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THE ESOTERIC SPIRITUAL TEACHING THAT
IS AT THE ORIGIN OF TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

The principal Scripture (or holy book) of the tradition of the Western “world” is the “New Testament”. The “New Testament” communicates principles and ideas and beliefs that, more than those communicated by any other book, are responsible for conventional Western ideas about “religion” and Spiritual life. Although Western culture includes “religious” traditions other than Christianity, the dominant “religious” text which, in the West, tends to inform all popular notions about “religion” and Spirituality is the “New Testament”.

If you grew up in the Western (and predominantly Christian) cultural sphere, you are perhaps influenced by the “New Testament” more than by any other “religious” book. Even if you are not very familiar with the “New Testament”, you have (nevertheless) been impressed, over the years, with certain conventions of “religious” presumption of which the “New Testament” is the source. The conceptions associated with the traditional interpretation of the “New Testament” are not only part of the “religious” teaching of Christian churches, but part of Western culture in general. Through your schooling, through your childhood “religious” training, and through the influence of those with whom you were associated as a child—even though they might not have spoken of “religion”—you have been greatly influenced by these conceptions, some of which are directly communicated in the “New Testament” itself and others of which are simply traditions that are, by extension, associated with “New Testament religion”.

Everyone is dominated, to one or another degree, by conceptions of life that have their origin in exoteric “religious” culture. Even though scientism (or scientific materialism) is tending to displace exoteric “religion” as a way of “knowing”, exoteric “religion” still tends to be the basis for present-day morality and social conceptions. In fact, exoteric “religion” has traditionally always been associated with moral and social conceptions. Thus, if you are, by birth, a Westerner, and even if you were not brought up as a Christian, you have, since your birth, been exposed to propaganda that is, at least in its origins, both conventionally “religious” and specifically Christian. And the basic intention of all such conventionally “religious” propaganda has been to convince you—and, thus, the collective of everyone—that certain kinds of behaviors are appropriate and other kinds of behaviors are not appropriate.

Every present-day legal system—and even the entire body of social contracts by which people are related in their daily lives—has its justification in the tradition of exoteric “religion”. Therefore, in a time when the legitimacy of exoteric “religion” as a way of “knowing” is being undermined by scientism, so (likewise) is the political and social order simultaneously being undermined by scientism. This is not only a time when individuals are moving from exoteric (and, thus, collectively enforced) “religious” ways of “knowing” toward materialistic and secular and even individualistic ways of “knowing”, but this is also a time when society as a whole is becoming corrupted and made chaotic by those same tendencies—and, therefore, new political forces are arising in immediate coincidence with the new cultural forces. Human beings are more and more impinged upon by the forces of political materialism—while, at the same time, they are impinged upon culturally by the forces of scientific materialism. The way of “knowing” in a culture cannot be changed unless the way of keeping order is changed at the same time—and Western society has kept order for many centuries through exoteric “religious” belief, exoteric “religious” presumptions, and exoteric “religious” conventions of behavior.

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If, all of a sudden, exoteric “religion” is “discovered” to be untrue, and if, as a replacement for the “point of view” of exoteric “religion”, the “point of view” communicated through scientific materialism dominates the present culture, then the traditional justifications for so-called “moral” behavior have, as a consequence, been abandoned—and not yet replaced with a viable public alternative. Therefore, how will the necessary public order be maintained? A new political force is, under the circumstances, required, to replace the moral programs of exoteric “religion”. Thus, all kinds of political idealisms arose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—revolutionary ideas, communistic ideas, egalitarian ideas, socialistic ideas, capitalistic ideas, all kinds of political experimenting—the basic purpose of which is to keep people in order, to keep material production going, to maintain public peace, to make life somehow acceptable to the people, so that the people will not rise in revolt, or go mad, or create chaos.

The rise of new political idealisms is coinciding with the new cultural circumstance, and not only is all of this dominant in the West but it is, likewise, dominant all over the Earth—which is now everywhere “Westernized”, both East and West. This change in the orientation of the mind of humankind has gradually been developing since the Renaissance era in Western (European) culture. The conventions of human orientation began to change in the period of the Western Renaissance—from a sacred orientation to an orientation to the human individual, from Deity-centeredness to ego-centeredness, from ecstasy and sainthood to “Narcissism” and ego-possession, from sacred culture to secular culture, from a dominantly right-brained culture to a now dominantly left-brained culture.

As this transformation has occurred in the “world”, the ancient cultural supports have lost their legitimacy. This does not mean that the ancient exoteric “religious” cultural supports did not have anything to do with what is right. Those exoteric “religious” supports were, in a rudimentary (and Reality-”objectifying”) sense, based upon the general (and, in principle, right and positive) intention to make life sacred. It is simply that the ancient exoteric modes of the “objectification” of Reality have (themselves) now—and rightly—lost their legitimacy in people’s minds. However, as a result of that change of mind, the principle of the sacred (or of the understanding and managing of life based upon the intrinsic Truth of universal prior unity) has also—and not at all rightly—been lost.

A way of thinking that had only secondary importance in the ancient “world” has now become dominant. Human-centeredness has become the acceptable convention of mind. Human “knowing” is now devoted to analytical reductionism, or the process of reducing everything to the individual human being, to human processes, to humankind in the lowest, most rudimentary—or material—sense. Many social and cultural enterprises remain valuable, with the potential to improve the condition of humanity, yet a profoundly destructive (materialistic, analytical, disunitary, and anti-sacral) philosophical enterprise is also operative at the same time. It is this latter development that is Criticized.

Science as a conditional “method” of enquiry, as an effective practical “method” of investigation for the sake of acquiring natural “knowledge” (and subsequent power to control natural conditions of existence), is, obviously, legitimate. Yet, science, from the beginning, has also (and otherwise) been associated with the ego-centered orientation (and, thus, with the fixed “point of view” perspective) and, altogether, with the ancient (conventional and naive) philosophy of materialism—and it has, on that basis, also been associated with the

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arising of co-emerging political movements. Present-day humankind is being both culturally and politically controlled—not only by science itself (which has an inherent, but also inherently limited, legitimacy), but also by the philosophy of materialism (which is inherently ignorant, gross, merely analytical, de-constructive, reductionistic, exclusivistic, and naively oppressive). And, as science and the philosophy of materialism progressively exclude all other forms of “knowing”, human beings are becoming more and more dominated by political materialism—or the forces that are keeping order independent of sacred (or unitive) consciousness and authority.

This is not to say that the cultural means whereby order was kept in the past were entirely benign. Exoteric “religious authority” is not necessarily (or even characteristically) associated with anything that has remotely to do with the Truth, or with Reality Itself, or with Divine Self-Realization, or even with the transcending of egoity.

In the Western “world” particularly, the institutional (or corporate) “authority” of the exoteric Christian Church has been the principal means whereby the State creates political and social order. Now that the State is associated with scientific materialism and not with “religious” doctrine, the State must find other means for creating order. Thus, the State is, generally speaking, no longer basing its own (corporate) “authority” on the (corporate) “authority” of the “official” Church. And, for the most part (even though some still cling, nostalgically, to the “old days”, of obedience to corporate exoteric “religious authority”), people are no longer politically and socially controlled (or, otherwise, willing to be controlled) by exoteric “religious authority”—at least, not sufficiently to keep order.

In its origins, what later became institutionalized (or corporate, and “official”) “Christianity” was a small cult (or sect) of cultural “outsiders”, with its “inner circle” associated with an esoteric Spiritual teaching. Outwardly, however, in its public preaching, even that essentially esoteric sect was associated with more general “religious” and social principles—and, through the process of that public preaching, people were gradually brought into the inner core of the esoteric life of the sect. In the early centuries of the Common Era, there were, everywhere, many sects which were (fundamentally) esoteric sects—to one degree or another revolutionary (or of a critical, or “outsider’s”, disposition) in relation to the “religious” exotericism of the “official religion” of the public institutions and the then-current political conventions of the State.

After about three centuries (by which time much of the esoteric Spiritual basis of the original pre-“Christian” sect had been lost), the Emperor (Constantine) engineered the cultural-historical shift that formally established the dogmatic basis for the institutionalizing of an “official” version of (exclusively exoteric) Christianity, and that eventually (within a few decades) resulted in that exoteric institution of (thus dogmatically defined) Christianity becoming the “official religion” of the Roman State. Since that time, either “official” (exoteric) Christianity has functioned as an arm of the State, or (otherwise) the State has, in some sense, functioned as an arm of the “official” (exoteric) Christian Church. As centuries passed, the relationship between Church and State changed—such that the exoteric Christian Church now plays a remarkably different role, and is gradually being excluded, having lost its previous presumed legitimacy and public “authority”.

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However, the exoteric Christian Church's loss of power in the political and social realms is a relatively recent development. With the original union between "official" Christianity and the State of Rome, Christianity became the force whereby political and social order was developed and maintained in the Western "world". To maintain order (and not Truth) was its function as an institution. Obviously, such an institution is not intended to be communicating esoteric teachings to the masses—since esoteric communications are intended to serve the higher, and greater, and (characteristically) Spiritual or (otherwise) Transcendental purposes of Truth-Realization (in the case of, necessarily, more mature people, who have already out-grown the boundaries of merely exoteric, or public, "schooling"). Because esoteric teachings take off where exoteric teachings have come to a developmental end, esoteric communications do not tend to enforce political and social order. On the contrary, esoteric (and, generally, ecstatic) teachings tend not to bring about a conventional political and social order—because esoteric teachings presume a prior (or already achieved) state of order, at least within the heart and mind and life of the individual esoteric practitioner.

As a case in point, Jesus of Galilee proclaimed an ecstatic, esoteric Spiritual message. His message was not a program for bringing order to politics and general society—nor was such order the purpose of the earliest institutionalized Christians, who were purposed to "religious" devotion (and even to mystical life), and who were, in any case, in no position to command the State of Rome.

Because their guiding purpose was "not of this world" (and, therefore, of no political use as a tool of social order), Rome regarded the early Christians as enemies—and the early Christians were persecuted by the State, as various other (similarly "unusable") "religious" sects were. But when the Christians eventually came into power as the "official authority", those features of Christianity that are oriented to the conventions of public (and altogether exoteric) "religion"—the purpose of which is to maintain political and social order—became the dominant communication of "official" Christianity. When that "officialdom" took hold of Christianity, its otherwise more esoteric dimensions—which were the real ("inner-circle") force at its origin—were systematically eliminated, primarily because esoteric teachings have nothing to do with managing either a great State or any kind of larger common social entity (of ordinary, and, generally, immature, or only exoteric-ready, and not at all esoteric-ready, people). A "religion" that is to be the "official religion" of a great State (or even any larger common social entity) must be essentially exoteric, and, thus, fundamentally oriented to maintaining social principles, social morality, conventions of behavior that maintain political and social order, and productive participation in work life, and positive participation in the larger collective of community life, and, altogether, universal subordination to the parent-like State (and to the parent-like "official" State-"religion") and, thus, universal conformity to the will of the hierarchical political (and "religious") "authority" (or "authority"-structure) of the time.

Therefore, the "New Testament" (and the tradition of Christianity as a whole) must be seen in relation to both the esoteric sect from which it arose and the exoteric institution that largely replaced it (and even all esotericism) with the systematic exotericism of ordinary political and social purposes that has, traditionally, been served by public corporate "religion" in the Western "world".

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The “New Testament” has a long history of interpretation. This scripture is interpreted anew by every generation, in every time and place. Consequently, the interpretations tend to reflect the mood, the state of mind, or the leading (and generally characteristic) presumptions of the time.

However, as a general rule, all the traditional interpretations of the “New Testament” tend to be oriented toward the development of a politically defined social consciousness. Thus, it could be said that, in terms of its most common traditional interpretation, the “New Testament” is a social (rather than an esoteric Spiritual) gospel. The text of the “New Testament” was originally compiled from (and, altogether, invented by) a wide variety of sources, and it was constantly propagandistically transformed over the centuries, always to represent a “point of view” (and a message) that is predominantly social and political in nature.

The process of reducing the “New Testament” to a social gospel began before institutional Christianity became the “official religion” of Rome. The process was certainly intensified when exoteric Christianity became the “official religion” (and “authoritative religious” corporation) of the State, but even the process of gathering (and inventing) the early materials and making a “New Testament” out of them began early on, as the Christian cult became more and more conscious of its conventional social role—which is to keep order, to inspire people to be civil in relation to one another, to function positively and productively with one another, to live a conventionally moral life, and, on that basis, to look forward to the cult’s “official” conception of rewards after death.

Thus, even before it became an “official” Church corporation, the cult (or newly emerging sect) of Christianity was becoming more and more the servant of the ordinary social (or “worldly”) life of its members. As the Christian sect acquired more members, assumed more responsibility, and had more social order to create, it began to play the role of social enforcer more and more exclusively. Thus, the newly emerging Christian culture more and more embraced the very same limitations (of exoteric “official religiosity”) that Jesus of Galilee had himself criticized.

Exoteric “religion” is primarily a communication that intends to bring political and social order to the public “world”. Exoteric “religion” is primarily a social gospel. Esoteric ecstasies, on the other hand, are very difficult to control—in the usual (conventional) sense. It is virtually impossible, for example, to interest ecstasies in being socially productive for its own sake. Ecstasies generally value the practice of being civil in relation to other people—but it is very difficult to get them to labor in factories and bureaucratic business organizations merely for the sake of “worldly” success, or, otherwise, to get them excited about the mundane purposes of a great State! Therefore, exoteric “religion” tends to eliminate all aspects of “religious” communication that suggest anything but how to be a productive and positive social personality. To reinforce these qualities—and even to suppress ecstatic qualities—is the guiding purpose of exoteric “religion”.

Even though Christianity is, in its origins, an esoteric movement, it was reduced to an exclusively exoteric “religion” as it became more expansive and eventually achieved the status of the “official” (or politically enforced) State-“religion” of the West. Christianity thus became an exoteric (or conventionally social) institution, and it reduced the teaching of Jesus of Galilee to a social gospel. The result is that now everybody commonly assumes that, since the “New Testament” is, historically, the primary “religious” influence in the

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Western “world”, “religion” is supposed to be a social gospel, and Jesus must (therefore) have taught a merely social gospel.

In this “late-time” (or “dark” epoch)—when even all cultures are being moved toward the way-of-”knowing” represented by scientific materialism, and all cultures are losing their sacred basis for order, and are tending to be dominated (more and more) by the forces of political materialism—the interpreters of the “religious” texts of cultures other than the culture of the West are, likewise, moving more and more toward an exoteric interpretation of esoteric teachings. India, for example, has, since the later nineteenth century, been undergoing a kind of renaissance of Hinduism. The Bhagavad Gita is a principal text in this movement in India—and one of the dominant tendencies of current interpretation conceives the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita as a kind of social gospel. In other words, the Bhagavad Gita is, now, publicly interpreted as a source of exoteric instruction about how to live the way of “good works”, rather than the mystically interiorized esoteric way of life that is characteristic of traditional Indian Spirituality.

Thus, the Bhagavad Gita—which, in its origins, is an esoteric teaching about Spiritual and Transcendental Realization—is being used, more and more, to support a cultural, political, and social movement of an exoteric kind. In this manner of “religious” interpretation within the Indian cultural sphere, the Bhagavad Gita is being interpreted (and, thus, used) in a manner that is very similar to the traditional exoteric interpretation (and even the earliest exoteric inventing) of the “New Testament” in the West.

To the degree that they are “religious” at all, people all over the Earth now commonly conceive of “religion” as a kind of social message. It is commonly presumed that “religion” is reducible to a kind of humanism—even a kind of atheistic humanism (or a humanity-centered, rather than Deity-centered, positive social life)—or, at least, that “religion” is totally compatible with the “world”-oriented, humanity-oriented, socially-oriented propaganda of the time.

You are constantly “TV’d” into the presumption that you are born for the sake of being born, that you are born into this “world” for the sake of this “world”. The presumption conveyed by TV (or the pervasive conventional mentality) is that life is an end-in-itself, and one is supposed to be enthusiastically involved with things of this “world”. Luckily (so the usual person presumes), there is science, technology, and a certain amount of freedom—and, therefore, it is possible to be rightly enthusiastic about conditional existence. People have a great deal of hope that, during their lifetime, they will achieve more and more pleasure, leisure, and fulfillment of their human functions. All over the Earth now, everyone is being propagandized into social consciousness, the positive social gospel that is now coming from the realms of scientific materialism and its political arms around the “world”. If current secularizing trends continue, sacred texts such as the “New Testament” and the Bhagavad Gita are in danger of becoming obsolete. If that occurs, then positive and enthusiastic social principles or ideals will, more and more, be communicated all over the Earth completely independent of any kind of “religious authority”—and, of course, entirely removed from any kind of esoteric teachings.

However, it is important to understand that the teachers and the teachings that are at the origins of the true scriptures of humankind (and of the various cultural movements associated with those scriptures) are not of an

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exoteric nature. Those teachers and teachings were not about the social gospel which the State has traditionally looked to “religion” to generate. If you understand the real fundamental (and esoteric) teaching underlying the “New Testament” and other traditional scriptures, you will see that those scriptures are not exoteric social gospels at all. Rather, those scriptures are esoteric communications about transcending the egoic “self” and the “world” and Realizing True Communion (and, ultimately, egoless Self- Identification) with the Divine Self-Condition.

The social gospel—and the socially positive “point of view” that the State wants to generate and to support by various means—is not at all about transcending the “world” by Realizing the Divine Self-Nature, Self-Condition, and Self-State of Reality Itself. Likewise, that social gospel is not about transcending the apparently individual “self” by “self”-sacrifice in the Divine Self-Nature, Self-Condition, and Self-State of Reality Itself. The State is purposed to have people transcend their otherwise egoic (or even “Godward” and ecstatic) inclinations by means of productive work. In other words, the State likes the ideal of individuals who are “transcending themselves” by being devoted to the purposes of the State. The State generally tolerates the large-scale communication of “religion” only if the message is exoteric (or socially oriented). The ideal must lead the common individual to be a “good” social personality—doing his or her job, being honest, not making trouble, not creating disorder, not being lazy.

The State is not interested in any kind of teaching about transcending the egoic “self” and the “world” in Communion with the Divine Self-Nature, Self-Condition, and Self-State of Reality Itself. The State is not at all in that business, nor does the State like such teachings. The State—and its “official” cult of the time—did not like Jesus of Galilee. One could say that present-day “official” Christianity also does not like Jesus of Galilee—and for the same reason. The “official” Church has never liked the ecstatic Jesus, who taught everyone to be an ecstatic, like himself, and so to transcend the selfish “self” and the “world” (or the “flesh”) in the Spiritual Divine. Nobody has ever really liked Jesus of Galilee, except those people who are able to respond to the Truth in Spiritual terms. Such people have always been relatively rare.

If you are truly Transcendentally Spiritually Awakened, then you intrinsically transcend the (apparently separate) ego-”self” and the (apparently “objective”) “world”—in every moment. Even if the machine of the body-mind-complex is active in one or another manner—as it inevitably is, because it is born in the frame of space and time—no action need bind you in any manner whatsoever, if you will rightly understand the nature of the body-mind-”self” and the “world”, and if you will practice life on the basis of that right understanding.

This is the logic of the teaching of Jesus of Galilee, and (indeed) the logic of the teaching of all the great Spiritual Adepts. The great Spiritual Adepts do not come into the “world” merely to guarantee social order, nor can their teachings rightly be reduced to a social gospel. The teachings of Jesus of Galilee are not reducible to the “Ten Commandments” and some sort of socially positive emotion that is called “love”.

The conception of “works”—or performing action for the sake of becoming holy, “sinless”, deserving of heaven after death, happiness, fullness, success while alive—is discussed in the “New Testament”, just as it is discussed in the Bhagavad Gita and other traditional scriptures. If you understand the esotericism represented by

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such figures as Jesus and Krishna (or by the essential teaching communicated by the texts in which such figures are the principal characters), you will see that no traditional scripture recommends the way of the social-personality-for-its-own-sake. In other words, no true traditional scripture is a merely social gospel, or a gospel that (ultimately) is merely a justification for a positive social personality whose “salvation” lies in “works”, or the cultivation of positive behaviors. In fact, the traditional scriptures (such as the “New Testament” and the Bhagavad Gita) all teach the transcending of bondage to “works”, the transcending of the necessity (and the “effects”) of all ordinary action.

The society of the Jews at the time of Jesus of Galilee was “officially” based on exoteric “religious” laws. The Mosaic law, or the “Ten Commandments”, was preeminent—but there were also all kinds of other laws—including laws of the temple, as well as many and various forms of conventional “religious” belief and social morality that were propagated by the various sects among the Jews. The Judaic laws were, first of all, forms of intentional action, or “causes” that produced culturally acceptable “effects”. You were instructed about actions that were appropriate for you in your station—actions that would produce positive results. These became the laws, the conventions of social morality, the behavioral rules and the systems of behavior and action and idealism that were associated with each of the social classes (or states of life, birth, and social status).

Jesus of Galilee was teaching Jewish people, in the context of a society founded on the observance of a sacred system of laws. In that social context, it was assumed that, in general, people were going to act according to the laws or conventions of behavior that were communicated in the sacred culture. However, the great Spiritual teachers have always called people to notice that the laws of sacred culture tend to be misused and misapplied—becoming (thereby) the basis for bondage rather than Divine Realization, and the basis for unhappiness and seeking rather than Spiritual Happiness and Freedom. Thus, the “New Testament” does not merely teach the Mosaic laws, or even a new and summary principle of social morality that could be called “love”. In other words, the “New Testament” is not merely teaching social morality, via the idea of “love” as a general social concept. Nor is the “New Testament” teaching the Law of love-in-this- ”world” for the sake of this “world” merely. Rather, the “New Testament”—at least in its underlying original contents—is primarily teaching the esoteric Spiritual Mystery of the “Kingdom of God” (or the “Divine domain”).

The fundamental teaching of Jesus of Galilee is about how to enter, in every present moment, into the Spiritual Condition of the Divine Reality, Which Is the Source-Condition (or Matrix) of conditional “self” and conditional Nature—and such that there is the inherent transcending of all “sin” (or all separation from the Divine Spiritual Condition of Reality Itself, or all bondage to mere “causes” and “effects”). Thus, the esoteric “method” (or the Way of “right life”, rather than the corporate social and altogether exoteric “religion”) that is the underlying practice recommended in the “New Testament” Gospels—and in all true scripture—is the release of all clinging to separate “self” and “world”, and the relinquishment of all seeking for results of any kind, by means of a total bodily and lifetime submission to the “Spirit” (or “Pneuma”, or “Breath”)4 That Is the Divine Reality. Jesus taught that, on the basis of always present “self”-surrender into “Spirit-Breathing” Spiritual Communion with the Divine Itself (or the Spiritual Reality-Condition That Is Inherently Divine), you should live as if you have been completely forgiven, and as if there are no binding necessities or unhappy obligations, and as if no “sin” is effective in your life.

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Thus, the fundamental principle underlying the “New Testament” tradition is an esoteric principle. That principle is the always-present transcending of conditional “self” and conditional “world” via ego-surrendering Spiritual Communion with the Divine Self-Nature, Self-Condition, and Self-State of Reality Itself. Most of the institutional overlay of communication in the “New Testament” is exoteric—socially oriented toward the “world” of public laws, the “world” of ordinary purposive action, and the “world” of commonplace relations.

Yet, if you examine the gospel stories, you will find evidence, here and there, of the underlying esotericism that is the “root”-teaching of Jesus of Galilee.

Perhaps the primary example (or demonstration) of the esoteric activity of Jesus of Galilee is the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus (in chapter three of the “Gospel of John”). I will quote this passage to you, from the translation in *The Jerusalem Bible*:

There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, a leading Jew, who came to Jesus by night.

In other words, Nicodemus came secretly. He did not want to be observed—because the “official religion”, like the State, is interested in exoteric matters, which do not “stimulate” the populace, and which do not (by any “distracting” means) deter ordinary people from being merely socially positive personalities. Nicodemus could have gotten in trouble for coming to Jesus, who was associated with a message other than the established dogma, for coming to hear a mysterious message from a man who was doing mysterious things.

Nicodemus . . . came to Jesus by night and said, “Rabbi,”—which is another word for “teacher”, or “Guru”, in that setting—“we know that you are a teacher who comes from God; for no one could perform the signs that you do unless God were with him.” Jesus answered:

“I tell you most solemnly, unless a man is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said, “How can a grown man be born? Can he go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Jesus replied:

“I tell you most solemnly, unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God: what is born of the flesh is flesh; what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be surprised when I say: You must be born from above. The wind blows wherever it pleases; you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. That is how it is with all who are born of the Spirit.”

This quotation is one of the principal summaries of Jesus’ fundamental “point of view”. Jesus of Galilee tells Nicodemus the “secret teaching”, the teaching one could hear from Jesus only in secret, the esoteric teaching—not merely the public message that encourages everyone to be a more positive social character. Nicodemus is receiving the “secret teaching” from Jesus, the teaching for the “inner circle”.

What is the secret teaching about? It is about the Mystery of the “Kingdom of God” (or the “Divine domain”)—and the “Kingdom of God” is esoterically interpreted to mean a transformation of the individual from existence in the “flesh” (or as an ego possessed by the conventional purposes of this “world”) to existence in and as the Living, Eternal, and Free Transcendental Divine Spirit.

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The idea of the “Kingdom of God” already existed in Israel before the reported time of Jesus of Galilee—but it was commonly conceived in terms of a “worldly” destiny, and identified with a “religious”, social, and political State corporation, primarily made up of the righteous believers among the Jews. The Kingdom was to be created in this “world” by the “God” of the Jews through a messiah, a Divine messenger, who would come into the “world” and conquer all of the enemies of Israel and establish Israel in peace and fullness, wherein all of the laws again produce pleasurable and good results.

Jesus of Galilee was reportedly teaching in a time when this ideal, this prophecy of the “Kingdom of God”, was already present. In the passage from the “New Testament” that I just quoted, Jesus is teaching a person from the temple, Nicodemus, who is well aware of the prophecies of the “Kingdom of God”. Jesus is saying that the “Kingdom of God”, or the “Divine domain”, is not of this “world”. It is not externally evident in this “world”, and it is not to come in this “world”—except, perhaps, as a natural expression of the Spiritual Awakening of humankind as a whole. The “Kingdom of God” is a Mystery about being “born”—or Awakened—into a state of Oneness with the Divine Spirit-Breath. You can be born again in the Spirit, even though you have already been born in the flesh. And that which is born (or Awakened) in the Spirit is Spirit Itself.

Thus, the esoteric teaching of Jesus of Galilee is that you must become the Divine Spirit-Breath. In other words, you must become That Which Is Divine. You must enter into the Domain, the Condition, the “Kingdom”, of the Divine—in this present moment. That is the process, the Mystery, whereby a person can Realize the Truth that Jesus came to teach. He did not teach about a “worldly” kingdom that he would establish as a political messiah, either now or in the future. Jesus is not coming again in order to be the political messiah—he did not come the first time in order to be a political messiah! The teaching of Jesus is specifically about the transcending of that expectation. Jesus taught about the “Kingdom of God” as an esoteric Spiritual Mystery, not as a convention of “worldly” seeking.

Now, it is true that, if everyone did Spiritually enter into the “Kingdom of God”, then, as time went on, as history developed, the Divine Spirit would be more and more effective—and, eventually, perhaps something like a non-utopian Divine Kingdom on Earth might appear. That possibility is, indeed, latent in such instruction. Nevertheless, Jesus’ “point of view” is definitely that such a Kingdom will not come about by any means other than a right life of Spiritual Communion with the Divine Condition of Reality. Jesus is not merely coming again to take over this failed “world” that refuses to be “born” in the Spirit. The Spirit cannot take over from outside. The Spirit is effective in this “world” only through the esoteric process of Spiritual Communion—not through mere belief, but through worship of the Divine in Spirit, worship of the Divine in Truth, until the “flesh” (or the conditional ego-”self” and its “world”) is utterly transcended in Spiritual Fullness.

Jesus of Galilee was saying that the “Kingdom of God” is Realizable—but not through social laws of any kind, and not through any transformation or perfection of conventional behaviors. In any case (as Jesus taught), the purpose of the “Kingdom of God” does not relate to this “world”. Rather, the “Kingdom of God” is the Spiritual State of Utter Unity, or Eternally Prior Oneness, with the Divine. “And”, Jesus is saying, “that Condition is Realizable now, even under the rotten conditions here in Israel”—or at any other time, and in any other place. Such Realization is a matter of Awakening in Spiritual terms. In other words, instead of clinging to

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behavioral laws, beliefs, rituals, expectations, and “worldly” inclinations, instead of depending on the “effects” that you can create or that any “God”-idea can create in terms of ordinary human possibility, cling to the Spiritual Divine—always presently. Enter into the Spiritual Divine, and Realize the Spiritual Divine.

In the passage that I just quoted, Jesus of Galilee is clearly communicating something about the Nature of the Divine. For Jesus, the Divine is not the abstract “God of our fathers”, the “God” of rote belief in the temple. For Jesus, the Divine Spiritual Condition of Reality is the Divine Source-Condition (or “One True God”) of the fathers (or the ancestors)—not the “God”-idea particular to any particular historical time, but the Ever-Living Reality That Is Divine. The Living Divine Is the Spirit-Breath of Reality. The Living Divine Pervades the “world” and all beings As the Spirit-Breath. Therefore, Spirit-Breath Re-Union with the Living (or Inherently Spiritual) Divine Is the “Kingdom of God”.

In another passage, Jesus of Galilee says that the “Kingdom of God” is not outside you but within you⁷— in other words, inherent in every moment of existence. Thus, the “Kingdom of God” is inherent in this moment of existence. The “Kingdom of God” is not to be sought by any strategic means, not to be sought outside yourself, not to be conceived as “missing”, or “elsewhere” in time and space. The “Kingdom of God” is a Principle. The Spiritual Divine Condition Is—Itself—the “Kingdom of God”. Thus, Jesus of Galilee is saying: Abandon all conventional principles and cling to the Spiritual Divine— and, thus and thereby, transcend all separation from the Divine Condition of Reality.

In Jesus’ teaching, the Divine Law is stated in contrast to the merely social (and political) laws. It is not a new social law that Jesus of Galilee is teaching, but the Law, the Divine Law. He is recommending not the law of love as opposed to the Mosaic law, but the Law of Spirit-birth.

Conventional Spirituality, even in its esoteric forms, is often oriented to the way of works (or right actions), because works can include not only social works but also works that are performed in private and that produce results which could be regarded to be positive from a conventionally Spiritual “point of view”.

Mysticism, for instance, depends upon such action. In the Hindu tradition, for example, forms of Yoga (such as Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, and Jnana Yoga⁸) are traditionally conceived in these same conventional terms—as actions that produce results. Thus, since the most ancient days, all over the Earth, there has existed this tradition of action, the way of works, the way of action as a kind of magical activity.

In the traditions of the way of works, action is conceived as something that always produces results—and, therefore, it is recommended that one perform only those actions that produce “good” results. In contrast to the conventional way (or “magical method”) of works (or “causative” action), however, stands the true esoteric way that has been indicated and pointed to by all the great Spiritual Adepts. The great Spiritual Adepts are traditionally associated with all kinds of lore about their origin, and many models of the universe were reflected in the stories of how a great Spiritual Adept appears and how he or she relates to the Divine Condition of Reality. Structures of the universe—with much “aboveness” and “belowness” and “middleness”, and many “planes”—have always been part of the esoteric traditions. The great Spiritual Adepts are typically presumed to have “come down” from the highest point in the scale of things into this “lower” plane, to bring the esoteric

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teaching down from on high, and, thus, into the middle and lower “worlds”. Whatever the model of the universe in the context of which any Spiritual Adept is conceived to arise in the human plane, the teaching of the great Spiritual Adepts (whether historical or legendary) always speaks in contrast to the conventional “wisdom” (or popular culture), and (therefore) in contrast to the way of social morality for its own sake, or the conventional way (or “magical method”) of action-leading-to-results.

Jesus of Galilee taught people about the all-embracing principle of love as the right and essential motivation behind all social laws—yet, ultimately (and more or less in secret), he was teaching people about the Spiritual “Kingdom”, or Freedom through Spiritual Realization of the Divine Condition (or Spirit-Breath) of Reality. The teaching of the “New Testament” could be summarized as: “Repent from ‘sin’.” That is to say, understand and renounce all forms of “self”-enacted separation from the Divine Condition of Reality and be established in the “Kingdom of God”, or the Divine Source-Condition That Is the Spiritual Divine. Renounce “sinful” (or ego-bound and ego-binding) actions, let all actions be performed in surrender to the Divine Condition of Reality, and (thus) fulfill the Law of Inherence in the Spiritual Divine.

“Religious” law is conventionally (or exoterically) conceived in terms of various rules and conventions of social morality. Thus, the “New Testament” teaching has been interpreted and reduced to mean “Repent—or be sorry for, and turn from—your ‘illegal’ and inappropriate social behaviors!” On a more profound level, the “New Testament” summarizes all forms of social morality via the primary law of love (or non-exclusiveness). Thus, the teaching of the “New Testament” has also been interpreted to say “Repent of all acts that are not based on love, and perform all kinds of acts of love, or ‘self’-sacrificial, social, and relational action.” In the “religious” fictions of the “New Testament” Gospels,⁹ Jesus of Galilee is made to preach about the laws of social behavior, and he is critical, even angrily critical, of the tradition of laws that were extant in his time—systems of behavior that were so complex that an ordinary person could not help but regard himself or herself to be a “sinner”. In the “New Testament” Gospels, Jesus frequently criticizes the “pharisees”, who (along with all the other “religious officials” of the time of Jesus) made the laws (or behavioral principles) whereby one might enter the (socially “objectified”) “Kingdom of God”, and who (the text supposes) made the laws so complicated that neither the pharisees themselves nor the people they taught could ever “enter the Kingdom”. Jesus was very much involved, apparently, in criticizing this over-complicated, “fleshy” conception, this non-Spiritual conception, of the laws.

Jesus of Galilee summarized his idea of the moral law of behavior many times. Sometimes, it is said, Jesus just pointed to the summaries from the “Old Testament” tradition: “Love God with your entire being, and love your neighbor as if your neighbor were not other than yourself.” In other words, always surrender to the Divine—and do not be exclusively “self”-serving in your social behaviors. Do not, in any negative (or non-Spiritual) sense, discriminate the apparent individual “self” from any apparent “other”.

This more exoteric (or social-behavior) teaching of Jesus was not a new teaching. This social teaching was already basic to the teaching tradition of conventional Judaism. Jesus of Galilee simply emphasized this teaching, in a social and cultural setting where the simplicity of that “point of view” had, under the weight of the “official religious” and political conditions of the times, been lost (or, at least, become very much diminished in practice).

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However, nothing like the esoteric moral teaching of Jesus of Galilee was fundamental (or even, in general, known) to the “official” Judaism of his time. Jesus’ esoteric version of the “moral law” is stated thus: “See everyone in and as and by means of the Spirit-Breath. Relate ‘self’-sacrificially (or in an egotranscending manner) to others, and, altogether, live the life of love that spontaneously emerges from a heart immersed in the Spiritual practice of Breathing the Divine Spirit-Breath.” Through such teaching, Jesus introduced concepts from a broader cultural base—including Hellenistic and even Eastern influences. That same esoteric teaching appears not only in the undercurrent of the “New Testament”, but also in the communications of all the great Spiritual Adepts throughout history. That esoteric teaching is about Divine Spiritual Communion and always-present Freedom from unhappiness.

The rather exoteric moral teaching of Jesus of Galilee is of a universal nature: “Be selfless—do not confine yourself to the commitment to separate ‘self’, such that you are always acting to serve yourself.”

Thus, Jesus of Galilee can be understood to have been saying, “As action, be love.” That is to say, do not act on the basis of separate “self” and desire-for-the-results-of-action. Act selflessly, on the basis of love of the Divine, or commitment to the Divine, and to all beings in the Divine.

However, the esoteric (or Spiritual) teaching of Jesus of Galilee is not about love as mere social morality, nor as a Yoga generated for its own sake or for the sake of conventional results. The esoteric teaching of Jesus was about the Spiritual Principle, which is, inevitably, also expressed as love in the inevitable life of action. The esoteric teaching of Jesus was the teaching of the “Kingdom of God” as a Spiritual Mystery, rather than the conventional teaching of the “Kingdom of God” as a “worldly” change—and the esoteric teaching of Jesus was not about the idea of “God” as a kind of powerful warrior (or “War-God”) who is, eventually, to dominate the “world”, but, rather, the “God” of Jesus is the Spirit-Breath That Liberates the heart by means of psychophysically-enacted Divine Communion.

Those who regarded Jesus of Galilee as a messiah-figure expected him to be a political warrior. However, Jesus of Galilee specifically criticized the exoteric expectations regarding the “Kingdom of God”, and he worked to replace that exoteric understanding of the “Kingdom of God” and the “messiah” and the Divine Itself with an esoteric (or truly Spiritual) understanding. The esoteric teaching of Jesus is about the “Kingdom of God” as the moment to moment event of being born (or Awakened) in and (thus) As the Divine Spirit-Breath.

The teaching and disposition of Jesus of Galilee can be summarized as follows: The Way is to Awaken in the Spiritual Divine—in each and every moment. The Way is to Awaken not only in but (also) As the Spiritual Divine—and (thus) to be Free and Happy.

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