

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE BIBLE

by

ALVIN BOYD KUHN, Ph. D.

* Electronically typed and edited by Juan Schoch for educational research purposes. This notice is not to be removed. I can be contacted at pc93@enlightenment-engine.net. I will be greatly indebted to the individual who can put me in touch with the Estate of Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn and/or any of the following: A. B. Kuhn's graduation address at Chambersburg Academy "The Lyre of Orpheus", A. B. Kuhn's unpublished autobiography, The Mighty Symbol of the Horizon, Nature as Symbol, The Rebellion of the Angels, The Ark and the Deluge, The True Meaning of Genesis, The Law of the Two Truths, At Sixes and Sevens, Adam Old and New, The Real and the Actual, Immortality: Yes—But How?, The Mummy Speaks at Last, Symbolism of the Four Elements, Rudolph Steiner's "Mystery of Golgotha", Krishnamurti and Theosophy.

I also would welcome any contact with someone who has any letters of Kuhn or has any personal knowledge of him. Thank you.

Recently (January 15, 2005) I was contacted by a 15 year old student of Upton High (state and city to be determined) who wanted to interview me in regards to the life of Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam). The interview was conducted and this student asked me if there was anything else. This is what I relayed:

There is a nationally and worldwide known issue of a disabled person in my state (Florida) who is being subjected to attempted murder. Her name is Theresa Marie Schindler-Schiavo. The courts say that she is in a Persistent Vegetative State when in fact she is not, they lie. Videos were shown on CNN during a live feed that prove she is not comatose. She sits up in a chair. Her husband who lives with another woman for over 9 years and who has two children with this woman is trying to say that Theresa wants to die when in fact he has been denying her rehabilitation and therapy so that she can have her own voice and be back on to the road to her recovery. He has been with several women since he caused Theresa's incident and this is his latest live-in concubine who is in collusion with him to make Theresa dead. His attorneys are attempting to accomplish a heinous starvation/dehydration death on her for the third time. One of his attorneys wrote a book in which he talks about tearing out peoples feeding tubes and says he speaks to them by "soul speak" asking them if they want to die and they tell him along the lines "Yes, I want to die! Please kill me." The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast is holding her hostage for over 4 years. This feeding tube yanker attorney was chairman of the board of this hospice. This is the worst case of domestic terrorism happening in our country right now. While we are off in other countries helping helpless and disabled people the government has been remiss to save a human life from terrorism here in my state. There is a cover-up of mass proportions and I have the evidence on a CD to prove it. This message is to you and all of your classmates and teachers who may be reading this. Please contact others if you know of others who care to stop this murder. Perhaps you, or others, including activist friends, know people who have the power to stop what is happening here in my state or bring greater attention to what is going on. Contact me at pc93@enlightenment-engine.net or call me at 407-925-4141 and I will get whatever information you may need. Help me and others to stop the return of Nazi T4 days in Florida, the rest of the United States of America and the world. We must take a stand and make our voices heard.

Please join my Alvin Boyd Kuhn Yahoo!Group and Gnosis284! <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AlvinBoydKuhn/join> : <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gnosis284/join>

PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE BIBLE

The Christian Bible presents to the reflective mind one of the most astounding phenomena of modern life. Though neglected and even repudiated by a large segment of modern thinking, and evidencing few signs of a controlling influence on current modes of life, it yet occupies a place of dominance that can only be

realized when its position and authority are challenged. More than that, it exercises through the subtle power of tradition and child-indoctrination a totally unbelievable thralldom over the common mind which can only be compared to a type of hypnotic obsession. The force and sweep of the subtle acceptance is not dreamed of by the person who has not become consciously emancipated from it and can view it objectively, or from the outside. Few people have been able to dissociate themselves sufficiently from their indoctrinated prepossession in this regard to objectify this phenomenon of the psychological life of the day. Only a trained and freed mind can stand out from under its own inherited habitudes of thought and feeling and subject them to rational and dispassionate criticism. Few can rationally appraise mass sentiments. This is the function of the philosopher and thinker. For the most part, people accept as authoritative the mass conceptions amidst which they grow up, and regard their general vogue as the seal and surety of their rightness.

In such fashion the Bible has been accepted as the great unique work of divine authority, and, with the force of sanctified allegiance back of it for generations, it now wields a perfectly unrealized power over the common mind. Even those who have outwardly rejected it are unwittingly influenced by it in ways they little dream of; for society has been insidiously impregnated with the germs of a thousand ideas, springing from the vast number of phrases, texts and incidents which have taken unshakable rootage in the mass consciousness. In the area of Christendom the book is still regarded as the supreme moral and spiritual guide of the race. And from time to time one reads the oft-broadcast declaration from eminent divines that what the world needs most of all as a salve for its ills, is more consecrated study of the Bible.

We have pondered this assertion deeply and sought what truth there may be in it. It is one of those equivocal statements that are true without meaning much after all. The answer might be "yes" and "no." We would say "yes," but with tremendous qualifications and reservations. We can agree that more study of spiritual things is decidedly a need of our time. But we face a strange situation here, which does not seem to have been discerned by the advocates of Bible study. To

1

begin with, there never has been a book that *has been studied* so assiduously and zealously as this. No book has received such devotion and reverence. No other has been preached on so often and so fervently. It has been organically dissected and analyzed without end. Thousands of volumes of exegesis have been written upon it. Yet we are told we need to study it more. And a prominent writer has, with general approbation, dubbed it *The Book Nobody Knows*, and its central hero, *The Man Nobody Knows*. If this is the outcome of past study on an enormous scale, what profit to study it further? The outcome of centuries of consecrated effort to glean its message is held up as a nullity!

On our part, we stand ready to make the bold assertion that it is yet a sealed book. Few, if any, know that it does contain a message that would save the race from disaster. Few, if any, know that it is one of the books of a grand past wisdom. And perhaps no one now living knows thoroughly what is hidden in its pages. Our verdict, then, is that it is futile to give it more study *of the kind that it has received heretofore*. If it lacks study it is because thousands have labored to get its meaning and have failed. The effort has bred disappointment and resentment against its incomprehensibility. What the modern age needs with regard to the Bible is not more study but some comprehension; not more waste of futile wrestling with riddles, but a few grains of understanding. In brief, what is needed is a knowledge of the background out of which it grew, and in reference to which alone it can be grasped.

Failure of modern effort to read the deep message of the Book is due to the fact that modern scholars stupidly and stubbornly refuse to see that ancient scriptural writing was esoteric or hidden as to its meaning, and allegorical and symbolical as to its method. The ancients did not use newspaper directness. On the contrary they put up their secret wisdom, vouchsafed to them by the great Sages, in the form of allegories and myths, which were to be taken as fiction in their outward dress, but as the cinematograph of profoundest truth and knowledge in inward sense. By a combination of symbols, nature signs and allegories, often woven into a background of real history, they sought to portray the deepest types of spiritual experience and an intellectual grip on reality. The Bible has been crassly taken for literal truth about living personages on the stage of mortal history. It has been rendered literally and historically. This is the most egregious blunder, the

most grandiose error, in all human history,--this mistaking of spiritual allegorism for literal human narrative. We are in position to make the unqualified declaration for the first time in the modern age that there is not one iota of history, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, in the Bible from beginning to end. Some portions of Jewish history are utilized as the base and frame of spiritual myths. The several Judges, Patriarchs and Kings are made to stand for the central figure of the Christos. Geographical names and

2

historical persons are mentioned but only as characters in the mystic or religious drama. According to Eusebius, one of the three chief formulators of Roman Christian theology, the Gospels of the New Testament are themselves nothing but old dramatic books of the Essenes in pre-Christian days. The earliest and greatest of the framers of Christian theology, Philo, Clement and Origen, expressly declared it was impossible and an impiety to assert that the logos of God could take the flesh of a human personality. New research makes it positively clear that the Old Testament narratives are in their entirety rewritings of old Egyptian material, distorted and obscured as it passed through later Hebrew hands. And *Egyptian* scripture was never historical. It was spiritual symbology, pure and unalloyed. The weirdest phenomenon of history transpired when later ignorance took the Egyptian constructions and converted them into absurd literal narrative. And the thinking of the whole world of the civilized West has thus been based on history that never occurred, and the Christian Church has been founded on a set of miracles that were never performed. The only miracle envisaged in ancient theology was the transformation of human character by the indwelling god, and this spiritual miracle was poetized, dramatized and allegorized in a hundred forms of outward representation, all of which was absurdly taken for personal history later.

This conversion of spiritual into biographical history has made Christianity the instrument of the grossest degradation of sublime ancient truth to which it has ever been subject. That is to say, that all Christian doctrines present the ancient wisdom in a more literal and hence cruder form of meaning than had ever been done before in national religions. In the nailing of a personal Jesus on a wooden cross Christianity reduced the glorious drama of the spiritual life to its grossest and most repellant form.

It is the business of enlightened Theosophy to lift this weight of crass literal dogmatism from off the modern imagination and conscience at whatever cost. The human soul is itself bound on the cross of gross superstition so long as these crude notions dominate the conscious and subconscious thought of modern man. The light of the true spiritual Gnosis of olden times must be cast into the dark nooks and corners of modern thinking, and disperse the mists of such errant and arrant doctrinism.

It is our declaration, based on years of the most assiduous research, that it is impossible to understand the allegories of the Bible without a knowledge of ancient methods of sacred writing, and of the ancient philosophies. Our work in this field has been rewarded by a number of the most signal discoveries which are basic for further grasp of the material.

(1) The composers of ancient scriptures were poets, allegorists,

3

dramatists and mythicists. They never wrote literally. They were in the line of generations of sages and seers who had developed the art of spiritual representation to a point of the utmost ingenuity and complexity, completely shrouding the intended real meaning under veils of symbolism, which have utterly misled modern scholars who could not pierce the outer veil to read the truth hidden underneath. Hence the works can not be read without the keys to the myths and reference to the symbols used. The ancients themselves testify plentifully that the scriptures are allegories. Origen regards the whole Bible as a set of allegories. But the most astonishing declaration to this effect is St. Paul's own statement in *Galatians* that the whole story of Abraham and Sarah and Hagar is "an allegory."

(2) The ancients were also esotericists, writing only of the inner life and for initiated pupils. They wrote of inner things under an outer veil. They wrote of the Greater Mysteries which were never given out to the

multitude, but taught in secret to disciplined students. Spiritual truth was not published in modern fashion. Whatever was written, was veiled under glyph and symbol. Mostly it was taught by oral tradition.

(3) Then the ancients were "uranographers." The "uranograph" was a chart of heaven. By this is meant a map outlined by the early sages charting the spiritual constitution and physiology of man, the psychic centers, areas of spiritual force, and all "after the pattern of things in the heavens." Man, the microcosm, is a replica of the heavenly man and the universe. From the history of man written thus in the constellation of the skies, the early religious formulators transferred the record to earth and distributed the various phenomena and localities over the national maps in accordance with the heavenly chart! All nations tried to frame their own history and geography after the pattern of things in the heavenly mount. Mainly the Egyptians and after them the Jews made this transfer almost completely. According to this chart each nation was given an upper and lower section, had a river flowing from the upper down to the lower, had a lake or sea, a central city representing the Holy City, and a score of parallel features found in every case. There was first a division into seven nomes or districts, later into twelve. Each nation thus strove to have its history interpreted as a fulfilment of the sacred allegory; and its national history, thus diverted into the form of the celestial myth, was made into the national epic. And finally came the claim on the part of several, notably the Jews, that since their history fulfilled the outlines of the sacred story, they were proven to be the "chosen people" of God. There is not a scrap of evidence anywhere to identify the Israelites as the historical Hebrews or Jews. The latter simply appropriated the distinction to themselves and fitted their history into the sacred scheme. As proof

4

of this it is offered that a monument in Egypt contained hundreds of Palestinian place names, afterward localized in the Holy Land of Judea, *before* the "historical" Exodus from Egypt. Hence the modern discovery of a town in Palestine bearing the name of a place mentioned in the Bible does not offer a single whit of proof that the Bible is history. It only proves that the religious formulators of the national epic had given to a certain place a name already found on the uranograph or spiritual chart, much as European explorers gave sacred names such as Salem, Providence, New Haven, Canaan, Newark, Corpus Christi and Santa Fe to new towns when they came to America. Jerusalem, Egypt, Sodom and others are therefore only spiritual names transferred to the map from the celestial chart.

(4) Lastly it was our discovery that all religious writings deal with but one central fact, the incarnation of man, or the descent and resurrection of the soul. It is graphically outlined in the Prodigal Son allegory. It is the whole story of religion. The old books deal with nothing beyond this story and its involvements. It is itself the key to all philosophy and religion. All meanings proceed from this one fact and return thither. In the light of this one fact all complicated meanings can be reduced to clear significance. It unravels the infinite complexities of the symbology that have confounded the learned scholars and theologians. That man is a god dwelling in an animal form is the central and cardinal fact of all religion.

It is well to note a few situations in the Bible which preclude any sane mind taking it for literal truth. How the literalist "swallows" them we know not.

First, the story of the flood. Forty (or four hundred) days' rain would not raise the ocean an inch, as all rain is first drawn off the ocean and only runs back into it at the constant level. And how could millions of species of every living thing be collected, cared for and housed in the "ark" by a single man and his family. It would take an army many years to gather a minute portion of all creatures. Then how could they be kept in living conditions, fed, and tended on board for months?

And how did the children of the first pair, Adam and Eve, go off and marry the women of another nation, as recorded in Genesis? And in the genealogy of Jesus as of David's line, the link with David is broken at his father Joseph, who was not his father after all. Jesus is of David's line, yet is denied parentage from David's descendant. Then we have the anomaly of Joshua's commanding the sun and moon to stand still at Ascalon. The sun is not moving (relative to the earth) to begin with. It is already and always still. And the matter of

the star of Bethlehem coming and standing "over the place where the young child lay." A star small enough to point out a small stable in Beth-

5

lehem is a thing impossible in astronomy. And stars never stand. They rush on with unbelievable speed. And finally how was it humanly possible for the events of Maundy Thursday of Passion Week to have occurred in the space of a single night? The last supper at sundown, the long siege in the garden of Gethsemane, the arrest, the mockery, then *three* separate judicial trials before three distinct courts in the dead of night (!), then the carrying of the cross up the hill, the long agony of the crucifixion, the earthquake, the rent veil, the opened graves, and the burial,--all in the hours of a single night! It is incredible as human history. Like the Abraham story, it is an allegory. Paul himself never mentions it as real history, albeit he lived at the time.

These and a hundred other irrationalities make it sheer folly to uphold the literal historicity of the Bible. Yet the major theses of Christianity stand on this weak ground. There is therefore nothing surprising in the fact that the history of the Church has been a tale of warfare, controversy, schism, blind faith and frightful cruelty, and that it is repudiated by about sixty per cent of the populations among which it is strongest, and is rather loosely held by its own adherents.

We are prepared to support the statement, then, that the Bible, sadly misinterpreted by its most loyal devotees, is in reality a collection of ancient works that embody in veiled figures the fundamentals of the genuine old wisdom of the hierophants. One might say indeed, that it is a repository of the great Mystery teaching of early times. In fact it is an assemblage of material comprising the substance of Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Kabbalism, Chaldean astrology, Greek Orphism and Hindu Wisdom, drawn mostly from ancient Egypt. It would not inaptly be described as a book of Platonic Theosophy. For Plato summed up most of the elements of these systems. To an orthodox churchman it would doubtless seem to belittle the Book to say that it contains nothing but the Platonic philosophy. But this is only because the churchman knows nothing of the grandeur and rank of the Platonic wisdom. It is enough to say that it could not be a great book if it did *not* embody Plato's philosophy. For this was truly "of the gods," and perhaps the most luminous presentation of spiritual knowledge ever to be vouchsafed to the human intellect. Fortunate is Christianity that its Bible is heavily charged with the elements of the great Divine Wisdom of past ages.

It is a practical impossibility, however, to expound even the crudest outline of Plato's teaching in such a lecture. We must be content with a few statements dealing with the emanation of living streams of being and intelligence from the first fount of all things. Plato represents life as unfolding from within itself at the beginning of a new period of manifestation, and proceeding outward or downward from a summit of pure spirit into ever-denser forms of creation. The One Life pours forth its power and essence in streams, called "rivers of

6

vivification", "from on high as far as to the last of things," bringing all forms of life into existence and ensouling all forms with more or less of its own mighty being. At each step of the way out, or down, this life takes embodiment in coarser forms of cosmic matter, thus giving birth to the greater and lesser gods of various ranks. For the gods are embodiments of the several grades and forms of nature's life, power and intelligence. The whole creation forms a chain of beings reaching from the lowest mineral crystals to the highest God. Somewhere in this chain stands man, and Plato tells us where it is. Humanity occupies a place of great strategic importance in the hierarchy, standing precisely at the point of junction between the highest animal and the truly human kingdom. Man is the creature that is fashioned to bridge the gap between the animal and the divine order. Hence his nature is compounded of the two elements, the animal and the godlike, in one organism, making it possible for the higher to "lift up" or humanize the lower. In his *Timaeus* Plato gives us the remarkable speech of the Demiurgus (Creative Logos) to the "junior gods," who were the divine beings commissioned by the Lords of Karma to come to earth and be the gods embodied in an animal race that had no chance of reaching the next level of evolution without such tutelage. In it the Demiurgus enjoins the deities to come to earth and "unite mortal with immortal natures," promising them that they

would "never be dissolved," if they held fast to their oath of purity and the covenant which they made with their Overlord. This is the covenant in the Old Testament which the Lord tells the Children of Israel (who were these junior gods, never the earthly Hebrews!) that they have broken times without number. For the gods, once incarnated, fell under the cloud of oblivion (drank the waters of Lethe), lost their divine memory and went "the way of all flesh" into carnality and beastliness. (See scores of passages in the Old Testament books).

But after rebellion they finally came to earth, incarnated in mortal bodies of flesh and thus linked a divine principle of intelligence with a body and a sensual animal nature. And this fact is the basis of all religion. Man is a god and a beast in one organism. Rather he is a god tabernacling in the flesh of an animal. Daniel (Chaps. 3 and 5) tells the King, who represents the divine soul, that he shall come to live with the animals and be given the mind of an animal. Ezekiel (32:4) says that the Lord "will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee." A hundred texts from the old books confirm this statement of the linking of the two diverse natures in one organism. And this great basic fact is the heart of Theosophy. Reincarnation and Karma are ancillary to it.

We have, then, in Greek philosophy the "descent of the soul" or the advent of the gods. This is equated in the old Christian tradition by the legend of "the fall of the angels," the fall of Lucifer. It is

7

outlined in full by the Prodigal Son allegory, and hinted at in many other places. The story of Abraham is a glyph of it, for he, like the Prodigal Son, left his home and kindred, left his native land, and journeyed to a far country that the Eternal promised to show him, where he would dwell among savage beasts and eat of the grass of the earth. (See *Genesis* 12.) Paul says "we are a colony of heaven." We, these junior gods, are collectively that second Adam, who, Paul says, "is the Lord from Heaven," following the animal man who, he says, "is of the earth, earthy."

There were twelve legions of these angel hosts, and this, indicated clearly by Plato, is evidenced in the New Testament, where at the feeding of the five thousand there were gathered up "twelve baskets of fragments"; and again in the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, where, when Jesus is seized by the deputation of soldiers sent out to arrest him, he says to them, in effect: "Don't you know that I could call upon my father and he would send to my aid instantly *twelve legions of angels*?" These are the mysterious "ten lost tribes of Israel" (two having failed in their effort), who in two divisions of five legions each, called the Suras or "willing (obedient) ones" and the Asuras or "unwilling ones," undertook the commission of the higher Lords and projected their powers in the direction of earth. These two groups are unquestionably the five wise and the five foolish virgins (one of their Sanskrit names, *Kumaras*, means "virgin youths") of the Biblical allegory; also they are the elder and the younger brother of the Prodigal Son myth. The Suras made the attempt, but, we are told, did not descend far enough, and their effort proved abortive. The Asuras, seeing this miscarriage, became recalcitrant, rebelled and refused, until at last they were forced to incarnate. The Suras obeyed but failed; the Asuras refused but finally complied, and took lodgment in our bodies, uniting the two natures.

The Greeks have all this depicted in their great fable of Prometheus stealing the heavenly fire--which, be it known, is divine intelligence, not the physical flame we cook our suppers with!--from the gods and bringing it to man for his behoof. It was what the Theosophists call *Manas*, the spark of thinking intelligence which made "man" a manasic being, or capable of abstract thought. We, then, are angels from heaven, and higher than the angels we shall be. For Paul, in two passages, avers that "we are to manage angels, let alone mundane things," and adds that "God hath made man for a little while (see Moffatt translation) lower than the angels and hath crowned him with glory and honor." Another ancient scripture says that "angels from their seats envy him" (man). For his experience in incarnation will advance his station beyond that of those spirits who have not been tried in the fires of earth and refined to purest gold.

The Nicene creed of the Church itself, describing the Second Logos

of the Trinity, avers that it "came down from heaven, was incarnate . . . and was made man," for us and for our salvation. John declares that no man shall ascend into heaven save he that first came down from heaven. Jesus said he "beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Satan is Lucifer, and we came down in the character of the bright and morning star, Lucifer, bright effluence of deity. The Chinese have a great saying that the "stars ceased shining in heaven and fell on earth where they became men."

The Neo-Platonic philosopher, Plotinus, has a remarkable passage in which he makes it clear why the soul or god in man was under the necessity of taking incarnation in an animal body. As I regard this passage as the clearest statement of the philosophy of incarnation ever given, I take the liberty of quoting it:

"Thus although the soul have a divine nature, though she originate in the intelligible world, she enters into a body. Being of the lower divine, she descends here below by a voluntary inclination, for the purpose of developing her power and to adorn what is below her. If she flee promptly from here below, she does not need to regret having become acquainted with evil and knowing the nature of vice, nor having had the opportunity of manifesting her faculties. . . . Indeed the faculties of the soul would be useless if they slumbered continuously in incorporeal being without ever becoming actualized. The soul herself would be ignorant of what she possesses if her faculties did not manifest by procession, for everywhere it is the actualization that manifests the potentiality. Otherwise the latter would be completely hidden and obscured; or rather it would not really exist, and would not possess any reality. It is the variety of sense-effects which illustrates the greatness of the intelligible principle, whose nature publishes itself by the beauty of its works."

We are on earth, then, to come to self-consciousness as divinities, but to do it by working through and with an animal. We are here to educate, refine, humanize and finally divinize, an animal! We are in bodies, which properly are not ours, but those of the animal soul, who is our appetitive or instinctual lower self. We are assigned the duty of "taming" this creature and conforming it to ways of intelligence and brotherhood. We must teach it the better way of curbing its savage instincts, its lusts and greed inherited from its wild experience in the animal orders, and must lead it upward to a final assimilation into the nature of the angel, its tutor. Little wonder the task can not be done in a single incarnation!

But how was the god to link his higher nature with the body of the animal so far below his stature? The very fundamentals of religion are interwoven with the answer to this question. For religions grew out of this relation between the god and his animal protege. Religions were not

originally forms of mere cult sentimentalism and piety. They were regimes of ritual and ethical practice designed to keep man in memory of his divine estate, and to hold him to the obligations of the "broad oaths fast sealed" (Empedocles) of his covenant to raise up the lower self, while keeping himself "unspotted from the world."

The technique of his incarnation is philosophically described under the terms of the great *Law of Incubation*. This is announced in the Bible in John's verse: "Unless a grain of corn (wheat) fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Also it is seen in Paul's description of the resurrection in I. Corinthians, 15: "What you sow cannot come to life unless it die." These texts proclaim the great truth of evolution, missed by scientific eyes, that each kingdom of nature is linked to the kingdom below it for the nourishment of its life. The vegetable kingdom is rooted in mineral soil, the animal is sustained on vegetable matter, the human is built up physically of animal and vegetable elements, and in their turn the lower divine beings must take rootage in the human bodies. As the acorn can not develop its oak potentialities unless it descend and be buried in the dark damp soil of the mineral kingdom, so the angels of God can not evolve to higher perfection of their divinity unless they undergo experience in human bodies. This is the simple law which is the philosophical basis of the incarnation, at once its explanation and its justification. The son of man must descend into the bowels of the earth for three "days" (aeons), one in the

mineral kingdom, one in the vegetable and one in the animal, before he rises out of matter again as a god in the perfection of his spiritual nature in the human kingdom. In the old scripture the advent of the god always occurs about "the fourth watch of the night," which symbol the human kingdom, as it is fourth in order. "As Jonas was three days in the belly of the whale, so must the son of man be three days in the bowels of the earth,"--in the lower kingdoms of evolution, not in a literal rocky tomb! We shall have light on the ancient scriptures when we follow the forms of the old symbolism.

The coming of the god to inhabit the body of an animal is in all respects equivalent to his death and burial, analogous to the death of the old seed in the ground, and is necessary if he is to rebeget himself anew as the risen son of the slain father. For when he steps into the lower body, he loses all the freedom of his glorious life as a spirit, and comes "under the law" that rules on the plane of physical matter. He is subject to all the vicissitudes of climate, bodily needs and the hardships of imprisonment in a body of flesh. In brief, he is in hell, and the grave or tomb they speak of is nothing more than his physical body. This is the first great mystery of ancient theology, lost since the third century, and now restored through occult discovery. The words tomb and womb are of the same origin and have the same significance. To

10

be born from the womb of a mortal mother is to enter the tomb of mortal life. Many passages from Greek philosophy will confirm this interpretation.

Spirit, then, must be buried and die in matter, to reproduce its new generation. The divine son must come to birth in the womb of Maria (the sea of matter). "Matter is the mother of the gods," said an ancient sage; as spirit is their father. The seminal seed of divinity must be sown in the body of flesh. It is sown to die, or as Paul says, "in corruption; it must rise in incorruption." It must be sown a mortal body, and be raised a spiritual body. Paul, who was an Orphic Mystery initiate, was simply giving one of the old symbols of the descent and resurrection of the god in mortal life.

But the god did not come as an adult. What life cycle starts at maturity? He came as a god in potentiality only, a god in embryo, a seedling god, in fact a baby god. The Christmas or advent festival celebrates the birth of an infant Christ. He is the Christ-child, the Krist Kingle (Kindel, Kindlein, little child--German), the Jesu Bambino of Italy, and the child Horus of ancient Egypt. The greatest truth that we humans can be told is that the Christ principle is born in us as a foetus in the womb of our physical bodies, struggling to be delivered! The physical body of each person is the womb of the Christ. "I groan and travail with you in pain," says Paul, "till Christ be formed within you." Nature, says John, groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, when it is to give birth to the god or Christ. And Paul says again, "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," the spiritual body of our resurrection, the house not built with hands, but in consciousness and character for when the foetal god is delivered at its final Easter morn from its imprisonment in the physical body, it must have fashioned for itself a temple or sanctuary, of imperishable elements, "eternal in the heavens," as its future abode. This is the temple we are masonically building out of the materials of incarnational experience,--thought, word and deed, day by day and life by life. This is the mystic temple in whose building, as says I Kings, "there was heard neither sound of hammer, axe nor any tool of iron." This is the temple that Jesus says he could build up, if destroyed, in three "days" or aeons of natural evolution. It is the glorious house we fashion for the soul out of the spiritual essence of human life. Every moral lesson learned, every item of character developed, has contributed to its heightened power to build this body of indestructible light.

In comparison with it the physical body is named "the garment of shame" and "the body of this death." It must be dissolved in the fervent heat of the inner spirit, to free the radiant body of solar glory within. For the god, it is a matter of shame and degradation to be

11

housed in the carnal body and subject to its animal impulses. In the body he is nailed to the cross of matter, and the worst of his painful sacrifice and of his humbling himself to be born of a virgin is his subjection to

the carnal appetites of the animal. He must wage a valiant warfare to avoid falling under the complete domination of these massive impulses, until he finally brings the god to adulthood, and has prepared the new subtle garment of light to be the eternal home of the soul after its resurrection. He must finally dissolve the physical elements of the veil of the temple, and the "*ekstasis*" (ecstasy) described as the consummation of the drama of initiation in the Mysteries. The word ecstasy literally means "standing out," and it referred to the actual freeing of the soul from the physical body. It is the resurrection, when the tomb of flesh is broken asunder, the gates of death are opened, and the dead are raised incorruptible. One reason for the egg as a symbol of Easter is the likeness of the spiritual experience to a chick's pecking its way out of its shell to effect its birth. Christmas is the quickening of the foetus in the womb; Easter is the actual birth of the human ego into the new kingdom of spiritual light. It is a delivery; whence the ancient philosophy was at times designated as midwifery. Socrates said he was a midwife, presiding at the birth of the soul into truth.

This glorious body, the *Augoeides* of the Greeks and the *Sahu* of the Egyptians, can be built up only from the union of spirit and body in the human kingdom. For it is formed on its material side from the particles of radiant essence generated from the cells of the body, at the center of which even modern science now declares there are "radiogens" on intensely hot nuclei of solar fire. (See statement of Dr. Geo. W. Crile, of the Cleveland Laboratories.) No new birth of higher life can be generated save by the interaction or conjunction of spirit and matter in some organic form. Man is the kingdom where these two meet to be joined in one higher union. Paul states this clearly when he says "the wall of partition between the two natures must be broken down, and the two made one in one body."

Having seen that the first great law of human life is the *Law of Incubation*, we are prepared now to see the operation of the other great law of nature and principle of Platonic philosophy, the application of which to the doctrines of religion will immediately throw them all in clear light. Especially will it illuminate that great doctrine of the Christian Church, its most significant rite, the Eucharist. Had this principle of ancient philosophy been kept in the knowledge of the early Church, Christianity would not now be the outcast from modern intelligent appreciation that it is. With this single principle restored, theology may again lift up its bowed head and take its ancient position of kingship among human interests.

12

We refer to the *Law of Dismemberment*. It is the method of the *Law of Incubation* as Reincarnation is the method of Karma. When one sees how extensively it was featured in the *Book of the Dead* and other books of wisdom, it becomes next to incomprehensible how it fell into total desuetude in the Christian system. For it is the key to the divinity of man and the humanity of the god. It is the basic principle beneath our understanding of all Christology. It gives us the entire rationale of the incarnation.

Briefly the *Law of Dismemberment* is thus set forth: as a principle of Plato's philosophy it is the division or partition of unit divine nature or essence into multiple fragments, the breaking up of the Oneness of God into many portions or gods. As the principle back of the incarnation, it is the breaking of the unified life of the god on his own high plane into fragments for the sake of taking lodgment in multiple bodies. Plato informs us that as the one life flows forth or descends into manifestation, the farther it proceeds from its source in homogeneity, the weaker is its power and the more numerous is its fragmentation. At each step of the descent it must suffer a reduction of its total force, which can only be effected by "partition" into fragments. The Great Light breaks up into lesser lights, the Great Fire into lesser sparks. A perfect analogy is seen in the letting fall of any large compact body of water or other liquid from a high place; it is thrown into infinite small particles by the opposition of the air and other causes. Deity breaks up into fragments as it descends, and according to the New Testament miracle there were twelve groups of these "fragments."

How could the total power and enormous energy of the god be embodied in the brain and nervous system of a single human body? It would "blow out the fuse" of any man to be suddenly subjected to the full dynamic power of such an energy as that represented by a god. One does not feed a child a whole loaf of bread, but gives it only fragments. So we are fed on the broken bread of life. How again could the deific nature and power be made universally accessible to all men, or distributed amongst them, without dividing itself into fragments, so that a portion might be given to each individual? It is supremely simple; yet this simple

principle underlying all theology has been lost out of Christian doctrinism. And the world has been rent with bitter warfare, and much of the foulest inhumanity to man ever known has been perpetrated, because this basic understanding was lost out of theology. The full power of divinity is too high for us to sustain; it would wreck our organism. So we receive each one a reduced portion--all we can contain.

Again the oak tree is our mentor in spiritual truth. To propagate itself the great tree divides its unific life into a thousand little nuclei, each of which when dropped into the soil of the kingdom below it, has the potentiality of reproducing the whole of its parent. So with the

13

god. He breaks his Oneness into fragments, and drops a seed, or infant Christ, into each human breast. This is Paul's "fulness of the stature of Christ." The child Jesus must grow to the stature of the Christ, or the adult god.

Tennyson knew of the *Law of Dismemberment* in its spiritual sense when he wrote in *In Memoriam*:

We are but broken lights of thee,

And thou, O Lord, art all in all.

The myths of the ancient gods in many cases convey this deep meaning in the form of the (symbolic) cutting of the body of the god in pieces, which are scattered over the earth, later to be reassembled by the Son, who restores the deity whole. Even with these fables of Osiris, Dionysus, Tammuz, Mithra and many others hinting at the plain truth, Christian blindness has gone on perverting the basic meaning of the Eucharist.

The principle explains for the first time also the significance of the phrase, the Lord of Hosts. As each Lord divides into a host of fragments, it is a simple matter to see him in his divided totality as a Lord of a Host. Plato indeed says, "Each superior god becomes the leader of a multitude, engendered from himself," his split fragments.

But the most astonishing corroboration of this Platonic Theosophy is found in the Bible itself at the very heart of the Lord's own ordination of the Eucharist. Is it possible to comprehend the crassness that has made generations of Christian theologians miss the clearly expressed doctrine of dismemberment in their own Book of Wisdom? Hardly.

In I Corinthians (11:23, ff) Paul distinctly states the proclamation to him by the Lord himself (in spiritual vision) of the festival of the Eucharist, "I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself, namely, that on the night he was betrayed the Lord Jesus took a loaf, and after thanking God he broke it, saying, "This means my body *broken* for you; do this in memory of me." Here is the bread of divine life offered to man, and the Lord first *broke* it!" If the Christian Church had all along known what "the broken body of our Lord" meant in terms of Platonic philosophy, the whole course of western history would have been altered mightily. Instead it quarreled over the Greek word rendered "broken" in futile negation of its true meaning, and missed the true gleam of the light of the world.

The Eucharistic symbolism of eating the Lord's body has likewise been missed. What can it mean beyond partaking spiritually of his spiritual nature? "God is a spirit" and he can be assimilated only spiritually. To convey this idea to dull mortal comprehension the ancient sages devised the outward rite, actually eating symbolic bread and drinking symbolic wine, and Christian literalists have argued (and fought) for centuries over the question whether the actual life of deity

14

was or was not in the elements themselves! In the light of such situations as this--and it can be duplicated in scores of other doctrines--how can any one fail to see the world's need of the Ancient Wisdom, and the restoration of the luminous Platonic Theosophy?

John has told us in ringing passages about "that bread which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall hunger no more." "For he who eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." It is impossible to realize save by long study and reflection to what extent the literalization of the Bible and the Gospel narrative has deprived the human mind of the intellectual nourishment on which it was expected to feed. None but one who has examined these ancient allegories and seen point by point how they have been turned into fruitless and meaningless miracles and earthly incidents, can appreciate the enormity of the miscarriage of ancient truth in its symbolic transmission to modern "intelligence." It is, when fully seen, the most monstrous prodigy of ignorance and superstition perhaps in human history. The ancients used outward nature and human actions to type spiritual truth. We have converted their spiritual allegories into the merest outward husk of truth, because Christianity became predominantly a movement among the ignorant.

A phrase in the Lord's ordination of the Eucharist gives us the text for the final principle of Plato's system that has to do with Christian theology. "Do this in remembrance of me," he said. Here again ignorance has beclouded a great truth and a great light. For here was an announcement by the Lord himself of Plato's other great doctrine--so mystifying to the modern savants--the doctrine of Reminiscence. If Washington or Lincoln had left an institution expressly designated by them as a means of perpetuating their memory, we would regard them as being actuated by a huge vanity. Was Jesus a vainglorious person, as the words of Paul make him, if an historical character, to appear? No; Paul was expressing a grand truth of Platonic wisdom, when he wrote of the light which came to him in this spiritual vision. Religion was designed primarily on no other motivation than as a means of putting into practice this phase of Platonic philosophy. Religion was not originally merely a "system of worship." It had far deeper bases. It was instituted to save the hosts of fragmented gods in mortal bodies from the dire fate of losing their divinity. For they were threatened with total forgetfulness of their real nature. Religion was designed to be a set of psychological exercises which would subtly revive and stimulate the memory of their former celestial state. One of the Nine Muses was Mnemosyne, the goddess of Memory, and Mercury had the function of awakening dead memories. Horus in Egypt came to awaken the memory of his father Osiris in the grave. From these connotations we are enabled to discern a totally new force of meaning in our word "remember." If

15

the gods on coming to save humanity were "*dismembered*" or fragmented into individuals, then the resurrection or return to their primal unity in their glorification at the end of the aeon would naturally be a "*re-membering*" of divided parts. We express the same idea in our other word for the same thing, "*re-collecting*." The brotherhood of humanity consists simply in this reassembling in a common spirit of unity the individualized fragments of the twelve Lords of Hosts, the twelve tribes of Israel. Horus is said to have come to reconstitute his dismembered father. Translated from allegory to spiritual meaning this can signify only that the Christ spark in us is to grow and expand until it fuses by its fiery power into the great universal spirit of wisdom and love that is to animate the race. Paul told us we are all members of one body, of which Christ is the head; but habits of literal thought have prevented us from sensing this in an intellectual or spiritual way. Our minds and hearts are to be fused in one great spirit of love and harmony, as we enhance the glory of the god shining within us ever more brightly unto the day of perfection. As we separated in our descent into body, so we merge again into a mighty unity as we ascend back to the father of lights. This is the reconstitution of the dismembered suffering god, broken upon the cross of matter, in order that we lower men might ascend into the kingdom of intellect and spirit. The reconstitution is indeed the re-membering our broken divinity, the re-collection of the scattered fragments of the broken body of the Divine Lord. Only by the study of ancient origins in philosophy can we see the grand spiritual sense back of these figures and terms. All symbols had their origin in simple ideas, which, however, were the expressions of the loftiest truths of early wisdom.

This reassembling of the scattered fragments is the basis and genius of human brotherhood. The individuals of the race, being of one identical essence, are kindred in nature. But being attached to animal bodies, the

god is subject to the separative selfish tendencies of the lower man, until he educates this pupil to the higher motivations of altruism and community of interest with others. As an animal he wars with his fellows, is jealous and self-seeking, under the evolutionary impulse of self-preservation brought up from former experience in the animal grades. But as a god he revives the memory of his kinship with his celestial mates, and in the glow of that warm recognition that his brother is himself, he learns to look upon his fellow-man with that love which is described as the cement of the universe.