalming, post mortem examinations and cremation are all felt. Therefore, these should be avoided during the first three and one-half days after the time of death, for when the panorama has been fully etched into the desire body, then the silver cord is broken, the vital body gravitates back to the dense body and there is no more connection with the spirit, which is then free to go on with its higher life.

When the body is buried, the vital body disintegrates slowly at the same time as the dense body, so that when, for instance, an arm has decayed in the grave, the etheric arm of the vital body which hovers over the grave also disappears, and so on until the last vestige of the body is gone. But where cremation is performed the vital body disintegrates at once, and as that is the storehouse of the pictures of the past life, which, being etched upon the desire body to form the basis of life in Purgatory and the First Heaven, this would be a great calamity where cremation is performed before the three and a half days are past. Unless help were given, the passing spirit could not hold it together. And that is part of the work that is done by the invisible helpers for humanity. Sometimes they are assisted by nature spirits and others detailed by the Creative Hierarchies or leaders of humanity. There is also a loss where one is cremated before the silver cord has broken naturally, the imprint upon the desire body is never as deep as it would otherwise have been, and this has an effect upon future lives, for the deeper the imprint of the past life upon the desire body, the keener the sufferings in Purgatory for the ill committed and the

keener also the pleasure in the First Heaven which results from the good deeds of the past life. It is these pains and pleasures of our past lives that create what we call conscience, so that where we have lost in suffering we lose also the realization of wrong which is to deter us in future lives from committing the same mistakes over and over again. Therefore, the effects of the premature cremation are very far reaching. Sad it is to say, that while we have a science of birth with obstetricians, trained nurses, antiseptics and everything else necessary to the comfort and well being of a little stranger, we sadly lack a science of death to help us to care for the departing friends of a lifetime.

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This article was adapted from "[The Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers, Vol. I,](#)" by Max Heindel.

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