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PAPERS (3014)**

BOX 16

FOLDER 28

THE NEW AGE

CHRISTMAS

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"OH, IT ISN'T THE HOLLY, IT ISN'T THE SNOW,
IT ISN'T THE TREE, OR THE FIRELIGHT'S GLOW:
IT'S THE FLAME THAT GOES FROM THE HEARTS OF MEN,
WHEN CHRISTMAS LOVE IS ABROAD AGAIN.
SO GREAT THE SHINING, SO PURE THE BLAZE,
IT REACHES BEYOND THROUGH THE STELLAR WAYS,
AND THIS IS THE SIGNAL THAT MAKES THEM KNOW
WE HAVE HEARTHS AND HOMES AND CHEER BELOW.
WHY, GODS AND ANGELS WALK BY THE LIGHT
THAT STREAMS FROM THE EARTH ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT!"

(ANGELA MORGAN)

HERS IS A COSMIC VISION OF WHAT IS GOING ON AT
CHRISTMAS TIME. BUT HOW BROAD AND WIDESPREAD IS
THIS VISION OF THE NEW AGE CHRISTMAS?

IT IS A MAGIC TIME...THE SINGING OF CAROLS, THE
TRIMMING OF THE TREE, THE CANDELIGHT AND TINSEL,
THE SPRIGS OF MISTLETOE, THE LIGHTS OF RADIO CITY,
THE LAVISH DISPLAYS OF FIFTH AVE. STORE WINDOWS,
~~THE SANTA CLAUSES RINGING THEIR LITTLE BELLS ON
STREET CORNERS (GIVING DIGNITY TO THE ART OF PAN-
HANDLING...OR "POT HANDLING")~~ --- AND CHRISTMAS
CRECHES EVERYWHERE - RETELLING THE STORY OF JOSEPH
AND MARY AND THE STABLE...AND THE WISE MEN AND
SHEPHERDS AND THE STAR OF THE EAST.

PURE MAGIC! BUT LIKE ALL MAGIC THERE IS ILLUSION
AND SLEIGHT OF HAND INVOLVED. FOR THE MISTLETOE
IS QUITE LIKELY PLASTIC...SYMBOLIZING THE GREAT
FACADE OF CHRISTMAS THAT HAS BEEN ERECTED LIKE A

HOLLYWOOD SET - TAKEN OUT OF ATTICS AND STOREROOMS AND CAREFULLY ASSEMBLED AT THIS SEASON SO THAT MOST PERSONS MAY ^{ONLY} DUTIFULLY AND SLAVISHLY GO THROUGH THE ANNUAL CHARADE.

NOW, LET ME HASTEN TO SAY THAT I BELIEVE IN CHRISTMAS...AND AT OUR HOUSE WE BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN AND ERECT THE FACADE AND ENGAGE IN THE CHARADE WITH RENEWED ENTHUSIASM. I SUPPOSE THE REASON IT COMES EASY IS THAT WE REMIND OURSELVES THAT IT IS A CHARADE...A GAME WE PLAY...WITH A BEAUTIFUL INNER MEANING. AS ANGELA MORGAN SAYS, "IT ISN'T THE HOLLY OR THE TREE OR THE FIRELIGHT'S GLOW...IT IS THE FLAME THAT GOES FROM THE HEARTS OF MEN..."

IT IS LIKE UNCOVERING A ROAD MARKER. IT WAS INTENDED TO POINT TO SOMETHING, BUT IT LOSES ITS MEANING IF WE SLAVISHLY ERECT THE MARKER YEAR AFTER YEAR WITH NO ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW ITS DIRECTION.

(JESUS) SAID, "FOLLOW ME" NOT "WORSHIP ME"

THE ORIENTALS HAVE A SAYING, "THE TEACHER POINTS TO THE TRUTH...THE STUDENT WORSHIPS THE POINTER"

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE CHRISTMAS POINTER? THE AVERAGE PERSON, IF HE COULD RISE ABOVE THE "SANTA CLAUS SYNDROME", WOULD PROBABLY SAY, "IT'S THE BIRTHDAY OF JESUS!" BUT IF THERE IS ONE THING DECEMBER 25th IS NOT IT IS THE BIRTH DATE OF JESUS. THE ACTUAL DATE OF JESUS' BIRTH IS UNKNOWN. THE DATE OF DEC. 25th WAS SET IN THE 4th CENTURY BY AN OBSCURE ROMAN HISTORIAN - QUITE ARBITRARILY.

IN ROMAN MYTHOLOGY IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE UNIVERSE WAS ORIGINALLY CREATED AT THE VERNAL EQUINOX: MARCH 25th. BY SIMILAR REASONING IT WAS HELD THAT THE INCEPTION OF ~~THE~~ THE NEW CREATION IN CHRIST ~~THE~~ MUST HAVE BEEN ON THE SAME DAY OF THE YEAR, WHICH WOULD ~~BRING~~ BRING HIS BIRTH NINE MONTHS LATER: DECEMBER 25th. WITHOUT ANY QUESTION THE DATE WAS INFLUENCED BY THE ROMAN FEAST OF SATURNALIA, WHICH OCCURRED AT THIS TIME.

AS STUDENTS OF THIS NEW INSIGHT IN TRUTH ~~WE~~ ~~MUST~~ BE MATURE ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH THE FACT THAT THE WHOLE CHRISTMAS STORY HAS EVOLVED OUT OF LEGENDS THAT WERE HIGHLY IDEALIZED THROUGH THE PASSING YEARS... AND THERE IS PROBABLY LITTLE THAT IS HISTORICALLY ACCURATE.

▶ IT IS REALLY NOT ALL THAT ~~THE~~ IMPORTANT WHEN JESUS WAS BORN ~~THE~~. HE DID NOT COME TO PROCLAIM HIMSELF - BUT TO CELEBRATE THAT ~~THE~~ GOD-POSSIBILITY WITHIN EVERY PERSON. HE WAS NOT TRYING TO TELL US OF HIS DIVINITY, MAKING HIM THE GREAT EXCEPTION: BUT TO TELL US OF OUR DIVINITY, SHOWING US THAT IN HIS OVERCOMING THERE IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THE "I AM" REACHING ITS FULL PERSONAL EXPRESSION IN MAN.

• THUS THE GREAT EVENT IN THE LIFE OF JESUS WAS NOT HIS ~~BIRTH~~ BIRTH AT ALL, BUT THE AWAKENING THAT TOOK PLACE WITHIN HIM DURING THE YEARS OF HIS GROWTH... THE DISCOVERY OF THE DIVINE DIMENSION WITHIN HIM, THUS IN ALL PERSONS.

'YE ARE GOD... Sons of...'

'ALL THAT I DO YOU CAN DO'

SO WE SEE THAT THE STORY OF THE LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM ON THAT NIGHT OF NIGHTS HAS BEEN OVER-SENTAMENTALIZED, ~~AND~~ AND THUS MADE UNREAL. IT IS LIKE A MOVIE THAT WE WATCH FOR AN HOUR... HAVE A GOOD CRY OVER... AND THEN GO OUT INTO LIVES OF DRABNESS AND ROUTINE, NOT THE LEAST BIT CHANGED BY THE EXPERIENCE.

MEDIEVAL MYSTIC POET ~~THE~~ ANGELUS SILESII SANG OF THIS: "THOUGH CHRIST A THOUSAND TIMES IN BETHLEHEM ~~BE~~ BORN, IF HE'S NOT BORN IN THEE, THY SOUL IS ALL FORLORN."

TURN TO YOUR SCRIPTURES AND YOU WILL QUICKLY NOTE THAT WE HAVE ~~A~~ PRECIOUS LITTLE ~~TO~~ GO ON IN A LITERAL SENSE. THERE ARE TWO ACCOUNTS: LUKE 2:, AND MATT. 2: TWO ~~ENTIRELY~~ DIFFERENT ~~STORIES~~ STORIES. ONE OF THEM SHOWS THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE INTELLECT AND ROYALTY, WHERE THREE MAGI (THREE KINGS) SAW A STAR IN THE EAST AND FOLLOWED ~~TO~~ ~~THE~~ THE PLACE WHERE JESUS LAY. (NOT IN A STABLE) "THEY CAME INTO THE HOUSE AND FELL DOWN AND WORSHIPPED HIM, BRINGING THE ROYAL GIFTS OF GOLD, FRANK-INCENSE, AND MYRRH."

THE LUKE STORY REVEALS THE PERSPECTIVE OF PASTORAL SIMPLICITY: SHEPHERDS IN THE FIELD, INSPIRED WITH AN ANGEL WHO TOLD ~~THEM~~ THEM OF THE COMING BIRTH OF JESUS. THE ACCOUNT OF MARY AND JOSEPH COMING TO BETHLEHEM SAYS ~~CRYPTICALLY~~ CRYPTICALLY, "WHILE THEY WERE THERE SHE BROUGHT/FORTH HER FIRSTBORN SON... ~~AND~~ AND LAID HIM IN A MANGER, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN." (NOTHING ABOUT A HARD-HEARTED INNKEEPER.)

IT IS INTERESTING HOW WE TEND TO READ INFERENCES INTO SCRIPTURAL WORDS ~~■~~ ACCORDING A CONTEMPORARY ~~FR~~ME OF REFERENCE. FOR INSTANCE THE WORD "INN" CONJURES UP SOMETHING LIKE AN ENGLISH PUB, WITH A BAR FILLED WITH LOUD- LAUGHING REVELERS, AND A HOTEL OF ACCOMODATIONS.

*CARAVAN
MOTELS* THE FACT IS THE BIBLICAL ~~TER~~M INN MEANS A "KHĀN" WHICH WAS LITTLE MORE THAN ~~A~~ A PROTECTIVE ENCLAVE, ~~WITH~~ WITH FOUR WALLS. KHĀNS WERE BUILT AND PLACED A DAY'S JOURNEY APART ON THE ROADS FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICH0, AND FROM JERUSALEM TO DAMASCUS, ETC. THE PEOPLE USED DONKEYS OR CAMELS, AND WITH MULES TO CARRY ~~■~~ THEIR PROVISIONS OR WARES. BY GOING INTO THE KHĀN AT NIGHT THEY HAD SOME PROTECTION FROM WILD ~~AN~~IMALS OR THIEVES. THE TRAVELERS, BY AND LARGE STILL CAMPED OUT ON THE GROUND.

SINCE THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE KHĀN, JOSEPH ~~AND~~ AND MARY, ACCORDING TO TRADITION, FOUND REFUGE IN ONE OF THE ~~CAVES~~ IN THE VICINITY. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE INNKEEPER, ~~■~~ CONTRARY TO THE LEGEND ~~OF~~ HIS COLD RECEPTION, MAY HAVE WARMLY LED THEM TO A CAVE WHICH WAS MUCH BETTER AS SHELTER. AGAIN, WE HAVE LOOKED BACK WITH DISDAIN ON ~~■~~ THEIR HAVING TO BE WITH THEIR ANIMALS. BUT IN THE OLD WORLD PEOPLE TOOK BETTER CARE OF THEIR ANIMALS THAN THEMSELVES.

(stable) The story says the infant jesus was laid in a manger...it is a feeding troughs, which made a very serviceable crib.

LOOKING AT THIS NATIVITY STORY FROM A METAPHYSICAL OR PERSONALLY SYMBOLIC SENSE, WE SEE THAT IT IS THE STORY OF ~~THE~~ THE BIRTH INTO CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE IDEA OF ~~THE~~ CHRIST OR DIVINE IDENTITY.

➔ THE BIBLE HAS TWO GREAT MESSAGES: INVOLUTION OF THE GOD-MAN (FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS) MAN CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE-LIKENESS. AND EVOLUTION, THE PROGRESSIVE UNFOLDING OF THIS GOD-POTENTIAL IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE. IT IS A LONG WAY TO THE PROMISED LAND.

WE ARE TOLD, "IT IS NOT YET MANIFEST WHAT MAN SHALL BE." MAN HAS GONE THROUGH ~~MANY~~ STAGES, BUT THE NEXT STAGE IS THE STEP UPWARD INTO COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS (TEILHARD'S "OMEGA POINT"). THIS STEP COULD TAKE EONS OF TIME. BUT JESUS DISCOVERED and DEMONSTRATED THE CHRIST POTENTIAL, WHICH ACCELERATED THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS FOR ALL PERSONS. BREAK THROUGH

<sup>not
always</sup> JESUS REVEALED TO ~~ALL~~ ALL OF US THAT WE ARE ACTUALLY BUTTERFLIES. HOWEVER BY AND LARGE HIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN IGNORED, FOR RELIGIONS HAVE INSISTED THAT WE ARE LOWLY WORMS, AND ONLY JESUS IS THE BUTTERFLY.

▶ THE NATIVITY REVEALS TWO ROADS TO BETHLEHEM: IN THE LUKE STORY OF SHEPHERDS IN THE FIELDS... AND THE MATTHEW STORY OF WISE MEN FROM THE EAST. WHEN YOU REALIZE THAT BRUTAL WARS HAVE BEEN FOUGHT AND BITTER ARGUMENTS ARE STILL WAGED CONCERNING THE LITERAL AUTHENTICITY OF EVERY WORD IN THE BIBLE... YOU SEE HOW THESE TWO ACCOUNTS CREATE A CHALLENGE.

THOUGH MOST PERSONS TODAY ARE TOO/SENTIMENTALLY INVOLVED WITH THE WHOLE STORY OF SHEPHERDS AND WISE MEN AND MANGER SCENES AND ANGELS AND STARS, TO ACCEPT THE FACT, AS BIBLICAL SCHOLARS HAVE LONG ACCEPTED, THAT THE TWO STORIES ARE ACTUALLY "EMBELLISHMENTS" OF FOLK POETRY AND LEGEND.

ONLY IN A PERSONALLY SYMBOLIC/SENSE DO ~~THEY~~ ^{THEY} HAVE ANY RELEVANCE... ~~THEY ARE NOT~~ IN OTHER WORDS THERE IS SOMETHING OF THE SHEPHERD AND SOMETHING OF THE WISE MEN IN ALL OF US.

THE SHEPHERDS REPRESENT SIMPLE FAITH AND FEELING, WHICH EXPERIENCES THE "ANGELS" OF INTUITION AND INNER LIGHT. THERE IS THAT OF US THAT COMES TO THE EXPERIENCE OF TRUTH BY FEELING ALONE... THE CHILD-LIKE ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA, "I AM A CHILD OF GOD."

WHEN THE ANGEL FIRST APPEARED TO THE SHEPHERDS, THEIR FIRST REACTION WAS "THEY WERE SORE AFRAID!" IN OTHER WORDS IN HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS IT SEEMED TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. THAT IS THE TRAGEDY OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS... WE THINK SOME GOOD THING IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE... BUT TROUBLE NEVER SURPRISES US. WE REGRET IT, BUT WE DO NOT THINK IT IS TOO BAD TO BE TRUE. THIS... BECAUSE WE HAVE A CATERPILLAR CONSCIOUSNESS. THE ANGEL OR GOD-THOUGHT TELLS US OF BUTTERFLIES, BUT WE ARE SORE AFRAID.

THE ANGEL SAID, "FEAR NOT, FOR I BRING YOU GREAT TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY!" SUDDENLY THEY SAID "YES" TO THE ANGEL, AND THERE BROKE OUT ~~HEAVENLY MUSIC~~ HEAVENLY MUSIC... IT IS ALWAYS PRESENT WITHIN

THUS THE SHEPHERDS WENT AND FOUND THE PLACE WHERE THE YOUNG CHILD LAY... AND THEY RETURNED GLORIFYING AND PRAISING GOD FOR ALL THEY HAD HEARD AND SEEN. THUS WE ACCEPT THE IDEA OF OUR DIVINE IDENTITY IN FAITH AND FEELING.

THE MATTHEW STORY OF THE WISE MEN OF THE EAST SYMBOLIZES OUR INTELLECT, THE WAY OF SCIENCE AND REASON.

TRADITION HAS IT THAT THE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST WERE FOLLOWERS OF ZOROASTER WHO HAD PROPHESED THAT A GREAT NEW PROPHET WOULD REBORN WHERE A CERTAIN STAR WOULD LEAD. THE STAR WAS PROBABLY MORE AN ASTROLOGICAL COMPUTATION THAN A LITERAL HEAVENLY BODY.

|| THERE IS THAT OF US THAT COMES TO TRUTH THROUGH INTELLECTUAL STUDY. THERE IS A CERTAIN LOGIC TO THE IDEA OF THE ~~HUMAN~~ ^{HUMAN} POTENTIAL, WHICH LEADS TO THE BETHLEHEM PLACE IN CONSCIOUSNESS --

BUT THE SIGNIFICANT THING ABOUT THE STORY IS THAT THERE IS A CONVERGENCE OF THE TWO -- OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION, OF FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE, OF PRAYER AND WORK, OF FEELING AND THOUGHT.

WE ARE COMING MORE AND MORE TO A TIME IN WORLD HISTORY WHERE THE CONCEPTS OF TWO UNIVERSES -- THAT OF THE MATERIALIST AND THAT OF THE RELIGIONIST CANNOT CO-EXIST.

BUT FOR YOU AND ME, THE NEW AGE CHRISTMAS CALLS US TO FOLLOW THE STAR OF WISDOM, AND LISTEN TO THE ANGEL VOICES OF INTUITION -- AND TO COME TO THE PLACE WHERE THE YOUNG CHILD LAY WITHIN OUR OWN SOUL.

➔ THE STORY EMPHASIZES THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE INN. DO YOU ALWAYS MAKE ROOM FOR SPIRITUAL THINGS OR ARE YOU TOO PREOCCUPIED? AT THIS SEASON HOW MANY PERSONS GET CAUGHT UP IN WHAT PHILIP WULIE CALLS ~~THE EXTENSIVE SEEKING~~

"THE HOPPED-UP, PRESSURE-LADEN, STATUS-SEEKING, COMPETITIVE DEGRADATION OF CHRISTMAS"

AS A MATTER OF FACT, MANY PERSONS GET SO INVOLVED IN THE EXTENSALS OF CHRISTMAS THAT THERE IS NO ROOM OR TIME TO LET THE BEAUTY OF THE CHRIST UNFOLD. CHRISTMAS BECOMES SYNONYMOUS WITH PRESSURE, WITH WORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND: "HOW GLAD I WILL BE WHEN IT IS OVER." THUS THERE IS A LITTLE OF THE "BAH, HUMBUG IN ALL OF US!"

▶ AS YOU MAY KNOW I HAVE BEEN ON A CRUSADE FOR YEARS TO GIVE A FAIR HEARING TO EBENEZER SCROOGE OF DICKENS "CHRISTMAS CAROL". HE HAS HAD A BUM RAMP, BECOMING THE CARICATURE OF THE MEAN, THE SELFISH, THE MATERIALISTIC PERSON. BUT HIS STORY IS ACTUALLY THE STORY OF METAMORPHOSIS, A DRAMATIC GROWTH EXPERIENCE - THE CATERPILLAR BECOMING THE BUTTERFLY BEFORE OUR VERY EYES.

WE TEND TO HOLD THE PREJUDICED VIEW OF HOW HE WAS, FORGETTING THE PICTURE OF WHAT HE DRAMATICALLY BECAME: SENSITIVE EMPLOYER. AND

second father to little ~~T~~iny-Tim. THE STORY ENDS,
"SCROOGE KNEW HOW TO KEEP CH~~R~~ISTMAS" ~~4~~ DO YOU??

SCROOGE~~1~~ IS ~~A~~AN EXCELLENT SYMBOL OF WHAT CHRISTMAS
IS ABOUT... BOTH THE BEFORE AND AFTER OF HIS CHANGE.
IF WE CAN MAKE ROOM IN OUR HEART FOR THE AWAKENING
OF THE~~1~~CHRISTMAS CONSCIOUSNESS, A TRANSFORMATION
CAN MANIFEST AS DRAMATICALLY FOR US AS IT DID FOR
SCROOGE.

▶ THERE IS MAGIC IN THE CHRISTMAS CONSCIOUSNESS, AND
IF WE LET OURSELVES BE~~1~~ MOVED BY IT, THERE IS A CON-
TAGION TO ITS INFLUENCE. WONDERFUL THINGS CAN HAPPEN
IN THE MANGER OF OUR HEART: THE BIRTH OF A NEW
AWARENESS OF SELF-WORTH, THE AWAKENING OF A HEALING
FLOW, THE STARR~~1~~ OF GUIDANCE IN THE EAST LEADING
US TO PROSPERITY AND CREATIVITY.

THE CHRISTMAS CONSCIOUSNESS IS A HEALING CONSCIOUSNESS, A PROSPERITY CONSCIOUSNESS, AND
MOST OF ALL, A LOVE CONSCIOUSNESS. F OR CHRISTMAS
IS LOVE.

{ WE COME TO EXPERIENCE THE BIRTH OF THE CH~~R~~IST IN
US BY EXPRESSING A DEEPER~~1~~ FEELING OF LOVE. JESUS
SAID, "IF YOU KNOW THESE/THINGS, BLESSED ARE YOU
IF YOU DO THEM~~1~~."

{ AS WE REFER TO OUR NATIONAL FALL FESTIVAL AS
"THANKSGIVING", SO WE~~1~~ MIGHT THINK OF CHRISTMAS
AS "LOVE-GIVING". FOR LOVE AND GIVING ARE TRADI-
TIONALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE SEASON.

{ "MERRY LOVEGIVING" TO EACH OF YOU, AND MAY YOU
AWAKEN A GREATER FLOW OF LOVE IN ALL THAT YOU~~1~~ GIVE.

SO REMEMBER, THE NEW AGE CHRISTMAS DEALS WITH YOU. THE CHRIST MASS OR CELEBRATION OF THE CHRIST DEALS WITH THE COMING OF THE CHRIST INTO CONSCIOUSNESS. JESUS WAS THE DISCOVERER AND REVEALER OF THE DIVINE LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE.

JESUS TAUGHT, AS ALL THE GREAT MYSTICS HAVE TAUGHT, THAT THE ONLY WAY ONE CAN CELEBRATE THE CHRIST IS THROUGH LOVE. IF WE GIVE EXPRESSION TO THE INNER FLOW OF COSMIC LOVE, AND AS HE PUT IT, "LOVE ONE ANOTHER", THEN WE ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE MANGER, AND THE STAR OF THE EAST IS GOING AHEAD OF US TO SHOW THE WAY.

A GREAT AFFIRMATION THAT HAS BEEN USED BY MANY PERSONS AT THIS SEASON OF THE YEAR:

"CHRIST IS BORN IN ME THIS DAY, HALLOWED BE HIS PRESENCE WITHIN ME."

THE TIMELESS ESSENCE OF CHRISTMAS KNOWS NO SEASON. IT IS NOT DECORATED CHRISTMAS TREES, CANDLES IN THE WINDOWS, STOCKINGS AND PRESENTS. IT IS NOT SINGING CAROLERS, THE SOUND OF BELLS, STREET DECORATIONS. ALL THESE ARE BUT OUTER SYMBOLS OF AN EFFORT OF MAN TO CRAM INTO ONE SEASON OF THE YEAR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE COMMANDMENT TO "LOVE THY NEIGHBOR". IT IS CHRISTMAS WHENEVER AND WHEREVER THE HUMAN HEART, TOUCHED BY HIM WHOSE EVER-LIVING SPIRIT IS THE EVER-GIVING SPIRIT, IS MOVED TO THE EXPRESSION OF UNSELFISH LOVE."