

**Advanced Core Concepts  
Independent Study Module No. 20**

**The Beneficent Experiences of Purgatory**

Let us not become alarmed by this word "purgatory," for although the experiences in this state may be painful, at the same time they are extremely beneficent, because they free the Ego from the weights which would otherwise prevent it from rising into the higher regions. This is the reason why purgatory comes first after passing out in death. From our standpoint we might consider it desirable to have heaven first, particularly if we have had a hard earth life, but this is scientifically impossible; until our spiritual specific gravity is decreased, we cannot rise.

Purgatory is located in the three lowest regions of the desire world. Its principal function is to tear out the coarse desire stuff which we have built into our desire bodies by wrong living during earth life. All coarse and selfish desires are torn out by the force of repulsion, which is the prevailing force in this region. Self-assertion is the mainspring in the force of repulsion. By means of this force all qualities based upon unbrotherly self-assertion are destroyed.

The life panorama of the preceding life now unrolls before the Ego, bringing with it the purging forces appropriate to each incident. Here the ego feels all the pain that it caused others. Here it suffers the pangs of destructive desires, such as those for liquor, tobacco, and drugs, because these desires cannot possibly be gratified. It suffers until these desires die out for lack of gratification. The pain connected with this process is approximately three times as keen as that of similar experiences in earth life, because the process is three times as fast, and because the Ego now has no physical body to dull the pain. The purgatorial period is ordinarily about one-third as long as the earth life just past.

A practical lesson may be deduced from the above, namely, that the best way to get rid of evil desires here is simply to push them out of the consciousness and let them die out from non-gratification. Fighting them creates thought forms to which they attach themselves and which prolong their life. Starvation, therefore, is the only practical method. This applies particularly to clearing the mind of impure thoughts. Also we may note the foolishness of acquiring a lot of handicaps during life in the form of destructive desires for such things as tobacco and drugs. But if we have acquired these desires, we may also see the great advisability of getting rid of them here during our earth life when we can do it with only one-third the pain and discomfort which would be required after passing to the other side. Even from a selfish standpoint it is only good sense to give these things up while we have the chance to do it easily.

As a result of the experiences of purgatory conscience is developed, which will tend to restrain the Ego in future lives

from repeating its mistakes; also it will come back in the next life freed from the binding effects of evil desires and able to exercise free will, which it could not do if those desires had not been expurgated. The temptation, however, to gratify those same desires will be repeated until the ego has finally developed the will power to master them. Then they will no longer enter his consciousness.

After going through the purgative processes the Ego is able to proceed into the heaven worlds and enjoy the life there, which it could not possibly have done before. Many people labor under the delusion that if they could only get into heaven as soon as they die, they would be happy; but as a matter of fact the vibrations of the heaven planes are so high that if the ordinary person were to be transported there before the purgative processes had been gone through with, he would be in the most intense agony, because his spiritual vehicles are vibrating at a very low rate, and to raise their rate of vibration suddenly to that of the heaven planes would bring on a condition analogous to that of electrocution.

People who during earth life enjoy vice and cruelty or use black magic to gain power over others harden the vital body and cause it to become interlocked with the desire body. The two then constitute what is known as the "sin body." Such individuals are **earthbound** after passing over into the purgatorial regions. The forces of purgatory are not able to disintegrate the sin body with the usual speed, with the result that these Egos remain earthbound in some cases for hundreds of years. They still retain their evil disposition. Moreover, they are in our very midst, closer than hands or feet, and by mental

suggestion they are able to incite those of weak mentality to crime. Thus they are far more dangerous than the physical criminal.

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Now comes what is the most practical part of this self-study module, namely, a method by which we may avoid purgatory if we will but take time by the forelock. This is the Rosicrucian method of retrospection. Each night we should go over the events of the day in reverse order, beginning with those of the evening and proceeding backward to those of the morning, examining each one very carefully to ascertain its spiritual quality of good or evil. We should let the experiences flow back into the consciousness, endeavoring to feel the pain which we have caused others, and also endeavoring to feel the unspiritual quality of our wrong actions of the day. By doing so we shall be living our purgatory each night, and when we pass over to the other side, we shall not have to go through the intensified purgatorial experiences which the ordinary person does. Thus we shall not only save ourselves much pain, but also much time, which we may use for service in the higher worlds, gaining added soul growth thereby: we shall also be able as a result to come back to rebirth sooner. In addition, this process of retrospection will release the emotional energy generated each day, and thus eliminate the possibility of its causing neurotic ailments later. This method really constitutes the daily forgiveness of sins, because from day to day we thus blot out our sins from the Book of God, namely the record within our own hearts.

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## Questions

[You are welcome to **e-mail** your answers and/or comments to us. Please be sure to include the course name and Independent Study Module number in your e-mail to us. Or, you are also welcome to use the **answer form below. (Java required)**]

**1.** Why does purgatory come before the heaven life? Could we enjoy heaven before passing through purgatory, and if not, why?

**2.** What is the nature of the purgatorial force, and how does it act?

**3.** What happens in purgatory to those who have injured others on earth?

**4.** What is the best method of getting rid of sensual desires, and why is this method the best?

**5.** What quality is developed as the result of purgatory?

**6.** What is the sin body, and what dangers to the living come from it?

**7.** How may we avoid purgatory, and what is the advantage of this?

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