

# PSYCHO-SCIENTIFIC FRONTIERS

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## **Communicating with God's World of Spirit – its laws and its purpose**

Personal experiences of a Catholic priest

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## 7. 0 Christ - His Life and His Work

For us Christians there is but one God, the Father, in Whom everything originates and for Whom we were created, and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came into being and to whom we owe our existence. Corinthians 8: 6

*What think ye of Christ?*

This question was written in letters of fire before my eyes from the day on which I had resolved to become a priest. It was to be my duty not only to proclaim Christ's teachings to my fellow believers, but also the truth concerning his person, his life and his work.

- Who was Christ?
- Who had he been before he became a man?
- What was he as a man?
- Was he God, or only a Son of God?
- Was he, after his human birth, a man like us in mind and body?
- Was he begotten and born like all men?
- As a child, was he obliged to acquire knowledge, as are all children?
- Did he, too, have to come to recognize God step by step, and to travel the same road travelled by all who seek to know God's nature and His will if they want to reach an understanding of God?
- Was he exposed to the temptations of evil, and to all of the fateful consequences attendant upon his choices, as happens to all of us daily?
- Was it possible that he, like the rest of mankind, might have succumbed to these temptations?
- Could he, perchance, like millions of others, have been induced by the Powers of Evil to forsake God?
- And if he had been sent to redeem humanity, wherein did the Redemption lie? What was the explanation for all these related questions?

After I had become convinced at the spiritistic Divine services that God's spirits speak through mediums, as they had in the early Christian communities, it was above all full enlightenment on these questions concerning Christ that I asked for.

My request was granted, to the smallest details.

And that knowledge constituted the most precious possession of my soul.

In what follows, I repeat the truths regarding Christ, his life, and his work of Redemption, as they were imparted to me by the spirit that taught me.

(Information from the SPHERES of LIGHT)

Thus, spoke a teaching spirit to me:

You are in search of enlightenment as to the person of Christ, his birth as a man, his life, sufferings and death as a man, and as to the truth relating to the Redemption. A few of those questions I have already answered by telling you of God's Creation and its fate, as well as of His Plan of Salvation.

At that time, you were told that Christ is *the first* and *the highest* of the spirits created by God and the only one to be created *directly*; that the rest of the spirit world came into being through Christ and, together with him, formed a great spiritual community, or kingdom, with Christ as its king, according to God's will.

In this kingdom Christ was, therefore, in a sense God's representative.

*Christ himself was not God.*

He was only the first Son of God. He received his power, and his glory and his kingdom from God. He was but one of God's creatures and, as such, not eternal like God.

It was against Christ's reign that the *revolt of the spirits* headed by Lucifer was directed. After the defection of a part of the spirit world and its fall into the spheres of the abyss, Christ volunteered to bring back the fallen spirits to God's kingdom in accordance with the Plan of Salvation God had conceived.

*Christ's work of Redemption* was begun immediately after the apostasy of the spirit hosts had occurred. It was Christ who created the *stages of rehabilitation* of which I told you in detail in the course of my teachings on God's Plan of Salvation.

- *Christ thus became the creator of the whole material universe, which forms the stairway for the ascent of the fallen spirits from the abyss to the heights of God's kingdom.*

From the earliest days after those spirits had risen to the level of human existence, Christ became the guide of mankind and strove to turn people's thoughts, which tend toward evil, toward God.

But the ruling Powers of Hell also did their utmost to maintain their sway over mankind.

This led to the mighty struggle between Christ and Lucifer over the spirits incarnated as human beings, a conflict that forms the main theme of what has been preserved for you in the writings of the Old Testament.

In this conflict Christ was supported by the good spirit world under his command, many of the spirits volunteering *to become mortals* in order that they might, by preaching the truth and by setting an example of righteous living, lead humans unto God.

One of the celestial spirits who was permitted to incarnate on earth was *Enoch*, who taught his contemporaries about the true God and the right path to a knowledge of Him. Above all, he taught

them of *communication with God's spirit world*, with which he himself was in daily contact. For in his day, almost all the people were given to communicating with evil spirits and had been led into idolatry of the most abominable kind and into all manner of depravity.

Unfortunately, the result of his efforts was not lasting.

The power of evil was so strong that the nations of those times became addicted to abominations of which you today can form no conception. The highest of the infernal spirits made use of human deep-trance mediums not only for speaking, but also for purposes of propagation, for just as the spirit of a medium can use his body for that purpose, so a foreign spirit can enter that body and, through it, propagate, and the corrupt female world population of the time considered it an honour to be thus abused at the idol worship. You will find confirmation of this in the Bible, in the passage relating that the sons of God came to the daughters of man, and these bore them children. (Genesis 6: 4)

- *The term 'sons of God' here refers to those once leading spirits of heaven that had fallen away from God, taking a prominent part in the revolt.*

These are the same spirits of which Job says:

*Job 1: 6:*                    'Now it came to pass one day that the sons of God came to present themselves to the Lord, and Satan appeared among them.'

Here, too, it was *only* the apostate sons of God.

Satan, as you know, was the second son of God.

- *As rulers of the kingdom of Darkness, these sons of God are not free to do as they like, but remain subject to God's sovereignty, and are, at times, called to account by Him.*

The efforts of Christ and his good spirit world to influence the completely corrupt human race were fruitless.

- *So, the whole generation had to be wiped out and replaced by a new one. The annihilation was brought about by the Flood, from which only one family, that of Noah, was saved to become the progenitors of a better human race.*

However, very soon after the Great Flood, evil once more raised its head among Noah's descendants, as witness the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the family of Lot. The more widely mankind spread out, the more zealously did men serve the Devil through idol worship and vice.

In order to accomplish his end in spite of the terrible sway of evil over humanity, Christ strove, *long* before his incarnation, to win over at least a small fraction of mankind to the cause of God, a fraction that was to be the bearer of the faith and of the hope of salvation for later generations. It was to be the sourdough through which the whole mass of humanity would ultimately be leavened, the mustard seed that in time would grow into the great tree of the true belief in and search for God, and gather all mankind under its sheltering boughs through the ages. When this tree had attained a certain growth, the 'fullness of time' would have arrived for the Redeemer to descend to earth as the *Son of Man*, to complete the last part of his mission of Salvation. Not until then would it be worthwhile to build the bridge by which the righteous spirits could cross from Lucifer's realm into the kingdom

of God, even as you do not build bridges unless the number of persons likely to use them warrants their construction.

*Abraham* was chosen as the sourdough and the mustard seed of the faith and of the hope of Redemption, a man of unshakable loyalty to God.

Christ communicated with him, at times directly, at times through his spirits, for Abraham was also an incarnated spirit of heaven.

Abraham's devotion to God was soon put to a very severe test.

- *As is the case with all to whom God thinks of entrusting a particularly important mission.*

When you humans build a railroad bridge to be used by freight and passenger trains, you also test its capacity before opening the bridge to traffic. If it fails to meet the tests, it is reinforced, and if it proves unsafe even then, it is condemned, and you must build a new bridge.

God proceeds similarly in the case of mortals selected to fulfill tasks of importance to His kingdom. If they fail to hold up under His tests, and if His efforts to strengthen them are futile, they are put aside as unfit, and others are selected instead. It often happens that people otherwise fit for God's great ends must be rejected because of disqualifying defects for which they themselves are responsible, but which *they persist in retaining*.

Many are called, but few are chosen.

- *Fearsome indeed was the test to which Abraham was put when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, for he who loves his father or mother, his brother or sister, his son or daughter, or his friend more than he loves God is not worthy of God's great gifts or of performing God's great work.*

Abraham passed the severe test, and was rewarded with God's promise:

*Genesis 22: 16-18:* 'Because you acted as you did and did not withhold your only son from me, I will richly bless you and will make your seed as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore ... and through your seed shall all the peoples of the earth be blessed.'

The seed mentioned in this promise does not refer to Abraham's *human progeny*, for that could not have embraced all the nations of the earth and would not have been as numerous as 'the stars of the heavens and the sand on the seashore.' God does not exaggerate, and what He says is always the whole truth.

Abraham's descendants were *spiritual* and would ultimately embrace all of the fallen spirits, in the sense that Abraham's faith in God and his devotion to Him would little by little *extend to all* who had forsaken God. Indeed, it would not have proved a blessing to Abraham had he had countless human progeny, who might fall into evil ways. As a matter of fact, in later days whole generations of Abraham's descendants forsook the true religion and turned to the worship of idols.

The second generation of Abraham's human descendants, Jacob and his sons, were led into Egypt, where they settled in the fertile land of Goshen, there to become a great nation, isolated from the idolatrous inhabitants of Egypt, and free to uphold the true faith.

- *But continuing worldly prosperity always endangers a nation's faithfulness to God.*

That is why God permitted the pharaohs to sorely oppress the Hebrews, as Abraham's descendants had come to be known, and to hold them in rigorous servitude. It was not God who instigated Pharaoh to pursue this course, *but the spirit Powers of Evil*, which had realized that the Hebrew nation, as the bearer of the true faith, was a dangerous weapon in Christ's hands and might be used by him against them. Hence, it was to be wiped out, and since this end was not being accomplished by the forced labour the Hebrews were compelled to perform, the demoniacal powers drove the pharaohs to exterminate them by the simplest and most effective method. Every Hebrew man-child was to be killed at birth. As a justification for this measure, the Powers of Hell had filled the king's mind with the thought that the Hebrews within his dominions, having already waxed strong in numbers, might become a source of danger by allying themselves with the enemies of Egypt.

Evil well knows how to attack men, and the rulers of men in particular, at their weakest point.

Which, with a king, is always a fear that his throne is in peril.

Hence Pharaoh fell a ready victim to the insinuations of the evil ones, and began the slaughter of all the newborn male infants of the Hebrews. According to Pharaoh's plan, this would have resulted in the extinction of all Hebrew men within a comparatively short period. The Hebrew women would then have become the wives or slaves of Egyptians, would have been absorbed by that people and, like it, have fallen into idolatry.

Thus, all the efforts of Christ and his spirit world to provide for human bearers of the true faith would have been nullified at one blow.

But once again it happened, as it happens so often in nature and in the lives of men, that the very force that was intent upon doing evil promoted the cause of good, for the moment at which a people is driven to the greatest desperation through the slaughter of its children by a ruler is also the most favourable moment for persuading that people to leave the scene of its sufferings. There was still another, more important reason why it was high time for the Hebrew people to be led out of the land of the pharaohs. During the 400 years of their sojourn there the Hebrews had gradually drifted toward Egyptian idol worship, and quite a few of them were already participating in the pagan rites. This grave danger to the Hebrew people's faith in God could be prevented only by an *exodus from Egypt*, and this was the most appropriate moment for that, since the massacre of their infants was making their stay in Egypt a living hell for the Hebrews.

"Leading so numerous and unmanageable a people out of Egypt was a task that called for a great human leader. Christ selected one of his high heavenly spirits for the purpose, and caused it to be born as a human being.,

It was *Moses*.

The son of Hebrew parents, he was saved from death by Pharaoh's daughter, who saw to it that he was instructed in all of the sciences of the time, thus equipping him, as a mortal, with the skills he would need as the head of a great people.

When he had grown to manhood, Christ spoke to him from the burning bush and appointed him as the leader of '*God's people*'.

Moses was called upon to perform, first of all, two tasks. One of these was to reveal himself to the enslaved Hebrews as God's envoy, charged with the mission of leading them out of Egypt. His second task was to persuade Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to leave his realm.

*Superhuman power* was conferred upon Moses by Christ for the execution of these two tasks, but the evil spirits, seeing their annihilation plans thwarted, also appeared on the battle scene in full force and used the Egyptian sorcerers as their instruments.

Then began the greatest battle among spirits ever fought on earth. On one side stood Christ with his good spirit world, and Moses as his visible champion; on the other, hell with its helpers, the Egyptian magicians.

With the aid of God's spirits, who stood invisible beside him, Moses performed the greatest miracles the world has ever seen apart from Christ. Moses thus hoped to convince both the Hebrew people and Pharaoh of the Divine nature of his mission. By these signs that took place before their eyes, God's people were to be moved to obey Moses as their leader, and Pharaoh was to be *induced to allow* the Hebrews to depart.

At first, and for the purpose of counteracting any effect Moses might produce upon Pharaoh and the people, the evil powers accomplished miracles similar to his, but before long their efforts began to fail, and the sorcerers themselves were forced to admit: 'This is the finger of God.' 'Never had such mighty spirit materializations been witnessed as in this battle.

- On Moses' side, a good spirit, dematerializing Moses' rod, changed into a serpent.
- The same thing was done for the sorcerers by the evil spirits.
- Entire hosts of spirits were materialized as frogs at Moses' command.
- and at the command of the sorcerers, low spirits did the same.
- Moses turned the waters of the river to blood with the aid of God's spirits.
- And, with the help of the infernal powers, the sorcerers did the same.

God allowed the wicked to exert their powers to the utmost of their ability, in order that, in the end, He might have the opportunity of showing *His full omnipotence* and thereby, above all, fortify the faith of the Israelites – for this was a life-and-death struggle in which the Hebrews, as God's people, were the stakes. Israel was the first-born of the true faith; should it fall victim to hell, a long time would elapse before another people fit to take that part could arise among mankind.

Christ, God's first-born, fought against the first-born of hell on behalf of the first-born human bearers of the faith and of the hope of salvation. Christ was the victor. God's avenging angel smote all of the first-born in Egypt, thus forcing the decision. Pharaoh and his people were seized with fear, and at the insistence of his own subjects he allowed the Hebrews to depart.

Travelling in a pillar of cloud, Christ led the Israelites, and out of the cloud he spoke to Moses, protecting the people from the pursuing hosts of Egypt. The good spirit world divided the waters of the sea and made the waves as a wall on the right hand of the people and on their left. Putting their trust in him who spoke from the pillar of cloud, the children of Israel fearlessly walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea. They received their first baptism unto Christ, with full faith in the '*Angel of the Lord*', who was none other than Christ himself.

God and Christ led Israel through the desert; at their behest the good spirit world brought forth water from the rock and provided manna. Hence Paul says, rightly:

*I Corinthians 10: 1-4:* 'I do not want to leave you in ignorance of the fact that our fathers were all under the protection of the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized in the cloud and in the sea as followers of Moses; and all ate the same food and drank the same spiritual drink: *for they drank from a spiritual rock that accompanied them, and the rock was Christ.*'

God and Christ, as well as the good spirit world, gave the people whatever advice and instruction were necessary.

It was God Himself who issued the Commandments on Mount Sinai.

"The long sojourn in the desert was necessary in order that the people might be tested, to show whether their faith and belief in God were strong enough to enable them to withstand the perils that would threaten them from the pagan inhabitants of the country that they were later to take over. It was imperative that this people preserve its faith in God, since otherwise all the previous efforts would have been in vain.

Still another menace to their faithfulness to God had to be eliminated. It was *greed for worldly belongings* and excessive attachment to material things, which tend to drive men into the arms of evil.

Christ resorted to every measure that would prevent, or at least diminish, these dangers, taking *radical steps* to cure his people of these failings by enacting laws whereby the Israelites, as the Hebrews eventually came to be known,

- were obliged to pay a tithe.
- Furthermore, they had to offer their first fruits, or to redeem these with some other offering.
- and in addition, they were called upon to make numerous sacrifices of beasts and fruits, such as burnt-offerings, meal-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, for which only unblemished gifts were accepted.
- When harvesting, they were forbidden to reap their fields completely or to gather up the gleanings of the harvest; they had to leave them for the poor and for strangers.
- Every seventh year they were not allowed to till their land.
- Every fiftieth year they had to 'return unto every man his former property'.



- Finally, the taking of interest was forbidden, thereby forestalling usury at the outset.

If the people of Israel observed these statutes, the danger of their being ruled wholly by worldly considerations and breaking faith with God out of love for Mammon would not be all too great.

The other danger that threatened their faith was, however, far greater.

This was the *idolatry* of the peoples the Hebrews would encounter in the so-called ‘promised land’.. This idol worship was all the more dangerous because, like all of its kind, it consisted of *humanly perceptible* communication with the evil spirit world.

The spirit realm is mysterious in human eyes, and mystery exerts an irresistible attraction on everyone. Ghost stories are listened to with the greatest attention, and wherever anything mysterious and spectral actually or allegedly happens, a crowd will gather.

Thus, the Israelites had already in the past been attracted by the mysteries of Egyptian idol worship. The Apostle Paul refers to this in writing to the Corinthians when he says:

*I Corinthians 12: 2:* ‘You know that when you were still heathens, it was the dead idols to which you were irresistibly drawn.’

I need scarcely add that the Israelites did not content themselves with merely looking at idol images, for lifeless stone and wood attracted the people of those times as little as they attract people today.

- *The allurement of idol worship lay in the actual communication with the low spirit world.*

The speaking of spirits through images and human mediums and the performance by them of other marvellous feats were the factors that attracted people. It was here that they were told so much that was mysterious, that they received answers to their questions relating to their *worldly prospects*, and that they heard *predictions about their supposed future*, something that all people welcome eagerly. In addition to this, they were told things highly gratifying to their *human passions*, for here vice was elevated to virtue, while virtue was branded as vice. Whoever once became addicted to this kind of spirit communication found it difficult to desist from the habit. “As the leader of God’s people, Christ took two measures to try to prevent his followers from lapsing into idolatry.

- One of these measures was to give them the opportunity of communicating with *good spirits*, as a substitute for the form of spirit communication that had been forbidden. He gave the Israelites the Tabernacle, the breastplate of judgment, and the good mediums, known to you as ‘*prophets*’, as I have already taught you at length in my previous accounts.
- As the second measure, he commanded the Israelites to exterminate certain tribes into whose land they were to emigrate. There were six of them that had fallen into such idolatry and abomination that their conversion to a faith in God seemed impossible. Instead, there was every reason to fear that they would soon have corrupted the Israelites who settled among them.

The command to exterminate these peoples has led many of you to look upon the God of the Old Testament as a cruel Deity and to maintain that the writers of the Old Testament were as yet incapable of conceptualizing a God such as Christ preached, since otherwise they would never have attributed such cruelty to the will of God. In this you are mistaken.

- *It was one and the same Christ who preached the conception of God that you find in the New Testament and who commanded the destruction of those idolatrous peoples.*

In one case as in the other, Christ appears as the Saviour. By ordering the extermination of those peoples, he preserved them from *sinking still further* into disbelief and depravity.

- *Christ indeed gave them the opportunity of working their way, in a new existence, out of the depths into which they had fallen.*

The underlying motive was the same as that which, in earlier times, had led to the [near] extinction of the human race in the Flood and the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. An even more important motive was that of *preserving faith in God* among God's people.

When men make war, they do not hesitate to shoot anyone who tries to induce a soldier to desert, a measure that you accept as perfectly justified. Was not God equally entitled to order the death of those who wanted to instigate his chosen bearers of the faith to desert their colours and to go over to the Powers of Darkness? Besides, it was through God's people that the hour of the Redemption of all mankind was to be prepared. Was Christ, then, to stand idly by while this work, difficult enough at best, was ruined by those who were enemies of God and instruments of Lucifer?

You mortals become very tender-hearted when God in His wisdom and justice orders the destruction of utterly wicked and irretrievably depraved people, lest they corrupt millions of others and in order that they themselves may as spirits be brought back into the path of salvation. Remember, also, that it was God who did these things, the Master of life and death, who had shown these people unmerited forbearance, even though they had committed everything abominable in His sight in their idol worship, going to the length of sacrificing their own children as burnt offerings to their idols. (Deuteronomy 12: 31) When making war upon other tribes the Israelites were commanded to conduct themselves humanely.

*Deuteronomy 20: 10:* 'When you approach another city to besiege it, you shall invite them to come to a peaceful agreement.'

They were forbidden even to injure fruit trees when laying siege to a city and were commanded to build their catapults of the wood of trees bearing no edible fruit.

Moses received his first taste of the danger of idolatry in the story of the *golden calf*. Soon afterwards also, when they approached the land of Moab,

*Numbers 25: 1-2:* 'When the Israelites had settled down in Sittim, they began to engage in harlotry with the daughters of Moab, for these invited them to the sacrificial celebrations of their idols and the people of Israel took part in their sacrificial feasts and worshiped their gods.'

The harlotry alluded to here was part of the pagan ritual and was demanded by the demons through the mediums as particularly pleasing to their gods. It was part of the idol worship, as among all other heathen peoples.

Armed with the weapon of idolatry and its attendant vices, the Powers of Evil subsequently did much harm among God's people and thereby to the preparations for the Redemption. Almost entire generations of the Lord's chosen people later forsook the true faith in God.

In order to lead them back, God subjected them to terrible judgments. Christ sent the prophets in an effort to win them back to the good cause. These prophets were the mediums of the good spirit world, and they were hard put to maintain a successful fight against the influence of the demonic mediums, the '*prophets of Baal*'. God's true prophets were incarnated celestial spirits, although in their life as mortals they were quite as much exposed to evil as the rest of mankind. Thanks to their efforts, the belief in the true God and in the coming Redeemer were not completely eradicated among the generations that followed.

The time finally came when a great part of humanity was ready, at least in their yearnings, to accept Christ's act of Redemption in faith and to cross the bridge he was to build over the gulf dividing the realm of the abyss from the kingdom of God. Countless human souls stood waiting to cross.

At last, the fullness of time had come when under God's Plan of Salvation, the Redeemer was to appear.

Shortly before Christ was born upon earth, he sent a herald to prepare for and proclaim his coming. This herald also was a celestial spirit, Elijah, the same spirit which, at a time when idolatry was at its worst, had come to earth on Christ's behalf and had fought victoriously against the instruments of the Forces of Evil. After accomplishing his mission, he had been taken back to Heaven without having experienced earthly death. Now, as Christ's predecessor, he was born as a mortal for the second time, as the son of Zacharias, and bore the name '*John*'.

Even before John's birth, the incarnation of God's Anointed was foretold. The archangel Gabriel, who had brought Zacharias the message of the birth of John as the forerunner of Christ, was also entrusted with the message of the human birth of the Redeemer.

Gabriel was sent to a virgin in Nazareth named *Mary*.

She had been chosen as the mother of the saviour.

## 7. 1 The Human Birth of Jesus, his childhood and his siblings

Procreation and birth in God's Creation follow immutable laws. The union of the seed of the male and the female is required in every instance.

- *This is a law to which there is no exception!*

Human procreation can, therefore, come about only when the seed of a human male unites with that of a human female.

- *Hence, no discarnate spirit, celestial or infernal, can beget offspring without using a human body and human seed.*

You interpret the Biblical account of the conception of Christ as though a spirit from heaven had begotten the Child in a virgin's womb *without* the aid of a male human body and male seed.

This is an incorrect interpretation,

And it gives countless people, believers and unbelievers, good ground for denying, or at any rate for doubting, the way in which the Son of God became a human being. Here we have an instance in which what is marvellous and unusual, although in complete accordance with the laws of nature, borders closely upon what is unreasonable and, hence, unbelievable.

I will tell you the whole truth of the matter, for I know that you will understand it.

When a deep-trance medium's spirit has left his body and a foreign spirit has entered, that spirit is capable of using the organs of the body in precisely *the same way* as the medium's own spirit.

- *Consequently, a foreign spirit, good or evil, that occupies the body of a male medium is capable of begetting offspring with a woman.*

Did I not, when speaking to you of the idolatry of antediluvian times, particularly call your attention to the carnal intercourse had by the evil spirits, through male mediums, with the daughters of men, by whom, according to the Bible's own testimony, they had children?

If this is possible for evil spirits, should it not be equally possible for the good ones? If the fallen 'sons of God' could beget children through human mediums and so *corrupt* mankind, ought not the faithful sons of God be able to do likewise on behalf of mankind's salvation?

Now you will understand the human conception of Christ without the need of any further explanation.

- *The human medium was Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed.*

Spirits of God had already repeatedly spoken to Mary, through Joseph as their medium, of the coming Redemption. Such spirit messages were nothing out of the ordinary for her; as a matter of fact, the Jewish people generally were thoroughly familiar with communication with the spirit world. This is evident from the account in the Scriptures of the appearance of the angel to Zacharias. When Zacharias left the temple and was unable to speak, the people realized that he had been visited by a messenger from God. (Luke 1: 22)

So, Mary was not alarmed when one day a spirit entered Joseph as its medium and brought her a message. But she was taken aback by the form of address the spirit used. It addressed her as '*blessed among women*', by which the spirit indicated that she would become a mother. This was beyond her comprehension, as she had never had relations with any man and therefore could not be pregnant. But the angel answered and told her that a holy spirit would come upon her and the power of one most high would overshadow her. That is also why the holy being that would be born to her would be called a Son of God.

The spirit then told her in detail how it would happen, a point on which your Bible is silent. It told her that, as soon as it had left the medium's body, a very high heavenly spirit would enter the medium, and that she would become a mother through this spirit by the generally valid law of procreation.

Thereupon Mary agreed to the plan.

- *After Gabriel had departed out of the medium and before Joseph had awakened from his mediumistic sleep, Christ himself entered Joseph's body and through him Mary conceived under the same law that governs conception in all human mothers.*

Just moments before the birth, the spirit of Christ entered the body of the child, that is, at the same stage at which the incarnation of a spirit occurs with *all mothers* through the entry of the spirit into the infant organism.

That this was the way in which Christ was begotten was well known to the early Christians, to whom it had been revealed in the same manner in which I am revealing it to you. They knew, therefore, that the human body of Christ had been begotten by Christ himself, using Joseph as his medium. That is to say, the holy spirit that, according to Gabriel's message, was to come upon Mary was Christ himself. He wanted personally to perform everything that he held necessary to achieve the Redemption. He had taken the difficult preparatory work into his own hands from the outset, had chosen God's people as the bearers of the faith, had led them, taught them, admonished, warned and chastised them. He had sent high spirits of heaven to earth as prophets. The last step in this preparation was begetting the human body that he would enter a few months later in his mother's womb, so that, by being born as a mortal, he might mingle with mortals as one of them.

As soon as Joseph had awakened from his deep trance Mary related to him the things that had happened. It was a hard test to which he now found himself subjected. Should he believe what his betrothed had told him? A terrible battle waged within him. Like all other men, he was but human.

Evil assailed him fiercely. The Powers of Hell had but one end in view: to incite Joseph to doubt Mary and to cast her off, for under Jewish law, a betrothed young woman who was found to have had relations with another man was stoned to death. Evil sought to hammer home in him the belief that Mary had become involved with another man, and that she was now making use of the pretext that a spirit of God had used Joseph's body while he was in a mediumistic state. There was nothing in the way of distrust, jealousy and bitterness to which men are prone by reason of disappointment that the Powers of Evil did not instil into Joseph. Their attacks were terrible and seemed to be more than he could bear. He was of half a mind to put his betrothed away secretly, for Joseph, being a righteous man, was unwilling, in the absence of positive proof that he had been deceived, to denounce a fellow creature for an offense the penalty for which was death. On the other hand, he was not ready to make his betrothed his wife as long as any misgivings persisted. Mary simply said

that God would surely reveal the truth to him in one way or another. She, too, suffered unspeakably under his suspicions.

That very night, an angel of the Lord appeared to the clairvoyant Joseph and explained everything to him.

This ended the conflict within him.

I realize that this truth – and it is the truth – will appear entirely too human and too much in accordance with the mundane laws of Nature to convince you mere mortals. It is not marvellous and mysterious enough to satisfy you. The human act of procreation is something debasing in the eyes of many, who, as it were, blame God for making it a part of the order of things. To their way of thinking, God is not chaste enough.

Wretched beings that you are, *to so misjudge* the most wonderful laws enacted by God's omnipotence and wisdom as exemplified in the procreation, the prenatal life, and the birth of a child!

Christ, the highest of created spirits, *did not find it beneath him* to beget his own earthly body in conformity with the eternally fixed laws of procreation, in order that he might dwell, suffer and die among you. Even if the truth regarding his human conception may not be miraculous enough to suit you, for Christ everything is miraculous that happens according to the sacred laws of his heavenly Father, about which the preacher says:

*Ecclesiastes 3: 14:* 'I realize that everything that God has ordained is valid forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has arranged things thus so that men should revere Him.'

Unfortunately, you mortals do not feel this reverence!

That is why you account for the incarnation of Christ by means of concocted theories, which, because of the alleged miracles they involve, are full of *contradictions* and furnish *good* grounds to the sceptics for deriding the first step Christ took in becoming a human.

Had the incarnation of Christ not followed the laws of human procreation, Paul could not have said of him that he 'became as one of us'. Then his conception would have differed fundamentally from that of other men. His body would not have come into being from human seed. But Paul was right. Christ became as one of you, even as regards the generation of his human body from human seed.

Now I'll come back to your request that I speak of certain *doctrines of the Catholic Church* that touch on this subject. As you were a priest of that church it is natural that you should be particularly eager to learn which of its doctrines are true and which are false.

The Catholic Church teaches that the mother of Jesus was free from '*original sin*'. This is true, but not for the reasons advanced by your church. Like certain other mortals who lived before her and who had been called upon to perform the work of the Lord, Mary was an *incarnated celestial spirit*. The same was true of Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and others of whom I have spoken. It was true also of John, the forerunner of Christ, in whom Elijah returned to earth.

- *In Mary, therefore, there was incarnated, not one of the spirits that had forsaken God, but one that had remained loyal to Him. She did not bear the sin of apostasy, which weighs upon all other terrestrial beings. That is the 'original sin' from which she was free.*

The Catholic doctrine, however, that Mary as a mortal was devoid of all sin, even the most venial, *is utterly false.*

- *There is no mortal who has no human failings, as you call them, but these have nothing in common with that sin from which Christ was to redeem the world, namely, the sin of having rebelled against God. That is the real sin. All others are human frailties, from which not even Mary was free.*

Nevertheless, she remained faithful to God, as did Moses, that high spirit from heaven, in spite of the fact that as a man he transgressed on more than one occasion, for which he was punished by not being allowed to enter the Promised Land.

The Catholic Church is also wrong when it maintains that Mary remained a *virgin* even after the conception and the birth of Christ. She was, thereafter, no more a virgin than any woman who has conceived and given birth to a child. Only *before* Christ's conception was she a virgin; it was not intended that the Redeemer should be born of a mother who had conceived and borne other children before him. That is the meaning of the words of Matthew: 'Behold, the "virgin" shall conceive and bear a son.' (Matthew 1:23)

It is furthermore contrary to the truth when the Catholic Church maintains that *no more children were born to Mary* after the birth of Christ. On what grounds do you assume that after the birth of their first-born, she was willing to waive her right to be a mother, or that Joseph was ready to waive his rights as a husband and a father? The fact that Christ had brothers and sisters who were born after him in no way detracts from his person, or from his life, his teachings and his work.

When the original texts of the New Testament speak in various places of the *brothers and sisters* of Jesus, they are referring to his own flesh and blood brothers and sisters, and *not 'kinsfolk'* as the Catholics desperately try to prove. Had they been 'kinsfolk', they would have been called such, and not 'brothers and sisters', or do you suppose that the language of those days had no word to express the concept 'kinsfolk'? You cannot maintain this seriously, for in the story of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple, it is related that his parents looked for him 'among their "kinsfolk" and acquaintances', from which you see that where 'kinsfolk' is meant, the Evangelist uses the word for 'kinsfolk'. When the same Evangelist later writes: 'His mother and his brothers came to him.' (Luke 8: 19), he is surely not trying to convey the meaning that these were merely kinsmen who came with his mother. Also, the people who reported the arrival of his mother and brothers said to him: 'Your mother and your "brothers" are outside and want to speak to you.' Matthew and Mark likewise relate that Christ's 'mother' and his 'brothers' had come to see him. Do you believe that all three Evangelists used the word 'brothers' when they meant 'kinsfolk', in which case that was the word they could and should have used? Any such assumption is foolish.

Furthermore, in telling of the appearance of Jesus in his native village of Nazareth, Matthew reports: 'When he came to his native village Nazareth, he preached in the synagogue there and his words impressed his hearers so deeply that they asked of one another:

*Matthew 13: 54-56:* ‘From where does this man have all this wisdom and the power to perform miracles? Is he not the son of the carpenter? Is not his mother’s name Mary, and are not his brothers named James, Joseph, Simon and Judah? Do not his sisters also live here among us? How has he come by all this?’ ”

Can any rationally minded person contend that this enumeration of the father, mother, brothers and sisters of Jesus refers to kinsfolk only? Just as the reference in this case is to the real father and mother of Jesus, so too his real brothers and sisters are meant. What purpose could be served by listing the names of his kinsfolk? The inhabitants of Nazareth were astonished at his words and his teachings and asked each other, as you would under similar circumstances: Whence has he all these things? His father, the carpenter, is a man like the rest of us. Mary, his mother, is a simple, unpretentious woman, and his brothers and sisters are nothing out of the ordinary, for his brothers, James, Joseph, Simon and Judas, live among us and we see them every day, but we have never discovered anything unusual in any of them, and as for his sisters, all of them live in this village and are no different from any of the other women of Nazareth. How does it happen that of all the family, Jesus is the only one who is so wonderfully gifted?

The contention that the expressions ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ of Jesus, as they are used here, refer to ‘kinsfolk’ only, is too absurd to be advanced by anyone without an ulterior motive.

You can see here how one falsehood must be supported by another.

The Catholic Church has taken the unreasonable stand that Mary remained a virgin in spite of the fact that she bore Jesus, a position that would, of course, be utterly untenable in the face of an admission that she afterwards gave birth to other children. However, there are many references in the Bible to the brothers and sisters of Jesus. Since this conflict with the doctrine of Mary’s perpetual virginity, these historically established brothers and sisters must be branded as ‘kinsfolk’. Otherwise, the dogma of Mary’s perpetual virginity, and, with it, that of papal infallibility, would collapse.

- *The birth of Jesus took its course like any other human birth, as regards both the mother and the child. The newly-born infant was nursed, cared for and eventually weaned, as are all children.*

The message of the angels to the shepherds, their salutation of the Redeemer of mankind who had appeared, the presentation of Jesus in the temple, and the coming of the Wise Men of the East all happened *exactly as related in your New Testament*. These Wise Men were Divine instruments and were highly gifted with mediumistic powers. In their homelands they were the dispensers of the true faith, and through their communication with the good spirit world they had been initiated into many of the truths relating to the Salvation of mankind. The same spirit world that had proclaimed the birth of the Saviour to the shepherds also brought the tidings of the happy event to the Magi.

It had already been foretold as imminent by messengers from God. They were now invited to set out in search of the child in whom the Son of God was incarnated. The name of the place at which the child lay was withheld from them, but they were told that a ray of light would go before them to guide them on their way. Not only the Wise Men, but everyone else saw this light, which appeared as a bright star moving before them and leading them, as Moses and the people of Israel had once been led by the pillar of cloud. Their journey took them first to *Herod* in Jerusalem. This was an act of God, by which that earthly prince was to be apprised of the human birth of him who was to rule the world, and in order that the destiny of the children of Bethlehem might be fulfilled, as had been foretold by the prophet. Here again the spirit forces who were against Christ inspired Herod with



fear for his throne and thus drove him to perpetrate the slaughter of the children, in order that the new-born herald of the truth might perish.

The Magi did not reach Bethlehem until after the presentation of Jesus in the temple, his parents having gone there with the child on their way back from Jerusalem and intending to stay for a while before returning to Nazareth. It was during their stay in Bethlehem that the Wise Men appeared, and after the latter had set out for home, the parents of the child also prepared to continue on their way, but a messenger of God appeared to Joseph, warning him to flee into Egypt with his wife and child, as Herod, who on first learning of the birth of a new King of the Jews had determined to destroy him, was now on the point of carrying out his design.

After the Christ child had grown out of infancy, his *childhood* was like that of other children. He learned to walk and to speak, and he played, like the rest. On occasions, he misbehaved, as all children will.

With the passing of his boyhood *his understanding developed*, and inasmuch as he was the incarnation of the highest of created spirits, he was also highly gifted. Nevertheless, he had to begin to learn things as everybody does, even the most gifted. As a child he came to know of God *exactly as you yourself* did, namely, by what he learned from his parents and teachers. He listened to sermons on God in the synagogue of his native village, and discussed them with his elders, of whom he asked for explanations of the things that he had not understood or that did not seem right to him.

Moreover, he was assailed by those temptations that come *to all* children of men and are *of a strength* in keeping with a youth's powers of resistance. He overcame these temptations to the same degree that his knowledge of evil increased with the advancing years. Nevertheless, there were times when *he erred* and was guilty of failings due to human weakness, as is the case with the best of children.

- *With every victory over temptation the boy received from God greater inner strength and knowledge of the spirit. As his power of resistance grew, the Forces of Evil were permitted to increase the strength of their assaults upon him. It is so with every mortal.*

No exception was made in favour of the boy Jesus, for it is a law that applies to all men alike that they gain in ability to resist sin with every victory over temptation, while, on the other hand, Evil is left free to proceed with more vigour than ever, with the result that the whole life of a God-fearing man is a constant battle with the hostile powers. *'A life of war is the lot of man upon earth.'*

As the boy Jesus grew in years, the *numerous errors of the Jewish faith* professed by his parents caused him many an inward struggle. These were all the errors that had been introduced in the course of time by the Jewish church in the form of manmade doctrines and alleged amendments to the law of God.

When he had reached the point of being able to read and understand the original texts of the Old Testament, Jesus began to question the interpretations given by the teachers of Jewish law, but whenever, in his youthful frankness, he expressed these views to his parents or teachers, he was severely rebuked. It was these convictions conflicting with Jewish religious doctrines that, at the age of 12, he laid before the priests in the temple at Jerusalem, much to their amazement, putting questions to them and replying to theirs out of his own wisdom.

To be sure, he was in this respect what you call a '*child prodigy*', such as you find in all branches of human endeavour. This boy was a '*child prodigy*' in his knowledge of God's ways of Salvation. But he was human, like all other humans.

- *At first he did not know who he was, or what mission he was destined to fulfill as a mortal.*

However, soon after he had reached the age of reason, Jesus began to exhibit great mediumistic powers. These consisted of *the gifts of clairvoyance and clairaudience*, which gradually attained great perfection, enabling him to communicate with the spirit world, to see the spirits as a clairvoyant, and as a clairaudient to hear the words spoken by them. These gifts with which the maturing youth was endowed were nothing new; many others before him had possessed them. But in the case of this envoy of God, the gifts were developed *to the highest degree* attainable by man.

Through his communication with the Divine spirit world he was taught, while on earth, everything he needed for the execution of his task, for in these matters he, as a mortal, was as ignorant as all the rest.

- *Jesus had no recollection of his previous state as the highest of God's spirits, because in every instance, the incarnation of a spirit in a material body destroys all memory of the past.*

Therefore, the things that Christ preached while he was on earth were *taught to him by the spirit world*, as Moses had learned all those things which he later proclaimed to the people by inquiring of God in the Tabernacle.

Thus, Jesus passed from *boyhood* through adolescence to *manhood*, and as he grew older, his wisdom increased, not only in the way in which this is the case with all people as they mature, but also, above all, by reason of the teachings he received from the Divine spirits. Hand in hand with this went the growth of his goodness, or, as your Bible expresses it:

*Luke 2: 52:*                   ‘Jesus grew in age and wisdom and became day by day dearer to God and to man.’

It was *real* progress and not merely a gradual disclosure of himself, as your religion maintains. As a mortal.

Christ was not perfect from the outset, as *no* spirit incarnated in human form can be perfect. All matter is *inherently* base and full of imperfections. Even a spirit that enters, pure and flawless, into the garment of flesh must, during its life as a human being, fight its way step by step through the debasing influence of evil toward perfection. The weaknesses and failings of every human body react upon the spirit it houses, and it, however perfect it may be, must constantly wrestle with them and can never quite free itself from them during its earthly existence.

This is a part of human nature from which not even Christ was exempt. To his last breath he had to fight against these failings, and more than once he succumbed to human weakness in his battle with Evil. In the garden of Gethsemane even this mighty conqueror turned faint and weak, praying that the Father might let the cup of suffering pass from him, yet adding: ‘Not my will, but Thine be done.’ He knew that it was the Father’s will that he must suffer, and his outcry reveals the weak, imperfect mortal, whose nature, being human, quails and rebels at the thought of an agonizing death. A perfect being would have said: ‘Father, send whatsoever torments thou wilt and deemest best. I will endure them.’ He would *not* have said: ‘Take them away.’ And it was human frailty that spoke through him from the Cross, when he uttered the plaint: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ This cry would *never* have been uttered by a human being perfect in every way, *but such*

*human beings do not exist*. If they did, mortals would no longer be what they are, and the material body would cease to be matter.

Paul has recorded this truth in his Epistle to the Hebrews, in words that are uncomfortable for those who regard Christ as God and hence deny the possibility on his part of sin or of rebellion against God. Paul wrote:

*Hebrews 5: 7-9:*        ‘In the days of his life upon earth, Christ, amid loud lamentations and many tears, sent up fervent prayers to Him Who could save him from “death”.. His prayers were heard, and he was freed from his fear. Although he was God's Son, he also learned obedience through his sufferings. Only after he had attained perfection did he become the source of salvation for all who obey him.’

In these words, you find confirmation of everything I have told you, to the smallest particular. “In my explanation of God’s Plan of Salvation, I called your attention to the very important fact that even the highest of created spirits is exposed by incarnation to the danger of being overcome by Evil and to being persuaded to desert God. *This danger threatened Christ himself*, and he was fully aware of it. On more than one occasion he was on the point of succumbing to the assaults of Satan. Paul indicates this in the passage I have quoted, when he says that Christ called upon God amid loud lamentations and tears to save him from death.

That it was not corporeal death from which he prayed to be saved is evident from Paul’s saying that Christ’s prayers were *heard*. So, God saved him from the death he so greatly feared. Did God save him from earthly death and its terrors? On the contrary, Christ was compelled to drain that cup to the dregs, so it must have been death *of another kind* from which Christ was saved in answer to his prayers. –

As you know, the word ‘death’ in almost all passages of the Bible, and especially in the epistles of Paul, signifies ‘*spiritual death*’, or the *abandonment of God*. This was a danger at which Christ trembled even before he knew that he was fated to die on the Cross, such was the fierceness of Satan’s assaults upon him. Your Bible says nothing of Christ’s daily battles with the Powers of Hell, which spared no effort to break his willpower and thus to cause him to forsake God. From the fact that he called to God in tears, beseeching Him for help as Satan and his hosts bore down upon him, and that he trembled for fear that he might not prevail against hell for long – from all this you may gather that it was possible that *even Christ might forsake God*.

- *Had there been no such possibility, he would have had no reason to tremble before hell’s attack, still less, to loudly and tearfully call upon God to save him from death.* –

Furthermore, Satan, who knew exactly whom he had before him in Christ, would have known better than to take the field against him with all his forces had he seen *no* prospect of victory. It is for this reason that he *never directs his attacks upon God Himself*, but only against His *creatures*. If Lucifer, the second highest of created spirits, deserted God, why should not the highest of them all (Christ) do likewise, particularly when he, in the shape of a weak mortal, found himself face to face with the infernal powers. Satan knows full well what he is doing, and he undertakes nothing that does not offer at least a fair prospect of success.

Paul also mentions in the same passage the fact that Christ had human weaknesses and failings, for he says that Christ, though he was a Son of God, yet learned obedience by the things he suffered.

Thus, also Christ, as a mortal, had to *learn obedience*. Even he did not, on every occasion, heed the appeals to his better nature that came from without and within, but the penalties that also he as a man had to suffer for even the most trifling act of disobedience taught him obedience little by little. That is how he attained perfection, namely through the greatest act of obedience – his death on the Cross.

It is precisely this that constitutes the greatness and wonder of Christ: that, although he was the Son of God, he was compelled to battle with the human frailties and shortcomings he *shared* with other men, and that *in spite of this* he held out against the infernal powers. He was called upon to sustain their most savage attacks, directed against him as a vulnerable antagonist who, terrified at the threat of defeat, cried out to God in prayer. He, therefore, knows from experience how helpless you mortals feel in your feebleness.

*Hebrews 4: 15:*       ‘For in him we have, not a high priest unable to feel for us in all our weaknesses, but one who was tempted just as we are in every respect – only without the sin.’

- *The word ‘sin’ is used here not to designate transgressions due to human weakness, from which no man is free, and from which not even Christ was free, but with reference to the iniquity that severs us from God, the sin whose wages is death.*

Christ was never one of the fallen spirits and even as a mortal did not betray his loyalty to God. The ‘mortal sin,’ as the Apostle John calls it, was something of which he was never guilty, but in other ways he became as all men, even as to their weaknesses, and, like them, there were times when he stumbled. For weakness shows itself in stumbling. He who never stumbles is never weak.

The public appearance of *John the Baptist* as a preacher of penitence was destined to be a decisive event in the life of Christ, who until then had not known that he was the promised Messiah. When, however, he went to John, and John hailed him before the people as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, *he realized who he was* and was confirmed in his knowledge by the voice of God saying: ‘You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’

The moment had now arrived for God’s spirit world to reveal to Christ his mission in life. He was told that he was the highest of created spirits, God’s first-born, that it was his mission to proclaim the Divine truth, that he must stand firm against the attacks of Satan, who would do battle against him to the utmost and bring about his death upon the Cross, as the prophets had foretold.

- *But only after his earthly body had died on the Cross and his spirit had departed from it, did Christ learn wherein the final victory over Satan lay.*

Hell recognized in Christ the Son and Emissary of God, who was to lead humanity to God by his teaching and who was to be ready to die for the truth.

- *But not even Satan was aware of the true connection between Christ’s Crucifixion and a victory over hell. Had he been, he would neither have tempted Christ, nor brought about his death.*

As it was, he simply sought to render Christ, in whom he saw only a herald of the truth, harmless as quickly as possible. Should he be unable to induce Christ to forsake God, he hoped to discredit his teachings by arranging for him a disgraceful death on the Cross. Satan reckoned that the teachings of a condemned man would soon be forgotten, for people would naturally expect a Son of God, such

as Christ proclaimed himself to be, to be endowed with Divine power sufficient to prevent so ignominious an end at the hands of his enemies. If he failed to prevent this, his teachings would be condemned along with him. That was Satan's reasoning.

Christ now knew who he was, as well as the nature of his great task, but before he began to carry it out, also his powers of resistance had to be tested, as had been those of all who had previously served God as His instruments. He had to prove himself equal to the task of his momentous, far-reaching mission.

It was *to this end* that a spirit of God led him into the *wilderness*.

Here it was that he was called upon to face a terrible attack on the part of the Powers of Hell. No helper or supporter stood by him. No word of human consolation from his mother, his brothers or sisters, or his friends could reach him here, at the very time when, torn by the conflict within his soul, he yearned for the sympathy and support of a friendly human heart. All this was denied him in the wilderness. Instead, he heard the howling of wild beasts, and his clairvoyant eyes saw shapes from hell, ceaselessly coming and going before him. He could hear them enticing, promising, threatening. Every form of temptation to which man is susceptible was employed against this Son of Man, for Satan has his specialists in every field of evil.

- *Among them were spirits of despondence and timidity, and spirits of doubt, seeking to shake his belief in himself as the Son of God, and in his Divinely assigned mission, and to drive him to despair.*
- *Again, there appeared spirits of hatred, intent upon embittering him against a God who would drive him into the desert to suffer so.*
- *There also came spirits of a life of pleasure, drawing the most enticing pictures of human ease and enjoyment in contrast to the dreary desert about him.*
- *All the spirits, however, came in the shape of angels of light and pretended to be his friends.*

These seducing spirits were skilfully assigned to the parts they played. *The ablest of them* were the *spirits of doubt*, which appeared upon the scene again and again. How, argued they, could any God send His firstborn Son into a desert to suffer hunger and unspeakable torture of the soul? Was not, after all, everything that he had heard from the allegedly good spirits, was not the utterance of the Baptist, was not the voice of God that spoke to him by the Jordan merely part of a great delusion or the pronouncement of the Evil One? Was not, therefore, his being the Son of God a great hallucination to which he had fallen victim? This was the point upon which hell centred its main attack.

- *Thereby seeking to destroy within this Son of Man his conviction that he was the Son of God. Once this end had been accomplished, Satan would have won the battle, for whoever loses faith in his mission casts it aside of his own accord.*

For 40 days and 40 nights this remorseless persecution was continued against a victim who stood defenceless and helpless, trembling in every limb from the agitation of his soul and from physical misery, brought on by hunger and sleeplessness. The desert offered no nourishment; Christ fasted indeed, not voluntarily, but because there was no food. Nothing but sand and rock, as far as the eye could see.

Nevertheless, all the specialists of hell laboured in vain to overcome this fever-racked Jesus of Nazareth, in spite of the fact that he was in the end no longer able to stay on his feet because of bodily fatigue, hunger and thirst. Again and again, amidst tears, he cried to his Father for help, in order that he might be spared the mortal sin of desertion, and be given the strength to hold out against the assaults of the evil powers until victory was achieved.

Finally, on the very last day, when the other infernal powers with all their arts of seduction had failed to make headway against their tormented victim, the *Prince of Darkness* arrived in person. He, too, is a specialist in some things, especially as a worker of hellish miracles. As such he now stood before Jesus, who was shaking with hunger, and said:

‘You think you are a Son of God. If this is true, then you need not suffer hunger. You need only to command that these stones become bread. That, however, is beyond your power, deluded man, and because of your obsession, you must die here of starvation. You are not able to work miracles. You never were, and never will be, and yet you imagine yourself to be a Son of God! Look at me! I am a son of God, Whom I have left, and Who in His cruelty leaves you to suffer thus. I can work miracles; a power God cannot take away from me. I can turn these stones into bread, which I will give you to eat. You will see that I am able to do this. Abandon Him Who has abandoned you to die of hunger! Join me, and the choicest foods on earth will be yours.’

Begone, Satan, I want neither your bread, nor any I could make out of these stones. I await the magic word that comes from the mouth of God. That word will come at the appointed hour. By it I shall have food, and shall live’.

“Satan, however, was not so easily discouraged.

‘So be it!’ he replied, ‘If you will neither work a miracle in my presence, nor accept the bread that I offer you in pity, you may choose another way to convince yourself whether you are indeed a Son of God. For that you are not, I would gladly prove to you, and rid you of your delusion. See, here is the pinnacle of the temple; I will take you up there and do you cast yourself down, for it is written: the hands of angels shall bear up the sons of God. So, try it! You know that I will not help you, since it is my purpose to prove to you that you are not one of the sons of God, and I am certain that the fall will dash you to pieces. Nevertheless, you should make the attempt. Not even God can demand of you a blind belief that you are His Son. If you are not willing to put your Sonship to even one single trial, you must confess yourself lacking in understanding. If you survive your fall unhurt, even I will believe in you. But if you perish, be thankful that death has relieved you quickly of the deceit with which you have been beguiled, rather than that you should waste your life in such madness, to die at last, disappointed, and reviled by mankind.’

Tortured though he was by weeks of suffering, Satan’s victim marshalled all his strength and replied:

‘I will not test my Lord. I will not use this way to prove that I am God's Son. I leave the proof in His hands. He will not fail me, as you too shall find.’

At this speech Lucifer, the second, the *fallen*, son of God, quailed for a moment before his elder, loyal brother. His sorcery availed him nothing against one who would accept no miracles nor presume to perform any on his own account.

Not even then did Satan lose hope; he had still another lure to offer that in the past had always yielded brilliant results: The world was his, *for everything material* is under his sway. He could give the kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever he pleased, whether to the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar, or the Roman, Tiberius, or to the Nazarene, Jesus, was for him to decide. All those to whom he had made such a gift theretofore had become his vassals and had obeyed his orders. The kingdoms of the earth in all their entrancing splendour passed as in a film before the feverish eyes of the Son of Man.

‘All these things will I give you. If you desire them all, they shall be yours; if but one or another, you have but to choose. But you must recognize me as your overlord. In the kingdoms you have seen, I am and will remain supreme. But you shall be next in power.’ ‘Begone, Satan. – I acknowledge only one overlord, the Lord my God.’

Satan had lost the battle. In the days that had passed he had felt certain of his victim, whose prayers to the Father for help he had overheard and whose signs of fear he had witnessed, and that at a time when only Lucifer’s subordinates had been engaged. Now he had come in person to conquer a fortress that seemed ready to yield to an assault and into which hunger had entered as his ally. He found that he had been mistaken. Spiritual weapons and human bribes had no effect upon this mortal. One instrument of warfare remained untried, one before which all men tremble and grow pliant, namely physical tortures. Satan resolved to use the most excruciating. To inflict these there was no lack of human minions, from the learned to the ignorant, from kings to peasants, authorities both temporal and spiritual. In the end he could not fail; he need only bide his time, and await the most favourable moment. Therefore, as your Bible tells you:

*Luke 4: 13:*                    ‘When the devil had exhausted all efforts in tempting Jesus, he withdrew from him to bide his time.’

It was these terrific attacks of Evil upon Jesus that Paul had in mind when he wrote that Jesus had offered up prayers and loud and tearful supplications unto Him Who could save him from the mortal sin of abandonment of his God.

As you see, God does not bestow His precious gifts without exacting something in return; those who receive them must prove themselves worthy by withstanding severe trials. Even Christ as a man was compelled to earn painfully the strength that he would need for the mighty task before him. He received nothing for the asking, but whenever he had fought victoriously with Evil, he was rewarded by an access to Divine power. The heavens opened and God’s spirits flocked about him, and so it was after the battle in the desert:

*Matthew 4: 11:*            ‘Angels came and ministered to him.’

They also gave him earthly food, after his fast of forty days. Now that the stones were turned into bread by God’s spirits, Jesus accepted it, giving thanks to God. When it had been offered to him under Satan’s influence, he had had to refuse it.

## 7. 2 Jesus's assignment as God's envoy

After this first trial, which he had passed triumphantly, Jesus began his *career of teaching* the multitudes.

He collected about him a few men known to you as the '*Apostles*', who though poor and simple were willing to accept the truth. It had been his intention to initiate them into the mysteries of the Redemption, but he soon found that even they were the weak products of their times and unable to endure more than *a fraction of the truth*.

The first thing Jesus had to do was to convince not only his disciples, but the people as well, that he was God's emissary. He had to tell them who he was and what mission he had to fulfill, and he had to prove his claims through the power of Him Whose emissary he claimed to be.

The same had been true of Moses, *whose mission was in every respect the counterpart of that of the Messiah*, whose coming he predicted in the words:

*Deuteronomy 18: 15*: 'The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me from your midst.'

Moses had been sent by the Lord to lead a single people out of the land of bondage into the Promised Land. The bond slaves were the Israelites; their taskmasters were the Egyptians under Pharaoh. Those whom Christ came to deliver from bondage were all the spirits that had fallen away from God; their taskmasters were the Powers of Hell, under Lucifer. Before Moses could succeed in solving the problem before him, two things had to be done. First, he had to persuade his people to agree to leave the land of their bondage and to accept him as their leader. Next, and far more difficult, he had to compel the Egyptians and their king to allow the Israelites to depart, for it goes without saying that Pharaoh and his subjects would *not part willingly* with the cheap labour of their slaves, male and female.

In the same way, the *Redemption through Christ* depended on two things:

- In the first place he had to persuade the fallen spirits that had reached the level of incarnation in human form but were still languishing under the bondage of Evil to declare themselves ready to abandon its ways.
- Then there remained the much harder task of compelling the Rulers of Evil under Lucifer to surrender those of its subjects who desired to return to God.

With Moses as with Christ, the task involved *two clearly distinct steps*.

As regarded Moses personally, it was incumbent on him above all *to remain firm before Pharaoh*, and to allow himself to be diverted from his God-given mission neither by threats nor by enticements, lest God's plan come to nought through his fault. The people of Israel, on their part, had to do their share by declaring themselves willing to leave and by holding themselves in readiness for the journey. It then was *up to God* to grant them a *decisive* victory over Pharaoh and to accomplish their deliverance. The manner in *which* this was to be achieved did not concern either Moses or the people; that was for God *alone to decide*.

So too with Christ.



He, too, had nothing to gain by telling the people how the Redemption was to be accomplished. It was his duty only to proclaim to them that the hour of their deliverance was near, that they must strive to make themselves worthy of the gift, and that it was he, whom God had sent as their Saviour.

For his part, he had to beware of *succumbing to the Powers of Darkness*. They left no stone unturned to induce him to forsake his God and to abandon his Divine mission.. Like Moses, Christ had to guard against being vanquished by the foe he had come to conquer. If he could hold out in his entrenchments against the assaults of Evil, it was for God to determine how the defence could be turned into a successful attack. For obviously, as a mortal, Christ *could not wage an offensive campaign* against spirits. The most that mortals can do is to defend themselves against the attacks of the Evil Powers when these attempts to lead them astray by means of insinuations, temptation and intimidation, through apparitions, or with the aid of human agents. Hence Christ could advance for an attack upon Satan only as a spirit, and only after his earthly death. Not until then could it be said of him that *'he had descended to hell.'*

As I have told you, the possibility existed that Christ, *the man*, could have been overcome by Satan. Had this happened, the Prince of Hell would have numbered also the first Son of God among his vassals. In that event, God would have brought about the incarnation *of another* of the highest of the celestial princes to accomplish the work of Redemption that, because of human infirmities, His first-born Son had failed to perform.

You shudder at the thought that Christ *could have* succumbed to Satan's attacks.

And yet this is a fact.

You mortals do not even faintly appreciate the love of your Heavenly Father, who did not spare His firstborn, but Who, *for your sake*, risked losing him as He had lost His second son. You also cannot picture to yourselves how dreadful the battle was that Christ was forced to wage against all of hell, in order that *you* might be redeemed.

The least of the devils can bring about your defection from God in a very few moments. The victory is his, for the offering of a handful of money, earthly fame, or sensual pleasures. –

But Christ, your oldest brother, was assailed by *all of* hell's forces, led by Lucifer himself, not just once and for a few instants only, but again and again throughout the whole span of his human life. Column after column of those sinister warriors advanced, day in, day out, upon the Son of Man, resorting at last to the most fiendish physical torments, until their victim bled to death upon the Cross. He died, *indeed, in human body*, but did *not* waver in his loyalty to God. Satan had proved powerless against him, yet he, against whom the full forces of hell were marshalled, was *as human as you are*, and was in every way like you.

This, then, is *the true picture* of the Redeemer, and such was the way his mission of Redemption was to be carried out.

Like Moses, who first had to make himself known to the Israelites as Divinely sent to save them and who had to prove his claim by means of miracles, Christ owed it to the people to tell them who he was and what mission he had to fulfill. And he, too, had to *give credence* to his mission of Redemption *through miracles*.

Who was Christ, and what did he himself profess to be? – ‘*I am Christ, the Son of the living God.*’ Such is his testimony of himself, and it is substantiated by the words of God: ‘*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*’ Christ was therefore the *Son of God*, and he claimed to be *nothing more*.

- *He was not God!*

Not once did he say: ‘I am God’. Not once did he claim to be God’s equal in any respect. He does not weary of repeating emphatically that *he can do nothing by his own power*, that his words are not his own, that he cannot perform miracles on his own. It is the Father who has sent him, from whom he has obtained the whole truth, from whom he has received the power to heal the sick and to raise the dead. Whatever he does is as the Father wills, and at the hour appointed by the Father.

Just as a deputy may act only in the name and on behalf of the sovereign by whom he was appointed, and only within the limits of authority delegated to him, so is it with Christ. Even if a ruler confers his full powers upon his deputy, the latter *cannot* call these powers his own, for he is *not* the ruler but is *dependent* upon him in all things. He can be relieved of his post at any moment. Thus, *Joseph was Pharaoh's deputy*. He was given unrestricted power to save the country. As symbols of his royal power, Pharaoh had given Joseph his signet ring and dressed him in kingly clothes. With this signet ring Joseph was to mark all his documents as royal documents. In his attire *Joseph was like* the Pharaoh. Nevertheless, it was not Joseph, but the Pharaoh, who had been, and continued to be, the *sovereign head* of the state. Joseph was merely his deputy, even though he was invested with full regal powers. He did not hold these by virtue of his own right, but by voluntary bestowal on the part of the king, who could restrict or withdraw them at his pleasure, or confer them upon someone else.

This is the simplest and clearest way of illustrating the relationship of Christ to God. God is Lord and Creator of all things, including His Son.

God is *in and of himself* eternal, omnipotent, omniscient.

Not so His Son.

The Father conferred upon the Son *the regency over Creation* and, foremost of all, the task of Redemption. But the Son has *nothing in and of himself*, not his existence, or his regency, or his power. Everything was given him by the Father.

- *Although in heaven the Son may be clothed like his Father and act with Divine authority, nevertheless he is not God, any more than Joseph was the Pharaoh.*

This fact is so clearly brought out in the Holy Scriptures that it is surprising to find that people could ever have made Christ into ‘God’, in the face of the solemn declaration by the Father and Lord of all Creation: ‘*I alone am God. There is no other.*’

Not even those Christian denominations that revere Christ as God and make him the equal of his Father in all things dare assert that he ever said ‘I am God’. They base their contention first upon the fact the he called himself the Son of God. They argue as did the high priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees, of whom the Bible says:

*John 5: 18:*               ‘They sought more intently than ever to take his life, for they held him guilty not only of profaning the Sabbath, but also of making himself equal to God by calling God his true Father.’

Christ did not defend himself against the charge of having called God his true Father, for he was a ‘Son of God’ in a sense that was not true of the other ‘sons of God’ or of the Divine spirits. He was not only the highest of the spirits created by God, but the only one *whose heavenly body* had also been created by God. As for the other sons of God, only *their spirits* were created by God, whereas their heavenly bodies owed their existence to His first-born Son.

- *Christ was, therefore, not only God’s ‘first-born’, but also the only one whose whole being was the product of direct Divine creation. He was unique. He was His Father’s ‘only begotten Son’.*

In another respect also he was the Son of God in a sense that applied to him alone. Upon him, and upon no one else, God had conferred the regency over Creation. God had given him the same position in his kingdom that the Pharaoh had given to Joseph in the kingdom of Egypt.

In this particular, then, the Jews were right: Christ did call himself a Son of God in a special sense. He was *the* Son of God!

But what Christ defended himself against vehemently was the charge brought by his Jewish enemies, that he made himself God’s equal. Again and again he protested, saying that he had no power and could do nothing at all in and of himself. If someone can do nothing of himself, then that is incontrovertible proof that he is *not* God. This is a conclusion so obvious that not even the high priests and the scribes could have failed to see it. And although they understood well enough what Jesus meant by the phrase ‘Son of God’, *they professed not to*, for they were seeking grounds for his death and could find none better than to assert that Christ was making himself equal with God by calling himself Son of God. Once they were committed to this pretext, they had to adhere to it at all costs; nothing that Christ could have said in refutation would have been of any avail.

It is true that Christ had full authority on earth and in heaven, but not from himself. As Joseph held his power in Egypt by the grace of Pharaoh, so Christ derived his power from his Father. In the same way that Joseph was not Pharaoh, Christ was not God.

The Father alone, and none other, is God. All power resides in the Father exclusively, and in no other being. At his own pleasure the Father can delegate this power *to any* created spirit, in and through which He performs His works. The power that was conferred upon Christ could have been conferred by the Father upon any other created spirit. It did *not* have to be His first-born Son. The great miracles worked by Christ could have been performed by *any other human* if God had given him the necessary power. Christ himself said frankly that the things he did could be done by anyone who became a believer.

*John 14: 12:*               ‘Whoever believes in me shall have the power to do the same deeds that I do, and even greater deeds.’

To believe in Christ is to believe in God, not, however, because Christ himself is God, but because he proclaims God’s teachings.

*John 12: 49:*               ‘I have not spoken of my own accord; it was my Father, who sent me, who directed me as to what I should say and what I should teach.’

Between the Father and Christ there prevails a perfect unity of love, and *every one* of God's creatures can attain this unity with the Father. Christ asks God for it on behalf of his disciples:

*John 17: 22-23:* 'that they may be one, as we are one, I united with them, and Thou with me, so that they may attain to the highest perfection of unity with us.'

- *You see how illogical it is for your church [the Catholic Church] to base its contention of the divinity of Christ upon the statement 'I and the Father are one' – considering that the same oneness that the Son has with the Father is promised to all who believe.*

If you will study those remarks of Christ in which he describes his relationship with his Father, you will see how sacrilegious it is to refer to Christ *as God*, to picture him as the giver, whereas he is but the recipient and can give to others only what he himself receives from God. –

- *The same sacrilege with which the Jews charged Christ when they falsely asserted that he made himself God's equal is committed today by the people who make Christ God in spite of the fact that Christ himself spurned any such pretensions.*

Christ's teaching concerning his own person, concerning the source of his doctrine and the might and power he possesses was, consequently, that he had received each and every thing from the Father. In and of himself he has nothing. *He is not God.*

There were things God withheld, even from Christ, and which He reserved to Himself. Witness Christ's answer to the sons of Zebedee:

*Matthew 20: 23:* 'The places at my right and at my left are not mine to give, for they will be bestowed upon those to whom they are allotted by my Father.'

The Day of Judgment is also not known to the Son, but to the Father alone:

*Matthew 24: 36:* 'The day and the hour of fulfillment are known to no one, neither to the angels of heaven, nor to the Son, but to my Father alone.'

Christ also did not obtain permission from God to evade the agony of death upon the Cross. Hence his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane that the cup be permitted to pass by him was not heard.

Christ's own family, as well as the Apostles and those of the people who believed in him, saw in him nothing more than a 'prophet' – 'God's emissary'.. It is true that his mother knew that in him was incarnated one of the 'Sons of God', for this had been revealed to her by the angel before Christ was born. But she was also aware that he was human and that he had human infirmities. His conduct in public and the doctrines preached by him *did not* meet with her approval. She had known that his teachings *differed substantially* from the doctrines held by the Jewish religion, but to see him *proclaim his views openly* to the multitudes weighed heavily upon her. She had pictured his mission on earth in a very different light, and when she heard that Jesus in his sermons had spoken out strongly against the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people and had publicly branded *as false* many of the tenets of their ancient faith, she, in company with her other sons, sought to restrain him, and even tried to compel him to return to his parental home, believing that in this way she could allay the ill will that his actions had aroused among the priests, scribes and Pharisees.

*Mark 3: 21:* 'And when his relatives heard it, they went out to lay hold on him, for they said, he has lost his wits.'

*John 7: 5:* 'For not even his brothers believed in him.'

That his mother and brothers should have disapproved of his conduct in public is easy to understand. They believed that the doctrines of the Jewish religion were correct. That is how they were brought up. Their ancestors had lived and died in that faith, and the fact that now their own son and brother should preach publicly that this faith embodied many errors was more than these simple and inexperienced people could bear. Whatever they were told by their clergy was valid as far as they were concerned. Moreover, they lived in fear of their fellowmen. They were pointed at as the relatives of a man who was assailing the faith of his fathers. They were frequently criticized on that score by the head of the synagogue of their village. They had business losses to fear as well. Especially hard to bear was the news that the supreme ecclesiastical council had excommunicated Jesus, and had threatened to do likewise with all those who followed him or acknowledged him as the Messiah.

*John 9: 22:* 'For the Jewish leaders had already agreed to excommunicate all who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah.'

The Jewish priesthood warned the people against Jesus and his doctrines, resorting freely to slander as a weapon, and alluding to him as a '*false prophet*', '*a man possessed of the devil*', '*an agitator*', '*a wine-imbiber*', '*a profligate*', who passed his time in the company of wayward women and sat down at table with publicans and known sinners. There was no expedient so low that they did not avail themselves of it to render him harmless, as he was a menace to their hold over the people. They could not tolerate the great mass of the people accepting as a religious truth something that differed from what they themselves preached. It was to them that the people owed obedience. What the clergy did not believe, the people must not believe, under penalty of being damned.

*John 7: 48-49:* 'Is there a single member of the High Council or a Pharisee who has been brought to believe in him? No, only the common people, who know nothing of the law. Damn them!'

- *It is always the same old story, intoned by the clergy of all denominations, as soon as they see their influence on the people threatened by an evangelist of the truth.*

You, too, will become better acquainted with that circumstance than you have been in the past, as soon as you have made public the truths imparted by me, when you will witness a repetition of everything that took place in those days. The servant is not greater than his master, and you will be called *a renegade priest, a false prophet, a madman, a man possessed by the devil, a degenerate*. Even your relatives will heap reproaches on you, and tell you that you should have left well enough alone, and that what was good enough for other clergymen was surely good enough for you also. But be not afraid! Trust in God! What have you to fear of men? On the other hand, by disseminating the truth you will be *of great benefit* to many. Even members of the clergy who read your book will become convinced that it contains the truth, even though they may not be disposed to admit this openly. Things were no different in the days of Christ.

*John 12: 42-43:* 'Even many members of the High Council believed in Jesus, although they dared not admit it openly for fear of being excommunicated by the Pharisees, for they valued honour among men more highly than honour before God.'

Even the Apostles had doubts about their Master on more than one occasion, for they also had had a different conception of the Messiah. Not until the day when Simon Peter gave utterance to his conviction:

*Matthew 16: 16:*      ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’

Did his Apostles know that in Jesus of Nazareth the ‘Son of God’ had come upon earth? Peter had not reached this conviction, however, by reason of Christ’s words and actions or by any process of reasoning of his own, but by virtue of a revelation from God.

*Matthew 16: 17:*      ‘This was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my heavenly Father.’

### 7. 3 The connection between Christ and the World of Spirit

As to the manner in which the Divine revelations reached Christ, I have already intimated this to you, but I wish to go into the subject more fully because it is essential to a full understanding of Christ's life and work. It will then become clear to you that also in this respect the experiences of Christ present *nothing altogether new* or previously unheard of.

You have only to recall the way in which God had conveyed His revelations and commandments to His instruments *in the past*. How did He communicate with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*? With *Moses and Joshua*? With the *judges, kings and prophets*? With *Zacharias, Mary and Joseph*? In precisely the same way He now communicated with Christ. Jesus was thus not favoured in this respect above those who had preceded him as Divine instruments and emissaries. God caused His spirit world to enter into communication with him as with all the others, and through it He revealed everything that Christ required for the fulfillment of the task before him.

The *prerequisites* for communicating with the spirit world were *the same* for him as for any other person. It was but natural that his mediumistic gifts were of the highest, for he was the highest and purest of spirits created by God to be incarnated in human form. Christ possessed the ability to concentrate, and to 'submerge the spirit', of which I spoke to you in connection with the development of mediums, to an extent *never attained by man before* or since. Moreover, no other human medium has ever possessed a physical od as *pure* as that of Christ.

- *In him, then, the prerequisites for communicating with the Divine spirits existed to a degree that no other mortal can hope to attain.*

The mission Christ had to carry out on behalf of the kingdom of God was the greatest ever assigned to a mortal. Hence it was necessary that God send him spirits in abundance, not only with regard to number, but also with respect to strength and ability.

Among them were *spirits of fortitude*, to infuse new strength into him when his own began to fail in the battle with evil powers. Often these spirits were accompanied by those of hope, joy, and peace of soul. Again, *militant angels* from Michael's legions came to his side, when Satan marshalled his legions in full force to bring Jesus down and the fury of their assaults threatened to be more than human strength could bear. *Spirits of truth* and knowledge instructed him about the teachings that he was to present to the multitudes as the Word of God or provided answers to personal questions about himself and his tasks. *Spirits of wisdom* taught him how to accomplish his individual tasks, but only after he had fully exhausted his own resources without finding the right answers. With him as with all other mortals the motto applies: '*God helps those who help themselves.*' If you would arrive at a good goal, use your *own* strength first, and if this does not suffice, God will intercede with the aid of His spirit world.

- *God does not heedlessly distribute His favours or crown you with success without effort on your part. He demands that everyone exert himself to the utmost, and this He demanded of Christ also.*

When the *sick* required his attention, *spirits of healing* came to his aid whenever his own native healing powers proved inadequate to cure the diseased od of the patient, although in many cases his great personal healing power sufficed to bring about the desired end without the help of the healing spirits.

Nevertheless, Christ did not heal everyone who appealed to him, for there are cases in which sickness is a punishment sent by God, to be suffered by the patient for a period commensurate with his offense. Christ's powers of clairvoyance and clairsentience enabled him in every instance to tell whether or not the supplicant's plea should be granted. Moreover, a belief in God and in him as God's envoy was the *prerequisite* for every cure that he effected.

Not in all cases was the cure permanent, for many individuals relapsed into their former ailment as soon as they lost their faith in God and in Christ, the main purpose of the healing being *to bear witness to the truth* of the message Christ proclaimed.

In connection with '*raising the dead*', I must tell you something that may surprise you. In all cases of so-called 'raising the dead', both those mentioned in the Old Testament and those performed by Christ, the spirits of those who were thus raised had not actually passed into the Beyond.

- *No one who has actually died can again come to life; his spirit can never again take possession of the body from which it departed in mortal death. This is a Divine law that admits of no exceptions.*

As soon as a spirit crosses over into the Beyond, its race on earth *is run*. Its earthly destiny is irrevocably decided. Only by *rebirth* can this spirit ever again take on human form.

All individuals recalled to life by Christ were spirits that had indeed emerged from their bodies but still remained connected to them by a *slender band of od*. This band of od was so feeble that the spirit could not have returned to the body either by its own efforts or by virtue of any human attempts at resuscitation, and so real mortal death would have ensued very shortly by rupture of the odic band. In the case of Lazarus, the odic band had already become so weak that not even the minimum of life force could be conveyed to his body that was necessary to prevent the setting in of decay.

- *Neither the odour of decay nor the so-called livid spots on a corpse are infallible symptoms of final decease.*

The fact that the raised 'dead' were only seemingly dead is clearly indicated by the words of Christ when he recalled the daughter of Jairus to life:

*Matthew 9: 24:*        'The girl is not dead, but only asleep.'

These words have been explained as a jest. Christ did not jest in such matters, least of all when he was engaged in proving the Divine character of his mission to the people. In the case of Lazarus, too, he called the attention of his Apostles to the fact that it was not a real death, for on hearing of the man's sickness, he said to them,

*John 11: 4:*        'This sickness will not end in his death, but will serve to glorify God.'

When, as far as one could judge, Lazarus had died, Jesus said again: 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; I go, that I may wake him out of sleep.' (John 11:11) When once more his Apostles failed to understand him, and lengthy explanations that they would not have understood seemed useless, Christ finally said: "Lazarus is dead". (John 11:14) This was not a strictly accurate statement of Lazarus' condition, but it was the only one that he could use, for at the time Lazarus was already in his tomb, and people considered him dead. Had this really been the case, Christ would not have said a few days earlier, 'This sickness will not end in death', nor could he, after the entombment, have



used the words: 'our friend has fallen asleep'. On both occasions Christ spoke the truth, since Lazarus was not really dead; it was a case of '*apparent death*'.

Nevertheless, nothing that I have said detracts from the merits of the case. What Christ did could not have been accomplished by any human power, but only through the power of God.

This is true of *every* case in which Christ recalled the dead to life.

Human power was of no avail.

The Divine spirits interceded, accomplishing whatever was needed to allow the return of the spirit into the body. Christ, by clairvoyance, observed the work of the spirit world, and at his word, the spirit was reunited with its body and the seemingly deceased arose.

It does not occur to you mortals that such things are *done in accordance with Divine laws*. This is true not only of the raising of the dead, but of *all* miracles performed by Jesus. When he turned water into wine, for example, this task also was accomplished by the Divine spirit world, and for this reason not even he was able to bring about the transmutation the moment his mother wished it. His 'hour was not yet come', because the spirit world had not completed the necessary work. Work takes time, even for spirits.

It is because you do not understand these processes that you fail to grasp the meaning of certain words found in the Bible which, in consequence, have been incorrectly translated into your languages. Thus, your version of the Scriptural account of the raising of Lazarus contains a sentence that must impress you as utterly incomprehensible;

*John 11: 33:*            'When Jesus saw that Mary was weeping, and that the Jews who were with her were likewise in tears, Jesus felt *indignant in spirit* and *he was upset*.'

Other translations say, "he was angry".

Why indeed should Jesus be angry or indignant at the sight of the weeping sister and friends of a man who had died? On the contrary. The original text reads: '*A shivering passed through his spirit and he was shaken*', for when spirits come near you and allow their powerful odic radiations to act upon you, you too feel a sensation of shivering pass through you and actually begin to shake.

- *The sensation is an agreeable one in the presence of good spirit beings, and unpleasant when it originates from the proximity of evil ones.*

Such a shivering sensation passed through Christ on this occasion. It was the powerful odic radiations of the spirits about him, who infused him with their strength, through which he consummated the work of the spirits with the summons: 'Lazarus, come forth!'

- *Raising the dead was something that Christ could undertake only when he had been informed by messengers from God that it was His will.*

All signs that bore testimony to the power of God were manifested solely when they served in some special way to promote the spread of the kingdom of God or to confirm His emissary and the latter's teachings.

In public Christ never mentioned his connection with God's spirit world. He mentioned it only when necessary. Thus, when some of the Jews accused him of using the powers of evil to cast out the spirits of the possessed, he replied that he drives them out with the help of a spirit of God.

*Matthew 12: 28:*        'If I drive out the demons with the help of one of God's spirits, then indeed the kingdom of God has already come to you.'

Along with the gift of clairvoyance in its highest form, as it was manifested in him, Jesus also had the ability to recognize the spiritual state of human beings and to read their thoughts. At all times there have been people similarly gifted, although your contemporaries have no understanding of this matter and especially do not realize that eternal laws govern also these phenomena.

Even in the case of Christ these laws applied in every particular case.

They were taken into account by him in the sense that he always selected the time and place for communicating with the spirits with a view to securing the conditions most favourable for the purpose. He, who advised his followers to withdraw to their quiet chambers for prayer, himself sought out wooded hillsides in the cool of the dusk and the night.

- *For light and warmth and the noises of the day exert an exceedingly adverse effect upon the formation of the od required for communicating with the spirit world. Hence he preferred the solitude of the woods or the garden, and the darkness and coolness of the night.*

Furthermore, everything that Christ predicted about the future he had learned from the spirit messengers sent to him by his Father.

It has been customary among you to regard Christ's miracles and prophecies as evidence of his Divinity. This conclusion is entirely erroneous. You *confuse* the Agent with His implement.

- *The Agent is God. His visible implement may be any being whatsoever, while His invisible implements are the Divine spirits assigned to that being.*

A little reflection on your part would enable you to discover this fact for yourselves.

When you, personally, preached on the 'Divinity of Christ' and tried to prove this by citing his miracles and prophecies, did it never occur to you to draw a comparison between him and those of God's emissaries who had *preceded* him? Did they not perform miracles similar to those performed by Christ? Were the miracles accomplished by Moses any less wonderful than those that Christ performed? Were the transformation of a rod into a serpent and that of water into blood, the killing of the first-born of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, his producing drinking water with the stroke of his rod, and the many other signs performed by Moses of less account than Jesus' transformation of water into wine, walking upon the waves or calming the storm? If you cite the acts of Jesus as evidence of his Divine status, then you would have to consider Moses to be God, too.

Were not the sick healed and the 'dead' raised by many mortals who were Divine instruments? Then you would have to regard also these mortals as Divine. Then *Joshua, Elijah, Elisha*, and the other great prophets from God were also God, not to mention the Apostles, since they performed miracles equal to those performed by Christ and would, according to him, do *even greater works* than he. You cannot cite a single miracle performed by Jesus that has not been performed in the same or in

a similar manner by other mortals acting as envoys of God. You misunderstand completely God's purpose in bringing these miracles about.

- *You do not pause to think that God must accredit his instruments as such by the performance of such unusual deeds before He can expect humanity to recognize them as Divinely appointed.*

## 7. 4 Christ's suffering in the light of its meaning for the salvation

In the fulfillment of their mission, all of God's envoys have suffered greatly at the hands of mankind. Every one led *a life of hardship*. They were the vessels from which radiated God's light and truth, but mankind, in the bonds of darkness, could not endure the light, as it was too bright for eyes afflicted with sin. People turned away from the light and sought to destroy the human vessels that served as lamps for the light of God.

So, it has always been.

So, it is today, and so it will remain as long as there are human eyes, sore with sin, that ache when the light of the truth is turned upon them. The Evil Powers, and all mortals enslaved by them, hate this light and its bearers, and do their utmost to achieve their destruction.

How terrible, then, must the efforts have been on the part of Evil to break the power of the greatest Light-Bearer who ever came upon earth!

How bitter the road of suffering that Christ had to travel!

His inner sufferings at the hands of Evil were hidden from human eyes, and therefore nothing is said about them in the Bible beyond the very shallow account of his temptation in the wilderness. Yet the onslaughts made upon him there by Satan were so savage that all the earlier Divine emissaries would have abandoned God, if He had allowed the Powers of Hell to proceed against them with the same vigour with which He permitted them to assail Christ.

Moreover, the physical sufferings that Jesus had to undergo until his last breath on the Cross were such that his predecessors could not have held out against them, especially as they had to be endured in addition to the simultaneous torment of his soul.

It is true that for Christ his sufferings had a *substantially higher significance* than for any other of the Divine prophets. For them, the end of *their* life on earth meant that *their tasks had been fulfilled*, if they had remained true to God. For Christ, however, the end of his earthly life marked the fulfillment of only a portion of his mission. The more important part was to be completed after his death: gaining victory as a spirit over the Prince of Darkness. His Crucifixion was only a precondition to that victory – not, indeed, the Crucifixion in itself, but his enduring it without faltering in his loyalty to God. Christ might, indeed, while yet alive upon the Cross, have lost faith in God at the last moment, and fallen victim to the enemy. Had he done so, he would have died upon the Cross nevertheless, but defeated by Satan and apostate to God. Until that moment, he had stood upon the defensive against the terrific hail of missiles that hell launched upon him.

- *Had he yielded; all would have been lost. The attempt at Redemption would have failed, and Christ would have been a prisoner of the Prince of Darkness.*

If, on the other hand, Christ as a human being could hold out against the most dreadful anguish of soul and body inflicted on him by the infernal powers, the moment of his death on earth would mark the beginning of the second part of the battle of Redemption. He, who as a mortal had stood on the defensive against the powers of hell, now advanced, as a spirit, to attack them to make his victory over them complete. To wage the decisive battle, *he descended into hell*.

I want to dwell a little longer, however, on the first stage of this battle, the most important that was ever fought. I want to review with you those hours of Christ's human suffering that you call the '*Passion*'. You mortals appreciate *far too little* the unspeakable agony this Divinely sent Bearer of the Cross had to endure in order that mankind might be saved.

On the evening before his death, Jesus was in the guest chamber of a house in the company of his disciples to observe the feast of the Passover. It was to be his last supper with them. Who among you can measure and realize the anguish of his soul? He knew from the Divine spirit messengers that all preparations for his arrest and speedy execution had already been made. He knew that one of his disciples had had dealings with the high priests and had, for a traitor's reward of 30 pieces of silver, declared himself ready to deliver his Master to them. At that very moment, his betrayer was lying at table with him. They were not seated about a long table, as you think, and as they are shown in your paintings, but were reclining upon the skins of animals whose heads were elevated as cushions, gathered in groups of three about small, low tables, one arm resting on the cushions, the other reaching for the foods before them. At the same table with Christ reclined John and Judas, *John* on his left, his head close to his Master's breast, *Judas* on his other side. Judas dared not meet his Master's eye and was anxiously awaiting the moment when he could leave the room without attracting attention.

The Master's heart bled on seeing before him this Apostle who was his betrayer, and whose terrible end he foresaw. 'It would have been better for him if he had never been born.' As he looked at him over and over again, Christ's eyes filled with tears, for his heart was filled with love for even this lost brother. In his mind's eye arose the picture of what within a very few hours was to be reality: Judas, in realization of his monstrous deed and with despair in his soul, standing rope in hand before the tree on which he would end his own life, and beside him Lucifer, ready to take the spirit of him whom he had led astray away with him into the depths. Horrified by this vision, the Master trembled. As for the other Apostles?

Would they stand by him in the hour of his martyrdom, offering help and comfort?

The fateful events of the coming 12 hours passed like a film before his mind's eye. He could see them all fleeing in terror for their own lives, and Peter, shaking with dread before a maid, swearing he had no connection with his Master. He saw the devils crowding about the door of the room, ready to seize upon his disciples as they went out, and to fill their minds on this very night with doubt of their Master, in order that they might offer no support or help to the one who was doomed to die.

'Satan has asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat.'

Why had Satan demanded this? –

- *Only now had God revealed to him what he had at stake in this battle. God's sense of justice did not permit Him to conceal any longer from Lucifer the fact that the battle that was now to begin between him and Christ was to decide the sovereignty of hell over the fallen spirits.*

God revealed to Lucifer that Christ, should he remain steadfast throughout the imminent death agony, would thereafter as a spirit launch an attack upon hell at the head of the heavenly hosts, and that he, the Prince of Hell, would be overcome and would be deprived of a considerable part of his sovereign rights.

At this news, Satan trembled.

Then, appealing to the Divine justice that had given him *absolute* sovereignty over the fallen spirits, he demanded that God observe *strict neutrality* in this decisive battle. What Satan asked was that God withdraw his hand entirely from Jesus, and also leave him no human support, while nevertheless allowing hell to have a free hand. If God acceded to these demands, Lucifer hoped he could by doing his utmost succeed in breaking the spirit of this Jesus of Nazareth at the last moment, and drive him to despair.

God granted the terms asked by Satan with the sole exception of reserving to Himself the right to strengthen Christ's purely physical vitality. Had he not done so, Christ would have died in the garden of Gethsemane, and his martyrdom would never have been completed.

At Lucifer's wish, all the spiritual and physical anguish of earth, crowded into a few short hours, was to be concentrated upon his antagonist, while at the same time the infernal hosts would be allowed to launch an attack in full strength on him and his followers. For Jesus, alone, betrayed by one of his own disciples, deserted by the others, denied any Divine aid against the forces of hell, Lucifer hoped to prepare an end worthy of a Judas.

Even as Jesus, after Judas' departure, gave his Apostles the *bread and the wine symbolic of his approaching death* and spoke his parting words to them, his heart was bleeding from a thousand wounds. He was human, as you are, and had no advantage over other mortals during this hour and those that were to follow. On the contrary, he *lacked* even those things that generally serve to console and fortify human beings in their hours of suffering.

Picture him now, going out into the dark of the night to the *Garden of Gethsemane*.

The night is no man's friend, least of all that of someone who is tormented by suffering. His disciples, on whom the evil spirit forces are already at work, walk silently beside him, in dread of what is to come. Under the burden of his soul's torment, he too is silent.

At the remote spot in the garden where Christ chooses to offer his prayer for strength, Lucifer is in wait with his ablest assistants, ready to break down their intended victim's spiritual resistance by their united efforts. This is the hour that God has conceded to the Prince of Darkness.

Human words are inadequate to portray the terrors of the visions conjured up by hell to its victim in this brief hour. As once the same Lucifer, when he tempted the Son of Man in the wilderness, had shown him the kingdoms of the world in all their splendour in order to cause his fall, so now and to the same end he shows Christ mankind's most dreadful and detestable traits, causing a steady succession of hideous pictures to pass before his eyes: pictures of blaspheming, sinful humanity in its full viciousness and corruption.

Then he shows Jesus the supposed 'fruits' of his years of endeavour among the Jews as God's people, pointing mockingly to his disciples, one of them actually approaching at the head of a horde, the others fast asleep nearby, with never a word of comfort for their Master and unable to stay awake a single hour for his sake.

'And would you die to confirm your gospel for such people as these?' Lucifer's mocking voice sounds in his ears, 'For these humans, who blaspheme your Father and will condemn you as a fool if you give your life for such criminals? And have you thought about how you will end?'

Before the clairvoyant eyes of his trembling victim there now pass the scenes of the suffering in store for him: his capture, the flight of his disciples, Peter's denial, the bloodthirsty roar of the multitude that but a few days earlier had hailed his entry into Jerusalem with hosannas, the death sentence, the flagellation, his captors' brutality, the crown of thorns, the path to Calvary, the Crucifixion – everything painted in the most terrifying pictures – in order to drive him to despair and a spiritual breakdown. All the while the *spirits of hopelessness* and despair were driving the maddest of thoughts into the mind of this victim of theirs, whom all had forsaken.

His pulse throbbed, his whole body shook with feverish tremors, his heart threatened to burst. The terror of death seized him, drops of blood oozing from his pores along with the cold sweat and trickling to the ground.

All through their Master's dreadful experience, his disciples slept peacefully.

The meagre outlines preserved by your Bible of the story of the Passion of Jesus fail utterly to convey to you the anguish of soul and body suffered by your Redeemer.

Indeed, many of the worst tortures are *not even mentioned* in the Bible. Thus, nothing whatever is said there of the frightful hours Jesus was compelled to spend in the underground cellars of the courthouse. Into these dungeons, wet and swarming with vermin, the soldiers had thrust him after they had scourged and mocked him and crowned him with thorns, and after they had rubbed salt into the countless deep gashes left by the lash upon his lacerated body and had bound his hands, lest by removing the salt he might find some relief from his unspeakable torments.

Never did man endure such torture as did this incarnated Son of God.

Through its human tools, hell did its worst, for in him it recognized its greatest foe that could ever appear on earth. But these physical sufferings to which it subjected him were not as great as those that his soul had to endure; moreover, both forms of torment, of the soul and of the body, were applied to him simultaneously. Add to this the fact that to the last he was without any human comfort, and, what was still harder, without any Divine aid. God had withdrawn His protecting hand and had left him helpless to the devices of hell. The cry uttered by Jesus as he hung dying upon the Cross: '*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*' reveals in full the agony he felt on finding himself forsaken by all in this hour of supreme suffering on earth.

- *Satan should never be able to claim that he failed to reduce this mortal to submission because of help received by his victim from external sources. He should be forced to admit that he had met his match in an unaided human being, who, in spite of the most excruciating torments of spirit and body, could not be driven to desert his God.*

The Biblical account according to which the mother of Jesus stood by the Cross, accompanied by John, is *incorrect*.

Even this consolation was denied him.

Not one of those dearest to him was at the Crucifixion. They could not have borne the sight. Where, indeed, can you find a mother who could look on while her child was being crucified? Again, you go so far as to assume that Mary was *standing* by the Cross throughout; had she been present at all, she would surely not have remained standing, but would have fainted and collapsed.

Hence, it is also not correct that Christ exclaimed to his mother from the Cross, '*Mother, behold your son!*' and to the disciple John: '*Son, behold your mother.*' He did, in fact, speak similar words to Mary and John as he was being led from the courthouse after Pilate had pronounced the death sentence and while his mother and John clung to him in anguish until they were torn away by the soldiers.

His mother had been present at the trial, as had the disciples.

And had never lost hope that it would end in his favour. She constantly thought of the story of Abraham, whose son was spared from sacrifice at the last instant, even as the knife with which he was to be slain was drawn.

To this day there is not a mother who would not attend a trial in which her child's life hung in the balance, but no mother who would go to witness the execution of her own child.

To see his mother on the verge of swooning from agony and terror cut Jesus to the soul, and all he thought of was to spare her any further sight of his own suffering. He therefore begged John to take her to his home until everything was over, and spoke lovingly to her, urging her to go with John and to implore God for strength in this hour of tribulation, telling her that it was his Heavenly Father's will that he undergo these things and that after three days she would see him again.

John willingly acceded to his Master's request and took Jesus' mother, pierced by a thousand sorrows and keeping to her feet only with the utmost effort, to his home. He did not take her into his home permanently, as might be gathered from the text of your Bible, but for the time being, to remove her from this harrowing scene. One after another all the other faithful followers of Jesus came there too. Some time later, when it was fair to assume that the Crucifixion had been carried out, some of them, including Mary Magdalene, went to a spot from which the site of the execution could be seen, and returned to relate the death of Jesus.

Jesus' mother stayed at John's home only so long as she remained in Jerusalem. Afterwards, she returned to Nazareth, her home and that of her *other children*. Naturally, she often revisited Jerusalem to see the Apostles, in particular John, as long as they continued to live there.

As Christ had been confirmed as God's emissary by the power of God during his life, so was he in the hour of his death. The sun darkened for three hours. It was not a *darkness by reason of natural causes*, but one effected by the power of God.

At the moment when Jesus gave up his spirit, the curtain in the temple was rent from top to bottom, as a symbol that the wall dividing the realm of God from that of Satan had been torn down by Jesus' death. The earth shook and rocks burst.

But the story recorded in your version of the Gospel of Matthew that the dead arose from their tombs and were seen by many in Jerusalem is *a falsification* of the originally accurate text, which read:

'The curtain in the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent, and the tombs were opened; and many corpses of those who had passed on were cast forth. Many who had come from the holy city saw the corpses lying there.'

This text, which is accurate, therefore records what naturally would and did happen, namely that the tombs carved into the rocks were cracked open by the earthquake shocks and that the corpses were cast out upon the surface. There they were, of course, in plain sight of the many who had come from



the city to witness the spectacle of the Crucifixion and who had to pass close by the shattered tombs. “Here you have another of the many instances where, in the past, *falsifications* were introduced into the Sacred Texts for specific reasons.

- *The false doctrine that the earthly bodies of humans will be resurrected on some future day had been introduced.*

In order to sustain this doctrine with passages from the Bible, this particular passage, in addition to others, was distorted by altering the original text. In place of the words ‘The corpses of those who had passed away were cast forth’ were put the words ‘The bodies of the *saints* who had passed away were *raised*.’

- *The word ‘saints’ had to be interpolated if only for the reason that it would never do to say that the bodies of the unsaintly had also been raised at the death of Christ. –*

But a still greater difficulty remained to be overcome in falsifying this passage, inasmuch as the Church holds that there could have been no resurrection of bodies prior to Christ's Resurrection. Christ was the first of the dead to arise. Hence, it was necessary to insert the sentence: ‘*After his Resurrection* they entered into the holy city and appeared to many.’

- *Those who committed this falsification did not pause to consider that it had already been expressly stated that the bodies were raised on Good Friday, or three days before Christ's Resurrection.*

Whether they appeared to the people of Jerusalem on that same day or on Easter Sunday in no way enters into the question. Besides, where did these bodies that allegedly had risen on Good Friday spend the intervening days? Where did they go after Easter Sunday? Did they return to their tombs, and, if not, where did they go? It is strange that the other three Evangelists say nothing of this resurrection of bodies on Good Friday. Of course, Matthew did not say anything of the kind either, as you have seen from my explanation.

## 7. 5 Descent into hell and victory

Christ was dead.

His earthly death had released his spirit from its material body.

*As a mortal* he had withstood all the onslaughts of hell and had thereby performed the first and most important part of his Messianic mission successfully. He had not been conquered by hell. Nevertheless, this alone did not assure his victory over the enemy he had repelled, for in a battle between two opponents, he who acts wholly on the defensive is not truly the victor, even if he succeeds in defending himself against the other's attacks. In order to claim a victory, he must overpower his antagonist and force him to acknowledge himself beaten. "This was true of Christ as well. As a man he had repelled all the attacks of his mighty opponent. That was all he could do as a man.

Now, however, that he was freed from the flesh, he could, as a spirit, advance upon his enemy, the Prince of Darkness. He descended into hell, relying upon the all-conquering Divine power that he had *earned* as a mortal through his loyalty to God.

God now sent him the heavenly hosts as his comrades in arms. Now began a struggle like that which had occurred when Lucifer with his adherents had battled with the Heavenly Legions in the days of the great revolt in God's spirit kingdom. The present battle was waged in Lucifer's realm and was a personal duel between Christ and Lucifer, as well as a general battle between the legions of heaven and those of darkness. This mighty conflict raged into the lowest depths of hell, into which Lucifer and his followers had been forced to retreat.

Then, when the defeat of the Powers of Hell was no longer in doubt, many of those who had formerly been their vassals but who, nevertheless, repented of their disloyalty to God, went over to the side of the heavenly hosts and fought with them against their former oppressors. The number of those who thus deserted grew from moment to moment.

When Lucifer saw that all was lost, he begged for mercy. He, who in the desert had tried to tempt the Son of God by offering him the kingdoms of the world, now stood quaking before him whose faith in his Sonship he had then sought to undermine. Now he trembled at the thought that this same Jesus of Nazareth would deprive him of all his sovereign power, and that the moment had arrived when he and his followers would be doomed to the depths of darkness. He was all too familiar with the prophecy that foretold the time when he, as the prince of the kingdom of the dead, with his henchmen would be hurled into the uttermost depths, shorn of all his power and deprived of his sovereignty over God's fallen children.

Christ, however, disclosed to him that he was not to be deprived of his sovereignty entirely, but that it was to be restricted to those of his subjects who were *whole-heartedly devoted to him*, and that all who desired to leave his kingdom and return to God *must be released*. He was no longer permitted to regard them as his subjects. He might, if so disposed, bind them to himself by artifice and guile, but *not by force as heretofore*.

Satan accepted these terms. He had no other choice.

He had, in fact, expected much harder conditions.

The title by which he held his sovereignty and which God Himself had once issued to him was changed to suit the wishes of his conqueror, Christ. God, in Whose name the victor made terms with Lucifer, is the just and almighty Protector Who guarantees the precise observance of this peace treaty. Everything, even hell, is subject to His power. His commands must be obeyed even by those who are His enemies.

Thus, was concluded the mighty task of Redemption. God's Plan of Salvation had been realized in all of its important aspects. The chasm that gapes between the Realm of Darkness and the Kingdom of God had been spanned by a bridge that could *now* be crossed freely by all who desired to leave Satan's foreign legion and to return to their old home in the land of God. No sentinel in the service of hell could prevent them from crossing the border.

Surrounded by his triumphant hosts, Christ returned from Satan's stronghold to the sphere that once had been paradise, and the cherubim who had since stood guard at its entrance lowered their flaming swords in a salute to Christ, their King and Lord, and his victorious spirit legions. Here in paradise, they stayed until the day on which, with Christ at its head, the great procession re-entered the portals of heaven.

During this time, however, neither Christ nor his hosts of spirits were idle. Their stay in paradise had to be utilized to spread throughout all Creation the news of the Redeemer's triumph and to urge all who were of a mind thereto to begin their homeward journey.

- *Special pains were taken to seek out the countless sufferers in the lower spirit spheres in order that they might be instructed, encouraged and comforted, and urged to rouse themselves and to set out upon the road to the Father's house, which Christ had laid open.*

Christ himself directed the counselling of these countless brethren and saw to it that as many as possible set out on the homeward path without delay. This is indicated by Peter in his epistle:

*I Peter 3: 19-20:*      'As a spirit Christ went and brought the news to the spirits in prison, to those who had once been disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built.'

- *Christ appeared, materialized in human form, to those who had been closest to him in life and had borne much sorrow with him and on his behalf: his mother, the Apostles and his friends.*

The day arrived on which Christ returned to the spirit hosts that were waiting for him in paradise, after he had said farewell to his friends on earth and had assigned to each his task.

This was the *day of his ascension*.

The day on which, as a conquering hero, he led a great spirit army back into the kingdom of God.

## 7. 6 The return of the redeemed souls to God

Ever since the Redemption was achieved by Christ, those who have fallen away from God have been free to make use of the redeeming opportunity thus offered to them.

- *Satan's prisons have been thrown open by Christ's victory, and his captives have been free to return to their homeland.*

Whether or not they avail themselves of the opportunity rests with them.

Christ has indeed built the bridge.

- *But whether it is used to return home is left up to each individual, who may not shirk the hardships attendant upon the journey.*

Consider what hardships the prisoners taken in the Great War (World War I) were ready to undergo after peace had released them from their captivity, wandering from the farthest steppes of Siberia with bleeding feet, week after week, in their efforts to make their way back to their homelands.

The prisoners of Satan must do likewise if they would find their way back to God's homeland.

Christ will help them through his spirit world to overcome the hardships they will face in their wanderings. *His messengers show them the way*, strengthen, encourage and comfort the travellers, and raise to their feet those who have stumbled and fallen from exhaustion. But the homeward-bound travellers must not turn back and re-enter the ranks of the enemy by deserting God; if they do, it will take all the longer before they again come to the resolution: 'I will arise and go to my Father.'

- *But every one, without exception, will see the day on which he can no longer appease his hunger for peace and happiness at the troughs of evil, and he will finally set out on the homeward path.*

For some, the span of a *single* human life will be sufficient.

Others must suffer for hundreds,

and still others, for thousands of years,

far away from God in their search for the gold of happiness, which they seek in the counterfeiters' dens in the realm of darkness, led by Satan's minions from one will-o-the-wisp into another.

It is their own fault that they must pass *through repeated human incarnations*, and that they are *so slow* to find the Road of Light that their loving Father and His Son, the great Redeemer of the fallen, have built for them.