

The Seven Jewels and the Seven Stages of Initiation

Wherever the name of man is spoken the doctrine of immortality is announced.

There are two heavens in men; the one is Luna Cebrum, but in the heart of man is the true micro-cosmic heaven. Yea, the heart of man is the true heaven of an immortal being, out of which the soul has never yet come, which new Olympus and Heaven Christ Jesus has chosen for His dwelling place in man.—Paracelsus.

THESE PORTALS,” says the Book of the Golden Precepts, “lead the aspirant across the waters on the other shore. Each Portal hath a golden key that openeth its gate; these keys are:

1. The key of Charity and Love immortal.
2. The key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances cause and effect and leaves no further room for Karmic action.
3. Patience sweet, that naught can ruffle.
4. Indifference to pleasure and pain, illusion conquered, Truth alone perceived.
5. Dauntless energy that fights its way to supernal Truth out of the mire of lies terrestrial.
6. The Golden Gate which once opened leads toward the realms of the Eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.
7. The key which makes of man a god, creating of him a Bodhisattva.”

Since the founding of initiatory Schools in ancient Lemuria after the link of mind was

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bestowed upon the pioneers of the human race (the masses did not receive the mental link until the Atlantean Epoch), there have been two great classes or divisions in the Schools, corresponding, after a fashion, let us say, to preparatory school and college; or to college and post-graduate degrees.

What we call these Schools matters little; but following the Greek custom, esotericists generally designate the lower school the Lesser Mysteries and the higher, the Greater Mysteries. There are nine Degrees or grades in the Lesser Mysteries, called Initiations—or, if the metaphysical terms are preferred, expansions of consciousness—and four in the Greater Mysteries. There are seven schools which teach or confer the nine Lesser Mysteries, and five which teach or confer the four Greater Mysteries. These schools are not physical but etheric structures, such as the New Jerusalem described by St. John; and they are not to be confused with mere secret societies. Truly, they all have an outlet on the material plane; if they had not, they would not reach our material-minded humanity and so would have no pupils to instruct in their Mysteries! These Mystery Schools, with their exoteric representatives, change from age to age in order to meet the requirements of the people among whom their work is to be done.

All of these Mystery Orders are “formed on cosmic lines”; thus, the thirteen Initiations correspond to the twelve constellations and their spiritual head of the zodiac; also their planetary rulers, some of which remain to be discovered. (It is interesting to speculate that in the Greek Zodiac the Pleiades were considered to be a thirteenth constellation

until a late date.) The great Christian type of the Mystery School is that of the Christ with His twelve Apostles. The Rosicrucian Order is also composed of twelve Brothers and an esoteric thirteenth, the revered Founder, symbolically designated Christian Rose Cross, after the work he came to do for the world.

The seven Schools of the Lesser Mysteries and the five Schools of the Greater Mysteries are grouped under a central Intelligence, called (again in the Greek fashion) the Liberator—a title anciently conferred upon Dionysus, but in Christian times related to the Risen Christ (or to the thirteenth Hierophant in a Mystery School). The mystic thirteenth is always the head of an Order, and the twelve heads are in turn grouped about that thirteenth whom Christians call the Christ, although He is known by other names in other lands and among other peoples.

In addition to the sacred numbers twelve and thirteen, we observe the recurrence of seven and five, corresponding to the five planets, Sun, and Moon of the Ptolemaic system. In some Schools the Initiations are arranged differently, so that the illuminative process is covered in seven Degrees instead of nine ; but the work done is the same in substance. The generally accepted Temple aspirant is a novice of one of the Lesser Mystery Schools, and of very early Degrees of that School. Few have advanced in spiritual work beyond the first seven of the Temple Rites. The remaining two Degrees (in the ninefold system) rise above the realms of this mortal plane, giving companionship with celestial hosts past discerning or describing by mere mortality.

From all of which is readily understood why the number seven is sacred to occultists. It has been said that “whoever passes over these seven steps

and degrees comes to such a marvelous place where he sees much mystery and attains the transmutation of all natural things.” The seven Schools of the Lesser Mysteries, also the seven Degrees of the sevenfold system, relate biblically to the mystic ladder which Jacob saw in his vision. The whole of the initiatory scheme is symbolized in the winding stairway of Solomon’s Temple which led to the inner chamber where a successful candidate was given the “wages of a master.”

The five Schools which teach the four Greater Mysteries are almost wholly unknown, even to the esoteric world. Rarely does any soul pass their sacred portals. The Hierophants through whom this sublime work is administered are the fewest and highest of Earth’s Initiates, and their pupils are also few.

As a human being possesses an aura which surrounds and interpenetrates his physical body, so also is the Earth planet clothed about with subtle matter. The physical sphere is familiar ground to everyone, but not so the spheres that lie above it. These include the etheric, the astral, the mental, the spiritual, and the higher spiritual. In the nine Lesser Mysteries of the Rose Cross (or seven Mysteries of certain other Schools), the candidate ascends successfully through these envelopes of the Earth planet by expansion of consciousness. He also recapitulates, in full consciousness, the entire evolution of the Earth and its humanity, both spiritually and physically. This recapitulation has the effect of awakening in him all the dormant faculties and powers which the race possessed in past Epochs, so making available to him the sum total of the race experience. What this means is seen in the marvelous instincts of animals and plants, instincts which man has lost since he



The key for advancing more rapidly on the spiral path of initiation is given by the injunction to adopt and live out of the Mind of Christ.

Wood engraving, Fritz Eichenberg

acquired reason but which in an Initiate become a consciously usable addition to intellect. Besides his humanity he possesses a super instinct, an inexhaustible vitality by which his body renews itself just as certain plants grow new parts to replace old ones. Thus his body becomes as indestructible as a diamond or ruby, for he has full control of the chemical forces also. All of this goes into the making of an Adept, an Initiate who has completed all of the nine Lesser Mysteries and the first of the Greater, thereby entering “the heart of the Earth” and meeting the Liberator face to face.

However, an Adept is so rare upon Earth that a layman is not at all likely to meet one on the physical plane. The layman’s interest is therefore centered almost wholly in the lower five of the nine lesser Mysteries. Few laymen take more than one Initiation in any one lifetime. When any candidate passes several Initiations in one incarnation, we may be sure these are chiefly recapitulations of work done in many previous lifetimes.

The fact has been noted in this series that in embryological recapitulation, the fourth month brings a decisive change in fetal development; esoterically, we say that at this time certain inner-world contacts are dissolved. The Ego concentrates definitely earthward and is intent upon building the physical vehicle in which it is to be embodied.

In Initiation, the Fourth Degree is an equally definite step heavenward; certain physical contacts are severed, and the inner-world relationship becomes more intimate. Henceforward for the disciple *God is All and All is God*. Though he remains in the exterior world where flesh and blood abide, he is no longer of it.

The fourth plane of Earth’s aura is the mental plane; it is the “intelligence” of the planet or, in metaphysical terms, it is the intelligence of God expressing itself relative to the Earth.

The mental world is the link between spirit and matter. Immediately below the mental plane is the world of desire; above it is the higher mental, or abstract mind, the plane of universal ideas. In this is the world (consciousness) of the germinal idea, without which manifestation could not take place because it is the seedground of cosmos. Hence it

marks a crucial point not only in involution down into matter for the race, but in evolution up into spirit for the Initiate. We may note in passing that involution into form has been a mass process throughout; Initiation, however, is an individual process. The Initiate stands alone.

At the fourth Initiation the Ego makes its decision as to whether it will proceed on the White or the Black Path. The strong, fully conscious Ego will not make the wrong decision.

The Fifth Degree, if attained, leads to sainthood. In this majestic Rite the Ego, having chosen unalterably to unite with spirit, is brought face to face with its own true self. In the ecstasy of this high moment the disciple comes to comprehend the true meaning of those words inscribed above the entrance of Grecian Temples—“Man know Thyself.”

In the Sixth and Seventh Degrees, the personality is perfected as a channel through which the divine self may pour its powers in creative work; every word and deed is inspired by a wisdom which is ageless. The Initiate bears the aroma of timelessness, for he knows himself to be a part of that which is without beginning and without ending.

Thus the personal self is absorbed by the higher, spiritual self and the disciple stands at the threshold of godhood.

In the two final Degrees he enters upon the work which makes him a god indeed. The Rosicrucian says that the victorious candidate of the Seventh Rite has blended the Red and White Roses which bloom in his Rose Garden.

The Rosarium of medieval alchemists was simply the laboratory (state of consciousness) of the aspirant who was seeking divine consummation.

Upon his head he wears a crown of sparkling jewels set in living gold. The kingly crown of an earthly ruler has its origin in the spiritual crown of ancient Initiate Priest-Kings after the order of Melchizedek. The Pope’s triple tiara is another symbolic representation of this spiritually visible crown of the Initiate who has risen through the three planes which lie under the higher mental.

Such also are the king and queen described in the alchemical marriage of C. R. C. □