

SOCIETAS ROSICRUCIANA IN AMERICA



ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Liber 1: Rosicrucian Series: No. 11

OCCULT SCIENCE

S.N.11

THE ROSICRUCIAN ELEMENTALS

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.”

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?”

Gal. iv, 3 and 9

1. A careful reading of these and the intervening sentences quoted from the fourth chapter of Galatians will reveal to the thoughtful student that vastly more is implied than a mere reference to local environment as would seem from literal acceptance. In every case, Biblical statements are to be regarded as esoteric or hieratic, and it is the inner significance that is to be sought if we would reconcile all the warring factions in human interpretation of the Scriptures and make the teachings easily applicable to every day life.
2. To the Rosicrucian, the term “elements,” implies the Four Elements: Fire, Water, Air and Earth, and verily there was a time when we were in bondage to these “elements of the world,” as indicated by the reference to them in Rosicrucian Fundamentals.* At that time, humanity existed in the form of “elementals” or types wherein the Involving Spirit was leaving the Animal Kingdom to become Human, but “inhabited largely by the realm of the Mineral Kingdom erstwhile.”
3. Today, every human embryo in the process of gestation reproduces the characteristics of the Mineral, Vegetable and Animal Kingdoms ere it becomes a true homospiren, and this is in accord with its previous evolutionary career up through these Kingdoms as “elementals” thereof.
4. The Rosicrucian Elementals were best described by Abbé de Villars, in his treatise *Comte de Gabalis*, in the seventeenth century, and are classified under four distinct grouping:

* Rosicrucian Fundamentals by KHEI X° (now out of print)

Fire.....The Salamanders
 Water.....The Undines
 Earth.....The Gnomes
 Air.....The Sylphs

5. These beings are referred to in Sanskrit, as the “*Bhuti*” (*Bhutas*), elements, created beings, elementals, ghosts, goblins, imps, demons, phantoms, and elementaries. The *Deva*, (feminine *Devi*) was an elemental god, or as we give it in Rosicrucian nomenclature, “King” of a given Element. By the ancients, elementals were regarded correctly as “nature-spirits” presiding over or functioning in the elements of Fire, Water, Earth or Air; “beings evolved from or constituting the lower elemental nature of man; centers of force in the astral light.”
6. The study of astrology substantiates this interpretation, for we find that every individual may be classified as belonging either to the Fiery, Watery, Earthy or Airy Triplicities. Furthermore, we observe the fiery temper or nature of one individual; the watery, fluidic, unstable nature of another, the phlegmatic, heavy, stable, unemotional nature of still another and the wavering, idealistic, airy nature of a fourth. The elements obviously and undoubtedly do enter most importantly into the constitution of Man, not alone as regards his physical and chemical constituents, but in his mental traits, temperament and ethical characteristics.
7. According to de Villars, the Elementals are unseen *intelligences* “who inhabit the Four Elements, of the finest essence of which, they are composed. The Abbé, a theologian, following the concepts of the Church, considered that the elementals were, before the “Fall of Man” subject to him, in consonance with the Genesis statement that to Man was given power and dominion over every living thing. But this statement obviously applied to living things in the visible world of “Adam,” not the unseen, for that would have made him ruler over the spiritual worlds as well.
8. The Sylphs inhabit the air and are described as having human form, but docile, interested in the sciences and attracted toward the sages but hostile to the ignorant. Their females are said to be of a masculine and Amazonian type of beauty.
9. The Undines or Nymphs are said to inhabit the rivers, lakes and seas, especially running streams, brooks and waterfalls. The females exceed in number the males and are very beautiful.
10. The Gnomes inhabit the earth and are of small stature and act as guardians of minerals, subterranean treasure and precious stones. They are ingenious and are friendly to man and easy for him to direct or command. The females are also of small stature and ordinarily good looking.
11. The Salamanders inhabit fire, are attracted to philosophers and their females, while beautiful beyond all other elementals, are rarely seen, for they dwell in a purer

element. Their habits and modes of existence are exemplary, their mental attractions being even greater than those of their persons.

12. The elementals are said to know the existence of the Supreme Being but do not look for eternal life for their soul qualities are essentially mortal. But they may claim immortality by marriage with a mortal. As they are composed of the purest essence of their respective elements, they may live for centuries or even indefinitely, but only by marriage with a mortal can they attain immortality. The children born of such marriages are said to be more noble and heroic than those of ordinary parentage and from this belief, Zoroaster, Alexander, Hercules and others, are claimed in mythology to have been the children of elementary spirits.
13. The Salamanders are composed of the most subtle particles of the sphere of fire, organized by the action of the Universal Fire; the Sylphs are composed of the purest atoms of the air; the Nymphs of the most delicate particles of water and the gnomes of the finest and most potent essence of earth.
14. According to the old philosophers, each species must be sought in its appropriate element and only by practicing the virtues of the element. The four groups are assigned to four rulers:

Salamanders are ruled by Djin.

Undines or Nymphs are ruled by Necksa.

Gnomes are ruled by Gob.

Sylphs are ruled by Paralda.

15. Many other features alleged to be descriptive of the elementals may be found by the student who cares to delve into the ancient lore but those we have given will suffice to convey an idea of the popular concept entertained by ancient and medieval occultists.
16. From the modern Rosicrucian standpoint, the facts are, *first* - that there are living beings or creatures in every phase of life and its kingdoms; *second* - that this is true because life is universal; *third* - that even the most minute of these living organisms has a specific degree of intelligence, whether it be the intelligence of the primitive cell, or the combined intelligence of a group of cells in a simple or a complex organism; *fourth* - that these living creatures may be adapted to the service of man to the extent that he studies the kingdom to which they appertain and comprehends the laws under which they exist. As proof of this statement, we have only to note the use of antitoxins wherein one group of organisms are set to work to annihilate the work of destructive organisms, yet both are, to the naked eye, invisible. *Fifth* - these organisms or creatures inasmuch as they do exist, are subject to nature's laws and law predicates a power to enforce it. Therefore, we assign these organisms scientifically to species, class, genus, etc., and occultly to "kingdoms" over which a definite force or ruler presides.

17. This instance will suffice to show how the mythos and pseudo-science of yesterday has become the real knowledge and use of today. Therefore, all the efforts of our earlier brethren, fanciful as some of them may appear, were necessary as preliminary steps to direct our attention to the very existence of forms of life exterior to our own, even in invisible planes of being.
18. Reference has already been made to the first of our subject texts, in Lesson 3, of this series, and therein we noted how at one time we were in bondage to the Four Elements strictly as such. In this lesson we obtain a larger glimpse of the Scriptural observation. Now we learn in addition of our existence as actual living entities during that bondage, crystallized not only within the Elements themselves, but living and functioning in obedience to the laws of those kingdoms, governed by elemental rulers and intelligences from which we have now evolved or escaped. This shows us the true and complete meaning of the term "*children*" applied to us.
19. In those early stages of evolution we were veritable children. As elementals, it was our purpose to learn how to construct human bodies for our future use when we should be permitted to incarnate as human beings. Elementals are entities evolving from the lower kingdoms and under instruction how to develop the requisite vehicles for human incarnation. But they are still phases of the Universal Spirit, no longer Virgin Spirit but differentiated by the passage through matter in the lower kingdoms, *but not yet individualized*. That is why the ancients considered that they could not hope for immortality. It is only when the Universal Spirit becomes individualized, that it becomes a complete and true human EGO and it is only the human Ego that goes on thereafter from one incarnation to another until its involuntary incarnations are completed and it passes permanently to the higher spiritual existence. Elementals, being of the elements are long lasting but impermanent.
20. We must not smile at the concept of the marriage or union of elementals with humans in order to attain immortality, for that is just what does happen to some degree. With every inhalation, with every meal or drink and in the oxygen absorbed for combusive purposes, we are taking into our bodily economy multiform types of living creatures, whose bodies or physical vehicles perish, but whose minute intelligences are absorbed into the complete intelligence of our organism and thus do, in a very obvious manner, attain to the immortal consciousness that is preserved by the human Ego.
21. But our second subject text gives us a warning that is as applicable to us of today, as it was to those of St. Paul's time. There have been those in all ages of the world's history, who are continually seeking association with what are Scripturally termed "familiar spirits," "controls," "guides," yet of whom the seekers know naught and have no way of proving or testing the desirability of such entities for intimate associations.

22. Those who seek through mediumship or the medieval fads now so much in vogue among alleged occultists and their victims, of invocation and evocation of spirits by the use of mantrams, tentacles, wands, swords and other gimcracks, little realize the dangers they invite. It is possible by such means to draw to one's self, discarnate entities and disembodied spirits of what is termed the "earthbound" class. But it is far easier and more dangerous to attract by such means, elemental entities with a semblance of human intelligence but inimical to man and it is against such that the Apostle warns us.
23. The reason is clear. To do so is devolution. By evolution we have risen above the elemental group and as a result of individualization and becoming true Egos, we have known God and are known to God. Why then, should we turn back and seek the companionship of the "weak and beggarly elementals" with their semblance of intelligence, an intelligence that is indeed real but only a microcosmic fraction of the complete human intelligence? Why should we seek or desire to become again in bondage by association with such entities and therefore make ourselves subject to their "control" and revert to the laws of kingdoms lower than our own?
24. Some writers have ascribed all sorts of animal and reptile shapes and forms to these elemental spirits, without however, any adequate authority for so doing. Stories of fairies, elves, brownies, etc., have their origin in the Rosicrucian concept.
25. The elementals are ascribed to the cardinal points. For instance, the Gnomes to the North, Salamanders to the South, Sylphs to the East and Undines to the West, and a study of mythology will reveal to what extent even the hardly defined ideas of these creatures extant in earliest times, influenced the literature of the period.
26. The more advanced among the elementals, seek, by the law of attraction, association with humankind, although invisibly, and by this association learn the laws of the Human Kingdom in which it is their destiny to incarnate when qualified to do so. They affect humanity according to temperament. Thus the Salamanders affect the sanguine; the Undines affect the phlegmatic, the Gnomes the melancholic and the Sylphs the bilious.
27. It is difficult to separate fact from fancy in treating of this subject. So much has been written concerning these elementals in all seriousness, by well-accredited artists, principally of the medieval school, that we must seek to find in their fancied characteristics the facts as revealed by modern science.
28. We do know that each of the elements is inhabited by multiform species of living organisms, but this does not cover the entire question. As occultists, we also know that the invisible worlds are inhabited by multiform types of beings in all stages of evolution, many and groups of which have not yet reached the stage wherein they can incarnate as humans and attain true Ego. It is to this class that undoubtedly beings answering in some respects to the general concept of elementals belong.

29. In some parts of the Rosicrucian rituals, not the elementals themselves, but the Sovereign Spirits of the Elements are invoked, not for personal manifestation but for the unity of elemental forces at particular times and for particular purposes. These Sovereign Spirits are the Group Spirits of each Kingdom and are far above the elemental spirits and are the Intelligences constituting well defined hierarchies in the higher planes for the guidance and development of the lower planes. The invocation referred to, is not accompanied by the magician's jugglery but is purely a spiritual rite.
30. St. Paul warned those whom he wrote, against taking any part in seeking to cultivate or make possible an association with elementals; that, instead of lifting them to the level of humanity, would only succeed in the devolution of humanity back to their status and bondage.
31. It is possible, however, for us to help in the evolution of these elementals, if by acknowledging their existence, we develop in our civilization and cultural centers ethical attributes and characteristics by which they can pattern, and so gradually raise themselves more rapidly to the status that will entitle them to enter the Human Kingdom in mundane or mortal expression. It is an exact parallel to the fact that animals once wild, but now domesticated, by constant association with human masters, take on by a kind of induction a degree of intelligence hardly distinguishable from true consciousness and reason in its elemental form.
32. Furthermore, and this is the purpose of the present Lesson, if we keep the facts just cited in mind, and hold the thought that we draw to us those creatures of human semblance in the invisible world who are just beginning to qualify for the Human Kingdom we shall help ourselves by helping them. For service as we have previously pointed out, is the greatest of all spiritual laws for advancement.
33. We of the mundane plane are, in the mass, the positive polarity of humanity. Elementals form the negative polarity or "incipient" humanity. Therefore, by the same law we described in the preceding lesson, we can, without any magical process, draw them to us, without descending to them or subjecting ourselves to them as "controls" or "guides." As we help them consciously by striving to live a definite life, we shall receive from them in gratitude the assistance in our daily work, it is possible for them to render us according to the element in which they function.
34. How many well-attested cases are on record where people have been saved from disastrous fire by "hunches," "intuition," "premonitions," etc.? The same from death at sea when ships on which they intended to sail have afterward been reported lost. How many have been saved from accidents by landslides and earth upheavals, whirlwinds, tempests, etc.? Being human, it is common for humanity to take all possible credit to itself and its self-assumed powers, but some day this self-same humanity will learn with amazement how much of its assumed genius is due to the helpful cooperation of humbler but still intelligent nature forces.

35. The mastermind of Shakespeare has brought these truths out finely in several of his works, notably *The Tempest*. A careful study of this work is recommended to all students, remembering that it is necessary to “read between the lines,” for Shakespeare was a Rosicrucian and embodied much of our philosophy in his works, although in the veiled and guarded manner so necessary in his times.
36. Remember always, that the intent and purpose of the true occultist is the search for the invisible, hidden causes of all known effects. This does not require the elaborate use of magic circles, pentacles, gowns, cups and other magical implementation. It is a straightforward, legitimate, scientific research. Bearing this in mind, it is not only lawful but a duty for us to avail ourselves of the assistance and cooperation of the nature forces, of which we shall learn much more as we progress.
37. We should keep St. Paul’s warning before us and not seek to revert by surrender of our mentality to lower states of consciousness, either by passivity or subjectivity in psychism, to the bondage from which we have evolved. Then we should endeavor on the other hand, to help those elemental beings that are starting on the pathway we ourselves have traversed in aeons past. The more we place ourselves in rapport with the nature forces in a legitimate way, by contact with nature in all her varying moods, appreciating her harmonies and symphonies of color, structure, immensities and constructive processes, knowing that each embody definite forms of life struggling upward to the heights we have attained, the more we shall draw to us the helpful, cooperation of those struggling intelligences. We shall find that many a crooked way will be made straight without apparent cause, and many a problem solved when we least expected it and in ways still less expected.
38. These entities are not mere fancies as much as may be supposed. Artists have peopled the air, foresters have peopled woodlands; mariners have peopled the seas and miners and farmers have peopled the earth with, to them, imaginary creatures that have formed the motifs and themes of ballads and epics. Who shall say that after all, the original inspiration was not the actual inner consciousness of the presence of these very beings?
39. It is customary in these materialistic days to scoff at all such things, yet we have seen many fancies resolved into fact and many “highly colored imaginings” become actual verities. To the genuine Rosicrucian, the crowded streets of the cities become wilderness and the solitude of the forest and plain become tenanted with a multitude of true friends. All nature lovers know this although few of them perhaps, know why. Seek to realize this yourself and relax from the strain of crowded thoroughfares by seeking nature’s freedom as much as possible. Seek nature, not wantonly to kill her forest citizens but to make them your friends and you will be amazed to find how they will respond and still more amazed at the sense of inner companionship you will feel.
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EXERCISE FOR THE MONTH

In connection with your personal thought-form, meditate upon the possible assistance that each of the Four Elements might afford, to constructively build and strengthen it. Hold the thought that you desire all such assistance as may be possible and also that you desire to be of all possible assistance to those who are just beginning their evolution upward and ask that the way be opened for you to render such assistance.

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With kindest of good wishes for your success in the Great Work,

Faithfully yours,

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