

EPISODE EIGHT

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

Hello everyone. Whether or not you are still on the path that you may or may not have ever been on. This is episode number eight of my podcast ManWomanSexGod. And my name is Michael Folz.

Now the most important point of the last episode was that, according to the understandings which underlie yoga, all males in the world ‘inhabit’ the extremely subtle Pingala thread in the spinal column. And, conversely, all females ‘inhabit’ what is called the Ida thread. But if you happen to be one of those people who is already somewhat familiar with the theory of yoga, you might well have wondered why you have never had this very important point impressed upon you earlier.

Well, to a large extent, this is because, historically, everyone in India—not to mention everyone else in every culture other than our postmodern Western one—always assumed that the male and the female were inherently different essences. Which meant that therefore, historically, no one would have ever been all that surprised to find out that males and females inhabited different threads. Nor would have anyone felt the need to stress this, nor to delve into the implications and ramifications of it, since, again, everyone already pretty much accepted and understood this reality.

In Western postmodern times, though, understanding that basic truth is a very big deal. Because, if nothing else, it blows a gigantic hole in the pretense that ‘male’ and ‘female’ are nothing more than gender constructs. What’s more, because of these postmodern times which we live in the implications of this basic truth are incredibly important to consider.

So for the next three episodes we are going to delve into some of these implications. Especially, in the next two episodes, with an examination of the Ida current and the ‘feminine’ essence.

By the way, if you happen to be a dyed in the wool postmodern listener, for right now kindly defer any questions about gender bending or gender fluidity or whatever. Some of these questions will be answered in the context of the next few episodes. More might be taken up later. For right now, though, keep remembering that I’m going to be talking about Ideals. And not messy reality.

Let me explain:

First off, it should be beyond obvious that each of us does have our own unique personality. Moreover, in the real world almost every one of us is a complex amalgamation of 'feminine' and 'masculine' traits. In the real world one would be silly to not recognize, for example, that men can be highly emotional or that women might sometimes have to, so to speak, steer the ship. Not to mention that there are many more traits out there that no one has ever even tried to assign a gender to.

But it's important for you to put that aside for right now. Because, as I just said, for now I'm going to be dealing with Ideal forms. After all, when you are studying physics, and if, for instance, you are learning about how a ball rolls down an inclined plane, your physics textbook will disregard real world effects such as friction, temperature, air resistance, and so on. Because by doing so you can then more quickly learn the simple, ideal beauty of the laws of inertia, acceleration, and so on. In the same sense, right now I'm not trying to present an exhaustive catalog of the real, messy, confusing, everyday human experience. Instead I'm trying to explain how the dynamics ideally work out.

Anyway, since I've brought up an analogy to science again, let's briefly consider the history of the study of electricity. Because, beginning in the mid 18th Century, scientists, including Benjamin Franklin with his kite, were already finding out some of the critical properties of electricity. Within a hundred years, in 1865, the Scottish scientist James Clerk Maxwell was able to unite various existing equations in order to pretty well describe all of electromagnetic energy. From that time until the mid 20th Century electricity pretty much reconfigured the entire world, from power generation to untold numbers of appliances and gizmos. But it might surprise you to learn that it wasn't until the end of the 20th Century that scientists finally started to have an accurate understanding as to how and why electricity actually worked.

The point is, for two centuries, just because we couldn't fully explain all of the precise ins and outs of electricity, that certainly didn't stop us from recognizing that it existed. Nor did it stop us from using it to totally change the world.

In like manner, at this point in our knowledge, I can't precisely describe how the kundalini is related to, and interacts with, those Ida and Pingala currents. In other words, I suppose that I am kind of at the stage of Franklin with his kite. I know for sure that the phenomenon exists. I know that it has immense energy. I know for sure that you're in big trouble if you don't have a lightning rod or other proper grounding going on when you're fooling around with this stuff.

Oh, and by the way, while we're talking about science, you should understand that, if the Ida and Pingala do actually exist, it wouldn't be that strange that they haven't yet been discovered by brain science. Because, even with all that has been figured out in the past fifty years or so, there probably is still more that is unknown than is known about our brains and nervous system. For example, endorphins weren't discovered until 1973. And even though we now know that the LSD molecule does its magic by totally surrounding serotonin receptors, we still have no idea why doing that would then cause all of those seemingly magical effects.

And, for all of you science nerds out there, here's a prediction for if and when they ever do locate the Ida and Pingala. I'm guessing that the chemistry associated with these threads will somehow involve the substance DHEA, a hormone which not only naturally occurs in our bodies, but one which is already known to be a precursor in the production of both our male and female sex hormones, testosterone and estrogen.

That's just my prediction, though. As with all science, we'll just have to wait and see what happens.

Okay. Now it's time to return to the religious experience. Or 'spiritual experience', if you prefer. Either way, what I want to do now is to circle back, and to discuss in greater detail what is a central, critical understanding about the state of mind which is absolutely necessary for you to have in order for you to have any hope of ever experiencing it. And the fascinating thing here is that I'm pretty sure that you already intuitively know this one.

Indeed, I'm pretty sure that even card carrying atheists intuitively know this one. In fact, I would argue that the reason that they are card carrying atheists is precisely because they do understand this one. And that behind their loudly proclaimed atheism is a personal fear of the loss of their precious sense of self. Or ego. Although we can certainly leave that argument for a later time.

Anyway, here's the (obvious) point: You cannot force your way into the Kingdom of Heaven. Or, to be slightly more poetic: You cannot storm the Gates of Heaven.

Let's think about that for a moment.

Because if there's one thing that we humans are known for, it is our ability, indeed our need, to actively shape our environment. To proactively solve all of those problems which the world throws our way. To invent new gadgets and new ways of doing things. In short, to be active. And, traditionally at

least, this forward looking, active mentality has always been associated with the masculine. What's more, it has also been associated with a distinctive form of individuality. Or 'ego', if you will.

But to experience the religious or spiritual experience, however—and this is going back the thousands of years that such experiences have been experienced—we have to have an almost diametrically opposed frame of mind. In other words, we need to be *receptive*.

And, as I stated last episode, the energy of the Ida cord is the essence of what we term female. Now instead of 'female' we can also call this energy 'the receptive'. Although, unfortunately, our present culture almost explicitly implies that 'receptive' is somehow inferior to 'active'. Well, it isn't. And we'll get to that in a minute. But this is why I've also labeled the Ida as 'energy relaxing upwards'.

Now remember how in earlier episodes I've pointed out that the disciplines and virtues that religions require—the actual active ingredients in any world religion that has stood the test of time—are pretty much identical? And that they are so required because they and only they produce the state of mind and state of being from which the religious experience can arise?

Well, here are the two most critical female virtues: Modesty and Humility. Indeed, it is probably more helpful to not even think of Modesty and Humility as virtues. It might be better to think of them as simply describing the state of being that one needs to be in so that the religious experience can more or less happen by itself.

Or, to say it slightly differently, the reason that Modesty and Humility are so crucial is that those words describe a specific *process*. The process by which the energy relaxing upwards actually relaxes upwards.

Got it? I hope so. But, although these twin virtues are absolutely necessary in order for the feminine energy to reach where nature has intended for it to reach, they are in and of themselves not sufficient. And it's going to take a short while to understand why. First, though, we need to discuss the idea of complementarianism for a bit.

This is generally considered to be a theological term, and it refers to a doctrine held by the Catholic Church. What it means is that the male and the female are seen as exactly equal, both spiritually and morally, but that *they are of inherently different qualities*. Moreover, it holds that these two qualities combine to create a third quality which is different from and also vastly superior to the individual ones. And that in fact this resultant combination is nothing more nor less than why the Sacrament of Marriage is a sacrament. Or Holy mystery.

Now the Catholics are great at precise philosophical definitions. But they are by no means the only religious group to have this understanding. Because it is also what is believed by the Orthodox Church. Not to mention most 'conservative' Protestant denominations. Plus Orthodox Judaism. Plus the entire Muslim world.

Now, clearly, as I have been discussing throughout, this is the direct opposite of what our modern, Western, secular society currently believes. And so to secular people the position of the Catholic Church and all the others is merely a function of their having blindly followed both tradition and what has been written in Scripture.

But this is rather intellectually insulting. It would be like me telling you that everything that you believe is just because someone told it to you or you read it in some book. Which, when you think about it, is pretty much technically true for most all of what any of us knows. But the statement is insulting because it implies that there is no actual inherent truth in what you now believe.

Of course, as I pointed out in the last episode, it's the modern, Western, secular belief in *gender* (which grew out of 18th Century philosophical noodling) that never had any basis in science or even common sense observation. And if you happen to be of the secular persuasion, then you're just going to have to learn to deal with the uncomfortable fact that you've been lied to. (Or else cite me the 18th or 19th Century scientific studies on which the idea of gender was based.)

But the whole schtick that somehow the complementarian idea arises from blind adherence to some specific Scripture completely falls apart when you realize that this understanding is not just held by Christians. And not just held by Christians and Jews. And not just held by Christians and Jews and Muslims. But that it has basically been held by every single civilization which has ever existed.

For instance, I'm trusting that you're familiar with that old yin/yang symbol, one of the central philosophical tenets of East Asian thought. And, once again, image google it if you're not.

Because it is also a pretty accurate artistic representation of complementarianism.

After all, if one merely wanted to depict how half of the world is male and half female, a simple straight line down the middle of the circle would have been appropriate. But the squiggly line implies that something else is going on. And the oppositely colored dot in the center of each 'half' adds to the sense of complexity in the supposedly simple division of existence into masculine and feminine principles.

As with the Catholic Church, though, Eastern philosophy's central understanding of yin/yang is that the male and the female are exactly equally equal. Male is not better than female. Female is not better than male.

In fact, it would be great right now if you could disabuse yourself of any simple good/bad, white/black, plus/minus understanding of yin/yang or complementarianism. Our excessively quantitative take on reality makes us think that if, for instance, the male is represented by +1, then the female must be -1. Further, we then think that '+' must be 'positive' and '-' must be 'negative'. More mental junk is created if we conclude that, since the yang is colored white and yin is colored black, this means that male energy is associated with the light and female energy is associated with darkness. No, those colors were chosen simply to show that the two apparently different two sides are actually qualitatively mirror images of the other.

So, going forward, it is absolutely necessary for us to reject the idea of quantitative mirror images, such as +1 and -1, and become comfortable with the truth of qualitative mirror images. Even if that's a little more complicated to conceptualize. But that's why the male/female divide was always seen as a sacrament. As a mystery. As in mystical. There is indeed a certain spooky quality to it.

And when we circle back to the yogic understanding of the nature of our existence, acceptance of the idea of complementarianism is absolutely necessary.

Because when we remember that yoga is all about conducting rigorous, dispassionate experiments upon our minds and bodies, and noting the reproducible results, then this relatively scientific nature of yoga saves us from having to invoke the crutch of Tradition or Authority or Scripture in order to justify any belief. Because yoga claims that complementarianism is a natural, logical outgrowth of the inherently qualitatively different natures of the energies expressed in the Ida and Pingala pathways of the kundalini system.

So, again, let's return to those energies. Especially the Feminine.

Because, as I said at the end of the last episode, it turns out that the Religious Experience, that very real and cross cultural phenomenon which I have been claiming that you can experience even without believing in any religion per se, is nothing more nor less than *the full realization of the higher octave of the Feminine Spirit*.

It's the energy going up having gone up.

It's why a girl enjoys being a girl. Only refined and clarified. And risen unto a State of Grace.

There. Once again, that's what it's all about. No more mysterious mysteries. No more secret occult symbols. No more existential dread because you don't know the Answer.

Because the Answer is the Feminine Principle.

But before we go wading about in that energy, I have to spend just a little more time reminding you that, besides what one might call 'traditional' 'gender-neutral' feminism, there is also a strain that could be labeled 'post-modern feminist empowerment'. This recognizes that the brains of men and women do indeed act differently. But it then presumes that the liberated female will naturally want the same things that men supposedly want, namely power, achievement, and independence. And that she will presumably achieve those same ends only through different means. No: The idea of strong, assertive women unafraid of putting themselves first, is the exact polar opposite of the Feminine Spirit which yoga is talking about and which is the foundation for the religious experience.

Remember: 'Active' is not better than 'receptive'. When we're talking about masculine and feminine principles we are talking about *qualitatively different* qualities. So it is absurd to think that a woman is somehow fulfilling herself by consciously aping male attributes. More to the point, when it comes to religions and/or the religious experience, then strong, assertive men unafraid of putting themselves first have never ever been seen as positive role models. Instead such people have been regarded as raging egotists. In other words, as the exact opposite of what spirituality is supposed to be about. So, if such an attitude is seen as terrible for the spiritually aspirant male, how in the world could it be a good idea for women to adopt this pose?

Let's take it further. For consider that for thousands of years thousands of men have left the world of status and achievement behind them in order to try to attain the religious experience. And what qualities did these men then invariably try to inculcate in themselves? Modesty. Humility. Non-violence. Selfless service. Acceptance. Grace. All of the so-called 'feminine' virtues. In other words, in attempting to become spiritual and attain the religious experience, men have in effect always sought to become women. Asexual women, to be sure. But psychological women nonetheless.

Now back to how the Feminine Principle expresses itself. Because, as I said, it turns out that inside of each and every one of us there is a tremendous amount of energy/life force that just *wants* to bubble upwards. In fact, picture a glass of a really highly carbonated beverage with its seemingly

endless number of bubbles constantly rising towards the surface. This is what it's like when you are infused with the Holy Spirit.

You can't stop those bubbles from rising. And you don't want those bubbles to stop rising.

And I really like that image. But here's a somewhat different approach. And this one involves the air that we breathe.

Now all of us, male and female, are constantly breathing in and breathing out. (A total of around 650 million times in an average lifetime, in case you're interested.) So it might seem strange to you to think of breathing as either a masculine or feminine pursuit. But if you are familiar with yoga, especially pranayama, or yogic breathing exercises, you'll already know that, according to yoga, breathing does have both a feminine and a masculine aspect. Specifically, breathing out is considered to be 'masculine'. And breathing in is considered to be 'feminine'.

If you think about it, you might see why this might be so. After all, even though most of the breaths that we breathe are done unconsciously, if you do take the trouble to be conscious about it, you will notice that breathing out and breathing in are qualitatively different experiences. For instance, if you are being conscious, then breathing out is something you control. Again: Active. But what happens after you've consciously expelled all of the air out of your lungs? Your body *automatically* breathes in. Receptive.

Or let's look at it in another way. Let's say that you're really frustrated about something. What do you do? You forcefully breathe out. Hmmmph! In other words, you're trying to control that frustration. On the other hand, let's say that it's a beautiful morning. You open the window, and what do you do? You breathe in deeply. Aaaaah! In fact, the very process of consciously taking a deep breath tends to make someone feel more positive. And receptive to good vibes.

And here we come to a very interesting etymological fact. Because usually when we find out how common words originated, it is most often the case that the meaning of the original word is not even remotely similar to what the modern word means. But do you know what the word 'inspire' translates to in the original Latin? To breathe in. This word 'inspire', which we closely associate with both creativity and the highest form of receptivity, literally means 'breathing in'.

Kind of amazing, eh?

Inspiration.

Okay, now let's think about that group of black ladies swaying and testifying on Sunday morning. They seem to be absorbed in a power that you can only guess at. They can't even keep their

bodies still, but have to move around as if dancing. And it is almost impossible to deny the joy that comes through from their gospel singing. And music, by the way, is also associated with inspiration, with breathing in, with the Receptive, with the Feminine.

In fact, here's a side note: We're always told that rock and roll is a direct descendant of the rhythm and blues sung on Saturday nights at alcohol laden juke joints in the Mississippi Delta. But according to Sam Phillips, the person who discovered Elvis Presley, the person who is most closely associated with the birth of rock and roll, what he was trying to recreate was the inspiration which he felt when he attended rural black churches on Sunday mornings. So that in a very real way you could say that rock and roll is a bunch of white guys awkwardly trying to reproduce the almost effortless inspiration of those black ladies in the Sunday choirs.

Anyway, speaking of church, you may have either a positive or negative opinion about 'Christians' in general. But you would have to be in willful denial not to admit that at least some of the Christians whom you have met in your life, white and black, are actually happy and loving and selfless. And that when these people say that they are 'born again', or that they are 'alive in Jesus', that they are referring to some *experience* that they are really, truly feeling.

Although there's no need to be bound by Christian terminology. As I've repeatedly said, this religious experience is available to everyone, male or female, regardless of particular religious beliefs or lack of same.

Except, of course: If you happen to be male, for at least that one moment of inspiration, you have to be female. Which is why Jesus referred to himself as the Bridegroom. And which is why Catholic nuns have always referred to themselves specifically as Brides of Christ.

And which is why Yoga, which once again always seems to just come right out and say it, declares that, in no uncertain terms, in reference to God, we are all Female. Indeed, one of the central myths in Hinduism is how Krishna (and remember, that's basically the same word as 'Christ') captivated all of the milk maids with the playing of his flute. Those milk maids: They're meant to be stand ins for all of us humans.

Okay. Now let me make one more stab at explaining—when it comes to the religious experience—the centrality of the Feminine essence. And when I'm talking about the 'Feminine essence', remember that I'm really talking about Modesty and Humility.

You see, one of the main difficulties in our present day understanding of what passes for the 'spiritual' is that, as currently used, the word 'self' can and does mean two totally different and contradictory things. In the context of Socrates' dictum 'Know Thyself', or as it is used in Indian philosophy, the word refers to pure consciousness alone. That is to say, it means consciousness without the slightest amount of covering of persona or personality, without any of those impulses, feelings, or thoughts.

But in modern parlance the word 'self' means just the opposite. It means that unique combination of desires and personality traits which makes each of us an individual. So that when we read about the Self in mystical texts, but only understand the word in its modern context, it is easy to get confused and to think that 'God' is somehow the same thing as 'me'. And then it logically follows that my desires are therefore God's desires. (And that therefore if my desires are not then always fulfilled, then God must not exist.)

However, when we look—across all cultures and religious traditions—at the accounts of those people who have experienced the religious experience, the one thing that stands out is that when the experience is happening there is absolutely no sense of 'I'. No sense of personality. No sense of individuality. Only a sense of 'Thou'. The only part of big Y 'You' which can be available for it is that part of big Y 'You' which has been stripped of any and all small y 'you'.

Which is what Modesty and Humility are specifically meant to do. Take small y 'you' down to zero.

Now, just like snowflakes, only more so, each of our individual personalities is unique and different. What's more, like incredibly complicated jigsaw pieces, it is almost impossible to mesh one human personality with another. Which is why relationships (as opposed to sacramental marriages) are so hard to keep going.

But Zero is the same for everyone.

Nor should you think of the 'Thou' as some other personality which you are in effect bowing down to or serving. Think of it rather as a totally non-individualistic One. So that what it comes down to is that You are Zero and God is One.

Although, again, you don't necessarily have to believe in 'God' in order to understand the religious experience. Because in this context I'm not referring to a personal ruler of the Universe, or even to an impersonal one. What I'm saying is that if you truly succeed in (even temporarily) erasing

all traces of personality you from consciousness You, the rush—the whoosh—that will *naturally* happen will be such that it might as well be God.

And now, in terms of yoga and chakras, let's go over the practicalities of what happens when the spirit rises.

Remember how the first three chakras—the base, the sexual, and the stomach—are referred to as the lower ones. It's complicated, but basically the stomach chakra is that of our mundane, everyday existence. It's where all our worries and strife about providing food and shelter are centered, along with all our desires and fears of success and failure, both physical and social.

And it seems that between the stomach and heart chakras there is some form of very strong barrier. Which is why most of us spend most of the consciousness of our lives in the former.

But if our energy becomes loosened and refined and (en)lightened, then it will, *on its own*, permeate that barrier and rise up into the heart chakra. But for that to happen you need some sort of divine *release*. You need a *softness of heart*. You need a total softness of heart.

And, as I intimated earlier, once you get there the heart chakra is the abode of joy, all purpose happiness, lightness of being, and compassionate warmth towards others.

Although, remember, the journey is still not over. Because the spirit can still rise further from there. And from this point on the words that best describe the process/state of being from here on up would be Prayer and Devotion. Not that Modesty and Humility are no longer necessary. It's more like all of these terms are referring to different states of mind along the same continuum.

So where does it all end? In that State of Grace. Which just so happens to be at the Third Eye. And thus the circuit is completed.

Nice soul work. If you can get it.

And therefore the Secret of the Universe is for everyone to get in touch with their Feminine Self, all dance around the Maypole, and everybody ascends up to Heaven. Right?

Well, not exactly.

But for me to explain *that*, you're going to have to wait until the next episode.

Because what I have been describing is how the Feminine Principle works when everything is going right. And if everything went right all the time, then the Wise Ones of old would have readily

shared this knowledge with everyone. And then there would have been no need for occultism, hidden meanings, mystery religions, etc.

Because it turns out that there's also an extremely dark side to the Feminine.

Again, though, you're going to have to wait until next time. Because for this time all the time that's left is for my friend the engineer to... cue the music.