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THE CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ The missionary journeys of Paul are familiar stories to many and form a very significant chapter in the development of the Christian church. Oftentimes, however, reading them merely as a part of the New Testament, we lose sight of their interest as biography and history. The mere difference of an unfamiliar rendering may make of the



particular circumstance cited a wholly fresh account. Paul was in Athens awaiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy:

While Paul waited for them at Athens, he was grieved in his spirit to see the city devoted to idols. He accordingly discussed in the synagogue with the Judeans, and with the pious people, as well as every day with those who frequented the market-place.

Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also debated with him; and some said, "What would this Thought-sower wish to say?" And others, "He seems to be an introducer of foreign divinities"; because he told them the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.

They accordingly took him, and conducted him to the Hill of Ares (the High Court), saying, "Would it be possible for us to get to know what this new thing, this teaching of which you speak, might be? For you have brought some foreign ideas to our ears—we wish therefore to know what is the intention of these?" For all the Athenians and the foreign residents spent the whole of their leisure in telling and listening to something new.

—Acts 17:16-21

(From *The Complete Bible in Modern English*, by FERRAR FENTON)

To the Members of the Esoteric Hierarchy, Greetings!

If you have not read the previous monograph carefully several times, concentrating upon, and visualizing each of the paragraphs, I urge you to do so now before you read this new monograph. These lessons contain more than is written in words. The thoughts are arranged to provoke and arouse Cosmic impressions and revelations. When you attempt to visualize these thoughts, you will find after a few moments of concentration that you become attuned with some intelligence, or group of intelligent minds, that assist you in building up pictures. You may think them wholly imaginary and based upon your own individual imaginings, but you will find later on that the pictures thus coming to you are consistent with what is being revealed in the lessons, and that you are receiving an active form of manifestation of Cosmic Consciousness.

You will get the utmost out of these present esoteric discourses only if on reading each lesson a second time, you take one paragraph at a time, reading it slowly and carefully until those thoughts are registered. Then visualize the thoughts of that paragraph, letting them build into a lesson, a beautiful picture, a fascinating revelation from the Cosmic. Do not miss this opportunity to experience the esoteric attunement coming from carefully prepared thoughts that act as key words to attune yourselves with Cosmic revelations.

I want to call your attention to the origin of these terms—the Invisible Hierarchy, or the Sacred Host of the Cosmic—in the Cosmic and mystical sense. According to the oldest Rosicrucian records available at present (it may be that in the future, Rosicrucian archives will be discovered containing even older records), the Invisible Hierarchy, as we now know it, was once known as the Celestial Hierarchy. This was probably before the term Cosmic became well enough understood to be used in connection with such popular teachings. The word Celestial, however, had the meaning that we would now attribute to the word Cosmic, and certainly was very appropriate then, and is just as appropriate today. This Hierarchy was described in ancient manuscripts as a Cosmic or heavenly body of secret rulers, each with different rank or division of rank. All came within the nine classifications or divisions based upon the old law of the Triangle, or Trinity, with three general sections, each divided into three divisions, making nine divisions of this body of Cosmic Hosts.

Webster's Dictionary describes the Celestial Hierarchy as "a Hierarchy of angels based on interpretations of various scriptural references." It says that the best known of these arrangements and interpretations is that which divides it into nine orders or groups of three, the first three being nearest to God. The divisions are as follows: The first three are named Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; the next are Dominions, Virtues, Powers;



the last Principalities, Archangels, Angels. You will at once recognize the mystical significance of the terms Seraphim and Cherubim. It is with these divisions and their terms that the next few lessons are going to deal, giving you the mystical understanding of these very ancient sacred ideas.

Webster's Dictionary says that the Celestial Hierarchy is a Host of Angels based upon the interpretations of various scriptural references. It does not refer exclusively to Christian Scriptures, but to many mystical writings which preceded the scriptural period, and upon which many of the Old Testament Scriptures were based. The Psalms and other books of the Old Testament contain thoughts, ideas, and mystical principles taken from the scriptural writings of a number of races in different countries. In all times, mystical truth has been universal and fixed in the minds of mystics. From one generation to another, from one race to another, and from one century to another, these mystical laws and principles were revealed and carried on without change because truth never changes, and belongs to no particular time, place, or group of persons. You may be interested in looking for these points in the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible. For instance, in Acts 17:34, we read:

"Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

The verse refers to Paul's departing from Athens, and being followed by a number of interested men and women, among whom was an individual known as Dionysius, the Areopagite. Paul was on his way to Corinth preaching the new Christian doctrines. He was attracting the attention of many of the Greek philosophers who had been devoted students in the mystery schools of Athens. The mystical teachings of Egypt and India had been brought there by missionaries, or by those who had gone to Egypt or India to be initiated. They had returned to their own lands to build temples and carry on the great work of the secret schools. In the same seventeenth chapter of Acts, we see an interesting scene described by Paul as he stood on Mars Hill among the many sacred temples, some erected to mystical ideas, some erected to superstitions or mythological gods of the past. Paul says in the twenty-third verse, "as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

This interesting verse reveals several points which you should visualize: Here was Paul preaching a new doctrine, a new and magnificent revelation of God's teachings to those who had been devotees of various older systems of thought. There were those whose temples were built to ancient mythological gods and principles, and surrounded with many superstitious beliefs.



There were those whose temples were modern and represented the latest mystical teachings of Egypt and India. These people going in and out of these temples in prayer and adoration were sincerely devoted, for they practiced the only religion they knew, and in it they found joy for the mystical side of their natures and a heaven for their spiritual selves. On one of the altars in one of these temples was the inscription "To the Unknown God." This did not mean that they were worshipping a hidden god; it meant that they were admitting and proclaiming that the great God whom they adored and worshipped was really unknown to them.

How many of us can truthfully say that we really know the God we worship, the God we believe rules the universe, the Great Architect, the Divine Intelligence, the Father of all Beings? We may say that we know of Him, know about His mercy, His love, and His justice, but we cannot truthfully say that we actually know Him. It is our struggle, our desire, our intense hope to know God that leads us on in our search and in our efforts to lift our consciousness upward and develop ourselves to a greater spiritual degree. We may salute God with the words "God of our Hearts," as Rosicrucians do, meaning that the only God we actually know is the God that manifests to our consciousness in our hearts, or our emotions, but we are not quite sure whether this is a perfect picture of God and whether we actually know God, or merely our picture of Him.

There was nothing barbarous, therefore, about this frank statement on the altar there on that magnificent Mars Hill. There was a real center of culture and mystical unfoldment, giving to the world the best that its leaders had according to their light. The mere fact that these persons gave way to Paul's preachings, that many listened to him with respect and courtesy, plainly indicates that a large portion of these worshippers were as anxious for new light and new truths as we, and that they were not biased and prejudiced, nor slaves to their ignorant beliefs as we hear some moderns say of these ancient philosophers and mystics. Paul said to these people, "Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." In other words, "This unknown God whom you are worshipping in your ignorance, I have come to declare, to reveal, and to make more understandable to you."

His message to the Athenians then is not a message of condemnation because they had labored so long in ignorance of the things he could reveal. It is rather a message of hope that their willingness to adore and worship an unknown God might lead them to a more intense and beautiful worship of a God whom they would know better as a result of his preaching.



In the twenty-eighth verse he symbolizes the very spirit of his preaching to them, for he says about God, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your

own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." In this very thought, he was trying to convey to them that what their poets had said about God was an attempt to reveal God to them, but that his message was more certain and more definite. As they listened, the thirty-second verse says, ". . . some mocked him: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." Evidently, there were sufficient mystical philosophers present to recognize in Paul's message truths that coincided with their own mystical teachings, and they were eager to hear more on these points.

When Paul told them that these great truths had been revealed to him by a messenger from God, by a Divine Son of God, and that they were intended for the redemption and salvation of all mankind, these mystics so long trained in the secret teachings of the mystery schools must have realized that some decree had been issued by the Cosmic Hierarchy whereby those things that had been taught secretly for centuries to a few WERE TO BE REVEALED TO THE WORLD PUBLICLY AS A MESSAGE FOR THE NEW AGE. To such it meant that the period of secret teachings had ended, and that public revelation of them was to follow. Such a thing could come about only through a decree from God, the Heavenly Hosts, and the Celestial Hierarchy.

There is no record that Paul was an initiate of the mystery schools. His familiarity with their philosophical principles implied he was. He did not, however, come before the public as a high initiate with secret teachings, but as a Christian bringing a public message to the entire world. He declared that he had received his message as a disciple of Jesus, the Christ. While these people in Athens and other parts of Greece did not know of Jesus, the Christ, there was something familiar and mysteriously significant about the name Jesus, and the title Christ. This immediately warranted the real mystics' listening and giving credence to what Paul was saying.

As he moved to the next town, certain ones followed him, among them this Dionysius. Little wonder that he and others followed Paul and became his followers and devoted listeners.

You are undoubtedly eager to know who this particular individual was, and why we are speaking of him in connection with our work. We shall leave Paul and his message for a little, then, in the next monograph give some consideration to this great mystic Dionysius.

May Peace Profound abide with each of you.

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

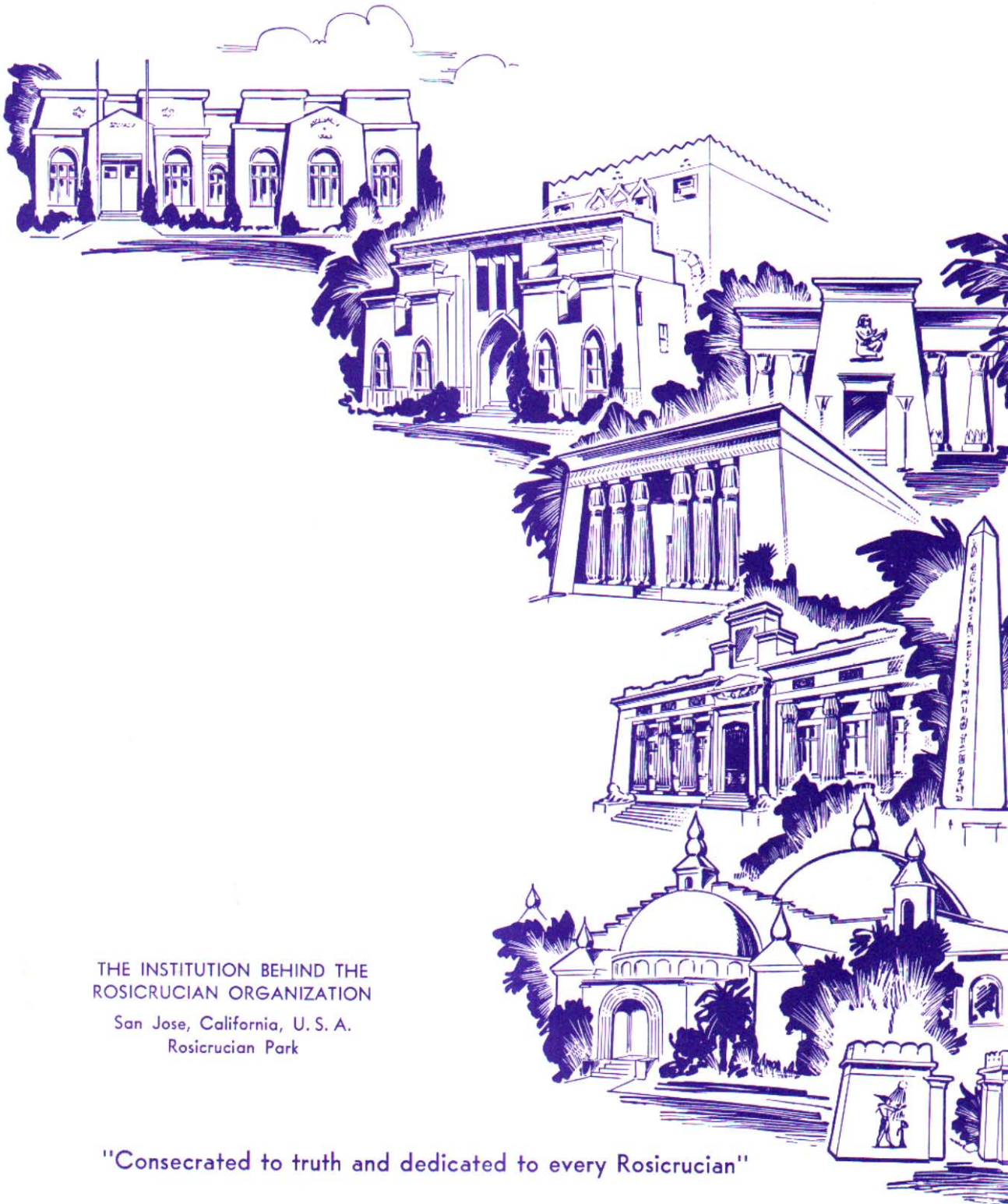


Summary of This Monograph



Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ The divisions making up the Celestial Hierarchy are: first, *Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones*; next, *Dominions, Virtues, Powers*, and last, *Principalities, Archangels, Angels*.
- ¶ Paul's preaching from Mars Hill in Athens was in response to a request from interested Athenians that he explain more fully the ideas he was discussing with small groups in the market place.
- ¶ It seemed to many mystics and philosophers who came to hear Paul that he must be instituting a new age, for what he was proclaiming publicly they knew had in former times been spoken of only in secret.
- ¶ They did not know the Jesus of whom Paul spoke but the doctrine, they felt satisfied, was one with which their mystical training had made them familiar; so they followed Paul from place to place willing and eager to hear more.
- ¶ Among these philosophers and mystics was one Dionysius of whom we shall hear more .



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ROSIKRUCIAN ORGANIZATION

San Jose, California, U. S. A.
Rosicrucian Park

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