

FEBRUARY & MARCH

THE SUN-GOD AND MAN

The first half of the Church Year – from Advent and Christmas up to Trinity Sunday (the Sunday after Pentecost) – is at were the most active, eventful part of the solar life [of the Solar Deity, the Logos of God]; and then the next six months are devoted to practising and preserving what we have learnt, as we pass into the comparatively calm waters of the Sundays after Trinity, when all goes on quite quietly with only occasional great festivals, none of which are connected with the life story of the Christ, which is also the life of the Sun-God. In all religions alike the Sun-God is always born in mid-winter [in the northern hemisphere], directly after the shortest day, born at midnight of the 24th of December when the constellation Virgo is on the horizon. Hence it is said that He born from the Virgin and yet after the birth, when the sun has risen into the heavens, Virgo still remains the immaculate and heavenly Virgin. We see there a sidelight upon the story of the Immaculate Conception which appears not only in our religion but in many other older faiths.

The Sun-God is reborn, because the shortest day in the northern latitudes is past; for months the days have been growing steadily shorter, as though He were being vanquished by the powers of darkness; but now this decrease is conquered, and He begins to reassert his powers, and the night slowly yields before Him. He still has to pass through the storms and tribulations of winter; and that is why the early life of the Sun-God in all religions is always surrounded by trouble and sorrow and difficulty. Krishna suffered much from persecution and had to be hidden among the cowherds as a child, because the king sought after his life; the Lord Jesus was assailed by Herod, who attempted to kill Him; in all the stories of the Christ-life in any religion we find the same thread running through. Osiris [the Egyptian deity] Himself, thousands of years before, was cut to pieces and destroyed by Set, and only after that He was gathered together and rose again. In Ancient Egypt the people mourned over the death of Osiris, just as some Christians now mourn over the death of the Christ on Good Friday, and they rejoiced in the great festival of the assembling together, the gathering together of that which had been separate, just as we now rejoice at Easter. Those old religions taught the same truths which we teach now; truth is one, although it is many sided and the presentation in those old days were not at all unlike the presentations put before us now.



Christ As The Solar Logos

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Great are the storms and tribulations of winter, but the Sun-God survives them all, and his strength is steadily growing as the days lengthen towards the vernal equinox [March 20th in the northern hemisphere]. At that equinox, as the name implies, day and night are exactly equal all over the world; and after it the sun crosses the line, so that in the northern hemisphere the days grow steadily longer, and the victory of the Sun-God over night is assured. He rises triumphantly over the line and ascends in the heavens, ripening the corn and the grape, pouring His Life into them to make their substance, and through them giving himself to his worshippers.

Every one of us will have in turn to undergo the suffering symbolised by the cross [our own crucifixion]; every one of us must learn to give himself up utterly for others; but also for every one of us is the glory of Easter, the Resurrection, the victory, the triumph over matter.

That still remains ever and gloriously true. The victory which man gains over the lower nature is something which must be achieved in the life of every Christian man. There must come in his life a point at which he finally triumphs over the lower matter [nature] and rises out of the darkness of sin and ignorance into the light of the wisdom and the higher, purer life. So Easter is not only the commemoration of something in the far distant past; it is a real day of celebration and of thankfulness for the victory which man has gained, is gaining, and will gain through all the ages over that which is lower, that which is less developed. In every one of us there is the divine spark. The Christ said: "Ye are gods, ye are the children of the Most High." [Psalm 82:6 KJV] In every one of us that divine spark is the true man, and that spark manifests himself in lower places in the soul of man, and that in turn puts down to still lower levels the personality, which is what we know as the self down here. We are only a tiny fragment of a fragment of the magnificent reality. That which we see ourselves to be down here is it were the seed of the future glory, but each one of us is also a soul; more than that, each is a spirit – the divine spark, slowly, slowly unveiling itself, slowly developing the qualities through which it can show itself, so that man may know it for what it is. At present the spark burns low; at present we are but at the beginning of the higher part of our evolution. We have won a great victory already in that we are here as men, we whose life has passed through all the lower stages, the kingdoms of the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, in ages long gone by. We have reached humanity, we have joined with the Father and have developed the soul; but that soul in turn must grow and expand. Just as the personality has to become one with that soul, so has that soul in turn to become one with the higher spark which it represents, and then later still the divine spark sweeps back into the flame of which it is a part, and God is all in all.

[Source: The Inner Side of Christian Festivals, Charles W Leadbeater, St Albans Press, Second Edition, 1985. First Edition 1920]