

— ROSICRUCIAN —  
**BEACON**



September 2015, Vol 24, No. 4





# Pictures Without Words





# ROSICRUCIAN BEACON

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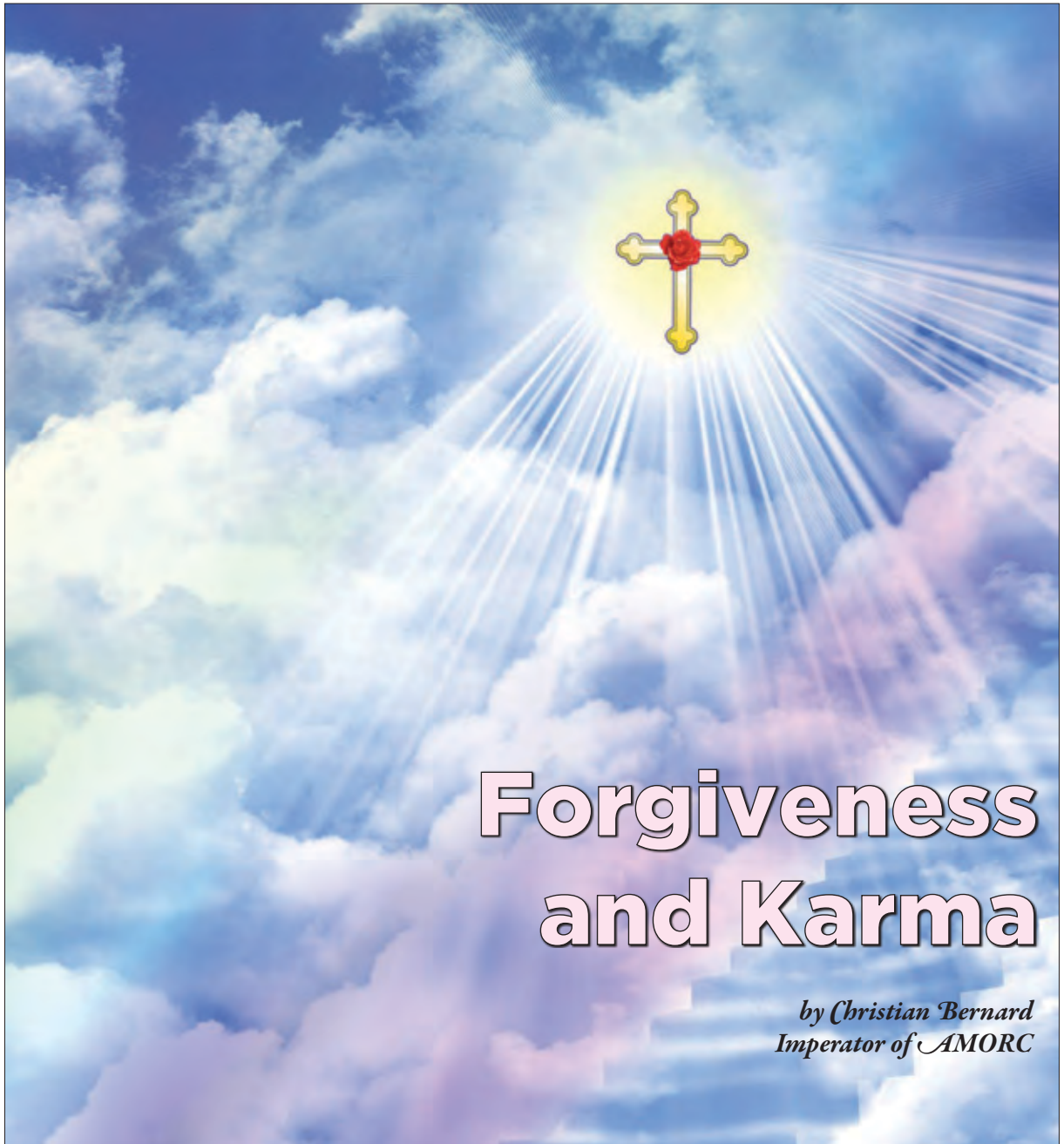
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## Cover spread

Sacred Flowers of Antiquity





# Forgiveness and Karma

*by Christian Bernard  
Imperator of AMORC*

**I**N MANY of my messages, and in what I have written in general, I like to refer to and emphasise the concept of responsibility. Free-will follows naturally on from responsibility, and this leads to the law of Karma. This is something you know about, you have read it, heard it, and most likely tested it out. But have you truly taken it on board?

There are times when I get the impression that this is not the case for some of you, given the conversations

we have. This could be due to an education that is often Christian, or at least religious, which, while preaching punishment and promising eternal damnation, also speaks of absolution.

Can we, with a wave of a magic wand or a few fine words, be absolved of everything? I do not think so myself, especially as the so-called repenting is hardly ever genuine, but is driven simply by fear or self-interest. As such it is not a true realisation. Faced with our mistakes and poor





choices, we are like a child doing something silly who, when caught out by its parents, vows never to do it again and begs for their forgiveness.

We do of course forgive children, and this is why, even as adults, we imagine that God, whom we affectionately call “our Father”, can erase everything and sort everything out. But it is not like this, if we consider the eternal and unchanging cosmic laws to be God in action. Can we demand of God that He renounce Himself, and think again about the cosmic laws? Miracles can occur, it is true, but they themselves are often the result of a law.

There are things in Nature that cannot be changed, words that cannot be taken back, things that have been written that cannot be erased.

What is done is done, and our mistakes rear up in front of us like so many transgressions that we have to recognise and face the consequences of. Often it is not enough to mumble vague apologies, to plead for, or even demand, the forgiveness that we think it so clear the other person absolutely must grant us. When we have caused harm, we must not demand that our ‘victims’ cleanse our soul by forgiving us. That would amount to making them take on some of our responsibility, and turning them into the executioner not the victim, as if being forgiven was our right, and they were the sponge wiping out our karma. This is not how it is. We must not get forgiveness and apology mixed up. We must be able to apologise without asking the other person to forgive us. True enough, if the other person forgives us, it eases our conscience a little more, and can enable discussion where we thought it no longer possible.

It is often said that we must be able to forgive without forgetting. But is forgiving possible without forgetting, and is forgetting possible without forgiving? Someone I

**But is forgiving possible without forgetting, and is forgetting possible without forgiving?**

know, whom I consider exceptionally mystical, generous, kind, and altruistic, has a completely different reasoning to this, though, which is very interesting to observe. Once the impact, the emotions and the distress have passed, this is a person who is able to keep their feelings to themselves, so that things do not get worse. They try to make light of the wrong done to them, and carry on without getting dispirited, with increased belief, energy, and enthusiasm, for the good of all concerned. And when I see them helping the person who treated them badly or unfairly, it always surprises me, and I ask myself, and them as well,



*We do of course forgive children.*

“So have you forgiven them?”. Their response is always “No, I never do. It is not within my power to forgive. It is not up to me, it is not something I can do. Forgiving is the Cosmic’s business!” Therefore this person will not forgive, yet their whole attitude would suggest the reverse.

On the other hand, I know other people who say they forgive, but whose attitude is very unclear. No discussion is possible, relationships go cool or even break down for good, their thinking stays negative... And yet these people maintain that in absolute terms, on the divine plane, they have forgiven. In their own mind this illusion absolves them. They think they are displaying leniency and wisdom, and have thus found the key to paradise, but nothing in their attitude rings true; although it may be honey-coated, the tone is not right. The people who act like this the most often are those who went through a religious education.

But what good is it to forgive, if our actions do not reflect this? - if we continue to distrust, and our attitude does not mirror our so-called forgiveness? If this is how it is, perhaps it would be better not to insist that we have forgiven: then there are no gaps between all of our ‘selves’, between our mind and our heart. Our emotions will not be contradicting themselves, buffeted in all directions. It seems to me that the person I just referred to, who says they do not forgive, is more untroubled than others who maintain that they have forgiven.

I have thought about this difference, and tried to find a rational explanation for it. If we were talking about someone who was completely egoistic and self-centred, then I would simply think they did not have the level of consciousness required to care, but this is not the case, it is quite the opposite. I have come to believe that this person’s concept of forgiveness, or rather non-forgiveness, reflects an absolute confidence in the divine laws; they do







*Norway remembers the summer of 2011.*

not claim to be in charge of karma, and do not assume the right to decide on the putting into effect of its laws; they do not take themselves to be the channel or intermediary between the person who was malicious and God. In acting in this way, they display neither pretence nor conceit, the flaws usually connected with those who do not forgive.

In the same vein, I have also noticed that among those who speak of devotion and sacrifice even, and who sometimes think, in all modesty of course, that they are carrying the world and its troubles on their shoulders, their so-called sacrifice is very measured, selective even. There is more moaning and noise than action and results.

These thoughts on the concept of forgiveness came to me at a time when in the media much was being said again about terrorism and multiple killings, including at the trial of the perpetrator of the tragic events you will all no doubt remember, in Norway in the summer of 2011, when nearly eighty people lost their lives. This terrorist, who prepared his crimes methodically, was not sorry at all. He took full responsibility for what he did, and asked for no forgiveness. His attitude appeared to throw the whole court into turmoil.

At the risk of shocking you, his behaviour seemed to me to be in line with what he is, and with what he did. What seems more abnormal to me is that the TV and radio commentators, along with all the press, only seemed to be focusing on one point: an apology. They acted as though they were offended by this refusal to ask for forgiveness; as if this criminal, by publicly apologising, could ease the pain of the families and satisfy the wishes of the judicial apparatus; as if what he did, if he were sorry for

it in this way, would reduce the harm he did, and would lessen the immeasurable pain of those who lost one or more of their dear ones.

If he were sorry for the premeditated crimes that he carried out with great precision and calculation, fully aware of what he was doing, then it would make no sense at all. Quite the reverse, would not his request for forgiveness then be illogical and unacceptable, and yet another provocation? I personally would be much more shocked if he were to say sorry, as if he had done something that wasn't very polite.

In this case as in similar ones, you could say that the world was holding its breath waiting for this request for forgiveness, as an end in itself, an absolution. This would lead us into thinking that, at the end of the day, the action of a criminal is only some kind of accident, a mistake, a simple error. That would be reassuring for us, and mean we didn't have to think any more deeply. His apology and forgiveness would enable us to draw a line under this terrible story; our society could move on; and, with our eyes wide open, we could continue to produce over and over again those same mistakes that lead without fail to the horrors that we know about.

Why do we always have to remove our responsibility for what we do? Would his apology be reassuring for society? Would it ease everyone's conscience, and justify our way of life and our way of thinking? Well, alright then! The whole world is apparently satisfied if someone asks for forgiveness and it is given, as if that was the crux of the matter and the most important thing about these killings in Norway and elsewhere.





I know that this theme is as old as the world is, and everyone has their personal view. It is a concept that certainly makes us think and meditate on the meaning of life and our relationships with one another, and beyond that, even.

There is no religious person, no philosopher, no thinking person who is immune from thinking about this. Even those we call atheists have from their earliest days been faced with this concept of forgiveness, from one side of the line or the other. This is part of the human condition, part of our nature, and very often our convictions get mixed up and are interwoven with each other, and one leads on to the next.

We think like this: forgiveness - revenge; apology - resentment; going apart - coming together; failure to understand - communication; hate - love; and so on.

Perhaps we should be able to see the difference between things and see both sides of the matter, instead of using forgiveness to condense it all, even if this may turn out to be a medicine that is comforting. Are we unable to simply do no harm, even to someone who was or is our enemy, without involving forgiveness? Personally I believe we can be neutral, and let life and karma take care of things. This is what will happen in any case, whether or not we are using the word "forgiveness".

It seems to me that when we forgive - even if it is completely sincere and comes from deep within our inner being, from the most well-meaning part of ourselves - it erases practically nothing. If it is possible for a true realisation to change someone who has done something serious and malicious, then they continue alone on their new path - the path of redemption. What we must not do, for our own well-being and that of those around us, is to hold thoughts or utter words that are full of hate. In so doing, we ruin the lives of those we love as well as our own, by generating negative vibrations that contaminate the area around us. This mental poisoning is a further victory for the person who has done us harm.



It is said that we can tell a tree by its fruits, and this is often true. Therefore the best response to insults, the best response to injustice - trust in my experience - is what may generally be called 'the strength of the soul'. Time passes and life's tests form us; and if we are able to face up, and continue with honour and courage, then the image we will be giving to our enemies will throw them into confusion just as much as any act of revenge, and will perhaps lead them to reflect on their own life, and even their own

**Are we unable to simply do no harm, even to someone who was or is our enemy, without involving forgiveness?**

setbacks. Will they then perhaps forgive themselves for their wrongdoing, maliciousness, and their cruelty, even?

The example you will be setting around you - in terms of your general attitude, your expansiveness, and your success, even, in one or more areas - will be as witnesses testifying, should the need arise, on your behalf. The more well you are inside, the greater will be your victory over what is bad; and this without violence, shouting, or act of revenge.

Returning more directly to the subject of forgiveness - I think, therefore, that we are not under any obligation to forgive, as it is generally understood, but that our attitude should be as neutral as possible so that Cosmic Law may be fulfilled naturally. Then, if the person waiting for our forgiveness is still a little uneasy because they did not get it, it is perhaps just as well for the inner work they have to do. Difficulties and obstacles can make us look at things, and even help us.

I hope I have not shocked you with the above. It is only a personal view, the result of what I have observed, and is in no way forced on you as an absolute truth.

I know that this view of forgiveness - that ageless wisdom ever-present in the human mind in general and in the mystic's mind in particular - is quite unorthodox, and does not fit in with what you are used to hearing, or could have learnt, even, within our Order.

But I know you will not hold this 'nonconformity' against me, because you know how to forgive; and since this has to apply in all cases, I know that you will recall that I have always favoured sincerity and the sharing of my convictions, over and above coming across as wise and perfect.

As my message today is entitled "Forgiveness and Karma", I would now like to move on to Karmic Law, as this subject is indirectly connected to forgiveness. Originally and etymologically, the meaning of 'karma' in Sanskrit is: action or reaction. It represents the law







*In a nutshell, we reap what we sow.*

of cause and effect that governs the whole universe, including humanity. This law is also known as the law of compensation.

In a nutshell, we reap what we sow. The fate of each individual is determined by the way in which they apply their free-will. The course of their life is usually connected to the choices, good or bad, that they may make at any given moment. I therefore come back to the concept of responsibility that I brought up at the beginning of this message. Each act is followed by an effect, from the tiniest and most insignificant thing to the greatest and most important.

Karma is not necessarily negative. In what we do daily, it is pretty much neutral, or even positive. It is just a logical reaction, the obvious consequence of our actions, and also of our words and our thoughts. The Law of Karma does not conceive itself or measure itself as mankind sees and measures, but it is every bit as clear, unchanging, and real as all the other laws and principles that are easier for the human mind to conceive.

All of our actions register in the universal memory and, be it a good or a bad thing, this computer never gets a 'virus' and its hard-drive is indestructible, it only being possible for debts paid off and lessons learnt to be erased, with any luck! Karma is therefore an integral part of the Cosmic Consciousness and, whether instantly or at some future point, in one life or another, we will have to come to terms with what we have done. The more we do this with good grace, the easier it will be.

As soon as the idea of karma is mentioned, we have a tendency to associate it with the negative side of things, and with what we may have done that is bad. The law of karma, however, also applies to the positive aspect of our choices and actions, for it is the expression of divine justice.

At first glance, this is not obvious. How many times have we thought or said "It's not fair!" when we are faced

with a problem, major or minor, either for ourselves or someone else. We have all known one or more people who conduct themselves excellently in all respects, yet who undergo great ordeals. Fate seems to be 'having a go at them', and we say that they have no luck at all. In spite of the difficulties and misfortunes they are subjected to, they remain confident in life, kindly and pleasant. This seems puzzling and incomprehensible to many. These are people who are either erasing karmic debts they may have, or they are accepting the choice they made in incarnating, and thereby agreeing to perfect their evolution more quickly. And if this is not what it is, if it is some kind of putting to the test, then their positive attitude,

of which pain and courage may be a part, will open up the gateway to bliss for them - if not in this world, then in another one to come.

Before continuing on with the subject-matter of this message, I would like to come back for a moment to what I just referred to: that is, the pain and courage of people under duress, who are able to remain positive in their ordeal. They may display strength and dignity, and remain outwardly collected and good-natured; but their distress and their suffering are no easier to tolerate than that of those who, with a great deal of show - or grandstanding, even - broadcast their pain, whether it be physical or emotional. The misfortunes and ordeals inherent to the human condition have consequences and negative effects, no matter what the individual concerned may be - rich or poor, mystic or atheist, or whatever. As I often have the chance of pointing out, the difference lies in the ability, and more importantly in the will, to triumph over what is happening.

Returning to the Law of Karma, which is the expression of divine justice and the law of greatest importance and concern for our present and our future: it is vital to properly understand its functioning, which is constant and unstoppable. The moment that we accept the law of compensation and its consequences for the course of our life, we are obliged to, and are able to, have advance control over our destiny. Let us therefore be sure always to act constructively and well.

If mistakes are inevitable, and not only credited to youth, then we must admit them, in both senses of what that means. Firstly, to admit them means opening our eyes and therefore seeing them. And then secondly, to admit them also means being truly aware of our errors and our poor choices, and putting right whatever these may be, whilst at the same time expressing our regret and, it goes without saying, changing our course. This realisation, while it may not erase everything, helps to improve our





likely chances. Whereas misfortune can result from what is called negative karma, then luck can be largely put down to the positive aspect of our karma.

If we want to increase the chances of this, we have no alternative but to act well, and to put all our force and abilities at the service of what is good. I know that for you, as Rosicrucians, this concept is not an abstract one, and that you know exactly what 'doing good' consists of. The choice is wide and the opportunities many. 'Doing good' consists especially of not harming either others or oneself; then - according to the opportunities we have, the country we are in, the society in which we are evolving, our work, our age, and so on - it consists of caring for and helping those around us, some cause, the planet, etc. Every single act of ours that is constructive and kind, however minor it may be, is important: from a word of politeness or comfort, right up to the giving of our talents, energy, time, and the sensible donating of money.

Doing good is also, and above all, the mystic work that you perform daily, or even occasionally. The expression of good is found, for example, in the system for spiritual aid that our Order offers, in the fraternity that we show among ourselves, in the echo that the word "peace" finds in our hearts, whether that be Peace Profound or inner peace, peace between nations and people, or that universal peace that we the members of A.M.O.R.C. celebrate each year at a special ceremony.

Each one of us knows how to do good and give it concrete expression. As we get older, and our strength diminishes and we have to give up certain things, we are usually left with our heart and our mind. We will reap the most wonderful fruits of all the good we have stored up, in this incarnation or later on. The question I am most often asked, along with our Officers and our Lecturers, is whether an ordeal, often a difficult and unhappy one, has to be the result of karma. The implementation of karmic law must not be felt and experienced as a divine punishment or reward, but as the logical outcome of our actions. It is therefore important not to confuse karma with ordeal. Whereas all negative karma generates an ordeal that could be described as things 'catching up', not every ordeal is karmic.

We can be the victim of an accident, get a serious illness, or find ourselves materially destitute without that being linked to the law of compensation. To state the opposite would amount to thinking that God favours suffering, just like certain religions state. We can be tested physically and spiritually, and come gloriously out of the experience exceeding ourselves or, if we cannot change things, at least accepting them philosophically. Generally, even

if we are not immediately aware of it, we are good at overcoming the obstacle that stands before us.

Whilst not all the problems we encounter are the result of negative karma, some may be. But whichever way it is, we should go through this 'putting to the test' with courage, and win through. In all times, even the most wise and the greatest initiates have been tested during their lives, sometimes as far as torture and death. Often that was part of their mission. There are many examples you will know of.

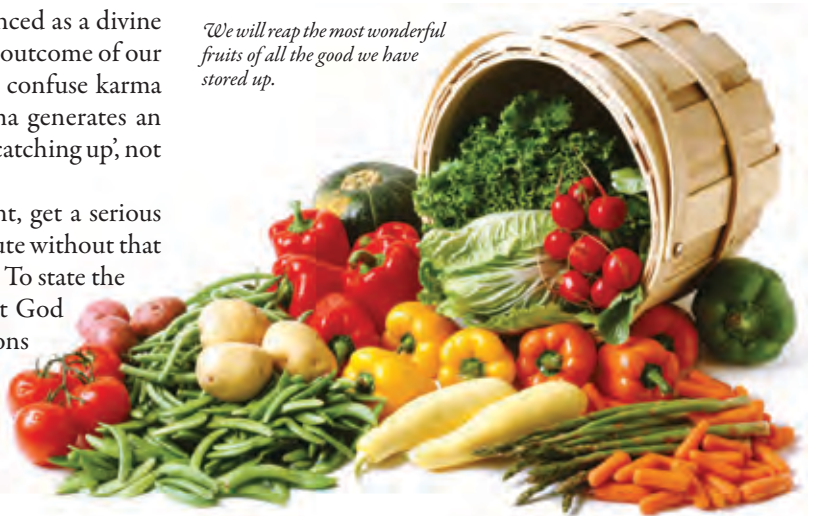
Is it necessary to know whether the problems we currently have are of karmic origin, or are a lesson to be learnt? I do not know. But if the answer is important to you and will affect your reactions and your choices, then the only way of finding your answer is by means of what comes to you intuitively and then, if necessary, by meditating. Signs may also be given to you, for example in a dream or in something you read. But whether or not you are enlightened as to the source of the ordeal, in all cases you will have to face it.

If you think that the misfortune you are going through, large or small, is of karmic origin, you can humbly express your realisation to the God of your Heart, spiritually make amends, and ask, in so far as is possible, for your cosmic burden to be lightened. For this, we come back to the forgiveness and the leniency that we are seeking. If the request is genuine, and is accompanied by concrete action with the purpose of succeeding, then it is possible that mercy may be shown or help be given to you.

"Help yourself, and heaven will help you!"


To conclude, the Law of Karma is a law of love which helps us to become aware, and to perfect our evolution. It compels us to put our free-will into action, to make preferably the right choices, and to take on board the saying "Know Yourself."

*We will reap the most wonderful fruits of all the good we have stored up.*





# The Neophyte & Service



by Raymund Andrea  
(1882 - 1975)

Adapted and abridged from "*The Neophyte and Service*": Chapter Three of "*The Technique of the Disciple*" by former Grand Master Raymund Andrea.

**O**NE OF the reasons why the discipline of the Path has been called a "hard school" is because the ordinary motives for action have to be reversed and given more impersonal direction. As a neophyte, you must think in terms of others as well as yourself. You may find it difficult to wholeheartedly accept the condition of pledging yourself to service as soon as you enter thoroughly upon self-development. This is not just the case with the neophyte; it is often the same for those who have been seeking advancement on the Path for many years.

When it is suggested they should throw their influence into other lives, they fail to see any connection between self-development and an interest in the development of others. They imagine that the law of service does not apply until they themselves are well advanced on the Path. They can scarcely be blamed for this, for many schools of occult education do not give much emphasis to the importance of service to others. Instead, they concentrate almost exclusively on methods of self-development or self-importance, with personal power as the sole objective.





If you are thinking only in terms of the material plane, this is to some extent legitimate and achievable. Indeed, it is possible to make some spiritual progress without any special consideration of service to others: but only within very narrow limits. In the progress of a person of any commendable quality, the time comes when this kind of exclusive programme becomes a most unsatisfactory affair. Psychic development is quite compatible with a selfish attitude towards life, and indeed has been put to improper use, and examples of this are well documented. Soul development however, is impossible on such terms. Study well the two Paths! They run very close to each other up to a critical point, beyond which they separate forever. It is at this point that the true Path resolves itself into the narrow and flaming way of service.

Why must the neophyte learn to serve? Because the [Inner] Master whom he or she aspires to know is perfected in service. You cannot have intimate association with the Master in world work until you have learned, through long probation, to likewise serve, and to serve efficiently. However, service is not necessarily of a spiritual character. We receive a hint of this from the Master when he says: *"...Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty."* That is characteristic of the teaching of the Master. He points you back to first principles, to the place where you now stand, and bids you to be productive in that place.

**Why must the neophyte learn to serve? Because the [Inner] Master whom he or she aspires to know is perfected in service.**

That may not be very inviting for some of us. Perhaps we were looking for something important at the beginning, something different from the occupation of the average person. Maybe we were expecting to be noticed as a remarkable character in some way.... How typical this attitude of mind is, not only in spiritual quests, but in many walks of life! Yet, only a generation ago, our noble-minded ancestors were not possessed with this narrow-minded spirit. Neither were Masters who belonged to an ancient and classic humanity. To them, the masks, mummeries and triumphs of our day would have passed for nothing. They stand as an inspiring example of reality, durability and self-effacement which makes our little ambitions and desire for effect unworthy of serious notice. Small wonder is it that the Master has to wait! To wait, even through incarnations, for us to awaken



*You can lord it over others to your heart's content on the physical and mental planes if you have cultivated force to that end; but not on the spiritual plane.*

from this sleep of the senses. Small wonder that we are compelled to open our own eyes, just where we are, and shake off the hypnotic sleep of unreality and false values that hang heavy about us.

Surely our affection for the Master grows most as we realise more and more the infinite patience shown towards the children of the Path during this awakening process. This can only be a patience grounded upon supernal wisdom and perfect compassion. Sometimes, we might be of that turn of mind where we lust for power over our fellow human beings. Perhaps the objective in our studies is to win the reputation of being a notable character. This attitude slays the soul for real achievement. It is forbidden ground, and the person who treads such ground is soon lost in the swamp of illusion. Such a person has a long way to go before he or she can hope to lord it over the souls of other people.

You can lord it over others to your heart's content on the physical and mental planes if you have cultivated force to that end; but not on the spiritual plane. A greater and purified force is required on that level. This, you will only gain when the objectionable voice of personal superiority has been made dumb through probation. As long as the personal voice speaks, you are on the mental plane, and your service will be ineffectual because it emanates from that plane. It will be service activated largely by self-interest, and will pass with others for what it is worth.

Service on the Path means service because you want to and must serve. If that ideal carries with it too strong a note of self-effacement, it is not the ideal that is wrong but your conception of the work before you. As the saying goes: *"There is a price for everything worth having."* The Path of spiritual revelation is an individual one, and every step on it has to be cut by our own hands and trodden by our own feet. This is not an arbitrary law made by our





*The athlete is not made by a detailed study of anatomy and reflection on the development of the physical body.*

teachers. It is an unalterable condition in the sphere of the Masters, that to receive, you must give. It is a severe and mortifying condition for the personality that loves to grasp and live for itself. However, there is no other way for you to gain even a preliminary measure of true self-knowledge, and to gain even the minor initiations of the Path. You must recognise the fact that service equals development.

Service may not necessarily be occult in character. Pause for a moment and think about that. When you recognise in fullness your innate gifts, you will determine your mission in life. Years may pass in different spheres before your gifts are recognised. One of the most striking results of service is the peculiar power of its discipline in initiating you into the sphere of the soul, and unfolding faculties unperceived until now; faculties you may have only dimly recognised and partially expressed. The awakening of the soul may lead you in many directions and into many walks of life. Remember, the disciples of the Master are just as likely to be found engaged in political, social and economic fields, as in spiritual and religious.

**Surprisingly, faith plays a large part in our unfoldment and use of power.**

You will not find more powerful examples of this than if you study the history of the Rosicrucian fraternity. Their influence can be traced throughout the civilised world in literature, art and science, in church and state, in mystical illumination and in occult achievements. That being so, as neophytes, we should enter upon our training with an open mind about the line of service that the studies will eventually disclose as fittest for us. As the training goes forward, one thing is certain: *that which you can do best*

*will be brought into prominence and matured.* Furthermore, it will not be long before you find ways and means of applying your abilities along lines which are satisfactory to yourself and also of value to the world.

There may be some who pause here, as a shadow of disappointment settles upon them on meeting so strong an emphasis upon service as the key to high development. One can only feel complete sympathy with this. After all, many of us enter upon our studies with hopeful ambition for personal conquest. However, we must remember that each of us is now passing into the domain of an exact science, the technique of which consists

of unchangeable laws of thought and principles of action. Such laws cannot be ignored without consequences. The act of service on the Path releases the power of the soul.

Unfoldment is not dependant only upon our absorbing of the material in the studies. The athlete is not made by a detailed study of anatomy and reflection on the development of the physical body. The athlete must translate this information into muscular training and scientific body building, as well as a range of mental adjustments specifically geared towards the physical feats he or she wishes to accomplish. It is the same with the neophyte, with you and I. The forces we seek to know and manipulate are resident within us, and exist around us. What we need is the key to enable us to tap into these infinite forces that await the call of the will to bring them into active use.

Surprisingly, faith plays a large part in our unfoldment and use of power. We will obtain many hints of this in times of emergency and stress if we are aware of our deeper nature. The steady and continuous effort to serve in any way that circumstances afford the least opportunity, will teach us far more than any detailed study of the spiritual life. You will have no idea of what you are capable until you rise confidently in the event of human need and you compel the response of the soul's innate power in meeting it. There is no room for the lukewarm neophyte on the Path. The demands of life have no room for this.

On the Path, men and women of action are needed. There are enough cults and societies in existence which will afford the lackadaisical ample hospitality to dream life away. The student we have in mind must leave these things to those who need them: only then will you be of some use in the world, and then others will emulate your example.

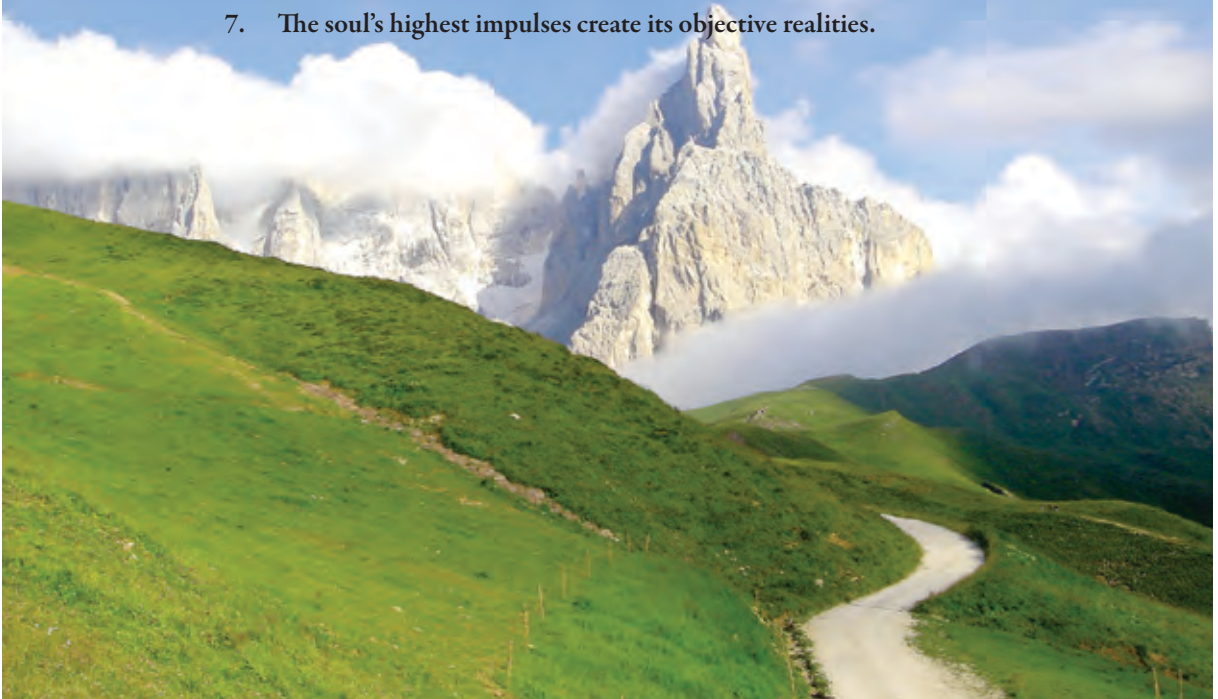




# Fragments for Reflection

*by Lester Kzorr*

1. All roads lead to the mountaintop. Inherently we are destined to take only a few of these roads and can never hope to reach the summit if we try and take them all.
2. The lofty and perfect sweep across all earth knows no boundary, encompassing all, even my heart, even my consciousness. This, greater than the mountains expressing its form, the sea, its motion, will always remain, like a perfect silence after the last notes of impassioned music fade. It does not need a time, a place, a mantle. Heaven is always close, and everything breathes its peace.
3. Without the passive there could be no active. Without the active there could only be the potential. God is. Therefore he cannot be potential.
4. The spiral leads through all experience. How then can we judge one another?
5. All beliefs are but a degree of attainment.
6. I am the Shekinah in my Sanctum.
7. The soul's highest impulses create its objective realities.



# Let there be Light

by *William Hand*

*“Let there be Light!” This is an often heard phrase, and in a mystical or spiritual context it is certainly not referring to physical light.*

*So what is this “Light” that mystics so often speak about?*

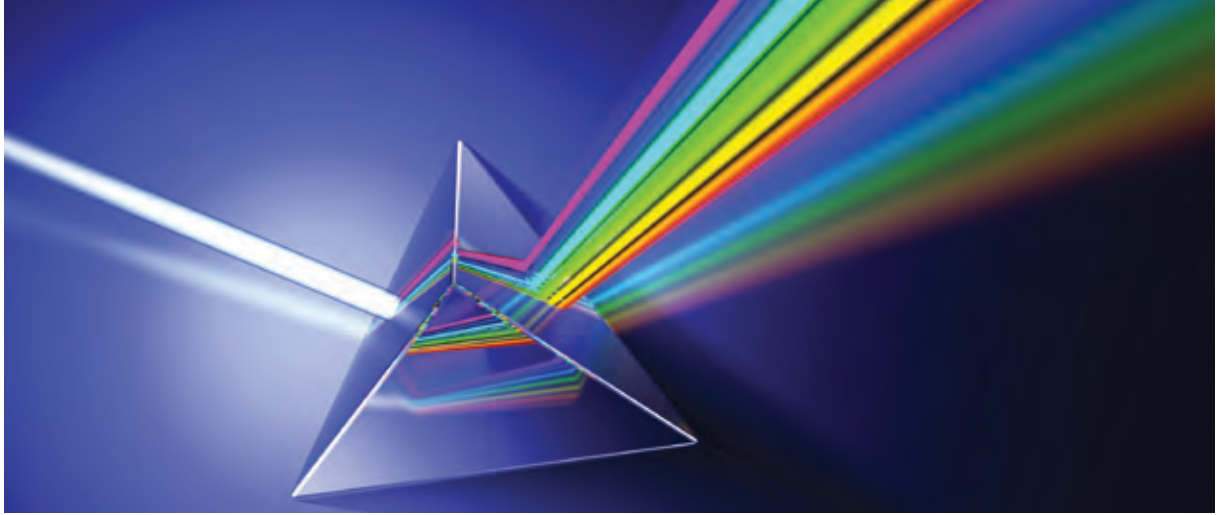


**I**N THIS article I will try and explain what mystics mean by Light, especially as outlined in the Rosicrucian tradition and teachings. I would also like to address other related questions like “why are we here?” or “what is the purpose of life?” Difficult questions, but we may be able to begin to answer them once we delve into the nature of Light. So let us begin our journey.

In Rosicrucian Lodge convocations reference is made to ‘Being,’ Being is a state of existence that is timeless and eternal. One way of thinking of Being is to think of it as a







universal Consciousness. The energy that Being radiates is called Light which itself must be outside the boundaries of time and space. If it is outside of time and space it cannot vibrate in the way we commonly understand since vibration is measured in movement per second, implying both time and space. So Being and the Light it radiates simply just IS. This is an important concept. If Being is outside of time and space then we, incarnated in our human bodies in 3-D space and time, can never know the whole and true nature of Being as radiated by Light. However, we can at least get closer from a vantage point gained through meditation and introspection.

We can say that Being or ISness is an *infinite conscious intelligence* radiating as Light with infinite potential. In other words it is God made manifest as opposed to the un-manifest, the Yin and the Yang in Chinese philosophy. Taken together, Yin and Yang in Chinese philosophy are the two primal forces acting throughout Creation. These forces arise together and work together as complementary components. They are mutually dependent on a constantly shifting balance. Like the light on a hill, as the sun moves, the Yin and Yang shift; Yang the manifested Light and Yin its complementary opposite the unmanifested, or yet to be manifested, Light.

Now, in this understanding, Rosicrucians refer to the attributes of pure Being radiating as Light as “*unfeeling, without reflection, and therefore formless.*” But if the infinite conscious intelligence was formless how could it realise itself and *experience* itself if there was no reflection? Well..., by creating Life, time, space, dimension and vibration through an evolving complexity of Being. Expansion implies space and dimension. Thus Life provides reflection for Light. In other words Life is required in order for Light or the manifested part of God consciousness to experience itself. In previous articles I have used the phrase (adapted from quantum mechanics): “*Life without Light is powerless, but Light without Life is purposeless.*” Thus we see Light and Life operating together for a purpose.

There is a wonderful experiment one can do in

physics that demonstrates the nature of Light (with a capital “L”). If we shine pure white light through a prism, what happens? The prism of course internally reflects and refracts the light into the multiple colours of the rainbow; red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. I’m sure you have all seen this at school. Now if we use the analogy of pure white light as the attribute of Being, we can see that creation involves filtering the white light (by the prism, symbolising different filters) leading to a multitude of different vibrations.


By analogy only, red light may symbolise the animal world, blue the human world, and so on. We can call this *creation by subtraction*. This is key. Too often people get tied in knots trying to understand how created things (like the universe) can come from nothing or have a beginning. But if you think of it the other way around, of there being no beginning, just an *Isness* or *Being*, then creation is an act of filtering. Creation is the very opposite of making something out of nothing. It is, on the contrary, a filtering process that makes something out of *everything*. Creation is an intelligent and selective *subtraction*.

Essentially, as human beings, our brains are decoders of energy in a specific way. After transition or bodily death, the decoding by the filtered part of the consciousness of God will be different again..., something to contemplate! Infinite Love is the only Truth, everything else is illusion! So, why are we here? What is the purpose of Life (with a capital L)?

To try and answer let’s go back to the infinite conscious intelligence radiating as Light or Being with infinite potential. What is the purpose of Being? Surely and logically it must at least be the transformation of infinite potential into *experience*. Now, as we have already seen, experience and realisation require reflection, and life provides this reflection. And that is where we come in as part of the greater Light (capital L) of the Cosmic.

Our experiences are ultimately part of God’s experience and that is why we are here, to help infinite potential become Reality and grow through experience. What a marvellous mission we have!





# Rosicrucian Spiritual Tradition in a Modern World

*by Claudio Mazzucco  
Grand Master of the Italian  
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**W**HATEVER conversation of a philosophical nature we engage in, it is good practice before starting to reflect on the sense and meaning of the words that are about to be used. Taking the word “spirituality” for example, it is important to have a clear vision of its meaning within the context of Rosicrucian philosophy. To achieve this, we are going to use ‘art’ as a means of gaining a clearer understanding, as the language of art touches many levels, awakening glimpses of truth in those who contemplate on it. I will begin with a few extracts from the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson:-





*The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know the truth when we see it; let sceptic and scoffer say what they choose.*

*By the same fire, vital, consecrating, celestial, which burns until it shall dissolve all things into the waves and surges of an ocean of light, we see and know each other, and what spirit each is of.*

*We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul.*

*When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love*

*Before the revelations of the soul, Time, Space and Nature shrink away.*

Emerson's "Essay IX, The Over-Soul"

Emerson's words awaken in us the idea that whatever we speak of is a vision, not in the sense of something requiring only the eyes to see, but a vision of an inner image which reveals itself to those who know how to search for it. Only those images that follow each thought and human expression make possible a first-hand description of the spiritual experience. They must



*Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 - 1882) - American essayist and renowned poet who led the Transcendentalist movement of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, is fondly remembered for many of his outstandingly beautiful writings.*



*Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918) was a French a composer, who with Maurice Ravel strongly associated himself with the Impressionistic movement in music of the last 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He was also closely associated with Rosicrucian activity in France.*

of necessity always be symbolic, evocative and indirect, always suggesting Truth without ever pronouncing it. This is what Spirituality means to Rosicrucians.

Debussy was a member of a branch of the Rosicrucian tradition founded by Joséphin Péladan towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. I am not going to delve into this as I believe it is more useful to highlight certain aspects of Rosicrucian spirituality so you can conclude for yourself the meaning of Debussy's affiliation to such an initiatic school.

## A UNESCO Initiative

In 1996 UNESCO, a branch of the United Nations dedicated to education and the development of human abilities, published a paper of a study carried out by eminent scientists and educators of various nationalities. The study looked at how the development of an individual should be in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Known as the *Delors Report*, this study highlighted four essential points which could be called four fundamental pillars for the education of future generations:



*Learning to do. Learning to know.  
Learning to live together. Learning to be.*

From a first analysis of these four points we can conclude that the first two are areas of focus for education, while the third and fourth are elements that each individual develops mainly within the family environment. In fact, this is how things used to be until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the transformation of contemporary society led the family to abdicate, for a variety of reasons, its fundamental role of preparation the individual for life, through the affective and social relationships which are typical of a family nucleus. But the reasons for this change are best dealt with by sociologists and anthropologists. What is of importance to us are however the last two of the points, namely *learning to live together* and *learning to be*.

From a careful analysis it is clear that these two points are essential for humans to be able to express their true potentials and to live harmoniously with others and their environment. The relevance of these two aspects becomes more evident if we look at recent events in the world, particularly with regard to the environment and indeed the very survival of cultural diversity. It is therefore understandable why *'learning to live together'* and *'learning to be'* are such important pillars for human evolution. Without them, we are destined to be plagued indefinitely into the future by constant conflict with others, both internal and external conflict. And we will be incapable of adapting ourselves to the constantly changing conditions of life, not knowing how to maintain a healthy equilibrium with our environment and fellow human beings.

## 17<sup>th</sup> Century Transformation

Let us now jump back in time to the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, in particular in the Rhineland-Palatinate region of central Germany. The 17<sup>th</sup> Century as a whole was a dramatic time in European history: it began with the burning of Giordano Bruno, martyr of free thought and a symbol for all who sought their own Truth through personal knowledge and experiences of the Sacred.

Bruno's thoughts spread across Europe, particularly to Britain and Germany, influencing many prominent thinkers. Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century underwent several periods of great transformation of thought and consciousness, influenced by Copernican theories...; from the profound transformation of scientific thought in the works of Galileo Galilei, Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton and several others, to the discoveries that radically modified the theologically led notion held until then of Man's pre-eminence at the centre of the Universe.



*Friedrich V Elector Palatine, and briefly the King of Bohemia.*

With navigation and the discovery of the New World just barely 120 years before 1600, the rapid dissemination of philosophical and scientific thought was now possible, thanks to the initial development of the printing press in Gutenberg in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, followed by advances in mass-printing techniques. Such were the essential factors leading up to the rapid transformation that took place during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

But with major changes came major crises as well. Northern Europe was under the influence of the Protestant Reformation which introduced the need for followers outside the clergy to become aware of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments without the intermediation of a priesthood. Indeed, Luther had claimed that every Christian should be his or her own priest. And so it happened that over a mere few decades, literacy in northern Europe and Britain had become superior to that of southern Europe. In this context the Palatinate in Germany under Protestant influence, enjoyed a particular form of freedom, for the pre-eminent ruler of the region, Elector Friedrich V of the Holy Roman Empire, was considered 'modern' by many of the learned of the time. Unlike many other powerful leaders, he had an open mind and was receptive to new ideas.

Within a brief period then, the Palatinate became a centre where many cultural and esoteric forms converged, such as the Kabalistic, alchemical and hermetic currents,







Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I of Britain and Anne of Denmark, reigned briefly as Electress Palatine Queen of Bohemia with her husband Friedrich V Elector Palatine.

as well as mathematicians and scholars of medicine, mechanics and astronomy. He gathered together these areas of learning into a single centre of development for education and knowledge in the broadest sense of the term.

It was during this period when the idea began to develop among the learned of Europe that the world was about to witness the realisation of a Utopia on earth. This was reinforced by the fact that Friedrich V would be marrying Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of King James I of Britain, who, with his military might could have guaranteed the security of the reign of Friedrich. But this did not happen. Regarding the marriage between Friedrich and Elizabeth, the Shakespearean company took to the stage in Germany with various productions in honour of the royal couple. Shakespeare and his company, as will be discussed later, very likely played an important role in the genesis of Rosicrucianism.

## The Rosicrucian Manifestos

Within this climate of intellectual, artistic and spiritual rejuvenation, full of new hope, ideas and projects, the first

Rosicrucian Manifesto entitled the *Fama Fraternitatis* ("Fame of the Fraternity") was published in 1614. It was followed in 1615 by the publication of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* ("Confession of the Fraternity"), and in 1616 by the *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*. In 1624 Paris awakens to a display of posters plastered on the walls of the main churches of the city, reading as follows:

*We, the Members of the Principal College of the Rosy-Cross, have taken up residence, visible and invisible, in this city, by the grace of the Most High, towards Whom are turned the hearts of the Just.*

*We demonstrate and teach to speak, without books or signs, to speak the different languages of the countries in which we dwell, to save mankind, our fellow-men, from error and from death.*

*If someone wishes to see us merely out of curiosity, he will never make contact with us. But if his desire truly brings him to register with our Fraternity, we, who base our judgement on thoughts, will show him the truth of our promises. For this, we do not make known the place of our stay in this city, since the thoughts united to the real desire of the seeker will lead us to him and him to us.*



Title page from the 1616 German edition of the combined "Fama Fraternitatis" and "Confessio Fraternitatis."



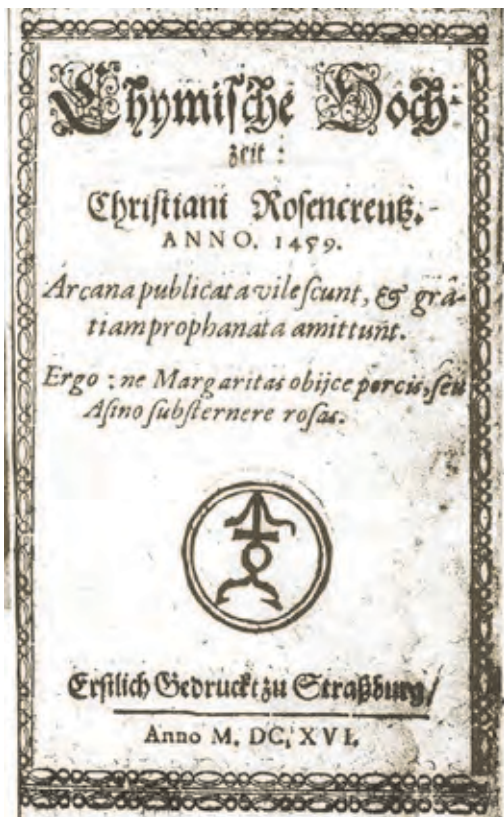
Scholars attribute the first two manifestos to a circle of eminent thinkers at the university of Tübingen, known as “the Tübingen Circle”, while the *Chymical Wedding* is attributed to Johann Valentin Andreae. The *Fama* tells the story of the legendary founder of the Brotherhood of the Rosy-Cross, Christian Rosenkreutz (CRC). It explains how CRC reached a high level of spiritual and philosophical preparation through a long journey that took him as far as the Middle East and possibly southern Arabia, and then by way of North Africa, Spain and France, a return to Germany where CRC created a monastic Order, the Brethren of the Rosy Cross, consisting of only a few individuals.

In essence, the *Fama* not only made people aware of the existence of the Order, it also hoped to bring together the wise men to expand the boundaries of knowledge for the benefit of humanity as a whole. The story is almost certainly an allegory and its message was meant to be understood symbolically, not literally. The very image of CRC is a symbolical one and should be understood within in esoteric, rather than exoteric terms.

The *Confessio* complements and completes the *Fama*. On the one hand emphasised the regeneration of Man



This drawing is believed to be of Johannes Kelpius (1667 - 1708) - done in 1705 - three years before his death at the age of 41. Kelpius was the founder of the first community of Rosicrucians to land in the New World. They settled at Germantown in Pennsylvania.



Title page from the 1616 German edition of the “Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz.”

and society, and on the other hand it highlighted one central point, that the Rosicrucian brethren possessed a philosophical science that enabled such regeneration to occur. It was aimed primarily at seekers who were keen to participate in the work of the Order and for the benefit of humanity.

The *Chymical Wedding* is an allegorical description of an initiatic process with many alchemical references on the transformation of Man. It is about a marriage between a prince and a princess, and as a guest, CRC narrates the events that take place in the castle during the seven days of celebration. There is no need to delve too deeply into the three manifestos here, as it is a topic well catered for by academic research, most of it freely and easily available.

Rather, we will look at the fact that these manifestos gave rise to more than four hundred publications, some of which were highly critical of the brotherhood, while others were commending and humbly requesting admission of their authors. Their impact on the world of culture and thought, was very significant. One has only to think of Isaac Newton, the father of modern physics. When he died, he left in his library 30 books on chemistry and physics, but





130 books on alchemy and hermetic philosophy, among them being were the *Fama* and the *Confessio*.

René Descartes may have travelled to Holland partly to escape persecution in France and to enjoy the greater personal freedoms available in Holland; but another reason was to try and find the Rosicrucians. Spinoza too was associated with the movement. With the Thirty Years' War everything was swept away, leaving behind death and destruction, from which Europe recovered slowly and with much suffering. The Rosicrucian movement was active in Holland and Britain, and in 1693, some Rosicrucians, lead by the Grand Master Johannes Kelpius, crossed the ocean heading for the New World with the intention of building a Utopia as suggested in Francis Bacon's 1627 book "*The New Atlantis*."

## Utopia

We are accustomed thinking of a Utopia as being synonymous with fantasy land or unrealistic ideas about some idyllic state. The word "*utopia*" derives from the Greek word "*outopos*", meaning *no place, nowhere* or a *place that does not exist*. In *The Republic*, Plato indicates in a subtle way that "... *Utopia is a form of Ideal Society. Perhaps it is impossible to achieve it on Earth, and yet a wise man must place all his hopes in it.*"

An eminent Sufi thinker once said that for as long as humans seek Jerusalem as a place on a map, there will never be peace in the Holy Land. These words highlight the inherent nature of a Utopia, 'a place that does not exist.' We have been taught that reality is made only of things that can be seen and touched. As the saying goes, we are modern people 'with feet on the ground.' However, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, science itself started dismantling this rigid and arid concept of reality and replaced it with a concept more elastic and pliable due to the presence of the human consciousness. And so it is that Rosicrucians have always maintained that 'thoughts are things.' Harmonious thoughts strengthen us and bring us wellbeing; discordant thoughts can lead to our death.

Thought and human consciousness are part of a dimension that is capable of acting upon what we interpret as "reality." And if we think about this honestly a while, how many things from our present experience of reality are none other than the 'pre-reality' thoughts that resided in the minds of enlightened individuals of the past? Utopia is for us therefore an *internal condition*. It is a dream, an aspiration written in the hearts of men, women and children, being the meeting point of the many different phases of reality that exist. Rosicrucians established themselves in the state of Pennsylvania in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century, forming a community called "Ephrata,"



Carlos Schwabe's poster from 1892 for the first of Joséphin Péladan's art and music "Salons de la Rose + Croix."

named after the biblical town of Ephrath in the pre-Roman province of Judea. In Ephrata the Rosicrucian community quickly developed printing facilities where important documents, some even about the European colonisation of the Americas, were being printed.

Many soldiers wounded during the American Civil War 170 years later, were cared for by members of this



community; and those who were dying were comforted by readings of inspiring words from books and pamphlets printed by the first Rosicrucians in North America. As already stated, in Europe at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War, the Rosicrucian movement gravitated to the relatively greater freedoms of Britain and Holland. Holland was renowned for its great spirit of religious and philosophical tolerance, while Britain was renowned as the country of Francis Bacon and Shakespeare. It is believed that Bacon had served as Emperor of the Order at some time during the reign of James I, and may have been its custodian during a quiet phase of its existence after the outbreak of hostilities in the Thirty Years' War.

The Shakespeare's plays were made up of a few actors who, if not Rosicrucians themselves, were sympathetic to their ideas, and it has even been suggested that some of the Shakespeare plays were either authored by or influenced by Francis Bacon. A few years after the end of the Thirty Years War the "Invisible College" was formed in England and subsequently became the Royal Society which was founded on principles well known to have originated in the *Fama Fraternitatis*, calling together all wise men for the expansion of knowledge. Isaac Newton was its president for several years, and the Rosicrucian Elias Ashmole was another. It is today one of the most reputable and authoritative scientific societies in the world.

But the Rosicrucians, where did they end up? For a few years they remained in a state of secrecy, or "sub-rosa" remaining "below the rose." Nevertheless, the Order continued its activities in Europe until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century when it resumed its activities together with the Martinist Order and various Masonic rituals disseminated mainly in France, Germany and Italy.

## The Salons Rose-Croix

In 1892 Parisians were invited to public events hosted by what was called the "Salon Rose-Croix." What did this and other 'salons' consist of and what relationship do they have with current Rosicrucians? At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the West was astonished in the face of new possibilities offered by industrial science. Science triumphed and people felt that with the advent of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, modernity would bring them happiness. Some enlightened minds however..., philosophers, mystics and artists..., were concerned with the prospects offered by this progress. This concern was particularly felt through the Symbolists, a movement that gathered together artists of all disciplines.

Joséphin Péladan, organiser of the *Salons* and allied to the Rosicrucian movement, sided with the Symbolists, he too querying the problem in the following terms: "The

*speed of the material world accelerates the interior life. 'But man, endowed with wings, does he not perhaps have the same heart and the same pain?'* Péladan placed himself at the meeting point between the symbolist and esoteric movements. As an Artist he positioned himself in the Symbolist movement, and as an Esotericist he presented himself as an initiate of the Rosy-Cross.

His aim was to restore reverence of the Absolute in all its splendour, with Tradition as its base and Beauty an instrument. He saw the Latin civilisation as being in a state of decadence. For him, only the enchantment of art could again save the West from an imminent disaster. He sees art as a tool capable of reversing the trend. The essential activity of the *Order of the Rosy+Cross of the Temple and of the Grail* that he founded, was therefore concerned with the organisation of exhibitions and evenings dedicated to the fine-arts.

The poster made up in shades of blue, evokes the dream. It proposes a hierarchical trinity of humanity, symbolised by three women. The first woman is chained in muddy waters, looking at a stairway that rises towards the light, decorated with white lilies and roses. She represents humanity longing for a better life, but is chained by the material world. The second woman has just liberated herself from her chains and mounts the first step of the

**The perfect work is that which brings together all that is perfect, though it is not enough to satisfy the intellect alone.**

stairway. This represents an initiate on her or his journey towards enlightenment. The third woman, translucent and radiant with light, receives in her hands a heart descending from the sky. This represents the mastery gained by anyone linked to the Divine. Péladan's theory about art is derived from the Rosicrucian formula: "There is no other Truth but God, there is no other Beauty but God."

Art is a search for God through beauty. In his work "How to Become an Artist", his theory on aesthetic was developed. For him, the mission of art represented the divine order. Art, together with religion, needs to magnify the divine element, enabling others to participate. Its beauty results from the balance between sight and vision. The perfect work is that which brings together all that is perfect, though it is not enough to satisfy the intellect alone.

Péladan assigns Man the status of "artistic animal", believing that there exists in humans an invisible attraction to beauty. This search for beauty is motivated by the nostalgic feelings of the lost harmony that he instinctively seeks in all things. In his book "Idealistic and Mystic Art", he invites the artist to make a reflection. For him,





the true artist is one who possesses the ability to listen through contemplation to the non-material qualities of objects that enable him to capture the celestial influx of “the Word” as the Divine Creator:

*Artist..., you know that art descends from heaven, just as life pours from the sun. That there is no masterpiece that is not the reflection of an eternal idea.*

*You know, painter or poet that which is defined as abstract. There is a little part of God even in a work of art.*

*Learn that if you create a perfect form a soul will come to inhabit it. And what a soul, a spark from the Central Fire.*

The *Salon* was inaugurated at a special ceremony with music specially composed by Erik Satie, a well-known Rosicrucian of his time. This was the environment in which Debussy lived and I am sure you will draw your own conclusions from the association.

Fortunately, we live today in a time of freedom, made possible by men and women of the past who nurtured a utopian dream. I point to the writings of one of these great people, Jan Amos Comenius, patron of UNESCO and a supporter of the Rosicrucian movement in Europe, whose work re-connects us with the opening words of this article. Modern education is still influenced by the Comenius’ original guiding principles, and these certainly help people to “*learn to do*” and “*learn to know*.” Sadly, few are today interested in “*learning to live together*” and “*learning to be*.” Cultural and human poverty often so widespread, clearly demonstrates this.

Furthermore, we live in an era of our human history where the transcendent has been almost entirely removed from our lives. Although this may reassure some scientists who base even their most private moments purely on things that can be seen and measured, it on the other hand distances them from their true nature, producing the sad results we are witnessing today: a totally unbalanced rapport with the environment; a relationship between individuals which, even when all goes well, is more of a truce than a state of peace..., an incapacity to conceive and dream of a better future.

We believe that “*learning to live together*” and “*learning to be*” are exactly the things that a traditional initiatic Order should be doing. To provide modern people with the appropriate environment and tools they need in order to develop this ability, people are empowered to become better, more mature human beings, capable of evolving and of grasping more profoundly the true meaning of life, namely to prepare oneself to become the architect of one’s own destiny.



*Eric Satie (1866 - 1925), well-known French composer and pianist of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is widely believed to have been a member of the Fraternity of the Rose-Croix of France.*

Rosicrucianism holds fast to the value of education, in an etymological sense of the word; and it supports the quest for Beauty as a privileged route for reintegration with the Divine. Rosicrucians maintain that this quest is essential, especially in an age such as the present, where the illusion of happiness obtained exclusively through scientific and technological progress without limits, is fast failing.

We, Rosicrucians of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, are more than ever convinced that education can truly save humanity from its own entrapments. In an etymological sense of the word, education, as mentioned earlier, ensures that people discover within themselves true knowledge, recognising in their fellow humans, as they recognise in themselves and the universe, Divine nature in action, expressing all the potentiality of the soul that manifests in all people.

We are children of the absolute and carry within us evidence of this inheritance. “*We have rejected that which the beast within us wanted, and we want to find the Man wherever he may have been lost.*” With these words, the French politician and writer André Malraux, was emphasising that the moment has arrived when new answers are needed, and these can only come from a renewed vision of Reality. Rosicrucians believe that an initiatic order in particular, as with art in general, has the purpose of helping people to reach this new vision. Perhaps this is Utopia...? Certainly it is in her that we place all our hopes. Can we do otherwise?



# Sacred Flowers of Antiquity

by Ralph M Lewis  
Imperator of AMORC (1939-1987)

*And this our life, exempt from public haunt,  
Finds tongues in trees,  
books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones,  
and good in every thing.*

from "As You Like It" by Shakespeare





## Colour and Sight

**W**E MAY sometimes hear trees that speak, we may read books in brooks, and we may hear sermons in stones. But what about flowers? Surely they have the deepest and most ancient of stories to tell? Indeed they do, and the tales associates with flowers are undoubtedly the earliest of all human stories, for they deal directly with the most refined forms of two of our most fundamental senses: smell and sight. The stories that have emerged in human minds about flowers carry forth to the modern world some of the most profound thoughts and transcendent ideals of humankind.

Botanically, a flower may be but a plant, a bloom of a plant or the means of its germination. Long before such physical characteristics were understood however, flowers were a source of gratification to the human senses of sight and smell. The exquisite perfume of flowers represents one of the two general qualities of the sense of smell. Flowers therefore became the physical ideal of the olfactory sense, symbols of its satisfaction. A harmonious or agreeable state to the sense of smell would be one that is free of offensive odours and, obviously, would include the aroma of flowers.

Other scents are agreeable to humans too, but not in the same manner as the fragrance of flowers. The aroma of fruits, vegetables and cooking foods may have a tantalising appeal, but they provide also a negative kind of pleasure; for while they stimulate the appetite before one has eaten, after the appetite has been gratified, these aromas lose their appeal. The scent of newly-sawn timber or even the pungent odours of a stable may provide pleasant olfactory sensations for some people. But such satisfactions are primarily the result of the arousing of agreeable memories or because the scent falls into a pattern of habitual experience.

The fragrance of a flower is abstract; it stands alone for what it is. Its enjoyment is not dependent upon reminding us of something else. The perfume of a spring flower is no less wonderful because we have no fond memories associated with it. A flower's perfume therefore symbolises not necessarily particular things or events, but a particular state of mind, of imperturbability, freedom from aggravation. The full gratification of each of our physical senses is not realised in the source of their stimuli, but in the sensations themselves. In the final analysis, it is not what produces pleasing sounds or exquisite fragrances, but the ecstatic experience itself which is sought. A fragrant flower can therefore depict an exalted mood or a moment of rapture, no matter what its particular kind.

Colour is one of the dominant qualities of our premier physical sense, namely sight. It is quite understandable therefore we should be attracted by the vivid hues of flowers. Physical beauty is a gratification of the sense of sight. It is what is perceived as an agreement of perspective and of colour. Since human vision is capable of discerning varied wave-lengths of the solar spectrum, a monochrome existence would produce for us a condition of monotony and ocular fatigue. Certain combinations and contrasts of colour consequently become physical ideals because of the satisfaction they provide. And habit of course also plays a part in our enjoyment of colour.

We become accustomed to combinations of colours in our environment and they become proffered arrangements. Unlike the olfactory sense, the visual sense has come to immediately identify flowers with other forms and associated experiences. The colours of some flowers remind us of the green of the sea, of the pallor of death, and of the fiery heat of the midday summer sun. The colouring and scent of flowers induced admiration in our early ancestors, and invited them to take a closer look. The symmetry of their form and the geometrical structure suggested order.

For humans, things that have an easily comprehensible arrangement, uniformity and order, is an indication of an underlying intelligence of sorts. The varied structure of flowers, their colouring, fragrance and the circumstances of their growth, has served to objectify and portray in



*It is quite understandable therefore we should be attracted by the vivid hues of flowers. A monochrome existence would produce for us a condition of monotony and ocular fatigue.*



form our abstract spiritual and mystical ideas. Flowers therefore have become living symbols of the moral truths of an ever-evolving human consciousness. As English poet Wordsworth said: “*To me the meanest flower that blooms can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.*” Indeed a profound statement.

Any attempt to review, even partially, all the symbolism which has become an accretion of our common flowers would be an arduous undertaking. I have therefore selected but three which are particularly rich in meaning, and in particular they today influence our concepts of religious belief, mysticism, philosophy and art.

## The Rose

Tradition relates that the ancient Egyptians used the rose as a symbol in their mystery rites and attributed to it a sacred function. Traditionally, the rose was consecrated to Isis or the mother-nature goddess and was a symbol of regeneration. Nothing however, has come down to us in actual inscriptions from antiquity to confirm this tradition. But as we will soon see, Egypt has strongly influenced the symbolism of flowers generally, and we will consider much now related to the rose as having originated there.



*Globular shape of the rose of Jericho during dormancy. It is part of the Cruciferae family and is also known as the Resurrection Plant.*

The rose of Jericho is indigenous to Arabia, Persia and Egypt. It is actually a small herb of the family *Cruciferae*. Upon the ripening of the seeds during the dry season, the leaves fall off and the branches curve inward. This causes it to assume a globular shape. When the herb becomes wet, the branches then unfold, and it assumes temporarily the appearance of a living plant. This characteristic caused it to depict resurrection.

There is a text from the Aggadah (Hebrew rabbinical texts) stating that the rose had no thorns before the fall of man. Youth was described as a garland of roses, but age, a crown of thorns. The rose is said to have formed part of



*The rose of Jericho in its juvenile form.*

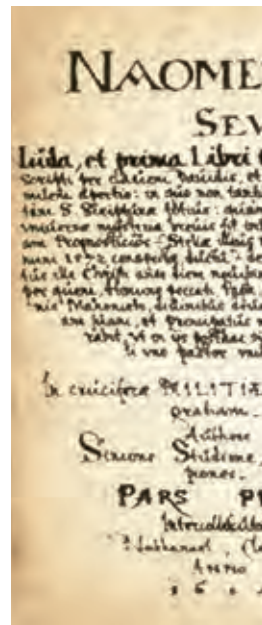
the bridegroom’s garland in ancient Jerusalem. According to the *Halakha* (Jewish religious laws from the Torah), the rose oil was extracted and used by the wealthier classes instead of common oil derived from olives, grains and grape seed. Rosewater has long been the favourite perfume of the East.

## The Zohar

In the Sepher Har Sohar (the “Book of the Splendour” dealing with the Kabala) the rose signifies the community of Israel. Its colour, red or white, refers to the periods of severity and mercy which have alternated in the life of Israel. Its five petals allude to the five ways of salvation and the five gates of grace. It is also related that Maimonides (Mūsā ibn Maymūn), the famed mediaeval Jewish scholar from Cordobá in Moorish Spain, used a rose preparation in his diet and prescribed it for others. Finally, the Hebrews ascribed to the rose the symbolism of Paradise. Dawn is the reflection of the rose of heaven, just as the glow of sunset reflects the flames of hell. Ancient Hebraic tradition relates that eight hundred of these flowers adorned the tent of each pious man in heaven.

Greek mythology recounts that the rose was sacred to the goddess Aphrodite (Venus to the Romans). It was also a palmary symbol of the Thracian mystery school. The mythological account states that the white rose was made red by Eros (Cupid for the Romans) maladroitly upsetting a cup of nectar while dancing before the gods. The Romans honoured the rose by naming a state festival after it: *Rosalia* or the Festival of the Rose was in memory of the dead.

The catacombs in Rome became symbols of the hopes of future blessedness because those buried there held such ideas.





Subsequently, rose inscriptions on tombs came to represent Paradise or the future life.



### Militia Crucifera Evangelica

Among the many titles given to the Virgin Mary in mediaeval times, we find Santa Maria della Rosa. The rose being consecrated to her, it became, in the Middle Ages a symbol of *virginity*. Dante wrote, “Here is the rose, wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate.”

The *Naometria*, published in 1614 by the Rosicrucian Simon Studion, was a chronicle of the first conclave of the Militia Crucifera Evangelica, held on 27 July 1586. This conclave was principally formed by Rosicrucians to protect the cross and to prevent it from becoming an instrument for the persecution of the nonconformists to Roman Catholicism. The *Naometria* has reference to the mystical significance of the rose. In fact, on page 271 of the book, there is

an illustration of the “*Joining of the Rose and the Cross.*” Accompanying it is the Latin phrase, “*Hierichuntis Rosa ex quatuor ins Partes.*”

The term “*sub rosa*” (beneath the rose) came from the fact that the rose had long been a symbol of silence among the mystical sects in the Middle Ages. In the early centuries CE, after the advent of Christianity in the Germanic regions, a garland of roses was suspended from the ceilings of banquet halls and at private gatherings as a reminder not to divulge the conversation elsewhere. Perhaps the rose became the symbol of silence because it locks within its petals the source of its fragrance and some of its most beautiful hues, thus showing that virtue and noble intentions should be carefully guarded.

Michael Maier, a Grand Master of the Rosicrucian Order in Germany in the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, made much of the mystical significance of the rose. He spoke of it as the most beautiful and perfect flower, guarded, like a virgin, by its thorns. He also said that it abounded in the *Garden of Philosophy*, the latter being a poetic name for the Order of the Rosy Cross. He contended that, just as the natural rose is sweet and fragrant, so the philosophical rose exhilarates the heart and gives strength to the brain. As the actual rose turns toward the sun and freshens with the rain, so the metaphysical rose is nourished in the light until it reaches perfection.

Rosicrucian alchemists often associated the rose with dew, since the Latin word “*rosa*” is related to another Latin word indicating the presence of dew. The rose placed in the centre of a cross, depicted to alchemists the four principle manifestations of nature - air, earth, fire and water – and became the alchemical symbol for regeneration.

### The Lotus

Among the flora of Egypt, so we are told by one Egyptologist, “...the only kind which may be said to be sacred is the lotus.” Some of his contemporaries, such as Wilkins, do not agree with him. However, the weight of evidence supports the conclusion that the lotus was a sacred symbol in ancient Egypt, and it is prominently displayed in the ancient Egyptian symbolism.

From the cup of the lotus blossom we see issuing forth the boy-god Horus in his aspect as the rising sun, symbol of resurrection. On sculptures and paintings of altars of offerings we see a profusion of lotus flowers. In the replica of an Egyptian tomb in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, we have a statue of the Nile Goddess holding forth a tray of her offerings to humankind. The tray is richly inscribed with fowl and fruits, and a bas-relief of numerous lotus flowers. In an early Memphite ritual there is the salutation, “*Hail, thou lotus, thou type of the god Nefertum*” The lotus, we do



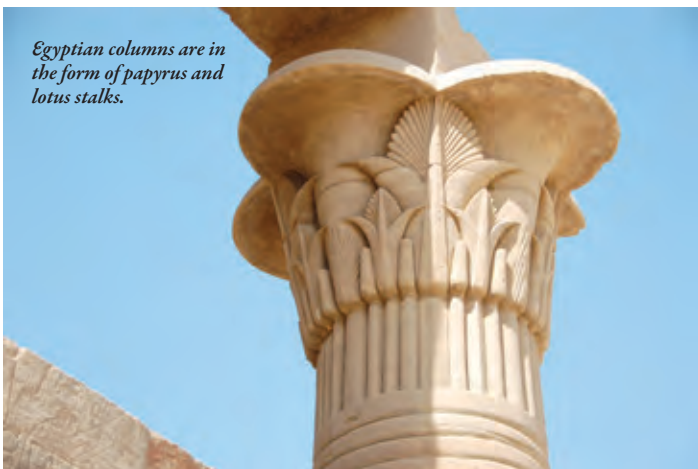


know, was symbolic of this god.

Plutarch tells us that the Egyptians thought that the sun sprang from the lotus plant. They undoubtedly did not believe that the sun came from the lotus flowers however, but invented this symbolism because of the phenomenon of the lotus opening with the rising sun and closing at sunset. However, many are the inscriptions showing Ra, the symbol of the sun and the eternal creative power of the universe, ascending from the lotus flower in the marshes. Also a hieroglyphic inscription reads in part, “...the lotus at the nostrils of Ra”, revealing the association of the two.

The lotus came to represent the Upper Nile; and the papyrus plant, the Lower Nile. The two, the lotus and the papyrus, were joined together in a symbolic device typifying the king’s rule over both regions, in the same manner as we would join two flags to indicate political unity of a region. Just why the lotus represented the Upper Nile has not yet been disclosed. The lotus, with the papyrus, also played a tremendous part in architectural ornamentation and design. Almost all primitive art begins with a copy of the indigenous manifestations of nature: flowers, fish, astronomical phenomena and animals.

The Incas, who lived along the coasts of Peru and



*Egyptian columns are in the form of papyrus and lotus stalks.*

Ecuador, used the marine motif in their decorations on pottery, and in their weaving. Those who lived inland used the animals’ peculiar to those regions. The lotus and papyrus, being common to the Nile, influenced early Egyptian design in a similar manner. Egyptian columns are in the form of papyrus or lotus stalks, tied at intervals by bands, giving them a fluted appearance. The capitals of the columns mostly follow the form of the lotus, either open or closed. When open, the capital has an inverted bell-like shape. The lotus bud became conventionalised, that is, a balanced geometric design, and was used as a frieze or dado along temple walls or in tomb decorations.

It must be realised of course that the lotus has more than one colour. The white lotus was placed upon mummies. The lotus flower, upon which the god Horus is always shown seated, is the *sesbni*, meaning “white lotus.” The lotus is mentioned in the oldest of the Vedas. It is there held to be an emblem of beauty to which the faces of the heroines are compared. In India, it appears on the oldest architectural monuments and as a design in sculpture. In the Atharvaveda, the human heart is compared to the lotus. It is referred to elsewhere as “*the flower born of the light of constellations.*”

### The Lotus in Creation Myths

In the *Brahmanas* (prose commentaries on the Vedas), the lotus first appeared associated with the creator in cosmogonic myths. In fact, its relation to the divine birth and creation is very significant. The lotus is further conventionalised as a seat or pedestal upon which divinities may be found seated or standing. The most striking example is that of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, always shown either seated or standing on a lotus, holding a lotus flower in each hand.

After Buddha became represented in sculpture, his image was continually given as seated cross-legged on a lotus seat, or standing on a lotus pedestal. The number of the petals varies from four to six. In this connection we must not omit mention of the well-known sacred prayer of the Buddhists of Tibet, “*Om Mani Padme Hum*” which has as one (of several) translations as “*Yea [oh Lord], Jewel in the Lotus - Amen.*”

To the ancient Aryans of India, the lotus symbolised superhuman or divine birth. We cannot help but see the similarity of the symbolism of the lotus flower in India to that in Egypt. Although the Aryans on their migration southward from Central Asia into India undoubtedly introduced the symbolism







*Hindu goddess Lakshmi, seated on a lotus flower.*

of the lotus wherever they settled, the concept was not unique to them alone. The Aryans were of Indo-European origin, some settling in what is now Iran, and almost certainly having contact with the great civilisation of Egypt.

Just as the script that evolved into Sanskrit may have originally come from a Proto-Indo-European dialect of Aramaic from northwest Syria, the symbolism of the lotus may have entered India from Egypt via early agriculturalist migrations. We have noted how in Egypt the lotus was shown as a seat for the god Horus. Is it just a coincidence that it was similarly shown as a seat for the Indian and Hindu deities?

**We have noted how in Egypt the lotus was shown as a seat for the god Horus.**

The traditional Indian and Buddhist explanation of the glorious lotus flower is that it appears not to spring from the sordid earth but from the surface of the water and is therefore perpetually unsullied and pure, no matter how impure the water. This symbolises all first created objects arising from a primordial chaos, confusion and darkness. In other words, from the dark, watery depths of the Lotus plant's roots came light, beauty and form. In modern terms, no matter what one's environment, the spiritual truth latent in one's nature may blossom forth



*The Buddha, seated on a lotus flower.*

and remain uncontaminated if one turns toward the light.

As a symbol of divine birth, the lotus is the most common symbol in Buddhism, always identified with the sun. It was perhaps the same natural reason that caused Egyptians, Hindus and Buddhists to identify the lotus with the sun (the solar deity). The phenomenon of the sun suggested that, symbolically at least, it reseeded in the closed lotus flower in the underworld at night and was resurrected the next day. In Mahayana Buddhism (the Buddhist interpretation of theism or a supreme god), there is an important sacred scripture known as "*Lotus of the True Law*." It is a dramatic play concerning creation, much as in the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament.

As in Egypt, the influence of the lotus on the art of India has been considerable. In Tibetan literature there are references to the three lotus deities. The lotus order of deities represents the deified principles of certain functions within us. In other words, the lotus deities are but esoteric symbols of certain human capabilities. In the *Dhammapada* (the "*Path of Law*") there is a chapter on the symbolism of flowers and their relation to human virtues and frailties. There are however, no particular references to the lotus.

## The Lily

Much reference is made to the lily in ancient Egyptian literature. However, it would appear that the lily and lotus are synonymous, for the same symbolism is often attributed to both. We have seen that the lotus is the symbol of the god Nefertum ("beautiful one who closes"). But we also find the following: "...the blessed one rises like Nefertum, like a lily, at the nostrils of Ra. He appears on the horizon every day and the gods are purified by the sight of him." Elsewhere we noted that the lotus also





was "...at the nostrils of Ra." Wallis Budge (an eminent Egyptologist of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century) when referring to the symbolism of the lily, equates the lily with the lotus, thereby suggesting that they were used synonymously by the ancient Egyptians. The lily is also seen as growing out of streams and lakes with the figures or the four sons of Horus standing on the flower.

In a fragment of a lost treatise attributed to Hermes Trismegistus entitled "*The Sacred Book*", a section entitled "*The Virgin of the World*" is believed to have originated in ancient Egypt: "*I am the pure lily, carrying forth from the Lily of Light. I am the source of illumination and channel breath of immortal beauty.*" This movingly symbolises the spiritual life, beauty and illumination. According to mythology, the white lily is fabled to have sprung from the milk of Hera who was the wife of Zeus. Here too it was a symbol of purity.

The Zohar of the Hebrew Kabala speaks of the 13 leaves surrounding the lily as the 13 attributes of God which encompass Israel. It similarly mentions that the five leaves of the rose are the first five words of the *shema* (short passages from the Pentateuch). The faces of the righteous are as a lily, we are told. Later Kabalists use the lily as a symbol of resurrection. In Hebrew scripture we find the words "...as a lily withers in sunlight but blooms beneath the dew, so Israel withers away, except as God becomes dew for her." A lily among the Hebrews was likened to "... Rebecca who remained pure amid evil surroundings." The opening passage in Psalms 130:1, "*Out of the depths I cry to you Lord...*" is a reference to the lily-of-the-valley.

The symbolism of the lily as passed from Judaism to Christianity, almost certainly originated with the

Egyptians, if the lotus and lily were held to be synonymous by the Egyptians. The Angel of the Annunciation is conventionally represented as bearing lilies. Then, again, in Matthew 6:28, we have the words "*Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow....*" This is interpreted as meaning that Jesus was alluding to the fact that no wealth or raiment can make any person as beautiful as the real nature of the flowers of the field, in this instances lillies. The *fleur-de-lis* or the emblem of the lily of France, had its origin in the ancient *crux ansata* (Egyptian looped cross or *ankh*), the symbol of the duality of the forces of nature. And the lily has also been used for centuries in the coats of arms of Florence and ancient Syria.

At least we must concur with Francis Bacon who said: "*God Almighty first planted a garden. Indeed it is the purest of human pleasures, the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiwork.*"


*The fleur-de-lis or the emblem of the lily of France.*





# RAINBOW MOMENTS

by Shirley Elsbey



**R**AINBOWS charm the eye and please the spirit. They are so beautiful and yet fleeting. It always seems a precious moment of grace when we catch sight of one, especially when it appears complete and perhaps even double. Sometimes they are even set against a deep purple or indigo background, making those prismatic colours stand out vividly.

Scientifically speaking, rainbows are formed when there are water droplets in the air and the sun shines through them at certain fixed angles. The sunlight is both reflected and refracted as it passes through each droplet, causing the white





*Victoria Falls, between Zambia and Zimbabwe.*

light of the sun to break apart into its primary colours. When replicated through millions of droplets, the effect is the rainbow we see. In a double rainbow the colours are reversed in the second rainbow as the light passing through the water droplets are refracted twice.

There are places on earth where they may seem commonplace if people go there often enough. They are places with a lot of spray! The three waterfalls which form Niagara Falls, between New York State and Ontario, produce spectacular rainbows, often in multiples; hence one reason for the name of the arched Rainbow Bridge spanning the Niagara Gorge.

Victoria Falls, one of the highest waterfalls in the world, frequently produces wonderful rainbows and that spot, sited between Zimbabwe and Zambia, is also famed for its much rarer lunar rainbows, called 'moonbows.'<sup>1</sup> These show up when the moon rises behind the observer and can be seen most easily when the moon is full, the sky cloudless and the water high to maximise spray. The moonbow may appear as a white haze but the colours come through in long exposure photographs.

In myth, rainbows are sometimes seen as an ancient mystical symbol bridging heaven and earth and also our higher and lower natures. Symbolically, they can perhaps be seen as bringing information from the higher to the lower regions of our consciousness. In Tahiti, legend has it that the god Oro descended to earth via a rainbow bridge every night, but that one night a little of the colour washed into the ocean and in the sunlight and warm waters, changed the pearls to a lustrous black, making them the rare and sought after ultimate romantic gift for princesses and the like.<sup>2</sup>

Greek mythology has the kindly Iris as goddess of the rainbow, using them to gracefully glide between the upper and lower worlds, often delivering messages for the queen of the gods, Hera. Hindus call the rainbow the *bow of Indra*, god of thunder, lightning and rain. In Armenia, the rainbow is a belt belonging to the solar deity Tir. In Irish folklore, leprechauns generally hide their pots of gold at the end of a rainbow, which, for us mere humans, is of course impossible to reach because the rainbow is an optical effect which changes depending on where we are standing relative to the mist or fine rain through which the sun is being refracted.

If you take up your shovel and try to walk toward the leg of the rainbow to dig up the treasure you will be sorely disappointed, for that leg will doggedly be just beyond your reach, and will in the end fade away. You will also be thwarted by the fact that despite appearances, the rainbow is not an arc but a circle, as can be verified if you see one from the air. The leprechaun's secret stash is therefore completely safe, for there's no end to a circle and the gold can therefore never be found. What an ingenious hiding place!

Having been so forced to conclude that locating the leg of a rainbow will lead to untold riches and an answer to all material problems, I still rate a rainbow as one of the most cheery things we can witness, especially as they don't appear that frequently over anywhere in my locality, a long, long way from Niagara Falls, the nearest waterway being the Ashby Canal, which frankly doesn't often create beautiful arcs of colour. Where I live, you have to take your rainbows where you can get them. But as it is, I have been given sight of what I consider to be the most amazing







*Double rainbows in the Brecon Beacons, Wales.*

rainbows, stupendous rainbows which feel as if they have been sent especially for me as a great and wonderful grace.

One was on the road to the Welsh village of Bethlehem. Travelling home from the Welsh coast through the Brecon Beacons, I saw the road sign to Bethlehem and was intrigued to see what a place with such a famous name looked like. Turning off the A4069 there was another sign, to a monument, which turned out to be not a stable or an inn but a large mound which I now discover to have been Garn Goch, a stand-out hill which was the site of a sizable Iron Age settlement from 1000 BCE to the Roman invasion of those parts around 70 CE.<sup>5</sup>

As I followed the directions and turned into a farm track I was stunned to a standstill by the florid rainbow which straddled both the path and the monument. It looked close enough to reach out and touch and I hit the brakes and reached for the camera. It seemed like such a privilege to see it so perfect and in such a memorable place. Naturally, then, the hill had to be climbed, examined and marvelled at for its panoramic views.

Coming back down to earth I started the car and found it stuck axle-deep in mud. No amount of careful clutch work or persuasive invective would shift it ... but then an angel appeared. On this isolated spot in the middle of more or less nowhere in fading light, he was driving a pick-up truck. He stopped and uttered the magical words: "Would you like a tow?" after which he conjured up a rope and hauled the motor clear of the mire before disappearing into the dusk with a friendly wave. It could have ended so badly but ended up being one of my very favourite rainbow moments.

The other was on the way into the Cotswold town

of Stroud. There was a traffic jam. I sat in it for some time, amusing myself with mystical thoughts as you do, when I noticed there were colours dancing all over the car, inside and out, and over me. With a thrill I realised there was a rainbow which appeared to have its right leg just over to the right of the bonnet, and I was being bathed in all its colours. I had no idea that was even possible and couldn't begin to come up with a how and why, but for a breathtaking few minutes before the traffic moved on I savoured the sense of having been truly blessed and given a great gift of reassurance, love and grace.

I have seen many other beautiful rainbows and always feel the lift of connection with the Divine when it happens. There have been rainbows so strong-looking in colour it seemed genuinely possible you could walk right over to the leg and mark the spot where it entered the ground. There have been others that appeared like a comfort offered on high when my spirits were down and nothing seemed very promising. And, there have been rainbows that simply added beauty to the sky after a downpour, always a pleasure to spot and always a reminder that this is a world of wonders.

I wish you all your own special rainbow moments and hope they give you as much pleasure as mine.

## Footnotes

1. <http://www.victoriafalls-guide.net/lunar-rainbow.html>
2. [http://www.gomansanillo.com/maria\\_cumbe/pearls/index.htm](http://www.gomansanillo.com/maria_cumbe/pearls/index.htm)
3. The Mythic Tarot, Juliet Sharman-Burke and Lis Green.
4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainbows\\_in\\_culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainbows_in_culture)
5. [http://www.breconbeacons.org/all\\_downloads/garngochleaflet\\_english.pdf](http://www.breconbeacons.org/all_downloads/garngochleaflet_english.pdf)



# The Rosicrucian Centennial

29 July to 2 August

100 Years of  
AMORC

**A** HUNDRED years of devotion to spiritual, moral and ethical goals of a transcendent nature is bound to leave something good for the world to enjoy. The service that AMORC has rendered to several million people who joyously found and subsequently became part of this august body of seekers of Light, is something to both celebrate and confidently commit to future generations of seekers of spiritual illumination.





The celebrations to mark the centenary of the founding of AMORC were held at Rosicrucian Park in San Jose, California, and at the nearby downtown Fairmont Hotel. Wherever Rosicrucians gathered during those sunny days between 29<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> August, there were smiles, laughter and good will in abundance.

Over 2,200 members from over 70 countries attended this Rosicrucian Centennial, and the talks, presentations, discourses and group attunements were intellectually stimulating but also, and especially, deeply inspiring.

It would be wonderful to share in the pages of this magazine all of the talks, discourses and presentations that were given, for they were all excellent and brought out the very best of Rosicrucian ideals. But as they are being published in the Rosicrucian Digest later this year, it may be easiest to download a copy from their website [www.rosicrucian.org](http://www.rosicrucian.org), and get the material there.

For the present issue of the Rosicrucian Beacon therefore, rather than give a detailed diary of the events, a brief pictorial outline of those happy days will follow over the next few pages.

Late on Wednesday afternoon before the fountain at Rosicrucian Park, Emperor Christian Bernard gave a moving address to members assembled in the Peace Garden and around the fountain, after which he removed from one of the sphinxes looking out upon Rosicrucian Park, a metal time capsule which former Emperor and founder of AMORC, Harvey Spencer Lewis, had placed there in 1934. This capsule contained documents that were relevant to the Order in 1934, and assisted by Grand Master Julie Scott, he then placed in the sphinx a new time capsule containing documents relevant to the Order today. This capsule is guaranteed to last at least 100 years without degradation, and we hope that some of our great grand children will one day witness the re-opening of this sphinx again.

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## *Address by the Emperor before the opening of the sphinx.*



**W**E HAVE now, at long last, arrived at the solemn moment that all of us have been waiting for. Welcome to you, and may I express appreciation for your energy in giving your all on the mystical, human, and material planes in order to be here at this World Convention, which I declare officially open.

I am very moved by being here, in Rosicrucian Park. I was fourteen years old when I visited this remarkable place for the first time. Since then, I have come back for different events on many occasions. What moves me all the more is that I know this is the last time I shall preside over a World Convention in San Jose as Emperor. If, in years to come, an international Convention comes to be organised here again, and if my age and my health permit it, I shall be taking part as just a member of AMORC. But in the meanwhile, other Grand Lodges will be having the honour of organising this wonderful fraternal gathering.

Members of AMORC, friends and guests, I now

invite you all to be witness to the solemn act that I am going to carry out, just as did Harvey Spencer Lewis in his time. On 11<sup>th</sup> July 1934, our Emperor placed in this Sphinx some documents - not secret or mysterious ones - but ones bearing witness to the Rosicrucian principles. Frequently in recent years, I have thought about these records and wondered what they contained, and also whether they had come down through the years in good condition. I had no idea what these documents were, as we have found no trace of a list in the archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge. Such questions resulted in my supporting the proposal made by Grand Master soror Julie Scott, to open up the Sphinx at our World Convention.

I had concerns, however, about what we were going to find, and for this reason I asked our soror to carry out a check on the contents in advance. In accordance with my instructions, and with great care and discretion, this was done. My intuition had been right, because unfortunately it was very difficult to draw up an inventory. The writings had not withstood





the passage of time and the climate. Having been examined, they have been put back in their original place, and are awaiting my symbolic opening of the Sphinx's repository. From what we have found and been able to work out, there were some monographs on the basic Rosicrucian principles, and a Rosicrucian Digest from 1934.

In a few moments, I am going to remove the capsule and give it to the Colombe standing by me. Then at the end of our Ceremony it will be passed on to the Grand Master, whose task it will be to officially place the capsule containing the documents on display in the Rosicrucian Museum, so that you can view it over the next few days. I shall then be putting in new documents, contained in a special capsule designed to last at least 100 years, as follows:

**A copy of the Mastery of Life.**

**The Rosicrucian Code of Life**

**The two Rosicrucian Manifestos, the *Positio* and the *Appellatio*, and the sealed monograph of the first mailing.**

**In addition, there will be a certificate signed by all the Grand Masters and Administrators at the most recent meeting of the Supreme Grand Lodge in October 2014.**



I shall then be calling forward each Grand Master and Administrator, and giving them a capsule already containing some documents, but with the task of adding texts in their own respective languages to these; they are then to place these documents somewhere within their Grand Lodge or Administration, just as I am now going to do here; I am entrusting them with choosing the most suitable place for Rosicrucians of the future to be able to find them.



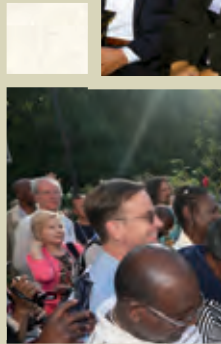






# Pictures Without Words

The AMORC Centennial Convention  
San Jose, California - 26 July to 2 August





The AMORC Centennial Convention | Pictures Without Words  
San Jose, California - 26 July to 2 August



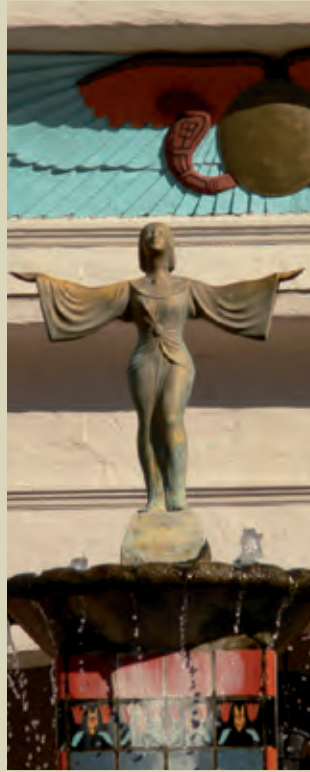




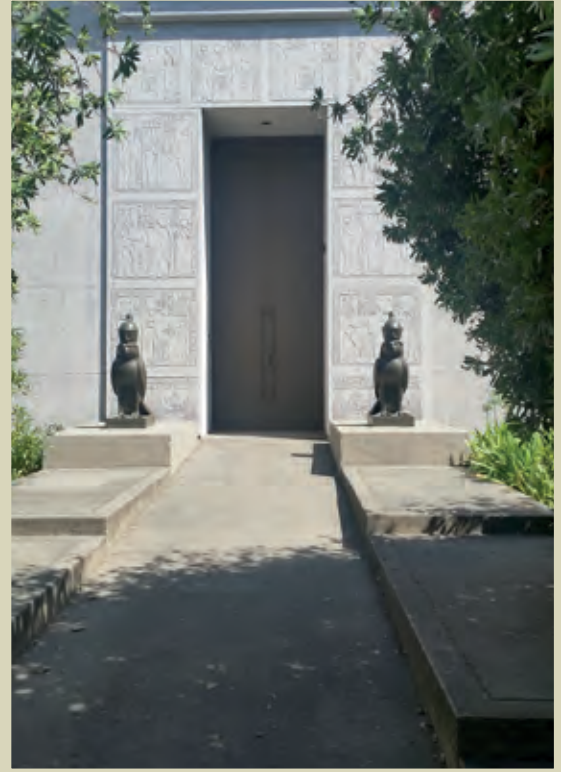






























# In the Green Silence: The United States Coast Redwoods

by *Bill Anderson*

*“Every spiritual journey is, at its heart, a quest for wholeness. We long to feel a part of the vast and unfolding mystery of life. We are seeking our place and purpose.”* This quote from the book *“Reclaiming the Wild Soul”* by Mary Reynolds Thompson, describes how I feel about forests: *“The Green Silence.”*





**I**N THE silence of the woods, you will not be alone” said Chief Seattle (1786-1866) of the Duwamish tribe. The redwood trees have always drawn and fascinated me, so on a recent visit to Northern California I decided I really had to see them up close and personal. The earliest progenitors of coast redwoods date back to the Jurassic Period some 201-145 million years ago. At their peak they may have covered as much as 2.1 million acres, but in our days that has reduced by 95%, most of the remaining protected in National Parks or Forests. The words



*Sunlight shining through redwoods in Muir Woods National Monument*

of John Muir, the Scottish-American naturalist and preservationist seem so appropriate here, and I have therefore included several quotes.

For those men who cut down the great trees, life was hard, and a job like that could mean the difference between their families eating or starving. I could not blame them, but I had no such feelings about the get-rich-quick attitude of the men who ran the lumber companies. With them lies the blame and it is a miracle that so many redwood stands have survived despite the predation. It was in spite of these entrepreneurs and not because of them that we still have some redwoods left to marvel at.

It was in forests that human evolution began in earnest. They are deeply rooted in our imagination. It was sacred groves of trees that formed the first ancient ritual sites. There is no doubt that there is something deeply mystical about the groves of soaring redwood trees. The mist rolls in from the coast. The canopies of the giant trees catch the water in the mist and it trickles down the leaves and mighty trunks to the forest floor below. Gradually the mist dissipates and the sun comes out. Most of the sunlight hits the canopy far above me but sometimes shafts pierce the twilight and hit the

forest floor, like the rays of the ancient Egyptian solar deity the Aten.

The pharaoh Akhnaton, some believe, was a deeply spiritual person, introducing for the first time a purely monotheistic religion to the world. There is a variant of his “Great Hymn to the Aten” that seems so appropriate here:

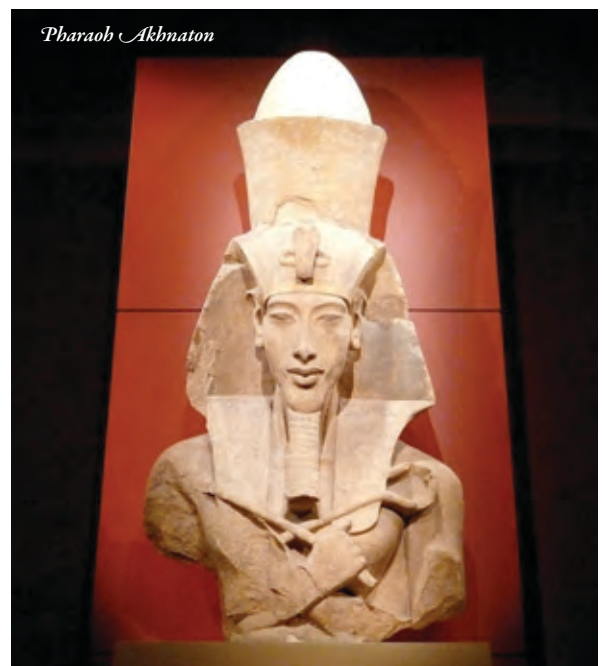
*Splendid you rise in the light-land of the sky, O living Aten, creator of life! You have dawned in the eastern light-land. You fill every land with your beauty.*

*You are beautiful, mighty and radiant. Risen high over every land, your rays embrace the lands to the limit of all that You made.*

*As Ra, You reach their end. You bend them for your beloved son. Though you are far, your rays are on Earth. Though seen by them, your course is unknown.*

*Your rays nurse all fields. When you shine they live, they grow for you. You made the seasons, so that all that you made may come to life.*

*You created the sky far away in order to ascend to it, to witness everything you created. You are alone, shining in your form of the living Aten. Risen, radiant, distant and near.*



*Pharaoh Akhnaton*



*You made millions of forms from yourself alone: cities, towns, fields, the river's course. All eyes see you above them as the Aten of the daytime on high.*

### Seeking Wisdom

*"A few minutes ago, every tree was excited, bowing to the roaring storm, waving, swirling, tossing their branches in glorious enthusiasm like worship. But though to the outer ear these trees are now silent, their songs never cease. Every hidden cell is throbbing with music and life, every fibre thrilling like harp strings, while incense is ever flowing from the balsam bells and leaves. No wonder the hills and groves were god's first temples."*

*"My First Summer in the Sierra"*  
by John Muir.

I remember fondly a Rosicrucian leaflet which showed a group of people standing in a circle in a clearing in a forest. The simplicity of the scene made a powerful impression on me and it has stayed in my mind to this day. Walking through the majestic groves of redwoods was one of the greatest experiences of my life.

I entered a quiet world of winding paths, shady corridors and glistening pools. I sat down to experience the ambience of the place, to experience the silence. No sounds disturbed me, no distant sound of animals, no birdsong, just an overpowering sense of peace. This is one of the great natural temples of the planet and I felt privileged to be able to be there.

Once I put my arms 'around' one of the redwoods. It is difficult to explain what I felt in words, they seem so inadequate. I felt a life-force; ancient and serene. The twilight beneath the canopy simply added to the experience. I could see the sunlight above, but little penetrated the thick canopy of leaves above me. Closing my eyes, my other senses started to take over.

*"Presently you lose consciousness of your own separate existence; you blend with the landscape, and become part and parcel of nature."*

*"A Thousand-mile Walk to the Gulf."* by John Muir.

### A Rosicrucian Plea for a Spiritual Ecology

*"Nowhere will you see the majestic operations of Nature more clearly revealed beside the frailest, most gentle and peaceful things. Nearly all the park is a profound solitude. Yet it is full of charming company, full of god's thoughts, a place of peace and safety amid the most exalted grandeur and eager enthusiastic action, a new song, a place of beginnings abounding in the first lessons of life, mountain building, eternal, invincible, unbreakable order."*

*"Our National Parks"*  
by John Muir.

At this the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium, at a time when our planet, and consequently the survival of humanity, is seriously threatened. I am reminded by the penetrating plea made by Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, Christian Bernard, to the Brazilian Senate in 2012 in which a truly humanitarian and Rosicrucian approach to the ecology of our planet was outlined in the following 11 points:-

*Let us remember that this Earth on which we live has existed for more than four billion years, and that humanity as we know it appeared here about three million years ago, and has put it in danger within less than a century.*

*Let us remember that two-thirds of our planet is covered by seas and oceans, that our own bodies are made up of 75% water, and that we could not survive without it.*

*Let us remember that forests are Earth's lungs, that they produce the oxygen we breathe, and that without them there would be no atmosphere, and therefore no life.*

*Let us remember that animals lived on our planet millions of years before humankind appeared, that the survival of humanity depends on them, and that they are intelligent and sensitive beings.*





*Let us remember that all of nature's kingdoms are mutually dependent and that there is neither space nor frontier between them, and that each of them, on different levels and in different forms, is endowed with consciousness.*

*Let us remember that Earth is surrounded by an electromagnetic aura resulting from its own natural energies, and that this aura, combined with the atmosphere, contributes to life.*

*Let us remember that the existence of our planet is not a matter of chance or a mere accident of time and place, but that it forms part of a Plan devised and put in place by that Universal Intelligence we call "God."*

*Let us remember that Earth is not simply a planet that allows humans to exist, but that it is also the environment in which our souls may incarnate in order to carry our spiritual evolution through to its successful conclusion.*

*Let us remember that our planet is a masterpiece of Creation. Although it is not unique in the universe, it is nevertheless a rare thing, and it is a great privilege for humanity to be able to live here.*

*Let us remember that Earth does not belong to us, that it is here for us to live on during our lifetime, and that it represents the most precious of heritages for us to pass on to future generations.*

*Let us remember that we do not have any rights over our planet, simply the obligation to respect, preserve, and protect it. In a word, to love it.*

Remember this, remind our children of it, and let the following be our formula...

*Terra humanitasque una sunt*  
Earth and humanity are as one.

*"The radiance in some places is so great as to be fairly dazzling, keen lance rays of every colour flashing, sparkling in glorious abundance, joining the plants in their fine, brave beauty-work – every crystal, every flower a window opening into heaven, a mirror reflecting the creator."*

*"My First Summer in the Sierra"*  
by John Muir.



**W**E ARE living in one of the great crisis eras of human history. Issues of peace and war, poverty and abundance, of racial, political and religious conflict face us on every side. Underlying all is the basic conflict between material and spiritual values, between self-interest and world service.

Yet there is a universal recognition that on entering the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, humankind has entered a new age. Science unites the world across all cultures, religions and political views, and the storehouse of human knowledge and intelligence storehouse of human knowledge and intelligence are greater than before. Countless movements based on goodwill are attempting to create a better world, and despite the prominence given to terrorist movements at the present time, there is a growing recognition of humanity's essential unity.



The decisive question today is whether humanity can solve its problems before they get out of control. The race is on for the future of humanity, and only men and women of goodwill in the world can guarantee a successful outcome. How therefore, can men and women of goodwill combine their strength in a united world service, in these critical times?

We have the power to affect world events. The combined massed thought power of people of good intent can create a channel of communication between the Cosmic and humanity through which spiritual energies can flow to heal and rebuild a troubled world. It is this power, properly used and directed, that can be

humanity's saving force. It is through their Celestial Sanctum contact periods that Rosicrucians mobilise energies to heal the present world situation. And as a Rosicrucian, I am ever aware of this sacred duty.



# KNOWING GOD

*by H Spencer Lewis  
Imperator of AMORC (1915 - 1939)*





**I**F I WERE questioned as to what is the most important or outstanding benefit, in a general sense, resulting from the studies and practices of the Rosicrucian principles I would unhesitatingly state that it is the beginning of a newer and better life through a newer and better understanding of God.

While it is true that the Rosicrucian Order has always been a very practical organisation of real workers in the world, we cannot overlook the fact that the fundamental principles enabling the aspiring mystics of the Rosy Cross to become more happy and successful in their earthly lives are related to spiritual truths leading to an awakening of the spiritual concepts of life.

Even those who are most busily engaged with the material problems of life and think they have little time for spiritual thought and meditation, often keenly realise that they need a better and more intimate acquaintance with the spiritual things of life and especially a better concept of the inner concept of a highest good, namely the "God of my heart." It is useless for anyone to try to argue that the average man or woman is not benefited by a better acquaintance with this inner concept of God that some refer to simply as the "Supreme Mind." As a man or a woman becomes more and more attuned with this inner God, all aspects of life are changed for the better.

Fortunately, the Rosicrucian teachings have kept pace with the evolutionary progress of man's concept of all things. If in five, 10, or 50 thousand years of human evolution and human struggle toward higher ideals, mankind has not brought itself closer to the inner God through a better understanding of it, then we would have to admit that human evolution is failing and that the perfection of the human race is an impossible task. But I doubt there are many rational beings who would venture to make such a statement.

The nearer a person approaches his or her concept of God, the more evolved and more inclusive his or her consciousness becomes. The concepts and ideals that satisfied a person in the past, or at least brought a satisfactory understanding of God to most people in centuries past, are clearly unsatisfactory in today's world. A better understanding of ourselves has led to a great change in our concept of the inner God, and our experience of the workings of many of the divine laws operating through our deeper selves, even here in our daily material affairs, has in recent decades radically changed our concept of this Divine inner part of ourselves to the extent that we have a fundamental principles of divinity that we can all agree upon.

The general working of the laws of love, mercy and

justice in all of our human affairs has similarly modified our concept of what God's laws and principles must be like. Even the continued evolution of human love or the love of human beings toward one another and especially the love of parents toward their children, has taught succeeding generations that each personal inner God is in fact a reflection of an even greater supreme God of all that is, a "father" to us all who is more loving than we can ever understand.

The Rosicrucian teachings have kept pace with these evolving concepts and continually anticipated the newer questions, problems and explanations that mystics of the past have contemplated during periods when they have attempted to lift themselves out of the material affairs of life in order to raise their consciousnesses to higher planes.

**A better understanding of ourselves, has led to a great change in our concept of the inner God.**

First of all, the mystic reveals God to him or herself as not only a loving, merciful, just ruler, but also as one to be loved instead of feared. How easy it is for some of us to recall that in our youth it was a commonplace expression to say that this or that individual was doing wrong because he did not have the "fear of God" in his heart. It seemed to be the accepted norm to think of God as someone to be recognised with terror and awe.

Little children were taught that they should do certain good things and refrain from doing certain bad things, for they should fear God and his mysterious power of punishing them for their misdeeds. This idea of fear was developed to such an extent that they did not dare think of God while smiling or laughing, or to speak of him in any casual way without an attitude of extreme fear. It is no wonder then that children (in some religious families at least) came to believe that God could be approached only at bedtime through the week, or in the church on Sunday, while on bended knee and with hands upraised in typical attitudes of fearful adoration.

The erroneous biblical quotation intimating that revenge was a power exclusively given to God, and also that God visited his wrath, envy, hatred and retribution upon men and women, and furthermore, that he was jealous and suspicious, were ideas commonly promulgated by religious leaders who based their arguments upon isolated and mistranslated passages in the bible.

It is no a wonder then that for ages, men and women have speculated upon the loving and merciful nature of God and asked why he allowed so many sinners to succeed



in life while those who tried to be pious and honest were unfortunate. Reasoning from such a false premise was responsible for the doubt that gradually arose in the minds of millions of persons as to the love and supreme wisdom and mercy of such a God. We may safely say that the strongest arguments used by atheists today in their contentions that there is no God are based upon the fact that God has been misrepresented to millions of persons or represented as such a being as would warrant our doubting that he was a merciful and loving Father.

## New Approach to Living

Rosicrucian members' concepts of God are so wholly different from all of this and yet so consistent with what Jesus taught. The greatest disciples and Lights among us in the past have revealed that we find Rosicrucians entering into a new life through their better understanding of God and God's ways. Such an understanding brings peace and contentment to the weary self, to the tired, tried and sorely tested physical body, and to the perplexed mind. It brings hope and renewed life and energy, and a firm conviction that justice will prevail and that truth will be demonstrated.



Such understanding opens up a new phase of life and a broader horizon here on this earth plane. It brings God closer to us, more intimate, more personal and friendlier in every human sense of the word. It makes God's laws appear in a warmer light as not only immutable and not only just, but as rational, reasonable and thoroughly understandable. It does away with all of the seeming inconsistencies and injustices and takes out of the picture entirely the idea that God is an arbitrary, jealous ruler. Surely, only petty human beings of low mental and moral integrity can have such emotions? Surely God who is greater than all of us, cannot stoop to what even we know to be wrong?

Greater understanding makes us realise that we ourselves, through our own thoughts, words and deeds, and not an unmerciful God, bring into this life the

**Understanding makes us realise that we, and not an unmerciful God, bring into this life the unfortunate results of our errors.**

unfortunate results of our errors. Instead of God finding joy and happiness in the suffering that we have had visited upon us, He is sympathetic and willing to forgive if we but ask for it and make ourselves worthy of it.

Certainly, an enhanced or deeper, more mature concept of God is the greatest change that can come into the life of any person. It is in fact fundamental to all of our thinking and doing in every phase of our existence, to have this concept of God evolve continually throughout our many lives in the material realm. But we cannot fully realise this, nor test the truth of it, until our concept of God has been changed sufficiently for to realise that it is in fact something that evolves just as everything else about us evolves too.

The Rosicrucian teachings therefore, are of extreme importance from a purely spiritual point of view inasmuch as this one great change of concept with regard to what God is brings about that regeneration and rebirth which every religion claims to be the ultimate end of its doctrines and practices.

Let us keep this in mind and speak of it to those who may inquire about the Rosicrucian teachings and about the relation of these teachings to spiritual matters. It is not necessary to have a religious creed or dogmatic outline of religious principles in order to become more spiritual and to have a better understanding of the God of all that is. Every man, woman and child is spiritually renewed as he or she understands and adopts ever deeper and more all-inclusive concepts of the inner God, which ultimately are no more than beautiful though incomplete prototypes of the sole God of all creation.





# Pictures Without Words





