



Theosophical Society

Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

Literature, supporting the study (on Sunday, January **26**, 2025)
of the lecture of Barend Voorham (on Sunday, January **19**, 2025)

Series: **The Mystical Birth**

Lecture: **The four sacred moments of the year**

Gottfried de Purucker, *The Masters and the Path of Occultism*, pp. 83-86 (1st edition 1939)

The Initiatory Cycle contained the circling year as a symbol of the entire spiritual, intellectual, and psychical life-cycle of a human being; and at the four cross-periods, composing 'the cross of the Universe', as the divine philosopher Plato, called it, there took place the four great initiation-ceremonies of human existence.

The first of these Initiations was called the 'Birth'. It took place and takes place at the time of the winter solstice, December 21-22 or thereabouts, which Christians now call the Christmas-Festival of December 25; and when this new 'Birth' occurred, then men said: "Lo! the Christ in man is born." Or: "The Inner Buddha is born from within the shell of the neophyte." As the man lived on, if he had the strength of will and the courage to proceed and to follow the Path to the second initiatory stage - no matter how many years this may have taken or now may take - then came the 'Easter' of his life, the second great Initiation, when the Christ within him was - not born, because that had already taken place - but when the Christ 'arose' and took his own stand as a fully developed Master, Teacher, Guide, and Leader, of men.

Then came the third stage, that which was commemorated mythologically by so many of the ancient peoples in the festival of the Midsummer, of the summer solstice. On June 21-22 began the 'trials' of this third stage, and they lasted for fourteen days, beginning at a time when the moon was new and culminating and ending for that period when the moon was full. So was it also at the winter solstice or 'Christmas'-Initiation beginning on December 21-22, when the moon was new and ending fourteen days afterwards, when the moon was full. So was it also during the Spring-time, the spring equinox, the second stage; and so was it again during the Autumn-period, September 21-22: each of these Initiation-ceremonies began when, according to the ancient, wonderful, mystical, true astrology, the sun and moon and planets were rightly situated.

Every one of these Initiation-periods began either at the time of the winter solstice, or of the spring equinox, or of the summer solstice, or of the autumnal equinox; respectively therefore on December 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until the full moon; or on March 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until full moon; and then on June 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until full moon; and then finally on September 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until the moon was full.

William Quan Judge, 'What is the "Daily Initiation"?'

Article 'The Stream of Thought and Queries II' in *The Path*, Vol. IV, September, 1889, pp. 187-188

In: W.Q. Judge, *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. II, p. 401 (PLP edition 1980), pp. 417-418 (TUP edition 2009)

It is supposed by some that initiation is always and in every case a set and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

William Quan Judge, 'Abridgement of discussions, Number II'

Leaflet, May 1886, in: W.Q Judge, *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. II, p. 434 (PLP edition 1980), pp. 450-451 (TUP edition 2009)

It seems to me that many who think that they would earnestly seek the light do not comprehend the true nature of the temptations to which they are continually subjected. They are looking for something unusual, something hard in the way of a trial, and think: "If something of the sort would only come along, how I would show my power to stand it!" At the same time, by their daily yielding to the small vexations of life they show their unfitness for meeting greater trials. Even if one who has waited long and patiently asks, "Why am I not given an opportunity, since my conduct deserves it?" he shows by the very question his unfitness. As the great poet, Walt Whitman, who is full of occultism, says: "When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architects shall appear."* When a person loses his temper over a trifle, he is hardly likely to meet any greater temptation in the right spirit. Every time we successfully overcome even the slightest obstacle, we have made a step in our initiation into the mysteries. Let us remember that it is the unexpected that always happens in the way of trials to the novice. The devil never sends a herald to announce his coming, and when pictured as a serpent it is never as a rattlesnake. (...) Humbleness, Patience and Content are the first 3 steps that lead to the door.

* ["A Song of the Rolling Earth," Stanza 4, line 10, in *Leaves of Grass* (many editions) — Comp.]

Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 12 (1st edition 1889)

Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself.

Gottfried de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 219 (1st edition 1932)

Each stage or degree of initiation after the third of the seven, we are taught, is marked by something more than teaching. The first three initiations, or stages or degrees in initiation, we are taught, are composed of teachings. With the fourth degree, there begins another method. What is this method?

It is one of the fundamental teachings of Occultism and of our Esoteric School, that nothing can be *truly known* which is not *experienced, lived through*. As a matter of fact, we all know this, as it is common experience. One of the so-called laws of our being, one of the fundamental conditions of our human nature is this, that thoroughly to know a thing, thoroughly to enter into it, thoroughly to understand it, you must *be it*, you must *become it*. You cannot tread the Path until you become and are that Path. Thus, therefore, the different stages or degrees of initiation are really a kind of 'forcing-process', for certain chosen spirits, certain chosen souls, who have proved themselves worthy: a 'forcing' or developing-process enabling them through actual experience, individual experience, to pass through and realize the hid secrets of being which the slow processes of evolutionary development would have brought to them as the ages rolled by. It is, in fact, a quickening or awakening of the man to inner knowledge and power. These different stages or degrees of initiation are marked by preparatory purifications, first. Then came the 'death', a mystic death. The body and lower principles, so to say, are paralysed, and the soul is temporarily freed. And, to a certain extent, it (the freed inner man) is guided and directed and helped by the initiators while it passes into other spheres and to other planes and learns the nature of these *by becoming them*, which is the only way by which knowledge thereof roots itself into the soul, *i.e.*, into the ego: *by becoming the thing*.

Gottfried de Purucker, *Occult Glossary*, p. 40 (1st edition 1933)

Circulations of the Kosmos. (Also Circulations of the Universe.) This is a term used in the Ancient Wisdom or Esoteric Philosophy to signify the network, marvelously intricate and builded, of the channels or canals or paths or roads followed by peregrinating or migrating entities, as these latter pass from sphere to sphere or from realm to realm or from plane to plane. The pilgrim-Monads, however far advanced or however little advanced in their evolution, inevitably and ineluctably follow these Circulations. They can do nothing else, for they are simply the spiritual, psycho-magnetic, astral and physical, pathways along which the forces of the Universe flow; and consequently, all entities whatsoever being indeed imbodiments of forces must of necessity follow the same routes or pathways that the abstract forces themselves use. These Circulations of the Kosmos are a veritable network, as said above, between planet and planet, and planet and sun, and between sun and sun,

and between sun and Universe, and between Universe and Universe. Furthermore, the Circulations of the Kosmos are not restricted to the material or astral spheres, but are of the very fabric and structure of the entire Universal Kosmos, inner as well as outer. It is one of the most mystical and suggestive doctrines of Theosophy.

Gottfried de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 241-242 (1st edition 1932)

Remember that initiation is the quickening or enlivening of the soul of one who is prepared. It is a quickening-process of evolution, for producing a more rapid evolving of the inner man, which otherwise an ordinary man would achieve only after many ages. In these initiations, and in the fifth, to particularize, there occurs what is called the *Theophany*. The Christians use that word and also *Epiphany*, which is a minor form of the same thing, and they say it should be celebrated on the 4th-6th of January, the matter having direct relation with the calendar of the solar year of which we spoke in our last study, but which we have no time to go into tonight. *Theophany* originally meant the *appearance of a god*. It actually is the following mystery: in the fifth initiation, the human being under trial, the chela under trial, *meets his own god-self face to face*, and for a longer or shorter time *becomes one with it*. He then knows truth; you will remember that the only way of really understanding a thing, is to *become that thing*. And that is the real meaning of what takes place in the true, real initiations, and the *Epiphany* is a minor manifestation of the *Theophany*. It is a Greek word meaning shining upon, or illuminating; whereas *Theophany* means the shining forth visibly of a god — *the man's own inner Higher Self*.

If the *Theophany* is more or less complete upon the ending of the initiation or the trial, the chela then has *Theopneusty*, meaning divine inspiration. He is consciously united with his inner god, his Higher Self. Literally, the inner god of the candidate breathes down into him, for a longer or shorter time, depending upon his advancement, the wisdom and the knowledge of all the universe, so to say, in degree greater or less, depending upon the candidate's advancement and receptivity.

The highest of all the ancient initiation-achievements, in Greece was called the *Theopathy*, meaning "suffering a god", not a god who suffers, but one who suffers the conscious entrance into him of a god. This is not, of course, an Avatara, which is something else entirely, as we have shown above; but it means that at initiation and for a less or greater time afterwards, according to the spiritual power and receptivity of the initiate, he becomes, through that holy presence in him, a walking, living god, *his own Inner Self*. Finally, our Teachers tell us that in some rare cases the *Theophany*, the *Theopneusty*, and the *Theopathy* last as long as does the life on earth of the Initiate.
