

MYSTICAL INITIATION (PREPARATION)

Christian Bernard, F.R.C.

EChristian Bernard serves as Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, worldwide. In this essay from [So Mote It Be!](#) he discusses the preparation for Mystical Initiation as it manifests today in continuity with ancient initiatory practices.

In the last chapter I explained that the first great initiation that Rosicrucians must seek to receive on the path of the Rose-Croix is the one that will enable them to experience consciously their own duality. In this sense, remember that the main purpose of the initiatory rites practiced within the temples of ancient Egypt was to help candidates experience projection. Such a projection experience was meant to leave an indelible impression upon their reason and emotions and to convince them beyond any doubt that the purpose of earthly incarnation was to receive the revelation of the mysteries.

However, I added that the mystical experience through which Initiates become fully aware of their soul essence does not constitute the summum bonum of the initiatory process. They must transform this experience into a constant reality and learn to function as easily and effectively upon the spiritual plane as on the material plane. It is only at the end of this learning period, and after years—and indeed even incarnations—devoted to the study and application of mysticism, that they are cosmically ready to receive the highest initiation that incarnated beings can ever experience.

Each Rosicrucian is transformed into a Rose-Croix

In the Rosicrucian Tradition, the Supreme Initiation transforms each Rosicrucian into a Rose-Croix; in other words, it elevates the individual from the status of a member of the visible community of our Order to that of a Master of the Great White Lodge. Whether

we are aware of it or not, we are all heading towards this goal, and the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis guides each step we take towards the state of Illumination which follows from it.

But I want to emphasize that it is unlikely that we shall attain this state of perfection in this lifetime, for it corresponds to a cosmic plane from which we are still too far removed. Such being the case, we have the duty and power to prepare ourselves for it and we must devote all the mystical potential of our present incarnation to this preparation. We may feel disheartened by such a prospect and unconvinced that the goal to be reached justifies that we devote one or several lifetimes to its preparation.

On the other hand, we may fear that such a preparation, although it seems warranted and necessary to us, will deprive us of many worldly pleasures and increase the burden of our trials. Not only are we mistaken if we think that this is so, but we also prove to ourselves that we lack mystical faith and motivation. There is no alternative upon the path of spirituality. Either we are convinced of the existence of a Divine Intelligence that humans must eventually experience, or we doubt it. If we doubt it, that does not change the fact that this Intelligence exists, but it does make every increase in awareness which brings us closer to it more arduous and lengthy. If we feel certain that the God of our Heart constitutes our reason for being, then we must live Rosicrucian mysticism in the past, the present, and the future with the absolute conviction that the Rose-Croix state has been attained by Initiates, is being so achieved right now by some adepts, and will be so achieved by all those among us who will have the courage and determination to prepare for it.

The Master Within

As you know, we can feel as much happiness in preparing for an event, whatever it may be, as in living it. As an example, when you prepare to receive friends, the joy you feel in doing everything you can to give them a warm welcome may even exceed the pleasure you feel when you are in their company. The same thing is true when it comes to mysticism, but very much more so, for the friend we are preparing to meet through initiation is the greatest of all. This friend is our Inner Master, the most intimate companion ever given to us to know, as well as the highest Initiate to whom we may speak.

This Master is also the custodian of God's Wisdom within humans and is accountable to God for human wisdom. Everything that troubles us troubles this Master likewise, and all that makes us happy makes this Master happy too, for this Master knows that our distress is the consequence of our errors and that our happiness comes from the Master's truth. There are no questions that the Master cannot answer, but there are many answers about which we must bring questions.

Our Inner Master knows all about our past for, like the rose that unfolds to greet the light of day, this Master was the first to bless the coming of our soul. Day and night, the Master tries by every possible means to be seen or heard, but day and night we veil our eyes and plug our ears. In fact, not a single day passes that the Master has not done everything possible to attract our attention. Our Inner Master knows that the time when the Master will entrust us with the jewel of our supreme consecration is still a long way off, but the Master also knows that time is the best servant and that humanity has no better master.

The Master's patience embraces eternity, and the trust the Master has always placed in us is infinite. For this Master, there is no doubt whatsoever that one day we will reach the goal, for we cannot escape our cosmic destiny. The only power we possess is

the positive application of our free will so that our return to the Heavenly Kingdom can be brought about as quickly as possible and under the most favorable conditions.

To be initiated into our own mystery, we must seek to meet our Inner Master more than any other visible Master. There are at least two reasons for this. In the first place, since the Inner Master incarnates within humanity the Wisdom of God, while the incarnated Masters, whoever they may be, are only one expression of this wisdom, the Inner Master knows much better than they how much knowledge we are capable of receiving at a given point in our evolution.

In the second place, it is our inner Master and this Master alone who has received from God the power to initiate us into the various planes of consciousness that we need to attain so as to contact the Masters. Thus, for these reasons and many others that I leave to you to discover, our Inner Master is truly the Hierophant who, in each of our incarnations, ensures that the initiatory process which continues within us be well in keeping with the fulfillment of Cosmic Law.

As I previously mentioned, our Inner Master is our best friend, and the Inner Master's greatest desire is that we become the best friend of the Master, as well. To accomplish this, we must prepare ourselves not to receive the Master, for this Master cannot leave our Inner Temple, but to rise in consciousness to meet the Inner Master. In this sense, the initiatory process begun under the auspices of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis corresponds to an active, and not passive, principle. Candidates always elevate themselves towards the Initiator; the Initiator is never lowered to the level of the neophyte.

When our Order states that when the disciple is ready the Master will appear, it does not mean that the Master goes to meet the disciple, but that the disciple, through active preparation, has reached the state of consciousness that enables us to attune with our own Inner Master.



Preparation for Inner Initiation

What does this preparation consist of and towards what should it be applied? This is the question I will now try to answer. We have seen that the Rosicrucian definition of initiation places equal emphasis upon reason as well as the emotions. This presupposes, therefore, that we prepare ourselves both mentally and emotionally so as to meet our Inner Master and bathe in the Master's light. To succeed, we have two magic keys at our disposal. The first key is meditation, for it opens the door to pure reason. The second key is prayer, for without prayer we cannot know the purity of the most noble feelings.

In the waking state, we constantly reflect upon the events that punctuate our life hour after hour, if not minute after minute. Everything that we see, hear, taste, and touch is a cause for reflection. Our reason is therefore unceasingly called into action by our external environment, and the inner conclusions we reach will determine our actions and reactions towards people and things around us.

The more we use our objective reasoning to solve problems worthy of a mystic's consideration, the more we initiate our reason into the true role it must play in life. This role is not to judge rashly that which does not concern it, nor to speculate needlessly upon that which eludes its comprehension. Rather, it is to reflect upon the means for making each of our thoughts, words, and deeds consistent with the Good, which it is our mission to manifest upon Earth.

Meditation: Initiation of Reason

The foregoing remarks bring up the question of how to know what kind of subjects we can meditate upon or, more exactly, what kind of problem we must not worry about. I believe the following excerpt from Marcus Aurelius's writings will best answer this question:

“Do not waste thy life in thoughts about others, unless it is to ascertain the positive, for

thou wouldst lose the opportunity of doing something else which is constructive. What are such persons doing? What are they saying? What are they thinking of? Any thought of the kind makes us wander away from our main duty. We ought then to check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without a purpose and useless, but most of all the over-curious feeling and the malignant. And we should use our mind to think of those things only about which if one should suddenly ask, ‘What hast thou now in thy thoughts?’ with perfect openness thou mightest immediately answer, This or That; so that from thy words it should be plain that everything in thee is simple and benevolent, having no rivalry or envy and suspicion, or anything else for which thou wouldst blush with shame if thou shouldst say that thou hadst it in thy mind.”

Thus, it is easy to understand that our thoughts initiate our reasoning to Beauty or to Ugliness, for each of them constantly dies to give birth to a new thought which either builds or destroys. We all know that the power of our mind is creative, but if we only knew how true this is, we would sometimes rather choose to refrain from thinking. However, it is not the process of thinking itself that is positive or negative, for it is neutral by nature, but it is rather the object or the subject to which we apply this process.

This means that if we think of something that is impure, we inevitably create discord within and around us. Inversely, if we concentrate our reason upon that which is pure in intent, we necessarily express Cosmic Harmony in and through our words and deeds. Consequently, the best way to make our reasoning an instrument of Good is to have it act as the mainstay of continuous meditation as often as possible.

In this sense, to meditate does not necessarily mean that we withdraw from the tumult of profane life and isolate ourselves for hours in reflecting upon some philosophical issue, for, when all is said and

done, every issue is philosophical the minute it concerns the good of our own evolution and that of others. This being so, it is true that we need to isolate ourselves regularly within the quiet of our Inner Temple so as to devote ourselves to mystical meditation.

Useful and Effective Meditation

The question that presents itself is how to proceed in meditating in a useful and effective way. As stated in the Rosicrucian teachings, meditation consists of two phases: one being passive and the other active. During the active phase, we must clearly define the theme of our meditation and devote all of our objective thinking to it for a few minutes. After this period of concentration, we must proceed to the passive phase, which consists of transmitting to our Inner Master the subject we have meditated upon, just as we have envisaged it from our reason's point of view. Without this transference from the intellectual self to the spiritual self, no answer from the Cosmic may reach us.

You will notice that the process of meditation follows along the lines of initiation, for it likewise involves transition and passage from one plane of consciousness to another. In other words, the issue upon which we meditate must die in the objective consciousness to be reborn in the subconscious. I shall also add that the more we meditate upon subjects relating to spirituality, the more we initiate our intellectual self into its true reason for being.

In doing so, our material problems are more easily solved because, according to an old saying, those who ask God that the mysteries of their spiritual being be revealed to them are rewarded with cosmic assistance on the material plane. As I have tried to make clear, never forget that your Inner Master will always make every effort to lighten the burden of your cross if you give supremacy to the beauty of your rose.

Prayer: Initiation of the Emotions

Just as meditation is the initiatory ideal of reason, so is prayer the initiatory ideal of the emotions. If human beings upon this Earth loved the God of their Hearts more and hated the God of the understanding of other people less, the collective consciousness of humanity would find itself highly purified by it. But true prayer has become the privilege of a small minority, and its absence attracts more and more adepts from the majority.

It is, however, the Royal Road, which Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, and many others have counseled that we follow. In spite of this, some of the faithful tear one another apart as they pray in their name. Why? Through ignorance of what true prayer is and to whom it should be addressed. As long as human beings pray to a God who is outside themselves, they will be at war with one another through interposed gods. But the day they understand that they must pray to an Inner God who is the same within the heart of a Jew, a Buddhist, a Christian, a Muslim, and even an atheist, then they will commune together in the same temple—that of Universal Peace.

Prayer is the dialogue of the heart—a dialogue that we tend to neglect. Its importance lies more within the essence than within the form of the words we use, whether they are spoken orally or mentally. Ready-made phrases repeated automatically have no more mystical impact than a lesson perfectly recited by a student who has not understood its meaning. When we pray, it is the voice of the soul that must be heard and not the voice of reason.

One word may suffice, from the moment it conveys on its own an emotion that thousands of words are not enough to express. It is easily understood that prayer is the unique language, which may be heard and understood by our Inner Master. I shall even add that the Master makes it the Master's own language, for it is under the Master's prompting that we feel the desire to



pray. This means that whenever we do not respond to this impulse we deprive ourselves of a close attunement with our Inner Master. Our individual duty is to determine the method of praying best suited for us, for no two individuals respond exactly alike to the impulses which lead to prayer.

Thank, Confess, and Ask

Why must we pray? The answer to this question can be summed up in three words: *thank*, *confess*, and *ask*. Praying to give thanks is tantamount to expressing our gratitude to the Cosmic not only for the daily blessings we personally experience, but also for the blessings other people enjoy.

To confess is equivalent to expressing the regrets we feel for having committed errors in thought, speech, or deed, whether it be towards ourselves or towards others. Lastly, we must ask God daily for the strength to live at peace with ourselves and to become an instrument of peace for the well-being of others.

In this respect, what present religions call an act of grace, an act of contrition, or an act of intercession actually corresponds to the mystical processes which Initiates of old used daily and which all mystical adepts used long before they became purely religious rites. The basic difference between their religious use and mystical application is that in the first instance they are directed to an outside Divinity whom we hope to reach by praying to saints or intermediary entities, while in the second instance they correspond to a direct dialogue between ourselves and our own Inner Master, who is none other than God within the Temple of every person.

To conclude this chapter, I would like to share with you below what Bahram

Elahi, a Sufi Master, had to say about prayer. This quotation concurs completely with the meaning, which I attribute to it as a mystical process:

“Prayer is the means to get in touch with God and establish a direct link with God. The more sincere one is, the more aware of this link one becomes. One can pray with actions as well as with words: to be charitable towards others, to never speak ill of anyone, to be useful to society, this is the basic prayer. For the mystic who feels true love towards the God of all humanity, there exist words of prayer.

“At the beginning, these words do not come easily, but once one has experienced what the Divinity is, they come of themselves. At first, one tries to concentrate upon God while speaking some sacred words used by mystics to pray: it is prayer-meditation. After a time, words are no longer necessary; one becomes the prayer itself. In prayer, the most important thing is to imagine that God is facing us and to feel our Master present within us. It is even possible to reach the point where no more distance separates the soul from God, wherein the prayer forgets about himself or herself and sees only the Divine. This state is often only momentary, but when it is permanent the supreme goal is achieved.”

Under the Auspices of the Rose-Croix and of the God of your Heart, initiate your reason through meditation, initiate your emotions through prayer, and you will transform mystical initiation into a living experience on all levels of your being.

So Mote It Be!

