

animal species; but many of these later animal forms developed through the continued vitalization of the still dormant germs. This development also progressed slowly from the primitive to higher organisms. The earthly material effect of Darkness was reduced until the connection between the Light and the Earth had been interrupted by the fall of the Eldest was re-established.

Until the Globe was once again drawn into the cycle of the the beasts mated at random. Innumerable species resulted from these cross-breedings. Only gradually, as the Light later gained greater organizing influence, were conditions for a more regular production of the existing species improved, whereby the animal kingdom - as well as the plant kingdom - became in many ways enriched and refined.

The molecular oscillations of Darkness (the oscillations of the largest particles), which then produced - and which still produce - the earthly forms and figures visible to the human eye, are held together and stabilized by the somewhat faster oscillations of the astral Darkness.

If the molecules of Darkness were not stabilized by astral² Darkness, then the molecules would easily loosen and dissociate because of their lower frequency. Therefore, all earthly forms of plant and animal, all organic and inorganic matter and all that is issued from or made thereof have an astral counterpart, invisible to the human eye, consisting of the faster oscillations of astral Darkness, in smaller particles with greater capacity for cohesion and adhesion. These astral counterparts are interwoven with the earthly substances in such a way that even from the transcendental world it can be difficult to determine where one ends and the other begins.

The frequency of astral Darkness lies about midway between the highest and the lowest frequencies of Darkness. Spiritual Darkness has the highest frequency and the Darkness that influences the thought and the will to sin. In Ardor's Account, a distinction is made between spiritual and astral Darkness.

When the earthly creatures and forms are attacked by disease, i.e., accumulations of Darkness, microbes, malnutrition, heat, drought, cold, and the like - then the connection between the astral counterparts and the earthly molecular formations is loosened, since

¹) See Ardor's Account, pp. 15-19.

²) See Summary, pp. 266-67.

³) See Summary, pp. 266-67.

the frequency of oscillation of the molecules is reduced. If the various states of weakness, disease, etc., cannot be eliminated so that the loosened connection may again be tightened and resume a normal function, then the living organism passes away, it becomes lifeless. The astral counterparts of the soft substances of the dead bodies and plants will be released and separated out, and after a shorter or a longer period of time they are absorbed by Darkness, only to be transformed into or to reappear in other forms.

By the separation of the astral counterparts and their earthly forms, the molecular oscillations of Darkness again become considerably reduced, with the result that the molecules entirely lose their resistance to attack by micro-organisms. The soft substances of the dead bodies and the withered plants will then decompose unless they are preserved artificially by drying, freezing or by chemical treatment, and they will be absorbed into the ground and the atmospheric layers. Later they are transformed again, partly into earthly and partly into astral forms.

The astral counterparts of the more solid substances of the dead bodies and plants such as bones, corneal tissue, teeth, bark and wood¹ are not released until these substances in one way or another are destroyed by mouldering, attack by fungus, burning or the like; but the connection between the counterparts and the earthly forms continues to be loose, i.e., the somewhat lower frequency is maintained. As these counterparts are gradually released, they are also absorbed by the astral Darkness.²

Even though the former Light-world of the Eldest had been completely saturated by the influx of Darkness, the Eldest were still able to distinguish and differentiate in the Darkness because of their divine origin, just as all the structures in the ravaged Kingdom were real and tangible to them, whereas everything on Earth which had been produced by the molecular oscillations of Darkness appeared to them as hazy and unreal forms of life.

When the Eldest on their journey across the Earth had seen that the plant and animal life of Darkness was destructible, they realized that they were unable to create immortal beings in their own like-

¹) If leaves, flowers and stems are cut while they are still alive, and then shortly after subjected to dehydration or any similar process, the astral counterparts are not released until the forms, or anything manufactured from them, are destroyed in one way or another. If fresh twigs, shoots or branches are cut and then grafted or planted, the counterparts are not released; the connection that is loosened after the cutting is tightened by the renewed supply of nourishment.

²) See also Summary, p. 295.

ness; but in spite of this knowledge they decided nevertheless to create. However, their attempts invariably failed until they agreed upon taking the animals for a model,¹ especially concerning questions of propagation and nutrition.

For about two million years – a long time according to human perception – the Eldest worked at shaping their thoughts in the astral as well as in the earthly material.² Finally they succeeded in creating the first individual beings of the human race that were capable of a living – animal-like creatures. But since many were involved in the work, and since their sense of form and beauty had been confused and distorted by the influence of Darkness and was no longer on a level with the capability of each individual's will, many very different types were created that were all only slightly superior to the animals.

Thus: the human race did not descend through various evolutionary stages from the animals, but evolved from created beings.

The manner in which the Eldest accomplished this act of creation will never be divulged to mankind.

5.

When the Eldest decided to create intelligent beings, having become convinced of the impossibility of leading the beasts that the vitalizing influence of Darkness had produced on Earth, it was rather with the intention that these, their own creatures, should assist them in the struggle against the gigantic monsters. Thus it was neither pure selfishness nor pure lust for power that motivated the Eldest during their attempts at creation. The spiritual counterparts of the first human beings were for this reason endowed with a faint element of spiritual life through that element of the Light that was the thought that had formed the basis for their creation. Once given this faint life-spark of spiritual Light could not be taken back, and it therefore had to be passed on from the first-created human beings to the progeny that they bore and bred. While new human bodies are formed during pregnancies, the astral counterparts are formed concurrently. They are given a faint element of spiritual life through the stream of Light that is carried by the waves of Darkness that constantly stream out from the Eldest, and which is transferred from them to human beings, who are infused by it. This heritage is thus given and received from generation to generation, and it will continue for as long as the Eldest by the circulation of Darkness through

¹) See also Summary, pp. 267-70.

²) See also Summary, p. 269.

them are bound¹ to the human race.

Since the spiritual life element of the Light did not stem directly from God, but was given by beings who acted against His Will, it was not strong enough to impart conscious, independent thought and will to the creatures of the Eldest, neither in the earthly nor in the transcendental world. The "human shadows"² – the astral counterparts – were therefore condemned in advance, after the cessation of earthly life, to exist for all eternity without ever gaining conscious knowledge or conscious understanding of their own or their fellow creatures' existence.

Some of the oldest races of human beings have in the apes left a visible reminder of the primitive stage of development in which they languished for many millennia, until the Light was brought to the Earth and ennobled mankind.

Through many ages of time human beings remained, bodily as well as spiritually, at about the same level as the animals, and since Darkness had reigned practically everywhere on Earth at the time of their creation, they also became related by blood to all the mammals extant at that time. By mating with several different animal species³ the first apes came into existence. APES

Since no element of the Light was present during the matings that were responsible for the emergence of the apes, and which took place only to satisfy the mating instincts of human beings, the astral counterparts of these creatures received none of the spiritual element of Light of their human ancestors; for which reason the apes, like all other beasts, are not endowed with spiritual life. After death, the astral counterparts of the apes are absorbed and converted into other forms in the same way as with all other astral counterparts.

Through the inter-breeding of the early apes and their own and their offspring's cross-breeding, partly with human beings and partly with other mammals, there gradually developed the profusion of ape species that are now found spread throughout the Earth, and of which certain species are more or less directly descended from human beings. Other species have through countless cross-breedings diverged radically from their human ancestors.

The regulating and Darkness-separating influence of the Light has removed human beings as well as most mammals far from their

¹) See Summary, p. 322.

²) See Commentary, p. 189

³) Through frequent and very diverse cross-breeding, several of the animal species used in this way degenerated and became extinct. People with the requisite ability and interest can through careful research discover which prehistoric and contemporary animal species are related to some of the known apes.

former common blood relationship. As is well known, however, some such relationship can still be shown between human beings and the so-called anthropoid apes, just as a similar relationship can be shown to exist between certain mammals that superficially appear to be unrelated. However, these traces of a common blood relationship will gradually disappear completely.

The primitive state of the original human beings can be judged from the fact that even the most primitive contemporary races can no longer produce viable offspring through matings with animals.

When somewhat over a million years had passed since the creation of the first human beings, God called a second time upon the Eldest order if possible to awaken their remorse. Some of the Eldest had long grieved over the dreadful life endured by their creatures on Earth, and through the deep desperation they felt for what had happened, they had come to understand the extent of the evil that they had done.

Their grief over their sin was so great and sincere that the moment they heard God's calling voice their first request for help was for their hapless creatures, before they thought of obtaining any betterment of their own miserable existence.

When God saw that their grief and remorse was genuine and deeply felt, He forgave them in His infinite love and compassion all that they had sinned against Him and promised at the same time to make the imperfect creatures His own children. Through the power of His Will God fulfilled His promise partly by sending a stream of His own divine Being to each human creature - to the "shadows" as well as to those who lived on Earth - and partly by adopting these newly formed human spirits into His Thought, and thus imparting eternal life to the entire human race. And from the moment God thus established a connection with mankind, the divine stream has flowed through all in an unbreakable cycle and is imparted to every new creature at the time of conception.¹

When God informed His youngest children of His adoption of the creatures of the Eldest and asked them if they would be of help in leading these wretched beings out of Darkness, they all fell silent. They shrank before the enormous task they would have to take upon themselves if real help were to be afforded. And although they knew that no one would exert pressure upon them, even if they should give up before the work was completed, they dared not immediately accede to their Father's request.

¹) See Commentary, pp. 188-90.

The thought of helping humanity according to God's wish awoke first in the female dual of the eldest of the Youngest. But the very moment she conceived compassion for mankind, this thought was seized by the male dual and with his will he turned her thought to action and came forward with the offer to support and to lead mankind. Through this voluntary act he gave life to the thought of his dual, but thereby he also assumed responsibility for its further execution.

If the eldest of the Youngest had not heeded the thought of his female helpmate her thought would never have come to life - to action - since the male power to act - the will - was required for the realization of such an overwhelming task, for which reason he may rightfully be called the saviour and leader of mankind.

From one of his incarnations his last one, the eldest of the Youngest is known to human beings by the name Jesus of Nazareth - Christ.

As a reward for his voluntary offer, God not only placed in his hands the leadership of mankind, but He made him also the uppermost among the Youngest - the male as well as the female.

The eldest of the Youngest's dual has contributed her help in various ways through repeated incarnations, as have all of her younger brothers and sisters.

At the downfall of the Eldest - when God had confronted His children with Darkness - the thought that God's choice must fall upon them arose first among the female Eldest; but through the will of the male, the female thought of lust for power brought all of them to downfall. The thought of creating living beings also first arose within the Elder's female dual, but it was brought into action by his will. The Elder consequently became the uppermost among the Eldest and rightfully bears the responsibility for the creation of the human race.

It was thus a female thought of lust for power that brought sin and downfall, and a female thought of compassion that brought the necessary help for regeneration.

6.

When God had promised His remorseful children to take their spiritually and bodily malformed creatures into His care, and when all the Youngest had promised to help lead them out of Darkness, He decided to create habitats and dwellings, both for the Youngest and for the spirits of human beings, where they could abide whenever they were not incarnated on Earth.

If the Youngest had permanently resided in God's Kingdom during the time of their leadership of mankind, it would have become very difficult for them to subject themselves to the earthly order of time.

From the astral-material and the ethereal-astral Light that generates the material forms in the transcendental world God formed habitats, or spheres, which together with the Kingdom created previously but ravaged by Darkness - i.e., "Hell" - constituted several worlds of astral Light that surrounded the Earth.

In order that all of them, the Youngest as well as the spirits of human beings, could have access to the Earth in the future without having to pass through the Darkness of the ravaged Kingdom, God opened a pathway through the habitat of the Eldest by the power of His Will. He extended this pathway through all the spheres to the outermost one and let it be pervaded by the Light. This provided a pathway, a Passage of Light, directly to the Earth, so that all of them could readily journey back and forth.

The transcendental dwelling places are as visible and material to spiritual beings as everything on Earth is to human beings. The higher the spirits advance in their struggle out of Darkness, the higher will be the ether-oscillations that produce the material from which these, their limited worlds, are formed. The farther the dwelling places are located from the Earth, the brighter, the more splendid, the more harmonious everything becomes, both dwelling and nature, e.g., seas, rivers, lakes, lands, flowers, etc. So long as the spirit stays in the sphere which it has reached by purification through its reincarnations - i.e., earthly rebirths - its body moves about in the same way as one moves about on Earth, i.e., by walking, running, etc. However, the movements of the released spirit are quicker and easier, just as the thoughts are more lucid and more precise than when the spirit is bound to the heavy earthly body that imposes so many restrictions upon it.

The means of transportation in the spheres are similar to those on Earth; however, they are all better, faster and more comfortable than those on Earth. All innovations and improvements that in the course of time have been brought to humanity have first been proved in the spheres, before they have become a reality on Earth.

If the Youngest do not wish to make use of the Passage of Light when communicating with inhabitants of the various spheres and of the Earth, they apply the energy of thought and will that lets the

¹⁾ However, the human spirits were only allowed to use this Passage of Light when accompanied by their guardian spirit, i.e., with the permission of God.

spiritual body be transported by the ether, which by virtue of the Earth dimension penetrates everything.

The fourth dimension cannot be explained in greater detail, since humanity as yet lacks the basis for an understanding of this concept.

The higher spheres are invisible to the inhabitants of the lower spheres. The lower spheres are partly invisible to the inhabitants of the higher, and even the Youngest have only a moderately clear view of them, when, borne by the oscillations of the ether, they move from sphere to sphere, or from place to place within the various spheres. The inhabitants of the lower spheres cannot on their own, either by thought and will or by the Passage of Light, ascend to worlds that lie above their own sphere. They can descend only to the Earth¹⁾ or to the lower spheres that lie in between, and only through the Passage of Light. However, within their home sphere and the sphere of the Earth, they are able to move about by thought and will, but only to a limited extent. They are thus unable to penetrate strong concentrations of Light or ethereal Light-radiations.

God's Servants and the Youngest can move about everywhere by the power of their thought and will, and therefore do not always make use of the Passage of Light. If they so desire, they can even make their way through the Earth's numerous accumulations of Darkness.

In the course of time God has created a number of animal figures for the enjoyment of human beings, for example birds, horses, dogs, cats, etc., so that they should not miss the purely earthly surroundings too much. However, these animals are not astral counterparts of earthly animals, but thought-forms without everlasting life. When the spheres have served their purpose as temporary habitations for the spirits, these animal figures, i.e., thought-images - creatures and objects - that are only temporarily contained in and by the Thought of God can therefore have no eternal life and will disappear. By the Will of God they are then retracted into the substance from which He created them. they will dissolve and revert to their original state - the Light-ether. But so long as the spheres exist, human spirits will always be able to find reproductions there of the animals that they most cherished during life on Earth. And since God creates these animal figures to conform exactly to their earthly prototypes, everyone will be able to find his or her favourite horse, dog, cat, bird, and so on.

¹⁾ See also Commentary, pp. 247-50.

In several of the accounts that departed human beings have conveyed to the earthly connections about life in the spheres, it is often stressed that the animals are endowed with everlasting life. This refers to the aforementioned thought-forms. However, there is some justification for such erroneous information that is given to the deceased relatives and friends, since even the more advanced human spirits find it difficult to realize that these animals, which are apparently as alive as they themselves are, have only been endowed with temporary life. In a few cases where such messages have apparently been given by higher spirits, this erroneous information about the eternal life of animals must be ascribed to the Elder, who implanted false thoughts while the communicating spirit was in contact with a medium. This has occurred quite often and cannot really be held against the mediums, since the Elder would of course avail himself of every opportunity to falsify any information given by the spirits of the Light.

But these and other false assertions could have been rectified in time if the mediums or the séance leaders had always analysed the various passages of every message and demanded verification that *all* was in exact agreement with the truth. *For where the truth was demanded in the name of God, the Elder would have had to yield.*

Through the eldest of the Youngest, God gives a broad outline of the life of each human being on Earth¹ and also determines its duration, all in agreement with that which can be allotted each individual on the basis of that person's thoughts, actions and progress in the preceding incarnation, as well as all that has not been atoned for from previous earthly lives. Before entering upon a new incarnation the spirit receives a message specifying how the forthcoming earthly life shall be lived, what demands will be made upon it, and for what deeds it shall atone. Not until the spirit has closely considered what is to come, has understood why the new incarnation must take the exact form specified and has accepted what has been proposed, will it be incarnated in that place and in those surroundings that are best suited to that particular purpose.

But since everything must take place on a voluntary basis, and the human spirits, especially the undeveloped ones, do not always immediately understand the purpose to be served by a new incarnation and therefore often refuse to undertake such a venture, they must remain in their dwellings with no possibility of further progress open to them until, after the elapse of a shorter or longer period of time, they come to acknowledge and comprehend the advantages that they will achieve through a further incarnation. Once this recognition is achieved they can continue the temporarily interrupted

journey toward their Father's Home.

However, it is not left entirely to human beings themselves to overcome all earthly difficulties. In order to render effective help, the guardian spirits¹ watch over them and try by influencing their thoughts, i.e., "stirring their conscience" - to guide every human being into the ways of life given by God. But since human beings are endowed with a free will in the same way as the Eldest and the Youngest, and since they very seldom pay full attention to the admonitions of their conscience, the incarnation often becomes a sad departure from the specified plan; and as human beings frequently take their own lives instead of awaiting the time and manner of death appointed by God, they very often create much needless suffering for themselves.

b) A human being who commits suicide while in a delirium (i.e., unpremeditated suicide) will be reincarnated immediately after an account of the earthly life just ended has been given. These immediate reincarnations, without time for rest and learning, are given by God partly as a continuation of the abruptly terminated life, and partly so that the individual can move beyond the spiritual sufferings recently endured on Earth. Even if the new incarnation should be of short duration, the spirit will be able to look back upon the mental or physical anguish of the previous earthly life with greater calm when it is again released. (Regarding premeditated suicide, see Speech of Christ, p. 114).

A guardian spirit is normally in charge of many human beings, sometimes several hundred and is in direct thought-communication with all of them. The older the human spirit, the clearer and the more emphatic does the voice of conscience sound to that human being. The younger the human spirit, the more closely does Darkness surround the human being, and the fainter and more uncertain does the voice of conscience sound. Many human beings often hear two voices that contradict each other, one of which constantly opposes the admonitions of the conscience to follow the ways of truth and of the Light. *At the present time*² this argumentative voice is that of the human being's own selfish and undeveloped spirit, giving its own opinions on the questions or situations under consideration; but clearly nothing is gained by overriding the conscience in order to yield to the human being's own desire to sin and to commit evil deeds.

¹) Guardian Angels.

²) During the time when the sin-bound spirits lived on the astral counterpart of the Earth (the Earth's astral plane) this opposing voice often stemmed from these wicked and evil beings, and in many cases it also stemmed from the Elder, who in that way tried to lead human beings astray. See also Ardor's Account, p. 29, Commentary, pp. 203-04, and Summary, pp. 307-09.

¹) See Summary, pp. 307-10.

When the spirit at death is released once more from its earthly body, the guardian spirit brings it in a state resembling sleep¹ to the sphere and the dwelling that it left upon its incarnation.

Upon awakening, the spirit must carefully consider the earthly life just ended, must review all thoughts and all actions – the evil as well as the good – and account for all the occasions when, as a human being, it was in disagreement with its conscience. God Himself poses the questions to which He requires more detailed answers by letting His voice sound to all spirits who have completed the rendering of their accounts.

God speaks through His Thought, and by His Will he transforms the vibrations produced by His Thoughts into waves of sound. God normally “speaks” to thousands of spirits at a time; but each individual hears only the questions addressed to that spirit alone, and the words sound as though God spoke in the earthly language used in the spirit's latest incarnation. When all questions have been answered in accordance with the truth, the spirit is given once more into the care of the guardian spirit for protection during the time of rest.

When the allotted time of rest² is over the spirit is transferred to a better dwelling or to a higher sphere, if the spirit has become worthy of this through its life on Earth. If this is not the case it will remain in its former dwelling, for however much the human being has sinned, the spirit will never be relegated to a lower sphere or to a poorer dwelling. In the world of Light there is only progress or for a time standstill, but there is never retrogression.

After the time of rest, whether the spirit is transferred to another place or remains in its dwelling, it receives instruction² in the special matters that will be of use during the next incarnation.

In all the spheres there are numerous institutions of learning, corresponding to the schools and universities of the Earth. All scientific and literary works that exist, or have existed, on Earth are available there, reproduced in the earthly languages, except for the most primitive ones. Each institution of learning has its own large libraries with appropriate reading and study halls. All public buildings, churches, assembly halls, universities, observatories, museums, etc., display great architectural beauty and are adorned with many works of sculpture. Many of these buildings have been designed and built by human spirits during their time of learning and thus were not created by God by the power of His Thought and Will, but were constructed from the materials of the spheres, similar to those on Earth (stone, wood, etc.)

¹) See Commentary, p. 204.

²) See section in small type, p. 185.

From the moment God endowed the human souls with life, He created them in the likeness of His first children, two by two, man and woman, so that when they had completed all the stages of their journey and reached God's Kingdom, they would belong to each other for eternity. Each retains his or her individuality. They are two, yet as one, since one will always be a reflection of the other.

Wherever possible, the human male and female duals accompany each other in their existence on Earth as man and wife, brother and sister or as other close relatives. But they do not always succeed in finding or understanding each other under earthly conditions.

Like God's other children, each human spirit is endowed by Him with the characteristic of its spirit-body, but this is not seen in its full beauty until the goal – God's Kingdom – is reached.

A description in broad outline is hereby given of the bodily appearance of the spirits.

The spirit-body, like the human body, consists of an outer form that encloses various internal organs. The outer form has the appearance of the most beautiful human body, many times idealized, but without sexual organs. (The female spirit-body is softer and more rounded than that of the male, but the actual difference in the outward appearance of the male and female cannot be explained, since human beings lack any basis for understanding this difference). The internal structure of the body bears only a remote resemblance to that of the earthly body. The physical digestive system consisting of the stomach, intestines, kidneys, etc., and all reproductive organs are non-existent, but the vascular and nervous systems are far more extensively and finely developed. By breathing in through the nose, the windpipe and lung-like organs, the body is supplied with the necessary ether currents, which then circulate through a finely and extensively ramified “vascular network” and back to the respiratory organs, where the currents are renewed. The vascular system is a double one. The network of vessels leading from the organ on the right side terminates on the left side, and vice versa. There are no blood-carrying vessels. If a spirit of the Light stays in or passes through accumulations of Darkness, a sensation is experienced similar to that of a human being breathing air of low oxygen content.

The spirit-body has no bone structure, but is nevertheless entirely firm in its construction, since it is supported everywhere by a strong musculature.

Instead of the human brain, but in the same place, there is a nerve centre from which an extremely fine network of nerves spreads from the head along the back and through the entire body. All the nerve fibres lead back to the brain-centre through a lesser centre that corresponds most closely to the human heart and is situated at approximately the same place; here the nerve-ends converge and lead through two cords, one on either side of the neck, back to the point of origin, the brain-centre.

Soul
Mates



Beings in the transcendental world need not take nourishment, if they do not wish to do so.

Nourishment, if taken, consists mainly of fruit,¹ which is consumed in the natural state or prepared in various ways. This nourishment is taken by mouth (the tooth structure of which is similar to that of the human body), is distributed through a finely ramified tubular system to the entire body, and is then imperceptibly secreted through miniscule pores of the skin by interaction between the tubular and vascular systems of the body and the surrounding ether of Light or of Darkness. The pores of the skin are not unlike those of the human body's pores for perspiration, but are much finer and are all connected directly with the tubular and vascular systems.

The spirit-body as it has been described here is alike for *all* spirits; but because the human spirit in the transcendental world is always an exact copy (see pp. 188-91) of the human embodiment of its previous incarnation, the spirit-body also contains duplicates of all the organs, etc. of the human body. In the transcendental world everything human remains completely latent - rests in a state of dormancy. On the other hand, for as long as the spirit is incarnated the organs of the spirit-body are at rest, since these can be used only when the spirit is released. But the nervous system of the spirit-body functions at all times, although to a lesser degree during life on Earth.

When the spirit has completed all its incarnations and is released from life on Earth, God removes by the power of His Will all the rudimentary organs that stem from its human existence, and the spirit-body then appears exactly as God created it.

7.

T.A. The moment the first frail seed of a new human body is formed in conception, it is endowed with its share of the divine stream of Light that binds humanity to God. Gradually, as the embryo develops, the divine element absorbs the faint spiritual Light given by the Eldest, which through the streams of Darkness is also received by every human embryo at the moment of conception, and thereby faintly brings to spiritual life, or animates, the astral counterpart of that human being. However, the counterpart itself² is not absorbed since it is completely interwoven with the earthly body. The astral counterpart of Darkness is not loosened and separated until *after* the death of the earthly body has taken place.

¹) All of the spheres abound in flowering and fruit-bearing trees and plants that are known on Earth. According to laws given by God, the fruits and flowers develop without pollution and have a flavour and fragrance far superior to those of the fruits on Earth.

²) See also Summary, pp. 274-75 and p. 289, regarding astral counterparts and dwelling in a state of disrepair.

When death has occurred, the astral connection to the soft substances¹ of the body is loosened, and the counterpart² is released and separated. The moment it is released it has the outward form and appearance of the dead body, but this likeness is only retained for a brief period of time - from five to twenty minutes. It then dissolves, becomes misty, is absorbed and disappears. The time of absorption differs, since it depends on various circumstances. If a person dies in the open air the counterpart is quickly absorbed, whereas the absorption is retarded in closed rooms. If a person meets with sudden, violent death, with no preceding illness, it then takes longer before separation of the counterpart and the earthly body is completed. This span of time can vary from about two hours to about twenty-four hours.

At the birth of a child, the element of Light received from the Eldest is completely eliminated by the divine element that enshrouds the child's body as a faintly luminous cloud of mist, in which the frail human form can barely be discerned from the transcendental world. As the child grows bodily, so in the same measure does the spiritual shroud of Light, but it still retains its misty appearance. When the physical body dies, whether at a tender age, in old age or in the years in between, the spiritual shroud of Light is released and at the same time condenses into an exact copy of the dead body. A new human spirit has thus been created, and in the earthly life that has just ended it has taken the first step on the difficult journey toward the Father's distant Home.

What has been stated here about the binding of a divine element to the human body holds true for every human embryo.³ But in those cases where one of the Youngest is to be bound to a new human body, or a previously created human spirit is to continue its incarnations, the binding takes place during the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy. The spirit that is to be incarnated is brought to the Earth and bound to the foetus with the "life-giving"⁴ cord - a resilient cord, fashioned from the finer substances of the Light and interwoven with the vascular and nervous systems of the human brain⁴ in

¹) What has been stated earlier - on page 177 - about the counterparts of the more solid substances of animal bodies also applies to the human body.

²) As stated earlier, the astral counterparts of the first human beings could not dissolve, because they were held together by the faint spiritual Light that had been brought to them from the Eldest. These counterparts - "shadows" - retained to some extent the outer form of the human body, but without any real firmness. Thus, at one moment they would dissolve into a mass of mist, and the next they would again assume a human form. In his Account, Ardor states that the shadows "wandered about", but undulated or floated would more aptly describe the movements of these counterparts.

³) Human foetus.

⁴) Ardor describes the cord as life-giving, because the spirit is connected by this cord to the brain of its physical body, thereby giving "spiritual life", i.e., thought and will to the human being. See also Summary, pp. 278-79.

such a way that only death can dissolve the bond.

Once bound to the foetus, the spirit remains in close proximity to the pregnant woman. As the formation of the foetus progresses the outer contours of the spiritual body gradually fade away, until the moment of birth when it merges with the child's body, enshrouds like a mantle and takes on the appearance of a more or less luminous formation of mist, in which the human form of the child can be perceived from the transcendental world as a darker body.

When the spirit becomes united with the human body at the birth of the child, it slowly fuses, through absorption, with the divine element that the embryo received at the moment of conception. The divine element thus enriches the spirit with an ever greater spiritual strength at each new incarnation, if it is a human spirit. But if one of the Youngest is bound to the child, the divine element merges with the spirit without adding further spiritual strength, since each of the Youngest is on an infinitely higher level than even the most advanced human spirit.

If the foetus dies before it is fully developed the spirit that is bound to it is released, and within a very short time it has resumed the appearance it had before it was bound to the foetus - the incarnation will thus not be completed. If the spirit is united with the child during birth - has taken on its appearance - and the child dies soon after birth, the spirit, in the form of the child, is brought back to the spheres and grows up there in foster homes until the age of maturity is reached, upon which it enters a new incarnation. These periods during which spirits grow up like children in the spheres are regarded as times of rest and learning.

The foregoing holds true for all human spirits whose earthly bodies die during childhood.

When the Youngest are released at death from their earthly existence, their spiritual bodies retain the forms of the human body until, after the elapse of a shorter or a longer period of time, they have rendered a careful account of what they have accomplished among human beings; the spirit then assumes once more the appearance that it received from God. If the Youngest are bound to human bodies that die during childhood, they do not grow up in the foster homes of the spheres as do human spirits, but are brought by their guardian spirit to their home in the last sphere where, after a short rest and by the power of God's Will, they assume their original form. Much unnecessary delay would otherwise be caused to the work of the Youngest for the progress of mankind.

The Youngest can assume any of the forms of their previous incarnations whenever they so wish or whenever it may for some reason

another become necessary. They often avail themselves of this ability when they visit human spirits in the various spheres, so that these may recognize the relative or friend who became dear to them during a contemporary incarnation.

Since the younger and undeveloped spirits normally stay only for a short time in the spheres (from five to thirty years), human beings cannot expect after every incarnation to meet all their departed relatives and friends. However, it is always ensured that human beings who loved each other or were friends during an earthly incarnation can meet each other from time to time during their sojourn in the spheres.

Human spirits who have had common spiritual interests, sympathetic connections and the like during their earthly existence often form larger or smaller circles. The various members of these circles will then meet sometimes in the earthly and sometimes in the transcendental existence; and when they have all overcome the power of Darkness through the strength of their will for the Light, and have thus completed their many reincarnations, those who have come together will all simultaneously be transferred to one of the globes in the distant star universes, so that they may there complete their spiritual development.

When released, the human spirits retain the characteristics of their earthly body until a new incarnation is begun. Then, as stated earlier, they assume the appearance of the new-born human child and develop accordingly as it grows up and lives its life.

If the human being dies at an older or at a very old age, the released spirit retains the characteristics of this age until it has rendered the account of its life on Earth. It then assumes the appearance that the human body had between thirty and forty years of age.

The spirit remains connected to the body by the life-giving cord during spontaneous release, which may arise during serious illness when the body is unconscious under the attack of fever, or through an accident that causes the body to faint, or under narcosis or the like. Human beings sometimes retain vague memories from this separation of the spirit and the body.

The spirit remains bound to the physical body by the life-giving cord also during sleep release¹, even though the spirit may be in the spheres while the body is asleep. Such nocturnal release is permitted in cases where the spirit has undertaken some mission to be carried out in a human existence. When necessary it can from time to time return to its dwelling in the transcendental world, where it can gain strength for the earthly task through consultation with its spiritual leaders.

¹) See also Summary, pp. 292-93.

So that the Youngest and the human spirits may be capable of eliminating the Darkness that unceasingly pervades the human body, an absorption layer is automatically formed by the power of God's Will at the time of birth. This absorption layer is formed from a finer substance of Light and surrounds the entire body as a closely fitted casing about 1/8 millimetre in thickness. The casing is itself enclosed by the spirit, which, after being united with the child at birth, is absorbing the divine element, constantly absorbs and to a greater or lesser extent eliminates the Darkness that unceasingly streams through the astral body from the Eldest. This Darkness was originally depolarized by the spiritual element of Light that formed the basis for the creation of mankind.

Seen from the transcendental world the human being resembles an egg-shaped, more or less strongly luminous misty formation, in which the human contours can only vaguely be discerned. The first to be seen in the misty formation is the spirit in human form, somewhat more faintly luminous than the enshrouding Light. Within the contours of the spirit-body can be seen a darker body. This is the human being itself together with its astral counterpart, framed by a luminous line - the casing. The higher and purer the spirit that is bound to the human being, the more strongly luminous are the misty formation and the radiations of the spirit-body - the aura.

The absorption layer serves also as an insulation layer, since the inside of the casing that is turned toward the spirit is such that it can normally exclude the knowledge, characteristics, memories and experiences that are possessed by the spirit bound to the body, all of which must not be conveyed through the life-giving cord to the human (i.e., physical) brain. The connection between the spirit and the earthly body is arranged in such a way¹ that only as much of the intelligence of the spirit can flow through it *as is necessary to produce the human personality in the forthcoming life on Earth*. Through the brain² the human being maintains communication with the spirit, so that all the knowledge and experience acquired by the human being during the many lives on Earth become the permanent possession of the spirit.

If the spirit, while it is bound to a human body, were not protected by an insulation layer it would be brought too closely into contact with the physical brain. This would cause the sufferings associated with residing in the earthly environment to become unendurable, especially where the Youngest are concerned. The memory of life in

¹) See also Summary, pp. 278-79.

²) See also Summary, pp. 277-89.

God's Kingdom and the yearning to return there would then inevitably become so crushing and depressing *that the Youngest would be incapable of carrying out their work for humanity's journey toward the Light*.

At the time of death, the insulation layer is loosened and absorbed by the Light in the course of three to six hours. However, there have been instances where, because of accumulations of Darkness, the Light has not been strong enough to absorb the insulation layer within the allotted time. These casings have as a result often lingered for years in the place where the corresponding earthly body had expired. Because the casings bear an unmistakable resemblance to the body they once enclosed, clairvoyants have on occasion incorrectly assumed them to be the spirits of the deceased¹ - i.e., ghosts.

Thus: *a human being is composed primarily of an earthly body and its astral counterpart, with the addition of an absorption and insulation layer that enables the spirit to eliminate the streams of Darkness from the Eldest and prevents the memories of experiences from previous incarnations from exerting a disturbing influence on the individual's conduct of life. In addition there is the spiritual self (thought, will and spirit-body) which is represented either by a newborn or by a more advanced spirit, which is bound to the human body by a cord, or bond, that severs and is dissolved at the time of death of the human body.*

In the earthly three-dimensional world, the casing, spirit-body, cord and the spiritual shroud of Light have no space-filling properties.

Since animals are not endowed with everlasting spiritual life - no spirit being bound to animal bodies - animals, in contrast to human beings, have no absorption and insulation layer.

The "intelligence", or instinct, of animals is retained from individual to individual in the brain of the astral counterpart, which so affects the animals' earthly brain that they live their earthly lives entirely by instinct and impulse. (A further explanation is given in the Summary, pp. 295-96).

8.

The civilized realms² that were destroyed in the remote past by mighty natural catastrophes varied greatly in size and in the level

¹) See Commentary, p. 255.

²) In order to achieve a better survey, the accounts of the three vanished empires have been amalgamated. See also Ardor's Account, pp. 22, 26 & 28.

LEMURIA

of civilization of their peoples.

The oldest empire, located in the Pacific Ocean, was the largest in size. In the very remote past it was geographically attached to the northern part of South America, but was separated by volcanic eruptions and subsidence of the ocean floor. The numerous island groups of Polynesia still show evidence of this land's existence and in part of its location. In about 30,000 B. C. this realm perished. It was split up into larger and smaller islands, which also came about through volcanic eruptions and subsidence of the ocean floor. The devastation continued for about eight centuries. The realm was completely destroyed, all plant and animal life vanished and only the highest-lying areas remained. Later, because of shifts in the ocean floor, some of the submerged parts reappeared as islands.

This empire's inhabitants were the ancestors of the Malayan people. However, the Malays of today are no longer of pure descent, but have been greatly intermingled through association with other people and are spiritually much less advanced than were their prehistoric forefathers.

In the most ancient times, during the many earliest millennia after the Youngest had begun their educational work among mankind, the peoples of the Pacific empire were predominantly sun and fire worshippers. Though the empire stretched over vast areas, it was only sparsely populated. The people lived in tribes or families of various sizes under the leadership of a chief. They were all at about the same cultural level. **JESUS**

The eldest of the Youngest underwent his first two incarnations¹ in this Pacific empire. In his first incarnation he was the chief, or leader, of the empire's largest and most important tribe, which at this time was still at a rather low cultural level. For this reason his work among these people had no lasting significance.

In his second incarnation, about two thousand years before the destruction of the empire, his rank and mission can best be described as that of high priest. By his authoritative yet gentle manner, he succeeded in calling to life among his people the belief in a Deity of Love. However, by that time the Eldest had already tried for millennia, and by every possible means, to undermine the work of the Youngest among humanity. And as the spiritual influence of the Eldest became ever greater, polytheism prevailed and the "new" God, the God of Kindness and Love to whom the sun was dedicated as a symbol, became more stern and cruel in the minds of the people. He was elevated to highest god, and under the constant influence of the Eldest was made into a terrifying monster of cruelty. The symbol of this highest god was the all-consuming, all-destructive fire; and to satisfy the ever-rising demands for atrocities that the priests in the name of this "divine" monster imposed upon the

¹) Not mentioned directly in Ardor's Account, since it was deemed unnecessary by the transcendental world. - Publisher's note.

people the first human sacrifices took place, and over the years they became more frequent and gruesome. A much favoured punishment for religious transgressions was to hurl the transgressors into a deep extinct crater.¹ If the victims were not crushed to death by the fall they died from starvation, because anyone caught offering help was liable to suffer the same punishment.

The Teotihuacans, or the Mlawayans, lived mostly by hunting, fishing and barter. Agriculture was known only to a few tribes and was not organized. The first primitive boat originated here and was made from dried animal hides. The bow and the stern were held together by plant fibres. The middle of the boat was distended by pointed sticks, it was steered by a forked branch and drifted with the current along the rivers; oars were unknown.

During the destruction of the empire large numbers of the population fled toward the west. The flight took place in boats that were better constructed and better equipped than the type mentioned above, and which bore a strong resemblance to the boats of the Eskimo people. The refugees and their descendants arrived by way of the intervening islands at the eastern and southern shores of Asia.²

Other inhabitants fled toward the east and reached - also by way of the intervening islands - South, Central and North America where they became the ancestors of the Indians, the so-called indigenous peoples of America. Some of the many types of Indian evolved from the union between the Teotihuacans and a primitive, animal-like people - the true aborigines - whom they encountered upon arrival in America. The inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego and the Eskimos are the most direct descendants of the aborigines of America. None of the Youngest had been incarnated among these beings, and consequently the level of their development was extremely low, but they still ranked somewhat above the first human beings in intelligence. This slight spiritual progress was due to the divine element that every human embryo has been given since God endowed humanity with spiritual life.

The second empire that perished was a large island in the Atlantic Ocean, the so-called Atlantis. In the remote past this island was connected with the southern part of North America, but through volcanic activity it became separated from the mainland.

The shape of the island can reasonably well be compared to a diagonally elongated, inverted Latin "S" - the upper curve at the right, and the lower at the left. The island's northernmost point extended to about latitude 40 degrees North, longitude 34 degrees West. The island extended south to about latitude 25½ degrees North, and west to longitude 47 degrees West, latitude 27½ degrees North, and eastward to about longitude 28 degrees West. An imaginary line from the town of Plymouth in England to the centre

¹) See Ardor's Account, p. 22.

²) Any indication of locality is given by present-day geographical names.