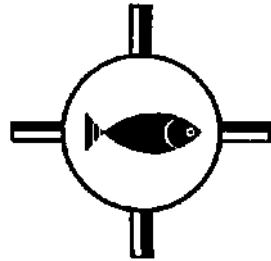


LIBERAL CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF STUDIES



Unit 14

THEOSOPHIA AND THEOLOGY

Paper 1

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

Edited from the writings of Rt. Rev. Adriaan Vreede
by the Rt. Rev. William Pitkin

Part I



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UNIT 14

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

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FOREWORD

Parts I to V of this Subject were originally compiled by the late Bishop A. G. Vreede for use in training clergy in the Netherlands. The Rev. W. A. Wils translated the original text into English and the Rt. Rev. W. H. Pitkin edited the whole and made some revisions in and additions to the original text. He also added Assignment VI dealing with the Apostolic Succession as a fitting culmination to the Subject.

In studying this Subject the student should keep his Bible and his Liturgy handy. He should look up each Bible reference and read it in its proper context. In studying Assignment II, The Minor Orders, he should study carefully the Charges given to the candidate in each of the five ordinations so that he will have a better understanding of the character building which is intended to be forwarded in each. Similarly in Assignment III, The Diaconates, he should study carefully the Charges and the several prayers in each Order, and the same with Assignments IV and V, The Priesthood and The Episcopate. He will want to review these prayers and Charges of the Major Orders in connection with Assignment VI, The Apostolic Ministry.

Although most of the material in this Subject is derived from *The Science of the Sacraments*, the student would do well to read what is written in that book in connection with the several Orders so as to broaden his understanding of the subject.

Footnotes, indicated thus: (*3) will be found at the end of the several Assignments, together with other Notes.

For Assignment VI, the book *The Apostolic Succession in the Liberal Catholic Church* by the Rev. A. W. Cockerham will be required. This may be purchased from the L.C.I.S. Offices in Ojai, California.

The student is encouraged to refer back to the text when answering questions posed by his mentor. The best answers are those in the words of the student, preferably with reference to material not necessarily mentioned in the text, but researched by him in order to gain a better understanding of the subject. On the theory (as used in U.S. Navy Study Courses) that it is not the memorizing of a lot of facts, but rather a thorough understanding of the subject *and a knowledge of where to find the facts quickly when needed* that is desired.

SUBJECT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS**A GENERAL SURVEY**

We should like first of all to view the subject of ordinations in a very general light, beyond the limited scope of the Catholic Church, even in a broader framework than that of the whole Christian Religion. Taking such a view, we may see the priesthood more in its universal nature and get closer to the core of its existence as an institution.

In all ages and in all lands, certain people have received ordinations of some kind, intended to bring them into a relationship with, and maintain them in contact with the powers of the higher world. However, we shall not go back in general history to the period of the divine King-Priests.¹

It need only be said that originally certain highly spiritual personages or adepts, belonging to another and an earlier humanity than our own, did exercise two combined offices of King and Priest by virtue of the divine capacities which they possessed. Of that ancient institution of King-Priest the last remainders were the Emperor of the Celestial Empire - China - whose office terminated in the early years of the present century, and the still-existing Emperor of Japan, whose office has been sharply curtailed as a result of World War II. These "Sons of Heaven" provided in olden days a conscious, and in later times only a ritual connection between the entire people (Chinese and Japanese, respectively) and God or the national deity.

Nor can we take the animistic period into consideration, which is a relic of the times when all people still possessed the lower form of clairvoyance and therefore were under the power and command of all sorts of astral beings, of whom they stood in mortal dread (often with ample reason), for although some of these creatures had a friendly attitude towards man, others were blood-thirsty elementals, and still others were beings who were quick to become angry and to take vengeance on those who displeased them. It is from this period of the decline of true religion into animism, which infected the religion of Israel as well as others, that has sprung the utterly un-Christian concept of an envious god, an angry god, the fear of a tribal deity who is wrathful against his people. Where such conditions prevailed, the priests had to conciliate those entities in order to maintain their cults - as is still the case on the Islands of Bali and Haiti, for example.

The word cult is derived from the Latin *colere*: the cultivation of the land. The cult of gods or spirits or ancestors is their *maintenance*, that is, taking their existence into consideration, consulting them, propitiating them, conciliating them, observing whatever must be avoided so as to escape their anger, or what can be done to cause their power to manifest itself through the tribe or through certain centers or articles (totems, etc.). Therefore, the priests or medicine men of these cults had to possess some super-physical qualities, even after the natural lower clairvoyance of the tribal members disappeared as they advanced in evolution. (Bear in mind that at this stage, further evolution meant greater *materialization*.) And when in the progress of such a tribe, the priests also lost their personal contacts with the unseen world, they had to depend on those rites and ceremonies which would keep them in touch with that world of gods or spirits.

¹ See also E. O. James, "Christian Myth and Ritual", Chapter I.

In order to perform those rites effectively, they had to possess certain special qualifications, and they obtained these through *ordinations*. In these ordinations, the realm of the invisible was known to play an important part; later on, when the rites still further degenerated, the invisible world was *believed* to play an important part.

In practically all of the ancient countries in both the Far East and the Near East, the following points may be noted: The father, as the head of the family, is also its priestly head. (The *Manu* of the Aryan race also laid down this principle.) This father makes offerings to the gods of the home, and maintains the contact for his family with the lares, the guardian angels of the family. There is also the temple priest, who exists in order to handle more difficult matters; he gives advice; he often acts as judge. He reconciles the angry god if anything goes wrong; he interprets what the god wishes, by means of auspices or oracles.

In addition, there exists behind all this the mystery cults, where contact is made with the higher, more god-like beings; the leaders of these cults have spiritual powers which they derive from the god of their special mystery cult, and whose powers they are able to convey to their followers. Then above this in turn is the *King-Priest*, or else High Priests at important central temples, who perform the services for the distinguished state deities of the official state religion.

What interests us for the moment is how the contact was made between the entities who were being taken care of, or who were consulted, and their priestly ministers or spokesmen. When the innate, primitive superphysical senses have vanished from the race, and the higher spiritual qualities which gave conscious contact with the higher worlds have not yet been developed (or are found but rarely), then magical, sacramental or ritual means have to be provided to bridge that gap. Here lies in a very general sense the foundation of spiritual ordination for the office of the priesthood, which, from its primitive state, is gradually brought to a higher spiritual level, as, for example, in Buddhism or Christianity.

When our Lord saw that his work, first among the Essene Brotherhood and later his short preaching ministry among the multitudes, was drawing to an ill-fated end, he had to decide how to establish and how to maintain down through the ages some such contact with himself, and through himself with him whom he called his Father. Should he bind the head of each family to himself, to act as a priest, as had been done in India, in old Egypt, and in the classical Roman Empire? Should he elect the other extreme: "A single temple for a large area, where, by adepts and highly specialized priests such a strong spiritual power was radiated that the entire country would be drenched by it?"

Apparently, he chose a middle way, and gradually his system took shape, outwardly resembling the established rites of the Jewish, Greek and Roman Temples, but inwardly conforming to the Ancient Mysteries where, through ordinations, the priests were brought into contact with those special spiritual beings who, at the institution of such Mysteries, had constituted themselves their living, spiritual centres.

We must also note that our Lord made a new dispensation, whereby, blood offerings were replaced by personal spiritual sacrifices, by self-sacrifice, in which the Deity worshipped as a God of Love, a Father in Heaven for all mankind; that he gave a new and great commandment, that of love for one's neighbor; but above all that he at the same time took it upon himself to be both a Sacrifice and a High Priest through all the ages to come. By means of this relationship which he undertook, he established the validity of his saying concerning his apostles, his clergy, his representatives: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me" (Matthew 10:40); when he told them: "Go ye into all the world

and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15); and especially: "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). As Professor van der Leeuw expressed it in his book on the Liturgy: "We should seek for what Christ has instituted."

He did not establish an entirely new form of rite, nor did he establish the Eucharistic Rite as we have it in all its details, but he did lay the foundation for the Christian Eucharist which in its essence springs from him. This new cult which he commanded is laid down in his words: "This do in remembrance of me." St. Paul, in I Corinthians 11, 23-26, sets forth the tradition he had received concerning the institution of the "Last Supper." In the Gospels themselves, there is as yet no mention of the rite - only the story of the original occasion; but the community, led by St. Paul, rightly understood the Lord's action as a decree. The Christian Eucharist starts with that episode in the "large upper room" where Jesus gathered with his disciples to keep the Passover.

It has been said that "the Church becomes visible in the Liturgy". "Those who read the Gospels" says Dr. van der Meer in his R.C. catechism, "get the impression that Christ only laid foundations. His establishments were implicit and sovereign, showing a Godly unrestraint devoid of haste in the present, while certain of the future; it seems as if he was mostly concerned with the spirit." And, we should like to add, "relying on his own continuing influence and leadership from above."

For those who have learned how to see clairvoyantly into the "memory of nature" and read the untarnished records of the scriptures of the past, there can be no doubt whatever (as Bishop Leadbeater says in *The Science of the Sacraments*) that Christ definitely intended and established the three Major Orders in His Church. They know that there has been no interruption in the *apostolical succession*, but they know also that the Gnostics were right in their statement as to the existence of a secret tradition, and that Christ, not only after his resurrection but even after his ascension taught his disciples many things about the Kingdom of Heaven. In the scripture, there is the account in the last chapters of the first three Gospels, but also Acts 1:3 tells us: "To whom" (i.e., the apostles) "also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" - things which are not told us in the scriptures. (*1) ²

That circle of the apostles was actually the first center of his clergy. Them he trained. "He knew" Dr. van der Meer writes "that the pupils could not yet bear all that he had been able to tell them, therefore, he ordered them to await with patience for what the spirit would unveil to them in time to come." (See John 16:12-13; Acts 1:4-5). "He had the time and the ages. They suspected nothing and hardly knew him, and counted for nothing in this world." But the Lord remained in contact with them. Acts 1:21-26 gives a description of the appointing of a new twelfth apostle in the place of Judas, one who had been "with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us," and who was now "ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Thus, the apostles - and they alone - still stood in contact with the Lord after his death, and received his personal instructions and his secret doctrine. In fact, the entire Eucharist remained secret for a long time, and only baptized Christians were admitted to it. (*2) Later, the Lord draws St. Paul into his work; in this case also, there is a living, overwhelming personal contact, not physical this time, but by drawing the consciousness of St. Paul towards the higher world and there establishing the contact with himself.

² The notes are at the end of this Assignment.

The appointment of the first seven deacons is related in Acts 6:1-6, for the purpose of seeing that there was an equitable ministrations to the needs of both Greek and Hebrew Christians. The *apostles* directed the *disciples* (the name apparently used to designate the original *membership*: see Acts 1:5 where 120 *disciples* are mentioned) to appoint seven of their number to act as servants or *deacons*. (*3) The chosen men were placed before the apostles, who, after they had prayed, laid their hands on them. St. Paul also, who calls himself "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ" (I Timothy 1:1) mentions in his letter to Timothy the laying on of hands by means of which Timothy had received his qualities as a presbyter (I Timothy 4:14, see also II Timothy 1:16) which is more like the functions of a bishop than that of a priest.

We shall not go into the well known controversy between Protestants and Catholics about the original meaning of professions of *presbyter* (literally, elder) (*4) and *episcopus* (literally, supervisor). (*5) Originally many names were in use: apostle, disciple, *episcopus*, *presbyter*, also prophet, teacher, leader (*proestes*) and chairman (*antistes*), governor (*hegemones*, translated "them which have the rule over you," Hebrews 13:7 and 17). Apparently, presbyter and episcopus were originally general titles - in the second and third Epistles of St. John he also calls himself presbyter, and in the letters to Timothy, St. Paul uses both terms alternatively. Yet we know, as Dr. van der Meer says, and as Bishop Leadbeater confirms, "that towards the end of the apostolic period in each community, one man was the actual governor of the board of elders appointed by an apostle." Bishop Leadbeater also writes that such a governor was frequently styled by the name of *Petros* - a rock or stone - the foundation of the community. In the letters from Ignatius, the second successor to St. Peter in the Diocese of Antioch, according to Eusebius (107 A.D.), the three offices of bishop, priest and *deacon* already appear established and in clear hierarchical relationship.

Originally, the succession by the laying on of hands from the apostles was regarded as taken for granted; after the rise of the Christian Gnostic sects, however, more attention was paid to that succession. It has been justly said: "The apostolic succession has never been a question in the Church. Quietly she began with it, it was everywhere accepted, and scarcely commented upon." Later, in order to counter the wild claims of certain Gnostics, the various communities commenced to play off their several dynasties of bishops against each other, each tracing its chain of succession which connected the present office holder with the apostles of old.

Whereas the three main offices were already established in the first century, the expansion of the number of souls in the various communities (especially during the latter part of the second and beginning of the third centuries) soon demanded a further extension of clerical offices. Some of these arose by the distribution of the clerical work among more servers; others sprang up from the members of the congregations. In I Corinthians 12 we read about the "diversities of gifts" and "differences of various administrations" all of which are awakened by the same *spirit*. Among them are prophesying, speaking in strange (and sometimes not understandable) tongues, healing, distinguishing of spirits, revelations, explanations. From these the *exorcist* probably originated (the Jews, as a matter of fact, also knew about necromancers) and these exorcists, judging from the frequent mention of them, must have been kept very busy! A canon of the Council held in Carthage in 265 A.D. is the oldest document in which their ordination is mentioned, and this canon will have a familiar ring to you: "When the exorcists are ordained they receive out of the hands of the bishop a book in which the text of the exorcisms is written, and they receive the power to lay hands upon the *possessed*, whether they be either baptized or catechumens" - a little sentence from the year 256! (See the *Liturgy*, p.336, *the charge*). Also the order of *reader* probably originated out of the congre-

gation, from which some educated member was probably chosen to read the Holy Scriptures just as the reader did this in the Jewish synagogue.

Referring to the institution of deacons as described in Acts 6, it was the custom that no church should have more than seven of these officers. In the larger churches, these soon became over-worked with the maintenance of the church, financial control, visiting the sick, charity, the care of widows and orphans, and assisting at the altar, so *subdeacons* came into existence to assist them. In like manner, the offices of *acolyte* and *doorkeeper* (or *janitor*) arose. Pope Cornelius, 251-252 A.D., wrote in one of his letters that in Rome he had under him "forty-six priests, seven deacons, forty-two acolytes, fifty-two exorcists and readers, and an undetermined number of doorkeepers." Then there were also their special functionaries such as grave diggers, singers, and *parabolani*, who in epidemics of plague helped the sick at the risk of their own lives; but these offices disappeared in the course of time. Bishop Leadbeater writes: "So these four orders came into existence, and it was only at a considerably later date that they were arranged in their permanent order, and regarded as necessary or at any rate desirable preliminaries to the greater orders. (*6) Although the Roman Church places these orders in a traditional sequence, her forms of ordination for the minor orders do not make any reference to their sequential nature; her forms are apparently relics of the time when each ordination stood apart by itself. In the Liberal Catholic Church, we have thought it useful to put more accent upon the progressive nature of the series of orders, and to clarify the actual purpose which each one of them is intended to serve in the training of the candidate."

If we now follow through this idea in our Liturgy, we will discern an occult, scientific succession of impulses by means of which the development of the future clergyman is stimulated, provided he himself consciously and purposefully cooperates in that inner development. For the *cleric* it is the right care and development of the physical and etheric body; for the *doorkeeper*, the guarding of the doors of the heart, bringing control and sublimation of the emotions; for the *reader* the exercising and enriching of the mind; for the *exorcist* the training of the will; for the *acolyte* - with all the beautiful allusions to the Inner Light in the charge - the awakening and development of the enlightening principle beyond mentality, that of the intuition.

Thus, in the minor ordinations systematic preparation is made inwardly by the conferring of the ordination powers, and outwardly by the instructions given, for the spiritual work and inner growth of the candidate. The method by which this is achieved is threefold:

I - The pouring-in of certain spiritual powers by which the personality of the candidate is raised to certain high rates of vibration and is thus brought to the best possible condition;

II - The stimulating of the spiritual growth of the candidate through the operation of these powers in him; and

III - By the instruction given in the charge (which differs in each order) directing the candidate to take his own training in hand and work on his inward development so as to prepare himself for eventual spiritual service to the Lord as a priest.

Such a threefold method we shall find again on a larger scale in the higher ordinations, but in this case, a far higher level of development is effected by means of the ordination:

I - By effecting certain improvements in the inward or psychic organization of the candidate;

II - By making connection between the candidate and certain spiritual forces or reservoirs of power, enabling him to draw upon them in his ministrations; and

III - The most important of all, the connection of certain spiritual principles in the candidate with similar principles in the Lord Christ himself.

The reality of the qualities or capacities conferred at ordination was fully recognized at the very beginning of the Christian era. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." (I Timothy, 4:14-15) (*7). Thus the apostle Paul wrote in solemn adjuration to his beloved pupil and bishop Timothy, whom he had himself ordained. The means of application of these gifts, their method of operation, their significance, we shall try to clarify in the following lessons (ASSIGNMENTS II, III, IV, V).

NOTES

(*1) An anonymous occult scholar who used the pseudonym *Omicron* in his study of St. Paul's Corinthian Epistles published in a book entitled *Letters From Paulos to His Pupils in Korinthos*, discloses the inner or occult meaning of many Greek words and expressions current in mystery schools and philosophies of St. Paul's time. The term *apostle* (Greeks *apostolos*) according to his studies means "A general sent for an undertaking; or as a leader of the way up to a certain point of progress or responsibility; and in particular, a *herald*." (Op. cit. p. 250-251)

(*2) There were two grades of church membership in early times, viz., *catechumens*, who were candidates under instruction in the Christian doctrine and practice, who were probationers, and the *baptised*, who had been admitted by that sacrament into full membership. At one period, the catechumens were admitted to the first part of the Eucharist but were turned out prior to the Canon of the Mass. The actual consecration was not observed even by the baptized, but was performed by the clergy behind the *ikonostasis* or *rood screen* separating the congregation from the sanctuary, the doors of which were kept closed much of the time. This is still the practice in some at least of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, whose rite still contains the proclamation (no longer enforced): "Let all the catechumens depart," said just before the Canon.

(*3) Greek *diakonos* a servant or minister.

(*4) Greek *presbyteros*, elder, older; the comparative degree of the noun *presbys*, an old man.

(*5) Greek *episkopos*, a supervisor, from *epi*, over, and *skopos*, inspector.

(*6) *Cleric*, the order not previously mentioned, was a preparatory step, the cleric or *clerk* being simply one who had declared his intention to study for the higher degrees and had been accepted as an understudy. In the Middle Ages, those from cleric on up were subject to the Church Courts, while laymen were subject to the King's Courts of Justice.

(*7) The writer "Omicron" quoted in (*1) above, gives the inner meaning of the word which has been translated "prophecy" as *the setting forth of a knowledge of divine things*. Such a hidden meaning would make more intelligible the "gift of prophecy" in ordination. Presumably, it means

occult instructions on the nature and use of the power being conveyed. This will become clearer as we study these powers in the following ASSIGNMENTS.

N.B.: The book whose full title is "Letters from Paulos, a Leader in Wisdom, to His Pupils in Korinthos" by Omikron, was published in London by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. in 1920, and also in New York by E. P. Dutton & Co. The London edition has appendices giving many Greek terms and their hermetic meanings with illustrations from other Greek texts, etc., also lists of variants of Greek words, probably errors in copying, etc., all of which is omitted from the New York edition, copies of which may sometimes be found in stores specializing in old books. There is *one* copy of the London edition in the Provincial Library.

CHAPTER II: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

Before we commence a mental analysis of the workings of ecclesiastical ordinations, which are the instrumentalities of Christ's Church, we ought first to tune ourselves devoutly to the holiness, the mystery, of the office of one so ordained. For this attuning we should endeavor to use the *intuition*. Here we have mortal men, weak, and with many failings, yet who through these ordinations become the bearers of godly powers and the distributors of hidden gifts; priests, to pass on His blessing and to bear forth His love to the hearts of men. They are called upon, as they are informed in the charge at the priestly ordination: "to offer the Holy Sacrifice before the throne of God and to celebrate the sacred mysteries of the Lord's love." In them is to be reflected, down here on earth and in the realm of time, the mystery of Christ's own Priesthood which is on high and in eternity.

No purely mental explanation or analysis can give a comprehension of the holy, the mystic character of this institution. Only by the intuition, the opening of the mirror of our higher mind in the heart, can we become aware of this superphysical, this holy character of Ordination, Only when we approach the subject in a spirit of grateful devotion and the use of intuitive vision will it be possible for us to enter upon and penetrate into the true significance of Holy Orders.

One way to help us to a deeper mental perception of our subject is to make a schematic diagram of man as he appears in the five worlds in which he manifests--not the physical man only, nor the personality of everyday life, nor our own immortal soul, but man in the higher worlds, that which constitutes the True Man. (Fig. 1 - 11) The true man in the highest sense, in his innermost Self, is a fragment of the divine consciousness on a plane above the five worlds. It is there that shines the divine of man which has to send forth its roots into the lower worlds in order that it may blossom out eventually as a mighty cosmic being. It is this spark of which the great mystics have said: "This spark is God Himself, and it cannot be said whether this spark has been created or has not been created." It is the *Monad*, the unity which will unfold into the five-fold world. (See Appendix, pp. 17-18) From that monad, that holy trinity in miniature, that seed for a cosmic being, man derives his spiritual principles: *Will* or power (Sanskrit *atma*), *wisdom* or intuition (Sanskrit *buddhi*), and *activity* or creative mind (Sanskrit *manas*). As these three spiritual principles are reflections of, or descends from the one monad, so also they in turn reflect themselves into the lower regions of this five-fold universe as the concrete *mental*, the desirous feeling (*astral*), and the terrestrial vitality (*etheric*) principles. All these several principles are potentialities; that is, they are originally slumbering qualities which must gradually be developed from their incipient state to eventual fullest growth.

The unfolding of the higher principles - - the higher mental, intuitional and spiritual principals - - may be postponed for life after life, but can be cultivated. This, for instance, is one of the effects of the Holy Eucharist; through it the slumbering higher principles in the intuitive nature are quickened into activity. And, as we shall see, the ordinations also have an extremely important effect from this point of view. An ordination has great influence not only on the spiritual nature of a man, but also even on his ordinary physical personality.

The series of ordinations from the lowest to the highest starts with the making of certain changes in the inner workings of the physical man. In order to understand this, we should first envisage what a person looks like in his etheric nature - - that part of his physical being composed of finer matter than the solid, liquid and gaseous states. Through man's etheric body the solar vital life energy (Sanskrit *prana*) of the physical plane is absorbed into the system. But also there stream down through this etheric body the vital life essences (pranas) of the higher worlds. And wherever

that power streams in, or wells up, from a higher world to a lower, whirling centers are formed. It is as if on a smooth surface of water a cyclone forms, which in itself is invisible; the water starts to whirl and turn, and a vibrating figure of circular form, with ribs from center to circumference, becomes visible. The human etheric form shows seven such whirls or vortices - - wheels (Sanskrit *chakras*), they are called in the East; in the West where their existence is hardly acknowledged we speak of them as *centers*. Through each of these seven centers a certain power flows into the human organism.

These centers or *chakras* (Fig. 1a - 12) are located, respectively: (Fig. 1b - 12) (1) at the top of the head; (2) at the forehead; (3) at the throat; (4) at the heart; (5) near the diaphragm; (6) near the spleen; (7) near the tail bone at the base of the spine. They are not part of those physical organs because they are not physical but etheric, and project a few inches beyond the periphery of the body, being connected by means of etheric threads to the spine where their actual point of application is located. (It is these centers - - or at least certain of them - - which are anointed in the Sacrament of Holy Unction. See *Ceremonial Book*, pp. 245 and 247.) When one looks into the flower of a convolvulus or morning-glory, one gets an impression of what such a center looks like when seen clairvoyantly.

Into each of these centers a different type of power flows down from a higher level. These centers can be divided into three groups which one could designate respectively as *spiritual* (1) and (2) *personal* (3), (4) and (5) and physiological (6) and (7). The two highest, above the head and in front of the forehead, only become definitely active when the spiritual life streams respectively of *will* (atma) and *intuition* (buddhi) begin to flow down. This can take place only when these two principles have become active in an individual, which will only be the case in people of high culture or spiritual development. (A primary purpose of occult meditation is the quickening of these centers.) These two centers, (1) and (2) are connected, respectively, to the pineal gland and the pituitary body, two important endocrine* glands in the brain. At the top of the head center (1) the life streams which arise in the lower centers come together. In the throat (3), heart (4) and diaphragm (5) centers, the primary life-streams of the personality arise, namely, of the mentality, the higher emotions and the lower passions respectively. The two lowest centers, spleen (6) and tail bone (7), are physiological or fundamental as they absorb into the internal etheric circulation the *prana* or vitality, and a mysterious power (Sanskrit *kundalini*) sometimes known as the *serpent fire*.

We must take a closer look at these two powers, *prana* and *kundalini*. What is that sun force or *prana* which is absorbed by the spleen center? On a bright summer day, if one stares into the air against the background of a clear blue sky, one can sometimes see to his amazement brilliant sparks which make all sorts of sudden darting movements in space. Although they are so minute that one could not see them with the naked eye (they are as small as atoms) yet they make an impression on the retina of the eye because of the sharp flickering which they derive from the sun. These are the so-called "vitality globules", sprung from the action of the sun upon the primitive atom of the globule. Whilst the powers of light, heat and electricity affect atoms from the outside and set them into vibration, *prana* works upon them from the inside; *prana* globules shoot, as it were, right into them. (Since the information given in this Assignment was written, science has discovered much about solar radiations, atomic actions, and the enormous power which exists in these ultra-minute particles of matter.)

These vitality globules look, when drawn on a flat surface, as shown in Fig. 3. Of course they must be imagined as constituting a sphere in three dimensions, not a flat disc. The central atom jumps wildly up and down, above and below the flat surface in which it is indicated.

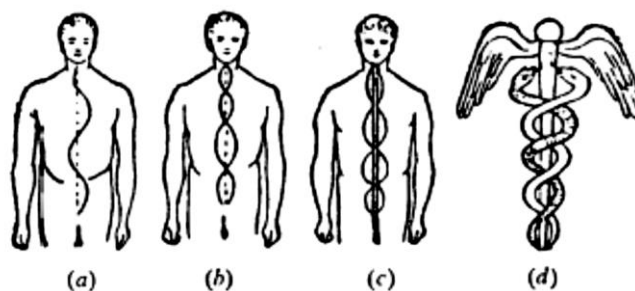


Fig. 1

This vibrating power is tremendously fiery - - the solar fire. If such a vitality globule attaches to itself twelve primitive atoms, it gives rise to the element *oxygen* and gives to oxygen its tremendous burning power. That is how the vitality also enters our blood. We breathe the air, absorb the oxygen in our lungs where the vitality globules are removed and taken up in the blood, and other primitive atoms are again driven out just as the nitrogen which we expell when we exhale.³

While it is through our breathing that this vitality enters the blood stream, it is through the functioning of the spleen center that these vitality globules are disintegrated into seven varicolored streams which flow through the etheric spinal channels (Sanskrit *nadis*) and along the nerve tracks, thus circulating through the body.

This vitality globule is a form of solar energy emanating from the First Person of the Trinity. As we shall see, there is another form of *prana* emanating from the Second Person. But we shall first consider briefly that power emanating from the Third Person, the earth force or "serpent fire" (Sanskrit *kundalini*). (See "The Chakras" by Bishop Leadbeater for a full discussion of this entire subject.)

Deep down in the earth there exists a sphere of such tremendous force, etheric, astral and mental, that no occultist explorer is able to approach it. Within this sphere new chemical elements of more complicated atomic structure are created through tremendous pressure, intense heat, and this mysterious, protean creative power of the Holy Spirit; therefore this central area inside the earth is sometimes spoken of as "The Laboratory of the Holy Ghost", which therein has reached the lowest point in the arc of creation (involution) and now turns its forces upward (evolution).

As we know, this force is active in man also; usually it is mentioned only in connection with the terrible danger of liberating this force prematurely and artificially (it is a form of atomic energy which can be *lethal*) - - but this refers to the awakening of this *kundalini* at the lower levels. This force slumbers in the tail bone or coccyx center, in a nest of hollow, concentric spheres of astral and etheric matter which are interlaced together as in the carved ivory concentric spheres of Chinese art. Apparently there are seven of these spheres in this center, which is called in Sanskrit the *muladhara chakram*, and in the case of the ordinary man only the outermost sphere is active, while in the others, as it is ornately expressed, "the fiery coiled serpent lies asleep."

³ The "primitive atoms" spoken of in this text are not the atoms of elements as known to science, but the ultimate building blocks of which the elements are composed. Of these there are but two varieties - - positive and negative - - and all elements are composed of aggregations of these two. There are several "states" of *matter* between the solid-liquid-gaseous element atoms and these "primitive" or "ultimate" physical atoms (Sanskrit *anu*) as nuclear science has recently been discovering.

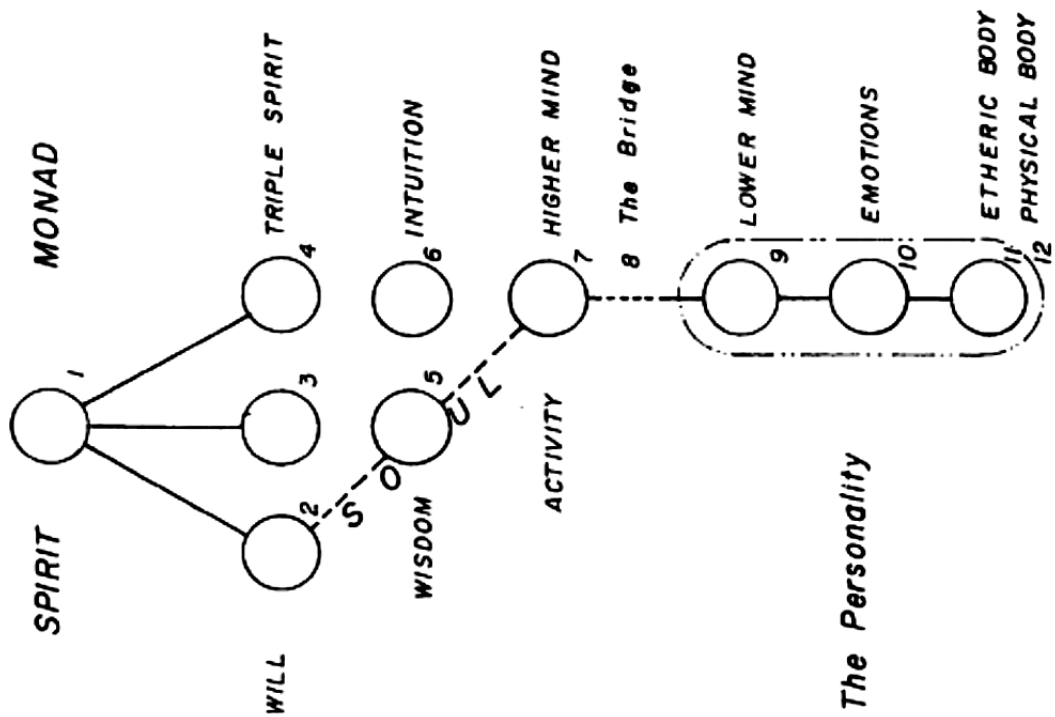
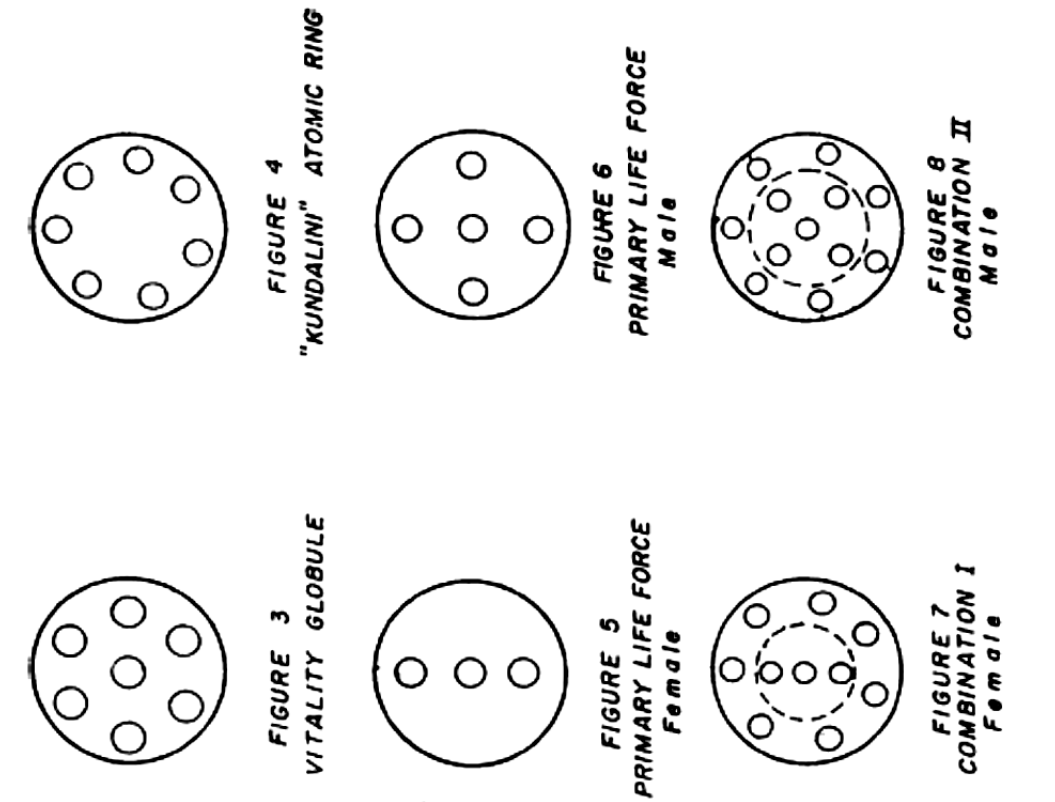
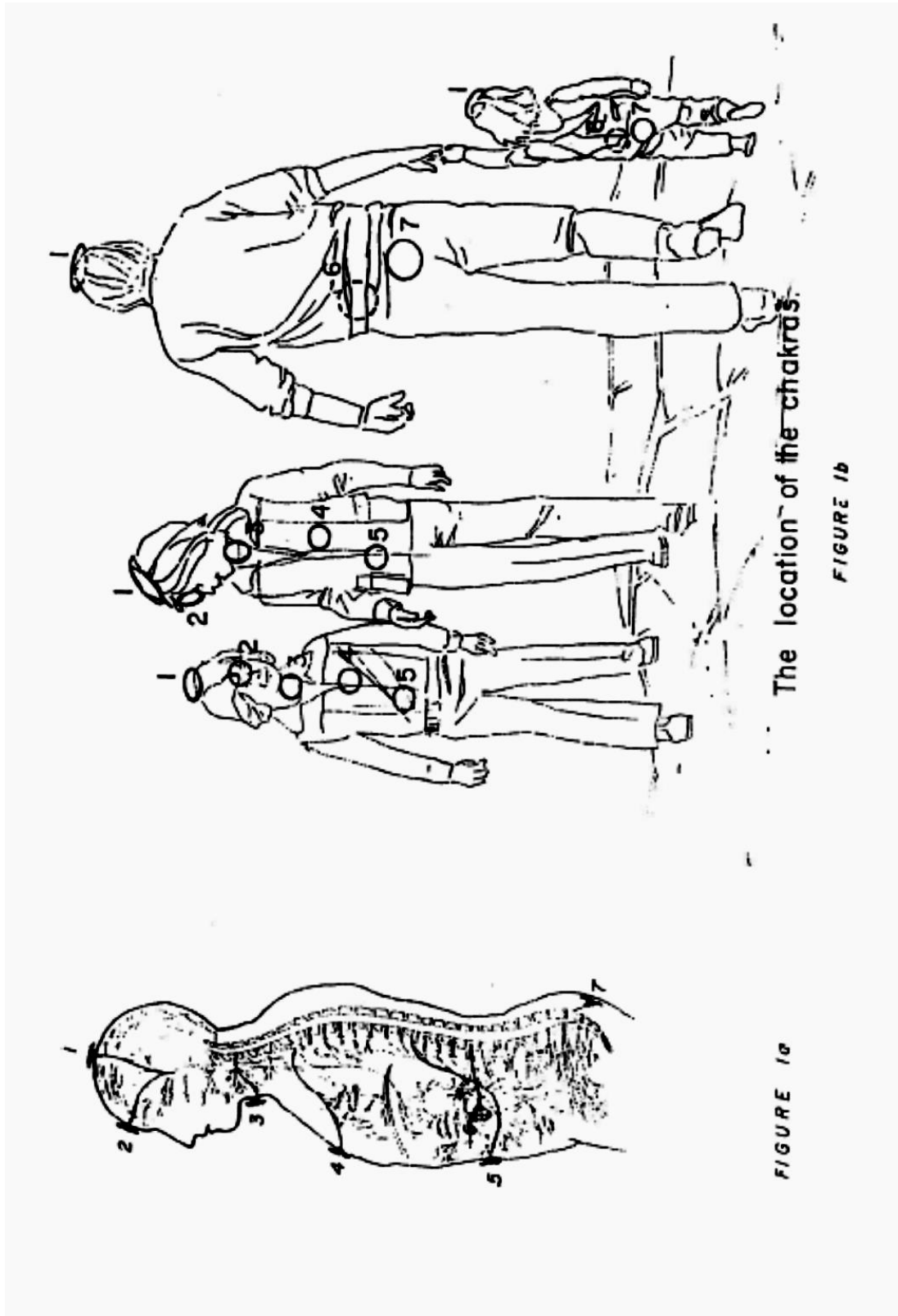


FIGURE 1



This *kundalini* power forces seven atoms to form a ring so that they lie in a flat plane (Fig. 4 - 11) and turn around slowly. But within that ring a tremendous latent energy is caged, which only manifests itself when it joins with one of the forms of a primary life force. This primary life force is a vital energy emanating from the Second Person of the Trinity, which materializes from higher planes and takes form as streams of etheric particles composed of three or five atoms (Figs. 5 - 11 and 6 - 11). The central (positive) atom in each particle vibrates up and down in the same way as that in the center of the *prana* atom (Fig. 3). This primary life force wells up in and streams into each of the seven *chakras*. Combining with the *kundalini* ring (Fig. 4) more complicated etheric structures are formed. (Fig. 7 and 8). In these combinations also the seven atoms derived from Fig. 4 constantly turn around, while the central primary force atom in (5) or (6) constantly and violently oscillates up and down, causing increased friction with the neighboring atoms, thereby generating a certain amount of heat and a huge acceleration in the rotation of the *kundalini* atoms, which now turn so fast that they become invisible to clairvoyant sight as separate atoms and give the impression of a glowing red ring. This harmless fire generated in the outermost *kundalini* sphere (the one now normally active in us) streams upward through the three channels of the spine. As this phenomenon is not yet known to western science (it can only be observed clairvoyantly) there are no western names for these channels, and we are therefore forced to use their ancient Sanskrit names: *Sushumna*, the central stream through the spinal canal, (Fig. 1c - 10) and twining around it two other fiery "life breaths", *ida* and *pingala*. (Fig. 1a and 1b - 10) This twining of two streams around the third forms the model for the "Thyrus" of the ancient Mysteries, the *caduceus* or "staff of Mercury", the rod which was used in those Mysteries to evoke the higher powers. (Fig. 1d - 10) (It is interesting that this emblem, or at least the upper part of it, still forms the head of the crozier used by Eastern Orthodox Bishops.)

At the Ordination of Cleric, these forces are stimulated and a stream of highly magnetized atoms is drawn down; at that of Doorkeeper the *ida*, a pink tinted stream (which is of a feminine nature), is given a further stimulus which can aid the candidate in gaining greater control over his emotions and his passions, exactly as is said to him in the Charge by the Bishop. In the Order of Reader the stream, *pingala* (which is of masculine nature), of a yellowish tint, is strengthened when the Bishop lays his hand on the head of the ordinand and speaks the formula or ordination. This assists the ordinand in the control of the mind and stimulates the exercise of the thinking faculty - - or can do so if the ordinand wishes to make use of it. (These two forces operate in *opposite directions* in male and female bodies, which may be part, at least, of the reason Christian ordinations are not operative in female bodies.) With the Order of Exorcist the blue tinted central *sushumna* stream going straight up the spinal canal is strengthened, thereby opening a way for the descent of influence from above to aid in the development of the will. At the Ordination to Acolyte, by means of a stimulation of all three *kundalini* streams which rise upward through and around the spinal canal (Fig. 1c - 10) the first effort is made to awaken the intuitional principle in the ordinand, the first step in the process of fitting him eventually for higher spiritual work which will necessitate the active use of this intuitional principle.

Let us now observe the general action of this *kundalini* force in the spine. Each of the seven *chakras* (Fig. 1a - 12) is in fact based in the spine; the *muladhara* or tailbone *chakram* (No. 7) resides in the last hollow of the spine, the other vortices being connected to the spine by stems resembling a flower. Along this spinal trunk the *kundalini* force rises. Actually it is a stream of the particles shown in Fig. 4. At the same time, as we saw, a primary vital energy (Fig. 5 or 6) (to be clearly distinguished from *prana*, Fig. 3) flows in, and this meeting of the two streams in each *chakram* causes those whirls, giving rise to their name, "wheels" (*chakras*). A special role is played in the spleen *chakram* (No. 6). Here the teams of *prana* particles are disintegrated into seven differently colored

elements which flow out to the other *chakras* in five streams. One stream, combined of the red and orange elements (with some purple), flows back to the *muladhara chakram* (No. 7) to energize the passional nature and body heat; but when transmuted by a man of spiritual nature it rises from there to the brain and makes possible a high development of intelligence, unselfish affection and spirituality. A green stream goes from the spleen to the solar plexus (No. 5) center to vivify the digestive apparatus; a yellow stream goes to the heart center (No. 4) and thence on up to the brain; a stream of the combined blue and violet elements goes to the throat (No. 3) where it divides, part of it passing on into the brain; while a fifth stream, rosy-colored, runs all over the body along the nerves, forming the specialized nerve-energy of the individual. All these streams and forces act upon the composition of the cells and organs of the body, while on the other hand our moods, character, qualities, tendencies and activities react on the nature and quality of these very complicated and intermingled etheric streams.

It is only in the light of this lengthy and somewhat complicated explanation that one can begin to see what takes place during each ordination, at each sign of the cross made by the Bishop over the ordinand, even at each word which he says to the candidate, as streams of very highly spiritually charged combinations of *pranic* and *kundalinic* particles together with particles of the primary vital energy are sent coursing through the candidate.

Since the Bishop is directly connected with the highest level of our fivefold universe, his radiations, and particularly his spoken word and his official blessing are drenched with *atmic* and *buddhic* forces; these are absorbed by the candidate who is thereby purified, vitalized and spiritualized. Then after having brought him into this condition through the preliminary states of the ordination ceremony, the Bishop lays his hand upon the candidate's head and speaks the words of Ordination. This brings about definite changes in the three spinal streams, all of which terminate in the brain. The ordinand is purified, his receptivity is increased, he is vitalized, spiritual power is poured into him, and he is thus given the opportunity to develop the characteristics required by his office in the quickest and easiest way. Then at the final blessing all this work is stabilized and sealed in place by the three crosses made in the Name of the Holy Trinity, so that this special gift which the ordinand has received will remain with him for a long period and will not immediately dissipate itself in the etheric currents which normally flow out through the crown *chakram* (No. 1). This insures that the ordinand will have ample time to absorb these forces within himself, to digest them, to transform them into definite vibratory habits of his own head and heart.

From all this it will become clear why a candidate should be scrupulously clean in all his personal habits, and especially why he should abstain entirely from the use of tobacco or alcohol, both of which have extremely destructive effects on the seven centers, and why he is directed to care for and rule his body so that no impurities of any kind may counteract or spoil the developments brought about by the Ordinations. (The use of hallucinatory drugs, which has become wide-spread since the foregoing was written, is far more harmful to the inner mechanism than tobacco or alcohol.)

In view of all this, the Charges in the Minor Orders, the prayer for each Order, and the final Blessing obtain for us a new and deeper significance. The Ordination Prayer reads: "O Lord Christ, who art ever ready to receive and to strengthen the earnest aspirations of Thy children, look down in Thy love upon this Thy servant who desires to become worthy to serve Thee as . . . in Thy holy Church. Sanctify + him, O Lord, with Thy heavenly grace, that growing continually in virtue he may rightly practice the duties of his office and so be found acceptable in Thy sight, O Thou great King of Love, to whom be glory for ever and ever." And then the blessing, at the conclusion of the service,

confirming and sealing the work: "The blessing of God Almighty, the + Father, the + Son and the Holy + Ghost come down upon you, that you may with steadfastness and zeal persevere in that which today you have undertaken."

From the nature of the powers involved even in the Minor Orders, it will be apparent why it is advisable, where practicable, to permit the lapse of some appreciable time - - some weeks, or days at very least - - between the several Orders so that the ordinand may use the energies aroused in carrying out to some extent the work upon his own character delineated in the Charge for each Order. It is hoped that this sketch, however complicated and incomplete, may throw a new and deeper light upon the significance of these Minor Orders which, in our Church, stand open for many - - not only those who intend to go on to the Priesthood - - and that there will be a realization of the possibilities for the ordinand inherent in these Orders, so that, as aptly expressed in the Baptismal Service, "that, using well the beginnings of Thy glory and heedfully observing Thy holy laws, he may be found worthy to attain the fullness of the new birth," - - whether in his own life only, or in the higher Orders which will next be considered.

APPENDIX

Since the various "principles" of the human being - - his Spirit, Soul and Personality and their components - - which are shown diagrammatically in Figure 1, play a very important part in the working of the Major Orders, a brief explanation may be helpful at this point. This explanation is in accord with the "Ancient Wisdom" or "Theosophical" philosophy, though there are traces of it in St. Paul's writings and in others of the early Church Fathers.

Of course any attempt to illustrate in a two dimensional diagram, states existing in at least three and probably several more dimensions (which we are assured is the case) must be utterly inadequate. All the "principles" occupy the same space, since the various states of "matter" of the "higher" (actually, more *etherial*, not "above" or "father out" in space) worlds interpenetrate each other yet without interference or without *contact* save where a "connection" is made, as in some of the ordinations or in the course of man's evolution. The principles are thus concentric about the *monad* as the focal point; they are not like so many apples hanging in the branches of a tree!

Referring to Figure 1, the *Eternal Spirit* or monad (1) expresses itself in the highest (atomic) world of manifestation as a Trinity, reflecting or being in the image of the divine Father as *Will* (2), the divine Son as *Wisdom* (3) and the divine Holy Spirit as the essence of *Activity* (4). Its *will* aspect (2) descends no farther, but both (3) and (4) descend into the next (buddhic) world and manifest as the dual Intuition, (5) and (6), which partakes of both the Wisdom of (3) and the Activity of (4). The *activity* aspect descends yet once more to the mental (Sanskrit *manas*) world to occupy its upper or abstract region, and there manifests as the *Intelligence*, the higher or abstract mind (7). In so doing it may be said to "proceed from the Father and (or *through*) the Son" as the Western Creed correctly maintains.

The three distinct or uncombined "principles" (2), (5) and (7) together form the *immortal soul* or ego, which puts down (or *out*) successive reflections of itself in the lower worlds (including the lower or concrete region of the mental world). These reflections constitute the four-fold *mortal* personality (9), (10), (11) and (12); the "bridge" (8) being the prism or mirror through which the reflection takes place. *Intelligence* (7) reflects itself as the concrete mind or *Intellect* (9), which deals in *formal*, concrete thought, as differentiated from *archetypal* or *abstract* ideas; *Intuition* (5) reflects

as *Emotion* (10); *Will* (2) reflects as *Vitality* (11), while all three, functioning in a physical body (12) represent the divine Monad (1) itself ("it" is sexless) with its triple Spirit, thus rounding out the complete Man, who is only *complete* when in physical incarnation.

After the death of the physical body (12), the etheric or vital body (11) soon disintegrates; the soul lives on for some years of *astral* life in the body of emotion (10), which at length fades away. A much longer time is spent in the mental body (9), where the soul exhausts the possibilities of thought gathered in the preceding *incarnation*; then it withdraws all the fruits of experience of that incarnation over the bridge (8) (which then disappears) into the *ego* or immortal self on the higher mental plane. One who is capable of retaining consciousness in that realm of pure abstraction may remain there at will; but except for the most advanced individuals, unconsciousness soon occurs when there are no external *forms* to hold its attention, and then the automatic procedure of re-incarnation is set in motion.

All that takes place "above the bridge" is permanent; all below it is of the one incarnation alone, only its "fruit" is garnered into the permanent "character" of the immortal soul. Thus a re-incarnating Deacon, Priest or Bishop, although he may (as far as we know) still possess the priceless *links* to the Lord in his *soul*, would need re-ordination to bring the new body into a relationship such that the links and powers would operate in the lower worlds. (See "The Science of the Sacraments," pp. 640-665, Second Edition.)

NOTES

In conjunction with this assignment the student is again directed to read over carefully the Ordination Services for the Minor Orders after studying the lesson, making a further serious effort to grasp the nature of the character development which each order seeks to stimulate.

As collateral reading, reference should be made to the first part of Chapter IV on Holy Orders (up to The Major Orders) in Bishop Leadbeater's book "The Science of the Sacraments" and to Chapter III on "The Descent into Matter" in his book, "The Christian Creed".

Those who are interested in gaining a more detailed knowledge of the functions of the Chakras and the various vital streams in the body, will find a very thorough exposition, illustrated in color, in Bishop Leadbeater's book, "The Chakras". As this is a somewhat expensive work, it might be possible to borrow it from a Theosophical Library or refer to it in the reading room of a Theosophical Lodge. (It will probably not be found in many Public Libraries.)

For a full and detailed exposition of the genesis of matter and its elaboration into elements and compounds, from an occult point of view (with which science is so far still much at variance), see "Occult Chemistry", 1952 edition - - another expensive Theosophical book by Dr. Annie Besant and Bishop Leadbeater. A condensation of this work will be found in Chapter X, "The Evolution of Matter and Force", in "First Principles of Theosophy" by C. Jinarajadasa - - a book which, along with "The Science of the Sacraments" and "The Christian Creed", should be in the personal library of every student for Major Orders.