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THE VEIL OF ISIS.

ISIS is said to have been a virgin sister-wife-mother. She was called the queen of heaven, the carrier of life, the mother of all that lives and the giver and restorer of forms.

Isis was known under many other names and universally worshipped by the humanity of early periods throughout the land of Egypt. All ranks and classes were alike the worshippers of Isis. The slave under the lash, whose web of life was wearily spun out by his daily toil on the stones of the pyramid; the pampered beauty, whose life was a whirling dream of pleasure amidst soft music and fragrant flowers, bathed in perfumes and fanned with delicately incensed air, whose every sense was stimulated by the arts and ingenuity of the race and indulged with the products of ages of thought and effort; the astronomer-magician who from his place in the pyramid observed the movement of celestial travellers, measured the rate of their speed and arc of travel, computed therefrom the time of their appearance in space throughout their history, and so knew of their origin, nature and end: all alike were worshippers of Isis, but each according to his class and kind and from his plane of knowledge.

The slave who was prompted to action by force could not see the "gracious mother of mercy," so he worshipped an object which he *could* see and which was said to be sacred to her: a graven image of stone, to which he would pour out the bitterness of his soul and pray for release from the bonds of the taskmaster. Removed from toil and hardship, but knowing Isis no better than the slave of pain, the beauty, a slave of pleasure, appealed to the unseen Isis through the symbols of flowers and temples and beseeched that Isis to continue the bounty which the suppliant enjoyed. In the movement of celestial bodies, the astronomer-magician would see the laws and the course of the suns. In these he would read the

law and history of creation, preservation and destruction: would relate them to the thoughts and impulses of mankind and read the destiny of dynasties as decreed by the deeds of men. Perceiving the harmony throughout inharmonious action, law within confusion and reality behind appearance, the astronomer-magician made known the laws of Isis to the governors of the land, who in turn obeyed those laws according to their nature and intelligence. Seeing the unalterable action of law and the harmony through all existing forms, the astronomer-magician revered the law, acted in accordance with it and worshipped the one reality in the forms produced by the ever invisible Isis.

The slaves of pain and pleasure knew Isis only by means of form and the senses; the wise knew Isis as the continual producer and supporter of all things.

Humanity has changed little since the day of ancient Khem. Its desires, ambitions, and aspirations are different only in degree, not in kind. The principles of knowledge are the same as of yore. The methods and forms alone have changed. The souls who took part in Egypt's life may again enter the arena in modern times. Isis did not die in Egypt even as she was not there born. Worship exists to-day as it did then.

The miner crawling in the bowels of the earth prays to the image of Mary to release him from the chains of toil. The phantom chaser of pleasure prays for a continuance of pleasure. The wise man sees law and order through apparent injustice and confusion and works in harmony with the only reality which he learns to perceive through all appearances. Isis is as real to-day as in the days of Khem. To-day Isis is worshipped by her votaries as an idol, an ideal, or the real, as she was then. The name and form of religions has changed but worship and religion are the same. People see and worship Isis according to their natures, characters and degrees of development. As the worship of Isis was according to the intelligence of the people of Egypt, so it is now according to the intelligence of the people of our age. But even before the rise of our civilization to a point corresponding to the glory and wisdom of Egypt, our people are becoming as degenerate in their worship of Isis as were the Egyptians in the decadence of Egypt. In addition to the glamor of the senses, money-power, politics, and priestcraft are withholding from the people the knowledge of Isis to-day even as in the days of Egypt.

He who would know Isis must pass beyond the veil into the realms of the immaculate Isis; but to all mortals Isis is known only as she is, heavily draped and thickly veiled.

But who is Isis and what is her veil? The Myth of the Veil of Isis may explain. The tale runs thus:

Isis, our immaculate mother, nature, space, wove her beautiful veil that through it all things might be called into existence and given being. Isis began in her immaterial worlds to weave and as she wove she threw the texture of her veil, more delicate than sunlight, about the divinities. Continuing through the heavier worlds, the veil was woven accordingly until it reached down and enfolded the mortals and our world.

Then all beings looked and saw from the part of the veil in which they were, the beauty of Isis through the texture of her veil. Then there were

found within the veil love and immortality, the eternal and inseparable couple, they to whom the highest gods bow low in reverent worship.

Mortals then tried to place these eternal presences into form that they might keep and feel them in the veil. This caused the veil to be divided; on the one side man, on the other woman. In the place of love and immortality, the veil discovered to the mortals the presence of ignorance and death.

Then ignorance threw a dark and stupefying cloud about the veil that unhallowed mortals might not violate love by their endeavor to enshroud it in the veil. Death, too, added fear to the darkness, which ignorance had brought, so that mortals might not entail unto themselves an endless woe in striving to outline immortality in the folds of the veil. Love and immortality, therefore, is now hidden from mortals by ignorance and death. Ignorance darkens the vision and death adds fear, which prevent the finding of love and immortality. And mortal, fearing that he might utterly be lost, hugs and clings closer to the veil and shouts feebly out into the darkness to reassure himself.

Isis still stands within her veil waiting until the vision of her children shall be strong enough to pierce it and see her beauty undefiled. Love is still present to purify and cleanse the mind from its dark stains and wounds of selfishness and greed, and to show the fellowship with all that lives. Immortality is for him whose gaze stops not within, but who looks steadily through the veil of Isis, and beyond. Then finding love he feels akin to all, becomes a defender, a sponsor for, and the savior or elder brother, of Isis and all her children.

Isis, pure and undefiled, is homogeneous primordial substance throughout boundless, infinite space. Sex is the veil of Isis which gives visibility to matter though it clouds the vision of beings. From the thoughts and deeds of the men and beings of worn-out worlds, which Isis (nature, substance, space) has retained impressed within herself, our world was reproduced according to the law of cause and effect. So Mother Isis began her movements in her invisible realm and there was slowly brought into being all that had taken part in past evolutions; so our world was formed out of the invisible as a cloud is drawn out of the cloudless sky. At first the beings of the world were light and airy; gradually they condensed in their bodies and forms until they finally are as we find ourselves to be to-day. In those early days, however, the gods walked the earth with men, and men were even as the gods. They did not know sex as we do now, for they were not so deeply enmeshed in the veil, but they gradually became aware of it as the forces condensed and became more turbulent. The vision of the beings who were of neither sex was less clouded than is ours; they could see the purpose of the law and worked according to it; but as their attention was ever more taken up with things of the world, and in accordance with natural law, their sight closed to the inner world of spirit, and more fully opened to the outer world of matter; they developed into sex and became the ordinary beings which we are to-day.

In ancient times our bodies were produced by will operating through natural law. To-day our bodies are generated by desire, and most often come into existence against the wishes of those who generate them. We

stand in our bodies at the lower end of the involutory arc and at the upward arc of the evolutionary cycle. To-day we can begin the climb, from grossest and heaviest folds to the lightest and thinnest strands of the veil of Isis, and even pierce the veil entirely, rise above it, and look on Isis herself instead of at the myriad forms which we conceive her to be, interpreting her by the veil.

According to the laws by which our world is ruled all beings who come into the world do so by sanction of Isis. She weaves for them the veil which they must wear during their sojourn here. The veil of Isis, sex, is spun out and woven by the fates, whom the ancients called the Daughters of Necessity.

The veil of Isis extends throughout the worlds, but in our world it is represented by the two beings of opposite sex. Sex is the invisible loom on which are woven the garments which the formless beings put on to gain entrance to the physical and to take part in the affairs of life. It is by the action of the opposites, spirit and matter as the warp and the woof, that the veil gradually becomes the visible garment of the soul; but warp and woof are as the instruments and material which are being constantly changed and prepared by the action of the mind on desire. Thought is the result of the action of the mind on desire and through thought (♁) the spirit-matter of life (♁) is directed into form (♁).

Souls take the veil of Isis because without it they cannot complete the cycle of their journey through the worlds of forms; but having taken the veil, they become so enmeshed in its folds that they cannot see as the purpose of its weaving, anything other than social or sensual pleasures which it gives.

The soul itself has no sex; but when wearing the veil it seems to have sex. One side of the veil appears as man, the other side as woman, and the mutual interplay and turning of the veil evokes all the powers which play through it. Then there is created and developed the sentiment of the veil.

The sentiment of sex is the gamut of the human emotions which extends through every phase of human life, from that of the lowly savage, to the emotion of a mystic, and through all the poetic fancies attendant upon human culture. The sentiment and morals of the veil of Isis are exhibited alike by the savage who buys his wives or increases the number of them by the right of capture; by acts of chivalry; by the belief that each sex was created for the other by God; and by those who interpret the purpose of sex according to all manner of fantastic notions. All alike are sentiments which enhance the value or attractiveness of each sex to the other. But the sentiment which seems to be most pleasing to many wearers of the veil is the notion of the twin soul doctrine, presented under many forms according to the nature and desire of the believer. Simply put it is this, that man or woman is only half a being. To complete and perfect the being, the other half is needed and is to be found in one of the opposite sex. That these two halves are made solely and expressly for each other, and they must wander through the cycles of time until they shall meet and be united and thus form a perfect being. The trouble is, however, that this fantastic notion is used as an excuse for disregarding the established moral code and natural duties.²

² See THE WORD, Vol. 2, No. 2, "Sex."

The twin soul belief is one of the greatest obstacles to the soul's progress, and the argument for the twin-soul emotion destroys itself when viewed calmly in the light of reason by one who has not found his soul's affinity or other half and who is not too keenly suffering from the sting of the snake of sex.

The word sex has a thousand different meanings to as many who hear it. To each it appeals according to the heredity of his body, his education, and his mind. To one it means all that the lust of body and animal desire would imply, to another a more refined sentiment of sympathy and love as exhibited by the devotion of husband and wife, and in the responsibilities of life.

The idea of sex is carried into the sphere of religion, where the devotee thinks of an ever-present, omniscient and almighty God i. e., as father and creator of all things and a loving mother of mercy, who is beseeched by the devotee to intercede for him with God, the Father or the Son. Thus the idea of sex is conceived by the human mind, not only as ruling on this gross earth, but as extending through all the worlds and even prevailing in heaven, the incorruptible place. But whether one conceives of sex in its lowest or highest sense, this veil of Isis must ever veil mortal eyes. Human beings will always interpret that which lies beyond the veil from the side of the veil on which they look.

It is not to be wondered at that the human mind is so impressed by the thought of sex. It has taken long ages to mould matter into its present forms, and the mind who has had to do with the various changes of the forms of matter must necessarily be impressed by them.

And so sex, the veil of Isis, was gradually woven about and around and through all forms, and desire of sex in form prevailed and still prevails. As the mind more fully incarnated into sex, its vision became colored by the veil. It saw itself and others through the veil, and all the thought of mind is still and will be colored by the veil until the wearer of the veil shall learn to discriminate between the wearer and the veil.

Thus all that goes to make man man, is wrapped about by the veil of Isis.

Veils are used for many purposes and are usually associated with woman. Nature is spoken of as feminine, and in form and action represented by a woman. Nature is ever weaving veils about herself. By women veils are used as beauty veils, bridal veils, mourning veils and to protect them against high winds and dust. Nature as well as woman protects, conceals and makes herself attractive by the use of veils.

The history of the weaving and of the wearing of the veil of Isis to the present time, as well as the prophecy of its future, is outlined and suggested in the life of a human being from birth to the ripened intellect and old age. At birth the child is cared for by the parent; it has no thought nor care. Its soft flabby little body slowly takes on more definite form. Its flesh becomes firmer, its bones stronger, and it learns the uses of its senses and its limbs; it has not yet learned the use and purpose of its sex, the veil in which it is wrapped. This state represents the early forms of life; the beings of that period had no thought of the veil of Isis, though they lived within its folds. Their bodies were exuberant with life, they responded to and acted with the elements and the forces as naturally and joyously as

children laugh and play in the sunlight. Childhood has no thought of the veil which it is wearing, but of which it is not yet conscious. This is the golden age of children as it was of humanity. Later the child goes to school and prepares itself for its work in the world; its body grows and develops into youth, until its eyes are opened and it sees and becomes conscious of the veil of Isis. Then the world changes for it. The sunlight loses its rosy hue, shadows seem to fall about all things, clouds gather where none were seen before, a gloom seems to enwrap the earth. The youths have discovered their sex and it seems ill fitted to the wearers. This is due to the fact that a new influx of mind has come into that form and is incarnate in its senses, which are as the branches of the tree of knowledge.

The old myth of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and their experience with the serpent is again gone over, and the bitterness of "the fall of man" is once more experienced. But the sense of so-called sin becomes a sense of pleasure; the cloud of gloom which seemed to enfold the world soon gives way to vari-colored rainbow tints and hues. The sentiment of the veil appears; grey misgivings turn into songs of love; verses are read; poetry is composed to the mystery of the veil. The veil is accepted and worn as a lurid cloak of vice, a gauzy vesture of sentiment, the purposeful robe of duty.

The childhood of the race ripened into the early manhood of responsibility in which the race has since existed. Though often impulsively, gradually, and unthinkingly, yet, nevertheless, the responsibilities of the veil are taken. The bulk of humanity to-day are like men-children and women-children. They come into the world, live, marry, and go through life without knowing the cause of their coming nor of their going, nor the purpose of their stay; life is a garden of pleasure, a hall of vice, or a young-folks seminary where they learn a little and have a good time without much thought for the future, all according to their inclination and environment. But there are members of the human family who see a sterner reality in life. They feel a responsibility, they apprehend a purpose, and endeavor to see it more clearly and work in accordance with it.

Man, after living through the first flush of his manhood, having assumed the cares and responsibilities of family life, having engaged in his work of life and taken his part in public affairs, having rendered service to his state when he so desired, feels at last that there is some mysterious purpose working through and within the veil which he is wearing. He may often attempt to catch glimpses of the presence and the mystery which he feels. With increasing age, the intellect will become stronger and the vision clearer, providing that the fires still slumber in the veil and have not burnt themselves out, and providing that these fires do not smoulder, causing smoke to ascend and to cloud the vision and suffocate the mind.

As the fires of lust are controlled and the veil remains intact, its fabrics become cleansed and purified by the action of the mind contemplating the ideal world. The mind is then not limited by the veil. Its thought is free from the warp and the woof of the veil and it learns to contemplate things as they are rather than as given form and tendency by the veil. So old age may ripen into wisdom instead of passing into senility.

Then, as intellect becomes strong and divinity more evident, the fabric of the veil may be so worn that it may be laid aside consciously. When with another birth the veil is taken again, vision may be strong enough and power great enough in early life, to use the forces held within the veil for the purpose to which they are ultimately destined, and death may be overcome.

The veil of Isis, sex, brings to mortals all their misery, suffering and despair. Through the veil of Isis come birth, disease, and death. The veil of Isis keeps us in ignorance, breeds envy, hatred, rancor and fear. With the wearing of the veil come fierce desire, phantasies, hypocrisy, deceit and will-o'-the-wisp ambitions.

Should, then, sex be denied, renounced, or suppressed in order to tear away the veil which shuts us out from the world of knowledge? To deny, renounce or suppress one's sex is to do away with the very means of growing out of it. The fact that we are wearers of the veil should prevent us from denying it; to renounce sex would be a refusal of one's duties and responsibility, to suppress one's sex is to attempt a lie and to destroy the means of learning wisdom from the lessons which the duties and responsibilities of sex teach, and of understanding the forms which Isis shows us as pictures on her veil and as object lessons of life.

Acknowledge the wearing of the veil, but do not make the wearing of it the object of life. Assume the responsibilities of the veil, but do not become entangled in its meshes so as to lose sight of the purpose and become intoxicated with the poetry of the veil. Perform the duties of the veil, with the veil as an instrument of action, but unattached to the instrument and the result of action. The veil cannot be torn away, it must be worn away. By looking steadily through it it fades away and allows the union of the knower with the known.

The veil protects and shuts out from the mind of man influences and entities which would be very harmful in his present ignorance of the powers of the veil. The veil of sex prevents the mind from seeing and coming into contact with the invisible powers and entities that swarm about him, and which, like birds of the night, are attracted by the light his mind throws into their realms. The veil of sex is also a centre and playground for the forces of nature. Through it the circulation of the grades of matter through the different kingdoms is carried on. With the veil of sex, the soul may enter into the realms of nature, watch her operations, become acquainted with the processes of transformation and transmutation from kingdom to kingdom.

There are seven stages in the development of humanity through the veil of Isis. Four have been passed, we are in the fifth, and two are yet to come. The seven stages are: innocence, initiatory, selection, crucifixion, transmutation, purification and perfection. Through these seven stages, all souls must pass who have not obtained release from the cycle of reincarnations. These are the seven stages which have to do with the manifested worlds, they mark the involution of souls into matter to gain experience, overcome, instruct, and obtain freedom from matter in the completion of their evolutionary journey.

To those familiar with the meaning of the signs of the zodiac, it will be of assistance in understanding the stages or degrees mentioned, to know

how the seven are to be applied and understood by the zodiac, and also to know what signs are those to which the veil of Isis applies. In figure 7, the zodiac is shown with its twelve signs in their accustomed order. The veil of Isis begins at the sign of gemini (♊) in the unmanifested world and extends downward from its immaterial realm through the first sign of the manifested world, cancer (♋), breath, the first manifested through the spiritual world, through the spirit-matter of the sign leo, (♌), life. Becoming coarser and heavier in its descent through the astral world, represented by the sign of virgo (♍), form, it finally reaches its lowest point in the sign libra (♎), sex. Then it turns upward on its evolutionary arc, corresponding to its downward curve, through the sign of scorpio (♏), desire; sagittary (♐), thought; capricorn (♑), individuality; there is the end of all personal effort and individual duty. Passing again into the unmanifested it ends at the same phase, but at the opposite end of the plane from which it began in the sign aquarius (♒), soul.

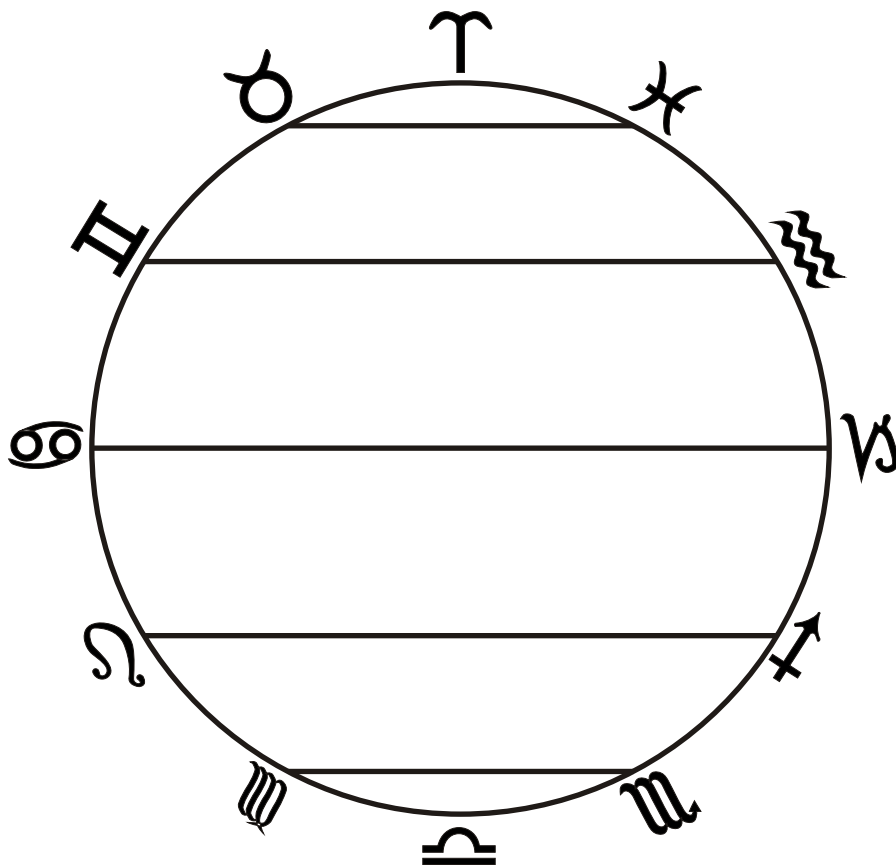


FIGURE 7.

The veil of Isis is draped over high and spiritual as well as the lowly and sensual worlds. It begins at the sign of gemini (♊), substance, the homogeneous primordial element, there securely fastened, and passes downward in its sweep. Isis on her high plane no mortal eye can see, as mortal eyes can never pierce the realm beyond the manifested; but when a soul has passed through all seven stages, it then, from the viewpoint of aquarius (♒), soul, perceives Isis as she is at gemini (♊), immaculate, pure, innocent.

The natures of the seven stages are indicated by the signs. Cancer (♋), breath, is that stage or degree at which all souls to take part in or having to do with the physical world begin; it is the world untouched by guile or impurity, the stage of innocence. There the ego is in its spiritual and god-like state, acting in accord with universal law it breathes out and puts forth from itself the spirit-matter, life, of the next stage or degree, leo (♌), and so likewise passing on the veil, spirit-matter builds itself into form.

Life as spirit-matter, is in the initial stage of sex. Beings at the initiatory stage of life are dual-sexed. In the following sign, virgo (♍), form, they enter the stage of selection, and the bodies which were dual now become separate in their sex. In this stage the human physical form is taken, and mind incarnates. Then begins the stage or degree of crucifixion, in which the ego passes through all the sorrow which saviors of every religion are said to have endured. This is the sign of equilibrium and balance in which it learns all the lessons of physical life: incarnated in a body of sex it learns all the lessons which sex can teach. Through all incarnations it learns through performance the duties of all family ties and must while still incarnate in a body of sex, pass through all other degrees. The physical bodies only of humanity are in this degree, but humanity as a race is in the next sign, scorpio (♏), desire, and degree of transmutation. In this sign the ego must transmute the desires from purely sexual affinity (♌), into the higher purposes of life. This is the sign and degree in which all passions and lusts must be transmuted, before it may perceive from its plane the inner forms and powers which stand within and behind the physical appearance.

The next degree is that in which the desire-forms are purified. This is done by thought, (♎). Then the currents and forces of life are perceived and guided by thought, through aspiration into the final human stage, where the human becomes immortal. The final and seventh stage is that of perfection, at the sign capricorn (♏), individuality; in which having overcome all lust, anger, vanity, envy and the myriad vices, having purified and cleansed the mind of all sensuous thoughts, and having realized the indwelling divinity, the mortal puts on immortality, through the perfective rites. All uses and purposes of the veil of Isis are then clearly perceived, and the immortal aids all those who are still struggling in their ignorance in the lower folds of the veil.



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