

Talk by Alice Bailey to Arcane School students December 15, 1944

AAB: [Reading from *The Rays and the Initiations*, p. 185]:

The rules for work within the veils of Maya are known and have been used.

Students should remember that the work of the Hierarchy is constantly conditioned by the point in evolution of the human hierarchy. In the early days of human history, thinking and progress had practically no place, and therefore little or no effect upon the forces and energies that were active upon etheric levels. At that period, they were left in a relatively quiescent state or else were swept into activity by definite and planned impression from the Hierarchy; any effect coming from the human kingdom was due solely to mass impulse or impression.

AAB: In the Antahkarana papers you are given instructions on impression. The activity of the Hierarchy swept humanity into activity. This power is now being used upon those individuals who can respond to it. Take for example the propaganda going out from every nation and to every nation. The whole thing is on a mental turn of the spiral. [Reading further on pp. 185-186]:

This was very little, owing to the lack of coordinated relation between units and groups within the human family. Later, as family units massed together and formed tribes, and then tribe united with tribe to form larger tribes or embryonic nations, this mass effect increased, but there was still but little thinking or direction connected with it; it was largely instinctive and ó if I might so express it ó the etheric plane was in reality more in the nature of a matrix surrounding a valuable creation, and was essentially protective, separating and slightly energizing.

In Atlantean days, the plane whereon humanity received its major direction or unfoldment was such that the emotional, impulsive nature and the field of maturing desire became dominantly active. Then the real difficulty within the realm of maya started. Hitherto only two energies had been felt upon the etheric plane: the energy of life itself, via the sutratma, as it passed through the etheric plane in order to produce exoteric livingness upon the physical plane, and secondly, the energy of the Hierarchy as a whole, producing a slow, broad, though somewhat negative organization of the prevalent forces. But then a third and most potent force, generated by humanity, was beginning to make an impact upon the etheric forces. People were beginning, at this early period of human history, to desire, and this desire was not, as hitherto, of a purely animal nature and hence an emanation from dense physical substance (and, therefore, not related to a principle), but it embodied a new type of energy and was ó in reality ó humanity's first expression of the highest divine aspect. Desire is the lowest reflection within the human consciousness of the will aspect.

AAB: We teach it as the lowest aspect of buddhi, but really it is the lowest aspect of will. All the differentiations and all the distinctions that we make are non-existent. That is a valuable thing for us to grasp. We make these distinctions in order to make the great unity clear to ourselves because it is the only way we can understand, and when we understand, we discard.

M: I do not think it so difficult to think of desire as being a lower form of will.

AAB: What you desire very particularly generates will.

M: If it wasn't for desire you wouldn't move forward.

AAB: Desire for life makes a plant push up toward the light, and that is the reason it lives.

AP: Its roots are below, and it grows upward, and will should come from above.

AAB: All seven centers in the body in the early stages of humanity are upside down, facing downward along the spine. Only in the last cycle are they beginning to turn upward. The head center, however, remains facing down.

R: The head center is like a tree rooted in the heavens with the flower below.

AAB: And also facing down when all centers are faced downward. That may be one reason why there is so much heart disease. Humanity as a whole is becoming group conscious. It is group consciousness that drives a great organization even if the motive is wrong.

AP: A businessman I know went through a difficult experience in his business life. So he said he was going away on a three-week vacation, and upon his return he planned to give less time to commerce and more time to spiritual things. He died about three days later from a heart attack.

RK: I think that is why Wendell Willkie [Republican presidential nominee in 1940, died in October 1944] went. His heart center opened too wide.

AAB: And too quickly too.

RK: He emphasized the idea of the One World.

LM: I admired him from the first moment he appeared and was criticized for it.

AAB: All worthwhile people get criticized.

GP: I think he was a great man after his defeat.

AAB: He could handle defeat, and that was his greatness.

AAB: I think we are going to have more and more of these people appear, and that is the hope of the world. The outstanding condition of the people of Europe is that they cannot feel anymore; they cannot respond to emotion; they don't care. That is the reverse thing for us to handle.

AP: I don't think there is any hope until we have fed, clothed and warmed them. If they weren't stony they would break.

AAB: I was talking to someone who said the problem in Europe is nothing but hunger. Feed and clothe them and make them comfortable again and all this will die out. [Reading further on pp. 186-187]:

This potent vibration of desire was evoked by people who were as yet without any spiritual vision of any kind; they were purely material in their instinctive reactions (and rightly so at that particular time), and these reactions attracted the attention of certain purely evil energies or Beings. These Beings availed themselves of the situation in order to satisfy their desire for power ó again a distortion of the Will or first aspect. Thus the Black Lodge was founded. It fed upon human desire and resembled a vast overshadowing vampire. It vitiated human living and increased the growth of desire far beyond normal expectancy or Hierarchical

planning, thus creating false goals and standards, building a barrier between the lowest planetary center, humanity, and the middle point or center, the Hierarchy. It will be apparent, therefore, that the following energies were let loose within the realm of maya.

1. The instinctive force of animal desire. This was not wrong in itself and is subject to negation in time, and normally is controlled.
2. The stream of descending life, and this in two aspects:
 - a. The life aspect, as it bestows being.
 - b. The life aspect, as it preserves form.
3. The steady impact of the attractive power of the Soul, implemented by the Hierarchy and increasing in potency as time elapses.
4. The impelling power of material desire, focused in the Black Lodge, both feeding human desire and drawing a form of life from the massed desire of humanity.

AAB: This accounts for lack of interest and negativity. [Reading further from pp. 187-189]:

5. Human development along astral lines, expressing itself as certain well-defined energies or force directions:
 - a. Material desire for possessions.
 - b. Desire for that which is owned by others. To this the commandment "Thou shalt not steal" has reference.
 - c. Personality aims and ambitions; these constitute a form of focused desire of a compelling, life-determining nature.
 - d. Aspiration, leading to vision and to the mystic Way.
 - e. Purification, the conscious handling of desire upon the Probationary Path.
 - f. Initiation. The first two initiations are taken, as you know, upon the astral plane, and bring complete release both from that plane of glamour and from the realm of maya.

All throughout this period, the organization of the etheric plane has been going on, subject to the impact of energies and forces as listed above, plus certain other energies (latent or potent) with which we have no immediate concern. Both the great White Lodge and its opponent, the Black Lodge, increased steadily in potency. Gradually the forces took organized form and the four veils of maya, or the seven separating energies, became well-defined. When this differentiation was complete, two great planetary events (if I might call them so) were consummated:

1. The seven centers in the human body (five up the spine and two in the head) were esoterically "in shape." The seven lotuses or chakras were functioning, some powerfully, while others remained unawakened. These seven were now visible to clairvoyant vision.
2. The seven Ashrams of the Masters in Their seven groups (conditioned by the seven rays) appeared, motivated from Shamballa, organized at this time upon the higher levels of the mental plane, and gradually supplied with personnel from the ranks of humanity itself, as one by one people achieved initiation.

Paralleling this activity and implemented, fed and sustained by the Black Lodge, was the appearance of glamor upon the astral plane, and to this thickening glamor humanity steadily contributed and responded. Then, as evolution progressed and the human intellect began to make itself felt, "the four veils of maya" and the great "curtain of glamor" began to

condition the mental plane. Illusion then appeared, and the distinction between truth and falsehood, between good and evil, and between the left hand Path and the Path of Initiation became apparent to the advanced humanity of the time. These distinctions had always been known to the Hierarchy, but now human beings were faced with them and recognized them: the great potency of intellectual choice confronted humanity and the Aryan race (as that name is correctly used to denote modern intelligent humanity) came into being.

As the ages slipped away, people contributed more and more both to the problem and to the solution of maya, glamor and illusion. The potency of human thought began to make itself felt; people in increasing numbers sought the Path of Liberation and so passed on into the Hierarchy; they became active and instructed opponents of the Black Lodge and intelligent wielders of energy as it can be projected downward and used to destroy the four veils, to dissipate glamor and dispel illusion. Humanity responded more and more sensitively to impacts ó both subjective and objective ó and their cooperation began to be effective and useful to the Hierarchy, necessitating some changes in Hierarchical techniques, releasing Hierarchical workers for other and different activities, and greatly complicating the problem and menacing the safety and the status of the Black Lodge.

One of the results of this mental development was the sending of the disciples out into the world of humanity; they issued forth in large numbers and, while preserving their conscious link with the Ashram with which they were affiliated, they could be trusted to live among people as people and to bring their potency to bear upon the problem of maya and glamor, doing so from below upward. This work had to be done by disciples who could stand under pressure, who would, in spite of all difficulties, live nobly and prepare for and take the initiation that was for them their next step. Several hundred years ago, only a few could be so trusted. Today (1944) there are many in every land, though there are very few in Germany, owing to the concentration in that unhappy land of the power of the Black Lodge and also to the misuse of the Shamballa force. This force has been isolated and its destructive aspect utilized in Germany, and this has been done without the paralleling activity of the love energy of the Hierarchy. It is this fact that has made it impossible (since 1933) for disciples of the White Lodge to enter. Elsewhere, however, the concentration of active disciples is greater than at any other time in human history.

AAB: We tried again and again to enter Germany and were unable to.

GP: Rudolf Steiner did good work in Germany.

AAB: He was a Sixth Ray initiate and a very powerful person. He had perhaps taken the second initiation.

R: The orientation of his group is not right.

AAB: I think it is fine. The trouble is that they quarrel among themselves. The work they are doing is amazing.

AP: He did a lot of work along the line of scientific white magic and scientific agriculture.

AAB: That is all from his followers. There is none of that in Steiner's teaching. I don't think the scientific part is Steiner. The group takes its coloring from Germany, and Germany is scientific.

FB: He saw things and his group took them and used them.

RK: You mean they brought them down from the astral to the etheric.

AAB: I think that is what happened.

RK: The Tibetan has said that there are some disciples whose business it is to fuse the astral and etheric, and that is where Master R would come in.

AAB: They demonstrated the fact of astral influences. They have taken very sensitive photographic plates and recorded geometrical systems for Uranus, Jupiter, Neptune, and they are all different. When planets are in the ascendant, they expose extremely delicate photographic plates to them, and the results are amazing.

R: They have done wonderful work with plants and photographed crystal forms.

GP: I suppose Max Heindel, his pupil, was of high degree.

AAB: I don't think he was an initiate. I think Steiner was the greater man. It must have taken strength to go to Germany and do what he did. Germany rejected everything that would have helped it. [Reading further from pp. 189-190]:

I have emphasized this point because our second phrase, "let the group widen all the rents within those veils," has reference here to disciples and the groups that they have everywhere gathered around themselves. It is these groups, many in number and differing in ray potency, that will lead the world through the post-war period into the New Age. It is their pressure upon the physical plane that has precipitated the crisis between the great White Lodge and the Black Lodge. Their work is to let in the light, and where the light goes the Black Lodge must fade out and disappear. It feeds on glamor and illusion and uses the veils of maya as a protection. Students would do well to avoid naming and differentiating the four veils. The veils themselves are transient and variable. They differ as they come under the impact of the seven rays. It is not possible or practical to distinguish them one from the other, except from the angle of the Hierarchy, and their destruction today (though it was not so earlier) has to come from the dense physical plane, and the attack must be made by personalities and individualities dwelling in physical bodies. This is a somewhat new mode of approach, for hitherto only a very few disciples and initiates have been able so to work. Today, hundreds and thousands of disciples are working, and thus learning to use the ancient rules for work within the veils of maya. Let me here give you some of these rules or formulas as they are to be found in The Masters' Book of Rules and as I can translate them. Some are untranslatable:

1. Focus the force at the jewel's point and find the veil that it can touch.
2. Carry the force from point to point and then project.
3. Look for the energy in form behind the veil attacked. A rent within the veil exists. Find it and see.
4. A path lies through the veils, giving access to the several courts. Walk on that path, wielding destruction and clearing out the refuse in the court. The court of the money changers is the last.

AAB: I think that is right where we are now.

RK: Isn't that the work of the triangles?

AAB: [Reading further from p. 190]:

5. Meet the descending forces and find the current that is yours.
6. Watch for the evil stream of force that seeks to mend the rents. Project upon that stream the energy of which you know. It led you from the Ashram into the veils. Use it and drive the evil back unto the astral plane.

AAB: I think it is the people who are disciples who have to do it, and if it is true that all of us who are definitely oriented and focused toward the spiritual life have taken the first initiation, then we are disciples, and it affects us.

FB: It is the New Group of World Servers who are to do this. It is furnishing them with the means of work and preparing the field for them.

AAB: And the group of World Servers busy themselves with the matter of goodwill.

FB: They are creating the mechanism that the New Group of World Servers will use.

AAB: [Reading further from p. 190]:

7. Work with the Sound and know it as the source of power. Use first the Voice; then use the OM, and later use the Sound. All three together will suffice.

AAB: The sound is the will. The voice presumably would be a mental thing.

FB: I think he means that we should speak up as a human being.

AAB: The Word made flesh.

RK: I think that the voice possibly has reference to what he said about the best means at present available for awakening people to the light is approaching humanity from various viewpoints by various types of thinkers, people with different viewpoints thinking and speaking out. That is the best way to get through to humanity at this time.

CH: In the beginning we invoke subjectively, and later he requested us to speak it out loud.

N: Everything that has reached humanity has come from the spoken or written word. Christ spoke in parables. With the OM we begin to touch the transcendent language. And then there is will when we get close to spirit.

JL: In the Tibetan's paper on the Sacred Word, AUM is a phrase, and then comes OM, which is a sound. The AUM is the Word made flesh.

AAB: [Reading further from pp. 190-191]:

There are other rules, but these will give you the major recognitions needed to do this type of work; these are the rules that the adventuring disciple needs to know. They have been used, and should not be interpreted by the lower mind, but with the aid of the initiate consciousness.

The second phrase runs as follows:

Let the group widen all the rents within those veils and thus let in the light.

We come now to a definite group injunction or instruction. The aid of the group is invoked almost in the form of an order. The point of this formulated injunction is that in the new era and in the interlude between the past (wherein prominent disciples worked within the veils of maya) and the New Age (wherein humanity itself will consciously function upon the etheric plane), the work of the esoteric groups, under the direction of the New Group of World Servers, is needed. They will have the capacity to recognize the distinction between the various veils. This is the next needed development. The groups must focus the energy at the very center of the group being; the group must carry the force from point to point and from veil to veil; the group must project the destroying energy and become unitedly aware of what each veil hides; the group must perform the activities (seven in all) of purification; the group must meet, accept and distribute the descending spiritual energy that will finally consummate the work done. The group ó through the use of that descending current ó will drive the forces of evil back on to the astral plane and will together work with the three aspects of the First Ray. These are typified by the Voice, the OM and the Sound.

In the above you have in reality a great formula for group activity and also a potent method (once the group can unitedly work together) for the cleansing and the reorganization of the forces active in the world today.

AAB: The voices are like propaganda. [Reading further from pp. 191-192]:

These forces are now raging and running wild; their effect is almost tangible (being in etheric substance) and factually and visibly present under the control of the Black Lodge. This Lodge uses the voices of lying propaganda, the Word of death (which I shall not give to you, for the OM, the Word of Life, suffices), and the Sound of the densest aspect in manifestation ó the sound of power in the mineral kingdom. This constitutes an unparalleled condition and creates a unique concentration of the Forces of Good and the forces of evil upon the etheric plane. The task of all groups that are working under the Masters of the Wisdom is to let in the light, utilizing those rents that already exist within the Veils of maya.

Three major rents within these Veils might here be noted. They are symbolically referred to in The Bible, though their essential meaning has not been noted or comprehended.

The first major rent was made by the establishment of the Law of God, and this is portrayed for us symbolically in The Old Testament in the story of Moses. He went up into the Mount of God and there received the Ten Commandments. This is the expression of divine law as adapted for humanity and as needed in the projection of those forces that will destroy, purify and reorganize. Moses, the Lawgiver, penetrated to one of the halls within the Veils of maya, and there encountered the glory of the Lord. This was of such radiance that, as the *Old Commentary* puts it:

öHe who entered among the first to penetrate within the veils absorbed the light and knew not how to pass it on. Neither he nor they were ready, but the light was there and likewise the two directing eyes. But only one can use, project and send the light upon its mission. The other must be blinded, and of this fact the Lawgiver was aware. He therefore veiled the light, assuming toward this end a fragment of that which he had helped destroy, and so descended from the mountain top, back to the darkness of the earth.ö

AAB: When he came down his face shone and they couldn't look at him. [Reading further from pp. 192-194]:

The second, and much the most important rent, was made by the power of the second aspect when the Christ subjected the Master Jesus to the fourth initiation and Their joint influence was triumphant over death. Then we read that the veil of the Temple was split in twain from the top to the bottom. The lawgiver assisted at the first rending as the climax to the third initiation, and there was a somewhat similar process of glorification. A similar event took place at the Transfiguration of the Christ, overshadowing, or rather working through, the Master Jesus. But at the triumph over death and through the Great Renunciation or Crucifixion episode, a great and major rending took place. The Law, when rightly kept and interpreted, defines humanity's attitude upon the mental plane and serves to make a rent in the etheric veil, separating the etheric vehicle in its fourfold aspect from the dense physical form. The rending of the second veil at the time of the Crucifixion let in light on to the second level of the etheric plane, and a new type of illumination was spread abroad upon the earth. Law and Love could now penetrate into the consciousness of humanity in a new and direct manner, as the brain became involved through the substance of the etheric counterpart of the physical brain; the instinct to self-preservation (one of the lowest aspects of Law) and the tendency to sensitivity (feeling or emotion, one of the lowest forms of Love) could be expressed in a more comprehensive manner.

Another rending of the veil, and one of relatively minor importance, took place when Saul of Tarsus saw the glory of the Lord and was changed into Paul the Apostle. His forward moving and potent directness and sincerity, pushing along "the road to Damascus," forced him to penetrate through one of the separating veils. The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force. This force, working in Saul, drove him through the veil, which prevented vision, and the rent thereby made brought him a new revelation. He was, we are told, completely blinded for three days, and this the esoteric records corroborate. This is a well-known correspondence to the three days in the tomb and one recognized by esotericists; it corresponds also to the penetration into the third heaven to which Paul testified later in his life. He realized the nature of the Law, as his later epistles demonstrate; he was brought to the feet of the Initiator through the effect of love, and thus he availed himself of the two earlier rents in the veil. While thus reaching out to the light, he wrote that epistle about which so much controversy has raged — The Epistle to the Hebrews.

AAB: The style of this epistle is so different that some theologians hold that he never wrote it. On a lower turn of the spiral I produce a lot of books and see that my style and the Tibetan's are different, and yet it all goes out under my name. Hebrews deals with mastery, with Melchizedek. It is very advanced. It gives you a list of great men of all ages.

GP: The definition of faith is given in this book.

AAB: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

RK: Hope and sight, astral and mental blindness are referred to there.

AAB: [Reading further from p. 194]:

While thus reaching out to the light, he wrote that epistle about which so much controversy has raged — The Epistle to the Hebrews. In it the results of the rending of the third veil provide the keynote and express the first and highest aspect, as the two earlier rents lead to

the revelation of the third and second divine qualities. This first aspect is seen as synthesis, as the Communion of Saints, and as related to the Lord of the World, Melchizedek. Read that epistle in the light of these remarks, and note how a great initiate endeavored to reveal some facts, inherent in the will or power aspect. These were, however, far beyond the ken of the disciples and aspirants of the time, but can today form a true part of the realization of humanity. Law, Love, Union or Synthesis ó all these great energies have seeped into the human consciousness and now provide the platform upon which the new civilization can be founded, the new approach to God be taken, and new human relations be implemented.

RK: Law, love and synthesis. Synthesis means sacrifice.

AAB: [Reading further from pp. 194-197]:

Three great rents, therefore, now exist, as well as numerous smaller and less important ones, to which no reference has been or need be made. Three great Sons of God at the moment of initiation made a major contribution to the human consciousness through their determined will-to-law, will-to-love and will-to-synthesis. Humanity was thereby aided to move forward more easily along the òlighted Way,ö to pass through the halls of maya, aided by the light pouring through the rents made in the separating veils by perfected divine Beings at the very moment of Their triumph. A fourth great rent still remains to be made as a result of the energies released and the gained good that the three earlier rents have made possible. This fourth major rent will be made by humanity itself, standing with õmassed intent,ö focused through the groups that are externalizations of the Ashrams of the Masters. It will therefore be made at the time that the Hierarchy takes physical shape upon the earth again.

Bear in mind the symbolical nature of this teaching. The veils are not actually existing veils in the usual sense of that term. They are in the nature of opposing forces and energies that act as inhibitory factors to the aspirant as he seeks to make progress, and to the entire human family as it moves onward upon the Path of Evolution. They are not basically related to consciousness at all, for in the majority of cases these veils õlie on the earthward side of being and not upon the side of lightö; they are essentially physical forces, and although they are the result of humanityø's own effort and activity down the ages, they are largely unrealized, unseen obstacles to its progress. They constitute the lowest concentration of forces precipitated from levels of activity other and higher than the physical, as you understand physical substance. If one might use a phrase that, even if true, is misleading, they lie between the subtle inner individual, mental and astral, and the *physical brain*. They are that which prevents brain registration of the world of causes and of meaning. This inner world can be emotional or mental in its focus and in its force precipitation on to the etheric plane. It can be the fused result of personality integration and be a combination of energies; or it can be dominated by the effects of Soul energy. These, if evoked, can penetrate occultly and drive out or break down and through the separating veiling forces, thus producing coordination eventually between Soul and brain.

These veils are as curtains over the windows of vision. They prevent realization of that which lies beyond the room or area of average or mediocre experience, and they prevent the light from penetrating.

The work of the three Sons of God referred to above is not concerned with the rending of the veils of their own interior life and forces, thus bringing about Soul contact unimpeded and dear, or with the illumination of experience upon the physical plane. That had long ago been effected in these special and individual cases. Their service was rendered to humanity and They made rents in the veils that separated humanity as a whole from the higher spiritual

experience and from registration of the fact of the existence of the Hierarchy. Theirs was a universal service, and made possible further human progress. For until some greater measure of light had been let in, it was not possible for a person to see and grasp the necessity to destroy the obstacles to light. The veils remain unperceived by the average aspirant until some light appears through the rents in the "curtain of impediment."

The glory of the Christ and the uniqueness of His accomplishment lies in the fact that He was the first to bring about the rending of the veils from "the top to the bottom." This He could do because He acted as the World Savior, outside and independent of humanity; He was free from the aura of the human family and ó again quoting the *Old Commentary*, as far as it is possible to translate these archaic terms:

"From above He worked and from the further side issued the force that tore its way into the separating forces, driving them in a threefold direction, from the point that is the highest, to the right and to the left, thus letting in that streaming force, which resolved itself as light, as love, as lifting energy. Thus worked the One for Whom all must wait. He is as man, but works not as a man. He works as light divine, as energy supreme and as the Savior of the world of humanity."

Let me again quote from the same source and give you the ancient names of the veils:

"Next to the earthly plane is found the Veil of Impulsion and then the Hall of Concentration. To that succeeds the Veil of Distortion, related to the world of glamor as impulsion is to force. Beyond that veil is found the Hall of Choice. And then we find another veil, the Veil of Separation, and beyond it lies the Hall of Blinded Men ó blinded by light but facing toward the final veil, the Veil of Aspiration. Four veils, three halls and many people."

I will leave you to make due application of this paragraph of stated truth and of condensed realization. I would remind you that concentration is one thing to the aspirant, and a very different thing to the initiate, and that the choices made by the initiate resemble not those made by the disciple. The blinding force referred to can range all the way from the deep spiritual darkness in which the average person moves, through the blindness of which Saul of Tarsus was the exponent, up to that condition that overwhelms the highest Initiate as He awaits entrance into the Council Chamber of the Lord.

R: You become conscious of blindness when you are about to have a new revelation.

AAB: You can be conscious of blindness all your life and then have a revelation.

FG: It is because light is so bright that you are blinded, and then after it clears you have the power to see.

AAB: According to this writing, all the veils were penetrated by those who were blind first. But what about the Hall of Blinded Men? Do only those who are blind find their way into the hall, or are they blinded in the hall?

JL: Some clairvoyants say that they cannot see physically when they are seeing psychically. If you move up onto the mental plane, you go blind on the astral.

AAB: It sounds quite feasible.

CH: It might mean that if you have broken through those veils you are no longer subject to conditions; you are blind in that sense.

FB: You could consider the vision as mental blindness and the words on the third veil as referring to a recognized lack of knowledge. I was asked by a teacher whether I would like to ask some questions, and I replied that what I knew was sufficient for what I was doing, and he said, "How foolish."

CH: I think it is interesting that the Hall of Blinded Men is connected with the veil of separation. The one great heresy is that of separateness. The final veil of aspiration, I would like to know more about that.

AAB: The aspiration of students comes between them and realization all the time.

RK: I suppose the aspiration of an initiate is different from that of a disciple.

JL: The Tibetan has suddenly changed the use of the word "let." The first time he uses will to law, will without activity. He speaks of will to live, and it is upward. It is the will to synthesis and not the will to synthesize.

AAB: [Reading further from pp. 197-200]:

Blindness is a prelude to initiation of no matter what degree. It is only at the last and highest initiation that the "tendency to blindness" comes to a complete end. In the early stages of evolution, blindness is natural, innate, unavoidable and impenetrable. For ages we walk in the dark. Then comes the stage wherein this normal blindness is a protection, but has also entered a phase wherein it can be overcome. Technically speaking, the blindness to which I have referred is something different. From the moment when a human being catches the first, faint glimpse of the "something other" and sees himself in juxtaposition to that dimly sensed, distant reality, the blindness with which I have dealt is something *imposed by the Soul* upon the hastening aspirant, so that the lessons of conscious experience, of discipleship, and later of initiation may be correctly assimilated and expressed; by its means, the hurrying seeker is defended from making too rapid and superficial progress. It is depth and a profound "rootedness" (if I may coin such a word) for which the inner Teacher and later the Master looks, and "occult blindness," its need, its wise handling and its final elimination are part of the curriculum imposed upon the candidate. This truth is recognized, though not truly interpreted, by the Masonic Fraternity. In one of the most important and highest initiations, the candidate enters with unblinded eyes and no hoodwink is applied. Then, halfway through the ceremony, he is blinded, and in that condition passes through the terrific tests, symbolic of a certain high stage upon the Path.

Blindness is therefore, esoterically speaking, the place of learning and is related to the eye, throat and heart doctrine. It is *not* related to the dim vision, the sensing of half-truths and the gropings of the aspirant in the process of learning about himself, or as he visions the goal and seeks to walk the Path. That is a familiar condition and one to which all beginners are subjected and that they cannot avoid, for it is inherent in their natures. Occult blindness is spiritually induced and "blacks out" the glory and the promised attainment and reward. The disciple is thrown back upon himself. All he can see is his problem, his tiny field of experience, and his "to him" feeble and limited equipment. It is to this stage that the prophet Isaiah refers when he speaks of giving to the struggling aspirant "the treasures of darkness." The beauty of the immediate, the glory of the present opportunity and the need to focus upon the task and service of the moment are the rewards of moving forward into the

apparently impenetrable darkness. For the initiate, this blindness is still more esoteric; there remains for him absolutely no light whatsoever ó no earth light nor any light within the three worlds at all. There is only blackness. To this the mystic has given the name öthe dark night of the soul.ö The true dark night (of which the mystic's dark night is only a dim reflection, to speak paradoxically) marks a very exalted state of Being and stage of development. It was into the blackness and darkness that Christ penetrated as He overshadowed one of His Masters, the Master Jesus upon the Cross. This will strike a new note for many, and can only now be revealed. It is concerned with the facility with which a Master participates in the experience, subjectively realized, of the disciples whom He has prepared for initiation. It relates also to the still higher identification of the Christ with those initiates who are taking the fourth and fifth initiations, such as the Master Jesus in the experience referred to above. Christ is no longer the Initiator, but stands to the initiate as the Master does to the disciple. It is a curious phase of öidentical participation,ö which evokes no reaction from the Master or the Master of the Masters, the Christ, except insofar as it enables the divine Participator Himself to face another area of darkness, veiling and hiding a still more supernal glory. The above paragraph is far beyond the comprehension of the average student, but will be comprehended by those whose eyes are open to be blinded.

Students must remember that the four veils upon the etheric plane are only the lower symbolic correspondences to certain great areas of divine expression, and that ever the glory must be approached through the darkness. Such is the Law. These higher veiling factors can be mentioned and enumerated, but more information concerning these mysteries, this separating darkness encountered by the initiate, may not be given:

VEIL I. That which faces the disciple as he wrestles with the Dweller on the Threshold and becomes conscious of the Angel of the Presence, though as yet he sees Him not.

VEIL II. That which the initiate encounters at the fourth initiation and that forces him to cry out in his blindness: öMy God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me.ö The words uttered by the Christ at that time, and as the Participator, have been forgotten by the orthodox, though preserved by the esotericist. To them H.P.B. refers in *The Secret Doctrine*.

VEIL III. That mysterious blindness that overwhelms the initiate when ó as the Embodiment of all the forces of the Spiritual Triad ó He faces the Monad and is impelled forward by the ödevastating Willö of the first aspect. Of this I may not write. It concerns the sixth and seventh initiations.

VEIL IV. That öunknown impenetrable Void, the utter darkness of negationö that Those Who are in the Council Chamber of the Lord of the World and Who are focused in Shamballa face when the time comes for Them to önegateö our planetary life expression and experience altogether. They must then leave behind all the seven planes of spiritual and human experience and pass onward and out into phases of Life and being for which we have no words, and of which we have no conception. They leave through the fourth veil on the cosmic physical etheric levels (on the highest plane of our seven planes) and pass on to the cosmic astral plane. There They negate its existence as They have earlier negated the existence of the astral plane, so familiar an illusion to all of us. The initiate passes on to the cosmic astral plane and finds ó What? Who knows? I do not.

Thus the veils serve their purpose; blindness nurtures and protects, provided it is innate and natural, Soul-imposed or spiritually engendered. If it is willfully self-induced, if it provides an alibi for grasped knowledge, if it is assumed in order to avoid responsibility, then sin enters in and difficulty ensues. From this may all of you be protected.