

**Advanced Core Concepts  
Independent Study Module No. 35**

**Faust [continued]**

As exercise is necessary to the development of physical muscle, so development of the moral nature is accomplished through temptation. The soul being given choice, may exercise it in whatever direction it chooses, for it learns just as well by its mistakes as by right action in the first place, perhaps even better. Therefore, in the Job myth, the devil is permitted to tempt; and in the Faust myth he makes the request:

"My Lord, if I may lead him as I choose,  
I wager Thou him yet wilt lose."

To this the Lord replies:

"Tis granted thee! Divert  
This spirit from its primal source,  
Him mayst thou seize, thy power exert,  
If he will go the downward course.  
But stand ashamed when thou art forced to own,  
A good man in his darkest aberration  
Still knows the path that leadeth to salvation.

Go, thou art free to act without control.  
I do not cherish hate for such as thee;  
Of all the spirits of negation  
The cynic is least wearisome to Me.  
Man is too prone, activity to shirk,  
And undisturbed in rest he fain would live;  
Hence this companion purposely I give  
Who stirs, excites, and must as devil work.  
But ye, O faithful Sons of God, none wronging,  
Rejoice in all of everliving beauty,  
The everliving, evergrowing, and becoming;  
Now gird yourselves about with love and duty."

Thus the plot is ready and Faust is about to become enmeshed in the snares which beset the path of every seeking soul. The following lines show the beneficent purpose and the necessity of temptation. The Spirit is an integral part of God; primarily innocent, but not virtuous. Virtue is a positive quality developed by taking a firm stand for the right in temptation, or by the suffering endured in consequence of wrongdoing. Thus the prologue in heaven gives to the Faust myth its highest value as a guide, and its encouragement to the seeking soul. It shows the eternal purpose behind the earthly conditions which cause pain and sorrow.

Goethe next introduces us to Faust himself, who is standing in his darkened study. He is engaged in introspection and retrospection:

"I have, alas! philosophy, medicine, and law,  
Theology I too have studied, pshaw!

Now here I stand with all my love,  
A fool no wiser than before.  
I thought to better humankind,  
To elevate the human mind;  
I have not worked for goods nor treasure,  
Nor worldly honor, rank, nor pleasure.  
With books I all my life have striven,  
But now to magic I am given;  
And hope through spirit voice and might,  
Secrets veiled to bring to light.  
That I no more with aching brow,  
Need speak of what I nothing know.  
Woe's me! Still prisoned in the gloom  
Of this abhorred and musty room,  
Where heaven's dear light itself doth pass  
But dimly through the painted glass.  
Up! forth into the distant land.  
Is not this book of mystery  
By Nostradamus' magic hand,  
An all sufficient guide? Thou'lt see  
The courses of the stars unrolled,  
When Nature doth her thoughts unfold  
To thee. Thy soul shall rise and seek  
Communion high with her to hold."

A lifetime of study has brought Faust no real knowledge. The conventional sources of learning prove barren in the end. The scientist may think God a superfluity; he may believe that life consists in chemical action and reaction—that is, when he starts. But the deeper he delves into matter, the greater the

mysteries that beset his path, and at last he will be forced to abandon further research or believe in God as a Spirit whose life invests every atom of matter. Faust has come to that point. He says that he has not worked for gold "nor treasure, nor worldly honor, rank, nor pleasure." He has striven from love of research and has come to the point where he sees that a spirit world is about us all; and through this world, through magic, he now aspires to a higher, more real knowledge than that contained in books.

A tome, written by the famous Nostradamus is in his hand, and on opening it he beholds the sign of the macrocosm. The power contained therein opens to his consciousness a part of the world he is seeking, and in an ecstasy of joy he exclaims:

"Ah! at this spectacle through every sense,  
What sudden ecstasy of joy is flowing;  
I feel new rapture, hallowed and intense.  
Now of the wise man's words I learn the sense:  
Unlocked the spirit world is lying,  
Thy senses shut, thy heart is dead;  
Up, scholar! lave with zeal undying  
Thine earthly breast in morning red.  
How all that lives and works is ever blending,  
Weaves one vast whole from Being's ample range,  
See powers celestial rising and descending,  
Their golden buckets' ceaseless interchange.  
Their flight on rapture breathing pinions winging,  
From heaven to earth the rhythm bringing."

But again the pendulum swings back. As an attempt to gaze directly into the brilliant light of the Sun would result in shattering the retina of the eye, so the audacious attempt to fathom the Infinite results in failure and the seeking soul is thrown from the ecstasy of joy into the darkness of despair:

"A wondrous show, but ah! a show alone.  
Where shall I grasp thee, infinite nature, where?  
Ye breasts, ye fountains of all life whereon  
Hang heaven and earth, from which the withered heart  
For solace yearns. Ye still impart  
Your sweet and fostering tides; where are ye- where?  
Ye gush, and I must languish in despair."

— [Back to Top](#) —

We must first understand the lower before we can successfully aspire to a higher knowledge. To rant and rave of worlds beyond, of finer bodies, when we have little conception of the vehicles with which we work every day and the environment in which we move, is the height of folly. "Man, know thyself" is a sound teaching. The only safety lies in climbing the ladder rung by rung, never attempting a new step until we have made ourselves secure, until we are poised and balanced upon the one where we stand. Many a soul can echo from its own experience the despair embodied in the words of Faust.

Foolishly he has started at the highest point. He has suffered disappointment, but does not yet understand that he must

begin at the bottom; so he commences an evocation of the Earth Spirit:

"Earth Spirit, Thou to me art nigher,  
E'en now my strength is rising higher,  
Courage I feel, abroad the world to dare,  
The woe of earth, the bliss of earth, to bear;  
With storms to wrestle, brave the lightning glare,  
And 'mid the crashing shipwreck not despair.  
Clouds gather o'er me, obscure the moon's light  
The lamp's flame is quenched with darkness of night.  
Vapors are rising, flashing and red,  
Beams of them dartingly, piercing my head;  
I am seized with a sickening, shuddering dread.  
Spirit, prayer-compelled, 'tis Thou  
Art hovering near, unveil Thyself now.  
My heart I gladly surrender to Thee;  
Thou must appear, if life be free."

As we have said in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, and as we have further elucidated in the Rosicrucian philosophy relative to a question concerning the Latin ritual in the Catholic Church, a name is a sound. Properly uttered, no matter by whom, it has a compelling influence over the intelligence it represents, and the word given in each degree of **Initiation** gives man access to a particular sphere of vibration, peopled by certain classes of spirits. Therefore, as a tuning fork responds to a note of even pitch, so when Faust sounds the name of the Earth Spirit, it opens his consciousness to that all-pervading presence.

And be it remembered that Faust's experience is not an isolated instance of what may happen under abnormal conditions. He is a symbol of the seeking soul. You and I are Fausts in a certain sense, for at some stage in our evolution we shall meet the Earth Spirit and realize the power of His name, properly uttered.

## **[To Be Continued]**

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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.** Is temptation, as portrayed in Faust, necessary to the growth of humanity and why?
- 2.** What two attributes assist in overcoming the temptation of Lucifer?
- 3.** Explain the difference between innocence and virtue.
- 4.** What does Faust, as a scientist, represent?
- 5.** Why did Faust fail in his first attempt to know the mystery of the Universe?
- 6.** After Faust's first failure, whom did he then turn to for assistance?

7. Is the story of Faust the story of each Ego, and if so, why?

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**Your Name:**

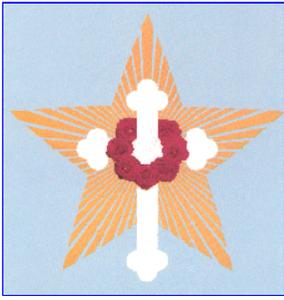
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