

XIII

FROM GENESIS TO THE FLOOD

Abundance in the Hebrew writings – Bara Bereshit Elohim – The Six Days of Creation – Creation and evolution – Central Fire and Creation – The Sabbath, God comes to inhabit Creation.

Whatever profit there may be in the discoveries one can make in the Hebrew books, they should not be used as demonstrative proofs of truths concerning the nature of man and his correspondence with his Creator¹, for these truths subsist by themselves, and the witness of books can never serve except as a confirmation of this.

Beside, the Hebrew books, given their length and the abundance of language in which they were written, claim such a large number of interpretations that they are like a battlefield upon which each side, each sect, finds something to be attacked and something to be defended.

This is why those who, with no assistance but common knowledge, plead for or against the sanctity of these books, and cannot convince one side or the other, because they do not found their opinions on a natural or common basis, so that all their objections appear insoluble to the other side.

If the principles put forth before now are not based upon a solid foundation, they do little for the advancement of knowledge², as in citing these books as its basis – whose sanctity has not generally been established – they continue to entertain doubts about the authenticity required to guarantee the truth of their arguments. But having established these principle on unshakable foundations, I believe I have the authority to use all that can be drawn out of them, or confirm their certainty; and the Hebrew books appear to be useful to achieve this end.

The Hebrew traditions, as much histories as allegories, offer us the same truths as those of other peoples. They also tell us about the degradation of man, the efforts he must undertake to erase his ignominy, and the assistance which the Supreme Order unceasingly offers him to accelerate his return to the light.

There we find the same signs of correspondences between man and Divinity, and between the Earth and all the Superior Powers. One also reads there the same

¹ The original word is 'Principle', but I have substituted 'Creator', 'Source' or 'Originator' in most cases as being more reflective of the meaning – PV.

² Or 'knowledge' – PV.

subdivisions of these Powers relative to man. Everything there is equally vengeance and rigor; everything there shows a severity of justice which never lets go of these rights.

Nowadays, one may think with some foundation that we have discovered striking correspondences between many characters in Egyptian mythology and the Hebrew traditions, where these consequently appear to be the original source of these stories. And if he have found the history of man in these original mythological traditions, all the more reason for us to recognize this in those events which appear to have been the pattern and source of the most famous of these traditions.

Besides, in the Hebrew texts one can see events joined to dogma and *action* to doctrine, whereas in all other traditions, these two things are almost always separate. Egyptian and Greek mythological traditions only contain events and precious little doctrine. The theological books of the Parsees, the Chinese and all peoples who, on the other hand, are similarly distanced from their original source, contain doctrines rather than events, since all these peoples have neglected the true knowledge of man, which makes them stray from their *history*; and so it does not provide them with an ethical set of rules and only leads them to moralize when it doesn't provide a guide on how to *act*.

Mohammed, who wrote and was born among the descendants of the Hebrews, imitated their books with profit. In the Koran, doctrine and historical facts appear in tandem, and though this book, which contains few flashes of illumination, is nothing but a shapeless collection of stories, and though it does not lead men to their true nature and degrades the means by which the Supreme Wisdom prepares their regeneration, there remains enough to recognize it as the natural child of the natural child of Judaism³.

In fact it is through his emanation from Judaism that he shows us more clearly his illegitimacy, because things that are real and which lead towards a true goal are perfected over time, rather than deteriorate; and the more they advance in years, the more they must show forth their beauty, their grandeur and their simplicity. In other words, the correspondence with the pure and living laws of the original type, which all Beings are charged with manifesting in their class.

Although Mohammedanism presents itself under this aspect, and claims that it is more perfect than Ismaelism and Judaism, it is infinitely beneath both of them. It possesses neither the *divine knowledge* of the Hebrews, nor the *natural knowledge* of Ismael; and being distanced from *power* and intelligence, it is unable to put in place anything but the law of the sword and the reign of the senses.

³ It goes without saying that this book was first published in 1782, and the view of Saint-Martin on other religions corresponds to the prevailing Western thought of the time which, put simply, believed that Christians and Jews were people of the Book, that Moslems were part of that family but of inferior stock (due to centuries of papal propaganda, and despite the fact that their scholarship has been superior to that of the West for centuries), and that all other religions were inferior and their people outside of Christian salvation. This section should be read in that historical context – PV.

If the books of the Hebrews, despite their obscure expressions, and despite the singularity or even atrocity of the majority of their narratives, tell us of other rights and powers; if they unite events to those dogmas closest to our Being and most fitting to remind us of the *Powers* of our Creator; if they present us with the most expressive images of that which man seeks and which he may obtain; and lastly, if these books do not contain a single material *talking idol*, and only contain living animals, men or higher Beings, one must accord them a distinguished rank among all the traditional books which are known to us.

The name *Hebrew (Ghibri)* does not indicate the true type of present day man; it signifies *passing* or *passenger*, to indicate to man his sojourn on Earth.

In these books one finds clear correspondences with the most profound truths, be they intellectual or physical.

Universal events are represented as being the fruit of these invisible faculties which precede any action. The word *Resh*⁴, which signifies Creator, head, or the duration of a thought, can also signify thought itself; *Bereshit*⁵, which is the first word of the Hebrew text, can thus be denoted equally well by these words: *In thought*, as by the words: *In the beginning*, which limits it to a temporal act. Thus, without rejecting this version: *In the beginning God created, etc.*, one may read it intelligently as : *In thought God created, etc.*, and in that one discovers another truth.

Universal events are represented as being the fruit of many Agents, through the singular expression *Bara Elohim, the gods created*: an image speaking of the truth of the original things, in which one sees both a single event and six Agents cooperating to produce it; as much as the word *Elohim* contains six distinct letters in its pronunciation⁶, which it also has in Greek spelling in the version by Sanchoniaton, though it has five letters in Hebrew.

So it is a weak and false theory that fear of putting limits on the omnipotence of the Universal Source of life, recognizing in this the Secondary Agents which operated perishable actions for Him and who performed these actions for the duration prescribed to them, for this power sheds light on so much more in directing the results which were punctually executed, and it is these works which His Grandeur and Sublime Simplicity did not permit Him to execute Himself⁷.

Those who would ridicule the extraordinary expression, *the gods created*, only show that they have little understanding of natural truths.

⁴ Also the Hebrew letter 'Resh' (ר) – PV.

⁵ Underlining mine, to show 'Resh' in the middle of the word – PV.

⁶ In Hebrew the word Elohim is spelled 'אֱלֹהִים'. Incidentally, the direct transliteration of these letter can result in a word sounding like 'Al-Cheem' (the 'ch' guttural as in the Scottish word 'loch'), which is rather like *alchemy*: another theory for the origin of that word! – PV.

⁷ This suggests that Saint-Martin believed that God, being omnipresent and eternal, could not create something limited and temporal by His own act, and therefore he had recourse to six lower Agents to create the Earth and Universe for Him – PV.

They have affected to translate as *he made* the word *Bara*, which can also mean *he produced, he created*. Let us not fall into the same error: this expression, *he made*, announced a coeternity of matter with God, Who would have had no other task than that of modifying it; while this coeternity only referred to the non-material Creator of matter.

In these books, immaterial creations are referred to as serving as the base and seat for the Spirit of God which, according to common translations, *was carried upon the waters*, or on the primitive and invisible seeds of the Universe, just as we now know that in the order of the Universe, water is the primitive seed⁸ of material forms.

Instead of the *Spirit of God*, translations should have said *the fertile action of these Agents*, the *Elohim*, charged with the production of the Great Work, for in Hebrew the proper nouns are real and essentially constitutive. Now the word *Ruach*, which is translated as *Spirit*, is not at all of this class: it merely signifies *breath, or expiration*; so when one applies this to superior emanations and actions, it can perhaps only be through analogy to the breath of wind, or to the expiration of animals which, in their respective classes, are a sort of emanation; but in neither example would this sort of emanation bear the name of the particular Being who is its Initiator, and the would be nothing to be gained in confusing the action with its Agent, if one wishes to proceed correctly.

Let us now assemble the three images contained in these three words *Bereshit, Elohim, Ruach*. The one gives us the Supreme Thought conceiving the creation of the Universe. The second, the number of Agents, or the active plan for its execution. The third give us the means by which this action is realized. We recognize in these three Agents a natural correspondence to the three intellectual faculties whose existence in man I have previously demonstrated.

As for the perceptible development of these universal creations, we see in these books that it is operated through a means similar to that which man uses to execute his will, since if he doesn't *speak* – in whatever manner that might be achieved – to those who wishes to act, his desire will remain null and without effect.

Finally, these universal creations are represented as separating the inferior *waters* from the superior *waters*, darkness from light; consequently this is the purpose of their existence, for this is their law. Even today the least vegetation can neither acquire nor conserve life unless it occupies a place between the shadowy abode of its creation and the region from which elementary lights shines down. A palpable image of a most important separation, which was operated at the beginning of the Universe, which is repeated in prevaricating man and in all of his posterity and which, to end, awaits nothing less than the coming together and joining together of all that has received existence.

⁸ Or 'origin' – PV.

This important fact is also indicated in the word *Aretz*, *Earth*, which signifies both *region* and *Universe*, for it derives from the word *Ratzatz*, or *he has broken*⁹, *he has bound together*, *he has compressed*. And if one does not trust this idea, note that the word *Aretz* has preserved in the majority of our modern languages a similarity evident in its root, as much in form as sense. The Germans call the Earth *Erd*, the English *Earth*, the Latin by inversion *Terra*, from whence the French *Terre*, *arrêter*, *hart*¹⁰. All are expressions in which the original sense is easy to recognize, and this is why Earth is called the theater of expiation.

The laws of physics are expounded in these books with complete accuracy, and the senary¹¹ division, which the Author symbolically presents as *Days* in the work of creation of temporal things, conforms with Nature. This law is manifested in the relationship between the radius with the circumference, by which the Author wished to teach us that it was a number of six united actions which resulted in the material corporization of the Universe; that this number of six actions must consequently direct all material things as it directed their creation; that this should be understood not only with regards to universal and particular bodies, but even to the time which they were given for their existence.

Independently of the metaphysical relationship between the radius and the circumference, these truths are represented at the celestial level, where six planetary bodies act and move beneath the eye of a seventh star which is their chief and ruler.

They are found materially in the six simple mechanical Forces, which provide the mobility fundamental to all movements of the body.

They are found temporally and intellectually in music, which cannot have regular movement unless its movement is senary since, although we can only sensually perceive fifth between the dominant and the tonic, it is no less true that this fifth contains two distinct thirds¹².

Finally, they are found corporeally in the six white lymphatic globules which, according to physiologists, constitute each red globule of our body¹³.

⁹ This first word hardly seems similar to the other two, but the phrase in French, '*il a brisé*' means precisely this – PV.

¹⁰ *Arrêter* means to stop (as in 'arrest' in English); *hart* could be seen as a further reduction of the word '*arrêter*', and means rope or halter. This is an interesting etymology, further supporting the idea that we are all 'bound' or 'arrested' in mud or earth – PV.

¹¹ i.e. into six – PV.

¹² One has to admire the sneakiness of this argument! Consider the five notes C, D, E, F, G. If you play C and E together you hear the interval of a third. If you play E and G together, you also hear a third. If you play C and G you hear a fifth. However, Saint-Martin argues, since the interval from C to G contains two 'thirds', then two *times* three equals six! – PV.

¹³ Fascinating insight into 18th Century physiology! Globule would probably mean corpuscle, as microscopes has been around for some time and William Harvey had discovered circulation a century and a half earlier – PV.

The people of the Orient, from whom all knowledge of the Universe has been communicated, offer us facts which apply the principle which we are advancing: in all their measures of time, in all their periods, they count by the number six, or by its multiple, and the famous period of six hundred years, known to all these early nations in antiquity, is a most important period which astronomers have subsequently discovered was used in different places across the Earth.

Finally, the people of America believed that the Universe had been created by six men who, before there was an Earth, were carried in the air at the whim of the winds. From this one may infer that these precise correspondences, known to nations which were so far apart and so different from one another, would not have been discovered if in following the senary division of the circumference by the radius, they hadn't found the true and natural measure of created things. One can similarly conclude that the Hebrew Author has not transmitted anything fictitious to us in representing the creation of the Universe by the laws of this same number.

This number of six days, which is perhaps only symbolic, since God acting *at the summit of the angle*, has no knowledge of time; since our temporal days are only formed by the revolutions of the Sun and since, according to the same Author, the Sun was only created on the fourth day; this number, I suggest, shows by its division into two ternaries the law of action and reaction necessary for the existence and production of corporeal Being, and it is this number which is observed by the Hebrew Author.

For it represents the Earth and all that belongs to it as the first ternary, for it is on the third day that all things are formed, and it represents the stars and everything which is not essential to the Earth, as the second ternary dominates and acts upon the first.

It is only in the second ternary that all Beings having life have birth, and it is not unimportant to note that the Sun and the Earth fulfilled functions similar to those which we see them perform today, since it was through the heat of this Sun acting on the fourth day on the Earth (itself formed on the third day) that all animals received life; a law repeated in the reproduction of all species, through the joining of male and female.

Here we part company with physics¹⁴. We present the creation of the Universe as being performed without time, yet the terrestrial globe offers apparent indications of a slow and successive formation. We present the birth of the Universe as a single event and the surface of the Earth is covered with a number of substances which seem to have been created and consolidated only after many centuries. Finally, the chronology of the Hebrew books gives the world a middling antiquity, compared to that which observation of Nature appears to attribute to it. We need to examine these difficulties.

¹⁴ The following section is a most pre-Darwinian justification for reconciling biblical narration with proto-evolutionary theory, and provides a fascinating insight into the mind of a well-read European at that time. Anyone who has read Immanuel Velikovsky (*Worlds In Collision; Ages In Chaos: Earth In Upheaval*) will especially appreciate Saint-Martin's theories as an early pointer to some of Velikovsky's writings: if he had never read Saint-Martin he should have! – PV.

Observers of Nature teach that such an extreme heat accompanied the origin of things, the Universe was for along time uninhabitable following the moment of its birth.

We would ask them firstly if their minds were not repulsed by such retarded progress, by this hiatus in the acts of an all-powerful hand which, by its nature, could not wait for an instant without acting; we would also ask them what purpose, what object was met by this interval which they wish to claim between the origin of things and their formation; what function they supposed for a world without inhabitants – for the picture these people paint is of the work of such a Creator as being without purpose and reason, a Being destitute of wisdom, and this would mislead us as to the true purpose of such a Being.

They only developed these systems by relying on secondary facts which they found under their eyes, such as the present reproduction of particular Beings who can only operate in the spaces of time proportional to their class, or the various sediments and mineral deposits which only accumulated over a long period of time.

These comparisons led them astray: they have not distinguished between primary and secondary facts, the inferior and passive outputs of primordial productions given off by a living action.

It is a constant law that the more Beings approach the Original Principle, the more powerful their generating force becomes, and this Power manifests itself not only in the quality of their output but also in the speed with which it occurs, because the Original Principle is independent of time, and the Beings cannot rise towards him without rejoicing, according to their measure and number, in His *rights* and *Powers*. And if one wants to find proof of this in man himself, one can compare the slow speed of his physical, corporeal movements to the promptness of his intellectual Being, which knows neither time nor space, and which in though transports itself immediately to the most distant places.

Now, without leaving the physical class, we would note that the slower the growth of a Being is, the larger the seed which produces it. This is why the seeds of all individual Being of Nature are corporeal and visible, seeing that their results only grow over a period of time. But Creation in general is the fruit of a Principle and a seed which are not at all corporeal, but invisible, like the inner movers which direct us in all our actions, and this general Creation must be born outside of time.

We will not therefore deny that those principles which are the product of the material Earth and Universe are superior to those terrestrial principles which engendered the animals and plants. Moreover, animals and plants must originally have had a power, a life superior to that which they now enjoy, since Nature changes, like all corruptible things. In consequence, present day animals and vegetables could be regarded as secondary fruits relative to the originals and those which the *original* earth had created by means of the immense heat of its central fire, just as these latter are secondary in relation to the invisible and superior sources which constituted universal Nature.

In the present physical order, we can only find proofs of this truth with difficulty. Everything being secondary, the difference between reproductions and their Principle, though certain, are too imperceptible to find a place in rigorous demonstrations, and besides, when these reproductions come to their ultimate end, they revert to the opposite condition of their original creation, because the circle must be closed. It is for this reasons that the caterpillar¹⁵, having descended into the state of a chrysalis, bursts forth in the glory of the butterfly, which gives rise to a new caterpillar, and it is for this reason that all mortals, engulfed in the somber horrors of the earth, come closest to the pure rays of light when they roam over its surface.

But if we do not have any current and active proofs of the difference between the first and second Principles, we at least have them in analogy. A first example is in the many experiences given to those who, knowing how to release, more or less, the *principle fire*, operate on material vegetation in a shorter time than that employed by Nature to produce them. Another is in the precocious nubility of animals which inhabit climates nearer to the Equator; and finally, in the changes which Nature proves as it becomes more distanced from the time of its creation, since by the enormous bonds and petrified vegetation which remain from these ancient times, it is clear that the first creations must have been much stronger and vigorous than those of our times; and that similarly through the diminution of Nature, more species, both aquatic or terrestrial, have been lost.

If it is clear that the secondary Principles are inferior to the primary Principles in all species, why compare them? Why would one want to match up such unequal Agents? And are those who make pronouncements based on similar premises not exposing themselves to incorrect conclusions?

The slowness of the daily productions of Nature must accordingly have done nothing contrary to the activity of the Agents which directed the origin of things and all the primordial creations.

When observers want to consider the origin of these calcareous sediments which they see over the whole surface of the Earth, they present two problems: one relating to their enormous multitude, and the other to the time necessary to consolidate them and convert them into stone.

So is the same doctrine of this great central fire sufficient to answer these questions, without having recourse to explanations which run contrary to the natural idea which we have of the activity of the Great Being, and which cannot be recognized as right, because they only offer works without point or object?

Without doubt, the central heat has been greater than it is today, but it is not necessary to believe that it was at the point of rendering the Earth uninhabitable, which

¹⁵ Saint-Martin uses the French word for worm (*ver*), and it is hard to tell whether he is making a metaphorical point, or more likely, that he is ignorant of biology! – PV.

would contradict the wisdom of Nature and the object of its existence. It only requires the Earth to have been hot enough to give sudden birth to the original creations which, in their turn, could give birth to numerous secondary creations in a shorter time than is required today for the same things.

It is this heat which enabled the speedy consolidation of minerals, the vitrification of granites, sandstone, jasper, porphyry, living rock¹⁶, quartz; in a word, to give rise to all the vitrifications which compose the tops of the mountains and the majority of rocks. It is this heat which was also able to calcinate this multitude of shells with equal rapidity, from which have resulted marbles, fluorspars, chalks, stalactites and all creations which can be transformed into limestone. It is this same heat which would have been able to connect to these clayish soils and these calcareous earths, those enormous banks of complete and perfectly preserved shells which are to be found in many places of the Earth.

Besides, one cannot dispense with acknowledging equally the activity of water in these great events. Everything tells us that it acted with just as much potency as fire, for even nowadays it makes basalt and lava solid, as well as dissolving both metallic and calcareous vitrifiable matter: like fire it divides as much as it consolidates and vitrifies. Finally, if the action of fire can still prove shows disassemble things beneath our eyes by showing us volcanoes in the middle of seas, the action of water is no less

If we are convinced that fire acted in these First Times of an explosion of things with infinitely more action than it makes nowadays, and that this diminution in heat is the cause of the present-day sterility of the poles and the loss of many species of animals, we must hold the same belief for water, since we see it noticeably diminished on the earth, and we also have evidence that species of aquatic animals were destroyed.

Finally, the earth itself had its own work to fulfill in these First Times, and this work also had much more intensity than it has today: for if fire is the beginning and the end of the elements, and if water is the beginning and the end of corporealization, then earth is the beginning and the end of form.

The *powers* of these elements are thus balanced, the one by the other, and it is when they cease to be in equilibrium that the Universe will cease to exist.

Let us say in passing, that fire being the beginning and end of the elements, everything suggests that fire will end the existence of the Universe, just as it began it; and here we see the progress of this Agent, both creator and destroyer. Since its origin the Earth has been sinking towards its central fire in order to reunite with it; the heavens with their planets are follows suit to reunite with it. Of this we do not see much happening over time, since the atmosphere is carried along with everything else, but the more these masses approach the central fire, the more water disappears; and finally there will remain nothing but a mass of salt. Then the igneous Principles, enclosed in this mass

¹⁶ ‘roc vif’ – this may have a precise meaning, but I have looked in three dictionaries and found no specific reference to this - PV.

of salt, working on themselves, will cause it to catch fire, and will go through it in order to rejoin their fiery origin.

If the power of water and that of earth has been greater in earlier times than it is today, we have in them another means of explaining ancient and prodigious terrestrial phenomena, as well as famous catastrophes of Nature, without needing a fourth Agent which is even more active than fire, water and earth, and about which we will have cause to talk in a moment when we take a look at the origin of these catastrophes.

Finally, if one wishes to reflect on these sudden consolidations which earthly substances receive every day through the virtue of the waters of some fountains, or even through the manipulations of the skilful who know how to direct the forces of Nature, one will no longer be surprised that the original elements were able to effect the same results; and it will be pointless to extend the period and origin of the Earth – as many have done – in order to clarify the difficulties presented to us, .

The Hebrew Books tell us of a seventh day, or the Sabbath, which ended the work of Creation. This word *Sabbath*, which has been translated as *Rest*, simply says that the number of the Universe was completed, and it not only indicates a cessation, an absence of activity by the Divinity, for it is written that He *blessed* this same day; this signifies that at the coming into existence of the Universe He attached *Superior Virtues* to those which He had formed, since they were not *holy*.

If it doesn't abuse the privileges of etymological science, one might find in the Hebrew word *Shebet*, or *Sabbath*, a sense of great sublimity. For in its root this word also signifies: *He is seated, He is placed*. And that is to say that *on the seventh day, God placed Himself, came to inhabit, came to establish his seat in all his works*. Sacred and worthy correspondences of the universal action of the Great Being, but which cannot be presented in an open manner, as they would be subject to dispute according to the letter of the text, though they may be justified by the purest rays of intelligence.

It is no less true that on this seventh day, the Supreme Wisdom presented man with things closer to His Being than for all the Senary Virtues, for it is important to note that man received temporal birth after all the Beings in Creation, and that he was thus the closest to these Holy Septenary Virtues, which consolidated existence.

One also sees in the Hebrew Books the dignity of man, who alone among the Being, has the sublime dignity of being the product of Divinity Itself and, according to the texts, *in the image of God*, that is to say as having the expression and sign: living and active correspondences that the translators have feebly rendered with these words: *in the image and likeness of God*, but which I explained at the beginning of this book, and which finds a happy confirmation here.

Here one sees this man set in a place of delights, close to *Life*¹⁷ itself, from whence flowed *four rivers*, and having received no other interdiction than that of drawing

¹⁷ A reference to the Tree of Life – PV.

near the *knowledge of good and evil*, which existed with him in this enclosure, as it still lives with us today. One sees him established by the Author of All Things over all the works of His Hands, as overseer to command them and submit them to his control; and one can no longer doubt that man, in his very degradation, manifests this glorious law, created exclusively in his favor since, despite his ignominy and weakness, he continues to work to subjugate all Nature¹⁸.

But there one also sees man ignominiously robbed of this empire, today preserving only the most imperfect image of it, having made an alliance with illusion and error, for the Hebrew word נחש *nahash*, from which is taken the word for serpent, signifies *spell, enchantment*.

And this very serpent, this disproportionate animal, this Being without armor, without shell, without feathers, without hair, without feet, without hands, without fins, having all its power in its mouth, a power which is but venom, death, corruption. The serpent, I tell you, carries with it the physical and analogous signs of the seduction to which the thought of man is susceptible, since this animal alone, among all others, has the ability to form a perfect circle with its body, and through this, under a regular appearance, to present us with the form and basis of all sensual and created objects – that is to say, to fix our eyes on matter and illusion. Finally, by forming an empty circle, in which one sees no central point, it had the ability to make us lose sight of the Simple Principle from which all things come, and without which nothing would exist. It is thus no surprising that one perceives such an antipathy between man and the serpent, since man, on the contrary, maintains the *center* through the proportion of his form, while through his form the serpent only presents the circumference or nothingness. Please do not take this to be an imaginative game: important truths are contained within these correspondences. It is there that one may find the means to instruct oneself in the *metaphysical relationships* which formerly existed between man, woman and the serpent; and which materially manifest themselves between them today, in all the regularity of numbers.

In these books one sees the grievous punishments attached to the criminal error of mankind. In seeking the light in another Principle than that which alone possessed him, he lost sight of the least of His rays, like all those who, since then, have sought their education and knowledge elsewhere than in the immaterial principles of all classes, and have become strangers to understanding. It is this *nudity* which made man blush after his crime, and which keeps all his posterity in like shame, until he shall recover his original *clothing*.

For the nudity which the Hebrew books attribute to him before his crime and which it is said caused him no embarrassment, presents another truth. The word *gharoum* (naked) comes from the Arabic root *ghoram*, which signifies a bone stripped of flesh. Now, *bone* is the physical symbol of the word *power, Virtue*, since bone is the power and support of the body. On the other hand, this word *bone* comes from the Latin word *ossum*, from the Hebrew root *ghatzam*, which means a *power, a virtue*. And so we find

¹⁸ It should be noted that at this time the control of Nature was seen as a *good thing!* – PV.

original man in a state of nudity, which tells us that he was an immaterial Entity, a *Virtue*, a *force*, a *Power* devoid of flesh, or without a body of matter.

In the same way it appears truer that in the next passage man is described as not blushing because of this nudity, and in fact, since the confusion which inspires modesty has no carnal meaning, if man, however pure and enlightened, was not concerned by his nudity, and felt no shame, nor any feelings of modesty, it clearly proves that this was not meant in the carnal sense.

XIV

FROM THE FLOOD TO MOSES

The story of the Flood – the Tower of Babel – Origin of the degradation of knowledge – Parallel between the story of Abraham and that of universal man – Moses and the flight from Egypt – About the first and the second laws.

If the Hebrew books teach about the horrible degradation of man, as confirmed by our present state, they explain even more clearly the various assistances offered to him for his regeneration and for which we have seen the need, founded upon the indissoluble link between the Divine Master and his image, and upon the love towards man which burns within Him, and which is the distillation of His essence and Virtues.

It is for this reason that in the midst of all the scourges¹⁹ which followed the various prevarications²⁰ of the posterity of man, and which Nature experienced in their basic Principles, those Hebrew books which have preserved these stories tell us of powerful Virtues, set in motion successively in order to repair the disorders. One reads there about the different periods, where virtual Beings, some of which act on water, others on fire, and still others on earth, and which act on these specific regenerations which occurred at the time of the original regeneration, when before the rehabilitation of man, it was necessary to reestablish his domain.

The first example which Hebrew tradition offers us about these truths is the story of that ancient prevarication in which entire nations of the first times were presented as having been delivered up to the empire of the material senses, to the point of having perverted the *ways of Nature*, and merited punishment by the element of water. It is at the same time a portrait of the means which the Supreme Wisdom employed to preserve a sanctuary on the Earth for the Virtues of just men, and for those of all Beings of His Creation.

The more the general influence of man's crimes upon the element of water appears astonishing, the more one is compelled to admit that it is only the greatness of his Being which could resolve this problem. His sublime origin is a true witness of the extent of these rights: for if one cannot put an end to his Virtues, nor in consequence the fruits which are their reward, so one cannot put an end to his prevarications, nor to the results which must naturally accompany them.

¹⁹ Or 'plague', I have used the term 'scourge' throughout, even when referring to the 'plagues of Egypt' — PV.

²⁰ Or 'betrayal of trust' – PV.

Just as man could exercise the sum of his rights and receive from all Nature the homage due to a sovereign, so he could show the signs of a traitor, a rebel and attract upon himself the severity of all the Powers which he had wished to usurp.

But one should not dwell exclusively on the carnal crimes of the first posterity of man if one wishes to discover the true reason for the Flood. There is too great a discrepancy between the influence of this type of excess on the dissolution of the body, and this destructive phenomena which the Author describes to us as being produced by the concurrence of the whole of Nature. The corporeal decay of the individual who abandons himself to these excesses, being his natural punishment, is found by superior justice to be adequate, without needing to extend the activities of the universal original elements²¹.

One must therefore accept that these early descendents must have given themselves up to considerable aberration and powerful criminal acts to attract upon themselves such boundless and measureless scourges. If the first crime of man subjected him to the elements and plunged him into an immense realm of physical and confused activity, what error could he have committed other than a similar crime, to expose himself anew to the fury of these elements?

The only difference one should note is that original man, not yet being material at the time of his first crime, experienced the action of the same elemental Principle, whereas in the prevarications of his descendants, the elements only acted on man through grosser action, since he himself was grossly corporealized. Now, after all the physical notions which have been presented in this writing, one should understand that the first appearance of corporealization of gross and physical things, is water.

This extraordinary scourge should not be seen as impossible, since it is not impossible for man to be exposed to it, and if men have in them the real right to provoke justice in different ways, this justice must ever be ready to bring the type of punishment fitting to their type of crime down upon them, for the possibility of crime must be not above the possibility of punishment, without which truth would be in peril.

We note, ever taking the physical body as a guide, that in human individuals the greatest excitement of the senses is felt during the first third of life, and it follows that the same period would hold for man in general; and that the intellectual crimes which must have accompanied these mistakes and attracted the great catastrophes, must have by analogy the same date; from which one may, with care, obtain some clarification about the age of the World and the period of the Flood.

Observers have attacked the reality of this Flood in vain, arguing – according to their calculations – of the impossibility of a volume of water sufficient to cover the whole

²¹ Saint-Martin is claiming that carnal excess draws its own debilitating punishment, which no doubt refers to syphilis and other venereal diseases which were incurable in his time, and points out that we must look to other reasons for the Flood. This would suggest that, although we know him as somewhat of a ladies' man, it is highly unlikely that he took advantage of any of his enthusiastic female disciples! – PV.

surface of the Earth and high enough to cover the highest mountains. These objections are but based upon the lack of intelligence of translators, and the errors which systems of philosophy have spread abroad on the nature of matter, in recognizing no other theories but their own.

In fact although the Hebrew word אַרְבֹּת *aroubboth* signifies *cataracts* according to the letter, is it not, according to the same interpreters, a derivative of the word רַבַּב *rabab*, or רַבַּח *rabah*, which means *it has been multiplied*? Then the text presents a natural idea of a more extended activity in the Agent who produces water, and not that of a simple flowing of previously existing water, because then there would only be a union or aggregation, and one would not see the action of a living Being who creates and multiplies.

Following this principle, one could not contest the possibility of great revolutions in Nature, an excess of one element over another, and in consequence universal scourges which could fall upon regions, people, and the entire Earth.

For one would have to deny the existence of the world itself, since it is but the visible result of the living and combined action of the elements which strive against each other, and successively overcome each another within earth's boundaries, each manifesting to the other the life and laws which they have received from the Supreme Powers.

Those observers have also contested the existence of the famous Ark, built by order of the Supreme One, to preserve an offshoot of the human race. Whatever this Ark was, since it represented the Universe, like the Universe it had to enclose – either in nature or as Principles – all the Agents and powers which compose it; and if these things appears inexplicable to the man who walks without its law, they are no longer inexplicable to him who knows them, and who holds to the idea that he must have its grandeur and rights in his Being.

We would add that like the *first vivifying seed of all things*, the Ark was carried upon the waters; that similarly the Ark floated upon the chaos and terrestrial abyss to restore to him, at the prescribed time, the life of which he had been deprived; and like the *vivifying seed*, it contained a pure Agent, a living source of justice and sanctity, in which men coming into the world should still find traces of their original splendor.

Regarding the Ark, I can spare myself from having the observers looking at Chinese traditions; they would see there that the character for boat, vessel, is composed of the figure for *vessel*, that for *mouth* and the number *eight*, which could make allusion to the number of people who were in the Ark. One also finds the two characters *eight* and *mouth* with that of *water*, to express *successful voyage*. If this is chance, it accords well with the facts.

Let us turn our gaze for a moment to those confused and varied remains of the general inundation and of the universal destruction, whose signs are written everywhere

on this terrestrial surface attesting to the certainty of this event. Regarding physics, which I have already discussed regarding the origin of the Universe, then I only had in view the regular consequences which appear to have accompanied its birth. Here I will consider physics in the context of these disorders.

In this general inundation which observers cannot deny, they only want to see a physical fact, isolated and independent of any correspondences which it must have with the *great work* on which all the *Powers* of Beings are employed. But if the immense plan, which has been laid out in this writing, can expand their ideas on the nature of man and on his union with all things visible and invisible, they will find new explanations in these same Hebrew traditions, where the laws of things are faithfully drawn, because they set to work all means and all Beings. There they will see that to end the Flood, independently of the activity and all the convulsing elements, a *superior power* had to stop the action of the Principle of water, and that at the same time it sent a *wind* or an *active exhalation* which, stirring in every sense the waters spread over the Earth, could effect these enormous movements of terrestrial matter from one region to another and, in a very short time, make revolutions which would require limitless time if they hadn't been the result of simple elemental actions.

So let us not be surprised that a combination of actions so opposed and so violent resulted in physical effect so bizarre and inexplicable, when one of the Agents which must have contributed to their production is suppressed. Let us accustom our eyes to understand all the principles if we wish to understand all the facts.

The famous epoch of the Flood was succeeded by a new occasion when the posterity of man strayed, when the criminals strove to usurp the *Powers* of the Heavens by terrestrial means which were both material and impure, concealed in the expression of this audacious edifice which, only being constructed with brick and having bitumen for cement, indicated both the impious folly of those who erected it and the lack of consistency of their work.

The consequence of this crime was the famous confusion of tongues which divide the one people into many nations. This is an emblem which again clearly explains the obscurity and confusion of knowledge of peoples; that despite the variety of their evident and habitual language, having since formed many scattered and separated groups, they could thus observe their common and original language altered by time and produce a innumerable multitude of other languages, almost completely different from each other.

This division of language, perpetuated over all the surface of the Earth, repeats in a symbolical form the present situation of man for whom, since his fall, the language of all true *Beings* which surround him is intelligible; and he no longer knows what means to employ to resurrect his communication with them and recover his original empire.

In consequence, these two punishments being similar, indicate that they are the fruit of the same crime, and that man finds himself today a stranger to the language of truth, because at the origin of things he dared to speak another language than that of this

truth; thus the original posterity never forgot that when they ceased to hold the exclusive dominance of the *First Of All Beings* as their goal, and formed a design to substitute Him with another *Principle*.

Here I am explaining a truth which will one day shed light on our origin and on the degradation of knowledge. People have claimed that early men were in the most profound ignorance and reduced to reliance on the sole resources of their instincts: they have been painted in the colors which we give to savages, having nothing to fight but Nature, nothing to satisfy but their physical wants, and nothing to communicate among themselves but responsive thoughts; and they would have us believe that such was the foundation on which were successively raised the different stages of the edifice of human knowledge.

They are mistaken in explaining the expanding source of the knowledge of man by this theory. When, after his degradation, he was placed on the Earth, he came there with more light than perhaps was possessed by the whole of his posterity, although this light was inferior to that which he had enjoyed before his descent. He had been as the root of these general Elect, employed by the Divine Goodness for the reparation of his crime; he had communicated the light in whose memory he still delighted to his descendants; and it is here that we find the true heredity for which the first men were so eager, and of which men in the following centuries only preserved an appearance through their material inheritance.

So these early descendants allowed this heritage to change, as man himself had lost that which he enjoyed during his glory; and ignorance joining with iniquity could only grow until both being filled to overflowing, the scourges of justice reduced men to deeper shadows and to a total *dispersion*.

It is to this last epoch that one must transport oneself in order to find man languishing in uncertainty and misery, and reduced to the sole resource of his instincts; it is in this epoch that one must seek the origin of conventional languages, since all true knowledge had been lost to men, and they had to use physical descriptions to signify their ideas. Finally, this was the origin of all the effort to which they were obliged to have recourse, having abandoned the infallible moving bodies which could still lead them over the Earth.

Their efforts, actuated by need, soon led them by various means to discoveries and notions, though imperfect, about these universal moving bodies which were so necessary to them, without which no people, no tribe, no individual perhaps can walk through life, either taking the same steps, nor on the same roads²².

²² This appears to be a very circuitous description of origin of astronomy and astrology. Having lost his original knowledge man had to re-learn knowledge through application and observation, and this was further hampered by his having to create 'syntactical and orthological language' to communicate, having lost the ability to communicate without using the physical apparatus of the mouth and tongue, and having also lost the ability to communicate with the higher Beings – PV.

It was thus that the sciences continued to grow among men, and one can follow the uninterrupted chain from this secondary epoch up to the present day. One can similarly be reassured that this body of knowledge will continue to be developed more and more, if one reflects on the innumerable means discovered to propagate it.

It has been so for the general species of man as well as for its individuals. There is nothing purer than the first rays of light which illuminate our Being, when it begins to become susceptible to receive them. Soon these precious rays find themselves stopped, and often even obscured by stormy emotions, which lead man to lose his memory of these first favors of wisdom which he had tasted at the beginning of his infancy; but soon one also sees him deliver himself from these shackles and rise up towards the *region* of knowledge and reason, and walk in the immense *paths* of light and truth, which extend each day before his eyes, losing themselves in *Infinity*.

It is as a consequence of this progressive growth that in the middle of the prevarications and dispersal of the ancient peoples, a Just One was chosen from among Chaldees to be the depositary of knowledge for the different natural laws of our Being. Thus Just One was taken from the town of \aleph Ur²³, which in Hebrew signifies *light*, to remind us of the emanation of original man and all his species, which was born in the bosom of Truth Itself and which belongs and corresponds, by his nature, to the universal center of *Life*.

This Just One was favored physically by three superior signs, or the presence of three immaterial Agents who were corporealized in human form, even receiving hospitality from him. These signs, having allusion to the three *Supreme Virtues*, declared the sublime rank to which this man had been called; and this rank was to be the *father* of a posterity as numerous as the stars of Heaven and the dust of the Earth. That is, to penetrate the sense of this figurative expression, to receive all the *Superior Virtues* of which man had been stripped, and to bring back the *inferior* Beings which has strayed. And finally it was to be the head or father of a people chosen from among all the people of the Earth, destined to be the object of the favors of the Divinity, and to serve as a beacon for all nations. This idea shows us this choice of a people as being necessary, since this man was, in everyone's sight and in his own species, the living representation of that which he had himself been.

To fulfill this glorious task, this is the order which he received, before taking possession of the Earth which had been promised to him. He was advised to traverse both *latitude* and *longitude*²⁴; a new indication of the quaternary superiority of man, and of these two diameters of which we have already spoken.

²³ The English Bible translations tell us that Abram (Abraham) came from Ur, which is spelled in Hebrew as 'Our', translated as 'light'. This should strike a chord with students of Kabbalah who will recognize 'Ain Soph Aur (or Our)' as the Source of the Sephirothic emanations – PV.

²⁴ Genesis 12:14 - 15 "...look from the place where thou art northward and southward, and eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." All biblical references are from the King James Version - PV.

If one sees this privileged man commit adultery which not only goes unpunished, but is even authorized, seeing that it did not stand in the way of his appointment, and also noting that adultery was later considered so great a crime among the Hebrews, it is because the *law* had still not yet been published; it is because the *Great Work* had not yet, so to speak, been started and because men still did not understand their *Virtues* other than by carnal generation, not yet being brought into regular order by a *superior and luminous law*; and such is the power of the physical laws to which man is subject, that the more they draw near to him the more his true nature returns to silence, so that only these physical laws hold sway.

This is why, at the beginning, he was allowed to marry his own sister, though at a later time men were not permitted to marry except with the *fourth* degree of consanguinity, because this number, being that of universal action, gives the same blood time to renew itself, and to demonstrate to man that his intellectual or *quaternary* Being should be in control of all his faculties.

After the glorious promises which were made to the first leader of the chosen people, one may easily recognize in this Just man, in his son Isaac and in his grandson Jacob, the successive and subdivided expression of the three Supreme Faculties from whom he had received the signs all at once, and who served as an example to those who manifest the human soul. He himself visibly exhibited *thought*, through the rank of his appointment which made him the first depository of the designs of the Great Being for the posterity of men; his son is the symbol of *will*, through the free sacrifice which he made of this individual, and the son of his son represents *deed* through the combat into which he entered against the Angel and through the numerous offspring which came forth from him. Here can freedom of understanding not be attained, as we see in Rebecca the image of the physical world, and through the two children who fought in her womb, recognize the image of man and of this *elder brother, his enemy*, with whom he is imprisoned in the Universe?

Later, the descendants of this Hebrew Just One became slaves to the Egyptian nation, from whom they had sought help. The sense of the word *Egypt* expresses sorrow and tribulation, the union of the Jewish posterity with this nation tells us about what the first criminal did in this very abomination, and shows that no Being can throw himself into such a abyss without being condemned to suffer and to sojourn there for a length of time proportionate to his iniquity.

The Hebrew books paint for us the consequences of this criminal alliance. This people, reduced to living out their days and labors in the dust, exposed to the unjust impositions of their tyrants, repeated the humiliating situation of man here below, where despite his action being horribly restricted, he had however to support fights which were far greater and more numerous than in his first estate; where he finally has *to live*, being, as it were, separated *from life*.

Now one sees a famous Agent appears, who, as a child of the Hebrews, escaped from the cruelty of the king of Egypt, or from those *impure Virtues* which set themselves

against the first efforts of our sentient Being and which only work to prevent him from regaining his liberty. This famous Agent is floating, like man, on the *waters of the abyss*, preserved from their whirlpool by a *cradle*, as is man by the Virtues in his body, raised, directed by a faithful teacher, as man would ever be if he were active and docile; and finally, charged like him to watch over the reestablishment of order and the destruction of iniquity.

Through his works, and his victories over the Egyptians, this Just One shows us the powers of man over the *Virtues* of the Universe and over the Principles of evil. Those who have claimed that this Lawgiver had all the knowledge of the Egyptians, have not noticed that, before his battles with the Sages of this nation, this Just One spent many years at the house of his father-in-law Jethro, who was a *priest*, and that he sat near a בור *beour*, a word translated as *a well*, but which can be analyzed as ב *beth*, in and אור *our*, light, signifying nothing less than the seat of knowledge and truth²⁵.

The superiority of man over physical things, and his powers over corruption, is outlined for us in the picture of the flight from Egypt and in the passage of the Red Sea. The first picture the Egyptian annihilated, so to speak, by all the scourges which they had attracted upon themselves, but did not cede until the *tenth*. It describes them stripped of their wealth, in which one surely understands the criminal instruments of their religion; it paints them pursuing the Hebrew people by uncertain roads, who, alone, visibly rejoice in the light, while shadow has spread over its enemies and over the whole of Egypt. The second represents the elements obedient to the voice which commands them to open a free passage to those who were led by *wisdom* and to resume their natural course at the approach of the impious who, having none of the *Virtues* necessary to defend themselves, became their victims.

This second picture teaches us again that the corruptible substances of blood are the real shackles which keep man in suffering, and that it is through the breaking of these links, or by the separation of his intellectual Being from blood, that he recovers some measure of liberty; this has already been indicated by the spirit of the precept of circumcision, which was followed by the prohibition given to the people against eating blood, since the life of the flesh is in the blood and the spirit of the flesh had been given to the Hebrews, or to men, for the expiation of their soul. This a sufficiently clear expression to justify the reproach made by the Lawgiver of the Hebrews: that they didn't distinguish in man a Being separate from the physical Being.

Finally, by the many encampments and the different works which followed the flight from Egypt, this Lawgiver pictures the different interruptions which man must endure after his corporeal passage, to realize what he can only know here below in imitation, just as Moses alone presented in himself a complete example of the universal course of man, from his terrestrial origin until the end where his original nature was forever recalled.

²⁵ 'Beth' also signifies 'house' and 'our' or 'aur' signifies 'light', so a simpler translation would be 'House of Light' or 'House of Illumination', an equally powerful concept – PV.

We come to the period when the Divine Voice made itself heard to the Hebrews, where the Lawgiver himself, like all the people, heard the sacred word which was communicated to men, to teach them not to act except in accordance with it, to not put their confidence in *strange gods* and *idols* which were not able to *speak*. In the events which followed, one sees represented the first law of man in his state of splendor, and the second law of this same man in his state of reprobation. Indeed, his first law takes him away since he distances himself from the center of truth, just as the first Stone Tablets were broken at the time of idolatry of the Hebrew people.

The second law, though containing the same precepts as the first – that is to say the indispensable obligation to manifest the properties of our Principle, and to be in some way the living organ of His Virtues – this second law, I say, is inferior to the first and infinitely more rigorous. Outside the daily experience which our present situation compels us to have, we have a sign in these very Tablets which Hebrew tradition presents to us.

The first Tablets of the Law are described as having been not only written, but even carved by the hand of God. An instructional Picture, whose true meaning is the emanation of man outside the bosom of light, on whom the same hand which gave him being at the same time carved the number, or the covenant on which all his power and all his glory must be based.

On the other hand, the second Tablets were explained to us by the Writer as having been written by the hand of God, like the first ones, but the difference between them is that the second ones were carved by the hand of man, and that it is on this work of man that the Requisite Being, filled with love for his creations, again deigned to engrave his seal and his covenant, as He had done on the pure substance of which the first Tablets were the image; such that the law of man not being engraved on his natural material, operates in him that violent and painful state which all men demonstrate when they seek this law with sincerity and draw near to it, because such sufferings and vexations are inevitable between heterogeneous Beings.

The majestic and terrible refulgence which accompanied the promulgation of these laws reminds us of the image of the origin of things, where disorder gave way to harmony; when each Being received his order and his law; where the light mixed and confounded with the shadows strained to separate violently from them; where the criminals who must inhabit these shadows were dragged along with the debris of this frightening explosion; and where those who had been faithful to their Principle rallied to His Divine Light, there to read the irrevocable Decrees of His Eternal Wisdom and to exercise them throughout the Universe.

It is always in the high places that these great facts are presented to us; in those places where air, being purer, seems to communicate the most salutary influences to our entire Being, and a life which conforms best to our nature and to our original destiny.

For later on, when this same law condemned the Hebrew people and those of its leaders who sacrificed in *high places*, they did not exactly claim to speak to the mountains, but to particular objects of Nature to which men have often given a blind confidence, and which, having begun by serving as instruments of Sabianism²⁶, ended by giving rise to the abuses of judicial astrology.

Some particularly large changes were introduced into the knowledge of the Hebrews. One find the proof of this in the waters of jealousy²⁷, by which the priest determined the crime or innocence of a woman accused of adultery. These proofs, stripped of the superior *Virtue* of man, whose priest was supposed to be specifically dressed, appear suspect and present only sorcery and illusion to the spirit. But when one ascends to the nature of man and when one reflects on the extent of his rights, nothing astonishes us in like stories, because the *secondary causes* are subordinate to him and he has the *power* to direct these *actions* to the glory of his intelligence and to the maintenance of the law of Him whom he is charged to represent on the Earth.

In consequence, although this *Superior Virtue* was weakened among men, they nevertheless preserved the formulae. From this came the proofs by water, by fire, by red fire²⁸, by the arms of the cross, which have for a long time been the only criminal jurisprudence of many peoples. These same peoples, held by superstition or blinded by ignorance, only judged after the facts and did not check to see if those who appeared to have these facts were sufficiently trustworthy to merit their confidence, and they did not doubt the innocence of the accused when his courage or his cleverness allowed him to endure the proof.

Finally, eyes were opened, both to the lying pretensions of the judges, and to the abuses of this extravagant form of justice. But men, in saving themselves from these atrocious crimes, were no further advanced towards their Principle: they had suppressed these abuses without making their footsteps any the more assured, guaranteeing that they would make the same errors as their ancestors, and did not become any wiser. They even fell into yet another excess for, not understanding these proofs in a time when they had already been deprived of their underlying basis, they believed that they had never had any.

It is the same with the leper: this illness was regarded by the Hebrews as a punishment for erring against the *Law*; it could not be cured except by the possessor or the depository of the *Law*, and in reality, this privilege or gift belonged to the priest.

²⁶ The Sabians were known for worshipping the sun, moon and stars. Saint-Martin appears to have a distrust of astrology and those who put their faith in the motions of the planets – PV.

²⁷ See Numbers 5:11-15, 27-28.

²⁸ I am not sure what this is (it is certainly not ‘red traffic light’ which is the modern meaning!). I would guess it is ‘trial by ordeal’, in this case by red hot poker. For centuries the proof of ‘trial by ordeal’ in which the person was burned, immersed in water or tortured in other ways, with the belief that if the person was innocent God would miraculously heal them or prevent their being harmed, was the most common means of determining innocence or guilt. The most recent manifestation of this concept was probably the witches’ ducking stool. As we now know this process was open to much abuse. For example, a person to be tried by burning – PV.

Later on, when the art of healing was no longer the lot of the priesthood, when the doctor believed he could stop being a priest, the sources of leprosy remained unknown, as they still are, and the sources of cures were closed. So, in the darkness in which man finds himself, he has sooner thought leprosy incurable than see what he lacked for its cure; just as the evils of man have more than doubled, for he has always had the *means* to prevail over leprosy and yet he cannot find the means to deliver himself.

XV

FROM THE TABERNACLE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

The Sabbath, announces the Great Sabbath – The sacrifices – Salt is a fire delivered out of the waters – The Law of the Hebrews – The Tabernacle compared to the first occupations of man – Man, a fire concentrated in an envelope – The change of government of the Hebrews – The third king and the construction of the Temple – The three Temples: The Ark, the Tabernacle and the Temple at Jerusalem – Wealth of the Hebrew language..

The Sabbath, so recommended by the Laws of the Hebrews, corresponds to the original Sabbath, both in its number and by its reason; and it is assuredly in the spirit of this original Sabbath that it was ordained for them not to sow, no to till the earth, not to tend the vine during the seventh year, or sabbatical year; during this year not to sew anything at all, nor harvest anything; and not to await any type of subsistence other than the natural products of the earth, in order to meet their current needs, without any anxiety about the needs to come.

In fact, does it not recount to us the difference between material laws and those of the intellect? Does it not indicate that matter only exists, produces, sustains itself through violent means and by means of laborious cultivation; while intellectual life, being self-supporting, promises the man who can attain it easy delights and an assured nourishment?

Does it not show us in advance what will be the destiny of man, when the Great Sabbath comes, and he will be reunited to the true divine Virtues, and come into possession of that Uncreated Earth, which will by itself endlessly yield fruit without cultivation; when being an *adherent* to the springs of life, he can continually quench his thirst there, with the confidence that they will ever be more abundant than his needs, and that they will never run dry?

One should not forget that the real temporal Sabbath must be found on the fourteenth day of the Mars moon, that it was at this time that the deliverance of the Hebrew people took place, and that this is the time in nature when we find the first sources of production, for it is around this time that the vegetative principles receive the first reactions of Spring, which must be counted for us from the course of the Moon and not that of the Sun, when both of these stars are found together at the same equinoctial point.

I would add that the Hebrews disturbed the time of their Sabbath, by beginning it at the appearance of the first star, instead of beginning it at midnight, which is the time of

its original institution, considering that this is a central hour; but this is not the only carelessness for which they can be reproached, for when it was institution, their Law was pure and supported by invariable foundations.

There one may see that, as far as the regulations relating to aliments, everything was founded on the most healthy of principles. The prohibition against eating animals well-known to be impure by the Law²⁹, considered the nature of these animals whose impurity with regard to us is written on their very shape.

Those whose head and body are stripped of offensive and defensive limbs, those whose neck is too large, or in other words whose neck and body form a single mass, these I say are the least pure Beings, the least regular, and at the same time the most harmful to man, for it is these whose blood is prone to be carried in abundance in the upper part of the body; and to preserve the language of the Hebrew Law, their blood is physically on their head. Now, frequent use of similar meats would not fail to produce the same disturbance in the equilibrium of our humors³⁰; it is then that the gross sulfurs, which our nature seeks to purge, flow back into our Being and block all the organs³¹.

For sure, no Being is keener to avoid this terrible effect than man, for when the seat of his Principle is disturbed, his Principle itself can suffer because of this disturbance.

Man is destined by his nature to be superior to all those that are *bloody* and impure, since his own head, being separated from his body by a thin neck, appears to be vertically set, so that the *blood* not being able to rise up, reigns and dominates all things which hold to blood.

That which I said about the deformity of animals which are described as unclean also applies to fish, whose body forms a single mass with the head, and appears to carry all the marks of impurity, so that one might ask why the Hebrew Law only banned those which had neither fins nor scales.

In general, the impurity of unclean fish must be less than that of terrestrial animals, because the blood of the former is so moderated by the aqueous fluid that it is neither abundant nor of a temperature capable of producing great havoc. It is for this reason that the Law tolerated those which did not have all the signs of impurity at the same time.

However, as the element they inhabit bears in itself the character of the confused origin of material things; as it is in water that all material Beings take their

²⁹ The list may be found in Leviticus 11:1 – 30. Aren't you glad we are forbidden to eat vultures, camels, tortoises, mice and moles! – PV.

³⁰ The French is 'liqueurs' which directly translates as 'liquors' or 'liquids': I prefer the older interpretation – PV.

³¹ The language is archaic but the description not far off what we are currently told by the dieticians regarding an excess of meat in the diet! – PV.

corporealization; the Law regarded fish as participating to some extent in the *confusing* of their element; and for his reason also they did not involve them in their sacrifices.

One must not ignore the fact that salt, so useful for our food, was strongly commended in sacrifices, and that almost everywhere on Earth it has been the symbol of wisdom. Salts in general are very instructive substances for man. They only come into being from the reuniting of their different parts contained in the waters which hold them in solution, and through the action of fire – be it general or specific – through active combination become strong, and depositories of all the qualities manifested in their corpus. In a word, salt is fire set free from water, and waters have a number so impure that the Hebrews only express this word by the dual number מַיִם *mayim*.

Let us add that, if preference was given to marine salt over other types, this is because it is square on all sides and has seven centers; this is because it directly receives higher influences through the action of the Moon on the waters and because its acid has less affinity with metals than the acids of other salts.

Unleavened bread, so recommended for festivals, has without doubt a very great significance, for it represents the affliction of privation, a preparation for purification and the memory of its origins.

The word *manna* comes from a Hebrew noun which means *to number*, and to come to an understanding of this daily distribution which the Hebrew books tells us were made to the people, this is what is it necessary to know.

Just as the Sun traverses all the points of our horizon each day to revivify the whole circumference, in the same way all men receive a ray of the *Great Sun* every day, which is enough to restore them intellectually, if they have not allowed it to be intercepted by a thousand foreign obstacles. Finally, each day in the physical order there is a universal movement by which all the spheres act one each other and reciprocally approach the bases on which in passing they imprint actions and numbers analogous to the traits they find there; and it cannot be denied that this is the same in the intellectual order, since one is the model of the other.

But in neither order can man pass the confines and measures of his faculties without destroying them, and although he has received these faculties by his nature, he must wait for the *Virtues* and higher numbers to come and complete and nourish them; in the same way he cannot stop relying on this superior aid, and believing that they can renew themselves like his needs. This is what is symbolized by the vases³² of the Hebrews, the manna with which they filled them each day, and the interdiction against collecting double portions.

If one doubted that this manna had existed in material form, one need only recall what one has just read; and if we recognize that, each day in life, intellectual manna is given to us, we will have made a large stride towards believing in the possibility of the

³² Or ‘omer’: Exodus 16:18 – 22 – PV.

material type, for this latter could certainly come from a common branch of the same tree, but which had come lower, as having the body for its object³³.

Regarding the criminal laws listed in the Hebrew books, though they are founded on the most precise justice, I do not propose to justify their origin with as much care as those laws of precept and instruction which we have discussed up to this moment. They present too many difficulties to dare assert that the hand of man, in drawing them up, never took the place of the Supreme Hand; and the principle objection is that, if the head of the Law was obliged to *consult* the Higher Light in all doubtful circumstances, it would have been pointless have a criminal code in writing.

In effect, if he knew by this *consultation* what the punishments set forth by the Law against such and such crime were, he knew them on the *deposition* of *two truthful witnesses*, of which I can give no clearer idea than comparing them to the signature on a letter and its contents, for we know that in Ancient times man wisely began their letters with their name, and this custom still exists among many peoples and in the ordinances of sovereigns³⁴.

But the head of the Law having amassed many of these *judicial sentences*, he must have used them to serve as guides when he found himself presented with similar cases, when he was constrained to *consult* them on the guilt or innocence of the accused.

Following this, the form of this jurisprudence must have been further debased; and the successors to the true heads, finding the laws for the punishment of crimes written down, took these laws to be the sole rule which they needed to consult, and the testimonies of human witnesses to be those which the Lawgiver had in mind; from which one may see what abuses must have been the result of this misunderstanding.

I willingly explain this problem, so that my train of thought does not appear suspect, and to have the right to defend the treasury of teachings which, despite this adulteration, can be found contained in the Hebrew books.

Let us now consider the Ark of the Covenant, the depository of all the *ordinances* which the people ought to observe to maintain their power against their *enemies*. Let us compare this Tabernacle, and the ceremonies ordained to be practiced there, with the *original occupations* of man: we will see that they offer a description of those ancient

³³ This appears to be a reference to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, specifically to the Four Worlds, and suggests perhaps that physical manna comes from a lower branch of the tree than intellectual or spiritual manna, as physical manna is in Assiah and spiritual manna is in Yetzirah – PV.

³⁴ This somewhat confused passage seems to refer to Deuteronomy 19:15 – 21, which lays down the law requiring two truthful witnesses, and also included the famous “eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth” passage, and links this to the tradition of edicts being prefaced with the name of the sovereign, as it still practiced in Last Wills and Testaments, as in: “I, John, being of sound mind.”. The underlying point appears to be that, even if the original Law was given by a Supreme Being, the custom of Common Law, by which decisions are taken with reference to prior similar cases, has moved us away from God’s original Law and closer to a man-made law which is both imperfect and which has lost its connection to the original Law. This seems to be borne out by the next two paragraphs – PV.

symbols, which wisdom must once again show to man, so that it may never be accused of breaking the covenant which it had made with him in forming it³⁵.

Also, it was commended to the Agent chosen for this work to conform to the plan which had been shown to him on the mountain, so that through the visible copy, being similar to the model which man no could longer see, man might be able to draw closer to his former glory and original knowledge.

And so it is important to study this copy with care if we wish to recover some ideas of its original. We must consider the various areas of the Tabernacle, and the different veils which separated one from another, in order to retrace the various progressions and suspensions of the light for us: the *Oracle* enveloped and covered by the wings of the Cherubim; the crown, or circle of gold which surmounted it and seemed to be placed there like Saturn's ring, to serve as the organ of the higher *Virtues* which must descend to that place; the *tables* erected in various locations; the twelve loaves of shewbread arranged six by six, to give us a picture of the two *senary laws*; sources of all things intellectual and temporal; and finally the seven-branched candelabra repeating the number of the *Higher Light* which illuminates and invisibly vivifies this mysterious sanctuary, the seat of His glory.

Not only must the Tabernacle have correspondences with the purpose of the Universe; it must also have correspondences with man, since man is its primary object, which is clearly announced by this square altar³⁶, in which it was ordained that the vases and instruments relating to the worship which should be practiced there be placed. This square form is a symbol analogous to the number of intellectual man, a symbol which one

³⁵ It is important to later sections and arguments to understand that the French word 'arc' or 'arche' can mean 'arch' and 'ark', and also note that the French for rainbow is 'arc-en-ciel' or 'arch/ark in the heavens'. This allows them to draw some conclusions not immediately apparent to English speakers. The first Ark carried the remnants of humanity on the waters for forty days, and the first covenant of God with man was symbolized in the Arch or Ark in the heavens, in a way a celestial correspondence with the Ark upon the waters, and which also symbolized the moment that the terrestrial Ark was reestablished upon firm ground at Mount Ararat. Moses was carried in a second Ark upon the waters of the Nile. And later in life (was he symbolically forty years old, perchance?...) he has an Ark built to house the Covenant with God – received on another Mount, that of Sinai: again, a celestial Ark or Arch to mirror the terrestrial Ark which began his life. Note also that the French word used for Covenant is 'alliance', a word more normally associated with marriage. So by adhering to the Law man was in a way 'married' to God, suggesting a much more personal and intimate relationship than the English translation of 'covenant', with its connotations of a political arrangement. This will also help us to understand the extent of God's fury when Israel was 'unfaithful' to its 'marriage vows'. Four 'arks', four 'arches', forty days, forty years. Moreover, the Keystone completes the arch or 'ark' which binds the two pillars together, and Christ was described as the Keystone, thus uniting God and man. In Freemasonry the two pillars carry orbs depicting the terrestrial and celestial worlds(!), now united by an Arch which ties both together and is itself made stable and enduring by the Keystone, that stone which the builders rejected! The symbolism is both rich and compelling. This is one of the reasons why the Holy Royal Arch Degree in Freemasonry is considered the completion and perfection of regular Masonry. I can only imagine how the scales fell from the eyes of those who went through the Degree one hundred or more years ago, when their familiarity with the Bible would allow them to recognize the allegory as an old friend, and take them on a journey of discovery and deep symbolism: nowadays most Candidates for this Degree have never read the Bible, and see the ritual as a quaint story... – PV.

³⁶ i.e. the Ark of the Covenant – PV.

can easily penetrate, and which will be further developed later on. Now, man's own body also appears to have correspondences as it forms a square shape itself in its dimensions. Moreover, this altar was supported and transported by means of four hollow batons which could never be detached; and this type is found in physical nature in the material form of man³⁷.

One cannot contemplate the physical end of the Lawgiver of the Hebrews, whose sepulcher remains unknown, as well as the story of those Elect Ones who we are told were raised up in chariots of fire, without taking away a vast and instructive idea of our true destiny.

Man is a fire concentrated in a gross envelope; his driving force, like that of all fires, is to dissolve and reunite with the source from which it has separated.

If, neglecting those activities proper to his Being, he allows himself to be dominated by this physical and shadowy envelope, it gains an influence more or less strong, depending on the rights that man has ceded to it through his weakness, his penchants or his pleasures. Then his fire is stifled or buried, so to speak, beneath this obscure veil, and at his death, man finds himself mixed up with the ruins of his corporeal form. This debris must remain heaped upon him so long as he feels nothing *vital* enough in the center of his existence to break and destroy the bonds which attach him to the inferior realm of the body.

If, on the contrary, in following the law of his nature, he knows not only how to conserve the power and rights of his own fire, but also how to augment them further through the action of the higher fire, it should come as no surprise that, at his death, their ardor more promptly consumes the impure form which till now has constrained his movements, and that the disappearance of this form is quicker.

So what happens if the entire man is burned up by this higher fire? He is obliterated down to the least vestiges of his matter. One will find nothing of his body, for he will have left nothing impure, like those Elect Ones who, at the end of their career, appeared to rise up to the Celestial Regions in luminous chariots, which were but the explosion of that pure form which is more natural to our Being than our material envelope, and which we have never ceased to have, despite being joined to matter.

What should one make of the translations which have Job say: *In my flesh I shall see God?*³⁸ One might think that this text is contrary to our thesis. In fact the word *נִקְפוּ* *nifou* comes from the word *נִקַּף* *naqaf*, which signifies: *he has broken, he has cut, he has corroded*, and not *he has been encompassed*. And Job, having recognized that his Redeemer lives and that He must raise him from the dust, naturally adds: *When my evils will corrode or destroy my corporeal envelope, I shall see God, not in my flesh*, as the translators say, but *out of my flesh*. For in *מִבְּשָׂרִי* *mibbesari*, as in a thousand other

³⁷ To state the obvious, man's square shape is 'supported and transported by means of four hollow batons which could never be detached', meaning his arms and legs – PV.

³⁸ Job 19:26 – PV.

cases, the particle *mem* is an extractive ablative represents existence outside of a place, outside of a thing, and not existence in a place or a thing; so here the text carries exactly the opposite meaning to the translations.

I will leave aside the multitude of facts and scenes contained in the Hebrew books from the time when Moses was replaced by his worthy successor, up to the time when the form of government changed. With the principles which we have established we can easily discover what Joshua represents when he introduces the people to the Land promised to their fathers; when he has his meeting with the Prince of Armies of the Lord³⁹ and when he took on the enemies of his people, the towns of *Kirjath-sepher* and *Kirjath-arba*⁴⁰ or the *City of Letters* and the *City of Four*; then I say one will understand what the Hebrew people themselves bring to mind, by allowing many of the criminal nations which they had been ordered to exterminate to endure, and forgetting so far as to make alliances with them.

As for the other scene we find in the books, we can uncover natural and instructive interpretations easily enough, in the same way that in our times it has been shown that the majority of those facts which appeared inconceivable were in fact far less dramatic than the translations led us to think. In Samson's foxes⁴¹, for example, one can see that it was nothing more than bundles of combustible matter, which nevertheless could have been combined with a more *active fire* than normal fire.

I will also leave aside all those facts which appear to be revolting, such as the bloody executions, the cruelties undertaken or ordered by the chiefs and the agents of justice, as I intend to talk of these in a later book.

As to the rest, perhaps it is best only to pour out a little knowledge and wisdom, rather than undertake a universal explanation of all that is contained in the Hebrew books; since not only is the life of one man insufficient, but it would perhaps even require a labor of many centuries, to develop all the points therein contained.

So we will observe that, when we discover many more inexplicable things in them, for whatever reason, this will not diminish the merit of the facts, whose correspondences with our Being and with the nature of things provides the most perfect evidence, in the eyes of intelligent men.

In this number is the sudden change in the type of Hebrew government. Most importantly, when did this change occur? It was when the sanctity of their law was profaned; it was when the avarice of their priests led them to appropriate the objects of sacrifice and when they only exercised their sacred profession as an expedient to their cupidity; and finally, it was when these very priests, being incapable of defending the incorruptible Ark of the Covenant with man, let it fall into the hands of the enemy, and when the people thus found themselves stripped of all that was their strength and their

³⁹ Joshua 5:13 – 15 - PV.

⁴⁰ Joshua 15:15 and Joshua 15:54 - PV.

⁴¹ Judges 15:4 – 5 - PV.

support. It was then that the Hebrew people, despite the wise advice of the last of their judges, wished to be governed by a king, like the other nations.

But just as original man, in separating from the center of light, was reduced to having no more than a feeble spark of this light for his guide, in like manner the Hebrew people, in abandoning their natural guides and submitting themselves to a king, now only had the *Virtues* of a single man – be he weak or be he wicked – as their recourse. And in this manner the history of the kings is the most instructive tableau that Hebrew tradition could communicate to us. For of all the kings of Israel, we are not shown a single one who did not commit a *crime*, and among the kings of Judah, we are shown only a very small number who were exempt, such as Asa, Jehosaphat and Josiah, even though one might reproach the first one for being allied with foreign kings and for having had less confidence in God than in doctors when he was sick.

We hasten to get to the famous period of the temple which was erected under the *third* king; a monument which Hebrew traditions represent as the first wonder of the world, and to which even today the bastards of Ishmael give a kind of homage⁴².

The construction of this temple, made a short time after the Hebrew people had abandoned their natural guides, is a perfect reproduction of the fate experienced by man after he was separated from the source of his glory, when he was reduced to no longer seeing the harmony of the *Divine Virtues* except in a gross and complicated reflection.

These images, completely material as they must be, yet present culpable man with traces of their original model: the Author of Beings, forever jealous for their happiness, offers them the image of His Strength, His Glory and His Wisdom, so as to fix their sight on the greatness and beauty of the light, whence this light will be fixed in their consciousness through His Own Symbols.

The edifice of the temple also reunited all that had been foretold by means of the physical signs of preceding manifestations.

It had, in its true – not literal – measurements, correspondences with the Ark of which Hebrew tradition makes mention at the time of the scourge of divine justice upon the prevaricators through the element of water; and thus the temple was, like the Ark, a new representation of the Universe.

It offered the same attributes as the Tabernacle whose model was given to the Jewish people at the time of the promulgation of the Law, for in the temple there was a place for sacrifices, just as they were performed in the Tabernacle. In both there was a *place* set aside for *prayer*, which was like a conduit for the light and gifts which the beneficent hand of the Eternal One spread upon the elect people and on their chiefs.

⁴² Once more, one must remember the times in which this was written and the ignorance of the author who was repeating calumnies perpetrated by the Catholic Church at the time – PV.

But everything in the temple was more numerous, more abundant, more vast, more extensive than in the preceding temple, to teach us that the *Virtues* are ever going to increase over time; and that as time advances, man will see assistance and support multiply in his favor.

It is in order to instruct us in these truths that each of the three *temple* was marked by a particular distinction. The Ark of the Flood was wandering and floated on the waters, to paint for us the incertitude and darkness of these early times. The Tabernacle was alternately on the move and at rest, and moreover, it was man himself who transported it and fixed it in the chosen places, to recount the rights accorded to man in this second period – rights to which he could aspire now and then when he possessed light. Finally, the third temple was stable and adhered to the earth, to teach us physically what are the privileges to which man may one day lay claim – privileges which extend to establishing forever his abode in the seat of truth.

And so the temple at Jerusalem represented not only what had occurred in the previous ages, but it was also one of the most instructive physical signs that man could have before his eyes, to recover the knowledge of his original object and the means which wisdom had taken to lead him there.

There, in the sacrifices and the effusion of the blood of animals, he found the image of that Universal Sacrifice which pure Beings never cease to offer the Sovereign Author of all existence, promptly using their own life or activity to support His Glory and Justice.

We would therefore add that all is relative to man here below, for it is by *man himself* that this sacrifice should be performed, and the sacrifice of animals was only a secondary facility to manifesting the Glory of the Great Being. Man alone in Nature has the right to offer Him tribute worthy of Him; but being today at the far end of the chain of Beings, he raises himself successively through their means: by placing in the open the *Virtues* of inferior Beings, he can ascend to the *Virtues* which lead them and through this progression arrive at a *living* strength which will bring him to the level where he can fulfill His Law, that is to say of worthily honoring His Principle, in presenting Him with offerings on which are imprinted the characters of His grandeur.

If the Jewish people had been the depositary of such instructions; if they possessed a temple which appeared to be the Universal hieroglyph; if those who fulfilled the functions in the temple which we have described as depositaries of the laws of religion; and if they also did all the things I described to show that the source was in man: it is probable that the Jewish people are in fact the people chosen by the Supreme Wisdom to serve as a sign to the posterity of man.

If this is true, would we not then believe that this nation was sent forth – preferably to all the other nations in possession of these means of regeneration already discussed, so that this religion would necessarily be carried across the Earth by means of

the Agents who had been made the depositaries of the *Virtues* subdivided from the *Great Principle* – in order to give to man knowledge of this *Principle*?

In the same way, we believe we can recognize in the religion of these people a correspondences with the true nature of man and his true purpose, as we have already noticed between the temple at Jerusalem and the harmony of the Universe.

We will see that the frequent ablutions, the careful preparations, the holocausts of all species – whether animal or the produce of the earth – and the sacred fire which forever lit the sacrifices and offerings, are most instructive emblems of all the functions of Beings towards the First Principle, and of the superiority of this Principle over all Beings. The single order for the times fixed for the different sacrifices, the disposition of all the *instruments* which were used, the quality of the *substances* involved, the number and arrangement of the *lamps*, and finally all the parties to this ceremony, were doubtless so many signs of a few of the higher *Virtues* which wisdom has subdivided for man after his corruption.

However, all these things which are, so to speak, common to all religions, being exterior and foreign to man, do not give him a sense of his true character. It is necessary for these great signs to be experienced by him, that they be represented and carried out by members of his own species, so that he will have personal and intimate evidence that it was for such work that he had been created.

If, from his origin, he could have had three great objects for his contemplation: the *Source* of all *Powers*, the *Virtues* which descend from Him to accomplish His Laws, and the *Beings* which never cease offering Him *homage*, then there must remain with him in his degraded state some indications and traces of this sublime spectacle. Then all these great objects should be presented to his eyes as well as those men who represent them.

Now, in the practice and assembly of the Hebrew religion, we can see these three classes with the greatest precision.

The people, arranged around the temple of on the parvis recalls the multitude of pure creations of the Infinite One who remain faithful to this Principle, as much due to love for His Glory as interest in their own happiness.

The Levites busy about the Altar represent through their actions the functions of those privileged Agents chosen to send forth the gifts and *Virtues* of the Great Principle to the least of His creations.

Finally, the high priest entering the *Holy of Holies* alone and but once a year, to bring the prayers of all the people and to have flow down to him the benefit of *life*, becomes a telling image of the invisible God, for whom a single act of power is enough to animate the whole circle of Beings, such that, of all these Beings who perpetually receive from Him the very seed of their existence, none have ever penetrated into the inaccessible Sanctuary of His essence.

And this is how man has been able to recover the idea of his original abode, since he has before his eyes a reduced – but exact – image, and because he has finally seen recounted in his own species the God of Beings, his ministers and worshipers.

There he also sees *physical tokens*, both of his former delights, and of the *fruits* which served as recompense for his *prayer*, since Hebrew tradition gives us to understand how these sacrifices were rewarded, by teaching us that the temple was filled with the glory of the Eternal One or with these positive indicators of *pure thoughts*, with which we have seen man surrounded.

As for the incredible multitude of animals which it is said were immolated at the time of the dedication of the temple⁴³, and in general in the sacrifices of the Hebrews, we have no intention of justifying these descriptions nor of refuting everything that has been said about the impossibility of the small country of the Jews enclosing enough livestock to furnish so many victims, and there being enough sacrificers to slay them all. Those who occupy their time and exercise their minds in critiquing these Scriptural texts could find more useful employment for both.

It would be more prudent for them to seek the means to penetrate these symbols then to stop at their envelope. One should note that the more the Hebrew traditions offer justice and depth in their passages where they are clearly expressed, the more one should admit that when they appears obscure or improbable, that this is deliberate in order to conceal from us those truths which only belong to knowledgeable men, and which would be meaningless or harmful to those others who are not prepared for them.

It would be more valuable to remember that the Hebrew language is in harmony with things of knowledge, since it has no words to express matter or the elements; there is more value in showing us how the original meanings of its most common words are sharp, correct and sublime, and we learn that instead of limiting the Hebrew language to a particular and literal sense, it is so vast that to understand its true spirit, one should focus on drawing out the full meaning, for in the true order of things, subject and knowledge should direct language: it is not for language to direct knowledge and subject.

Finally, it has been more useful to teach us that every corporeal Being is a symbol of an *invisible faculty* which is their analogue. Then one can take the idea of *strength* in the bull, that of *gentleness* and *innocence* in the lamb, that of *putrefaction* and *iniquity* in the he-goat, and similarly for all species of animal and even for all the substances which were offered in kind in the sacrifices.

Perhaps with this attention, we would have already succeeded in piercing the veil. For it is possible that the species of animal sacrificed was the physical sign of the *quality* which corresponded to it, and that the quantity or number of victims was the allegorical expression of this very *quality* that the sacrificer sought to combat if it was *evil*; which on

⁴³ See I Kings 8:62 – 64 - PV.

the other hand he strove to obtain from the sovereign Being if it was *pure*; or finally, through which he rendered homage when he had obtained it.

XVI

FROM THE PROPHETS TO THE WANDERINGS

Elijah and his marvels – The captivity in Egypt – Corn, wine and oil, foundations of the intellectual building of the Great Work – The end of captivity, the sacrifices – The hand of man – The elect people, temporal image of man – The Hebrew people were the depository of the Name.

Among the important things that tradition presents to us, there is nothing which should interest us more than the appointment of the Just Ones, raised up by the Divine Wisdom, Who being unable to abandon men – since they should be *signs* of His Glory – from time to time presented them with patterns⁴⁴.

None of these models more resembled the ideal than the Just One Elijah, whose name embraces all classes of Beings who are higher than matter, and who was made known through most extraordinary acts. But it is because he participated in the strength of the Principle of All Things that we should stop being astonished by such facts. If he remained close to the *Being* Who had produced all things, to the Source from whence flows all perceptible *signs*, both material and immaterial, which operate in the Universe, what difficulty is there in the idea that, under the sign of a crow⁴⁵, he received his nourishment from a superior hand? What difficulty in the idea that he unveiled the deception of the priests of Baal, by manifesting the powers of the True God? What difficulty in the idea that gave life to a cadaver, since he was acting by the same God who had given it in the first place?

So let us not be surprised by the rights which he was accorded to multiply the foodstuffs of the widow in Zarephath, to hold back the rain or dew or to let it fall according to his will, to consume the captains of Ahaziah with fire from heaven: for if we do not lose sight of the designs which the Divine One has for us, if we read the Book of Man, there we find the elements of all these marvels.

One can surely see here beneficial it is for us to be ever strongly united by thought, desire and action to the *Virtues* of these privileged Beings, since the faithful disciple and successor of Elijah repeated almost all the marvels of his master.

⁴⁴ The word ‘modèle’ means ‘model’, or ‘pattern’. I have chosen ‘pattern’ in remembrance of the first two lines of the fourth verse of the popular Christmas Carol “Once in Royal David’s City”: ‘For he is our childhood’s pattern, day by day like us he grew’. Thus, Saint-Martin states that the prophets were sent to the Hebrews to provide an ideal ‘model’ or ‘pattern’ for them to follow in their lives. This is an interesting variation as the prophets are usually seen as people who warned the Hebrews and their leaders against errant behavior, and not as role models whose example was to be followed, especially given their general hygiene and unusual eating habits! – PV.

⁴⁵ I Kings Chapter 17 – II Kings Chapter 2 - PV.

But one of the most beautiful teachings which Elijah has left to us is when, being upon the mountain, he recognized that the God of man was not in the *violet wind*, nor in the *trembling air*, nor in the *great and devastating fire*, but in a *soft and gentle wind* which announced the calm and peace with which *Wisdom* filled all the places it approached, and indeed, this is a most sure symbol of separating *truth* from *lies*.

The various Just ones who followed the same career were charged with telling the kings and their people the fate they must expect if they proceeded to deviate from their Law. And just as there are numberless roads along which to stray, and just as the hardships which correspond to these deviations are equally innumerable, these Elect by presenting images of them, fulfilled their duty by means of signs most appropriate to what they had to tell.

It is for this reason that the Supreme Justice, desiring to make the Hebrew people feel the horror of their idolatrous alliances, presented them with the symbol of union between one of His Delegates and a female prostitute; a union which also represented original man when he had covenanted with impure substances so contrary to his Being.

It is for this that Justice, wishing to give notice to His people of the dispersion with they were menaced and the shameful state to which their enemies were going to reduce them, commanded another of His Agents to appear, stripped of his clothes, exiting through a breach made by him in his own house, and secretly taking flight.

So it was for this reason that, wishing to represent to the Hebrew people the undignified treatment to which they were going to submit in their servitude, Justice did not hesitate to have them see a Just One plunged into the most terrible suffering and taking for nourishment the most disgusting things.

Man can see himself in these various images form which he may compare them to his deplorable situation.

This was the source of this multitude of allegories and emblematic facts which the stories of the prophets offer us with such extraordinary passages, and which one could not imagine when they are separated from the secret events which are their object and reason.

From this the errors of those who dared to judge these passages, without knowing their sense or correspondences, multiplied. These observers have created chimeras in order to argue against them with more success; and for this they can only carry away imaginary victories.

When, in defiance of the teachings of the several Elect Ones, the people and their masters abandoned themselves to crimes of *putrefaction*, the Hebrew books give us the story of a new servitude even more humiliating and harsh than the first, since, in their

Egyptian bondage the Hebrews had come willingly from a foreign land, whereas, in this second servitude, the enemy came to attack them in the heart of their city, shed their blood, dragged them from their hearthside, ravished and profaned the most precious articles of their religion.

One can even note that it is written that these cruel enemies blinded the king of the Hebrews, and that since this chief represented the light of the people, this was to show that the manner in which Justice dealt severely with the prevaricators was to extinguish the flame of their knowledge.

This symbol was repeated during their servitude by the flight of many tribes who, being escaped the yoke of their tyrants at Babylon, went far away and by hidden paths, to dwell in an unknown land on the Earth. There they still practiced the religion of the Eternal One in its pure state, according to the Law of the Hebrews; there they made expiation, through mourning and sadness, for the prevarications of their ancestors, and represented that *pure living organ* of our thoughts, which withdraw when we are *craven*, and which lament our voluntary errors, that all their tears might be offered as tribute to the Supreme Wisdom and Justice, Who forgets the crimes of the guilty in order to attend to the sorrows of the innocent.

The same symbol is seen in the Ark of the Covenant which Maccabees tell us was deposited by Jeremiah, during the captivity, in an unknown place where it must remain until the end of time⁴⁶.

But in all these symbols, one always sees clemency accompanying justice, ever giving hope to unhappy mortals condemned to privation. It is for this reason we are told that at the end of time the tribes who were exiled will reunite with their people, and that the Ark will come out of the hidden place which concealed it, with the same refulgence and majesty which surrounded the famous mountain where the Law of the Covenant was given to man.

A conquering king of Assyria, wise and partaking of the knowledge of the Hebrews, knew that the end of their slavery had come. He charged a Just One, indicated to him by Divine Wisdom, to lead them to the Land of their Father, in order to rebuild the temple which had been abandoned for the whole period of this horrible servitude, where they had been deprived of their religion and their true sacrifices; where also, plunged into sorrow, they had hung their *musical instruments* on the branches of the willows rather than mix their *songs* with the *impure harmony* of their *masters*. These images are so plain and so strikingly similar, there is no need for us to explain these correspondences.

It is the same with the differences found between this second temple and the first. The first had been so impressive that those who had known the old temple, and who saw the new one built, could not stop themselves from shedding bitter tears, so much did they sense the value of what they had lost. This remind us that the corporeal temple which

⁴⁶ II Maccabees 2:4 – PV.

man inhabits today is nothing more than a sewer, a shadowy dungeon compared to the temple in which he had his first abode.

The priest in charge of the rebuilding of this temple rediscovered one of the copies of the Law. Those who have thought themselves able to deny the prophecies of the Hebrew books, by alleging that Esdras had forged these books himself, might have been able to give the weight of this objection to the prophecies whose events has preceded it, but not for those whose completion could not have taken place after it, and they cannot deny that these are not very numerous.

In reestablishing the religion, Esdras reestablished the offerings of corn, wine and oil, which had been the custom during the great days of the Hebrew people. I will not conceal the fact that these three substances combined form the fundamental materials on which rest the intellectual edifice of the *Great Work* of the restoration of all things; because the first is the *recipient*, the second the *active and generating Agent*, and the third is the *intermediary link*.

To give an idea of the properties of oil, I will make the observation that it is composed of four elementary substances which give it *active* correspondences with the four cardinal points of the universal circumference. Among the various oils, that of the olive holds the first rank, because the flesh of its fruit being on the outside, because of this it receives the original effects of influences, without forgetting that, due to its natural quality, it fixes and retains these very influences. It is for this reason that, when describing the prevarications of the Chaldees, Baruch depicts the women burning olive stones before their false gods.

A short time after the deliverance from this second captivity, the *strong* ceased to *fight* and became *like unto women*; one sees all their *Virtues* consumed and corrupted; one sees this *chosen tree* become so weak and so sterile that, in the allegorical expression of the prophets, it could not produce even a single *branch* strong enough to make a *prince's scepter*; one can clearly see these people fall into such blindness, that they do not fear to go, for money, and solicit from among the idolaters the high priest for their own temple.

One then sees a *powerful enemy* surrounding their walls, making them experience all the horrors of war and want, and one recognizes in these numberless evils and terrible scourges the fulfillment of the menaces which had often been reiterated to the Hebrew people, if they did not keep the Law of His Covenant up to then; when the unhappy couples fed on delicacies, found themselves so harried by hunger that they would tear out their own fruit, and having devoured it, they would quarrel over this unformed and disgusting mass to which man is attached in his mother's womb. A horrible image which teaches both of corporeal man and his abominable origin, and the strong necessity for him daily to devour the bitterness and impurity with which the first crime commingled him.

Soon *the perpetual sacrifice was interrupted for want of victims; a pile of dead bodies had accumulated around the altar; soldiers, armed and covered with the blood of their brothers set themselves up in this redoubtable place, where the grand priest alone could enter but once each year.* It is then that, subjugated by numbers and by wretchedness, the people dwindled into a complete dispersion. They became wanderers, without a temple, without sacrificers, without an altar, as man after his fall groveled shamefully in the privation of his original rights and the sublime functions which he fulfilled in the Universe.

The Hebrew records, considered in this context and point of view, present us with a faithful mirror in which we can contemplate the story of man. One should also not refrain from recognizing in them traces of a light and of a superior power, of which man left to himself was absolutely incapable. I speak of those *Virtues* which must have brought visible assistance into his tenebrous abode, or of those Agents, many of which were proclaimed in the Scriptures are having neither genealogy nor ancestors.

Finally, the number of those Agents and the different periods in which they manifest, represent that subdivision of Divine Powers which control the torment of man here below, but to whom he must submit before recovering his domain, and whose pictures cannot be painted in colors severe enough, since for him whose last thought has been contempt for truth, the first must be the terror of this same truth.

We must now fix our attention on the appearances of cruelty and injustice offered to us by the Hebrew traditions, and on the choice which Wisdom has made in selecting a people who have responded to His kindnesses so badly.

Let us first consider these cruel executions, to this enormous effusion of blood at the hand of the Hebrews despite the formal Law which forbid them to shed it; let us talk about the scourges launched against innocent people in expiation of the faults of their chiefs; let us talk about all the sufferings of the many who were its victims, not only for the prevarications of their ancestors, but also those of other criminals apparently unconnected to them.

The first of these problems is resolved by a contradiction. The more exact the prohibition made to the Hebrew people against shedding blood, the more Wisdom made known that the right of Justice was reserved to Him alone, and that having alone been capable of giving life to men, He alone had had legitimate power to dispense it.

But in reserving the exclusive right to act on man, Wisdom does not lose the right to act through him. And so in whichever way He manifests His action, He changes none of the Laws which comprise man, for it is always He who operates; and as such in using the hand of man, He must do it in a way which is closer to the gross state of us guilty ones, which control He continually exercises over all the posterity of man, as over all Beings.

Man therefore being but the Agent or organ of Justice, for him there is neither prevarication nor crime, and as he does not shed blood by his own authority and for his own reasons, he is not accountable in the eyes of Justice. This is a truth which men have often applied poorly to their conventional justice, and to the province of social order, whereas it only properly applies to the true Law of man; a truth nevertheless of which human justice still preserves a trace and imprint, for it regards all those who judge and kill in the name of the prince as innocent, and only deals severely with those who judge and kill in their own name⁴⁷.

The Hebrew Author shows us in effect how the hand of man was passive in these great events, and how it was directed by a superior power, since he often presents us with prodigious numbers immolated for Justice in an instant, and by an insufficient quantity of men.

As for the bloody and cruel executions for crimes in which the people had not participated, without recalling here what has been said about the crime of man⁴⁸, one must distinguish between specific crimes and those which are common to an entire nation. The constitution of the body is such that evil, like good, is reversible in all its members. We see examples of this in the simple order of human things.

Besides, what can stop all muttering about the uncertainty we have if the Supreme Wisdom does not pay for the services which He requires of us; if after exercising His powers on the recipients of His Justice to terrify the guilty, He does not compensate them for the works which they have performed; if being more noble and fruitful than all the sovereigns of the Earth, He cannot pour some rays of His Glory into the soul of men, who look for recompense out of all proportion to the pains and service suffered? And when the progress of this wisdom is considered from this point of view, what can we answer when they use these arguments? Injustice is not setting a workman to work; but making him work and then holding back his wages.

If one then wishes to bring to mind the ills which afflict the posterity of man all over the Earth, and compare them to the scourges of all kinds which, according to the Hebrew traditions, were visited upon the Jewish people so many times, one will see that these afflictions were more focused and more frequent upon the people destined to manifest all the effects of the Divine Virtues.

For, despite the difficulty in admitting to scourges so widespread and ills so numerous being inflicted upon a single country and a single people, as I have already said, widespread prevarications must attract widespread molestations; and from what we

⁴⁷ A modern example would be those Germans captured at the end of the Second World War who claimed they were ‘only following orders’. Does this make them culpable or not? Saint-Martin was no doubt referring to kings and princes ordering their men to war, when killing the enemy was not considered a capital offense, as murdering a person outside of war was. In this paragraph, I have written the word ‘Justice’ when referring to human law with a small ‘j’ although it is spelled with a capital ‘J’ in the original: conversely, when a word is written with a small first letter (such as wisdom) but refers to a superior Being, I have written it with a capital letter, for the same reason – PV.

⁴⁸ That is, the original prevarication – PV.

have glimpsed of the rights and will of man, be they for or against him, there are no grounds or facts which should surprise him, or appear supernatural to his true essence.

It is true that in general, natural ills which afflict nations and which occur without the hand of man, are not comparable to the facts reported in the Hebrew books, in which Divine Justice is almost always exercised against the guilty by men. But if the Supreme Wisdom had to choose a people from among all other peoples to accomplish His designs, if He truly made this choice to recount to man the privileged rank which He had given to him in earlier times above all other the Powers, whatever the people chosen, we should be able to see assembled in that people all the diverse activities which would constitute an order of Beings if they were in their state of perfection.

But the posterity of man being in degradation, it cannot represent this order of Beings except with a great irregularity, and this irregularity consists of showing in the same species all the activities of the opposite species. It consists of so shrinking the image that, in the same order of Beings, one sees both active *Virtues* and passive *Virtues*; such that in the same race, in the same people, one may find both judge, executioner and criminal, while these names should belong to different Beings.

As for the prohibition against the shedding of blood, let us seek why it is said in the Hebrew books that God once more asked for the soul of man from the *hand* of man, and even those of animals.

On the subject of the word *hand*, let us firstly restore an error by the translators. יָד *iad*, hand, comes from יָדָה *iadah*, he has thrown, because in fact the hand is the instrument which throws. But the word יָד *iad* also means *power, force*. Now, if the translators had been led by wisdom, they would have said in Proverbs that death and life were *in the power of the tongue*, which would have been very expressive, instead of telling us, as they have in fact done, that they were *in the hand of the tongue*, which offers us only an unintelligible and extravagant picture⁴⁹.

Let us then transform the word *hand* into the word *power*, and let us recall what dangers menace the impure man who leaves his body before his time.

Since the Law of Beings is irrevocable, they are forced to fulfill it. Now, if intelligent man must live for a time in blood, and if he is deprived of his, then he must attach himself to another blood, usually that of his murderer, be it a man or beast, because then this blood is the closest and the most open to him⁵⁰.

In these two cases, only the greatest disorder can result for him, since a Being can only inhabit the body which is proper and natural for him. In attaching himself to the

⁴⁹ Proverbs 18:21 says: “Death and life are in the power of the tongue”, so I am not exactly sure what Saint-Martin is arguing about, unless the wording in the French or Latin Bible are different – PV.

⁵⁰ This is a bizarre passage, in which Saint-Martin has a person killed before his time entering the body of the man or animal which killed him! The references to ‘blood’ hark back to the earlier passage in which Saint-Martin said the spirit of man is contained within the blood – PV.

blood of another man, he constrains it without being able to rest, since another Being resides above him. In uniting with the blood of a beast, he links himself to even more gross and foreign shackles, and all these ills are so many obstacles which retard him and molest him on his journey. Thus one can see why God once more asked for the soul of man in the *hand* or power of all that is blood, since man is his tithe through the original correspondences of his quaternary with the *ten*. One can see the basis for the horror which men have generally had towards murderers; and finally, why all the nations on Earth have regarded those whose cadavers are exposed as food for the birds and other animals as covered with the ultimate mark of reprobation⁵¹.

Let us move on to the second question, concerning the ingratitude of the chosen people.

Most observers are shocked that the Hebrew books, in presenting a people elected by the Supreme Wisdom to be a mirror of His *Virtues* and Laws, depict a people which become the most gross, the most barbarous and the most ignorant of the Earth⁵²; so that, far from fighting for the Hand which has chosen them, at every turn they arm themselves against Him; so that, by only observing the letter of the precepts of His Wisdom, they became useless to His designs.

If those observers had opened their eyes to the true destiny of man, to the inextinguishable love of his Principle, Who burns with zeal and ardor for him, and to the belief found in all peoples that this Principle works without cease to deliver them from their darkness and privation, then they would have realized that the Hebrew books, as all other traditions, are but the story of man.

They would have realized that this First Principle, Whose image man was charged with manifesting on Earth, continued to furnish him – even here below – with the means of accomplishing his destiny; that He knew the most sensible way was to show him, through his own posterity, what he would have been if he had retained the rights of his origin; that in order to do this the First Principle both could and had to select from among this criminal posterity some Being less culpable and nearer to Him, and make him the depository of the *Virtues* which Justice grants to the Earth to lead it to His Center; because of the original covenant to give this Being the promise that if he made them a legitimate practice, not only would he preserve them for himself and his posterity, but he would also augment his *Virtues* without end and exponentially⁵³; but if, on the contrary, he and his descendants scorned them, all these gifts would be taken away, and instead of enlightening the nations and leading them to their center, they would become the object of His justice and the disgrace of the Earth.

⁵¹ It is not surprising that Saint-Martin had clearly not come across the funereal habits of the Zoroastrians, who make a point of returning their corporeal bodies to nature by exposing them of funereal towers as a feast for the birds of prey – PV.

⁵² This is another instance of an age without political correctness! Rather than suppress the text, I have translated it here and again can only say that the ignorance of the time presented the average man with a distorted view of the worth of the great cultures of other religions – PV.

⁵³ ‘*Jusqu’à l’immensité des nombres*’: literally ‘up to the immensity of numbers’ – PV.

Those observers would finally have seen that this first covenant on which the emanation of man was founded was repeated in a physical and temporal scene, by which he should enjoy all the advantages inherent in the splendor of his source if he remained attached to it, just as he could expect all ills and degradation if he divorced himself from it.

But although the Supreme Wisdom could and had to make the temporal choice about which we have spoken, although He selected a just Being in which to confide the treasure of his kindnesses, since no impious person could participate; if the subsequent posterity of this Just One came to deviate from His Law, and if in consequence it became a receptacle for ignorance and the object of contempt of all peoples, would one say from this that the choice of this Wisdom had been unworthy? And what if the first choice that He had made had become less pure in himself; though he himself became uncleanness itself? Then one would have to say that man, emanated from the Supreme Wisdom, was without glory and corrupt at his origin, since today we see him groveling in crime and opprobrium.

So we would say that this people, despite the fact that they so little supported the Hand which had chosen them, were no less – at the time of their election – than the living flame which should have shone in our darkness, and recounted the temporal image of which invisible man is the model. Finally, let us recognize that he should have been the living proof of the principle which has been outlined, on the necessity for communicating the subdivided Virtues of the Supreme wisdom among men.

One cannot deny that, in the complete dispersal to which they were delivered, they no longer presented the marks of this truth. This people, chosen by the Wisdom to be His sign upon Earth, represented the glorious estate of man in the purity of his origin and the sublime functions which this Wisdom called him to manifest in the Universe. These people also represented the order and harmony of this Supreme Unity which all Beings should ceaselessly contemplate, so as to conform to the regularity of their pattern. In a word, they were the beacon of nations and the flame which should progressively enlighten them.

When the Hebrew people fell into the camp of the guilty, when their crimes dragged them into forgetfulness of their rights and into a false and impious religion, and into the harsh dispersal which must necessarily be the result, their original nature had not changed at all. Though the exercise of their rights and faculties had been withdrawn, the covenant of election was not destroyed; though the members of this body were completely dispersed and subdivided, they still retained their fundamental correspondences.

And so these people continued to offer the original imprint which constituted them. They always bore the *seal* of the Minister to which they were called upon them, and carried their indelible essence everywhere they went, just as man has retained his, despite his crime and his degradation. So, when the Justice let these people wander

among all the nations, He still exhibited traits in them, though modified, of a worthy origin which attested to the existence of *Virtues* and divine perfections.

In this manner He gave the nations – in distorted pictures – secret signs of those Virtues which love and wisdom had penetrate into the dwellings of men, in order to show them for all time the living image of the True Being on which their existence was modeled. And this people being dispersed among all nations of the Earth, had in front of their eyes both the Agents who necessarily were the organs of truth, and the punishments which followed them for having dared to scorn it.

We cannot better end this discussion about the Hebrew traditions than by showing on what the sublime privileges of which these people were the depository rested. This is the fact that in his language, he had the first positive and collective *Name* of all the faculties and attributes of the Great Being, a *Name* which distinctly encloses the *Principle, life* and *primordial* and *radical action* of all that may exist; a *Name* by means of which the stars shine, the earth brings forth harvest, and men think; a *Name* by which, dear Reader, I have written these truths for you, and by Which you can understand them.

It is true that this great *Name* passed into all the other languages of the Earth, but in no case did it pass in the complete sense which it had in the language of the Hebrews. Some only have an indicative denomination of the existence of s Superior Being, without expressing His *Virtues*. Others preserved some of His principle traits, but made an abstraction of all the others, and these do not paint a true picture of our God to our senses. Still others, whose languages are close to Hebrew through their antiquity, preserved the letters which compose the *Name* of the Universal God to a large extent, but altered the form and pronunciation, and soon stopped associating it with the vast and profound ideas whose source it is. Hebrew alone possessed this Supreme *Name* intact, a stock on which are and shall be grafted all the other *Names* destined to support the posterity of humanity. We are not therefore surprised that this nation is presented as being the beacon to nations and the visible hearthstone on which, since the Fall of man, have reflected the first rays of the Great Being.

We believe that we have presented till now a collection of principles which are sufficiently linked, coherent and true to overthrow all doctrines of error and emptiness, and we believe we have replaced them with a most solid, luminous and consoling explanation. If, up till now, man had neglected seeking to manifest the properties of the Source from which he descended, at least he can no longer accuse Him or complain that this Source hasn't provided him with the means to do so.

For though man, as a natural consequence of his faults, had been reduced to being unable to contemplate the images of his divine faculties except in a dismal and painful subdivision, they are so multiplied in him that they no longer leave any cause for complaint.

Not only do all substances and all actions in Nature each express a trait of the creative faculties which have produced them, not only do all the facts of man tell us that

he is emanated from a sentient source, that he has been separated by a crime and that, because of an indestructible need and because of the law of which he is comprised, both Wisdom and man must ceaselessly strive to reunite. But still all the traditions of the Earth show that this source has never stopped coming close to man, despite his defilement, that He circles about him by innumerable channels in all parts of his corrupt habitation and that He shows Himself visibly in all His steps.

So, all that man can perceive with his corporeal eyes, all the acts which he may perform and produce according to the laws of the physical realm, all that he can receive through thought, all that he can even learn through traditions, by the different doctrines of his peers, by the spectacle of a sublime religion given to the Earth, through the shameful and contemptible state of those who had lost it by having profaned it; there he sees so many irrevocable witnesses which speak to him in the language of his Principle and of His Law.

If Wisdom formed man under the express condition that he manifest Him in the Universe, we do not believe it the more unjust, nor ineffectual, to contemplate the ways that He never ceased to use to reestablish the union which should always have reigned between Him and us. Let us recognize, in short, that while we endlessly fail our side of the *covenant*, Wisdom occupies Himself expressly in fulfilling His.

XVII

KNOWLEDGE⁵⁴ AND TEACHING

Knowledge and its genuine source – The compassion of Earth – Idolatry and simple religion, the Agents – We live habitually in the Second Class – The Third Class and its two bases – The resources of Nature to higher aspirations of man – The Fourth Class and the false sciences of astrology and alchemy – The Fifth Class of knowledge – Means of judging those who teach knowledge – True teachings founded upon the correspondences of man – Picture of the progression of intellectual man – Opening of the Fifth Door through wisdom – The need for the Third Age, role of the Repairer.

Let us now seek to be on our guard against the abuses that men make of truth, and consider the different branches of *knowledge* which, in their hands, have been so often separated from their *true source*.

I will fulfill this task so much more willingly as the time appears to be approaching where it will become necessary to remind men in some way of these important things. The traces of barbarism have been effaced; one grows weary of the vague and pointless studies which have replaced them; the absurd systems which had been too precipitously raised on their ruins are buried in darkness and appear to be drawing to an end; and although these poisonous plants have grown deep roots in many places, since they have shed all their seeds at once, nothing is left in them to grow, so that they are destroyed by their own impotence.

Among the shapeless debris of these colossi of imagination and corruption, we see a class of observers appear who are both prudent and judicious, and who, learning from the aberrations of those who have preceded them, endeavor to make their course more sure.

A hidden desire focuses their attention on the remnants of truth scattered through the Universe. Their emulation, to some extent directed by Nature, has them daily uncover traces of light whose existence they hadn't suspected a few moments earlier. In a word, the spirits ferment and physically purge themselves of foreign substances with which they were mixed up for so long.

So it is likely that these observers, after studying at length the laws of Beings, celestial and terrestrial phenomena, the physical correspondences between man and all that exists, parallels in languages and the true meaning of traditions, will finally perceive the immense realm that is the knowledge of man and that they will then enjoy a system of knowledge that is true, logical and universal.

⁵⁴ '*Les Sciences*': I will use 'knowledge or 'science(s)' as necessary to improve the translation – PV.

Let us note here that the most important and the principle of all these discoveries is the recognition of the physicality⁵⁵ of the Earth, for it is easy to assured ourselves that our planet enjoys this facility, since we enjoy it ourselves corporeally and because our bodies come from the Earth.

Just as the smallest parts of our bodies communicate their physicality to the immaterial corporeal Principle which animates us, so do all terrestrial Beings invisibly communicate theirs to the *Physical Principle* of the Earth. And one can determine the extreme degree of its physicality, since it combines both our physicality and that of all the other physical Beings of our realm, and besides which it has correspondences of a different type with other Classes of Beings⁵⁶ which appear more distant, and which can only correspond with it by means of their *number* and by their *secondary actions*.

But to better understand the importance of this doctrine on the physicality of our globe, let us understand that it is the *basis* of all physical phenomena, just as man is the *basis* of all intellectual phenomena, and thus Earth and man are the two places in which are reflected all the *actions* and all the *Virtues* destined to be manifested at one time.

Here is one of the sources of this sublime knowledge towards which men seem to walk without knowing it, and which should one day teach them what their true occupation and the true destination of their Being is.

But one cannot reflect on man without realizing that this period could be as much something to fear as something to desire for him.

For at what time has the *tree of knowledge* not been weighed down beneath the weight of *strange branches* which are grafted onto it? We have seen that idolatry is the result of man's descent from the pure idea and simple cult of worshiping his *Principle* to worshiping *inferior objects*.

Now, if material time only began for man after his crime, one may see how for him being in material time it was difficult for him not to fall into idolatry.

In fact, what has become of this *simple cult* to which man was called by his nature, and of which he has perceived so little trace about him since his degradation; this *cult* which pure Beings who are free of the shackles which bind us offer to the Eternal according to their *Virtues* and their *number*? Too sublime for Earth, He hides from our eyes and no longer allows us to gaze upon Him.

⁵⁵ *Sensibilité* can mean physicality, sensibility and sensitivity. I have translated it here as 'physicality' to emphasize the material nature, but one should remember that, to a French reader, it also carries aspects of the other two words at the same time – PV.

⁵⁶ It is worth mentioning here that Saint-Martin envisages five Classes of Being. He explains this later, but to make the text easier to read, I will list them here: 1st. Divine; 2nd. Spiritual; 3rd. Natural; 4th. Material; 5th. Impure. This is reflected in the five ways man can act: 1. in God; 2. with God; 3. through God; 4. without God; 5. against God, as we see later in this Chapter – PV.

Forgetting this cult having been the first step which man made in distancing himself from his Principle, his only resource was in these pure *Agents*, formerly his *ministers*, and now his *masters*; these *Agents* who are joined to time like him, but not contained like him in the shackles of a gross and corruptible body; finally, these *Agents* on which God *writes* without ceasing today, as he formerly *wrote* on man, and who, in their turn, *write* on all the parts of the Universe, so that man may everywhere be within reach of instruction.

We could say that, in a way, we normally live under the laws of this *Second Class*, since we receive daily thoughts which can only come from those who comprise and inhabit it. However, as we are almost always *passive* in these communications and as some cult heralds the *activity*, one must presume that this *Second Class* presents to our study more *physical, insistent and positive objects*; and that, from then on, it requires a more vigilant and better *directed attention* than those which the majority of men employ.

This *Class*, without being as perfect as the *First Class*, is the highest level to which man may wisely raise his eyes during the rapid instant that it passes across the earth. It does not require any matter, instrument, or organ foreign to those which man possesses as a consequence of his nature. From his birth, man carries with him all the *materials* and all the *foundations*; without which this edifice would never be built.

Nevertheless this *Class* knows the *time* and the *suspension* of actions permitted to it, since such is the law of all *Agents* enclosed in time; and if there are masters who teach otherwise, they are either ignorant or imposters.

But the more this *Class* is sublime, the more it is difficult for man to remain there. To do this everything that is prideful in him must disappear and be wiped out, so that nothing but his pure and real essence may be allowed to shine forth. While preserving this indestructible integrity of his *Being*, those illusions which fill him must make room for solid and true substance, just like tender vegetation which, in the soil, loses its softness and takes on a more durable matter in its channels which, without changing its form, gives it a resistance to all trials. Finally, man, joining the *life of another Being* to himself, must perpetually renew himself without ceasing to be himself, and the *life* of this other *Being* is that of the Infinite One.

Let us therefore not be surprised if this *Class* appeared so elevated to those who had known them that, from the Fall of man, many men worshipped them, and this was the first source of temporal idolatry.

There is a *Class* which is *inferior* to this. Although it is only at the *Third Level*, it is the most in accordance with the infirm and degraded estate of man; and like him it is a mixture, composed of two significant bases.

The first of these bases has as its subject knowledge about the true nature of man, and the second embraces physical Nature. Both are pure, respectable and full of marvels for him who knows how to follow their correspondences, and to bring to his contemplation a simple, peaceful, humble intention, disposed above all to contemplate

and admire those beautiful spectacles rather than to reign over them and to glorify himself for existing there.

Both are depositaries of those hieroglyphic emblems which have served as the seed for the symbols of fable; both have been known by many Sages of olden and present times; both are the origin of many religions which are clearly practiced on Earth, since there is not one which does not exhibit at least a vestige of them. And when these traces be further distorted, the pure and constant desires of man who follows them in the simplicity of his heart can help them to recover their original efficacy.

If the first of these bases should serve as the model for the second, the second must support the first, to satisfy all the laws of our Being, and to bring all the faculties of which we are composed into perfect equilibrium. For if man, aspiring to *intelligent knowledge*, neglects the *resources* which Nature puts before his eyes, he runs the risk of achieving nothing but ignorance and folly.

In fact, if elementary Nature is harmful to us, it is when we allow ourselves to enslaved by her, and not when we penetrate its *Virtues*. In a word, to ignore Nature is to crawl before her, to subordinate oneself to her and to remain in the thrall of its shadowy path. But to know her is to conquer her and raise oneself above her; and those who are focused on real *objects* recognize her usefulness so well that, when they are exhausted from a too great abundance of *the fruits of their studies*, it is enough for them to fix their attention on a physical object to obtain relief.

Besides, if we find ourselves put in the midst of these physical objects, this proves that the Supreme Being wants us to begin to understand Him in this way; if He has put this book⁵⁷ before our eyes, it is so that we may read it before those *books* which we still are not able to see. This is one of the greatest secrets that man can know: to not go to God as quickly as possible, but to spend a long time on the road which leads there.

Nevertheless, let us take care never to separate this inferior base from the *intellectual body* which must vivify it and which is its true goal. That is to say, let us endeavor never to contemplate these physical objects without taking the *flame of intelligence* as our guide, for it is the God of Nature. Without this light, we only see an apparent confusion and will never penetrate the wisdom of the order and harmony which constitute it, just as we will never draw near to that God who is above wisdom if we do not begin by *deifying* our heart, seeing that nothing operates except by analogy.

Let us keep from losing from sight of this higher goal and of limiting ourselves exclusively to physical and elementary knowledge. This is the danger into which men of almost all ages have fallen. It is this danger which befell Ishmael, and then Esau, who lost his birthright. And this is why the Arabs who descend from Ishmael, and who have

⁵⁷ Here we find an overt reference by Saint-Martin to the “**Book of Nature**”, and in the following paragraph he even makes mention of ‘order’ and ‘harmony’, two of its pages. While this may be old news to francophones, I am sure this will be a revelation to English followers of his teachings – PV.

been such fertile sources of the natural sciences that they are acknowledged in this way to be the institutors of all areas of study, still live beneath the true purpose of man.

It is in distancing themselves still further from this Class that the Mohammedans have reduced the religion of the Arabs to simple bodily observances without intelligence or light; that, for them, the freedom of the senses is so to speak without restraint, and is it not perhaps for reasons relating to this fact that Mohammed is said to have been inspired by the Angel of the Moon⁵⁸?

So, in order to obtain a complete understanding of knowledge and *Virtue*, it is clear that the two bases, intellectual and elementary, must lend mutual assistance.

From dividing up these two bases, as implemented by the Arabs and also by early men, an immense source of abuse and error has resulted which forms a Fourth Class. The men of this Class, drawn to natural substances, have limited their view by dint of fixating on them alone.

Their aim has been focused on the Inferior Being of man; and if they occasionally concern themselves with his Superior Being it is only in order to present Him with objects which are not worthy of Him.

From this in all ages is born knowledge based upon formulae and secrets. This knowledge whose success, according to those who teach it, depends exclusively on dead matter, amulets, pentacles, talismans, or the observation of physical objects, the flight of birds, the alignment of certain stars, the features and structure of the human body, that which is understood under the names of geomancy, chiromancy, magic, astrology, and all knowledge in which the Principle being subordinate to *secondary causes*, leaves man in ignorance of the *true Cause*. Now, it only takes one step to go from ignorance to error and iniquity, as an uncultivated terrain covered with brambles soon becomes a lair of serpents. It is through this that blind and false masters, abusing the faith of people whose passions and vices they deceive, daily turn men aside from their original destination and the true goal of their trust.

I am not talking of those who, enjoying the most celebrated reputation among men, are even beneath those whom I have just described. Not only have they estranged themselves, like those described, from the invisible cause which presides over all the laws of Beings; not only have they become blind to the destination and Principles of natural things; but they have also lost any understanding of the properties of the least substances. They only observe the exterior effects of the body without being concerned with the true correspondences of these Beings with man.

However, man's intelligence cannot always be asleep, and it has at least sought the laws and correspondences which these Being can have among themselves. But

⁵⁸ See my earlier comments about Saint-Martin's exposure to Catholic prejudice. I would prefer to translate his words than censor him: the reader should be intelligent enough to examine the text in the context of the times – PV.

having separated these Beings from their Principle, they are forced to explain them only with reference without reference to God, and it is from this that those material and incoherent doctrines about the production of stars by means of the division of a single body of incandescent matter have arisen. These diminished comparisons of the birth of these great and living causes, with the dead, passive fusions of our earthly substances, systems, cost their author considerably more effort than would have been necessary if they simply accepted an active and controlling Principle of all Beings, Who infuses each with a measure of *power*, of *Virtues* and of *life* analogous to His plans; because only falsehood and error causes man to labor; and it is a peaceful and natural deed when he is in truth. But as I have already said, I must not speak of this order of experts, for they are worthless relative to knowledge and the objects of our study.

Finally, there is a *Fifth Class* of knowledge, and it is abomination itself. It possesses *means* and *intelligent physical emblems* like the preceding Classes; it knows the *number* and *properties of phantoms*; it has a *religion*, and a certain purity is required to operate it. Finally, there is a nation on Earth which sells other peoples a part of the *ingredients* necessary for this religion, but the *results* are horrible; their *signs* are usually traced upon those who profess and practice it, so that men have eloquent examples of justice before their eyes. For as the *object* of this knowledge is *false* and corrupted, it leads men by opposite path to those which lead to truth. But since this truth is found everywhere, the monsters of whom we speak cannot take a single step without encountering it, and not coming to it by means of *natural roads*, they approach truth only to be driven back; they only know truth through being tested by its severity, and do not enjoy the peace which is its own⁵⁹.

To these different Classes of knowledge, one must add intermediate gradations. We shouldn't forget that each of these Classes can lead to unlimited expressions, either in the number of branches which it encompasses, or in the extent of these branches, which allow it to combine completely or in part with other Classes, be they the closest or the most distant, to form amalgams which man's conception has difficulty in recognizing.

For from the sands of the sea up to the highest regions of Beings, man can establish many and varied *signs* of his *original entitlements*; he can, as he proves each day in his arts, his tastes and his passions, put his soul into his eyes, his ears, his hands, his feet, his taste, his head, his heart, in his impure organs. And all these things, corporeally linked to him, are but the image of objects distinct from him with which he can identify.

From this one shouldn't be surprised at the jumble of doctrines on the Earth, and see in them different combinations of the divine, the spiritual, the natural, the material

⁵⁹ Being described both as 'impure' and 'working against God' one may safely assume that the Fifth Class refers to black magicians, witches, fortune-tellers and their ilk. However, the reference to the "nation on Earth which sells other peoples a part of the *ingredients* necessary for this religion" is intriguing. We are clearly prior to the rediscovery of ancient Egypt, which later provided many talismans, mummy bandages and other accoutrements for magical spells. I would hazard the opinion that Saint-Martin is referring to the *gitanes* or gypsies – but this is only an educated guess – PV.

and the impure, because all the Classes are open to man, and because when he does not regulate his steps by an *infallible guide*, he allows traces of his corruption and ignorance to enter into his *works*. So, it is invariable that man, through his nature, can act in God, with God, through God, without God and against God.

It is not difficult to see why it would be in our interest to decide between all these types of knowledge. But seeing the mixing up to which they are subjected in passing through the hands of man, it would be possible that under a plausible exterior they could lead us into error. So let us protect ourselves from the masters who only build their knowledge on a material foundation, on formulae and on scientific recipes, always focusing on secondary causes since, I repeat, there is almost no gap between secondary causes and corrupt causes. And those who cling exclusively to similar recourses and to those who teach them should only merit our compassion.

Those who manifest a more elevated knowledge and *superior means*, require our vigilance and meditation even more, because as their path is less well-known, it would be easier for them to lead us stray. There are two ways to assess them: by their teachings and by their *facts*. I would say facts are the more important for those who only witness them, though they are more useful to those who have the good fortune to be their instruments. But as this vocation is also one of illusion and bad faith, it is important to exercise prudence in carefully observing all that manifests and all that happens, so that one does not mistake natural and subordinate causes for the activity of superior causes. Another means of protecting oneself in these types of observations is to not be blind to the point of wanting to explain everything by the sole mechanism of secondary causes, as have some commentators of the Hebrew books who, speaking about the Law given on Mount Sinai, have represented the imposing sounds which accompanied this episode as being simple meteors, a clap of thunder and lightning⁶⁰.

Teaching is therefore the surest touchstone to judge the knowledge claimed by a master, to know the purpose which drives him and the direction he has given to his abilities.

This teaching, we are bold to say, is that which has been presented in this book, teaching founded on the nature of man, on his correspondences with his Principle and with the Beings which surround him.

It is this teaching which teaches him how he is superior to elementary nature, since this is but a *composite unity*, or a fraction of the great unity, necessarily following the law of *numerical fractions* which is to diminish in their exaltation, or to be ever more numerous in their roots than in their Powers; so that the more the material Universe advances in years, the more it approaches annihilation, since it augments to its Powers.

⁶⁰ ‘*Les feux*’ can be translated as ‘fires’ or ‘conflagration’, but in this instance I believe it is an abbreviation of ‘*feu du ciel*’, or ‘lightning’ (lit. ‘fire from heaven’) – PV.

It is this teaching which shows the intellectual Being of man as *complete*⁶¹, since he is attached to the intellectual and divine origin in which all Powers are complete; which states in consequence that according to the law of *completeness*, he must grow and spread in proportion to how much he raises himself to embrace his Powers, since the privilege of *complete ones* is to manifest more and more their grandeur and the indestructibility of their Being.

It is this teaching which, by showing the *number* of man as being greater in proportion with how high he raises himself to embrace his Powers, leads us to understand that there must come a time where the temporal action of this *number* being more complete, he can no longer act except in the infinite, and in consequence outside of both specific and general material boundaries. So this is the picture of the progressive course of intellectual man: in childhood he does not think at all on account of his body; in youth he thinks through the body; in maturity he thinks with the body; in old age he thinks despite the body; after death, he thinks without the body.

It is this teaching which one cannot accuse of wishing to control the belief of men, for on the contrary it urges them not to take a single step without scrutiny. It is this doctrine which, showing in man the remains and the ruins of a magnificent temple, presents him with all the *actions* of wisdom and truth which ceaselessly strain to raise him up once again on his foundations; which teaches him that the ways indicated by enlightened men or the general Elect Ones are needed by him in the middle age of his rehabilitation, but that the true light which acknowledges each in private comes by means of a still more natural channel and sheltered from all illusion, after man has practiced total self-denial for a long time, is not at all filled with his own conceit, and does not believe himself wise and, like the daughter of Jephthah, has truly bewailed his virginity⁶².

It is this teaching which shows him that the crime of man subdivided all his relative *Virtues* whose vast totality he had contemplated in the blink of an eye in former times, but that the nature of Beings being indelible, since man is the characteristic expression of the Supreme Principle, this law must operate eternally.

It is this teaching which leads him to recognize that the plethora of facts, activities, *Agents* and *Virtues* spread across the Universe according to the traditions of all nations, are the fulfillment of this coeternal and indestructible law which, having created man, accompanies him and will accompany him forever in every instant of his existence.

Finally, it is this teaching which makes him consider all the facts of Nature to be the expression of his true knowledge and of the sublimity of his original functions, in the same way that one can see it in the rainbow, a phenomenon which is formed by the reflection of the solar rays – as the intellectual *Virtues* are the *reflections* of the *Actions* of the Supreme God – which, not appearing except when there are clouds, appears to set the boundary between their shadowy chaos and the seat of light; which carries a regular

⁶¹ ‘*Entier*’ is the word used, or ‘*entire*’ to contrast with ‘*fractions*’ in the preceding paragraph. ‘Complete’ seems the best word to us – PV.

⁶² Judges, Chapter 11; 30 – 39 - PV.

number in its colors; which appears in the form of a circumference so far subordinate to man, who himself forever occupies the center and makes it follow all his steps; which offers an immense tableau to his eyes in which he can see what his first correspondences with unity were, with the submissive Agents which he commanded at will, and with the seat of disorder and confusion from which these faithful Ministers carefully kept him apart; which, in a word, presents so fertile an image that Wisdom could not choose a better symbol, when He wished, at the time of the Flood, to announce these superior and universal *Virtues* which He made for all time the organs and signs of His covenant with man.

With such a sublime doctrine, those who appear to guide us in the path of truth may merit our confidence, for if it happens that their course does not accord with their principles, these principles alone are sufficiently open to our minds that we will sense the error of their course, and the purity of our desires will render their efforts powerless.

In the same way, they would merit our confidence more if they taught us to discern knowledge with that wisdom which is the extension and goal of all knowledge.

One should not believe that this wisdom is at our sole disposition and that it depends completely on us, like the habit of bodily exercise by which we can shape ourselves by dint of repetition, and be assured of success.

We have within us, it is true, many intellectual and spiritual faculties which can be perfected by our labors; these are the *secondary Virtues*, and also knowledge. But we do not come to Wisdom through open strength; it is in the court of kings that we must walk with humility, submission, obligingness, and constant vigilance to charm their benevolence, so that, at any moment that they notice us they must always find us ready to please them and to sacrifice ourselves for them. It is as much through patience as through authority and violence that one should dispel the rivals who cross our path. Mildness and love are the paths which lead to happiness; moreover, despite all this care, the *Prince* may yet perhaps not judge it appropriate to honor us with a glance.

Let us now judge if wisdom is a precious thing and if there is nothing with which it may be compared⁶³. Man must ask for it incessantly, but with words of fire which express how much he desires it. His face must carry beforehand the joy with which this treasure could fill him; for it is a burning thirst, a voluptuous need: it is all his inner Being which must speak.

We should listen to our Masters when they describe the imprudence to which the spirit of man is exposed during its progress because of too hasty judgments; when they tell us that however much knowledge, wisdom and *Virtue* we might possess, there is always more to acquire than that which we have already; that the plants which follow the course of their work in peaceful perseverance should serve us as models; that each moment that man uses to contemplate himself is drawn from those destined for his *growth*; that not only should he count the greatest pleasures which man can experience as

⁶³ Saint-Martin is paraphrasing Proverbs 3:13 – 15 - PV.

being of little value, he should also hold particular pleasure and favor in even less esteem, as the object of the Great Work; nor detached knowledge as the universality of marvels contained in the covenant of man with his Principle, for this false manner of seeing would be the first obstacle to our progress; and if we instill it in others, we may be assured that we will mislead them and that we will mislead ourselves.

We should listen attentively to these Masters if, having instructed us through these principles, they urge us to consider whether there isn't a complement to this Great Work, and in this we come to see the birth of a new order of things.

What would man's knowledge be, what would this Being be able to do to possess the whole of knowledge and truth if he had only been able to hope to know a subdivision of these Divine Virtues? Since his very nature calls him to consider the reunion of these very Virtues and to be their living sign, how would he ever recover his sublime privileges if he had only seen the scattered rays of this reunion?

And who are these heroes, these demigods, these famous Agents whose relations with the Earth are constantly depicted to us by our historic and fabulous traditions? They have only been depositories of certain *Virtues* of unity. One manifested strength by the *grandeur* of his enterprises and by his immense works. Another manifested *justice* through the punishing of *evil-doers* and by the enslaving of *rebels*. Still others manifested goodness and benevolence through the knowledge and help which they brought to the *unhappy*, and by the taste of mildness they brought to men of peace. And one can even say of these Agents, without excepting those which are spoken of in the Hebrew traditions, that they only showed man *isolated Virtues*, temporal and fleeting, and that, in consequence, they did not give him that perfect concept of his Being, nor of the rights which are attached to his nature.⁶⁴

He still lacks the complement of this knowledge to understand the sense of all these rough symbols which truly represented the law of men, but which only represented it in a material way, instead of this law being shown through man's *Virtue* and by the facts which emanate from man himself.

And a *POWERFUL ACTION* is needed in order to demonstrate the very real and potent existence of man, by means of facilitating in him the intelligence of his Being and by raising him to a state of superiority to which, ever since his fall, he never ceases to strain because of an irresistible law of his essence; and so I tell you a third epoch is needed; a perfect model⁶⁵ is needed who presents him with a law which is simpler and

⁶⁴ One might suggest that Saint-Martin is treating of archetypes. Thus, the ancients demigods tended to caricature and exaggerate one aspect of divinity – Hercules/Heraclès for strength, Venus/Aphrodite for love – and we even see this in the Old Testament, such as Samson for strength. Thus each demonstrates an aspect of the divine action (or Virtue), but none of these demigods exhibits the complete or rounded man, and so taken in isolation would lead to obsession or at best an incomplete image of original man. This is one reason why modern thought believes the philosophers of early times understood well the concept of one god, but this was expressed in various aspects, which were taken by the masses to be separate gods – PV.

⁶⁵ *Un type total* – lit. 'a complete type'. He Saint-Martin is referring to Heli, or the Savior – PV.

more *one* than all those which had preceded it; a law more analogous to the true nature of man, whose grandeur and sublimity we never cease to defend⁶⁶.

Finally, it is necessary for wisdom to *open* for human posterity another *door* in addition to those which are contained in the *square* of man's power, that is to say that this wisdom must *open* a fifth door in order to abolish the *number of servitude* operated by the redoubled power of evil, so that man, having himself been delivered from evil, may be delivered from his enclosure. And such is the spirit of this Hebrew law which, at the end of fifty years, brought liberty to slaves and had dispossessed belongings returned into the hands of their original owners⁶⁷.

By means of this new *Virtue*, not only must man make the laws of instinct and brute affection disappear from within him, but he must also replace them with the rights and habits of intelligence. Not only must he recognize all the powers of order and justice, but he must also learn to raise himself above justice itself by conducting himself under a different law from that which had only been written for slaves and evildoers: in a word, he must learn to discern the true destiny of his Being, which was not created to be locked up in fetters, but to do good, like God, through his very nature and through love; not surrounded by the vehicle of reward and punishment. During the first epoch of his expiation, man, like a child in the tenebrous bonds of matter, no doubt tested the kindnesses of Wisdom. But like a child, he received these kindnesses without perceiving nor recognizing the hand which showered them upon him; for he was still passive, and his real and intelligent Being still did not taste its true nourishment, composed of action and life.

In the second epoch, with his faculties more developed, he set about profiting from the gifts which he had squandered.⁶⁸ It was then that the virtuous and enlightening Agents, set before him, subjected him to sacrifices, to teach him about the state of violence and subjections in which all Nature found itself in comparison with him, since everything gave its life for him.

Through this these Agents instructed him on the destiny of the several parts of the Universe. They taught him that there was not a single Being in universal Creation which was not the image of one of the divine *Virtues*; that Wisdom had multiplied these images about man, so that, when he introduced himself to them, Wisdom brought forth a new unction; and thus it transmitted to man all the help which he required; and that, with the model thus uniting with the copy, man could come into possession of both.

This was to paint his destiny in living color, by representing the Universe as a great temple, in which the stars are its torches, the Earth its altar, all corporeal Beings are

⁶⁶ This law is both the example of the Christ and also the perfect law which He gave to us, that one should love God and one's neighbor as oneself – PV.

⁶⁷ The 'Jubilee Year' of the Old Testament provided for a *double portion* of rest every 50th year. Each 49th year would be a Sabbath Year, followed by a Jubilee Year in the 50th, so that for two consecutive years the people would be bound to restore the land, restore personal and economic freedom and to depend on God for their livelihood and their nourishment.– PV..

⁶⁸ Or 'which had been lavished upon him' – PV.

the holocausts and man is the sacrificer. Through this he would be able to recover profound thoughts about the grandeur of his original estate, in which he had been called to be nothing less than the PRIEST OF THE ETERNAL ONE in the Universe.

But, despite this brilliant light which the Elect Ones of the second epoch had come to communicate to man, by announcing that he was the priest of the Eternal One, there was no further explanation of this sublime title.

The image of correspondences which the Elect Ones presented to him, as magnificent as it was, only offered him objects inferior to his true nature. In these he only saw Powers as sparse and divided as the corruptible holocausts. In these he saw neither sign of an imperishable offering, nor of the unity of the Agents which had to come together so that, through them, he could enjoy the fullness of his rights.

And so it was left to a third epoch for him to acquire a more perfect knowledge of truth and for him to learn that, if simple and temporal images could have brought him to discover some of the superior *Virtues*, then he must not place any limit on his hopes in presenting *Truth* with an image emanated from that *Virtue* which, by means of the help it gives to man, vivifies him through that same unity and assures him of the same immortality.

And it is through this that man, discovering the knowledge of his own greatness, learns that by establishing himself upon a universal base, his intellectual Being becomes a true temple; that the torches which must brighten his path are the light of thought which surround him and follow him everywhere; that the sacrificer is his reliance on the necessary existence of the Principle of order and life; that it is before this burning and fertile persuasion that death and darkness disappear; that the perfumes and offerings are his *prayer*, his desire and zeal for the reign of exclusive unity; that the altar is this eternal covenant, established by His very emanation⁶⁹, and to which God and man come together in concert to renew the alliance of their love and to find there glory and happiness respectively. In a word, the fire destined to devour the holocausts, this sacred fire which must never be extinguished, is the divine spark which animates man and which, if he is faithful to his original law, will forever make him as a bright and useful lamp placed on the pathway to the throne of the Eternal One, there to illuminate the footsteps of those who have been separated from Him. Thus, at last, man may no longer doubt that he received his existence in order to be the living testimony of the light and token of Divinity.

⁶⁹ For as we read above, man is the sacrificer and in a way, being the temple is both priest and victim, as was the description of the Christ. Here Saint-Martin seems to describe man as the altar as well, created by God's very emanation, and God meeting man at this altar to renew the covenant suggests, as all followers of Saint-Martin's writings know, that God is within us and that, by following the 'Way of the Heart', we can meet him there – PV.

XVIII

1, 4 AND 10, THE BOOK OF MAN

Numbers and sages – number are the invisible envelopes of Bring – the Book of Man, Virtue of the Quaternary, the Fall – need for the Universal Agent to descend – the Universal Agent and Man – Four is the middle of Seven – the earthly year, image of the universal cycle.

To better convince ourselves how necessary it was for a *unity of Virtues*⁷⁰ to be achieved before men gain sight of their Being – which had only been cursorily traced through particular manifestations – I am going to say something about numbers. But first, I must warn you that this area of study is so vast that man, nor any Being which God Himself created could not comprehend it completely. Moreover, it is so worthy of respect that I can only speak about it to a certain extent, both because it is impossible to be very clear and open in a vulgar language, and because it conceals things which one must not state without preparation.

However, I will do so in order that the Man of Desire may understand me since it is necessary, and I will neglect nothing to procure his education with prudence.

But if it happens that he does not understand me, I beg him in his own interest, not to discuss what I am going to confide in him with those sages in title and influence in the opinion of humanity, for they have desiccated *knowledge* and have no substance; they are but fleshless skeletons and the most nourishing *juices* have evaporated before their eyes without them having the wisdom to grasp them.

Knowledge is free. They have claimed to have established its laws, and have forbidden mankind to hope to discover anything outside of their decisions, but it has fled before them, and they walk in a gloomy void. Knowledge is as unrestrainable as water. They tried to restrain it, but it shattered the shackles they gave it, and they are left in the desert.

Therefore let the reader not go to them in order to air his doubts; they will only increase them or substitute lies. If something in what he is going to read puzzles him, let him fall back on his own faculties and try, through *inner activity*, to make himself *simple* and *natural*, so that he will not be annoyed if success makes him wait. The *interruptions* he will experience are often the same paths which are being secretly prepared for him and which will lead him there.

⁷⁰ It is very difficult to translate the word *vertu*, since it has a broader meaning in French than ‘virtue’. I have sometimes translated it as ‘virtue’ and sometimes as ‘power’, to try to make the meaning clearer: translation is always a balance of clarity in a second language over original nuance – PV.

Numbers are the invisible envelopes of Being, just as bodies are physical envelopes.

One cannot doubt that all Being have an invisible envelope, for they all have a *Source* and a *form*, and this Source and this form being at the two extremes, they are too far apart from each other to unite and correspond without an intermediary. It is the invisible envelope or number which fulfills this role.

Thus it is that in the body earth is the envelope of fire, water in that of earth, and air that of water, though this order is completely different in non-corporeal elements.

One is not unaware of the fact that the laws and properties of Beings are written upon their visible envelopes, since all appearances by which they communicate with our senses are none other than the very expression and action of these laws and properties.

One might say the same thing about their invisible envelopes. These must contain and carry upon them the invisible laws and properties of the Beings, just as their visible envelopes indicate their visible properties. If they are written there, man's intelligence must therefore be able to read them, just as his senses can read or experience the effects of visible properties traced on the body and acting through the visible envelope of Beings. This is how a knowledge of numbers can allow him who does not take them for simple arithmetic expressions, to know how to contemplate them according to their natural order, and see in them those principles which are *coeternal* with *truth*.

One should know moreover that since Beings are infinite, and since the properties of these Beings are manifold, there is also an infinity of numbers.

And so there are numbers for the fundamental constitution of Beings. There are numbers for their actions, their career, just as there are for their beginning and their end, when they are subject to one or the other; there are even numbers for the different stages of progression which is established for them.

And they are there just as much for the limits where the *divine rays* stop and where they reflect back towards their *Source*, not only to present Him their own images, not only to offer Him the glorious witness of His singular superiority and infiniteness, but also to draw *life*, *measure* and *weight* from Him, the sanction of their correspondence with Him. All the things we have seen can not exist except in the Original Source of Beings.

There are also composite numbers to express the different unions and compositions of Beings, actions and *Virtues*. There are central numbers, median numbers, circular numbers and circumference numbers. Finally, there are *impure* numbers, which are false and corrupt. And, we repeat, all these things indicate the different aspects under which we may consider Beings and the different properties, laws and actions – be they visible or invisible – to which we can be certain they are

susceptible. And perhaps the true reason why numbers have appeared so chimerical to most men, is the custom by which accountants make all numbers derive from zero, that is to say, to commence their geometric divisions from zero, before enumerating the first unity. They don't see that this visible and conventional unity, which becomes the first basis of their measurements, is only the representation of invisible unity, put before the first step in all these measurements, since it gives birth to all, and that if they are forced to represent it with a zero, they should that this only depicts its inaccessible *value*, and not see it as a 'nothingness', since it is the source of all the bases on which man can operate.

One sees here that just as numbers are infinite, so the idea one must have of them is simple and natural.

It will become much more simple when one notes that this immense multitude of numbers, which subdivide and extend to infinity, directly sum to ten simple numbers, which return to four other numbers, and those into unity from which all comes⁷¹.

This is why, living amidst all the many things in Nature, we nevertheless only have ten fingers, four limbs and a single body, in order to feel these things, to draw near them, and to command them; for our toes have no other purpose than to give us suppleness, elasticity and speed in our gait, as well as solidity and force when we are standing still. And if you have seen men successfully make use of their toes through strength of habit, the forced exercise which they have gone through to get there and the useless attempts of so many others prove well that these digits are not given to us by Nature to do such things; for, even if they carry the number ten, like the digits on our hands, this is only because everything repeats itself, but with inferior qualities and properties, according to the inferiority of rank.

The allegory of the *Book with Ten Pages* in the work previously cited, clearly offers the different properties attached to ten intellectual numbers. It is sufficient to add that from their different unions and their different combinations result the expression of all the Laws and actions of any Being, just as the active combination of different elements results in the infinite variety of all corporeal products and elemental phenomena.

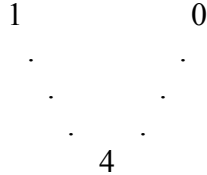
From among the examples I have just given, I will limit myself to just one; but man is its subject, as he is the subject of this work, and from this example one may learn to consider the examples which I pass over, and to consider other properties of numbers.

The ancient philosophers have transmitted to us the addition of the number four, which gives ten as a product, which offers a natural means of reading how to discover the immense *Power* of the quaternary; modern philosophers are content to ridicule all these numerical ideas, without either understanding nor being able to refute them.

⁷¹ Theosophic addition shows that any number can be reduced through adding its parts to a number between 0 and 9 (e.g. $1984 = 1+9+8+4 = 22$ and $2+2 = 4$. Ten can be shown to be composed of four numbers: $1+2+3+4 = 10$. And finally, $1+0 = 1$, showing that all numbers ultimately reduce to unity – PV.

In this book we saw the original purpose of man, which was to be the *sign* and the *Minister* of Divinity in the Universe. We also saw that he was marked with the *quaternary seal*.

It is a singular thing that this sublime destiny of man can be found written in the expressions of the ancient philosophers. For, in bearing the quaternary number up to the result of all the Powers which constitute him, he yields two numbers or two branches which, being reunited, form the number ten, in this manner:



Now, the number four is found placed between unity and the number ten, does it not seem to have the function of communicating unity up to the universal circumference, or zero? Or, to put it another way, does it not appear to be the intermediary placed between supreme wisdom, represented by unity, and the Universe, represented by the zero? Out of this comes the natural figure:



Here I have drawn this figure using original numeric characters, which are attributed to the Arabs, seeing that they have been transmitted to us by them, but the wise men of this country recognize that they belong to a more ancient people.

These characters who, to the experienced eye, carry the exact imprint of the highest secrets of natural and physical sciences, can only have been drawn for common man by Sages, and for them by an even purer Hand, in order to help them walk with a firm foot in the way of truth.

Thus, through the law of numbers and the figure I have just drawn, one can be convinced of the original dignity of man who, being in correspondence with the Source of light and with the most distanced Beings from it, was destined to communicate His *Virtues* to them.

One similarly finds in these number the way by which man went astray.

If, in place of being in the center of his eminent position, man, or the quaternary, is distanced from unity and approached the circumference figured by the zero, until he is lost and enclosed in it, he has become material and tenebrous like it, and here is the new figure which his crime has produced:

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Can we not also discover traces of this union of the quaternary with zero in the number of days necessary for the human fetus to have life? The physiologists assure us that it takes around 40, and so it would be hard to doubt that this had been the source and result of man's crime, since this number is recounted before our eyes in the reproduction of the human species.

Still, we should note, to allay the understanding of the reader, to whom these truths might appear very strange, that we should not apply this number of 40 days to the crime of man, as we see it attributed today to corporeal reproduction. The real number of this Law is only a consequence and an expiation of a *false number* which acted at an earlier time.

Finally, we also find in this simple figure:

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clear evidence of all the principles previously outlined on the need to communicate the superior Virtues down to the unhappy abode of man.

From *one* to *ten*, there are many different numbers which all hold onto the first link of the chain by some particular tie, though we have the right to separate them in order to consider each under a particular aspect. If the quaternary, or man, has descended down to the lower extremity of this chain, or down to zero, but, however, the supreme Source had chosen him as His representative sign, would he not have to be able to recover knowledge of what he had lost; for all these numbers – or all these superior and intermediary *Virtues* between *one* and *ten* – to come down to him, right down to his circumference, as he doesn't have the power to breach the confines prescribed for him, in order to let him reascend towards them? And here we have all the Powers of subdivision which I have already explained regarding the correspondence with man, applied to all the traditions and allegories of mankind.

But that still does not suffice for the complete regeneration of man. If *Unity* has not penetrated the circumference which he inhabits, he has not been able to recover the total idea, and he would have remained below its law. It was also necessary for *Unity* to be preceded by all the *intermediary numbers*, since the order was reversed by man, and he could not recognize the *Original Unity* which he had abandoned, until he has known all the *Powers* separating him from It.

This sheds much light on the nature of this *universal manifestation*, whose need we have recognized for the fulfillment of the supernal Decrees.

For, whatever Agent may be charged with an operation, it is certain that it cannot be inferior to the particular Agents who have only manifested superior faculties in their subdivisions, and if the particular Agents, though reduced to some partial *Powers*, have nevertheless represented the Powers of wisdom, without which they would have been fruitless in their designs, so there is all the more reason that the *universal* Agent must be the depository of the same rights and powers.

And so this universal manifestation of divine Powers following the rigorous laws of justice which result in the subdivision of these Powers, must have crowned all the blessings that man could expect, by giving him a glimpse of these positive truths, from which he took his origin.

We must at the same time acknowledge that nothing less than an Agent clothed in such immense power would be necessary to raise man from his fall, and help him to reestablish his likeness and correspondences with the *Original Unity*.

If it was through the most elevated of mankind that all the evil of his unhappy posterity has been engendered, it would be impossible for man to be redeemed by any man of this posterity, for one must suppose that the degraded Beings, stripped of all rights and all *Powers*, would still be greater than he who was illuminated by the same *light*; else it would suggest that weakness were superior to strength. Now, if all men are in a condition of weakness, and if they are all bound by the same shackles, where from among them would you find a Being capable of breaking their chains and delivering them? And if one found such a man, would one not have to wait until someone first came to break his?

So it is true that since all men are in the same powerless condition, despite all being called through their nature to a state of greatness and liberty, they cannot be reestablished in this state by a Being who is their equal; which proves that the Agent charged with bringing them back to *Divine Unity* must himself be more than man.

Thus we must admit that if *Divine Power* itself is not handed down, man could never recover his knowledge. Then it would never be possible for him to reascend to the place of light and greatness to which the rights of his nature called him; and the seal of the Great Principal would have been imprinted on his soul in vain. Then this Great Principal Himself would have failed in the most wonderful of his Powers, love and goodness, by which he ceaselessly procures for man the means to be happy. And finally this Great Principle would have deceived through his Decrees and in the ineffaceable covenant which binds all Beings to Him.

When I say that there is nothing between man and God, I say this in the order of our real nature, where in truth no Power other than that of the Great Principal can rule over us. In our present state, there is something between God and us; and that is this false

manner of being, this transposition of Powers which by imprinting universal disorder in us, creates our torment and the horror of our transitory situation in time.

This is another reason why the *Divine Power* comes near to us, in order to reestablish general order, by restoring all the Powers to their natural rank; by reestablishing *Original Unity*; by disuniting the *corruption* which had come together in the *center*; by distributing the *Powers* of the center to all the points on the circumference – that is to say, by effacing *differences*.

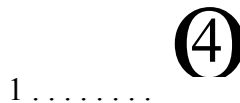
For this is a truth which is at the same time profound and humiliating for us, that here below differences are the only source of knowledge for us, since it is from them that the correspondences and distinctions between Beings are derived; yet these are the same differences which steal away our knowledge of *Unity*, and prevent us from approaching it.

Now, we know that if the *Divine Power* does not take the first step, man could never hope to return to this *Unity*. For with two separated *Powers*, how could the more feeble one – the one which is completely powerless – ascend alone and by itself to effect a reunion?

Finally, without this universal Agent, man may have known from all the preceding manifestations that he possessed Powers and spiritual *Virtues*: but he would never have known that there was a God, since there would never have been a *Unity* in all his *Virtues* which would have let him know this.

And so, we can confidently recognize that the Agent which is the depository of all Powers, whatever name we give him, must possess the totality of all the highest *Powers*, which before him had never been manifested except in their subdivisions; that this Agent would have to carry within him a divine character and essence, and that in penetrating to the soul of men, he was able to make them feel what was their God.

Here I recall the preceding figure:



which represents the state of privation in which we all languish because of the separation we have from our Principle. One can see that in bringing these characters together and allowing Unity to penetrate into the quaternary of man, like this:



Universal order is reestablished, since these three characters:

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are found once more in their progression and their natural harmony. This order certainly existed even at the time of the subdivision of these types, since it is eternally indestructible; but then it only existed horizontally, or on a latitude; whereas in the figure which unites them here under the same point and under the same center, this order exists according to its true number and true law, which is *perpendicular*.

Finally, to speak without concealing anything, it is only in this epoch that the *Great NAME* given to the Hebrews could have all its *action*. Under the law of Justice, it had only acted exteriorly. It had to penetrate right into the center in order to operate in man that general explosion to which his intellectual Being is susceptible, and to deliver him from the state of concentration⁷² to which his fall had reduced him.

Given the profound concepts which we are presenting here, we should not be surprised at all by the diverse opinions which men have held regarding the *Universal Agent*. Whatever idea that they have formed about it, contain nothing about *Virtues, gifts* and *power*, which they are not able to see in Him. Some have said that He is a prophet; others a man with profound understanding of Nature and of Spiritual Agents; others a Superior Being; still others a Divinity. All are right, all have spoken in conformity with the truth, and all these variations only come from the different places in which men stand in order to contemplate the same object. The error committed by the early philosophers was the desire to make their particular point of view both exclusive and universal; that committed by the later philosophers was in not adapting their ideas to the weakness of their disciples, and in wishing to make them absorb the most fertile truths that the spirit of man may embrace, without taking their level of intelligence into account.

Different levels of *knowledge* and will are therefore the only reason for the diversity of opinions reigning among men regarding this important object, for it is to these that the *Universal Agent* has come; to others for whom He comes; and other for whom not only has He not come, but for whom he comes no more.

The same principles which have been explained will help us to discover which should have been the most appropriate age for the manifestation of this Agent. For if He is charged by the Supreme Wisdom with the recovery of the bad beings attached to the alien, shadowy sphere which we inhabit, He would have to follow all of its laws.

According to the physical order of things, an illness can only be cured after the remedy had penetrated to the very seat of life, to the center of the Being, which can be

⁷² Or ‘condensation’. However, ‘concentration’ is probably better, alluding at it does to a process of reducing into a smaller circle (concentric) – PV.

observed in the majority of corporeal disturbances, which can only be properly remedied through the purification of blood.

But blood is the center of the animal body. It is its inmost corporeal Principle, since being surrounded by other principles, it may consider itself to be in the center of the animal circumference, and it is from there that it sends forth the emanations of its own life to the corporeal subdivisions of its extremities.

It must therefore follow that the *Universal Agent* charged with the Great Work of the reintegration of all *Powers*, had to penetrate the most intimate *substances* of all impure Beings, to which He had to communicate His powers in the very *center* of all temporal things; that in order to effect this, he had to appear in the middle of time, as in the middle of all activities of emanated Beings, in order to act most efficaciously, and at a single point in time, both on the center and on the life of all the circumferences.

If one wished to determine a positive and identifiable age for this manifestation, it would be quite possible to discover it through assembling various scattered ideas in the Hebrew traditions. One should remember that their Scriptures teach us about the senary law which directed the creation of all things, and on the holy Septenary Law which is its complement⁷³. One needs to understand the sense of the passage which announces that “a thousand years are but as one day before God⁷⁴”, since neither those who use it in their discussions, nor those who have disputed it, seem to have understood it any better than the others. Finally, we need to know the correspondence between all these expressions, both with the ternary number and the visible corporeal elements, as well as with the *real number* of the unity of their Principle. Then one will see that the superior laws and actions are also clearly designated in numbers, or in the intellectual envelopes of Beings, and that the material laws may be found upon the body.

But, just as we must give the reader very detailed explanations of these matters, it would be useless to show him results which would be worthless for his education, until he could be assured of all this through his own efforts. For now, I am content to lead him on the path, speaking to him further on the *quaternary number*, whose properties we have demonstrated above.

Man, whom the quaternary number particularly suits, was emanated in order to occupy the *intermediary center* between the Divinity and the Universe. Through his fall, he was precipitated into a *circumference* very inferior to the place he had previously occupied, but since his nature had not changed despite his degradation, he had to occupy the center of this new region, as he had occupied the center of his previous one. And this because despite whatever degree of inferiority Beings descended to, their character would be preserved and would manifest itself.

⁷³ Senary = pertaining to six; septenary = pertaining to seven. This refers to the six days of Creation and the seventh day on which God rested – PV.

⁷⁴ 2 Peter 3:8 “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” It is odd that Saint-Martin quotes the New Testament when referring to the Old Testament – PV.

If man, in his fall, still occupied a center, he would thus carry within himself the original quaternary number, though this number would have experienced some alteration on account of the new region which was so contrary to it.

If man, in preserving his *quaternary* number, still occupied a center in the very abode of confusion which he inhabits, the Universal agent, charged with providing him with a model, must conform with all its laws; that is to say, that in appearing in the middle of these times, He must have been imprinted with the quaternary number up to the age of his temporal manifestation. What I am saying is that the quaternary of time and the center of time are one and the same thing.

So the quaternary, which necessarily directs the *Great Work*, must direct the results as He directed the various preparations; for this number, signifying both expiation and regeneration, expands or contracts by reason of the object the Beings must achieve. The first man advanced by *forty*, to obtain remission of his fault and the reconciliation of his temporal posterity; Jacob advanced by *forty* to obtain reconciliation for his spiritual posterity; the liberator of the Hebrews advanced by *forty* to obtain deliverance of his people⁷⁵; the great Regenerator prepared the universal reconciliation by means of a *quadruple denary cube*, since in being its pivot, center and the first of all these types, it is to Him alone to perform the work of the middle of times, through which He embraces the two extremes, being both depository and complement of all the numbers⁷⁶.

Since His Advent, this active quaternary number has reduced itself and will reduce itself more and more in future by reason of *extreme oppositions* for which it will be necessary for man to regenerate himself in less time than in the past; and this progression will continue to diminish until the quaternary *acts* so rapidly, so instantaneously that it will become confused with the Unity from whence it came. It is then that all temporal things will end, when love and peace shall reign in the heart of Men of Desire.

If one reflects on the sabbatical or septenary number which completed the origin of all things, one will recognize that this same number must complete its duration, and that *four* being the center of time, is also the middle of *seven*⁷⁷. But we must guard against numbering the temporal course of the seventh action, in the same way as the preceding six actions. This seventh action, not being marked upon our body⁷⁸, evades our calculations, and it would be impossible for man to calculate its length, since it is governed by *superior numbers* which man does not know how to command.

⁷⁵ Moses – PV.

⁷⁶ I think this is again referring to the fact that the number '4' contains '3', '2' and '1', which can be used to create all number by Theosophic addition – PV.

⁷⁷ In the progression 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 4 is in the center – PV.

⁷⁸ *Ne tombant point exclusivement sur le corps* (Fr.): I have taken this to imply that, since our envelope is not marked with this number, being a number of Divinity, we can neither control it nor guess at its operation. As with many of the phrases used by Saint-Martin, this is hard to translate – PV.

This is something to exercise the intelligence, but there is also compensation for the work which remains to be done to calculate the age and antiquity of the World; and all I can say is that, in order to calculate this correctly, one must use a scale of terrestrial years.

Why use a scale of terrestrial years, you ask, and not days, weeks, months or even the revolutions of a planet other than ours?

Because, since time is the expression of the *six and one* first and constitutive actions of Nature, there must be a direct correspondence to this in its periods and epochs. Therefore it must present us with reduced – yet complete and proportionate – tables to compare to the great table of the Origin of the Universe, its total duration and its destruction.

Now, we know that the terrestrial year is the period which most accurately represents these major traits of the Principle of things, since it shows us in a short period the image of all which has been, which is and which is to come. This is because a year contains the universal production and destruction of vegetation, which is a true reflection of all things past, present and future. Finally, since it contains all these things, all epochs, be they material or immaterial, have been given to the intelligence of man to help him to be *reborn* and to assist him to leave the abyss⁷⁹.

I would say we know that this period is the same as all periods in the revolutions of the earth, that it is the true unit of computation of the Earth, and that during this particular time period the Earth depicts in living activity all the traits of all time. This should be enough to prove that the terrestrial year is the symbolic number of universal time, and that as such, it becomes the basis of all our calculations.

We also find in this the proof which could avenge the Earth for the contempt shown it by ignorant men who wanted to find little correspondence between it and the Universe, as a reason to despise it. If the Earth did not hold itself as closely as any other corporeal Being to the Laws and First Principles which have directed and produced all things, it would not carry with such clarity the number of all these characteristics.

⁷⁹ This seems to be saying that the annual cycle of vegetable life is a microcosm of the life of the universe; and that these periods are given as signs or lessons to help man to learn how to reintegrate (the study of Nature to draw certain fundamental rules of existence is reminiscent of the *Book of Nature* taught in some lineages of Martinism) – PV.

XIX

THE WORK OF THE REPAIRER

The advent of the Repairer or the fourth age of the Universe – Was the Fall of man foreseen? – The action of the Repairer in man – The incense of four aromatic ingredients and the purification of the temple – The correspondence between the visible and the invisible – The law of refraction – All is linked to the Creation, free-will – Wisdom has sowed Virtues around us, to have us gather them – All is linked and all can communicate.

With regard to the revivification connected with the *universal, central* and *quaternary* act, we find indications of this in the Hebrew traditions concerning the origin of the Universe. They teach us that the Sun was formed on the fourth day, and that before it was made, nothing animal had life. It was His reactive fire which worked to draw forth all the corporeal Beings which inhabit the material Universe from the bosom of the earth and the waters. Was this not written to tell us by means of this picture that if man became a criminal and subject to time, he would be unable to recover his true light until the fourth epoch of the duration of temporal things? Was it not to fix the number of this light and to describe the law by which it is directed and directs itself eternally?

It is for this reason that the Law given to the Hebrew people only carried the punishment of crimes unto the fourth generation. Now, the universal Repairer, by appearing in the fourth age of the Universe, clearly satisfies the Law⁸⁰: in this epoch He was able to consummate a universal expiation for the prevarications of all the posterity of men; in consequence. He operated on the impurity and illegitimacy of his own ancestors and on all curses wherever His Ministry could expose them, on man's behalf.

However, should I present the formation of the Sun on the fourth day as a prophetic sign of a foretold event, for, according to many, the crime it occasioned could not have been predicted, since the Author of things was not involved⁸¹, and did not participate in the error of his creature? Should I not rather present this formation of the Sun on the fourth day as a simple confirmation of the universal action of the quaternary number, which had to be completed before culpable and shadowy man could get back the life of his intellectual Being, just as the animals existed in inertia – as it were in nothingness – until that moment when the elementary Sun came to give impetus to the action which was proper to them?

It is an established fact that if so many mistakes have been made concerning divine prescience, it is because those who discuss these facts confuse two very different

⁸⁰ Saint-Martin is drawing a parallel between the physical *Sun* of the fourth day with the spiritual *Son* of the fourth epoch of man – PV.

⁸¹ *Ne fit le pour et le contre* – lit. 'Did not make the for and the against' – PV.

orders of things: the visible order of corruptible things in which we live, and the order of incorruptible things, which was that of our true nature.

Instead of making this important distinction, they attribute to Supreme Wisdom an overall cooperation with our works, which perhaps He has for some of us in our present estate, where we are bound to the checkered actions of Beings who are not free; but they are unable to see His hand in our original estate without abusing Him and denaturing all His Laws.

We will not spend much time on this question; it is of the number of those which are useless and dangerous to approach by way of reasoning divorced from *action*. We must act in order to obtain the foundation for our meditations, rather than meditate before we have obtained this foundation. Without taking this approach, everyone errs in the wide and spacious darkness; each seizes a small part about which, through ignorance and recklessness, he makes generalizations; all is obscured since all is divided; all comes to nothing since man, left to his own devices, uses up his strength and receives nothing to renew it. And this is the provenance of schisms and sects from nothingness. Finally, even one of the great sciences focuses on this very subject.

Let us confine ourselves to recognizing that the universal Agent, appearing in the middle of time, in a quaternary period, and giving man the true reagent he needed, placed him within range of returning to his former domain and traversing all that opposed him; for if man's body exhibits two diameters, and if by that the body is a perishable symbol of the universal dimension, then his intellectual Being, holding to the Infinite Principal, is so much the more endowed with a quaternary sign participating in the infinite and with which he can forever measure all Beings.

But the two corporeal diameters of man are, so to speak, confused, unconscious, disfigured and inert in the womb of woman, until that moment when, reaching elemental light, he is allowed to deploy them. This then shows us that the quaternary measure of intellectual man was bound up and as nothing from the moment he committed the disturbance, and that it could only grow and develop in the time of the great light, in this period when the *Virtues of Unity* are themselves *sensitized*, in order to flow in the four channels which form the hieroglyphic character of man.

And so this epoch provides man with the positive means to exercise in his turn the same reaction on all which is still obscure and hidden to him, and there is no longer anything in the laws and nature of Beings which should be able to hold out against his empire, since all Beings are themselves subdivisions of the universal measure and all partially belong to the *great quaternary*.

But in order for this universal development to produce such results, it had to operate in the middle of universal time and in the middle of particular time, which is its abridged reflection, and which divide the course of the Moon in *four*. The Agent charged with this work had to complete it, not only between the new and the full Moon, but also in the middle of a septenary period of days being a sub-multiple of the lunar period.

Finally, it was at the same tie in the middle of a week, in the middle of a *periodic* month of the Moon, and in the middle of the universal course of Nature that this Agent had to divulge to men the secret Law which had been veiled to them since their exile in the period of expiation, so that by acting simultaneously in these three centers, he opened as it were the *Virtues* of these three supreme Faculties which, alone, could revivify the three intellectual organs of man and bring *hearing, sight and speech* to all his posterity.

It is during this tripe period that he had to enter the *Holy of Holies*, dress himself in the *ephod*, the *robe of linen*, the *pectoral*, and the *tiara* which had been used by the Hebrews in their sacerdotal functions, and which were to them but the symbol of the *true clothes* with which the Regenerator will one day cover the nudity of human posterity.

There he had to expound the *knowledge* before the eyes of those whom he had chosen; he had to reestablish before them the *words* which had been erased from that *ancient book* formerly entrusted to man, and which the same man had disfigured; he had even to give them a *new book* more extensive than the first, so that, through this, those to whom it would be given would know how to dispel the evils and the shadows which surrounded the posterity of man, and so that they would also learn to keep them at bay and to render themselves invulnerable.

There, he had to prepare the *ancient perfume* described in Exodus, composed of *four aromatics of equal weight*, and which the Hebrew priests could only use in the Temple, under the most strict guidelines; he had to fill the *sacred censer* and, having *censed* all the *areas* of the Temple, he had to satisfy his Elect that they could do nothing without this *perfume*.

Finally, his work would have been useless to them if he had not initiated them into his knowledge by teaching them to *gather* these *four precious aromatics* for themselves, to *create* in their turn this same incorruptible *perfume*, and to *extract* from it these *pure exhalations* which, by their living wholesomeness, are destined from the time of the great disturbance to *confine corruption* and to purify the whole Universe.

For the Universe is like a great fire set alight from the beginning of things for the purification of all corrupt Beings. Following the law of terrestrial fires, it had begun by being covered with smoke; then the flame developed and endured to gradually consume all material and impure substances, finally to regain its *original whiteness* and to give to these Beings their original colors.

It is for this reason that in the elemental order, when the flame has pierced and risen above the combustible material, it pursues its dissolution until it is totally destroyed. This is why, as it attracts its *Vital Principles* to itself, releases them and unites them with its own essence, so it rises up with them into the air and gives them a free and active existence, which they had not enjoyed when in corporeal form.

The Universal Chief of all the spiritual institutors of the pure and sacred religion must, like them, retrace on Earth all which occurs in the higher class, in conformity with

the great truth that everything physical is but the representation of that which is not, and that all actions which manifest are the expression of properties of the Hidden Principal to which they belong. The Universal Elect One must Himself have fulfilled this Law in a more lofty manner than all His Agents when He came to complete the Great Work, since on Earth they only showed the cult of justice and severity, while He came Himself to bring the cult of Glory, Light and Mercy⁸².

Thus, in all these actions and in the cult which He exercised, He had to show all that was operated in the invisible order. From the immense height of His Throne, the Divine Wisdom never ceases to create the means for our rehabilitation: here below, the Universal Regenerator never ceased to cooperate with the corporeal and spiritual relief of men, by transmitting to them the several gifts relative to their own preservation and that of their fellow men, by teaching them to distance themselves from the snares which surround them and to fill themselves with truth.

From the immense height of His Throne, the Divine Wisdom never ceases to moderate the evil we commit and to absorb our iniquities in the immensity of His love; here below, the Universal Regenerator gave pardon to the guilty, and when people stood accused before Him, He had to show that it was a greater act to grant absolution than to condemn.

Finally, from the immense height of His Throne, the Divine Wisdom provides His own *Powers* and *Virtues* to abolish the *criminal pact* which submitted the whole posterity of man to slavery: here below the Universal Regenerator had to give His sweat and even His very life to have us *deeply know* the sublime truths, and to *extricate us from death*.

And thus the visible and invisible Orders, being linked by an intimate correspondence, show man the indivisible unity of the sacred motive power which causes all action. To his *Intelligence* there is no longer a higher or lower supreme Power: now it only sees a single fact in all the parts of this Great work, a single ensemble, and in consequence a single Hand.

For this is an eternal truth: that all these facts would never have been understood by man, if He who came to operate them had not lived in conjunction, through all the acts of his Ministry, with the *Unity* with which he was eternally linked by His very essence; just as all the possible manifestations of Divine Powers which Wisdom has sent to aid man would have been meaningless to him if there was the slightest separation or division between these Powers, since man being the last link of the chain, he would never have been able to see the *Virtues* of the superior extremity coming to him if one of the intermediary links have been broken.

⁸² Although most Christian Kabbalists equate Tiphareth with the Christ, it is interesting to note that Saint-Martin is implying that, if anything, the Repairer provided Gedulah or the Pillar of Mercy to counterbalance Geburah or the Pillar of Severity of the prior Agents, possibly implying that it is Original Man himself as Adam Kadmon who rightly occupies the Middle Pillar, and whose heart is Tiphareth - PV.

And to affirm our trust both in the necessary union of these *Virtues* with their Principal, and in the general possibility of all the manifestation of which I have spoken, I will recall here that matter, however real it appears relative to the body and to material objects, is only apparent to the intelligence; that it is because of this appearance that the higher actions can come down to us and that we can raise ourselves up to them; that it would be impossible if the space which separated us were fixed, real and impervious; just as there would be no mutual influence between the Earth and the stars if the air between them were not fluid, elastic and compressible.

The only reward I wish from him to whom I unveil these truths, is that he meditates upon the laws of refraction, that he observes what is greater by reason of the density of the environment; and that he will thus recognize that the object of man on Earth is to use all the rights and powers of his Being to rarify, insofar as he can, the *environment* around him and around the *Sun of truth*, so that with all opposition neutralized, the passage may be free and the rays of light will come to him without *being refracted*.

One must see that in man himself, however separated from this Wisdom in which he drew life, ignorance is a state only relative to man and not to the Supreme Intelligence Who, embracing the universality of Beings and alone giving them existence, shows the impossibility for a Being to exist yet to be unknown to Him.

But since, despite our stains and our degradation, we can never escape from the intimate, total and absolute gaze of the Great Principal, perhaps it would be easier than we would expect if, for us to perceive His Presence, we followed paths which are more true and less obscure. Perhaps all obstacles would become null and void if we were to use all the efforts we currently use to destroy our connections with Him to reestablish them instead.

If from such connections comes the privilege of *pure Powers*, which it pleases Wisdom to have communicated to us, it is because these *Powers*, remaining unaltered unlike us because of our irregular gait, remain united through their will, as by their essence, and thus preserve the unity of all their faculties and all their correspondences with Him.

We must therefore admit that all higher manifestations, whose necessity we sense in order for us to retrace the rights of our first Nature, only present an appearance of separation relative to us, who are bound up in constraints and who, because of the weakness of our eyes, can but see a part of the overall picture; whereas He who holds the image in His hand may vivify it, contemplate it and ever see it in his entirety.

And so everything is linked to God, everything contains everything else, everything exists together. All the *Virtues*, be they inherent in Him or emanated from Him, are seen and animated by Him; all the Beings He has chosen, all the men whom He has caused to be born, and finally all the means He has employed from the beginning of things and which He will use until their end and in His own eternity, are ever present

before Him. Otherwise His works would be perishable; He would produce only mortal Beings, and His universality would not be complete.

We should also reiterate that the false will of the free Being is the sole cause which can exclude it from the universal harmony of *Unity*, since it since by its Nature it seeks this *Unity*; and from this the result is that, if he seeks to imitate the *pure Powers* which manifest the divine *Virtues* before him, his will is united to the will of the Great Principal, and with them he will have the joy of being in complete correspondence with this Principal. It would be like the indestructibility of his Being, founded on the law of his emanation; it would be seen in the harmony of all his divine faculties; and among all the *Virtues* which Wisdom manifests in him, there would be none he did not recognize or in which he was able to rejoice, otherwise he would not know their unity.

For since a love for the happiness of all Beings is the true essence of Wisdom, when He sends forth to us both the subdivided Powers and His own Powers, His purpose is but to lead us back into that harmonic unity in which alone all Beings can rejoice in the fullness of their action.

And so He sowed all these *Virtues* around us, so to speak, in order to have us harvest them, to assemble them and to make them our daily food; in a word, to bring them into unity with us by removing all the obstacles and all the veils which cover our eyes and prevent us from seeing them.

So all these divine *Virtues*, commanded by the Great Principal to cooperate in the rehabilitation of men, permanently exist all around us, close by to us, never leaving the womb in which we are enclosed; just as the products of elemental Nature continually surround our bodies and are ever ready to communicate their salutary properties to us, to cure us of our ailments and even to keep us from them, if only our false and contrary views did not distance us so often from the knowledge of Nature's treasures and the fruits which it tries to procure for us.

Thus,

Thus,

All the works of this Great Principal

In fact, if all is fundamentally linked, inseparable, indivisible, as coming from the Divine Essence; if all the *Virtues* which emanate from the Great Principal are forever united and in perfect and intimate correspondence, it is clear that man, being unable to destroy or change his own nature which necessarily links him to universal unity, is forever encompassed about by all the divine *Virtues* sent through time; that he is surrounded; that he cannot take a single step or make a single movement without communicating with them; that he cannot act, think, talk even in the profoundest solitude without having them for witnesses, without being seen, understood, touched by them; and that if there was not the fruit of his base and corrupt will between him and them, he

would know them as intimately as they know him; and he would have the same rights over them as they have over him; and it would not be going too far to say that then there would be extended to him the privilege of visibly knowing *Pho-hi*⁸³, Moses, and the Universal Regenerator Himself, since this privilege includes all the Beings who, from the beginning of time, have been called to the Earth.

Why would we then not believe that, but for our corrupt will, we would have similar rights over these great events and over the great actions to come? If our nature calls us to partake in the properties of *Unity*, would we not then, in *Unity*, be able to embrace all of space and all of time, since we are, like *Unity*, above all passing and temporal things?

Yes! It is true that, in our essence, we are inseparably linked to *Unity*, and we must have all the properties which are proper to it, including those which existed before time, those which will exist until the end of time, even those which will take place after the dissolution and disappearance of visible and created things. For we would not strive towards *Unity* if our rights were only partial, and if we were unable to contemplate all the details of this immense spectacle in their entirety.

By this we see how simple is our idea regarding the prophets. Their glory and their illuminations become those of all mankind. All men are prophets by their very nature, but it is their weakness and their depravity which prevent them from manifesting the privileges of the prophets.

The etymology of this name is the proof. The Hebrews expressed it by the word *roëh*⁸⁴, a participle of the verb *raah*, *he has seen*. They also called their prophets *seers*. Perhaps one can derive from this the rights and *Virtues* of kings, to whom, according to the true meaning, should principally belong the quality of *seer*⁸⁵. In addition the first king of Israel received his titles and his authority from the *seer* Samuel, because at that time the temporal chiefs of the Hebrews were *seers*, as was man in his first estate, and as all his posterity should have been.

Finally, these *two worlds* are filled with treasures both born or to be born, which are made manifest by the will of man when he is wise, for there is a common *Seed* in both. This *Seed* is without bound, without number, without end. It only awaits a shock or clear reason in order to produce and to show itself, and this reason is the purity of man's desires. How can he then complain of his ignorance, and how can he have ills and pains, when at all times he has the power to educate himself or to pray to his God *effectively*?

⁸³ This is clearly a great luminary in history – I regret I do not recognize the name nor can I guess at it – PV.

⁸⁴ My Hebrew is not strong, but in my dictionary the word *Prophet* is given as ‘*navi*’ (נָבִי), though ‘*raah*’ (רָאָה) is indeed listed as *To See* – PV.

⁸⁵ I don't follow this argument, unless the word ‘*roi*’ (*king*) anciently had an etymological connection with *voir* (*to see*) – PV.

Besides, those who do not wish to believe in their soul, because they have not been shown that in it is all that they are told they should be, show that they have scant intelligence. In effect, to show them that they are burying themselves in a state of darkness would not be to show them anything at all. Before they can realize that all the marvels which we attribute to Him are not to be found in that darkness, they will have to expend some effort to find them, and perhaps these efforts will help them to grow; so that they may recognize that it is not so hard to think about it in order to be happy; and that, if they wish to be happy, they only have to *speak*.

XX

THE ACTS OF THE REPAIRER

Physical means used by the universal Agent – Man was captivated by matter, the Repairer captivated matter – The Elect Ones were the hieroglyphs but the Universal Elect was the language – The universal influence of the universal Agent – The regeneration of the three bases of Nature – The regeneration of the invisible barriers of the seven stars – The Word, the progression of His Powers, and regeneration – The gift of tongues – The beneficence is shown to us as a law of reaction – The bread and wine, spiritual bases of spiritual Virtues – Religion is an image of the operation of the Repairer – Cghristianity possesses things which shall never be written down – State Religion – The five epochs of religious decadence.

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XXI

THE END OF TIME

Men cannot inhabit the Earth at the same time – Man will only be a witness of immensity when the material Universe is destroyed – The general dissolution of the Universe – The future condition of impious men – The future condition of good men – The Great Being will be able to contemplate His own image.

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XXII

SEARCH YOUR SOUL

*Man can set in place the foundations of the temple here below – Search your soul often –
Do not neglect the assistance offered by the earth – The properties of water – The
properties of fire – The word ‘initiation’ – All is linked, correspondences between God,
man and the Universe – The intermediary Agents.*

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