

The Roots of Ritualism in Church and Masonry - Part 2 by H.P. Blavasky

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VII

The ritualism of primitive Christianity — as now sufficiently shown — sprang from ancient Masonry. The latter was, in its turn, the offspring of the, then, almost dead Mysteries. Of these we have now a few words to say.

It is well known that throughout antiquity, besides the popular worship composed of the dead-letter forms and empty exoteric ceremonies, every nation had its secret cult known to the world as the MYSTERIES. Strabo, one among many others, warrants for this assertion. (*Georg, lib. 10*) No one received admittance into them save those prepared for it by special training. The neophytes instructed in the upper temples were initiated into the final Mysteries in the crypts. These instructions were the last surviving heirlooms of archaic wisdom, and it is [Page 2] under the guidance of high Initiates that they were *enacted*. We use the word “enacted” purposely; for the *oral* instructions at *low breath* were given only in the crypts, in solemn silence and secrecy. During the public classes and general teachings, the lessons in cosmogony and theogony were delivered in allegorical representation, the *modus operandi* of the gradual evolution of Kosmos, worlds, and finally of our earth, of gods and men, all was imparted in a symbolical way. The great public performances during the festivals of the Mysteries, were witnessed by the masses and the personified truths worshipped by the multitudes — blindly. Alone the high Initiates, the Epoptae, understood their language and real meaning. All this, and so far, is well known to the world of scholars.

It was a common claim of all the ancient nations that the real mysteries of what is called so unphilosophically, *creation*, were divulged to the elect of our (fifth) race by its first dynasties of *divine* Rulers — gods in flesh, “divine incarnations”, or Avatars, so called. The last Stanzas, given from the Book of Dzyan in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. II, p. 21), speak of those who ruled over the descendants “produced from the holy stock”, and . . . “who re-descended, who made peace with the fifth (race) who taught and instructed it”.

The phrase “made peace” shows that there had been a previous quarrel. The fate of the Atlanteans in our philosophy, and that of the *prediluvians* in the [Page 3] Bible, corroborates the idea. Once more — many centuries before the Ptolemies — the same abuse of the sacred knowledge crept in amongst the initiates of the Sanctuary in Egypt. Preserved for countless ages in all their purity, the sacred teachings of the gods, owing to personal ambition and selfishness, became corrupted again. The meaning of the symbols found itself but too often desecrated by unseemly interpretations, and very soon the Eleusinian Mysteries remained the only ones pure from adulteration and sacrilegious innovations. These were in honour of (Ceres) Demeter, or Nature, and were celebrated in Athens, the flowers of the intellect of Asia Minor and Greece being initiated thereinto. In his 4th Book, Zosimus states that these Initiates embraced

the whole of mankind; [Says Cicero in *De Nat. Deorum*, lib. I : “Omitto Eleusinem sanctam illam et augustam; ubi initiatur gentes orarum ultime”.] while Aristides calls the Mysteries the *common temple of the earth*.

It is to preserve some reminiscence of this “temple”, and to rebuild it, if need be, that certain elect ones among the initiated began to be set apart. This was done by their High Hierophants in every century, from the time when the sacred allegories showed the first signs of desecration and decay. For the great Eleusinia finally shared the same fate as the others. Their earlier excellency and purpose are described by Clement of Alexandria who shows the greater Mysteries divulging the secrets and the mode of [Page 4] construction of the Universe, this being the beginning, the end and the ultimate goal of human knowledge, for in them was shown to the initiated Nature and all things as they are. (Strom. 8.) This is the Pythagorean Gnosis, Epictetus speaks of these instructions in the highest terms: “All that is ordained therein was established by our masters for the instruction of men and the correction of our customs.” (Apud Arrian. Dissert. lib. cap. 21.) Plato asserts in the *Phaedo* the same: the object of the Mysteries was to re-establish the soul in its primordial purity, or *that state of perfection from which it had fallen*.

VIII

But there came a day when the Mysteries deviated from their purity in the same way as the exoteric religions. This began when the State bethought itself, on the advice of Aristogeiton (510 B.C.), of drawing from the Eleusinia a constant and prolific source of income. A law was passed to that effect. Henceforth, no one could be initiated without paying a certain sum of money for the privilege. That boon which could hitherto be acquired only at the price of incessant, almost superhuman effort, toward virtue and excellency, was now to be purchased for so much gold. Laymen — and even priests themselves — while [Page 5] accepting the desecration lost eventually their past reverence for the inner Mysteries, and this led to further profanation of the Sacred Science. The rent made in the veil widened with every century; and more than ever the Supreme Hierophants, dreading the final publication and distortion of the most holy secrets of nature, laboured to eliminate them from the inner programme, limiting the full knowledge thereof but to the few.

It is those *set apart* who soon became the only custodians of the divine heirloom of the ages.

Seven centuries later, we find Apuleius, his sincere inclination toward magic and the mystical notwithstanding, writing in his *Golden Age* a bitter satire against the hypocrisy and debauchery of certain orders of *half-initiated* priests. It is through him also, that we learn that in his day (second century A.D.) the Mysteries had become so universal that persons of all ranks and conditions, in every country, men, women, and children all were *initiated*! Initiation had become as necessary in his day as baptism has since become with the Christians; and, as the latter is now, so the former had become then — *i.e.*, meaningless, and a purely dead-letter ceremony of mere form. Still later, the fanatics of the new religion laid their heavy hand on the Mysteries.

The *Epoptae*, they “who see things as they are” disappeared one by one, emigrating into regions [Page 6] inaccessible to the Christians. The *Mystae* (from *Mystes* “or veiled”) “they who see things only as they appear” remained very soon, alone, sole masters of the situation.

It is the former, the “set apart”, who have preserved the true secrets; it is the *Mystae*, those who knew

them only superficially, who laid the first foundation stone of modern Masonry; and it is from this half pagan, half converted primitive fraternity of Masons that Christian ritualism and most of dogmas were born. Both the *Epoptae* and the *Mystae* are entitled to the name of Masons: for both carrying out their pledges to, and the injunction of their long departed Hierophants and “Kings” *rebuilt*, the *Epoptae*, their “lower”, and the *Mystae*, their “upper temples. For such were the irrespective appellations in antiquity, and are so to this day in certain regions. Sophocles speaks in the *Electra* (Act 2) of the foundations of Athens — the site of the Eleusinian Mysteries — as being the “sacred edifice of the gods”, *i. e.*, built by the gods. Initiation was spoken of as “walking into the temple”, and “cleaning”, or *rebuilding the temple* referred to the *body* of an initiate on his last and supreme trial. (Vide St. John's Gospel, 2:19). The esoteric doctrine, also, was sometimes called by the name of “temple” and popular exoteric religion, by that of “city”. To *build a temple* meant to found an esoteric school; to “build a city temple” signified [Page 7] to establish a public cult. Therefore, the true surviving “Masons” of the *lower* Temple, or the *crypt*, the sacred place of initiation, are the only custodians of the true *Masonic* secrets now lost to the world. We yield willingly to the modern Fraternity of Masons the title of “Builders of the higher Temple”, as the *à priori* superiority of the comparative adjective is as illusionary as the blaze of the burning bush of Moses itself in the Templars' Lodges.

IX

The misunderstood allegory known as the Descent into *Hades*, has wrought infinite mischief. The exoteric “fable” of Hercules and Theseus descending *into the infernal regions*; the journey thither of Orpheus, who found his way by the power of his lyre (*Ovid Metam.*); of Krishna, and finally of Christ, who “descended into Hell and the third day rose again from the dead” — was twisted out of recognition by the non-initiated *adapters* of pagan rites and transformers thereof, into Church rites and dogmas.

Astronomically, this *descent into hell* symbolized the Sun during the autumnal equinox when abandoning the higher sidereal regions, there was a supposed fight between him and the Demon of Darkness who got the best of our luminary. Then the Sun was imagined to undergo a temporary death and to descend into the infernal regions. But mystically, [Page 8] it typified the initiatory rites in the crypts of the temple, called the Underworld. Bacchus, Herakles, Orpheus, Asklepios and all the other visitors of the crypt, all descended into hell and ascended thence on the third day, for all were initiates and “Builders of the lower Temple”. The words addressed by Hermes to Prometheus, chained on the arid rocks of the Caucasus — *i. e.*, bound by ignorance to his physical body and devoured therefore by the vultures of passion — apply to every neophyte, to every *Chrestos* on trial. “To such labours look thou for no termination until the (or a) god shall appear as a substitute in thy pangs and shall be willing to go both to gloomy Hades and to the murky depths around Tartarus.” (*Aeschylus: Prometheus*, 1027, ff.) They mean simply that until Prometheus (or man) could find the “God”, or Hierophant (the Initiator) who would willingly descend into the crypts of initiation, and walk around Tartarus with him, the vulture of passion would never cease to gnaw his vitals. [The dark region in the crypt, into which the candidate under initiation was supposed to throw away for ever his worst passions and lusts. Hence the allegories by Homer, Ovid, Virgil, etc., all accepted literally by the modern scholar. Phlegethon was the river in Tartarus into which the initiate was thrice plunged by the Hierophant, after which the trials were over and the new man born anew. He had left in the dark stream the old sinful man for ever, and issued on the third day, from Tartarus, as an *individuality*, the *personality* being dead. Such characters as Ixion, Tantalus, Sisyphus, etc., are each a personification of some human passion.] Aeschylus as a pledged Initiate could say no more; but Aristophanes less pious, or more daring, divulges [Page 9] the secret to those who are not blinded by a too strong preconception, in his immortal satire on Heracles' *descent into Hell*. (*Frogs*.) There we find the chorus of the “blessed ones” (the initiated), the Elysian Fields, the arrival of Bacchus (the god Hierophant) with Herakles, the reception with lighted torches, emblems of new LIFE and

RESURRECTION from the darkness of human ignorance to the light of spiritual knowledge — eternal LIFE. Every word of the brilliant satire shows the inner meaning of the poet:

Wake, burning torches ... for thou comest
Shaking them in thy hand, lacche,
Phosphoric *star of the nightly rite*.

All such final initiations took place during the night. To speak, therefore, of anyone as having descended into Hades, was equivalent in antiquity to calling him a *full Initiate*. To those who feel inclined to reject this explanation, I would offer a query. Let them explain, in that case, the meaning of a sentence in the sixth book of Virgil's Aeneid. What can the poet mean, if not that which is asserted above, when introducing the aged Anchises in the Elysian fields, he makes him advise Aeneas his son, to travel to Italy . . . where he would have to fight in Latium, a rude and barbarous people; therefore, he adds, before you venture there "*Descend into Hades*", *i. e.*, get yourself initiated.

The benevolent clericals, who are so apt to send us on the slightest provocation to Tartarus and the [Page 10] infernal regions, do not suspect what good wishes for us the threat contains; and what a holy character one must be before one gets into such a sanctified place.

It is not pagans alone who had their Mysteries. Bellarmin (*De Eccl. Triumph.* lib. 2, cap. 14) states that the early Christians adopted, after the example of pagan ceremonies, the custom of assembling in the church during the nights preceding their festivals, to hold vigils or "wakes". Their ceremonies were performed at first with the most edifying holiness and purity. But very shortly after that, such immoral abuses crept into these "assemblies" that the bishops found it necessary to abolish them. We have read in dozens of works about the licentiousness in the pagan religious festivals. Cicero is quoted (*de Leg.* lib. 2, cap. 15) showing Diagondas, the Theban, finding no other means of remedying such disorders in the ceremonies than the suppression of the Mysteries themselves. When we contrast the two kinds of celebrations, however, the Pagan Mysteries hoary with age centuries before our era, and the Christian Agape and others in a religion hardly born and claiming such a purifying influence on its converts, we can only pity the mental blindness of its defenders and quote for their benefit Roscommon, who asks:

When you begin with so much pomp and show,
Why is the end so little and so low? [Page 11]

X

Primitive Christianity — being derived from the primitive Masonry — had its grip. pass-words, and degrees of initiation. "Masonry" is an old term but it came into use very late in our era. Paul calls himself a "master-builder" and he was one. The ancient Masons called themselves by various names and most of the Alexandrian Eclectics, the Theosophists of Ammonias Saccas and the later Neo-Platonists, were all virtually Masons.

They were all bound by oath to secrecy, considered themselves a Brotherhood, and had also their signs of recognition. The Eclectics or Philaletheians comprised within their ranks the ablest and most learned scholars of the day. as also several crowned heads. Says the author of *The Eclectic Philosophy*:

Their doctrines were adopted by pagans and Christians in Asia and Europe, and for a season everything seemed favourable for a general fusion of religious belief. The Emperors Alexander Severus and Julian embraced them. Their predominating influence upon religious ideas excited the jealousy of the Christians of Alexandria. The school was removed to Athens, and finally closed by the Emperor Justinian. Its professors *withdrew* to Persia, [And we may add, beyond, to India and Central Asia, for we find their influence everywhere in Asiatic countries.] where they made many disciples.

A few more details may prove perchance, interesting. We know that the Eleusinian Mysteries [Page 12] survived all others. While the secret cults of the minor gods such as the *Curates*, the *Dactyli*, the worship of Adonis, of the *Kabiri*, and even those of old Egypt had entirely disappeared under the revengeful and cruel hand of the pitiless Theodosius, [The murderer of the Thessalonians, who were butchered by this pious son of the Church.] the Mysteries of Eleusis could not be so easily disposed of. They were indeed the religion of mankind, and shone in all their ancient splendour if not in their primitive purity. It took several centuries to abolish them, and they could not be entirely suppressed before the year 396 of our era. It is then that the “Builders of the higher, or City Temple” appeared first on the scene and worked unrelentingly to infuse their rituals and peculiar dogmas into the nascent and ever fighting and quarrelling church.

The triple Sanctus of the Roman Catholic Mass is the triple S.S.S. of these early Masons, and is the modern prefix to their documents or “any written *balustre* — the initial of *Salutem*, or Health” as cunningly put by a Mason. “This triple masonic salutation is the most ancient among their greetings.” (Ragon.)

XI

But they did not limit their grafts on the tree of the Christian religion to this alone. During the [Page 13] Mysteries of Eleusis, wine represented Bacchus and Ceres — wine and bread, or corn. [Bacchus is certainly of Indian origin. Pausanias shows him the first to lead an expedition against India, and the first to throw a bridge over the Euphrates. “The cable which served to unite the two opposite shores being exhibited to this day”, writes this historian, “it being woven from vine-branches and trailings of ivy”. (X 29. 4.) Arrianus and Quintus-Curtius explained the allegory of Bacchus' birth from the thigh of Zeus, by saying that he was born on the Indian Mount *Meru* (from thigh). We are aware that Eratosthenes and Strabo believed the Indian Bacchus had been invented by flatterers to simply please Alexander, believed to have conquered India as Bacchus is supposed to have done. But on the other hand, Cicero mentions the god as a Son of Thyoné and Nisus; and Dionysus or means the god Dis from Mount Nys in India. Bacchus crowned with ivy, or Kissos, is Krshna, one of whose names was Kissen. Dionysus was pre-eminently the god who was expected to liberate the souls of men from their prisons of flesh — Hades and the human Tartarus, in one of its symbolical senses. Cicero calls Orpheus a son of Bacchus, and there is a tradition which not only makes Orpheus come from India (he being called dark, of tawny complexion) but identifies him with Arjuna, the chela and adoptive son of Krshna. (Vide *Five Years of Theosophy*: “Was writing known before Pānini?”)] Now Ceres or Demeter was the female productive principle of the Earth; the spouse of Father Aether, or Zeus; and Bacchus, the son of Zeus-Jupiter, was his father manifested: in other words, Ceres and Bacchus were the personifications of Substance and Spirit, the two vivifying principles in Nature and on Earth. The hierophant Initiator presented symbolically, before the final *revelation* of the mysteries, wine and bread to the candidate, who ate and drank, in token that the spirit was to quicken matter: *i.e.* the divine wisdom of the Higher-Self was to enter into and take possession of his inner Self or Soul through what was to be revealed to him.[Page 14]

This rite was adopted by the Christian Church. The Hierophant who was called the “Father”, has now

passed, part and parcel — *minus* knowledge — into the “Father” priest, who today administers the same communion. Jesus calls himself a vine and *his* “Father” the husbandman; and his injunction at the Last Supper shows his thorough knowledge of the symbolical meaning (*Vide infra*, note) of bread and wine, and his identification with the *logoi* of the ancients. “Whose eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life”. “This is a hard saying”, he adds. . . . “The words (*rhemata*, or arcane utterances) that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life”. They are; because “it is the Spirit that quickeneth”. Furthermore these *rhemata* of Jesus are indeed the arcane utterances of *an Initiate*.

But between this noble rite, as old as symbolism, and its later anthropomorphic interpretation, now known as transubstantiation, there is an abyss of ecclesiastical sophistry. With what force the exclamation — “Woe unto you lawyers. For *ye have taken away the key of knowledge*”, (and will not permit even now *gnosis* to be given to others); with what tenfold force, I say, it applies more now than then. Aye; that *gnosis*, “ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were (and are) entering ye prevented”, and still prevent. Nor has the modern priesthood alone laid itself open to this blame. Masons, the descendants, or at any rate the successors, of the [Page 15] “Builders of the upper Temple” during the Mysteries, they who ought to know better, will pooh-pooh and scorn any one among their own brethren who will remind them of their true origin. Several great modern Scholars and Kabalists, who are Masons, and could be named, received worse than the cold shoulder from their Brethren. It is ever the same old, old story. Even Ragon, the most learned in his day among all the Masons of our century, complains of it, in these words:

All the ancient narratives attest that the initiations in the days of old had an imposing ceremonial, and became memorable for ever through the grand truths divulged and the knowledge that resulted therefrom. And yet there are *some modern Masons, of half-learning*, who hasten to treat as charlatans all those who successfully remind of, and explain to them, these ancient ceremonies! (*Cours. Philos.* p. 87 note [2].)

XII

Vanitas vanitatum! Nothing is new under the sun. The “*Litanies of the Virgin Mary*” prove it in the sincerest way. Pope Gregory I, introduces the worship of the Virgin Mary and the Chalcedonian Council proclaim her the mother of God. But the author of the *Litanies* had not even the decency (or is it the brains?) to furnish her with any other than pagan adjectives and titles, as I shall presently show. Not a symbol, not a metaphor of this famous Litany, but belonged to a crowd of goddesses; all Queens, [Page 16] Virgins, or Mothers; these three titles applying to Isis, Rhea, Cybele, Diana, Lucifera, Lucina, Luna, Tellus, Latona triformis, Proserpina, Hecate, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, Leucothea, Astarte, celestial Venus and Urania, Alma Venus, etc., etc., etc.

Besides the primitive signification of trinity (the esoteric, or that Father, Mother, Son) does not this Western Trimurti (three faces) mean in the Masonic pantheon: “Sun, Moon, and the Venerable”? a slight alteration, forsooth, from the Germanic and Northern Fire, Sun and Moon.

It is the intimate knowledge of this, perchance, that made the Mason, J. M. Ragon describe his profession of faith thus:

For me the Son is the same as Horus, son of Osiris and Isis; he is the SUN who, every year redeems the world from sterility and the universal death of the races.

And he goes on to speak of the Virgin Mary's particular litanies, temples, festivals, masses and Church services, pilgrimages, oratories, Jacobins, Franciscans, vestals, prodigies, ex voto, niches, statues, etc., etc., etc.

De Maleville, a great Hebrew scholar and translator of Rabbinical literature, observes that the Jews give to the moon all those names which, in the Litanies, are used to glorify the Virgin. He finds in the *Litanies of Jesus*, all the attributes of Osiris — the Eternal Sun, and of Horus, the Annual Sun.

And he proves it. [Page 17]

Mater Christi is the mother of the Redeemer of the old Masons, who is the *Sun*. The *hoi polloi* among the Egyptians, claimed that the child, symbol of the great central star, Horus, was the Son of Osireth and Oseth, whose souls had *ensouled*, after their death, the *Sun* and the *Moon*. Isis became, with the Phoenicians, Astarte, the name under which they adored the Moon, personified as a woman adorned with horns, which symbolised the crescent. Astarte was represented at the autumnal equinox after her husband's (the Sun's) defeat by the Prince of Darkness, and descent into Hades, as weeping over the loss of her consort, who is also her son, as Isis does that of her consort, brother and son (Osiris-Horus). Astarte holds in her hand a cruciform stick, a regular cross, and stands weeping on the crescent moon. The Christian Virgin Mary is often represented in the same way, standing on the new moon, surrounded by stars and weeping for her son *juxta crucem lacrymosa dum pendebat filius* (See, *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*). Is not she the heiress of Isis and Astarte? asks the author.

Truly, and you have but to repeat the *Litany to the Virgin* of the Roman Catholic Church, to find yourself repeating ancient incantations to Adonaïa (Venus), the mother of Adonis, the Solar god of so many nations; to Mylitta (the Assyrian Venus), goddess of Nature; to Alilat, whom the Arabs symbolized by the two lunar horns; to Selene, wife and sister of Helios, the Sun [Page 18] god of the Greeks; or, to the *Magna Mater*, . . . *honestissima, purissima, castissima*, the Universal Mother of all Beings — because SHE IS MOTHER NATURE.

Verily is *Maria* (Mary) the Isis *Myrionymos*, the Goddess Mother of the ten thousand names! As the Sun was Phoebus, in the heaven, so he became Apollo, on earth, and Pluto in the still lower regions (after sunset); so the moon was Phoebe in heaven, and Diana on earth (Gaia, Latona, Ceres); becoming Hecate and Proserpine in Hades. Where is the wonder then, if Mary is called *regina virginum*, “Queen of Virgins”, and *castissima* (most chaste), when even the prayers offered to her at the sixth hour of the morning and the evening are copied from those sung by the “heathen” Gentiles *at the same hours* in honour of Phoebe and Hecate? The verse of the “Litany to the Virgin”, *stella matutina*, [The “Morning Star”, or *Lucifer*, the name which Jesus calls himself in Rev. 22:16, and which becomes, nevertheless, the *name of the Devil*, as soon as a theosophical journal assumes it!] we are informed, is a faithful copy of a verse from the litany of the *triformis* of the pagans. It is at the Council which condemned Nestorius that Mary was first titled as the “Mother of God”, *mater dei*.

In our next, we shall have something to say about this famous Litany of the Virgin, and show its origin in

full. We shall cull our proofs, as we go along, from the classics and the moderns, and supplement the whole from the annals of religions as found in the Esoteric Doctrine. Meanwhile, we may add a few more [Page 19] statements and give the etymology of the most sacred terms in ecclesiastical ritualism.

XIII

Let us give a few moments of attention to the assemblies of the “Builders of the upper Temple” in early Christianity. Ragon has shown plainly to us the origin of the following terms:

(a) “The word 'mass', comes from the Latin *Messis* — 'harvest,' whence the noun *Messias*, 'he who ripens the harvest,' Christ, the Sun”.

(b) The word “Lodge” used by the Masons, the feeble successors of the Initiates, has its root in *loga*, (*loka*, in Sanskrit) a locality and a *world*; and in the Greek *logos*, the Word, a discourse; signifying in its full meaning “a place where certain things are discussed”.

(c) These assemblies of the *logos* of the primitive *initiated* masons came to be called *synaxis*, “gatherings” of the Brethren for the purpose of praying and celebrating the coena (supper) wherein only bloodless offerings, fruit and cereals, were used. Soon after these offerings began to be called *hostiae* — or sacred and pure *hosties* — in contrast to the impure sacrifices (as of prisoners of war, *hostes*, whence the word *hostage*), as the offerings consisted of the harvest fruits, the first fruits of *messis*, thence the word “mass”. Since no father of the Church mentions, as some scholars would have it, [Page 20] that the word mass comes from the Hebrew *missah* (*oblatum*, offering) one explanation is as good as the other. For an exhaustive enquiry on the word *missa* and *mizda*, see King's *Gnostics*, pp. 124, *et seq.*

Now the word *synaxis* was also called by the Greeks *agyrmos*, (a collection of men, assembly). It referred to initiation into the Mysteries. Both words — *synaxis* and *agyrmos* [Hesychius gives the name (*agyrmos*) to the first day of the initiation into the mystery of Ceres, goddess of harvest, and refers to it also under that of *Synaxis*. The early Christians called their mass, before this term was adapted, and the celebration of their mysteries — *Synaxis*, a word compounded from *sun* “with”, and *ago* “I lead”, whence, the Greek *synaxis* or an assembly] — became obsolete with the Christians, and the word *missa*, or mass, prevailed and remained. Theologians will have it, desirous as they are to veil its etymology, that the term messias (*Messiah*) is derived from the Latin word *missus* (messenger, *the sent*). But if so, then again it may be applied as well to the Sun, the *annual* messenger, sent to bring light and new life to the earth and its products. The Hebrew word for Messiah, *mashiah* (anointed, from *mashah*, to anoint) will hardly apply to, or bear out the identity in the ecclesiastical sense; nor will the Latin *missa* (mass) derive well from that other Latin word *mittere*, *missum*, “to send”, or “dismiss”. Because the communion service — its heart and soul — is based on the consecration and oblation of the host or *hostia* (sacrifice), a wafer (a thin, leaf-like bread) representing the body of Christ in the Eucharist, [Page 21] and such wafer of flour is a direct development of the harvest or cereal offerings. Again, the primitive *masses* were *coenas* (late dinners or suppers), which, from the simple meals of Romans, who “washed, were anointed, and wore a *cenatory* garment” at dinner became consecrated meals in memory of the last Supper of Christ.

The converted Jews in the days of the Apostles met at their *synaxes*, to read the Evangels and their correspondence (Epistles). St. Justin (150 A.D.) tells us that these solemn assemblies were held on the day called *Sun* (Sunday, *dies magnus*), on which days there were psalms chanted — “collation of

baptism with pure water and the *agape* of the holy *Coena* with bread and wine". What has this hybrid combination of pagan Roman dinners, raised by the inventors of church dogmas to a sacred mystery, to do with the Hebrew *Messiah* "he who causes to go down into the pit" (or Hades), or its Greek transliteration *Messias*. As shown by Nork, Jesus "was never anointed either as high priest or king", therefore his name of *Messias* cannot be derived from its present Hebrew equivalent. The less so, since the word anointed, or "rubbed with oil" a *Homeric term*, is *chris*, and *chrío*, both to *anoint the body with oil*. (See LUCIFER for Nov.1887, "*The Esoteric Character of the Gospels*.")

Another high Mason, the author of "*The Source of Measures*", summarizes this *imbroglio* of the ages in a few lines by saying: [Page 22]

The fact is, there were two Messiahs: *One*, as causing himself to go down into the pit, for the salvation of the world; [From times immemorial every initiate before entering on his supreme trial of initiation, in antiquity as at the present time, pronounced these sacramental words . . . "And I swear to give up my life for the salvation of my brothers, which constitute the whole of mankind, if called upon, and to die in the defence of truth. . . ."] this was the Sun shorn of his *golden rays* and *crowned with blackened ones* (symbolizing this loss) as the thorns. *The other*, was the triumphant *Messiah*, mounted up to this *summit of the arch of Heaven*, personated as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*. In both instances he had the cross. . . ."

At the *Ambarvales*, the festivals in honour of Ceres, the *Arval* (the assistant of the High Priest) clad in pure white, placing on the *hostia* (sacrificial heap) a cake of corn, water and wine, tasted the wine of *libation* and gave to all others to *taste*. The *oblation* (or offering) was then taken up by the High Priest. It symbolized the three kingdoms of Nature — the cake of corn (vegetable kingdom), the sacrificial vase or *chalice* (mineral), and the *pall* (the scarf-like garment) of the Hierophant, an end of which he threw over the oblation wine cup. This pall was made of pure white lamb skins.

The modern priest repeats, gesture for gesture, the acts of the pagan priest. He lifts up and offers the bread to be consecrated; blesses the water that is to be put in the chalice, and then pours the wine into it, [Page 23] incenses the altar, etc., etc., and going to the altar washes his fingers saying, "I will wash my hands *among the INNOCENT* and encompass thy altar, O Lord." He does so, because the ancient and *pagan* priest did the same, saying, "I wash (with lustral water) my hands among the INNOCENT (the fully initiated Brethren) and encompass thy altar, O great Goddess" (Ceres). Thrice went the high priest round the altar loaded with offerings, carrying high above his head the chalice covered with the end of his snow-white lamb-skin. . . .

The consecrated vestment worn by the Pope, the pall, "*has the form of a scarf made of white wool, embroidered with purple crosses*". In the Greek Church, the priest covers, with the end of the pall thrown over his shoulder, the chalice.

The High Priest of antiquity repeated thrice during the divine services his "*O redemptor mundi*" to Apollo 'the Sun, his "*Mater Salvatoris*", to Ceres, —the earth, his "*Virgo paritura*" to the Virgin Goddess etc., and pronounced *seven ternary commemorations*. (Hearken, O Masons!). The ternary number, so revered in antiquity, is as revered now, and is pronounced five times during the mass. We have three *introibo*,

three *Kyrie eleison*, three *mea culpa*, three *agnus dei*, three *Dominus Vobiscum*. A true masonic series! Let us add to this the three *et cum spiritu tuo*, and the Christian mass yields to us the same *seven triple commemorations*. [Page 24]

PAGANISM, MASONRY, and THEOLOGY — such is the historical trinity now ruling the world *sub rosa*. Shall we close with a Masonic greeting and say:

Illustrious officers of Hiram Abif, Initiates, and “Widow's sons”. The Kingdom of Darkness and ignorance is fast dispelling, but there are regions still untouched by the hand of the scholar, and as black as the night of Egypt. *Fratres, sobrii estote et vigilate!*