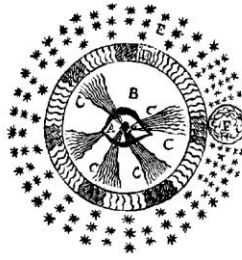


Spirit's Day Studies

The Writings of Jane Lead,
17th Century Christian Mystic



Diane Guerrero, Editor
8220 Gage Blvd #707
Kennewick, WA 99336 USA
www.janelead.org
diane@janelead.org

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Abbreviations used in this study
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Concerning the Virgin Mary

Excerpts from Jacob Boehme's 177 Theosophic Questions

Q104. What kind of virgin was Mary (in whom God became Man) before she conceived?

1. The Virgin *Mary* was of low estate and degree. Daughter of *Joachim* and *Anna*, not (as such) wholly pure, as some feign, but came from fallen *Eve*. Much less was she the Virgin *Sophia*; for the first *Adam* had repudiated himself and all his from that heavenly virginity and gone into adultery, into lust.
2. So that of *Mary* it may be said as *Daniel* of himself, *This is not revealed to me for any wisdom that is in me more than in any living*. Or as *Peter* said of himself and *John*, *Why look on us, as if by our power and holiness we had done this*, etc.
3. But though *Mary* before she conceived, was in soul and body such as other daughters of *Eve*, who by the regeneration were in the Holy Element. Yet to say what she came to be in, and after her conceiving, will fall under the answers of the two following questions.

Q105. Why must Mary be first espoused or betrothed to old Joseph before she conceived of the Holy Ghost?

1. An espousal (of the sort here signified) is a solemn mutual contract, between two of different sexes, exclusive of all others. Such was this of the Virgin to *Joseph*, a thing usual with the Jews: To which allude both the Prophet, *The love of your espousals*; and again *Paul*, *I have espoused you to me*. This definition has these parts: (1) It must be mutual, between two. (2) Of different sexes. (3) Exclusive of all others. (4) Solemn.
2. By this espousal is signified that the Virgin of Wisdom, the Promised Seed, was espoused to man's soul. This Virgin *Sophia* is the tincture in the Holy Element in Paradise; viz. the holy ternary or heavenly earth.
3. As the spirit, or (as some have called it) the soul of the outward world, is to this out-world and elements a giving mind, sense and virtue to the creatures: Such is the pure *Sophia* in the eternal glorious world. The soul and it, were as one, but by the apostasy became two.

4. Again, This holy, pure Virgin is espoused to man's soul or fiery property, herself being of the tincture of the Light World, and so were they of two sexes.
5. Also, this espousal is exclusive of all others; for the soul must cleave to her, and not join itself to the *First* or *Third Principles*.
6. And the solemnity is no less than that which either enters the soul into the Life Eternal and Love Kingdom, which else is precipitated into the fierce wrath.
7. Now that *Mary's* espousal should precede her conception by the Holy Ghost, was: (1) To show what Infinite Grace did immediately on the heavy Fall: For man even ready to be devoured by the *Third Principle*, and to devour himself by his *First*, is by this espousal (the Covenant of Grace) stayed from the abyssal Fall, which stop or betrothing must needs be now or never.
8. (2) That it was only an espousal, and that before the actual conception, was to show that man could not be entrusted (at least not yet) with so inestimable a value.
9. (3) To signify an intermission or intervention of time or ages, to pass and occur before performance of what had been promised; being, as the Apostle phrases it, the end; viz. us, *Upon whom the ends of the world are come*; as had said the angel to *Daniel*.
10. (4) To show what a vast distance man had removed himself, that his restoration must be wrought by tract of time, as men creep out of chronical diseases, so that the time of espousal was, as said the Apostle, *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you*; as till an embryo mature to a completeness, or a seed to be a tree.
11. (5) To attest the genealogy of the Lord's earthy humanity to be of *David*. For, besides the express, frequent, plain and full testimonies by the Prophets and Apostles concerning Christ's lineage, both genealogies in *Matthew*, from *Abraham* for satisfying the Jews; and in *Luke*, to *Adam*, for comfort of the Gentiles, do pitch on *Joseph*, wherein *Mary* is included; because none married out of their own tribe, and consequently none espoused out of it.
12. (6) The certainty of *Mary's* genealogy is demonstrated only by her espousal with *Joseph*, to keep humble that sex, who being the divided tincture, were first in the transgression.

Q106. How was God; viz. the Word made flesh? What has he assumed from man?

1. Questions 75, 81, and 90, and in the 15 particulars of the 21th Chapter of the little treatise called *Considerations. etc. on the Scope of Jacob Boehme*, much relate to the present inquiry. Yet it seems fit to say farther; viz. That because man's going into the *Third Principle*, had subjected him to the mortal bestial flesh, in the wrath and curse; if the Word had not assumed and been made flesh, the plaster had not been as broad as the wound. The elementary part, viz. that of the four elements, must forever have remained captive in death, and passed away with the melting and dissolution of them, into their aether, without recollection or resurrection.
2. At the same instant therefore of the Virgin *Mary's* conception, the Word in or of the *Second Principle*, was by the vehicle or medium of the Holy Element conceived in the Light of her life, taking hers, viz. our eternal human soul and spirit, or light generated out of the soul's essences, and both soul and spirit became as one in an eternal band with the Word, like as the masculine and feminine tinctures unite in ordinary conceptions.

3. In the same moment also, by the genuine right of nature, as the divine lubet of the two principles breathe out the *Third Principle*, attracting the powers thereof for their manifestation, and by the same immutable law, as by which common fire attracts air, did this Holy Divine Conception call to it the astral powers and spirit, and those (for their associates) brought, as their house and clothing, the four elements, being of the like necessity, as the body of a living creature follows the head. Thus the Word became flesh, yet as incomprehensible not only to the flesh, but also to the fallen human nature as the eternal soul is to the astral, or as the astral spirit is to the dead earth.

4 But as truly as the eternal human soul and spirit, the tincture, the astral soul, the animal spirits and senses, and the elementary body or bulk compose and form one man, so truly did the Word of the Almighty Son of God, the Virgin of God's Wisdom: the disappeared image of the Heavenly Humanity assume and unite with man's human soul, spirit, and tincture, enter also into the astral vigor and powers, also enter and assume the elementary flesh, and consecrate, circumcise and hallow them; and thus become one perfect complete person: God and Man.

5. The decay of the lungs is hard to be restored, because applications there are obstructed, their porter so curiously guards the entrance, as that air only may have admission; wherefore the wall is sometimes broken by incision to send injections to the part impaired, though with great hazard. But our Almighty Restorer has entered the whole man: every crevice and secret of soul and body is all superficies, an open field at noon day to the omniscience of gracious Love.

6. When my dull spirits a little penetrate this incomprehensible condescension, my powers yield up themselves prostrate, tremble and flame, my soul finds himself as one living among the dead; it has something to say and do which it wants apt organs to express and prosecute. And if my obscure soul find himself unequally yoked, what a stoop did infinite goodness make to bear our griefs and take on him the chastisement of our peace, be as a Lamb dumb before the shearers; yea under the merciless murderers and tormentors pour out his soul? He hid not His sweet face from shame and spitting, that by His stripes we his cruel enemies might be healed.