

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching



Izvor Collection



P R O S V E T A

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The True Meaning of Christ's Teaching



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P R O S V E T A

Chapter One

‘Our Father in heaven...’

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us into temptation,
But rescue us from evil.
For the kingdom and the power
and the glory are yours for ever.*

Amen.

In the course of his teaching, Jesus taught his disciples a prayer that has been recited by Christians everywhere, ever since, and which we know as the Lord's Prayer, or Our Father. Contained in this prayer is a very ancient science handed down by a tradition which had existed long before Jesus' time. But it is expressed in such a condensed, encapsulated form in the Lord's Prayer, that it is not easy to grasp the full depth of its meaning.

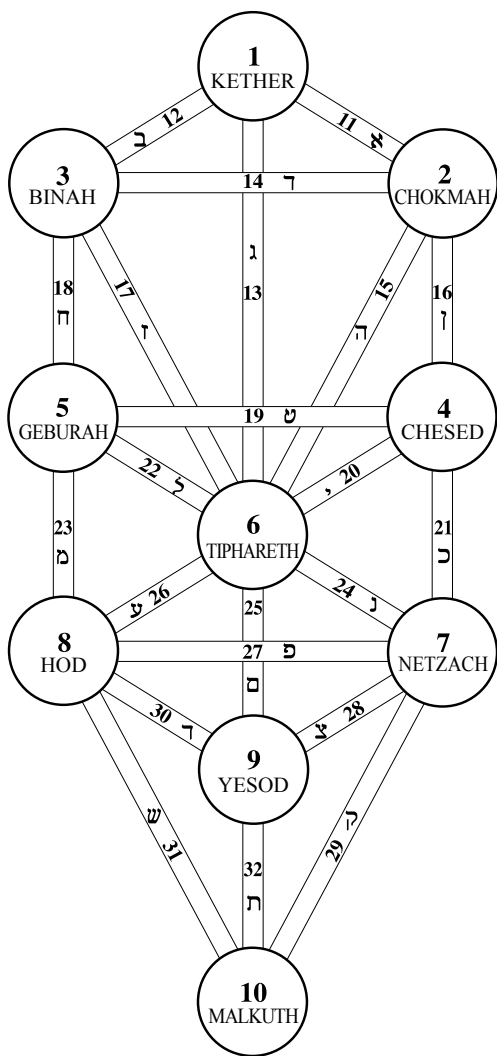
An initiate goes about things in the same way as nature. Take a tree, for instance: the whole tree – roots, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruit – are all miraculously condensed in a pip or a seed. The marvel of a tree, with all its potentiality to live for years and years and constantly produce fruit in spite of the buffeting of wind and weather, is all there, in that one little seed buried in the soil. And this is an image of what Jesus did: he condensed all his sacred science into the Lord's Prayer, hoping that it would take root in the souls of those who

recited it and meditated on it and that, as it grew, they would gradually discover the untold grandeur of all it contains: the tree of Initiatic Science.

All Christians everywhere recite this prayer, whether they are Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox. But they have not always understood it correctly. In fact quite a lot of them think it is not rich or eloquent enough. They have composed their own, far more impressive, poetic, all-embracing and – let's face it – interminable prayers... and they find them highly satisfactory! Yes, but what do their prayers really contain? I am afraid that if you analyse them you will not find very much. So, let's try and see what is hidden in the words of the Lord's Prayer... though I must say at the outset that it is so immensely rich, we shall never be able to explain it all.

'Our Father in heaven.'

A Creator and Lord of heaven and earth and of the whole universe exists, and his dwelling place is heaven. But heaven, in the Jewish tradition, has several different regions, and each region has its name: *Kether, Chokmah, Binah, Chesed, Geburah, Tiphareth, Netzach, Hod, Yesod* and *Malkuth*. Each heavenly region also has a numerous population consisting of one of the celestial hierarchies, from angels to seraphim.¹ Here, in the ten regions known in the Cabbalah as the sephiroth, dwells



Sephirotic Tree

the God described by Moses and the prophets as a consuming fire, a 'jealous God'. This was a God who inspired not love but fear and trembling in the hearts of men and women: *'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'*. And then, one day Jesus appeared and taught that God was our Father.

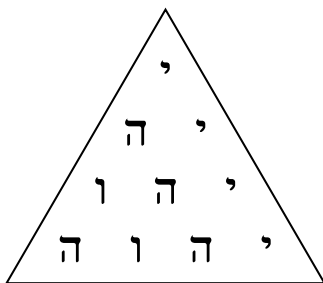
Jesus came to replace fear with love. Instead of being afraid of that terrible God, we can now love him and nestle close to him as a child with its father. This was the novelty of Jesus' teaching: we can love God with tender devotion, for he is our father, we are all his sons and daughters. *'Our Father in heaven...'* Yes, and if our father is in heaven, then we can be sure that we too will reach heaven: one day the father and his children will be together.² There is marvellous hope in these words – the hope of a glorious future. God has created us in his own image; we are his heirs; he will give us kingdoms, he will entrust us with the organization of planets, he will give us everything.*

'Hallowed be your name'. God has a name which we must know before we can bless or 'hallow' it. Christians are not accustomed to calling God by name, they just call him 'God', but Jesus was heir to an ancient tradition, and he knew

* Chapters 2 and 3 explore the consequences of this notion of humans as sons and daughters of God in greater detail.

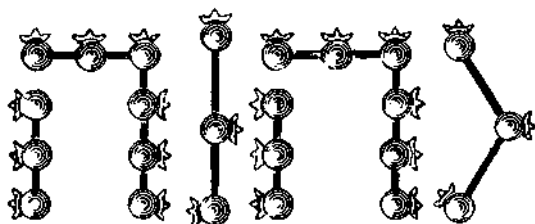
that God has a mysterious, unknown name. Once a year, when the High Priest uttered God's name in the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem, his voice was covered by the sound of trumpets, drums, flutes and cymbals, so that the people gathered before the Temple would not hear the sacred Name. In the Old Testament this name is given as Yahveh (Yahweh) or Jehovah, and we know only that it consists of four letters: Yod, He, Vau, He: יהוה.*

Kabbalistic tradition teaches that the Name of God is composed of 72 names or powers, and it might help you to understand this better if I tell you how the Cabbalah explains it. Each letter in the Hebrew alphabet is identified with a number, and as י = 10, ה = 5, ו = 6 and ה = 5, the four letters add up to 26. When the cabbalists write the Name of God in a triangle they place the letters like this:



* Hebrew reads from right to left.

Another way is this:



When the Name is written in this way, the 24 knots represent the 24 elders mentioned in Revelation, and each knot has 3 flowerets giving a total of 72.

But what does it mean to ‘hallow’ or sanctify God’s name? Don’t be surprised if I begin by calling to mind the four elements – earth, water, air and fire – of which the world is made. There is a connection between the forces and virtues of the four elements and our body, heart, mind, soul and spirit, and each element has its own presiding angel. This is why, when initiates want to purify themselves they ask the angel of earth to absorb all the impurities of their physical body, the angel of water to wash their heart, the angel of air to purify their mind and the angel of fire to sanctify their soul and spirit.³ Blessing or sanctification, you see, corresponds to the highest level, that of the soul and spirit, the level of fire and light.

The notion of holiness has always been associated with the notion of light. The Bulgarian language contains a good example of this: *svetia* in Bulgarian means holy or saint and has the same root as *svetlina*, 'light'. A saint (*svetia*) is one who possesses the light (*svetlina*): all is light within them, they shine and radiate light. And as you know, traditional art has always depicted a halo of light surrounding the heads of the saints. Holiness is an attribute of light, of the pure light that shines in the spirit.

Only what is pure can purify; only what is holy can sanctify. Only light, therefore, can sanctify, because only light is holiness. We must bless and sanctify God's name in the purest light of the spirit. A name represents, summarizes or contains the entity it designates, so that if we are infused and penetrated by the holiness of light when we utter the name of God, we have the power to draw him into ourselves and into everything around us, to sanctify all objects and all living creatures. It is not enough to go to church and repeat: *'Hallowed be your name'*, we must hallow his name really and truly within ourselves. If we do this we will know the extraordinary joy that comes from having the power to illuminate whatever we touch, whatever we eat, whatever we look at.

Yes, the greatest of all joys lies in really grasping what this means and, in blessing, sanc-

tifying and radiating light, every day, everywhere, on all that comes our way. Only then are we doing what Christ told us to do. If all we do is repeat '*Hallowed be your name*' and never actually do anything to bless that name in the way we live our daily lives, it means we haven't understood the first thing about it. When we say or write the name of God we ally ourselves to divine forces and we can actually draw these forces down into the physical sphere. But this work has to begin in the mind. '*Hallowed be your name*'. To hallow God's name is a work of the spirit, and it takes place, first and foremost, in our mind.

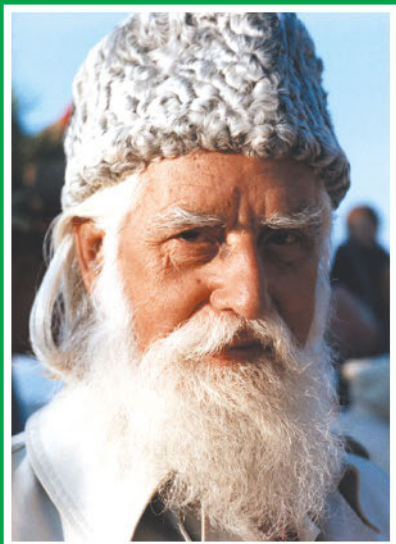
'Your kingdom come...' From this we see that the kingdom of God does exist and that it has its own laws and its own harmonious organization. To imagine what it is like is totally beyond us! But we do seem to get a fleeting glimpse of it every now and then in our purest, most spiritual moments, but it is only at these special times that we can begin to have any idea of what the kingdom of God means. It is no use relying on our experience of earthly kingdoms, with all their disorders, conflicts and madness, to guide our imagination. It is possible to establish the kingdom of God on earth; there is a whole body of teaching and methods to bring this about. But it is not enough to ask for it in our prayers. The trouble is that we have been asking

for it for the last 2,000 years, and it still has not come, because people do nothing to make it come.

With this second petition, *'Your kingdom come'*, we have moved from the domain of the mind and spirit to that of the heart. God's name must be hallowed in our mind, but his kingdom must come in our heart, for the kingdom of God is not a place but a disposition or attitude that reflects all that is good, generous and disinterested. Two thousand years ago Jesus said that the kingdom of God was at hand: this was true for some, but for most people it still has not come. And it never will, even in another twenty thousand years, if we are content to wait for it to come from the outside and do nothing about the inner reality. For some, then, the kingdom has already come; for others it is coming, and for yet others it will come one day, but who knows when!*

We come now to the third petition of the Our Father, one that is even less well understood than the others: *'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'*. The whole of Initiatic Science is summed up in those few words. In heaven God's will is always carried out without a murmur, because his servants are totally attuned to it. Amongst human beings this is not the case, and that is why Jesus

* See Chapter 4: 'Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness'.



The Bulgarian philosopher, teacher and spiritual Master, Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov (1900-1986), moved to France in 1937. His work deals with the many aspects of initiatic science, but he says, 'I have particularly tried to clarify one subject: the two natures of human beings, their higher nature and their lower nature, because this is the key to resolving all problems.'

The whole of Christ's teaching is summed up in the prayer he gave us: the Lord's Prayer. In this book Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov demonstrates and explains this. 'An Initiate,' he says; 'follows the methods of Nature. A tree with its roots and trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit, begins life as a minute seed but if you plant it, water it and expose it to the warmth of the sun, it becomes a tree of majestic proportions. Nature, in her own wonderful way has condensed a tree's entire potential into one tiny seed. Jesus did the same. He took his Teaching, the new Science he was bringing mankind, and condensed it into a prayer to his Father, in the hope that this seed would take root in men's souls, be nurtured by them and grow into its full potential: the massive fruitful tree of Initiatic Science, the true Teaching of Christ.'

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