

## WALKING THE PATH OF INITIATION

### INTRODUCTION

A person is ready for the processes of initiation when he has at least partially conquered the glamour and illusions from the astral and the mental worlds. He can only tread the Path of Initiation and pass the waiting (and guarding) Angel at the door when he is no longer completely deceived by the illusions of the outer world. Initiation can be defined as an entrance into the spiritual life, or in the spiritual kingdom. This is the fifth superhuman kingdom after the fourth human kingdom.

The goal of all initiatory processes is the realization and identification with the will and purpose of Deity. This realization comes through the form (the different bodies and the personality of man). The person develops the Will aspect of Divinity on the Path of Initiation. More specified this means the will-to-good and not the will-to-power of the integrated personality. Man has shown he is not ready for power because the will-to-good is not strong enough yet to balance this power aspect. He first has to develop his ability and focus to do good in the world as a necessary counterforce to the will-to-separation and aggression. He becomes a dynamic force in manifesting this will aspect by invoking the spiritual power of the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Souls, which is the Spiritual Hierarchy, or the Love aspect of God. The Hierarchy responds by invoking the centre of God's Will, Shamballa, which leads to the working out of God's purpose and plans on Earth.

In total there are nine major initiations but we are concerned only with the seven solar initiations and of these only five planetary initiations concern average humanity. This means that there are five initiations ahead of the disciple, with two more ahead of the Master, making the seven initiations. Very little is said about the eighth and ninth initiations because a few, if any, of our humanity achieve them.

The passing of each door of initiation is not a onetime process. The disciple returns life after life and has to take up his tasks in the three outer worlds (physical-etheric, astral and mental) each time again to deepen and integrate the process of initiation by re-enacting the former initiatory steps after which he is ready to take on the essential lessons of the next initiation. So, the Path of Initiation is essentially an expanding series of inclusive and intelligent recognitions of that what is to be revealed.

Even though the initiatory process starts with the first initiation the Path of Initiation technically starts at the third initiation in which the disciple achieves complete light and illumination and emerges as the real initiate. But, of course, to reach this Path the first two initiations have to be taken first. In this paper I will focus onto these first two initiations on which most disciples are working in this stage of evolution.

## THE FIRST INITIATION: THE BIRTH

### **It's essence**

The first initiation symbolizes the dedication of the physical body and physical plane life to the soul. It is the birth of the Christ principle or Christ consciousness in the heart of the disciple and in humanity as a whole, or said in other words: the birth of the 'Christ babe in the heart'. The Christ consciousness is the manifestation of love on the physical, etheric and astral plane and the flowering of soul illumined intelligence on the mental plane so that the initiate can work powerfully on this mental plane. The disciple has taken the first step into the Fifth Kingdom, the Kingdom of the Souls, and is becoming creative in the higher sense.

For the first initiation an urge for soul contact is needed. Spiritual instinct, as the lowest aspect of the intuition, enables the disciple to register contact with the Hierarchy of which the soul is a part. The soul starts to induce group consciousness, but the first degree initiate is still selfish because the soul is only gradually beginning to express through the personality. Slowly the soul (which is the Christ in the human heart) starts to take over the reign of the personality, endeavouring to replace selfishness by selfless group consciousness.

*"It should be remembered that very little egoic control need be evidenced when the first initiation is taken. That initiation indicates simply that the germ of soul life has vitalised and brought into functioning existence the inner spiritual body, the sheath of the inner spiritual man." (EP II, p. 14)*

### **Necessary preparation**

For the first initiation right organization and management of time is needed. This is a quality of the seventh ray which is conditioning the first initiation. The main focus in the necessary preparation lies in following points:

- *The discipline, control and purification of the physical body/plane.*  
This means that the physical body has to obey and has to be brought under the control of the Ego. For this it is needed to bring a regular rhythm in the daily schedule, to do regular physical exercises, to drink and eat consciously, to control sexual urges and licentious behaviour.

*"At the first initiation, the control of the Ego over the physical body must have reached a high degree of attainment. "The sins of the flesh," as the Christian phraseology has it, must be dominated; gluttony, drink, and licentiousness must no longer hold sway. The physical elemental will no longer find its demand obeyed; the control must be complete and the lure departed. A general attitude of obedience to the Ego must have been achieved, and the willingness to obey must be very strong." (IHS, p. 82-83)*

- *The ability to rightly manage finance.*

This is not only the taking care of financing the personal and family daily life, but also the regarding and handling of money as a spiritual asset instead of only thinking of it in purely material terms.

- *The development of the abstract mind and spiritual instinct.*  
This is the capacity of the soul to register contact with the Hierarchy of which the soul is part. Spiritual instinct is the lowest aspect of intuition and indicates the readiness for the first initiation. For this it is needed to study and meditate daily (building the antahkarana), and to start with service work.

### Expression in the life of the disciple

What does the initiate experience and what changes may be noticeable on the physical plane after the first initiation? Although few disciples remember the first initiation due to the slow pervasion of information from the higher planes to the physical brain, DK assures us that it is evident to the spiritually discerning eye. **ED: of others** Initiates can be recognized by the following qualities:

- They are deliberately treading the Way.
- They love the Christ, regardless of how they call him.
- They serve and help their fellowmen.

*“That they have taken it is evidenced by their deliberate treading of the Way, by their love of the Christ—no matter by what name they may call Him—and by their effort to serve and help their fellowmen.”* (RI, p. 436-437)

- They are no longer under dominating control of basic physical appetites leading to such things as “gluttony, drink and licentiousness.” (IHS, p. 82)
- They have accomplished self-control because the control of the Ego over the physical body is strong now. “The physical elemental will no longer find its demand obeyed; the control [is] complete and the lure departed.” (IHS, p. 82)
- Essentially, they have ended “maya” through a “divine indifference to the call or pull of matter (...)” and it is this which allows them to begin to “live a life, inspired by God.” (GWP, p. 172)
- They demonstrate that they have “resolved the dualities of the physical plane and can rightly impose etheric energy (the higher of the two) upon physical energy.” (GWP, p. 103)
- Although first degree initiates may not remember their first initiation, they are usually aware of great changes in their capacity of self-reflection, in their attitude towards their fellowmen, to their handling of circumstances, and to their interpretation and handling of life events. In short: they notice and show a new orientation to life and a new way of thinking.

*“(...) the individual initiate who takes this initiation is aware of great changes in his attitude to himself, to his fellowmen, to circumstances and to his interpretation*

*of life events. These are peculiarly the reactions which attend the first initiation; a new orientation to life and a new world of thought are registered by the initiate.”*  
(RI, p. 569-570)

All this does not mean, however, that life is easy for the first degree initiate. On the contrary, after an initial period of integration and stabilization, a new struggle begins at the emotional level. The personality begins to be threatened by the integrative soul energy, leading to a fight between the inner and outer man, or between the soul and the personality. The disciple can feel less integrated because the soul is disturbing things. With the physical body automatically under etheric control now, the initiate is still under the strong influence of the potent astral energy of desire, and grows quite naturally more selfish and materialistic at this new level. The maturing human soul, emerging via the unselfish nature of the Christ life, is directly at odds with this. Thus, the long difficult struggle between the new higher energies of the Christ life and lunar elemental forces begins. This leads to much pain and suffering until the definite choice is made for a new dedication to service. Then the initiate is ready to undergo the Second Initiation of Baptism, an evolution that takes many lives of struggle after which, by the way, the suffering doesn't stop, as we will see in the next paragraph.

A great many people on the planet today have taken this physical plane initiation many lives ago, according to DK:

*“All true aspirants have taken the first initiation. This fact is indicated by their intensive struggle to grow into the spiritual life, to follow the way of determined orientation to the things of the spirit and to live by the light of that spirit. I believe that many who read my words will recognize these determinations as the basic motivation of their lives.”* (DINA I, p. 716)

So, this implies that the group of people who is preparing for the second initiation must be quite big too. In the next paragraph I will look into this second initiation.

## THE SECOND INITIATION: THE BAPTISM

### **It's essence**

Where the first initiation is felt on the physical plane and in the physical body, the second initiation is felt on the *astral plane* and in the *astral body*.<sup>1</sup> The goal is to become free of the emotional nature of the personality which contains emotional attachments, glamour and selfish desires of the lower nature. In this initiation the disciple learns to control the astral, or emotional energy, that “drifting, undefined and exceedingly fluid” energy of the astral plane. “Of this type of energy water is the symbol, and this is one reason why this second initiation is called the Baptism initiation, or the initiation of “entering the stream.” (RI, p. 353). After this first baptism by water, or purification of conscience in man, follows the baptism by fire (solar fire) of the lower mental nature.

The astral plane is the major battleground of the *pairs of opposites*. One of the major tests of the disciple is to recognize these pairs of opposites before he can rightly choose between them. These pairs form the opposites of the demands of the soul or the higher man on the one hand and those of the personality or the lower man in time and space on the other.

At the second initiation, the initiate demonstrates that he can choose between these pairs and proceed with decision upon the *middle way*, or the narrow path between them. This “middle way” is a field of tension in which the disciple vibrates between the higher soul decisions and the lower personality decisions. In treading the middle way the disciple is building a bridge, and by standing on that bridge the Self is met and harmony will be settled between the pairs of opposites. The disciple has to make the decision which way to go on his own, functioning in his mental body.

The disciple has to *choose* if he is going to respond and react consciously to the higher pull and pass on to new and higher areas of spiritual experience, or if he is going to fall back into the glamorous lower life of the personality with his desires in time and space. When he is making this choice between the opposites he is under the influence of the astral energy and the second initiation is concerned with the emotional or astral body, the most difficult aspect of the personality to control. He is challenged to learn to stay centred at the middle point of balance and poise, to control his emotions, to seek the distinction between the dualities and make the right choice between them. He has to learn to step back from his personality and to *be* what he is in reality: *the soul* who no longer identifies with either of the opposites but stands free upon the middle way.

### **Necessary preparation**

The main focus in the preparation for the second initiation lies in the following interrelated points:

- *The control of the emotions and the purification of desire.*  
The disciple has to deal “drastically and potently” with his emotional nature. When an emotional crisis appears a decisive action has to be taken with which the disciple proves his control of his emotional nature. Such a crisis “may take the form of some great and vital test, covering a brief time, but calling forth every resource of wisdom and of purity that the disciple possesses, or it may be a long and protracted emotional strain, carried over many years of living. But in the attaining of success and in the achievement of clear vision and right discernment (through right discrimination) the disciple testifies to his fitness for the second initiation.” (TWM, p. 225)

This success is attained by “remembering that victory descends from above and cannot worked up to from below. The soul must govern and its instrument in the warfare is the consecrated mind.” (TWM, p. 228) The result of purification of desire is a quiet spirit, “or the “gentle stillness” of the vehicle so that it can adequately reflect the Christ principle, or the Buddhic nature. (...) Quieted emotions, and the control of the desire nature ever precede the re-orientation of the lower. Before the

desire of a man can be towards things spiritual he has to cease to desire the things of the world, and of the flesh.” (LOS, p. 206)

- *The dissipation of the glamour of the astral plane.*  
The work of dissipation of glamour is done on the mental plane. The consciousness has to be focussed there and the light needed for the dissipation of glamour must be gathered there. The disciple has to dwell in the light and hold the mind steady in that light. The illumined mind has to be used as a search light by a conscious use of the will, throwing this light into the fogs of glamour on the astral plane. So, it is important not to work in the astral field or body, but to build the light in the mental body and to shine if from the mental body towards the astral body. In this way the illumined mind assumes control over the astral body and dissipates the glamour.<sup>2</sup>
- *The breaking of the control and the sacrifice of the astral body.*  
This allows the intuition of the soul to take over the control. For this consistent and regular study, meditation and service is needed. This builds the antahkarana, the bridge to the soul and the spiritual triad, and clears the way for the downflow of light, love and power.

### **Expression in the life of the disciple**

The second initiation is called by DK “purification by fire” or “baptism of fire”. There is first the baptism by water, or purification of conscience in man, and then follows the baptism by fire (solar fire) of the lower mental nature. Water and fire produce hot steam. Considering glamour from this perspective, it is the steam that immerses the disciple in “the fogs and miasmas, the glammers and the mists.” (RI, p. 675) Out of this steam the disciple must emerge. DK states that the second initiation is one of the most difficult ones for the disciple.

*“The fire of mind today has to be reckoned with in conjunction with the water of desire, and it is owing to this that much of humanity’s problem develops. It is because of this that the second initiation has become one of the most difficult which the modern disciple has to take.” (RI, p. 675)*

The potent problem of glamour faces the aspirants with a hard and very long test. They not only have to deal with their own uncontrolled astral energies but also with the racial, national and world glammers which they unwarily attract to themselves in this period. The baptism of fire will inevitably bring pain and anxiety on a large scale, which can be seen quite clearly when one looks at the state of affairs in the world.

The more clearly the disciple is aware of the pairs of opposites the stronger becomes his struggle with them and the clearer he will see, and suffer from, the duality. For example, the one pointed focus of the majority of humanity on the material world, material comfort and material possessions, and the dangers of it, will be put very clearly into his face. He is faced with a long and hard transition from an emotional focus, in

which he is driven by his desires and aspirations, to a mental focus of intelligent and clear thinking. He is developing a new attitude to his old desires and habitual emotions, and a new perspective to his astral body. Where he formerly was attracted to the glamour, delusions and misinterpretations of the astral plane, he now becomes more and more appalled by them. The positive appeal of the glamorous outer world is replaced by a negative one and his attention is drawn to a higher dimension. He is conquering his innate selfishness and begins to replace it with group thinking and service to the whole.

This transition of an emotional to a mental focus, together with the accompanying growing insights, changes his life permanently and irreversibly and causes a lot of suffering to the disciple. The struggle with his selfishness, which he is now detesting himself becomes more and more apparent and fierce. He tries to discharge his selfish impulses but his lower self is fiercely fighting back to keep control. He feels a growing and deepening dissatisfaction about things as they are and a painful and distressing realisation of failure in releasing himself from his little self.

What is he to do with this?

- He has to persist in an attitude of experiencing and learning. Experiencing reality as it is, including his struggle and so called failures, will show him the uses of failure.
- When pain arises he has to take and maintain the position of the observer and stay with this pain without judging it or trying to get rid of it. Techniques like mindfulness, vipassana meditation, breathwork and the likes can help him in this process.
- He has to keep challenging himself to shift the focus from his 'poor little self' to what he can contribute to the group and to the whole. Where can he be of help, how can he serve? These have to be the main questions for him.
- And of course he has to persist boldly in walking the middle path between the pairs of opposites, and resisting the pull of either sides.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The process of initiation is long, enduring and repetitive in an ever deepening way. The disciple has to go over the different initiatory steps and processes during many lives. In total there are nine initiations but average humanity only is concerned with the first five. I focus in this paper on the first two initiations. Not many of humanity are further in the process anyway.

The first initiation is the birth of the Christ principle in the heart of the disciple and of humanity as a whole. It is felt in the physical body and on the physical plane life and an urge of soul contact is needed. According to DK many people on the planet, more than we think, have taken this initiation.

The second initiation is called the baptism because the goal is to become free of the watery and fluid emotions of the personality. It is felt in the astral body and on the astral

plane. The disciple has to learn to walk the narrow middle way between the pairs of opposites. This means he has to learn to choose between the demands of the soul and those of the lower personality who is immersed in glamour and selfish desires.

Both initiations bring a lot of pain and suffering to the disciple. He has to endure and withstand this by experiencing and learning from his present situation, physical and emotional purification, discipline, regular study, meditation and the practising of service.

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<sup>1</sup> These initiations are felt on those planes and bodies but they are not taken there. The first four initiations are taken upon the second mental sub-plane, within the causal body where it has moved at the first initiation from the third mental sub-plane.

<sup>2</sup> See for a technique to practice this my earlier paper 210 "Dissipation of the Glamour of Materiality".