

The zodiac is the law according to which everything comes into existence, stays a while, then passes out of existence, to reappear according to the zodiac.

THE ZODIAC.

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BIRTH-DEATH DEATH-BIRTH.

THERE is no death without birth, nor birth without death. For every birth there is a death, and for every death a birth.

Birth means a change of condition; so also does death. To be born into this world the ordinary mortal must die to the world from which he comes; to die to this world is to be born into another world.

In the journey to the beyond countless generations have repeatedly asked, "Whence do we come? Whither do we go?" The only answer they have heard has been the echo to their questions.

From more meditative minds there come the other twin questions, "How do I come? How do I go?" This adds more mystery to the mysterious, and thus the subject rests.

While passing through our shadowland those who are conscious of or who have had glimpses into either side of the beyond say that one may solve the riddles and answer the questions relating to his future by the analogy of the past. These statements are so simple that we listen to them and dismiss them without thought.

It is well that we cannot solve the mystery. To do so might destroy our shadowland before we can live in the light. Yet we may get an idea of the truth by making use of analogy. We may apprehend "Whither we go?" by taking a glance along the perspective of "Whence we come?"

After asking the twin questions, "Whence and Whither?" and "How do I come?" and "How do I go?" there comes the soul-awakening question, "Who am I?" When the soul has earnestly asked itself this question, it will never again be content until it knows. "I! I! I! Who am I? What am I here for? Where do I come from? Where am I going? How do I come? and How

do I go? However I come or go through space, through time, or beyond, still, ever and always, I am I and only I!"

From testimony and observation, one knows that he came into the world, or at least his body did, through birth, and that he will pass out of the visible world through death. Birth is the portal leading into the world and the entrance into the life of the world. Death is the exit from the world.

The generally accepted meaning of the word "birth" is the entrance of a living, organized body into the world. The generally accepted meaning of the word "death" is the ceasing of a living, organized body to co-ordinate its life and maintain its organization.

This, our, world, with its atmosphere—the dregs of eternal Substance—is as a speck floating in infinite space. The soul comes from the eternal, but has lost its wings and its memory while coming through the earth's dense atmosphere. Arrived on the earth, forgetful of its true home, deluded by its vestures and the fleshly coil of its present body, it is unable to see into the beyond on either side of the now and here. Like a bird whose wings are broken, it is unable to rise and soar into its own element; and so the soul dwells here for a little while, held a prisoner by the coils of flesh in the time-world, unmindful of its past, fearful of the future the unknown.

The visible world stands between two eternities as a great theatre in eternity. The immaterial and the invisible here become material and visible, the intangible and formless take on a tangible form, and the Infinite here appears to be finite as it enters into the play of life.

The womb is the hall where each soul gowns itself in the costume for its part and then launches itself into the play. The soul is forgetful of the past. The paste, the paint, the costume, the footlights and the play cause the soul to forget its being in eternity, and it is immersed in the littleness of the play. Its part over, the soul is relieved of its vestures one by one and ushered again into eternity through the doorway of death. The soul puts on its fleshly robes to come into the world; its part over, it puts off these robes to leave the world. Pre-natal life is the process of costuming, and birth is the step out onto the stage of the world. The process of death is the disrobing and passing back into the worlds of desire, thought or knowledge (∞-∞, ∞-∞, ∞-∞) from which we came.

To know the process of unmasking, we must know the process of masking. To know the transformation during the passing out of the world, we must know of the transformation while coming into the world. To know the process of masking or of the putting on the costume of the physical body, one must know somewhat of physiology and of the physiology of foetal development.

From the time of copulation until the birth into the physical world the reincarnating ego is concerned with the preparation of its vestures, and the building of its physical body which it is to inhabit. During this time the ego is not incarnate, but it is in contact with the mother through the emotions and senses, either consciously superintending the preparation and building of its body or it is in a dream state. These conditions are determined by the previous development of the ego as to its powers and capacities.

Each soul lives in a distinct world of its own, and of its own making, which it relates to or identifies with itself. The soul builds a physical body within and around a portion of itself for a sojourn and experience in the physical world. When the sojourn is at an end it dissipates the physical body by the process called death and decay. During and after this process of death it prepares other bodies in which to live in the worlds invisible to this our physical world. But whether in the visible physical world or invisible worlds, the reincarnating ego is never outside its own world or sphere of action.

After a life just ended the ego causes the physical body to be dissolved, consumed and resolved into its natural sources by the physical, chemical, elemental fires, and there remains nothing of that physical body except a germ. This germ is invisible to the physical eye, but remains within the world of the soul. Symbolizing the physical body, this germ appears as a glowing, burning coal during the process of the death and decay of the physical body. But when the elements of the physical body have been resolved into their natural sources and the reincarnating ego has passed into its period of rest the germ ceases to burn and glow; it gradually decreases in size until it finally appears to be a diminutive burned out cinder of an ashy color. It continues as an ashy speck in an obscure part of the world of the soul during the entire period of enjoyment and rest of the ego. This period of rest is known to the different religionists as "Heaven." When its heaven period is over and the ego is preparing to reincarnate, the burned out cinder, as the germ of the physical life, begins to glow again. It continues to glow and become brighter as it is brought into magnetic relation with its future parents by the law of fitness.

When the time is ripe for the germ of the physical to begin the growing of a physical body it enters into a closer relationship with its future parents.

In the early stages of humanity the gods walked the earth with men, and men were ruled by the wisdom of the gods. In those times humanity copulated only at certain seasons and for the purpose of giving birth to beings. In those times there existed an intimate relationship between the ego who was ready to incarnate and the egos who were to provide the physical body. When an ego was ready and willing to incarnate it made known its readiness by asking those of its own kind and order who were living in the physical world to prepare a physical body in which it might incarnate. By mutual consent the man and woman thus approached began a course of preparation and development which lasted until the birth of the body. The preparation consisted of a certain training and a series of religious ceremonies which were considered to be solemn and sacred. They knew that they were about to re-enact the history of creation and that they themselves were to act as gods in the august presence of the universal over-soul. After the necessary purification and training of body and mind and at the particular time and season suited for and indicated by the ego to incarnate, the sacred rite of copulative sacramental union was performed. Then the individual breath of each merged into one flame-like breath, which formed an atmosphere around the pair. During the rite of copulative union the glowing germ of the future physical body shot forth

from the sphere of the soul of the ego and entered the sphere of the breath of the pair. The germ passed like lightning through the bodies of both and caused them to thrill as it took the impression of each part of the body, then centered itself in the womb of the woman and became the bond which caused the two germs of sex to fuse into one the impregnated ovum. Then began the building of the body which was to be the physical world of the ego.

This was the way when wisdom ruled humanity. Then child birth was attended by no labor pains, and the beings in the world knew of those who were to enter. It is not so now.

Lust, lasciviousness, sexuality, voluptuousness, animality, are the present rulers of men who now desire sexual union without thought of the malignant beings who come into the world through their practices. The inevitable companions to these practices are hypocrisy, deceit, fraud, falsehood and treachery. All together are the causes of the world's misery, sickness, disease, idiocy, poverty, ignorance, suffering, fear, envy, spite, jealousy, slothfulness, laziness, forgetfulness, nervousness, weakness, uncertainty, timidity, remorse, anxiety, despondency, despair and death. And not only do the women of our race suffer pain in giving birth, and both sexes are subject to their peculiar diseases, but the incoming egos, guilty of the same sins, endure great suffering during pre-natal life and birth. (See Editorial, THE WORD, Vol. 5, No. 1, p.97.)

The invisible germ from the world of the soul is the idea of and archetypal design according to which the physical body is built. The germ of the man and the germ of the woman are the active and passive forces of nature which build according to the design of the invisible germ.

When the invisible germ has come from its place in the world of the soul and has passed through the flame-breath of the united pair and taken its place in the womb it unites the two germs of the pair, and nature begins her work of creation.

But the invisible germ, although out of its place in the world of the soul, is not cut off from the world of the soul. When departing the world of the soul the glowing invisible germ leaves a trail. This trail is brilliant or of a lurid cast, according to the nature of the being who will incarnate. The trail becomes the cord which connects the fallen invisible germ with the world of the soul. The cord connecting the invisible germ with its parent soul is composed of four strands within three sheaths. Together they seem as one cord; in color they vary from dull, heavy lead to a bright and golden hue, indicative of the purity of the body in process of formation.

This cord furnishes the channels through which are transmitted to the foetus all the potencies and tendencies of character, as they are involuted into the body and which remained as seeds (skandas) to bloom and bear fruit as the body matures in life, and the conditions are furnished for the expression of these tendencies.

The four strands which make up the cord are the channels through which passes the gross matter, the astral matter, the life matter, and the desire matter, to be fashioned into the body of the foetus. Through the three sheaths surrounding the four strands is transmitted the higher matter of the body, namely, that which is the essence of the bones, nerves

and glands (manas), the marrow (buddhi), and the virile principle (atma). The four strands transmit the matter which is the essence of the skin, hair and nails (sthula sharira), flesh tissue (linga sharira), blood (prana) and fat (kama).

As this matter is precipitated and condensed there are produced in the mother certain peculiar sensations and tendencies, such, for instance, as the desire for certain foods, sudden sentiments and outbursts, strange moods and longings, mental tendencies of a religious, artistic, poetic and heroic color. Each such phase appears as the influence of the ego is being transmitted and worked into the body of the foetus through its bodily parent the mother.

In ancient times the father played a most important part in the development of the foetus and guarded himself as carefully for this work as did the mother. In our degenerate times the relation of the father to the foetus is ignored and unknown. Only through natural instinct, but in ignorance, may he now act positively on the passive nature of the woman in the development of the foetus.

Every true scripture and cosmogony describes the building of a physical body in its gradual development. So, in Genesis, the building of the world in six days is a description of the development of the foetus, and on the seventh day the Lord, the Elohim, the builders, rested from their labors, as the work had been completed and man was fashioned in the image of his creators; that is, for every part of the body of man there is a corresponding force and entity in nature, which is the body of God, and the beings who take part in the building of the body are bound to that part which they have built and must respond to the nature of the function which that part is commanded by the incarnated ego to perform.

Each part of the body is a talisman to attract or guard against the powers of nature. As the talisman is used the powers will respond. Man is verily the microcosm who may call upon the macrocosm according to his knowledge or faith, his image-making and will.

When the foetus has been completed it is only the building of the physical being in its sevenfold division that has been done. This is only the lowest world of the soul. But the ego is not yet incarnate.

The foetus, being perfected and having rested, leaves its physical world of darkness, the womb, and dies to it. And this death of the foetus is its birth into its physical world of light. A breath, a gasp and a cry, and through the breath the ego begins its incarnation and is born into and enfolded by the psychic sphere of its parent over-soul. The ego, too, dies from its world and is born into and immersed into the world of flesh.

To preserve the lunar germ is the first step towards immortality. All bodies of man, the physical, psychic, mental and spiritual bodies, are built by the same force. The force rises to different heights in order to furnish a germ for the kind of body which is to be built.

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I N OUR last article a brief description was given of the perennial invisible germ of physical life, how it persists in the world of the soul from life to life, how it acts as the bond which unites the two sex germs, how it furnishes the idea on which the physical body is built, how in pre-natal development the foetus receives its principles and faculties and how these are transferred from the world of the soul through the instrumentality of its parents, how, when the body is perfected it dies from its world of physical darkness, the womb, and is thence born into the world of physical light; and also how, at the birth of its physical body, the reincarnating ego is born into the flesh and dies from its place in the world of the soul.

In the present article will be shown the correspondence between physical death and physical birth and how the process of death may be anticipated and overcome by a process of spiritual development and spiritual birth while man is still living in the physical body, which development and birth is analogous to foetal development and birth, and how by this birth immortality is established.

All the powers and forces of the universe are called upon in the fashioning and building up of a human body. The human body is born and is breathed into the physical world of the soul; speech is developed; later, the ego incarnates and self-consciousness begins to manifest. The body grows, the senses are exercised, the faculties developed; a few ideals and ambitions are attended by some all-important little struggles, by a little joy and sorrow and pleasure and pain. Then the end comes; the play of life is over, the curtain is rung down; a gasp, the light of the breath goes out and the actor retires to brood over his deeds and motives in the play. So we come and go, again and again, alternately praising and abusing the wheel of birth and death, but hugging it closely all the while.

Physical death corresponds to physical birth. As the child leaves the mother, breathes and is separated from the parent, so the bundle of sensations held together during physical life in the astral body (*linga sharira*) is at the time of death forced outward from the physical body, its vehicle. A cry, a gasp, a rattle in the throat; the silver cord that binds is loosed, and death has taken place. The new born child is cared for and protected by its parent until it is self-conscious and is able to live by its experiences and knowledge, so the ego separated from the physical is cared for and protected by its good deeds and works in the world of its soul until it arrives at a knowledge of its state, and, at the moment of choice, separates itself from the sensuous desires which hold it in bondage in the desire world. Thus is lived the round of birth and life and death and birth again. But this will not go on forever. There comes a time when the ego insists on knowing who and what it is and what its purpose is in the whirl of life and death? After much pain and sorrow the light begins to dawn for him in this land of shadows. Then he will see that he need not be ground down by the wheel of life, that he may be free from this wheel even while it continues to revolve. He sees that the purpose of the turning of the wheel through joy and sorrow, struggle and strife, light and darkness, is to bring him to the point where he may see how and desire to overcome death. He learns that he may overcome physical death by spiritual birth. Even as physical birth is attended by pain, so also does travail and much labor attend him who would help on the tardy race to which he belongs by bringing about and attaining his spiritual birth and thus becoming consciously immortal.

In new fields of effort, thousands fail where one succeeds. For centuries past thousands have tried and failed before one air-ship was built to fly against the wind. And if in one branch only of physical science partial success has resulted from centuries of effort and the loss of lives, it is to be expected that many will try and fail before one of the present human race succeeds in dealing intelligently with and entering into a new world where the instruments, the material, the problems, and the results are different from those with which he has been familiar.

The explorer into the new world of immortality must not be less courageous than the adventurer into new fields who risks his life and spends his substance and endures mental and bodily hardship and privation and failure, in the hope of discovery.

It is not different with the one who would enter the spiritual immortal world and become an intelligent resident thereof. Greater dangers will attend him than any adventurer in the physical world, and he must be possessed of the endurance and strength and valor and wisdom and power to cope with all obstacles and difficulties. He must build and launch his bark and then cross the ocean of life on to the other shore before he can be numbered among the immortal host.

In the course of his journey, if he cannot endure the jibes and ridicule of his race, if he has not strength to withstand the fears of the weak-kneed and faint-hearted and to continue even while those engaged with him fail utterly or leave him and return to the beaten track, if he has not the valor to ward off the onslaughts and attacks of his enemies who would interfere

with or prevent his work, if he has not the wisdom to guide him in the great work, if he has not the power to overcome, and if he has not, withal, an unswerving conviction in the virtue and reality of his quest, then he will not succeed.

But all these are acquired through effort and repeated effort. If the efforts of one life do not succeed, they will add to the success of a future life of him who admits defeat only to renew the fight. Let the motive be unselfish and for the good of all. Success will surely follow the effort.

In the early ages of humanity, the consciously immortal beings from past evolutions formed bodies by the union of the dual forces through their will and wisdom, and entering these bodies they dwelt among our then primitive humanity. The divine beings in that period taught mankind that they could produce physical or spiritual bodies by uniting the dual forces within. Owing to natural fitness and following the instruction of the divine beings, a few of that race united the dual forces of nature within their bodies and called into existence that body in which they became consciously immortal. But the majority, continually uniting the opposite forces to produce only physical effects, became less and less desirous of the spiritual and more and more deluded by the physical. Then instead of copulating only for the purpose of furnishing human bodies for the egos of their own high order and like character, they listened to the promptings of lower entities and copulated out of season and for their own pleasure. Thus were born into the world beings who were crafty and cunning and who made war against all human kind and among themselves. The immortals withdrew, humanity lost the knowledge and memory of its divinity and of its past. Then came loss of identity, and the degeneracy from which humanity is now emerging. Entrance to the physical world was given to inferior beings through the door of human passion and lust. When passion and lust are controlled and overcome there will be no door through which maleficent beings can come into the world.

What was done in the early ages of humanity may be done again in our age. Through all apparent confusion runs a harmonious purpose. Humanity had to become involved in materiality that it might gain strength and wisdom and power by overcoming matter and raising it to a higher degree in the scale of perfection. Humanity is now on the upward evolutionary arc of the cycle, and some may, some must rise to the plane of the immortals if the race is to progress. To-day it stands on the upward evolutionary arc of the plane (∞-∞) that humanity was on in its opposite and downward involutory path, and man may enter the kingdom of the immortals (∞). But whereas, in the early ages men acted naturally and spontaneously as gods because they were consciously in the presence of and with the gods, now we can become as gods only by overcoming all that holds humanity in ignorance and bondage, and thus earning the right to our divine inheritance of conscious immortality. It was easier for humanity to become involved into matter and held in bondage than it is to gain freedom from that bondage, because bondage comes by natural descent, but freedom is gained only through self-conscious effort.

What was true in the early ages of humanity is true to-day. Man can earn his immortality to-day as it was earned by man in past ages. He may

know of the law concerning spiritual development and if he will comply with the necessary requirements he will benefit by the law.

He who is informed concerning the law of spiritual development and birth, even though he be willing to comply with all requirements, should not rush madly on when wise men stop to ponder. After becoming aware of the law and requirements one should wait and consider well what are his ideals and duties in life before he determines to engage in the process of attaining self-conscious immortality. No real duty of life can be assumed and then neglected without incurring the consequences. One cannot make real progress in spiritual life if his present duty is left undone. There is no exception to this stern fact.

With its attendant causes and phenomena, foetal development and birth into the physical world are physical examples of physical development and birth into the spiritual world; with the difference that whereas physical birth is attended by ignorance on the part of the parents and lack of self-knowledge on the part of the child, the spiritual birth accompanies the self-conscious knowledge on the part of the parent who becomes immortal through the development and birth of the spiritual body.

The requirements for immortality are a sound mind in a healthy and adult body, with the idea of immortality as the motive in a life of unselfishness and of living for the good of all.

There is in the body of man a solar germ (♁) and a lunar germ (☾). The lunar germ is psychic. It comes from the world of the soul and represents the barhishad pitri. The lunar germ descends into the body once every month with man as well as woman. In the body of man it develops into a spermatozoon but not every spermatozoon contains the lunar germ. In the woman it becomes an ovum; not every ovum has the lunar germ. For impregnation to take place in the production of a human physical body there is necessary the presence of what we have called the invisible germ of the physical from the world of the soul, and the male germ (spermatozoon with the lunar germ) and the female germ (ovum with the lunar germ). The male and the female germs are bonded by the invisible germ and so produce the impregnated ovum; then follows foetal development which culminates in birth. This is the psycho-physical aspect of conception and of the building of a physical body.

The lunar germ is lost from the body of man by the production of a physical body. If still in the body the lunar germ is lost by copulation; and it may be lost in other ways. In the case of our present day humanity it is lost every month by both man and woman. To preserve the lunar germ is the first step towards immortality, for all bodies of man, the physical, psychic, mental and spiritual bodies,¹ are built up from the same source and force, but the force must rise to a certain height in order to furnish a germ for the kind of body which is to be built. This is the basis and secret of all true alchemy.

The solar germ descends into the body from the world of the soul. The solar germ is never lost so long as the human remains human. The solar

¹ See The Word, Vol. IV., No. 4, "The Zodiac."

germ is the representative of the ego, the agnishvatta pitri, and is divine.² In reality the solar germ enters when the child becomes self-conscious, and is renewed thereafter every year.

The bodies of man and woman complement each other and are so constructed that their particular functions produce two distinct physical germs. On the purely physical plane the body of the woman produces the ovum, which is the vehicle and representative of the lunar germ, while a male body is used to produce the vehicle and representative of the solar germ, impressed with the signature of the solar germ.

To create a spiritual body the lunar germ must not be lost. By living a life of purity of thought and action, with the motives of immortality and unselfishness, the lunar germ is preserved and passes the gate of balance (☮) and enters the gland of Lushka (♁) and thence rises to the head.³ It takes one month for the lunar germ to reach the head from the time of its entrance into the body.

If the purity of the body has been preserved consecutively during the course of a year, there are in the head the solar and lunar germs, which stand to each other as the male and female germs in the production of a physical body. During a sacred rite similar to the act of copulation in former times, there comes down a divine ray of light from the divine ego in the world of the soul, and blesses the union of the solar and lunar germs in the head; this is the conception of a spiritual body. It is the immaculate conception. Then begins the growth of the spiritual immortal body through the physical body.

The descent of the divine ray of light from the ego sanctioning the union of the solar and lunar germs corresponds to the presence, on a lower plane, of the invisible germ which blends the two psycho-physical germs.

The immaculate conception is attended by a great spiritual illumination; then the inner worlds are opened to the spiritual vision, and man not only sees but is impressed with the knowledge of those worlds. Then follows a long period during which this spiritual body is developed through its physical matrix, just as the foetus was developed in the womb. But whereas, during the foetal development the mother feels only and merely senses vague influences, the one who is thus creating a spiritual body knows of all of the universal processes which are represented and called upon in the fashioning of this immortal body. Just as at the time of the physical birth the breath entered the physical body, so now the divine breath, the holy pneuma, enters the spiritual immortal body so created. Immortality is thus attained.



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² See The Word, Vol. IV., Nos. 3-4. "The Zodiac."

³ See The Word, Vol. V., No. 1, "The Zodiac."