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## EVANGELICAL LEGENDS OF THE CHRIST.

### THE TOMB OF SAINT JOHN.

At that time, Jesus travelled with the rapidity of a spirit throughout all the countries of the world. All the people were sorrowful and awaited for Him, but everywhere the Christ remained still alone as He had done in the Garden of Olives. He entered as a poor pilgrim into the Basilica of St. Peter's, at Rome, where no person recognised Him, He approached towards the tomb of the Apostles, in order to discover whether their relics were ripe for resurrection, but the ashes of the Saints were cold, and they continued still dormant in their sleep.

Now, it was one of those Apostles, who, according to an ancient tradition, had never died; he whom the symbolic paintings represent to us as being always young, who has an Eagle for an emblem, he whom we call the Apostle of Charity, and the Disciple of Love—John. It is also this Disciple, as the legends of the first century inform us, who must awake in the last times to save the world, and to rekindle the Sacred Fire of fraternal charity. In short, the same legends also relate that his remains were never found; the faithful of Ephesus believed that he was entombed and preserved amongst them, but that the Angels afterwards came and concealed the sleeping Apostle amidst the solitudes of Patmos.\*

Jesus transported Himself to the isle of Patmos, which seemed still to tremble and throb with the noise of the Seven Thun-

\*See *Book of Light and Life*, p. 110.

ders; He approached the grotto where His faithful Disciple slept. At the entrance of the tomb there sat a celestial form, silent and motionless; it resembled a woman clothed in a long azure mantle, which covered her head, and enveloped her entirely, falling around her in large folds. Her pale hands, extended a little, were joined with fervour, her eyes, full of resigned sadness and infinite hope, were fixed upon the tomb. Jesus approached to her, and said:— "My Mother, is this you? You doubtless know that I had to come here." "I know it, my Son," replied Mary; "for he who reposes here you tenderly loved; and before your death, you had confided me to him, saying:— 'Behold thy Mother.' Now ere I can return to earth in the person of woman who will comprehend what it is to be a mother, it is necessary that the Disciple of Love come to life again in order to protect me, for I must, Oh! my Son, in the person of all women of Intelligence and Love, place you a second time into the world." "My Mother," responded Jesus, "do you remember what the Angel said to the women who sought me at the sepulchre?" "Why do you seek the living amongst the dead? He is risen, He is not here." You know that the prophet Elias, according to the traditions of the Jews, must return to earth to prepare the ways. The form of Elias was transfigured, and his Spirit has returned in the person of John the Baptist. Verily I say unto you that you now live upon earth in the person of all the women who feel the hope of the future trembling in their bosom. This is why, Oh! my mother, you appear to-day for the last time under your symbolic figure.

John, my well-beloved disciple, has bequeathed his Spirit to all men full of faith and love, who wish to build the New Jerusalem, the sacred city of harmony, and I say unto you with truth that those know how to honour their mother, and that they are worthy of being called "*Sons of Women*." They submit their hearts to the inspirations of your heart, those who wish to partake in the work of all the children of the great family, according to the attractions and aptitudes of each, in order that all may compose the totality of the honey of the human hive which will still serve to nourish all. They know what woman really is, those who wish to liberate themselves from a love of bondage, in order that they may never prostitute themselves, and that the sources of generation may be pure. Rise then and come, Oh! my Mother, come unto Calvary to assist at my last symbolical triumph, then we shall re-live in humanity all entire. All women will be you, and all men will be me, and we two will make but one."

The Christ, elevating His Mother, and carrying her in his arms—as she had carried Him when He was a little Child—left the isle of Patmos, marched upon the waves of the sea, and went towards the shores of Palestine. At this time the sun rose, and shone with resplendency upon the surface of the waters, the two celestial forms glittered in brilliancy without casting any shadow, or leaving any traces behind them, like a couple of marvellous birds, or as a light cloud, tinted with the colours of the aurora, and shaded with the reflections of the rainbow.

### EXAMINATIONS UPON THE GOLDEN VERSES:

#### PREPARATION.

(2) To the Immortal Gods render thou the venerated creed,  
Preserve well thy fidelity:

PYTHAGORAS—to whom a modern Sage, otherwise very estimable, has made a reproach without reflection, by terming him a fanatical and superstitious man\*—commences his teaching by laying down nevertheless a principal of universal toleration. He recommends his disciples to follow the worship established by the laws, whatever that worship may be, and to adore the Gods of their countries, whoever those Gods may be; enjoining upon them only to preserve their faith afterwards, that is to say, to remain inwardly faithful to his doctrine, and never to divulge the Mysteries. Lysis, in tracing this first verse, embraces therein very adroitly a double meaning. In the first place, he recommends tolerance and reserve amongst the Pythagoreans, and according to the example of the Priests of Egypt, he establishes two doctrines, the one ostensible and vulgar, conformable with the law; the other mysterious and secret, analogous to faith; by the second meaning, he reassures the suspicious people of Greece, who, according to calumnies then current, feared that the new sect would wish to make an attack upon the sanctity of their Gods. This tolerance, upon the one hand, and that reserve, upon the other, was not then that which it is at the present day. The Christian religion, exclusive and severe, has changed all our ideas in this respect. In admitting but only one doctrine embraced in one unique church, that religion has necessarily confounded toleration with indifference,

\*Bacon. *Novum Org. aph.* 65 and 71.

or coldness, and reserve with heresy or hypocrisy: but in the spirit of Polytheism, these same things take another colour. A Christian Philosopher could not, without perjuring himself and committing a frightful impiety, bend the knee in China before *Kong-Tze*, nor offer incense to *Chang-Ty*, or *Tien*; amongst the Indians he could not render homage to *Krishna*, nor present himself at Benares as an adorer of *Vishnu*; he could not even, although recognising the same God as the Jews and Mussulmans, mingle in their ceremonies, nor, that which is even nearer home, could he adore that God with the Arians, the Lutherans, the Calvinists, if he was a Catholic! These hold to the essence even of their creed. A Pythagorean Philosopher does not recognise those redoubtable barriers, which pen up nations so to say, isolating them and rendering them worse than unfriendly. The Gods of the people were in his eyes the same Gods, and his cosmopolitan dogmas condemned no person to eternal damnation! From the one end of the earth to the other he could make the incense rise in cloudy waves upon the altar of the Divinity, under whatever name, under whatever form He was adored, and could render to Him the public worship legally established. This was perfectly reasonable. Polytheism was not in his eyes that which it has become in ours, or an impious and coarse idolatry, or a cult inspired by the infernal adversary, in order to seduce mankind and attribute to himself the honours which are only due to the Divinity: it was a particularisation of the Universal Being, a personification of His attributes and faculties. Prior to Moses, none of the theocratic legislators had thought that it was good to present to the worship of the people the Supreme God, unique and increate, in His unfathomable universality. The Indian Brahmins whom we may regard as the living types of all the Sages and Pontiffs of the world, do not permit even at the present day the remembrance of their antique Science to be effaced by uttering the name of God, principle of All.\* They are contented with meditating upon His essence in silence, and in offering sacrifices to His most sublime emanations. The Chinese Sages act in the same manner as regards the First Cause, which they neither name nor define;† the votaries of Zoroaster, who make the two universal principles of good and evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, emanate from that Ineffable Cause, content themselves in

\* *Asiat. Res. V. III, p. 371 to 374.*

† *Mém. concern. the Chinese, V. II, p. 26.*

designating It by the name of Eternity.\* The Egyptians, so much celebrated for their wisdom, the extent of their knowledge and the multitude of their Divine symbols, honour by silence the God-Principle and Source of all things;† they never speak of It, regarding It as inaccessible to all the researches of men; and Orpheus their disciple, first author of the brilliant mythology of the Greeks, Orpheus, who appeared to announce the Soul of the World as the Creative Cause of this same God from which it was emanated, says without evasion:—

I see not that Being surrounded by a cloud.‡

Moses, as I have already said, was the first who made a public dogma of the Unity of God, and who divulged that which up till then had been buried in the shadow of the sanctuaries; for the principal dogmas of the Mysteries, those upon which all the others depended, were the Unity of God and the Homogeneity of Nature.§

It is true that Moses, in making that divulcation, permitted himself no definition, no reflection, neither upon the essence nor upon the nature of that unique Being; a thing which is certainly very remarkable. Prior to him, throughout all the known world, and after him, except in Judea where a greater gloom still obscured the idea of the Divine Unity, up till the establishment of Christianity, the Divinity was considered by the theosophists of all nations under two aspects; the first as unique, the second as infinite; as unique, reserved under the seal of secrecy in contemplation, in the meditation of the Sages: as infinite, trusted in veneration, in the invocation of the people. Now the unity of God resides in His Essence, which the vulgar can never in any manner either conceive of, or know: His infinitude consists in His perfections, His faculties, His attributes, of which the vulgar may, according to the extent of their knowledge, catch a few feeble emanations, and draw them nearer to themselves in detaching them from the universality, that is to say, in particularising and personifying them. Behold, then, the particularisation and personification which constitute, as I have already said, Polytheism. The multitude of Gods which results therefrom is as infinite as the Divinity even from which it has taken its birth. Every nation, every people, every town, adopts

\*Eulma Esclam. *Note upon Boun Dehesh*, p. 344.

†Porphyr. *de Antr. Nymph.* p. 126.

‡See Dacier, in his *Remarks upon the Comment. of Hieroc.*

§Vit Pythag. Phot. *Cod.* 259. Macrobian. *Scip. L. I. C. 6, L. II. C. 12. August. de Civit. Dei, L. IV. C. 9 and II. Euseb. Præp. Evan. L. III. C. 9. Lactant. False Relig. L. I. C. 6 and 7. Plot. *Ennead. III. L. II.**



according to its wish those Divine faculties which agree best with its character and wants. These powers, represented by their shadows, become so many particular Gods whose diversity of names still augment the number. Nothing sets limits to that immense theology, since the First Cause, from which it emanates, has none. The common people, rendered enthusiastic by the objects which may strike their senses, may become idolatrous, and they generally do become so; they may distinguish even these objects of their adoration, the one from the other, and believe that there really exists as many Gods as there are statues; but the Sage, the Philosopher, the youngest Neophyte even can never fall into this error. He knows with Plutarch that the places, the different names, do not make different Gods; that the Greeks and Barbarians, the nations of the north and those of the south, adore the same Divinity;\* he readily restores to the Unity of the Essence that infinity of attributes and powers, as still do to-day the respectable remnants of the ancient Samaneans, the Priests of Burmah; he adores God, whatever the Altar or the Temple may be, or the place in which he may find himself.†

From the foregoing it will be readily understood that which the disciples of Pythagoras believed and acted upon, by command of their Master; they saw in the Gods of the nations the attributes of the ineffable Being whom they were not permitted to name; they augmented ostensibly—and without any repugnance—the number of the attributes which they recognised in the Infinite Cause; they rendered to them the worship legally constituted, and they recalled all in secret to the Unity which was the object of their faith.

(To be continued.)

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\*Plutar. *Isis and Osir.* p. 377.

†The Priests of Burmah, who are called *Rahans*, but whose generic name is that of *Samana*, from which comes the term *Samaneans*, which the ancients gave them, carry the spirit of toleration as far as it is possible. They with the same devotion visit the Pagodas, the Mosques, and the Churches; they neither persecute themselves nor others for the sake of religion. The Brahmins, the Mussulmans, the Christians, occupy amongst them important offices, without scandal. They regard all mankind as their brothers. (*Asiat. Research. V. vi. p. 274-279.*) The Brahmins have the same ideas. We read the following remarkable words in the *Bhagavat-Ghita*:— "A great diversity of cults, similar in foundation, but true in forms, are manifested through the will of the Supreme Being. One party follows one cult, another attaches itself to a different one; all these worshippers are purified from their offences through their particular worship. . . . God is the gift of charity, God is the offering, God is the fire of the Altar; it is God even who makes the sacrifice, and God will be obtained by those who make Him the only object of their works." (*Lect. IV.*)

## THE VISION OF HERMES.

At present I shall only quote a superb extract from the "Vision of Hermes," which can not fail to merit the attention of the reader. Hermes, being in great mental distress, perceived at first in obscurity the form of a man, who gradually became more and more luminous, taking on gigantic proportions, and of a beautiful countenance. This apparition regarded him with the utmost mildness, and spoke as follows. "Thou sufferest, Oh! Son of Earth, I come to strengthen thee, for thou lovest Justice and seekest Truth. I am Pymander, the Thought of the Omnipotent; express to me a wish and thou shalt have it granted." "Lord," replies Hermes-Thoth, "give me a ray of thy Divine Science." "Thou hast well chosen," replies Pymander, "then thy wish shall be satisfied." Immediately Hermes, ravished in ecstasy, is surrounded by a spectacle that no human language can describe. All forms, all magnificence which could fill the most ardent imagination, are displayed around him in a sphere of dazzling light which surrounds him everywhere. When Hermes devoted himself to the charm of this contemplation, the light became paler, the visions gradually resolved themselves to a chaotic shadow, and this shadow filled him with an inexpressible fear. From that darkness proceeded a discordant noise like peals of thunder, and a voice louder than the thunder cried out in the midst of this tempest of Nature. "It seems to me," says Hermes, "that this grand voice was the voice of the vanished light, and that the Word of God proceeded from it. This Word was carried upon a current of Celestial Water, of which I felt the coolness, and there gushed within it a pure and light Fire, which disposed itself throughout the Air. That Air, subtle as spirit, floated between the Water and the Fire; and within the waves of that ambient Air, our world balanced itself in equilibrium, as a mass of substance still unformed, which awaited the creative work. And the Word of God agitated this world, and in proportion to its agitation, the light recovered its strength, and innumerable manifestations of Form appeared anew, one after the other. It seemed to me that I saw all things within the mirror of my thought, and then the Divine voice of Pymander made itself heard with sweetness, and spoke thus:— The Thought is God the Father, the Word is His Son, they are indissolubly united in eternity, and their Union is Life. The Thought and the Word create the Acts of

the Almighty. From the Almighty emanate Seven Spirits who operate within Seven Spheres, and in these Spheres are contained all the Beings which compose the Universe. The action of the Seven Spirits within the Spheres is called Destiny, and these Spheres are themselves enclosed within the Divine Thought, which eternally penetrates them. God has committed to the Seven Spirits the empire of the Elements, and the creation of their compounds. But He has created man in His image, and, being formed in that image, He has conceded to him the power of acting upon Terrestrial Nature.

Now, man having seen his Father in the Supreme Creator, conceived at one time the ambition of making himself equal to the Almighty, and wished to penetrate within the circles whose empire was not permitted to him. In thus troubling the Divine Harmony, he rendered himself guilty, and his chastisement was that he must become the slave of his body. Immortal through his Spirit, which is the image of God, he made himself mortal through the love of transitory and perishable things. Nevertheless liberty has been permitted to him, in order that he may, by a courageous effort, rise again to his original altitude, by ridding himself from the servitude of the body, and recognising his Immortality. God wishes then that every man should learn how to know himself, and to distinguish his invisible *Superior Self*, the visible form of which is only the bark or rind. When he is able to recognise himself in the *Duality* of his creation, he is no more attracted by perishable changeable forms; his thought has no other desire than that of seeking and pursuing, in traversing the infinite, the absolute beauty, the contemplation of which is the sovereign boon promised to restored intelligence. The man who triumphs over sensual temptations, augments his mental faculties; God measures out the Light to him in proportion to his merits, and gradually and progressively permits him in this life to penetrate the most profound Mysteries of Nature. Upon the contrary, he who succumbs to the seductions of the flesh falls, little by little, under the empire of the *fatal laws which govern the Elements*, and, in becoming their prey he devotes himself to *perpetual ignorance*, which is *Death for the Soul*. (The Soul that sinneth, *it shall die*; What will it avail a man to gain the whole world, if he *lose his own Soul*, etc., say the Gospels). Happy is the Son of Earth who has preserved in purity the image of God, and who never darkens himself with the veil of the basest concupiscence. When the hour approaches for him to leave this world, his body returns to the domain of matter; but the Spirit, disengaged from that temporary shell,



is elevated within the Seven concentric Circles which surround our Terrestrial System. In the sphere of the Moon, he knows himself to be immortal; in that of Mercury, he is rendered impassible; in that of Venus, he is clothed with innocence; in that of the Sun, he receives strength to support himself from fainting under the refulgence of the Divine splendours; in that of Mars, he learns humility; in that of Jupiter, he obtains possession of the treasures of Divine Intelligence; and in that of Saturn, he perceives the truth of all things in their unchangeable beauty. Beyond the last of those Spheres reigns the Infinite of Worlds, striving in its pilgrimage through heavens of heavens towards the Supreme God, to whom it unceasingly approaches—eternal asymptote, without ever having arrived thereat."

Thus spoke Pymander (the Thought of the Almighty), and the Divine Vision replunged itself within its Celestial Sanctuary, but it had Illuminated the Soul of Hermes-Thoth; it had made him a *Messiah*, to preach to humanity the great Mystery of the Soul's Destination. It will be fully recognised that in this fragment of "Pymander," the one God, invisible, ineffable, all-powerful, and infinite, has Seven Spirits or Archangels, Messengers of His will, Agents of His Providence, thus the existence of Celestial Spirits, mediators between God and man, is affirmed as a veritable doctrine, thousands of years before the birth of Jesus Christ, and those doctrines cannot be disputed. Christian Theology itself has consecrated to the intervention of Angels all the great scenes of the Bible, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelations. From the Cherubim with the fiery sword, who guards the threshold of the lost Paradise, to the Angels with the Seven trumpets and vials, who interview the Prophet of Patmos, in his vision of the End of the Age, the Angelic world never ceases to mingle itself throughout the religious history of humanity.

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SPEAKING in a general sense, Man is a double Mirror for the reflection of the Planetary Forces throughout two different directions, the one being that of the Planetary influx from his own body, which builds up the inferior planes below himself; the other that of the finer Ethereal Essences of the Planets, reflected from his Soul to the Spiritual Races in the spheres above. In the first plane, are seven degrees, from Mineral to Man, the lower octave of existence; in the second plane, are also seven degrees of higher life, from Man to Angel, the superior gamut of existence, embracing the Aerial Races, or Planetary Angels of the seven spheres between the Planets and the Sun.

## LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE.

IN addressing ourselves to our readers, we can only for the present briefly summarise a few all-important thoughts for mature consideration, our limits being rather circumscribed in the present Number of the Magazine. In the Almighty, we have immutability, in the Universe we find a steady and progressive expansion of initial Monads, including in nucleus all the infinite attributes of God, not exactly present, but susceptible of successive development, each according to laws of everlasting perfectibility. Herein is embraced unalterable truth itself, but relatively expressed for our comprehension, inclusive of that immense solidarity which unites all creatures to our supreme Father—God. God acts and shines upon all His creatures through superiors upon inferiors, in the most elevated of the worlds even, as well as in the very lowest regions of the Universe. We are all connected together more or less, and we cannot tear ourselves away from that general sum-total, of which God is the central magnet. Let us never murmur at our lot, nor call upon any force to assist us in our imaginary rights; there are no other rights here upon earth than the will of God, based upon Justice, upon our merits, and our wants. Let us never complain because we possess no vast domains, where we can glide along happily and tranquilly upon the current of Physical life; we know very well that the many trials and ordeals which have been reserved for us, are the very necessary means whereby we can progress. Do we not know that God, in His mercy, has treated us with far more favour than ever we had deserved, and can we not recognise what a mystery is concealed in affliction, or sorrow? The Universe is not based upon confusion, or disorder, upon the contrary it is harmony; there is no fatality, or chance, all is governed by Providence. There is nothing that God can not penetrate, no creature that He abandons. Where is the herb of the field that does not possess its pretty raiment, where is the insect which finds not its food? If God censures us, it is because He wishes us to regenerate. Happy in reality ought all those to be, who suffer patiently in this world, for the suffering of the present is the joy and happiness of the future.

Say not, then, that this earth is in reality evil, that the creation is bad. What do we know of the past or the future, we, poor and ignorant mortals of earth, who have been only able to

read one page of the book of creation, how can we pronounce judgment upon it? We perceive only the very threshold of the details, we are incapable of judging the whole. Placed here below, between two abysses, the past and the future, having a transitory existence which occupies only an imperceptible point of time, can we be really so senseless as to imagine that we are born yesterday, and that we will become nothing to-morrow? Do we know the rank which this earth occupies in the hierarchy of worlds? Does not everything demonstrate to us that this earth is but one of the Purgatories, which would raise itself up in proud misery to the very threshold of Paradise? Now this being so, is it not wise upon our part to accept voluntarily that position in which God has placed us, to be the more courageous as our task becomes the greater, to be the more energetic as our burden gets heavier? Misguided travellers, let us confide in those who know our point of departure and the term of our many peregrinations; to those whose first attribute in the arrangement of the world is the most sovereign justice.

Pilgrims of earth, envy not those who repose in splendid mansions, in the midst of false delicacies of the senses; if you are fatigued, before pursuing your incessant work, rest yourself patiently by the entrance of the temple, exposed if need be, to the burning heat of the sun. What is fortune and pleasure here below for those who may only live but a day, who can carry nothing away, if they possess not fortitude and virtue? Make your riches that which death can never steal from you: fortify your will; enlighten your intellect; develop charity. In the midst of your transformations, you really know only your personality, and if you have improved yourself, you will have amassed the only treasure which will never leave you. Love all mankind with an inexhaustible love; do for them even more than you would demand for yourself, in order that by restoring you a little, they may always give you enough; seek therefore to exceed yourself mutually in devotion and charity.

Have we not all the same origin, and the same goal to attain to; do we not all travel towards the same summit, towards the Divine type which attracts us? To wound only one of our fellow-creatures is to wound God, as well as ourselves. To love God is to love our brethren, to love our brethren is to love God; to love God and our brethren is to love ourselves. To be selfish is to hate one's self in the necessary aim of life and thought, for we all depend upon God and our brethren. Disorder and misfortune is division; order and prosperity is unity, unity of Action, unity of Intelligence, and unity of Love.

## GOD IS LOVE.

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." *John xvi. 12, 13.*

At the present Soul-Cycle a new Revelation commences to present itself to us; we are no more isolated upon this material world of sin, strife, and sorrow, for *Light* is dawning upon humanity's deserving children, that *Light* which will eventually enlighten all. This is the prelude to the fulfilment of the above Scriptural passage, the promised Truth, the Book of *Eternal Life* which has been opened for us to carefully study, and thus to approach nearer and nearer to our Almighty Father. It is the Spirit of Truth who comes to Initiate us, poor and ignorant children of earth, into all the secrets of that Science of Life, and to inform us that He who governs the Universe is Intelligence, Light, Love and Progress, all united in sole Perfection.

Oh! thoughtless and sinful Man! open thine eyes to this shining Light, and thou wilt certainly see that the affectionate hand of thy Celestial Father—God—is always extended towards thee, that He is always blessed, in His Power and Glory, and that He is happy in entertaining the return of us His prodigal children. That new Light for thee, Oh! Man, will soon bear its fruits, by flashing forth its radiance upon thy free will. Let not the wild, erroneous, and idiotic errors of eternal "Fire and Brimstone," of a "never-ending punishment"—born from the dark and gloomy den of sheer ignorance—ever haunt your mind, for God is a *God of Love and Mercy* to all His children. Each one gets exactly what he merits, for God, whose Universe is His Corporeity of Life, could not and would not lose even one of His worlds, no more than He would one of His dear children. Far from harshly chastising, He is incessantly occupied in purifying all by trials.

Oh! Man, be contented and happy, for the labours and sorrows of thy rough period of life will be so far ended, when thou wilt have the sense to live in goodness. Thou shouldst already know that Death is only a change for thee, although the ignorant misunderstand this act essentially vital, through which we are transformed, and harmonised indefinitely within eternal Life. Soon thy earthly material envelope, under which thy *substantial* existence is gradually developed, will become perfectly plain to thee—*deserve* and then *desire*. Thy body is only thy external clothing, the Light of Life is as yet dark for thee, but when thou art *prepared*, that *Sun* will shine within thee, and everything will be gradually revealed.