

OCTOBER GATHERING 2016 ~ THURSDAY EVENING

“And further, His Highness also explained that this cosmic substance, the Sacred Askokin, exists in general in the Universe chiefly blended with the sacred substances ‘Abrustdonis’ and ‘Helkdonis,’ and hence that this sacred substance Askokin in order to become vivifying for such a maintenance must first be freed from the said sacred substance Abrustdonis and Helkdonis.

“To tell the truth, my boy, I did not at once clearly understand all that he then said, and it was only later that I came to understand it all clearly, when, during my studies of the fundamental cosmic laws, I learned that these sacred substances Abrustdonis and Helkdonis are just those substances by which the higher being-bodies of three-brained beings, namely, the body Kesdjan and the body of the Soul, are in general formed and perfected; and when I learned that the separation of the sacred Askokin from the said sacred substances proceeds in general when the beings on whatever planet it might be transubstantiate the sacred substances Abrustdonis and Helkdonis in themselves for the forming and perfecting of their higher bodies, by means of conscious labors and intentional sufferings.¹

KEITH: I think it would be useful if we were to share impressions on how we have come to understand the very essential terms in this brief quotation: Askokin,² Abrustdonis, Helkdonis and then conscious labor and intentional suffering, but especially the first three because it may clarify a great many things about our Work. It helps us a great deal when we have a particular way of understanding what Gurdjieff is talking about here. This is inclusive now of his image of the Earth, the Moon and Anulios. He is talking about something having its origin in the Earth, passing to the Moon and Anulios, however we understand this, and that are within Askokin, Abrustdonis and Helkdonis.

Let’s start with those. What are your impressions?³ How do you understand Askokin?³ What does it mean to you?³ I made an error here, as Askokin is discussed quite early in *Beelzebub’s Tales*.

“This custom is at present so widespread there, and the destruction of the existence of beings of various forms for this maleficent purpose has reached such dimensions, that there is already a surplus of the “Sacred Askokin” required from the planet Earth for its former parts, that is to say, a surplus of those vibrations which arise during the sacred process of “Rascooarno” of beings of every exterior form arising and existing on that planet from which the said sacred cosmic arising is required.⁴

PARTICIPANT: To quote you, which has deepened my understanding of so much, you have said to us so many times that Askokin is simply life experience. It is the activity upon this planet that creates the vibrations necessary to maintain the Moon and Anulios, to maintain

1 G.I. Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub’s Tales*, P 1106

2 Ibid., PP 183-34

3 K.A. Buzzell, *Reflections on Gurdjieff’s Whim*, “Askokin,” PP 86-87

4 Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub’s Tales*, PP 182-83

that which we have become separate from or less and less aware of—the relationship of our emotions and our physical life to that in which we continually find ourselves with our improper understanding of our intellectual capacities. I would say Askokin is life experience that feeds those broken off parts.

KEITH: Any other impressions, disagreements, modifications?

PARTICIPANT: I think we could be a little more general and start with the idea that man is a transforming apparatus where all of the energies which come to us. Of course life experience includes all that but many things are included that are not perceived by us to be life experience. That which we are not aware of, the processes of our body, those things which could be studied but are not normally coming to our experience or attention, those things that are involved in the third striving, knowing more about the motion of the laws and bodies around us which could come into our experience in some way, we could become aware of but not necessarily.

KEITH: Okay, that broadens the definition of experience to include that which we are not necessarily aware of. We must include now, in view of the error I made, to enlarge Askokin to include 'death' expressions of all beings of all exterior forms.

PARTICIPANT: I have a question. Wouldn't Askokin also include the whole of LA-SOL-FA interval in the Great Ray? So then wouldn't it be that all life on Earth feeds the Moon and Anulios? All experience of all life?

KEITH: I don't think so mostly because Gurdjieff seems to be putting this in the context of three-brained beings. When he speaks about Abrustdonis and Helkdonis, this certainly would not apply to one- and two-brained beings.

PARTICIPANT: I agree with that but if the separation of Abrustdonis and Helkdonis can take place in three-brained beings but would that mean necessarily that Askokin is not something that all life is emanating.

KEITH: As I understand it, what Gurdjieff is talking about here is that this is the task that is before us through conscious labor and intentional suffering to separate Abrustdonis and Helkdonis from Askokin. From that context, I don't think he was inferring or including other forms of life; he was talking about us, three-brained beings.

PARTICIPANT: However, we are responsible for the separation. If we stay for a moment with Askokin as the total of all experience, conscious and unconscious, two-brained beings don't have the capacity to separate out conscious labor and intentional suffering from feelings and sensation associations; they don't have the capacity to take those apart but, in that sense, it is the process of life that is trapped within it but the potential cannot be released without conscious labor and intentional suffering.

PARTICIPANT: Keith and I saw this little video about an elephant, who, a year before the elephant was a baby and a man saved this elephant's life. A year later this man was swimming in the river and the elephant perceived the man was in trouble. She waded into the water and you could see her pick up speed to reach him and save his life. He was smiling the whole time because he wasn't really in trouble but she perceived he was in trouble. She got him between her two front legs and guided him to shore and then put her trunk down and scooped him up and put him on the shore.

Here's a whole year later that this event occurs and it seems to me that that is certainly an experience in the life of this two-brained being. But the man's experience is something that, in his Askokin, that there can be a separation of Abrustdonis and Helkdonis.

PARTICIPANT: Somewhere here is there a question of the relationship to meaning? Meaning is an experience and meaning opens deeper experiences. So that unusual experience was an experience of feeling in the elephant. I can't see how the elephant could have got higher meaning out of that, without a third brain. So part of our responsibility is that we can extract meaning.

PARTICIPANT: Is that part of extracting Abrustdonis and Helkdonis because we can do that?

PARTICIPANT: It seems to me meaning is potentially everything but you need an instrument able to take those things apart to find meaning inside.

KEITH: Which part of us gives meaning?

PARTICIPANT: The process comes from the frontal lobes but a sense of meaning also seems to come from here [points to chest].

PARTICIPANT: I seem to remember that you yourself have said that the third brain exists in varying degrees of development throughout the animal kingdom so it is not in such a black and white situation as to who is a three-brained being.

KEITH: No, I never said that; everything you said up to that was correct. Once it begins to be brained then we have to give consideration to elements that are already there that will develop over time into the second brain and, eventually, the third brain. That much is true but not that the third brain is there in any sense or the second brain is there but there are elements of it that take vast geological time, hundreds of millions of years, to differentiate.

We can say specifically that a one-brained being has one brain. Does it have cellular elements that over time are going to differentiate into the second brain and the third brain? Likely. This is especially true, in what evidence there is out there in neurophysiology today, about the third brain. It is very interesting. Even Paul MacLean, who was an absolute underpinning of all modern investigation of brained beings, if you will, he spent years investigating reptiles but, in all of his studies, he could never find the origin of the second brain, neuroanatomically and made the statement that as far as we know we don't know the true origin of the limbic, emotional brain. That it came from somewhere is obvious, but as far as a cellular origin that could be identified in creatures over geological time, no. He was never able to find anything specific. So it is an interesting mystery, an interesting question where the limbic system how it actually originated.

I'd like us to enlarge this question because if we talk about the Earth, Moon and Anulios, then this is an image that Gurdjieff makes use of about the Earth but he is talking about the Earth. This is a word that has a certain context of meaning in the context of Earth–Moon–Anulios. So what is he talking about here? Is he talking about us, about parts of us? And if so, what is the Earth? What is the Moon? What is Anulios?

Because I think it is consistent with Gurdjieff's intent in the whole of *The Tales*, let's enlarge the image even further. He sets out a picture of Beelzebub coming to Mars, being exiled to Mars. Mars is a planet in this solar system; the Earth is another planet. Saturn is spoken of as another planet. Those three are spoken of in great length in different parts of *Beelzebub's Tales*. Venus is mentioned once very briefly. No fantasy or imaging of a meaning

of the Earth, Moon, Anulios, Mars, Saturn, the solar system is made use of or is found in any other literature. It is only with Gurdjieff that we get this image. What does it mean? What does it mean to have Earth, Moon, Anulios, Mars, Saturn, Solar System?⁵

He mentions solar system in one place in particular, remember? The Sun that neither lights nor heats? What does that mean? Here he mentions the Sun and here we have an Earth, Moon, Anulios and Saturn. These are the major points in the drama. I think they have very clear and specific meaning which can be enormously helpful when we are trying to untangle so many of those events and allusions that Gurdjieff makes throughout *The Tales*.

If we have some way of saying, for me, this image of Earth–Moon–Anulios means this, and Mars means, and Saturn means this, and the sun means this and if there is a consistency to the way in which we look at all that, in other words, that it becomes a kind of way of understanding the images that he has created, then that makes a big difference. It means I can take many of the stories in *The Tales* and the allusions he makes and put them somewhere. I can ‘make sense of it’ because it will have a certain meaning in a context.

If Saturn has something to do with the higher intellect, then his essence friend, Gornahoor Harharkh, has a certain meaning. He represents some action within higher intellectual center, even more important, his son, his offspring, his Kesdjanian offspring, Gornahoor Rakhoorkh; again a Saturn being has even more significance in the context of what Gurdjieff has created—making use of Saturn in the way in which he does. Remember it is from Saturn where Beelzebub leaves the solar system. He has to wait on Saturn because the star ship can’t get him to the smaller planets; it can only come to Higher Intellectual Center, Saturn.

So what then is Mars? The obvious effort that I made at some point was to build an image of the whole of this solar system that was built on maybe simple-minded premises on my part, but always they have turned out to be kind of useful.

If the sun that neither lights nor heats is the fact that I have no I, that I have no real Will, that the surface of my sun is cold and would rather borrow heat from something else than a source for itself. If my sun, if our individual sun, if our I is not present, then that is one way of understanding the sun neither lights nor heats. Now we have a solar system that has a sun that neither lights nor heats—no I—so we have an Earth, a Moon and Anulios.

In one of the earliest and, for me, profound insights into the evolution of the brains concern the experiment with the brain of a frog. The cell layer of what is going to become, evolutionally, the third brain is stripped off. It still has an evolved first brain but it has no third brain component. If you take that frog and you set in on the edge of the pool, it will stand there. If you push it in, it swims and climbs out and stands. If you take a morsel of food and push it into its mouth, it swallows. If you offer it food, it doesn’t move. If you did nothing, in about three days, the frog has not eaten; it has not initiated out into the world, beyond itself. If you intrude into its world, you activate those impulses that are already inside. It will swallow, it will swim, but it will not be self-initiatory in any shape, way or form.

This was one way to understand, the most primal way to understand, the third brain. The most primal function is commitment into the world—to move from wherever you are to go into the world—to react to—to respond into—to use your senses into. Without that initiative that comes from the third brain, nothing happens; we simply are frozen on the edge of the pool. That is the Earth in my analogy in *The Tales*. The Earth is our third brain; it is the source of initiation of all life events. We would be totally nothing; we would be an organism

5 K.A. Buzzell, *Gurdjieff's Whim*, “The Solar System,” pp 26-27

frozen in space. Without the third brain, quite aside from all its rather miraculous capacities that are built into it over time, the most primal, most essential aspect is that it is the initiator into life. Without it, nothing happens.

PARTICIPANT: Clarification. Even single-celled animals initiate so how do we understand that?

KEITH: There are no single-celled 'animals'.

PARTICIPANT: I had an image that came to mind when people were talking about the separation of the Helkdonis from the sacred Askokin. Elsewhere in *The Tales*, Gurdjieff uses Djartklom as a separation. I have the image of Askokin somehow separating these forces or something creates this Askokin that breaks apart or things are extracted from it. If Askokin was generated from just life on the planet itself, animal and vegetable life and all the creatures and we have that within ourselves so maybe individual humans generate Askokin from the three centers we have and so that, when we work on ourselves, somehow these energies, sensation, feeling and thought, something can happen to them, some kind of transformation can take place. I believe it was Bennett who said that Abrustdonis being the Higher Emotional Center and Helkdonis being the Higher Intellectual Center—that when the sort of Djartklom can occur within us, these energies within us can feed parts of ourselves.

KEITH: Good. This is a little further down the road, when we get into the nature of Abrustdonis and Helkdonis.

To stay with the analogy, if the Earth is the third brain, then the Moon is the physical body; we are under the gravitational influence of the Moon. He speaks of the Moon as being an influence in human life, the Moon that moves us all around, etc..

The Moon becomes an indicator of the physical body and then all the actions and activities that the physical body becomes involved in, because it is all passive; it's all reactive. We move the physical body because we want a get cup of coffee, we've got to go to work; we have to take a shower, etc.. There has to be something that initiates the action of the Moon, of the physical body. The Moon is the first brain in the sense of physical movement into the world.

Anulios is pretty obvious in us because Anulios is that little tiny planet that grandmothers used to tell myths about. To me, the proper image of Anulios is that this is in most of us what our real emotional center is. It has lost its ability to respond to myth. There are places where Gurdjieff speaks about myth being the language of our emotional center. So it is pretty obvious if you don't respond to the myth, you have lost some connection to that part of yourself. So Anulios becomes this tiny little planet which is very hard to find and most of us have totally lost the ability to image where it might be.

So if we have our three brains lined up in this way, what then is Mars? This is where Beelzebub was exiled. This carries us further into the kind of imaging we are forced to invent. Beelzebub cannot be like us. He is after all born on Karatas and taken as a young being onto Holy Sun Absolute. He already has a Higher Being-body, already has Conscience. He cannot have a physical body like you or I. That should be very obvious from early on. We should not fall into the trap anywhere in *The Tales* of assuming that, when he is talking about Beelzebub being here and there that he is physically present; that is really not the point.

In any case, Mars is the only place Beelzebub can have a home while he is in exile. He can visit the other planets; he is given permission and the wherewithal to do that; he was

given a spaceship so he can go visit the other planets if he so chooses but Mars is his home; that is where he becomes established.

For me, Mars is Higher Emotional Center. That is the body of Beelzebub. This is his ‘physical’ body. The Will, or Higher Reason, is Beelzebub’s highest center or body. These are the three bodies of Beelzebub for me and it seems to be consistent with other parts of *The Tales*.

Saturn then obviously becomes Higher Intellectual Center and all of the allusions to Saturn, the roles that it plays: the ravens, all the images of Gornahoor and all the interesting complications that come from that, the creation of the Teskooano, the visitation of Gornahoor to Mars in order to set up the Teskooano, all of this is an interesting interplay that you can explore if you take this as the interaction and interplay between Higher Intellectual and Higher Emotional Centers. It gives it a substrate that you can test things against and asks, “Does this make sense and is this consistent?”

Now we get back to Askokin. If, in this context, we have Earth–Moon–Anulios and we have the totality of experience, however the additional impressions that were offered were all useful and we can stretch it that far because we are really talking about the totality of experience that is, in Gurdjieff’s image, which is initiated by the third brain; it is not dependent upon outside; it is dependent upon itself to be self-initiator of whatever is going to happen. That’s the kind of experience we are not necessarily aware of it but we still initiate all kinds of things from our imaginations, from our dreams, from our hopes and so forth that are often never put into precise language—often we wouldn’t know how to speak them out; they simply are urges, wishes, whatever.

So, in this context, if we have Askokin, as the totality of experience up to death, well just think in an everyday kind of way, what is your life experience? You get up and have a shower and go to the bathroom, have breakfast, go to work, have lunch and then you do this and then you do this and then you go out to dinner, maybe you go to a meeting—whatever it is that you do, whatever that mix of life experiencings, within that there are going to be certain possibilities, there are going to be certain levels of relationship for instance where you are going to have contact with your son or with your daughter-in-law or with your grandchild or with a neighbor. It will be the beginning, the initiation, the origin of some emotionally-based interaction.

What becomes of it? How do we dismiss it or endorse it? How do we respond to it? Do we see it the context of self and what this means to me? Is this a compliment? Is this an insult? Is this a challenge? Or this a need on part of other that I feel responsible for trying to address? Do I feel that? It is different if I am focused on self, then I am in my biology, I am defensive of this experience and it only means something to me in my physical body. It does not mean anything for the other person, child or whatever.

In terms of Abrustdonis, this is food but it is food that is going up into the world of relationship with other. There are so many, they can be extremely brief or they can be more prolonged but we have extended experiences every day with other people, other beings.

In that whole range of experience we have during the day, how often are we open to their world—to their concerns, to their interests, to their needs? How often are we in that world with them? Or, are we simply very much occupied with what we are doing at the moment and this is “oh, yeah, great to see you again...” and away we go into our own world. How often during the day are we in relationship? How often are we existence in the world of self-other? Not self, but in the world of self-other. This is the interface of Abrustdonis; this

is the separation of the higher emotional world possibilities from the physical level of our emotional world interactions.

Later, we will go into the origin of experiences that can stop at the level of our own physical body, our own DNA that has to do with our uniqueness out of which all of our feelings of self become so very vital to the physical survival of the physical body. In that physical survival there is an emotional nature that is protective of the body and it is an important survival in the emotional sense and we see this in all of the emotional ‘defensivenesses’ that we observe in ourselves throughout the day. Also, we feel this in the insults, when we are put down, when we are criticized, when we act not in the fashion of self-other, not in the fashion of what-is-your-need but rather, we defend ourselves.

So we have an emotional value but that emotional value is totally in terms of self.

Biochemically as well as through our DNA, all of that comes from the early steps from the digestion of food and air. We will get more into that later also.

In any event, Abrustdonis would apply to those interactions that have an emotional potential; developing and being an expression of a real self-other relationship, up to and including Conscience, although not necessarily Conscience—it may not go that high.

We would have a hard time justifying all of the jocularity, all our interactions with our grandchildren if we find a couple of them arguing with each other or fighting and we step in and play a game and dissolve that kind of altercation that was in motion and if we do that, we can do that in the context of seeing into the world of self-other but we would have a hard time calling that Conscience. That is just common sense in the sense that this is how you deal with youngsters who need a little guidance now and then to get out of a fix that they find themselves in. Incidentally, they are in that fix because of the early steps in the digestion of food and air. They are in it because this is the self and they are expressing the self and there is nothing wrong with that but they have to be invited into the world of self-other. We are the tools for that, as parents, grandparents, neighbors—we are the tools for bringing them into the world of self-other—Abrustdonis.

Helkdonis—help-for-God obviously involves efforts in the arena of Higher Intellectual Center. This is the effort to understand law. That is a very broad statement. Bennett does such a great job of exploring and understanding law, individual law as well as the principle of law that involves an understanding of the Law of Three in particular, Affirming, Reconciling and Denying and how these combine.

It involves making an effort to understand what is going on. Why is this happening the way it is happening? We have a marvelous illustration of the effort we can make in our present dilemma of what is happening in our political climate in the United States. You can ask: what the hell is going on? Because it is all lawful, everything has a reason for why it is going the way it is going. What are the reasons? How do I understand what is going on in the world? What does it mean when people do this kind of thing to each other and then they say these kinds of things? What does it mean? This is Helkdonis. It is an effort to understand this simple question.

When I think to myself what is the earliest significant question that I can remember? Aside from the obvious, such as when is supper, can I go out and play? I don’t mean that kind of thing. The earliest question I can remember is: I don’t understand what is happening. What is going on? What is happening here? I was about 3½–4 years old. I think all of us are about that age when these questions appear. How is this happening? This is implicitly a question that has to do with Higher Intellectual Center, eventually.

I say eventually because we have to have a lot of things to accumulate along the way, such as language, concepts, a basic understanding of process in order to even understand the question of what is going on. We have to have some way of putting things together so we can test them out. All of that takes time but the question can be there at a very, very young age and be there, significantly: what's going on? Or an alternative, the same question but asked in a different way: how does this happen?

When I was at school, the teacher gave a demonstration of a simple leverage system and how it worked. He put it together and then he left it there by his desk. Part of our assignment was to figure out how many pounds did you have to pull on this in order to lift so many pounds over here? Three or four of us were working trying to figure this thing out and I remember I had this colossally significant moment that lasted maybe a half second or less when I saw it move and I saw *why* it moved. And I remember I was so excited that I ran up to the teacher and said, "I saw it! I just saw it!" But he didn't know what he was talking about. He didn't know what I was talking about.

All of us have had moments like that when we saw something about how things happen and then maybe we lost it but it didn't matter. The mere fact that we had the capacity for seeing how something happens—that is the significant part of it because the hall mark, the first indicator of Higher Intellectual Center is what should be set off with the first conscious shock.

There is so much appropriate attention given to the role of Attention. Gurdjieff is inveterate. He never gets away from this: you must learn, firstly, to recognize and to use your Attention but, over time, end up using it to explore yourself. The Attention is the key that he never, never retreats from. You cannot explore Abrustdonis or Helkdonis without Attention. It simply won't happen. It won't happen because you are warm-hearted or generous in your basic nature. That's very nice to be that way, but it is also very ordinary in the sense that it comes from our biology. It does not come from any effort that you make, that any of us make.

The kind of change that he is talking about here, Abrustdonis or Higher Emotional Center function, this is a different story altogether. This is placing oneself consciously in the position of other, just like he puts in the admonition over the entrance to Purgatory.

So that is the image that I have found to be very useful. The whole of our solar system: the Sun that neither lights nor heats, the absence of I and then these individual planets which he chooses to put into the drama but he leaves out a whole bunch of other planets and we have to have the question, why? Or what do these planets mean? Why does he not talk about Jupiter or Venus or Mercury?

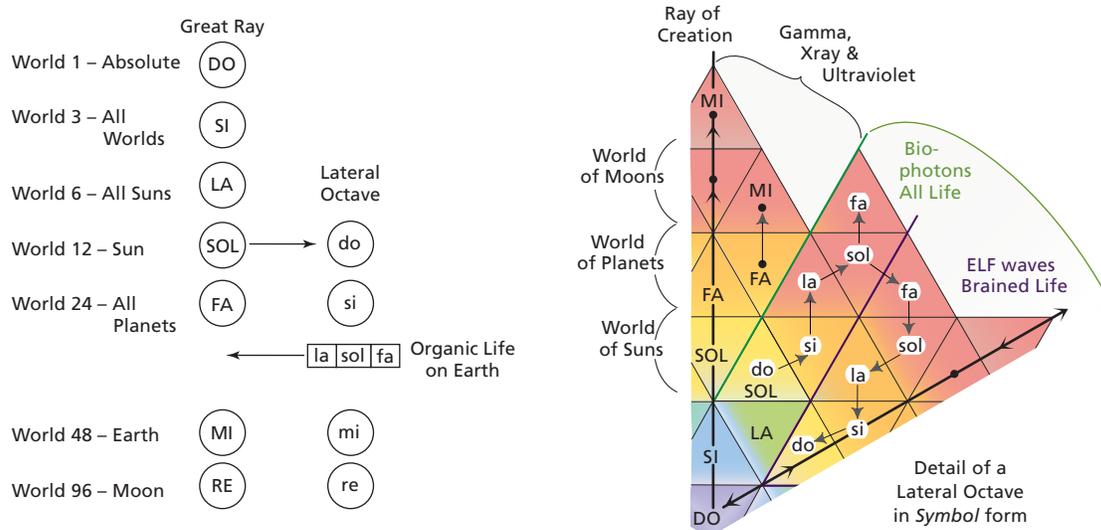
PARTICIPANT: Let's go back to Mars for a minute. The thought occurs to me that Mars in Greek and Roman mythology is the site of war and struggle. Beelzebub is exiled there because he doesn't understand why God does things the way he does. Maybe Mars symbolizes the struggle for self-perfection inwardly rather than outwardly. Mars is the site of the world within us perhaps between our one nature and our higher natures.

KEITH: That is a possibility. Gurdjieff himself alludes (and I can't remember where I read this) to the fact that Mars is understood the way it was 10,000 years ago, before the Romans. And there he spoke about the great struggle but it was an emotional struggle; it was not physical warfare.

PARTICIPANT: When you speaking about Helkdonis, I had an interesting insight. You were speaking of Helkdonis as being help-for-god, but also that seems to be the development of

reason, a source of reason. As a schoolteacher, if I ask why is that a help for God but it seems directly related. If I am with my kids and some of the kids are developing reason it makes my job so much easier because then I don't have to do the same sort of work because as soon as I've got kids in the classroom demonstrating reason, developing reason, I am not in the same position; my role is changed. And so by three-brained beings developing reason I can see why that is help-for-god, HIS load is lighter by us being able to reason.

KEITH: There is an interesting analogy to that for those of you who are familiar with the *Symbol of the Cosmos* in the unfolding of the Lateral Octave.



The unfolding comes down from the level of the Sun through the Planetary World and finally into Life. But then when brained beings emerge, the octave turns and then begins to go from one brain to two brains to three brains to Kesdjan and Higher Being-body. So it rises from World 48 to World 24 laws so it is an analogy to World 24 as in the descent into the Lateral Octave and then finally to World 12, to the triad of the Higher Being-body which is then a World 12 container which apexes in World One.

This *Symbol* raises a great many questions about what is the purpose of this, a lot of hair-raising questions about what is the purpose of this? If Gurdjieff speaks as he does about man being, potentially, help-for-god, in the enlarging Universe, then the essentiality of the Lateral Octave gets raised. Given this outflow that comes from the level of the Sun and unfolds through the planetary world to the planet and then begins the reversal, the ascent, lawfully all the way back to World 12 to its origin, what is to happen? If in the Lateral Octave there is not that unfolding to Kesdjan into Higher Being-body—if it is not sufficient in numbers of those beings who can transform to that level, if there is not that, then the Lateral Octave is in danger of failing. What does that mean? Well, the Lateral Octave fills the FA-MI of the Great Ray so it becomes a much more interesting and colossally more significant development to consider the failure of the Lateral Octave in the context that Lateral Octave filling the FA-MI of the Great Ray. The most comforting thought I have about that is that they have now estimated that 10,000 billion galaxies, so there are a lot of efforts there. There is a lot of potential out there so if we screw up and we go down the tube then that's not the story for the Universe.

PARTICIPANT: The illustration of *A Symbol of the Cosmos and its Laws* gives a visual image of the consequences of the failure of the Lateral Octave. It concerns the whole Universe as much as it concerns us, it is definitely a big concern.

There is a paragraph in *The Tales* that I think puts into context the concern for us that Beelzebub has.

“The aspect of this fundamental question regarding the significance of the sense and aim of the existence of your favorites is so important for the understanding of a great deal that proceeds there on the Earth, and by the way also of the question touching the causes of war, that I consider it necessary to refer to it once more.

“I first learned that the destiny of beings arising on this planet of yours is chiefly to elaborate—by means of the process of their existence—the vibrations required by Nature for the maintenance of those former parts of the planet now called Moon and Anulios, when, do you remember, I became worthy personally to converse for the second time with His Conformity the then still Angel, but now Archangel, Looisos.

“His Conformity then told me that although the movements of both former parts of the planet Earth were now already finally regulated with the general harmony of movement and that every kind of apprehension of some or other surprise in the near future had absolutely vanished, yet to avoid any possible complications in the distant future it had been explicitly decided by the Most High, Most Sacred Individuals to actualize the ‘corresponding’ on the planet for the formation of what is called the Sacred Askokin so that this sacred cosmic substance, required for the maintenance of that planet’s former parts, might continuously issue from that planet.⁶

So the circumstance in which Beelzebub finds among Hassein’s favorites, among us, is what prompted him to go into speaking with Hassein about this sacred substance, Askokin, and how it can, *consciously*, become something that gives meaning and significance to Hassein’s favorites and the planet Earth. So I just thought that that was the context for what we are speaking about.

KEITH: It certainly precedes the attention to Abrustdonis and Helkdonis.

PARTICIPANT: Is it like a set-up tool?

PARTICIPANT: When you speak of Abrustdonis, it reminds me of a paper that is attributed to Mr. Gurdjieff entitled *A Normal Being Wishes to Live Forever* where he talks about fishing in the stream of life. What you said reminded me of what he wrote in that paper about the three streams of feeling, thought and physical sensation and what we extract we can make our own and that seems to be what you are talking about.

KEITH: If this is not a conscious process, the Earth–Moon–Anulios goes on and in this text they are all part of the Earth, in other words, part of our created-ness. There is nothing higher about the Moon or Anulios. Anulios is the emotional part of us that comes from our DNA, from food. It means that this is much of the underpinning of the emotional life of animals, of two-brained beings—not bad—I do not mean it in that context. But both the

6 G.I. Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub’s Tales*, PP 1105-06

terrifying in terms of defense of the hive or the defense of the tribe or the hunting and all the emotional connotations of family life within the world of animals—all of that is coming from food and the DO-RE-MI of air. None of it is in the upper octave of air. It cannot reach above the MI of air.

PARTICIPANT: Although in some of the higher primates we see the beginning of that in dolphins that have self-awareness and show empathy, like the elephants. Isn't that the beginning of something that is moving evolutionarily?

KEITH: Yes, sure. None of these are sharp boundaries; I don't think they can be but we do see and we can identify very readily amongst two-brained, warm-blooded beings that there is a family life that arises with intrauterine life, with breast-feeding, nurturing and play behaviors in the young—all of these are completely normal reflections of a warm-blooded existence. And there is much in there that we should complement; it is good to see that kind of activity going on but it is still automatic. It happens because they are made that way. That is their inner machinery; the way their brains function. They don't function in the way in which they function because they choose to be that way.

When we are the Earth–Moon–Anulios, there is no choice. That's life. That's life on the planet.

PARTICIPANT: Is the Askokin described in the passage that was just read, the responsibility of Looisos and his cronies making things happen?

KEITH: It depends on which kind of image you have of angelic influences. To me, Gurdjieff makes quite a point of emphasizing the very poor perception into the possibilities of man that comes from the angelic world. They made terrible mistakes. They turned out to be mistakes for us because they didn't see the consequences; they didn't see the state of man *in potential*. There are a thousand myths about this, such as *Conference of the Birds* where man is not understood by all the other creatures; he is not understood for his potential; he is understood for all the wacky and terrible things we do and so we are put down by these other creatures. The Master says, no, man has this potential.

And Gurdjieff does the same thing here in *The Tales*—man has this potential and the angelic sources, the powers above see order in the celestial sense—order is ultimately the important thing, to make sure that disorder does not break out in the lower worlds. As a *prehension*, as a seeing ahead into the future, that puts into motion certain mechanicalnesses that imprison man is what Beelzebub objects to and says that this is a nearly “criminal unforeseeingness.”⁷ And he puts this right at the door of the angel Looisos and the High Commission, which includes Archangels as well.

PARTICIPANT: I hope this is not taken facetiously, but when you are talking about the story of man and his potential, it occurred to me that we are in the midst of this election where there is a struggle between people seeing that Donald Trump can bring the potential of the country out, that he has a potential but, in his appearance, it is not seen or at least many people are not seeing that he is bringing potential to the future of the country as opposed to the other candidate that is going to bring the same thing, the familiar, the safe, the convention. Maybe you don't see that but it seems to me that it is a part of the story and what is going on in the election right now. We are in the midst of that myth.

⁷ G.I. Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, p 673

KEITH: Well, we are in the midst of ordinary life. All of that on both sides is ordinary life. It is all crazy—in the Work sense. This is all second state of consciousness. There is not one shred of entry into the third state of consciousness, this attention to what is really going on. There is not a shred of that—anywhere! That's the world that we live in; that's the world that, unfortunately, we function in.

I hope we can go into this more this weekend—what do we do about Work in the individual and in the group sense, given the state of the world?

This has been a question for-ever. Gurdjieff lived through the occupation in Paris. You have to keep in mind this extraordinary human being had the capacity to do things in the midst of that awful situation.

We are certainly called upon to be more conscious than we find ourselves when we wake up in the morning. The demands on us *personally and in groups* are far beyond anything that is out there—far beyond.

So what is happening in the election is all just crazy stuff, second state of consciousness stuff—all reactive stuff. There is no reason in it or reasons for it. Yes, there are laws that are being followed because nothing can be unlawful, that doesn't mean that the laws that are being followed are very inclusive laws or high laws.

For instance, laws, which are in us because of our digestion of food, lead us to defend the body, to hold the body as one. All of that energy and all of that DNA transmission into impulses and whatnot doesn't give a damn about its own children, certainly not his neighbors. It can't. It doesn't have the consciousness to do that. To the degree that it is open and it can stay open, that means an escape into whatever the mentation is that locks us in that first state. I think that is an adequate definition of the second state of consciousness. The second state of consciousness does not permit the attention to be in the world of self-other. I am not referring to a moment, a moment of empathy—no, not that—I mean to *live* in that world. It is a very tough world to live in. I think Gurdjieff lived in that world all of time. He said his life was against his essence. When he left Russia, he left his essence. He lived a life that was inimical to his essence. But he lived it because he understood from Higher Emotional and Higher Intellectual Center that that was necessary.

It is just as necessary for us.

PARTICIPANT: It is the story of Beelzebub being exiled.

KEITH: Yes, exactly.