

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

Man's Dual Nature.



For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

For I delight in the inward man:

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

—*Romans 7:19-23.*

How perfectly does Saint Paul describe in these beautifully humble words the continual struggle between the higher self and the lower self that confronts every aspirant on the Path! And from what depths of understanding and wisdom did he speak! This zealous disciple's Way was not an easy one, but wholeheartedly and unflinchingly was he devoted to the "eternal quest," which must eventually end for each follower of the Christ in the complete mastery of the personal, selfish side of the nature by the real self, the indwelling Ego or Spirit—a spark of Divinity.

But whence this duality of man's nature? Why should an omniscient Creator make man so that he must eternally be at war within himself? A logical satisfactory answer to these questions may be found in the teachings of occult philosophy.

In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* it is explained how the Lucifers, stragglers in the angelic life wave, changed the original plan of man's development by imbuing him with passion and selfishness, and inciting him to misuse of the divine creative power. Then "The mind was given to man in the Atlantean Epoch to give purpose to action, but as the Ego was exceedingly weak, and the

desire nature strong, the nascent mind coalesced with the desire body; the faculty of cunning resulted and was the cause of all the wickedness of the middle third of the Atlantean Epoch."

So it was that this "law of sin" gained a foothold in man and caused a duality in his nature. His task—the task of all humanity—then became that of transmuting the selfish, passionate side of the nature into the higher spiritual qualities which are his innate heritage. Thus will he reach a higher stage in evolution than he would have reached had he followed the original plan. The chief tool of the Spirit in accomplishing this goal is the mind—the link between the indwelling Spirit and the material world. Spiritualization of the mind, along with the development of the will, makes it possible to direct our creative energies into the highest channels and bring into existence that soul food which is the basis of human progress. Only in the crucible of the everyday life can this be done—only by sacrificing our personal desires and interests as we love and serve our fellow men.

How many times do we fall short of our goal, as did the consecrated Paul! With what inner anguish do we contemplate our failures! What a wave of helplessness sweeps over us when we realize that we have acted directly contrary to our good intentions! But then we remember that "there is no failure save in ceasing to try," and we put the day behind us and start all over again, more keenly conscious than ever of our dependence upon "our Father in heaven" for guidance.

Thus "the law of sin which is in my members" has carried us into the precincts of suffering and death, but the Law of Love makes it possible for us to return to the blessings of life abundant, the true life of "the inward man."