

The Apocalypse of St. John

Dorje Jinpa

*In the New Testament, John, the beloved disciple, was privileged to gain a cosmic picture and a true prophetic vision which he embodied in the Apocalypse...*¹

Abstract

This article provides an esoteric interpretation of *The Apocalypse of St. John*. Drawing upon the works of Master Djwhal Khul, the new Terra Lucida teachings,² and the writings of Rudolf Steiner it attempts to unveil the hidden archetypal symbolism used by St. John to express a portion of the incoming currents of evolution as they apply to the spiritualization, initiation and alchemical transformation of the Earth into a “Body of Light.”

Introduction

The Master Djwhal Khul, whose writings appear under the name of his amanuensis, Alice A. Bailey, and Rudolf Steiner, a seer of remarkable abilities, both state that St. John, the author of *The Book of Revelation*, was an initiate of the Mysteries. This is confirmed from the symbolism he uses throughout this work to veil higher truth, and from the name “Revelation,” which in the mystery traditions was used to represent a divine pronouncement or disclosure.

Like many great initiates, the death of St. John at Ephesus is shrouded in mystery. According to Calmet, the 17th century monk and professor of Biblical exegesis, St. John in his old age, “after bidding farewell to his disciples, entered alive into his own open tomb, and disappeared to someplace unknown to mortals.”³ This belief is shared by the Masons, an offspring of the ancient mystery schools, who hold that both St. Johns—St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist⁴—whose festivals they celebrate at the two solstices, are alive and active in the Great Work of spiritual evolution.

In the *Book of Revelation*, St. John tells us that while he was on the island of Patmos he was

visited by a great angel who took him up in spirit where, under the direction of the Christ, he was able to read clairvoyantly the archetypal images concerning a major world event soon to take place. These archetypal images express pictorially a portion of the incoming currents of evolution, symbolized in the text as a “river of living water” that flows out from the Throne of God, carrying the fiery impulse of the divine Plan, the will of the Father, to the Earth. Because the images of the divine Plan appear in the spiritual worlds long before they manifest in the physical world, St. John was able to read the future simply by reading these symbolic images.

To read these archetypal symbols accurately more than the intellect is required. They must be approached through a refined esoteric sense, a spiritual intuition that stems from the heart essence of wisdom. Master Djwhal Khul informs us that one of the best ways to develop this spiritual intuition is through the study and accurate interpretation of symbols.⁵

Rudolf Steiner maintained that the images of the Apocalypse were given by John in much the same form as he saw them. They were given without much interpretation to prevent them from being distorted and misused by those who are not yet ready spiritually to receive them. The deeper arcane teachings of the great

About the Author

Dorje Jinpa is the author of *A Synthesis of Alchemy* (out of print), *Mysteries of the Heart*, *The Coming Avatar of Synthesis* (free pamphlet), and *Heart Essence*, a translation of two of the five treatises by Bodhisattva Maitreya and the recently published *Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries*. He may be reached at DorjeJinpa@gmail.com.

Mysteries are not yet ready spiritually to receive them. The deeper arcane teachings of the great Mystery Schools have always been veiled to ensure that only those who had attained a certain degree of spiritual consciousness would understand the hidden meaning. Such a veiling also prevents, to some degree, the destructive tendency to crystallize and dogmatize the sacred teachings, a tendency which results in arrested growth, decline and retrogression.

According to Steiner, the *Book of Revelation* concerns both the initiation and spiritualization of the Earth, but because these two activities pertain to the secrets of initiation, he states that he cannot reveal their deeper significance to the public. However, in a series of lectures on the *Apocalypse of St. John*, he gives this hint: "The Earth together with all its beings will be changed into a heavenly body and physical substance as such will disappear."⁶ With the support of the esoteric writings of Djwhal Khul and the new *Terra Lucida Revelation*, it would seem that this great coming event pertains to the alchemical transformation of the Earth into a spiritualized "Body of Light." The cause of the event, we are told, is the cosmic initiation of our Planetary Logos, the Lord of the World. The *Apocalypse of St. John*, therefore, can be seen as a highly veiled prophecy revealing to "those with eyes to see," the effects we can expect as the direct result of this cosmic initiation. This then, might well be the meaning of the prophesy in the *Book of Revelation* concerning the descent of a "New Heaven and a New Earth."

From the writings of Djwhal Khul we learn that the Earth is fast becoming a "sacred planet." The reason for this, we are told, is because our Planetary Logos is in the process of taking a cosmic initiation. He also states that when a Planetary Logos reaches the status of a sacred planet transfiguration occurs.⁷ Transfiguration is a technical term meaning the transformation of the consciousness and its vehicles of expression, including the body, into their higher counterparts. He goes on to say that this transfiguration process, which takes place at the third initiation, becomes complete, for either a disciple or a Planetary Logos, at the fourth ini-

tiation,⁸ though of course the latter occurs on a much higher turn of the spiral. Our Planetary Logos, he tells us, is in the process of taking the fourth cosmic initiation and is therefore in the process of transforming His body of manifestation, the Earth, into a highly purified ethereal form.⁹ The statement made by St. John that "the Earth was made bright," probably refers to this process.¹⁰

In a veiled manner, Master Djwhal Khul states in at least two places in his writings that a sacred planet is an etheric planet, one without a lower dense counterpart. "The etheric planetary body is fundamentally *the* body in the case of the sacred planets..."¹¹

He indicates some of the effects that this initiation of the Logos will have upon the world:

The Logos of our scheme is preparing for initiation [the fourth] and hence the terrific tests and trials incident to life on our planet."¹² "This [cosmic] initiation requires the reorganization of the energies through and composing that 'center which we call the race of man.... As our planetary Logos nears the climaxing point of the initiation He is now undergoing... [it] will bring about great, necessary and unexpected changes."¹³

This cosmic initiation is having a profound effect upon the evolution of all the life-forms on the planet. We are told that when a human being takes the fourth initiation the dense physical body as well as the soul body is consumed in the united three fires of the body, mind, and spirit, leaving behind a spiritualized etheric body of light from which a new physical body can be created, or not, as needed. If we apply the law of analogy, "as above so below," we see that in the process of the Planetary Logos taking the fourth cosmic initiation and becoming a sacred planet, the dense physical body of the Earth would also be transformed in the Sacred Fire into its spiritualized etheric counterpart.

In February 1949, Alice Bailey asked the Master Djwhal Khul what he considered to be "the most important and significant events from the spiritual angle at the present time."¹⁴ He answered by giving the following veiled hint:

This question highlights a theme which I have just given anent the Great Renunciation [the fourth initiation] and its consequent Revelation or (as the Christian churches call them) the Crucifixion and Resurrection....¹⁵

The fact that Djwhal Khul is applying the fourth initiation to the most important world events of the present time would certainly seem to suggest that he is referring to the planetary initiation of the Logos. The Tibetan Master continues:

There are five great spiritual events in which all humanity is today sharing, and two which will take place later, when the first five have established their lasting effects. These events are based upon a forced and not upon a spontaneous renunciation (as is the case in the true experience of the Renunciation Initiation); they will lead nevertheless to a revelation which is imminent in its dawning and which will confront humanity before so very long.¹⁶

The fact that these events are forced may be due to the present extremely unhealthy state of the earth and to the preponderance of negative human karma.

A New Heaven on a New Earth

At the conclusion of the fourth initiation, whether human or planetary, the etheric body that remains is refined and spiritualized through the descent of spiritual energies from above and from the ascent of the subterranean fires from below. For a human being this process has been referred to as the “descent of the Holy Spirit” and the “rising of the kundalini.” In the *Book of Revelation* the spiritualization of the ethereal body of the Earth, the future home of the faithful, is symbolically depicted in the following words:

I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth; for the first heaven and earth had passed away, and the sea [the water element] was no more. And I saw the Holy City and the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.¹⁷ The marriage of the Lamb has come and his Bride has made Herself ready. It is granted Her

to be clothed in fine linen, bright and pure. The fine linen is due to the righteous deeds of the saints.¹⁸

The “Bride” can be interpreted as the “New Earth.” The “husband” and “Lamb” as the Christ and His Church, the spiritual Hierarchy, who will descend to and unite with the New Earth on etheric levels making of it a heaven on earth. According to Rudolf Steiner and the *Terra Lucida Revelation*, this externalization of the spiritual Hierarchy will take place primarily upon etheric levels. “The Holy One will come,” says Enoch, “and the Earth shall be rent asunder! He cometh with ten thousand of his holy ones!”¹⁹

In the Mysteries this level of spiritual initiation is called the “alchemical wedding,” for through the close union of the down-flowing spiritual energies with the essential energies of the human being on the physical plane; the vehicles involved are quickened and intensified to a point where transmutation occurs.

The Bride

Then came one of the seven angels... saying ‘Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.’ And the spirit carried me away to a great high mountain and showed me the Holy City and Jerusalem coming down from heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel...clear as crystal.²⁰

Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.²¹

The Bride is the New World of Ethereal Light into which will descend the heavenly Bridegroom, Christ and His Church, the spiritual Hierarchy. That She will “have the glory of God like the radiance of a rare jewel clear as crystal,” that “the Earth was made bright,” and “it is granted Her to be clothed in fine linen, bright and pure,” can be taken as symbolic references to the fact that the “New Earth” will be ethereal, radiant with light. The words of St. John concerning “the rainbow around the throne,” and the “Sea of Glass” would also refer to the radiant light of the ethereal plane. The fact that those who will someday live in these cities will be “clad in white

garments,” can be taken to mean that they will be living in their etheric bodies.

This new ethereal world, we are told, will have three primary cities or centers, which in the *Book of Revelation* are called the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, and the City Foursquare. According to Djwhal Khul, the “Holy City” represents the head center of the planetary etheric body and is also called Shamballa. The “New Jerusalem,” he says, is the planetary heart center, the future home of the Christ and His Church (the spiritual Hierarchy and the seven ashrams). The “City Foursquare,” he tells us, refers to the planetary throat center.²²

The River of Living Water and the Tree of Life

*Then he showed me the River of the Living Water, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb through the middle of the street of the [Holy] City, on either side of the river the Tree of Life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree for the healing of nations.*²³

The River of Living Water can be said to symbolize the incoming flow of spiritual energies as a mighty evolutionary current streaming forth from the Throne of God, Shamballa, and from the Lamb, the Christ, into manifestation on the earth. The living water contains the “fiery impulse” to evolve according to the divine Plan. The river of life carries the Plan, the will of the Logos, into manifestation on the earth.

The Tree of Life, which has its roots in heaven and its fruit on the etheric levels, is the pathway along which the River of Living Water descends. It represents the planetary correspondences to the sutratma and sushumna of a human being, the subtle life thread that connects the etheric body with its higher self in the higher worlds. The twelve pieces of fruit may represent twelve planetary etheric centers.

During initiation, whether human or planetary, the water of life, the Fire of the Holy Spirit, descends along the trunk of the tree, through the crown center (the Holy City) to the centers and the etheric body as a whole. For a human

being the River of Life is the Antahkarana, the connecting link between the pilgrim in the body and the three-fold Spirit. Master Djwhal Khul informs us that:

Upon the Path of Initiation, the monadic will (of which the Egoic will is the reflection and the individual self-will is the distortion) is gradually transmitted, via the antahkarana, direct to the man upon the physical plane. This produces the higher correspondence of... transmutation and transformation... This is the ‘burning bush’ or the burning Tree of Life of Biblical symbolism.²⁴

During planetary initiation the spiritual Fire descends to the Holy City, the planetary Crown Chakra, and from there continues down through the Tree of Life to all the centers, where cyclically, once a month at the time of the full moon, it flows out to humanity and the nations of the world.

The Inner Government of the World

The invisible government of the world, the spiritual Hierarchy, is represented in the *Book of the Revelation* as:

- 1) He who sits upon the throne of God, elsewhere known as the Lord of the World.
- 2) The Lamb of God, the Christ, the head of the spiritual Hierarchy.
- 3) The seven Spirits before the throne, refer to the seven Planetary Logoi, the seven Heavenly Men, the Lords of the Seven Rays, the seven Chohans and seven churches or ashrams.
- 4) The twenty-four Elders around the throne of God.
- 5) The four angels who dispense divine justice also called the “four creatures,” the “four horsemen,” the “four Maharajas,” and the four Lords of Karma.

Lord of the World

At once I was in the spirit and lo, a throne stood in heaven... and He who sat upon it appeared like jasper and carnelian, and

*round the throne was a rainbow that shone like an emerald.... And the twenty-four Elders and the four creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated upon the throne.*²⁵

According to Djwhal Khul the term “God” here pertains to Sanat Kumara, the Lord of the World, the Eternal Youth and the Creator. His throne is the Holy City, Shamballa, the crown center of the etheric body of the Earth. He goes on to say that Sanat Kumara is manifesting on the etheric Earth through a very high level etheric vehicle in Shamballa.

The Seven Spirits before the Throne

*I saw a Lamb standing as though it has been slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out to the earth.*²⁶

The Lamb of God is the Christ. The seven horns are the seven powers, one for each of the seven rays. The seven eyes symbolize the seven watchful Chohans, the lords of the seven rays who are also the heads of the seven churches or ashrams. These seven spirits of God, as the seven powers and the seven eyes of the Christ, are to be “sent out to the earth.” In the writings of Alice A. Bailey, this event is called the “externalization of the Hierarchy.”

The Four Angels of the Four Directions

*And around the Throne on each side are four living creatures, full of eyes, in front and back: the first like a lion [♁], the second like an ox [♂], the third with the face of a man [♁], and the fourth flying like an eagle [♁]. Each of the four living creatures had six wings....*²⁷

The four creatures (elsewhere in the *Book of Revelation* they are called “the four angels”) symbolically represent the four Lipikas, the four Lords of Karma, who are responsible for enforcing spiritual law, administering justice according to the divine Plan, and keeping a certain level of equilibrium for the Earth. In their capacity as dispensers of divine Justice they are also called the “four horsemen” who fly out on the four winds (energy currents) from the four directions to “square” things with the divine Plan. They have eyes in front and back as they see both the future and the past. Their 24 wings (6 x 4), sometime called the “wings of time,” may pertain to the cycles of time from which we derive the 24-hour day. The symbolism of wings becomes apparent through the clairvoyant perception of the lower correspondence of these light rays as issuing from the shoulder centers of initiates and devas (angels) of a certain degree.

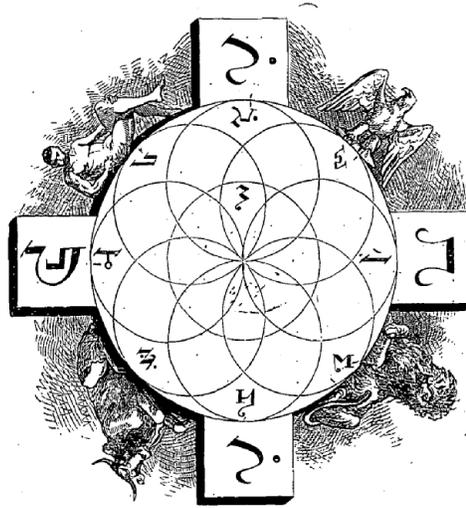


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Figure 1. A depiction of a winged Deva by Godfrey Hodson

In the Mysteries these four creatures, which are under the rule of four zodiacal signs, Leo, Aquarius, Scorpio, and Taurus, represent the Fixed Cross upon which the disciple is karmically tested before he or she can take initiation. The Fixed Cross has been described as a tran-

sition in consciousness and an initiation of the soul by the fires of God. It is called the Fixed Cross because the man is stretched upon it by the directed choice and immovable intent of his soul.



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Figure 2. The Fixed Cross

In the Egyptian Mysteries the mystical four is symbolized by the Sphinx, who guards the entrance to the house of initiation, the Great Pyramid.

The Master Djwhal Khul gives us the following information concerning these four spiritual agents or dispensers of the law.

Besides these main presiding Personalities in the Council Chamber at Shamballa, there is a group of four Beings Who are the representatives upon the planet of the four Maharajas, or the four Lords of Karma in the solar system, who are specifically concerned with the evolution of the human kingdom at the present time. These four are connected with:

1. The distribution of karma, or human destiny, as it affects individuals, and through the individuals, the groups.
2. The care and tabulation of the akashic records. They are concerned with the Halls of Records, or with the "keeping of the book," as it is called in the Christian Bible; they are known in the Christian world as the recording angels.

3. The participation in solar councils. They alone have the right during the world cycle to pass beyond the periphery of the planetary scheme, and participate in the councils of the Solar Logos. Thus they are literally planetary mediators, representing our Planetary Logos and all that concerns Him in the greater scheme of which He is but a part. Co-operating with these karmic Lords are the large groups of initiates and devas who occupy themselves with the right adjustment of, a) World karma, b) Racial karma, c) National karma, d) Group karma, e) Individual karma, and who are responsible to the Planetary Logos for the correct manipulation of those forces and building agencies which bring in the right Egos on the different rays at the correct times and seasons.³⁰

The Seven Churches

*I heard a great voice saying, "What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia."*³¹

The "seven churches," though veiled behind the names of the seven towns that formed

a circle near Patmos, symbolically represent what Djwhal Khul calls the “seven ashrams of the spiritual Hierarchy.” In the ancient mysteries, they were called the seven Mystery Schools and the seven Lodges of the Great White Brotherhood. They represent the outer expressions of the seven evolutionary currents or rays, each ruled by a sacred planet and each governed by an angel and a Chohan or Ray Lord. In St. John’s time the religion in the area around the island of Patmos was a Phrygian sect of the Greek Mysteries. Christian churches had not yet been established to any degree in the seven towns that carry the names of the seven churches.

The letters to the seven churches or ashrams show the strengths and weaknesses of the brethren of these seven schools or ashrams according to the ray qualities that govern them. The term “Asia” is a blind for the “East,” a directional symbol meaning the source of the rising sun, the source of wisdom.

Everything that is seen and heard in St. John’s vision is thought to pertain to the future. This includes the seven Ashrams of the Hierarchy, which according to Master Djwhal Khul are only accessible to initiates of the third degree, but which will in the future appear on the New Earth with the return of the Christ. These secret Lodges will, we are told, provide the training ground for disciples of the Great Brotherhood, to prepare them for initiation. Therefore, “What thou seest, write in a book for the seven churches,” refers to that which was written specifically for disciples of these seven ashrams.

A deeper understanding of the seven churches can be gained by comparing them with the seven ashrams and the corresponding seven rays, which define them, as explained by Master Djwhal Khul.³²

Opening the Seven Seals

*And I saw in the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back. It was sealed with seven seals. And I saw a powerful angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”*³³

*“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain [the Christ].”*³⁴

The “seven seals” express the seven stages of the application of the divine Plan as it pertains to the transformation of the world. To open a seal is to reveal that stage of the process. While we don’t know the time frame for this event, the stages may correspond somewhat as follows:

1. Opening the first seal reveals that due to negative karma the bodies of approximately one-fourth of the people will be destroyed from famine, poverty, wars, and natural disasters.
2. The opening of the second seal reveals that the elect of those who pass on will be given white robes (pure, spiritualized etheric bodies) to await their comrades who are still living in dense physical bodies, who will also receive white garments, etheric bodies, when their turn comes.
3. A great earthquake will occur. It will seem like all the stars are falling from the sky, the sun will turn black, the moon red, and all the mountains, land, and sky will disappear from view. The elect will then be given white (etheric) garments to stand before the throne of God.
4. All 144,000 will stand together in white robes (bodies of light) before the throne of the Logos. They will experience no more hunger or thirst but will be given nourishment as living waters (prana) directly from the sun.
5. Those that remain on the dying dense physical earth will experience the fire of karmic retribution.

*The New Jerusalem which cometh down from heaven, first in the hearts and lives of the followers of the Christ and latter for humanity and the world.*³⁵

Conclusion

We might conclude from this article that *The Book of Revelation* and the *Scroll with Seven Seals*, which it contains, gives in symbols the blueprints for the divine Plan concerning the initiation of the Planetary Logos as well as the effects that this profound event will

have upon humanity and the world. And while the intensity and frequency of world upheavals and natural cataclysms seems to indicate that we are approaching close to this event the timetable is not given. There is some indication in the *Terra Lucida teachings* that this event will coincide with the beginning of the new age. This probably refers to the Age of Aquarius, which according to my best calculations begins sometime in the first half of the twenty-first century. Master Djwhal Khul mentions the year 2025 several times throughout his writing as a time of *major* importance in the history of humanity. He also states that the externalization of the Hierarchy, the coming Avatar of Synthesis,³⁶ the reappearance of Christ, and the ‘restoration of the Mysteries are all a part of the one great event for which all men wait. He adds further: “It will be obvious, if you have considered my words carefully, that a great spiritual movement is under way—perhaps the greatest of all time!”³⁷

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A Word Problem* (1950; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1978) 173.

² Terra Lucida (World of Light) is the name given to a series of texts about the ascension of the Earth into a subtler realm for the coming cycle of evolution. Based on transmissions from the inner world, these texts address some of the effects of the Initiation now being taken by Sanat Kumara, including a shift into the etheric plane for the continued unfoldment of human and planetary consciousness. (For more information contact Nancy Seifer: nfseifer@verizon.net)

³ See *Mankind: Their Origin and Destiny*, by Arthur Dyot Thomson (1872; reprint; Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2010), 310.

⁴ See for example, *The Two St. John's* at: http://www.themasonictrowel.com/Articles/Symbolism/st_johns_files/two_st_johns.htm (accessed November 18, 2014).

⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (1950; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1978), 9.

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, *Apocalypse of Saint John* (1943; reprint; London: Anthroposophic Press, 1961), 145.

⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), 207.

⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and Initiations* (1961; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 354.

⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (1961; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 331.

¹⁰ Revelation 18:1, (NOAB).

¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), 104-105. (Emphasis in the original).

¹² *Ibid.*, 374

¹³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 238-239

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 741

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 741

¹⁷ Revelation 21:1, (NOAB).

¹⁸ Revelation 19:7, (NOAB).

¹⁹ The Book of Enoch, XC 18, Joseph Lumpkin (Blountsville, AL: Fifth Estate, Inc., 2011).

²⁰ Revelation 9:1-1, (NOAB).

²¹ Revelation 19:10, (NOAB).

²² Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of The Hierarchy* (1961; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 107.

²³ Revelation 22:1, (NOAB).

²⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and Initiations*, 31.

²⁵ Revelation 6:16, (NOAB).

²⁶ Revelation 5:6, (NOAB).

²⁷ Revelation 4: 6, (NOAB).

²⁸ “A Deva or “Mountain God,” as perceived by Geoffrey Hodson, in *The Kingdom of the Gods* (1952; reprint; Adyar India: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1987), 220. This image is in the public domain.

²⁹ P. Christian, *Histoire de la magie et du monde surnaturel* 1890 page 170. The letters depicted on this ‘Rose-Cross’ are taken from ‘Alphabet of the Magi’ where each letter represents a principle. The letters on the four arms of the cross find a correspondence in the letters IN-RI.

³⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar* (1961; reprint; New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 40-41.

³¹ Revelation 1:1, (NOAB).

³² See *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I & II, by Alice A. Bailey.

³³ Revelation 5:1-2, (NOAB).

³⁴ Revelation 5:12, (NOAB).

³⁵ Harriette Augusta Curtiss, *The Key to the Universe* (1917; reprint; Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2011), 142

³⁶ See my article, the *Coming Avatar of Synthesis* at: <http://www.souledout.org/newworldreligion/avatars/avatarofsynthesis.pdf>.

³⁷ Alice Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 649.