

UNIO MYSTICA

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In 1972 he joined the Rosicrucian Order and has been a Board Member of the AMORC Foundation in the Netherlands since 1992.

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“God is at home, it’s we who have gone out for a walk.”

Meister Eckhart

In this quotation by Meister Eckhart, a German Dominican and mystic of the fourteenth century, something interesting is being said about a person’s relation to God. Interesting and inspiring enough to meditate upon for a lifetime, or at least for the next twenty minutes.

When I was preparing this presentation, it came to me that the best I could do would be to sit with you in the hall and to contemplate with you on the wisdom hidden in this quotation.

But don’t worry. This is not what the organization of this convention nor you would expect from me. So I’ll just keep

standing here for a while and I ask you to follow me in my train of thought starting with this quotation by Meister Eckhart.

God is at home, meaning God is at home in people. God is at home in people and speaks to us unto our souls. Not through the soul, but unto the soul, when we follow Meister Eckhart’s mystic preaching. God speaks unto the soul, because the soul is not apart from God but part of God. Mysticism, and I am still following Meister Eckhart, is not about unification but about unity, or in other words, about a state of being. God is so incredibly near, that people deep down, in our deepest being, coincide with God, thus speaks Eckhart, and in connection herewith he speaks of the **unio mystica**, the divine unity, the unity of God and human beings.

In this unity we can hear God speak. Amidst silence, as Eckhart says, God speaks unto the soul. God speaks in silence, and it is given to us to hear His word, when we learn how to listen to His voice.

Having said this, I would like to ponder with you on these three questions:

1. What do we refer to when we speak about God;
2. What do we mean by soul and where is it to be found;
3. What keeps us from the *unio mystica* and restrains us from hearing the voice that speaks to us unto our soul?

Let us start with the first question. What do we refer to when we speak about God?

According to the Rosicrucian ontology, God is the Universal Soul or Intelligence, the power and energy being the source of the entire creation and of everything it includes, both at a visible and invisible level. Thus considered, we are not capable of knowing it with our objective faculties or of visualizing it. In this opinion, the soul is an emanation of God through which one is given to unite with God in one's consciousness, to receive His consolation and encouragement, and to experience, in the unification, the **unio mystica**, the influx of the Divine word.

According to the Rosicrucian philosophy, everyone's soul is an individualization of the Universal Soul. Or, in the words of the seventeenth century physician and philosopher Jan Baptista van Helmond:

“The human soul is the image of the Divine soul.” To this he adds: “It is, however, not sufficient that the universe is reflected in the soul. The soul must also become aware of this.”

In this sense, everyone's soul is an emanation, an outpouring of the Deity itself. Characteristic of an emanation,

according to the teachings of this philosophy, is that the very essence or characteristic property of the source from which the outpouring took place coincides with the result of its flow. This sounds complicated, but it simply means that the soul as an emanation of the Deity also has its qualities and all its characteristics.

In other words: it is immaterial, immortal,

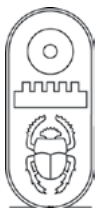
and rudimentarily perfect. We can presume that it is in fact the expression of God in people but even more, that the human soul and God are one. It is the reflection of His omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

This thought is not exclusive to the Rosicrucians. We come across this thought in all esoteric traditions and in most major religions, since there are many sacred texts declaring in almost identical terms that man is made in the image of God.

This does not imply taking the texts of the Old Testament literally, like the text in the book of Genesis saying that God created humans in His own image, but rather referring to human beings' immaterial aspects—that part of us that makes us unique in the entire creation, that which makes us a dual being with both



Meister Eckhart



material and immaterial aspects—body and soul.

On this line of reasoning, the soul has a Divine nature. It is part of the universal soul energy permeating each and every one of us in an equal manner. It is pure and Divine without distinction at a personal, individual level. The apparent differences between people are in this respect not more than differences in expression, differences in the way every person responds to the Divine in himself or herself.

The human soul is at all times perfect and can therefore not grow nor improve. The soul is there in all its perfection and only needs to be unveiled by us. The soul doesn't want anything else but us becoming aware of its presence, seeking it. It doesn't want anything else but us learning to hear the voice speaking in it.

The soul doesn't know any challenges. Contrary to some assumptions, the soul doesn't meet with any challenges. The actual challenge, challenges, are the soul being prevented from expressing its splendor through us, challenges to that which interferes with us hearing the voice of God in our soul.

And this brings us to the third question, which we put to ourselves before. Again starting with the words by Meister Eckhart.

You must have noticed, *sorores* and *fratres*, that he is an important source of information to me and I can advise you all to go further into this great mystic's works.

In Meister Eckhart's words: "all works performed by the soul, are performed with the sensory faculties."

In other words, the activity of the soul is presented through our material faculties, our senses which enable us to see, to hear, our capacity to think. It yields thoughts and images created by the senses.

Images and thoughts which, no matter how wonderful and lofty they may seem to us, do not remotely do justice to the essence of the soul. Nor can the soul create or form an image of itself (Meister Eckhart). The soul only knows God. No, I'll say it otherwise. The soul is God.

It's our objective faculties, our senses which form and transform. It's also

these faculties which form our personality to a great extent, it's these faculties which bind us to our, what we call, ego, the consciousness of our self. This ego formed by the impressions of our objective faculties plays a major part in veiling and keeping veiled the beauty of the soul. It is in fact the ego that keeps us from hearing the voice that speaks to us in the soul.

I would like to quote here the author and Rosicrucian Marie Corelli, who wrote with reference hereto:

"Man's greatest enemy is nothing else but his own ego, for as long as he isn't master of his ego, he will be deaf and blind to the good."

The soul is perfect in itself and manifests itself in each of us differently, as I said before, because of the various ways we, under the influence of the ego, respond to



Jean Baptista Van Helmond

the soul energy in us. Therefore it's not the soul but the personality of the individual, or our ego, we should be working on. Because it's this ego that veils the light of the soul to us.

If we take up the challenge to work on our ego, we will enter upon the path towards self-knowledge, towards knowledge of our higher self this is, and we will gradually learn to appreciate the beauty of the soul in us, to possibly hear its message and allow the soul to manifest the message in our personality—without any obstruction, clear as light shining in the darkness, like the Rose blossoming on the Cross.

More than ever in the history of humankind, there seems to be a need for allowing the message of the soul to be expressed in our personality. Equally, there seems to be no better moment than now, for humankind in general and for the individual in particular, to connect oneself with the purity and integrity of the soul, and to have the personalities, which we are, the individuals we all are, merged with the innermost of our souls.

To this end we need to be, so to speak, reborn—to be reborn in a spiritual sense.

Considering what I just said about the ego, we can only be reborn spiritually if we learn how to handle our objective faculties otherwise.

Again I draw from my source, which is most important for this discussion and which indicates that people should avoid all senses, direct all our sensory faculties inwards, and come to a state of forgetting

all things and ourselves. Forgetting all things and ourselves! We may regard this as distancing oneself from all external things. We will find our true self, the higher self in us; we can be reborn in the spirit if we open up to the unforeseen, if we search in silence for that which is greater than ourselves, that which surpasses our comprehension. I

repeat the quotation by Meister Eckhart mentioned previously: “Amidst silence God speaks unto the soul.”

It is necessary to allow the qualities of the soul to manifest themselves in us, to work through us, in our doings, in our silent works, in the contributions we make in its loving silence to the elevation of human society.

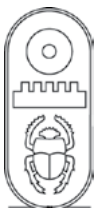
All this has been put simply, and has been said frequently, through the ages, in various wordings by diverse teachers or Avatars but always with the same message.

We have been called and are encouraged to search for ourselves by adopting in our lives a more introspective approach in silence and to embark upon the way inward in this silence.

In the first place this requires preparation. It calls for preparation to allow the light of the soul to shine through the medium of our personality. It also calls for our longing. It calls for our longing to eliminate all impediments obstructing the manifestation of the splendor of the soul. To be more specific: we must first strive to become aware of the influences of our objective faculties, of the illusions they create, of the negative, destructive,



Marie Corelli



or unkind thoughts, convictions, or intentions obstructing or obscuring the light emanating from the soul.

This doesn't mean we should turn away from the objective reality and turn inward exclusively, meditating on the Divine unity and enlightenment. "The concrete reality should certainly not be ignored for the benefit of a contemplative unity with God encompassed with a silent comfortableness." Here I quote the Dutch religious scientist and philosopher Welmoed Vlieger who refers to a child and says: "we only need to look at a child to realize that living from unity and open-mindedness, as children do, does not obstruct concrete reality but rather breaks it open."

Isn't this wonderfully in line with the words by Master Jesus according to the Gospel of Mark: "I assure you, that the man who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Therefore we must strive for a balance in our attitude to life. On the one hand, we should be open-minded and turned inward, and on the other hand we should have an open eye for what's happening in the objective world. In such an attitude towards life there is no place for selfishness or craving for power or exerting influence on worldly affairs or other persons. Instead, we should develop a feeling of compassion and unity, of feeling at one with the other person, with everything alive. Our criticism of others who have made mistakes in our view or have put forward opinions other than ours will disappear and give way to the desire to let Divine love speak in our relation with others.

The soul is equal to the challenges of the ego, if only we give it scope. It is completely different from the ego and

doesn't know the traditional fears and limited understanding typical of the ordinary personality. The soul is guided by the highest will and wisdom. In itself it is the highest will and wisdom, with all characteristics inherent to its Creator: kindness, compassion, forgiveness, and patience.

The soul and its Creator, or let me say, the soul and the source from which it has emanated, are one. Inseparably one, in the words of Marie Corelli: "like a guide and friend for man during his life here on earth." A companion always ready to help us with its unconditional love and understanding at all levels of being. The soul stimulates us and invites us to make contact with it—to become at one with it. It shows who has developed the capacity to listen to it. It's our inner voice.

In connection herewith the Rosicrucians speak of their Master Within. God speaks to us through our Master Within. This Master Within, my Master Within, who is your Master Within as well, is always there, expecting us and waiting for us in our Inner Sanctum. It is up to us to let this Master speak to us and to wish for its properties to be manifested through our personality. As we learn to consider the objective world otherwise, learn to approach this world in silence and aspire to become unselfish in our actions, forgiving and patient, we will gradually get closer to the experience of Divine unification, we will understand the Divine plan increasingly better and we will enable the soul more and more to manifest itself in us.

What can we do in our lives to attain this contact with our soul, the *unio mystica*? Put the first step on the path, just like every beginning. Start to refuse to build our life philosophy exclusively on what is visible, and despite the hustle and bustle and the impressions of the outward world, irrespective of what the outside world

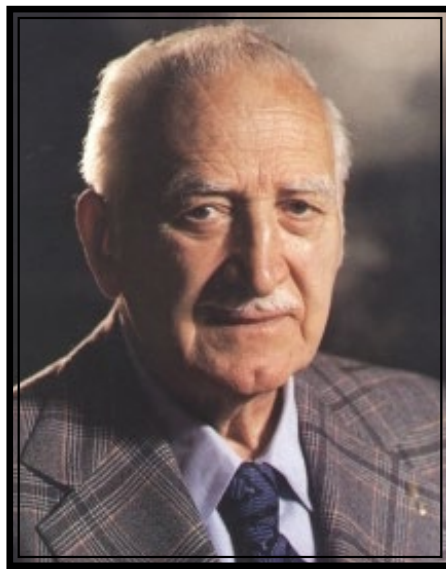
thinks of us, try to make room for silence in our lives. The marvel of the path is contained in this first step. Once we have crossed the threshold and continue in silent wonder, more and more new views will unfold to us. When we, supported by the fire of our desire and by study, meditation, and most of all prayer, connect ourselves more and more with our path, sooner or later the Divine song will sound from our soul and we will be able to manifest its message in ourselves.

This brings to my mind what was called by Ralph M. Lewis, former Imperator of our Order, Mystical Life. We cannot live to the full, according to Ralph Lewis, if we do not pay attention to the mystical side of our existence in addition to everything else. He sets mystical life, or rather inner life, against physical life, and considers mystical life as the reason for living. He calls the person a mystic who, in his or her life, unites the material aspects of our being harmoniously with our inner self, our mystical being, our higher self or soul.

Like the two points of the triangle which when connected create the third point of perfect harmony—this is in Rosicrucian terms a perfect example of the so-called Law of the Triangle. Mysticism is regarded as a deep, inner and personal connection within us. However, it is not by definition the mystical experience that turns one into a mystic. Almost on the contrary, I would say. It's the attitude towards life which makes a person a mystic. The mystical person is one who by his or her approach to life gives shape to the wish to ever attain

a mystical experience. It's the responsible person who puts mystical idealism into practice and through this practice brings the Divine unification within reach.

It is indeed, as the Greek philosophers established, possibly the hardest assignment in human life—hard, but not impossible. In fact, it becomes totally possible for those whose personality is permeated with the harmony resulting from continuous attunement with the Universal Soul.



Ralph M. Lewis

It may be right to emphasize here that mystical life and striving for mystical unification are not reserved to certain privileged persons. But what is required is to be able to lead a mystical life, to attain the **unio mystica** which is latently present

in each of us, in each of you. Irrespective of what is being said about “enlightened” people, one human being is not more perfect than another.

We can say, though, that some people have learned to open up the flowers in their hearts, as a result of which they are capable of more completely using the powers latently present in himself or herself, just like in anybody else. This person has found the way to his or her soul, has taken the way within, along the path of regeneration—the path that started with a deep and sincere desire and has progressed through study, meditation, and a lot of praying. And step by step, by a gradual initiation process, veil after veil has been removed from this person's soul. This person has come home to the unity of a human being with the Divine. The **unio mystica!**

