

CHAPTER XVIII - Material Life is a Lesson

In Chapter XVIII of "The Planet Mars and Its Inhabitants," the emphasis is placed on the pivotal role material life plays in the spiritual and character development of individuals. The chapter conveys a profound truth that material existence is not an end in itself but a means to unfold the inherent divine essence within humans. This process of unfolding is manifested through experiences of work, joy, and sorrow, all of which are imbued with lessons of love. Understanding and embodying this love is presented as a fundamental step towards becoming full participants in the Kingdom of God, as underscored by the teachings of Christ.

The narrative further contrasts the Earthly conception of the Kingdom with that of Mars, suggesting that while material possessions and achievements are transient and ephemeral, the Martian society represents a step towards a higher, more harmonious existence in alignment with divine will. However, the text advises against idolizing Mars or the Martians, as even their advanced society is just a single step in the broader cosmic progression towards the ultimate perfection envisioned by the Father's Kingdom.

Martians are portrayed as beings who, through prolonged efforts, have managed to control their base instincts and have directed their energies towards self-improvement and the overcoming of subtle and complex challenges. This, however, is not to say their journey is devoid of difficulties; rather, their challenges are of a different nature than those faced by humans. By highlighting the continuous struggle of Martians with their own unique sets of problems, the chapter serves as a reminder that every level of existence has its trials, which are crucial for spiritual growth and advancement.

Lastly, the text makes a case for the valor and merit of individuals who manage to transcend their challenging circumstances and find their way to the divine, arguing that overcoming adverse conditions to discover spirituality and connect with the Father's Kingdom is a greater achievement than mere birth into favorable circumstances. This chapter underscores the universal journey towards understanding and embodying love as the core of spiritual evolution, regardless of one's starting point or the nature of their challenges.