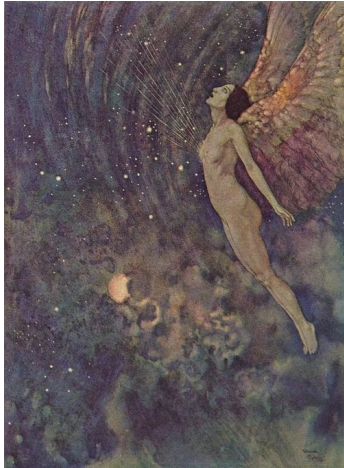


Volume I - The Way of Illumination

Section III - The Soul: Whence and Whither?

Part III

TOWARDS THE GOAL



THE soul during its journey towards manifestation, and during its stay in any plane, whether in the heaven of the angels, the sphere of the jinn, or the plane of human beings, feels drawn towards its source and goal. Some souls feel more drawn than others; but there is a conscious or unconscious inner attraction felt by every soul. It is the ignorant soul, ignorant of its source and goal, which fears leaving the spheres to which it has become attached. It is the soul that knows not what is beyond which is afraid of being lifted up above the ground its feet are touching. Is the fish afraid of going to the depths of the sea? But apart from fish, even men who are born on land and have been brought up on land, make a practice of swimming and diving deep into the sea, and bringing up the pearl shells from its depths. There are seamen who are happier on the sea than on the land; and their daring, to those unaccustomed to the phenomenon of water, is sometimes perfectly amazing.

Life is interesting in every phase; on the journey towards manifestation as well as on the soul's return towards the goal. Every moment of life has its particular experience, one better than the other, one more valuable than another. In short, life may be said to be full of interest. Sorrow is interesting as well as joy; there is beauty in every phase, if only one can learn to appreciate it. What dies? It is death that dies, not life. What then, is the soul? The soul is life, it never touches death. Death is its illusion, its impression; death comes to something which the soul holds, not to the soul itself. The soul becomes accustomed to identify itself with the body it adopts, with the environment which surrounds it, with the names by which it is known; with its rank and possessions which are only the outward signs that belong to the world of illusion. The soul, absorbed in its child-like fancies in things that it values and to which it gives importance, and in the beings to which it attaches itself, blinds itself by the veils of its illusion. Thus it covers with a thousand veils its own truth from its own eyes.

What is the return journey? Where does one return to? When does one return? The return begins from the time the flower has come to its full bloom, from the moment the plant has touched its summit; from the time that the object, the purpose for which a soul is born upon earth is fulfilled. For then there is nothing more to hold it, and the soul naturally draws back as the breath is drawn in. But does

man die by drawing in his breath? No. So the soul does not die owing to this drawing in, though it gives to the dying person and to those who watch an impression of death.

The physical body may be likened to a clock, it has its mechanism and it requires winding, and this winding keeps it going. It is the healthiness of the physical body which enables it by its magnetic power to hold the soul which functions in it. As this body for some reason or other, either by disorder or by having been worn out, loses that power of keeping together by which it holds the soul functioning in it; it gives way, and the soul naturally departs, leaving the material body as one would throw away a coat which one no longer needs.

The connection of the body and the soul is like man's attachment to his dress. It is man's duty to keep his dress in good order, for he needs it in order to live in the world; but it would be ignorance if he thought his dress to be himself. Yet as a rule this is what man does; how few in this world stop to think on this subject, whether this body is *myself*, or whether *I am* apart from this body; whether higher or greater, more precious or longer living than this body! What then is mortality? There is no such thing as mortality, except the illusion and the impression of that illusion, which man keeps before himself as fear during his lifetime, and as an impression after he has passed from this earth.

Both life and death are contrary aspects of one thing, and that is change. If there remains anything of death with the soul which has passed away from this earth, it is the impression of death, according to the idea it has had of death. If the soul has had a horror of death, it carries that horror with it. If it has agitation at the thought of death, it carries that feeling with it; also, the dying soul carries with it the impression of the idea and regard for death of those surrounding it in life, especially at the time of its passing from the earth. This change paralyses every activity of the soul for some time. The soul which has become impressed by the idea it held of death, and by the impression which was created by those around the deathbed, is kept in a state of inertia which may be called fear, horror, depression or disappointment.

It takes some time for the soul to recover from this feeling of being stunned; it is this which may be called purgatory. Once the soul has recovered from this state it again begins to progress, advancing towards its goal on the tracks which it had laid before. How many souls foolishly believe in the idea of death, and carry with them that thought while passing from the earth to a life which is a still greater life! And how many souls do we find in the world who believe the end of life to be death; a belief in mortality which cannot be rooted out from their minds! The whole teaching of Jesus Christ has as its central theme the unfoldment, the realization of immortality.

What is purgatory? The Sufis call it *Naza*, a suspension of activity. If there is any death it is stillness and inactivity. It is like a clock which for some time is stopped; it wants winding, and a little movement sets a clock going. So there comes the impulse of life, which, breaking through this cloud of mortality, makes the soul see the daylight after the darkness of the night. In Sufi terms this may be called *Nahazat*. And what does the soul see in this bright daylight? It sees itself living as before, having the same name and form and yet progressing. The soul finds a greater freedom in this sphere, and less limitation than it has previously experienced in its life on the earth. Before the soul now is a world, a world not strange to it, but which it had made during its life on the earth. That which the soul had known as mind, that very mind is now to the soul a world; that which the soul while on earth called imagination is now before it a reality.

If this world is artistic it is the art produced by the soul. If there is absence of beauty, that is also caused by the neglect of beauty by the soul while on earth. The picture of *Jannat*, paradise, the ideas about heaven, and the conception of the infernal regions, is now to the soul an experience.

Is the soul sent to the one or the other place, among many who are rejoicing there or suffering for their sins? No, this is the kingdom that the soul had made while on earth, as some creatures build nests to stay in during the winter. It is the winter of the soul, which is the immediate hereafter. It passes this winter in the world, which it has made either agreeable or disagreeable for itself. But one might ask, 'Does the soul live a solitary life in this world that it has made?' No, how can it be solitary? The mind, whose secret so few in the world know, can be as large as the world, and larger still. This mind can contain all that exists in the world, and even all that the universe holds within itself. Though some might say, 'What a wonderful phenomenon; I never thought that the mind could be so large; I thought my mind was even smaller than my body, that it was hidden somewhere in a corner of my brain.'

The understanding of mind indeed widens one's outlook on life. It first produces bewilderment, and then the vision of the nature of God, which is a phenomenon in itself, becomes revealed. Does one see, then, all those whom one has known while on the earth? Yes, especially those whom one has loved most, or hated most. What will be the atmosphere of that world? It will be the echo of the same atmosphere which one has created in this. If one has learned while on earth to create joy and happiness for oneself and for others, in the other world that joy and happiness surrounds one. And if one has sown the seeds of poison while on earth the fruits of these one must reap there; that is where one sees justice as the nature of life.

The idea of the prophets which one finds in the ancient scriptures, that there will be a Judgment Day, and that man will be called before the great Judge to answer for his deeds, must not be understood literally. No, the Judgment Day is every day, and men know it as his sight becomes more keen. Every hour, every moment in life, has its judgment, as the Prophet has said, 'one will have to give account for every grain of corn one eats.' There is no doubt about this, but the Judgment Day has been especially mentioned in the scriptures as taking place in the hereafter because in the hereafter one cover has been lifted from the soul. Therefore the judgment which every soul experiences here on earth, and yet remains ignorant, being unconscious of it, becomes more clearly manifest to the view of the soul after it has passed from this earth.

What connection has the soul which has passed from the earth with those who are still on the earth? No doubt there is a wall now which divides those on this earth from those in the other plane, yet the connection of the heart still keeps intact, and it remains unbroken as long as the link of sympathy is there. But why do the lovers of those who have passed away from the earth not know of the condition of their beloveds on the other side? They know it in their souls, but the veils of the illusion of the physical world cover their hearts, therefore they cannot get through clear reflections. Besides, it is not only the link of love and sympathy, but it is the belief in the hereafter to the extent of conviction which lifts those still on earth to knowledge of their beloved ones who have passed over to the other side. Those who deny the hereafter deny to themselves that knowledge which is the essence of all learning.

It is more easy for those who have passed from the earth to the other side to get into touch with those on the earth, for they have one veil less.

The soul, which functions in different bodies on its way to manifestation covers itself thus with one body over another, has a power which it uses to a smaller or greater degree in the renewing of the tissues of the body, or in healing it. The child born into a family in which there are physical infirmities is often born already healed from hereditary conditions and with its tissues renewed. The reason is that the soul is the divine Breath; it purifies, revivifies and heals the instrument in which it functions.

On its return journey the soul shows the same phenomenon in a different way; freed from all the impressions of illness, sadness and misery which it has experienced while on the earth, and has taken into the spirit world, it heals its own being, and renews the tissues of that body, which still remains with it after it has left the physical form. It purifies itself from all illness and the impression of illness, and thus renews the life in the spirit world in accordance to its grade of evolution. But apart from evolution it is the tendency of the soul to repel all that is foreign to it, either from the physical body, or from the mental body which it still has in the spirit world. The soul is on a continual journey, on whatever plane it is; it is journeying all the time, and on this journey it has a purpose to accomplish; many purposes contained and hidden in one purpose.

There are objects which remain unfulfilled in one's lifetime on earth; they are accomplished on the further journey in the spirit world. For nothing that the human heart has once desired remains unfulfilled. If it is not fulfilled here, it is accomplished in the hereafter. The desire of the soul is the wish of God; small or great, right or wrong, it has a moment of fulfillment. If that moment does not come while the soul is on the earth-plane it comes to the soul in the spirit world.

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There is a process to be seen both in the soul coming to earth and in its return. When coming to earth it adorns itself with the veils of the particular planes through which it passes; and on its return it unveils itself from the bodies it has adopted for its convenience in experiencing that particular plane. In this way there is a process of covering and uncovering. The soul, so to speak, throws off its garment on the same plane from which it borrowed it, when it has no more use for it. Then what becomes of these bodies? Earthly bodies are composed of physical atoms, and so all that has been composed decomposes and returns to its own element; breath to air, heat to fire, liquid to water, and matter to earth. In spite of all the diverse ways in which the body may apparently be absorbed – various insects may eat it, birds may share it in their food, wild animals may devour it, or it may be swallowed by a fish, in time it may turn into the soil, or it may be used to nourish a plant or a tree – in every case the first rule remains.

As the physical body composes and decomposes, so does the mental or spiritual body. This body has an incomparably longer life than the physical body has on the earth. Its end is similar to the end of the physical body. When the soul unveils itself of its mental garb this garb falls flat, as did the body of the earth, in that plane to which it belongs; for it is not the body which has strength to stand; the strength of standing belongs to the soul. It is therefore that man, in whom the soul manifests in the most pronounced form, stands upright; all other animals bow or bend in their natural form.

The decomposing of the spirit body is used in making the bodies of the spirit world, but not in such a crude way as happens with the earthly body; in a much finer way, for this is a finer body. There is joy in the composing or decomposing of this body, as there is even some pleasure in the composing and decomposing of the physical body. What does the body that the soul wears on the spirit-plane look

like? Exactly the same as it looked on the earth. Why must it be so? Because of man's love for his body. Does this change? Yes, if it wishes to change; if the soul wishes, it can be changed according to its own ideal. It can be made as young and as beautiful as possible, but it must be remembered that by nature the soul becomes so attached to its form that it clings to it, and as a rule it does not like to become different.

The condition of the next world is very like the condition of the dream world. In dreams one does not see oneself as very different from what one appears, except in some cases and at some times; and for that there are reasons. Nevertheless, the power that the soul has in the next world is much greater than that which it has in this world of limitations. The soul in the other world, so to speak, matures, and finds within itself the power of which it was ignorant during its life on earth; the power of creating and producing all that it wishes. And its movements being not so much hindered by time and space, it is capable of accomplishing and doing for itself things which are difficult for the soul to do and accomplish on the earth-plane.

A soul which has passed from the earth, and is in the spirit world, can still live on the earth in one way, and that is by obsessing another soul. Very often people have explained this idea wrongly, when they have said that spirit takes hold of a dead body, and, entering into it, makes use of it. The body once dead *is* dead; it has entered upon the process of returning to its own origin. It has lost that magnetism which attracts the soul and holds it, in order to allow it to function in the physical body. If the dead body had magnetism, then it would not have allowed the soul to return; it would have held it back. For it is the body which holds the soul to the earth; the soul has a pull from within which draws it continually towards its source. But there are many living dead in the good or bad sense of the words. It is in these cases that single-pointed spirit takes hold of their minds and bodies as its own instrument, using them to the best advantage; this is generally known as obsession. In point of fact there is no soul which has not experienced obsession in the true sense of the word; for there are moments in every day life when those on the other side take the souls on the earth as their medium through which to experience life on the physical plane.

Impression upon the soul is a much deeper experience than that which obsession gives; for in time the spirit which enters into the being of a person on earth makes that person entirely void of himself. In time he loses his identity, and becomes like the spirit who has obsessed him, not only in his thought, speech and action, but also in his attitude and outlook. In his habits and manners, even in his looks, he becomes like the obsessing entity.

Might one say, then it is a good thing from a mystical point of view thus to become selfless? No, this is not the way to become selfless; in this way one is robbed of the self. The mystical way to become selfless is to realize the self by unveiling it from its numberless covers which make the false ego.

iv

The soul, arriving on its return towards the goal in the sphere of the jinns has collected during its life on the earth some riches in the form of merits, qualities, experiences convictions, talents, and a certain outlook on life. The belongings of the earth it has returned to the earth on its passing, but in the spirit world the soul offers these riches or allows them to be taken from it, and it imparts them to the souls coming from their source who are on their way to the earth. These souls on their way to the earth, full of heavenly bliss but poor in earthly riches, purchase with the current coin of the plane of the jinns, guarantees, contracts, mortgages, and all the accounts that the spirit had left unfinished on

the earth; these they have to undertake to pay when coming on the earth. Among these souls there are some who take from one spirit all they can as their heritage from the spirit world; some take from many. Yet the souls who absorb, attract, conceive and receive all that is given to them on the spirit plane have perhaps received more from one spirit than all the gifts they have received from other spirits they have met.

Does this exchange rob the spirit on his way to the goal of his merits and qualities? No, not in the least. The riches that the soul can take to the sphere of the jinn are safe and secure. Any knowledge or learning, merit or talent given to another person is not lost by the person who gives; it only makes the giver richer still. When the Hindus told in ancient times to a wicked person, 'Next time you are born it will be as a dog or monkey,' it was to tell him, who did not know any thing of life except himself, that his animal qualities would come again as the heritage of the animal world, so that he would not be known again to his human friends as a man, but as an animal. When they said, 'Your good actions will bring you back as a better person,' it was said so that the man who did not know the two extreme poles of his soul might understand that no good action could be lost; and for the man who had no hope in the hereafter, and who only new of life as lived on the earth, it was a consolation to know that all the good he had done would come again. The theory, which was thus explained, was true in that sense.

It is only a difference of words; the soul who comes from above has no name or form, no particular identity. It makes no difference to the soul what it is called; since it has no name it might just as well adopt the name of the coat which was put on it, as that is the nature of life. The robe of justice put on a person makes him a judge, and the uniform of a policeman makes him a constable; but the judge was not born a judge, nor the constable a policeman; they were born on earth nameless, if not formless. Distinctions and differences belong to the lower world, not to the higher; therefore the Sufi does not argue against the idea of reincarnation. The difference is only in words; and it is necessary that a precaution be taken that the door may be kept open for souls who wish to enter the Kingdom of God; that they may not feel bound by the dogma that they will be dragged back after having left the earth-plane by their Karma. The soul of man is the spark of God. Though this spark is limited on the earth, still God is all-powerful; and by teaching the prayer 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven', the Master has given a key to every soul who repeats this prayer; a key to open that door behind which is the secret of that almighty power and perfect wisdom which raises the soul above all limitations.

Does the spirit impart its merits, talents, experiences and knowledge consciously or unconsciously to the new-coming soul passing through the spirit spheres towards the earth? In some cases it imparts consciously, in others unconsciously; but in the conscious action there is the greatest pleasure for the spirit. For the soul, which receives the knowledge from a spirit as its heritage from the sphere of the jinn, is considered by the spirit as a child is by his parents or a pupil by his teacher; in giving the heritage to this soul there is a great joy for that spirit.

Do they keep connection in any way? No connection except a sympathetic link, for one goes to the north and the other to the south; one ascending to heaven, the other descending to the earth. A connection or an attachment between them would do nothing but hinder the progress of both. A soul lives in the spirit world while it is busy accomplishing the purpose of its life, which may last for thousands of years. Does a soul in the spirit world continue to do the same work which it did during its life on the earth? It does in the beginning; but it is not bound to the same work because it is not

subject to the same limitations as it was while on the earth. The soul eventually rises to the standard of its ideal; it does that work which was its desire.

Are there difficulties in the spirit world as on the earth, in doing something and in accomplishing something? Certainly there are; but not so many as here on the earth. And what if there were one object which was desired by various spirits, how can they all attain to it? Will they all get parts of that object? And if it is a living being, what then?

The law of that world is different from the law of this world of limitations. There souls will find in abundance all which is rarely to be found here on earth. The picture of the spirit world is given in the story of Krishna. The Gopis of Brindaban all requested the young Krishna to dance with them. Krishna smiled, and answered each one that on the night of the full moon he would do so. All the Gopis gathered in the valley of Brindaban, and a miracle happened. However many Gopis there were, every Gopi had a dance with Krishna, and all had their desire fulfilled; which is a symbolical way of teaching that the One Divine Being may be found by every soul.

The spirit world is incomprehensible to the mind which is only acquainted with the laws of the physical world; an individual who is a limited being here is as a world there; a soul is a person here and a planet there. When one considers the helplessness of this plane one cannot for a single moment imagine the greatness, the facility, the convenience, the comfort and the possibilities of the next world; and it is human nature that that which is unknown to man means nothing to him. A pessimist came to Ali and said, 'Is there really a hereafter for which you are preparing us by telling us to refrain from things of our desire, and to live a life of goodness and piety? What if there is no such thing as a hereafter!' Ali answered, 'If there is no such thing as a hereafter I shall be in the same situation as you are; and if there is a hereafter, then I shall be the gainer, and you will be the loser.' Life lives and death dies; the one who lives *will* live, *must* live; there is no alternative.

v

Life in the sphere of the jinn is the phenomenon of mind; the mind is not the same there, with all the thoughts and imaginations which it carries from the earth to this plane. Mind, which is a mind here on earth, is the whole being there on the return journey. Thoughts are imaginations here, but realities there. One thinks here, but the same action there instead of a thought becomes a deed; for action which here depends upon the physical body; there is the act of mind.

There is a story which gives a picture of this idea. A man who had heard of there being a tree of desire was once traveling; and he happened to find himself under the shade of a tree which he felt to be restful and cooling, so he sat there leaning against it. He said to himself, 'How beautiful is nature; how cooling is the shade of this tree, and the breeze is most exhilarating; but I wish I had a soft carpet to sit on, and some cushions to lean against' No sooner had he thought about it than he saw himself sitting in the midst of soft cushions. 'How wonderful,' he thought, 'to have got this'; but now he thought, 'If only I had a glass of cooling drink' and there came a fairy with a most delicious glass of cold drink. He enjoyed it, but said, 'I would like a good dinner.' No sooner had he thought of a dinner than a gold tray was brought to him, with beautifully arranged dishes of all sorts. Now he thought, 'If only I had a chariot, that I might take a drive into the forest'; and a four-horse chariot was already there, the coachman greeting him with bent head. He thought, 'Everything I desire comes without any effort. I wonder if it is true, or all a dream.' No sooner had he thought this than everything disappeared, and he found himself sitting on the same ground leaning against the tree.

This is the picture of the spirit world. It is the world of the optimist. The pessimist has no share in its great glory, because he refuses to accept the possibility which is the nature of life. Thus he denies to himself all he desires, and even the possibility of achieving his desires.

The pessimist stands in his own light, and defeats his own object here, and even more so in the hereafter, where the desire is the seed which is sown in the soil of the spirit world. Optimism is the water which rears the plant; but the intelligence at the same time gives that sunshine which helps the plant to flourish on the earth as well as in the spheres of the jinn.

Is there death for the spirits in the sphere of the jinns? Yes they have so-called death, but after a much longer time, a death not so severe as on the earthly plane, where everything is crude and coarse; but a change which is slightly felt after a very long life of the fulfillment of every desire. What causes this death? Are there illnesses or diseases? Yes, there are discomforts and pains peculiar to that sphere, not to be compared with the diseases in the plane of the earth. What especially brings about death in the sphere of the jinn is the moment when hope gives way, and there is no ambition left. It is the loss of enthusiasm which is change there, and the cause of death here on the earth.

Souls in the spirit world have more control over their life and death than those on the earth. The world of the spirit is his own world; it is a planet; when it loses that strength and magnetism which hold the soul functioning in it, it falls like a star from heaven, and the soul departs to its own origin.

The soul now enters the angelic heavens, and it is allowed to enter under the same conditions as before. It has to leave all that belongs to the sphere of the jinn in that sphere. Thus by unveiling itself from the garb of the spirit world, it finds its entrance into the world of the angels.

Does it take anything to the world of the angels? Yes, but not thoughts; it takes the feelings that it has collected; therefore the life of the soul in this sphere is more felt by its vibrations. Every soul that enters the heaven of the angels vibrates with the same vibrations that it has gathered during its life in the physical world and in the world of the jinn.

Examples of this are manifest to our view here if we would observe life more keenly. Every person before he does anything, or says one word, begins to vibrate aloud what he is, what he has done, what he will do. There is an English saying, 'What you are speaks louder than what you say.' The soul apart from the body and mind is a sound, a note, a tone, which is called in Sanskrit *Svara*. If this note is inharmonious, and has dissonant vibrations, it is called in the Sanskrit language *Asvara*, or out of tune. The soul therefore in the heaven of the angels has no sins or virtues to show; nor has it a heaven or hell to experience; nor does it show any particular ambition or desire; it is either in tune or out of tune. If it is in tune it takes its place in the music of the heavens as a note in the tune; if it is not in tune it falls short of this, producing discordant effects for itself and for others. What occupation has the soul there? Its occupation is to be around the light and life, like the bee around the flower. What is its sustenance? Its sustenance is divine light and divine life; divine beauty it sees, divine air it breathes, in the sphere of freedom it dwells, and the presence of God it enjoys. Life in the heaven of the angels is one continual music. Therefore it is that the wise of all ages have called music celestial, a divine art; the reason is that the heaven of the angels is all music. The activity, the repose, and the atmosphere there is all one symphony continually working towards greater and greater harmony.

What connection has the soul with the sphere of the jinn whence it as arrived in the angelic heavens? No connection necessarily, except a sympathetic link, if it happens to have such with anyone there; or

if it happens that the body in which it functioned gives way before it has accomplished what it wanted to accomplish. The happiness of the angelic heavens is so great that the joy of the sphere of the jinns cannot be compared with it and the pleasures of the earth are not even worth mentioning. For earthly pleasures are mere shadows of that happiness which belongs to the heaven of the angels, and the joy of the sphere of the jinn is like wine that has touched the lips but has never been drunk. That wine one drinks on arriving at the heaven of the angels. In the Sufi terminology that bowl of wine is called *Jam-i Kauthir*.

There is a saying that there are four things which intoxicate the soul: physical energy, wealth, power, and learning; but the intoxication that music gives excels all other forms of intoxication. Then imagine that music of the heavens where harmony is in its fullness; man here on earth cannot imagine the happiness which that can give. If the experience of that music is known to anyone, it is to the awakened souls whose bodies are here, whose hearts are in the spheres of the jinn and whose souls are in the heaven of the angels; who, while on earth, can experience all the planes of existence. They call the music of the angelic spheres *Saut-i Sarmad* and find in it a happiness which carries them to the highest heavens, lifting them from worries and anxieties and from all the limitations of the plane of this earth.

vi

What body has the soul in the heaven of the angels? Though the soul continues in the sphere of the jinn with a body resembling the one it had while on earth, it has undergone an enormous change in its body and form while in the sphere of the jinn; and when the soul reaches the angelic heavens there is still a greater change, for there it is turned into a luminous being. Its body then consists of radiance; it is light itself. The difference is that light as we understand it on the physical plane is of another character. For here it is visible, but there it is both light and life in one, so the light is audible as well as visible, besides being intelligent.

One might say that the physical body is intelligent also; it is. It is its intelligence which we call sensitiveness; but the body in the sphere of the jinn is even more intelligent, and the body that remains in the angelic heavens is more intelligent still. It may be called Intelligence itself.

The life of the souls in the angelic heavens is incomparably longer than the life of those in the sphere of the jinns. They have no more desires, no more ambitions, no more strivings; only aspiration to reach farther, to experience greater happiness, and to get closer to that light which is now within their sight. They fly around this light like the moth around the lantern; the 'magic lantern', which is the seeking of all souls, is now within their horizon. Nothing has a greater attraction for them than this light which is continually burning before them. They live and move and have their being in this divine light. Have they anything to offer to the souls going towards manifestation? Yes, their feelings. In what way do they offer them? Souls coming from the source and going towards the earth are tuned by them and set to a certain rhythm. It is this offering which determines the path they tread in the future. The Sufis call that day of tuning *Azal*; the day when the plan was first designed of the life of that particular soul.

It is not necessarily one soul only which impresses the soul newly coming towards earth with its tune and rhythm, with its feelings and sentiments; many souls may impress; but there is one impression which is dominant. Is there any link or connection established between the souls which give and take

one from the other? There is a link of sympathy, a feeling of love and friendliness, an impression of joy, which a soul carries with it even to its destination on the earth.

The crying of an infant is very often the expression of its longing for the angelic heavens; the smiles of an infant are a narrative of its memories in heaven and of the spheres above. Does the returning soul who meets with the new-coming soul receive anything? It does not require much; it is full of joy in its approach to the culmination of life, the goal of its journey. Yet the purity that the new-coming soul brings with a new life and light gives ease to the soul striving towards the goal, and illuminates its path.

The sizes of the bodies in the sphere of the jinn, and in the heaven of the angels, are as numerous as on the earth-plane. The size of the body that the soul brings from the sphere of the jinn is much larger than the size of the physical body, and the size of the body brought by the soul from the angelic heavens is larger still. When the soul dons the body from the sphere of the jinn, that body not only covers the physical body, but also enters into it. And so the body brought from the angelic heavens covers both the body of the sphere of the jinn and that of the physical plane, and yet enters into the innermost part of man's being. In this way the angelic and the jinn bodies not only surround the physical body, but exist within it.

There is almost too much that a soul has to do on the earth; there is also much that it has to accomplish in the spirit world or plane of the jinns. But there is much less to be done in the heaven of the angels; for as the soul proceeds forward, so its burden becomes lighter. The only condition of proceeding forward and drawing closer to the goal is that of throwing away the heavy burden which the soul has taken upon itself throughout its journey. If one may say that the soul lives in the spheres of the jinns for thousands of years, for the sake of convenience one may use the expression millions of years in speaking of the time that the soul passes in the heavens of the angels; until at last there comes the moment when the soul is most willing to depart, even from that plane of love, harmony and beauty, in order to embrace the source and goal of love, harmony and beauty which has attracted it through all the planes. As the soul approaches nearer, so it has been drawn closer, It is throwing off of that radiant garment which is its body in the angelic heavens that brings the soul to its real destination, the goal which it has continually sought either consciously or unconsciously.

What will be the mystery hidden behind the accomplishment of all desire in the next world to the earth-plane? will power, with optimism. It is the conviction called *Yaqin* by the Sufis, that will be the guiding light on the path of the soul in the spiritual world. What will hinder the progress of the spirits is the lack of this, though it is not necessary that the soul who has been pessimistic here should remain pessimistic in the next world. It is possible that its journey onward will bring about a change once the soul becomes acquainted with the mysteries of hopefulness.

In what way will the spirits communicate with one another? All spirits will not necessarily communicate; only those spirits who wish to communicate will do so. In what language? In their own language. If spirits did not know one another's language in the spirit world there would be the same difficulty as on the earth; but there is one common language of that plane, a language which is the language of the spirit.