

LESSON 6

THE WHITE BROTHERHOOD

Most students who are beginners on the Path have heard about the White Brotherhood, but few are really knowledgeable about this Organization and its Members. Who are the Masters? Do they really exist? What role, if any, do they play in the evolution of humanity? These are valid questions which this lesson will address in the hope of bringing light on a subject about which all occult students should be well informed.

Several schools of Occult Science refer to the existence of a group of human beings who having concluded their human evolutionary journey, have nevertheless, chosen to remain on earth to help promote human development and guide - to the extent permitted by the Law of Karma - the evolution of humanity. Having once trod the same road we now tread, marked by imperfection and error, they have reached its end, thus achieving perfection at human level. This state is known as Adeptship, and it represents someone for whom human physical life holds no more lessons to be learned by virtue of having achieved mastery over the limitations imposed by it.

It is interesting to note how the Brotherhood became known to us. In the latter part of the 19th century, a remarkable occultist named Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, brought to the attention of the western world the existence of a group of Adepts or Masters who worked for the evolutionary progress of mankind. In the East, especially amongst Hindus and Buddhists, this was and still is common knowledge, although the majority of followers of these religions seem to have no apparent in-depth knowledge about the Masters themselves or their fields of endeavor.

Another source which brought us information about this Planetary Hierarchy was Mr. A.P. Sinnett, an English journalist of considerable prestige, who lived in India and was the editor of a newspaper called "The Pioneer". Mr. Sinnett was able to enter into direct correspondence with two members of the Brotherhood through the agency of Madame Blavatsky.

This epistolary contact lasted four years (1880-1884), bringing forth a dispensation of occult knowledge of considerable volume intended primarily for a Western World fettered by two thousand years of sometimes valueless religious dogma. In addition to his work in The Pioneer, Mr. Sinnett wrote several books on the new dispensation, notably "The Occult World" and "Esoteric Buddhism" where he comments at length on the new knowledge placed at his disposal. In similar fashion, Madame Blavatsky authored a book under the direct guidance, and sometimes actual dictation, of the

Masters
on this

ancient occult philosophy to which she gave the name Theosophy. The name (originally coined by Ammonius Saccas) is a composite of two words: Theos (God) and Sophia (Wisdom) meaning “Divine Wisdom”.

Actually, it was at the suggestion of these Masters that the Theosophical Society was founded in New York in 1875 by H.P. Blavatsky and her associate, Colonel Henry S. Olcott, with some clear cut objectives not the least of which was the promotion of the brotherhood of man on Earth as well as the open dissemination of what was until then the knowledge of only a few. The main body of this esoteric dispensation is contained in Madame Blavatsky’s two main works: “Isis Unveiled” and “The Secret Doctrine”.

The existence of these Masters has been questioned by many under the premise that, if they in fact exist, they would be known by many more than the few who claim to have been in touch with them. The notion of the existence of a group of supermen who have marvelous powers but who only show themselves to a chosen few doesn’t sit well with the western mind. But upon some reflection about the purpose of man’s evolution it is clear that, like all evolving processes, it must have a goal to reach; we see man in his primitive origins, rough, unpolished and, in general, pretty far in development from contemporary man. And even if it can be argued that he retains some attitudes and behavior still reminiscent of his barbaric past, it is unquestionable that today’s man differs considerably from his ancestor of prehistoric times. Man has, indeed, evolved, even when it must be recognized that he still has a long way to go. To go where? is the logical question that comes to mind. The answer is equally as logical: to the achievement of human perfection, a goal already achieved by millions before and which millions will achieve in the future.

It is perhaps the slowness of the process that makes us lose perspective and therefore the precise notion of the purpose of our journey through the lower worlds. We see then why the idea of the existence of perfected human beings should not be alien to us. It is the logical corollary of thousands of years of toil and suffering under the restrictive and painful conditions imposed by a body of flesh. Once more it will be wise to remember that Nature “hastens slowly”. It has all the time it requires and is hence only concerned with results.

It is said that in the case of man, the final results of his human development are of matchless splendor, beauty and power . “A moment comes”, stated a noted Adept, “when the aspirant is compensated one thousand fold for all he has had to endure during his physical sojourn”. The Masters of the White Brotherhood are an eloquent testimony to the truth in that assertion.

There are a number of very valid reasons why the Hierarchy remains secluded. “The skeptic is our best shield...”, one of the Masters has stated. It is easy to

understand what would happen if the Brotherhood became public and its members were free to move amongst average humanity: the lack of development of the average individual would throw him completely off balance and his reaction could spell disaster. History is full of examples of what happened to those who dared step out of the ordinary to show the way of light to his brethren; they were made the object of limitless persecution and vilification, in some cases with loss of their own lives. Now, valid as this is, there is an even more important reason for the seclusion of the Hierarchy, namely the dictates of Cosmic Law which strictly forbid direct intervention of adepts in human affairs except under particularly exceptional circumstances. Humanity must be allowed to develop on its own. Guidance and inspiration are permitted, but free will in decision making must prevail at all costs because it is an essential part of the method under which we develop. And, consequent with their development, members of the Hierarchy adhere unconditionally to the strict rules that govern their group.

Powers of the Adept

It is said that the powers of the adept are as great as they are varied. Clairvoyancy, telepathy, telekinesis, levitation, materialization of objects at will and bi-location, are normal in them. They also possess the power to heal diseases and to shift their consciousness at will between their bodies. Since intellect must develop parallel to consciousness, the adepts' intelligence is highly developed as well. Their inner power and purity reflect in their vehicles, making them glow with radiance and freeing the physical vehicle from the bondage of disease or the deterioration which accompanies aging. This confers to their countenance a perpetually young and radiant look. Madame Blavatsky, who first saw her Master when she was in her early twenties, stated that in the next forty years of her life she saw no changes in his aspect: he looked invariably about 35 years old, a tall and handsome Rajput Prince. She added that she observed the same feature on the other adepts she came across in the discharge of her occult work.

From the little information available, it appears that not all the Masters of the Hierarchy have a dense physical body. It is said that some of them retain only their etheric double since there appears to be no need for more in the type of work in which they are engaged. Not much is known about the duration that the body of an adept can have, but it is said that his physical vehicle can live around seven hundred years with no aging involved. Perhaps the legend surrounding the Master known as the "European Adept", or Count Saint-Germain, who is said to have been written about in the 16th Century by people who met him personally, can confirm this, since those descriptions of him coincide quite closely with descriptions made by individuals, such as C.W. Leadbeater, who claimed to have seen him in the latter part of the 19th Century.

The Path to the Masters

A question quite often asked by early students of occult science is, “Why can’t I see the Masters? Since I want to place myself at their service and dedicate my life to the Cause of Humanity as they have, why don’t they show themselves to me?”

The answer we are given is that it is we who have to earn the presence of the Masters rather than the other way around. We are told that the arms of the Masters are wide open for us and that they themselves are particularly pleased in those who reach and find them. But this, of course, requires a kind of life removed from ordinary behavior. Meeting an Adept personally is an extraordinary event, an honor without parallel which requires a type of magnetism far above that of the ordinary individual; and this is only possible through a life of purity and selfless dedication to the Cause of Humanity. When such a state is reached, an encounter with any of the Masters will happen as a natural consequence. For it is said that, when observing the mass of humanity from their high state of consciousness, they are able to see, among the millions of points of light some who shine with an increased light of their own; these are souls reaching maturity, who are now ready to be incorporated in the work of the Hierarchy. At this point the contact is made, that is, once the aspirant has in fact earned the singular honor of the visit of an adept. This visit has very specific purposes, among them the need to instruct the aspirant about a particular task to be discharged; it could also take place in order to reassure the aspirant about his/her spiritual progress. There are, of course many other reasons for a Master to visit a student, but in general such visits are quite rare.

Students may wonder what to do to improve their magnetism and purify their vehicles so as to finally merit the contact they long for. The answer is not new; consistent introspection, regular meditation habits, self-denial, proper eating habits (which should exclude meat and alcohol), disinterested service to those in need, a consistently kind attitude towards all living beings and an unflinching devotion to the Cause of Humanity. Dedication to these principles will invariably bring the individual in touch with members of the Hierarchy and, needless to say, will benefit his spiritual progress to a greater extent. Loyalty and total commitment to the guidance and instructions of the Master will strengthen and perpetuate the relationship. For it must be said that the pitfalls confronting the aspirant will be numerous and difficult to overcome, and he will need all of his strength and determination to emerge victorious in what will undoubtedly constitute the hardest battle of his existence against the forces of evil unleashed on him in an effort to prevent his success.

Hierarchy

An important occult axiom states that “As above, so below”. Applying this idea, we see that our solar universe is but a replica of the more vast Cosmic Universe, as the White Brotherhood - which can appropriately be considered as the Inner Government of the World - is replica of the Spiritual Government of the seven fold Cosmic Universe (see Diagram 2). This Cosmic Spiritual Hierarchy is also known as The Great White Throne (see Lesson 13, “The Devic Kingdom”), and works in conjunction with the White Brotherhood in furtherance of the Divine Plan. We are told that this work is carried out in a structure comprising seven departments or fields of activity. The reasonableness of this idea is evident, since if progress towards a goal of perfection is the Universal Law of Life and Form, it should not seem strange to think of the ladder of life as extending infinitely beyond man even as it is recognized to extend infinitely below him - that man is but the middle point in a vast scheme of progress. Throughout untold eons this process has been going on. Out of the ages, many have passed the point where we now stand. The existence of the Masters has always been known to the few who have earned the right to that knowledge. They have completed human evolution and lived henceforth to serve Him, who represents upon our planet, the King, the Lord of The Universe. As the Mighty Archangels carry out the seven fold work of the Logos (see lesson 12) in the larger scheme, so do these our elder brethren, carry out the work upon Earth the work of those mighty beings whom we shall call our Planetary Logos or Lord of our World. The Bible refers to this body of “just men made perfect” as the Communion of the Saints. These adepts or supermen, under the leadership of the one whom they recognize as The King, carry out His manifold activities upon this planet. They represent and recapitulate upon our Earth that seven fold spiritual hierarchy of the Heaven Worlds. Hence, once again, the celestial is mirrored in the terrestrial and, following the celestial pattern, the organization, if we may use that term, of this Brotherhood follows the Divine Plan through the following structure:

First, there is The King, the One who is both the representative and the embodiment upon our planet of the Solar Logos (Word). Under him, there are the three who in a marvelous way represent the Divine Trinity and through whom the three aspects of the trinity become effective upon Earth. We are told that these four magnificent beings are not a product of our evolutionary wave, but that in remote times they came to Earth to prepare the planet for the advent of our human race and guide its evolutionary path until it could produce beings capable of taking over for them. They are known as the Lords of the Flame or Pratyeka Buddhas, and they originate from the planet we call Venus where apparently a previous humanity completed its evolution. They belong to the 9th level of Initiation.

In the 8th
level of

Initiation we find Him who is the highest expression of our evolving humanity and who lived his last incarnation on our planet as Siddharta Gautama, also known as the Lord Buddha. The time in which he will take the office of King is not far off, we are told, although this should be thought of in terms of hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years. By then, the Pratyeka Buddhas from Venus will move forth for service in other worlds, leaving ours in the care of beings developed from our own evolutionary process. Just under the Lord Gautama, we find three lofty beings known as The Lord Maitreya, who occupies the office of the Bodhisattva of the Race (known to Christians as the Christ); The Lord Vaivasvata, who occupies the office of the Manu (Father) of the Race (so named because He is believed to be the One who presides over our present and fifth evolutionary period, otherwise known as the Fifth Root Race), and the Lord Mahachohan, who is believed to be the direct Chief of the Adepts who compose the rest of the Brotherhood. Under the above, at the 6th level of Initiation (Chohan) stand seven Masters, each heading a Ray or field of activity as planned and manifested by the Logos through the chain of command (see diagram 2).

It must be stated that within the high positions in this hierarchical structure there are other Masters. They are not mentioned in the diagrams included here for several reasons, chiefly that the information available on them is scarce, which probably conforms to their expressed desire for total anonymity. The diagrams presented in this lesson should hence be considered as a summation of the structure, but not a complete one.

In summing up this lesson, it appears useful to quote from Dr. Annie Besant, former president, of the Theosophical Society who, in her book "The Masters", states the following: "They aid, in countless ways, the progress of humanity. From the highest sphere they shed down light and life on all the world, that it may be taken up and assimilated, as freely as the sunshine by those who are receptive enough to take it in. As the physical world lives by the life of God, focused by the Sun, so does the spiritual world live by the same life focused by the occult Hierarchy. Next, the Masters specially connected with religions use these religions as reservoirs into which they pour spiritual energy to be distributed to the faithful in each religion through the duly appointed "means of grace". Next comes the great intellectual work, wherein the Masters send out thought forms of high intellectual power to be caught up by men of genius, assimilated by them and given out to the world; on this level also they send out their wishes to their disciples, notifying them of the tasks to which they should set their hands. Then comes the work in the lower mental world, the generation of thought -forms which influence the concrete mind and guide it along useful lines of activity in this world, and the teaching of those who are living in the heavenly world. Then the large activities of the intermediate world, the helping of the so-called dead, the general direction and supervision

tendencie
s of
events,

the correction and neutralizing, as far as law permits, of evil currents, the constant balancing of forces that work for or against evolution, the strengthening of the good, the weakening of the evil. In conjunction with the Angels of the Nations also they work, guiding the spiritual forces as the others guide the material..”

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Explain what is an Adept.
2. Describe the Planetary Hierarchy.
3. Describe the powers of an Adept.
4. Explain the relationship between The White Brotherhood and The Great White Throne.
5. Is it possible to verify personally the existence of the Masters? If so, what are the requirements to achieve this?
6. Explain in a summarized way the work for which the Planetary Hierarchy is responsible.
7. Who are The Lords of the Flame?
8. Describe the structure of the Planetary Hierarchy and its relationship with the Seven Rays or fields of activity.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

The Masters and the Path, by C.W. Leadbeater
The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, Trevor T. Barker
The Occult World, by A.P. Sinnett
The Masters, by Annie Besant