

Vishvakarma first of all offers up all the world in a sacrifice, and then ends by sacrificing himself.

In the mystical representations of his character, Vishvakarma is often called Vittoba, and is pictured as the "Victim," the "Man-God," or the Avatâra crucified in space.

[Of the true Mysteries, the real Initiations, nothing of course can be said in public; they can be known only to those who are able to experience them. But a few hints can be given of the great ceremonial Mysteries of Antiquity, which stood to the public as the real Mysteries, and into which candidates were initiated with much ceremony and display of Occult Arts. Behind these, in silence and darkness, were the true Mysteries, as they have always existed and continue to exist. In Egypt, as in Chaldæa and later in Greece, the Mysteries were celebrated at stated times, and the first day was a public holiday, on which, with much pomp, the candidates were escorted to the Great Pyramid and passed thereinto out of sight. The second day was devoted to ceremonies of purification, at the close of which the candidate was presented with a white robe; on the third day]* he was tried and examined as to his proficiency in Occult learning. On the fourth day, after another ceremony symbolical of purification, he was sent alone to pass through various trials, finally becoming entranced in a subterranean crypt, in utter darkness, for two days and two nights. In Egypt, the entranced neophyte was placed in an empty sarcophagus in the Pyramid, where the initiatory rites took place. In India and Central Asia, he was bound on a lathe, and when his body had become like that of one dead (entranced), he was carried into the crypt. Then the Hierophant kept watch over him "guiding the apparitional soul (astral body) from this world of Samsâra (or delusion) to the *nether* kingdoms, from which, if successful, he had the right of releasing *seven suffering souls*" (Elementaries). Clothed with his Anandamayakosha, the body of bliss—the Srotâpanna remained there where we have no right to follow him, and upon returning—received the *Word*, with or without the "heart's blood" of the Hierophant.†

* [There is a gap in H. P. B.'s MS., and the paragraph in brackets supplies what was missing.—A. B.]

† In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II., pp. 41, 42, a portion of this rite is referred to. Speaking of the dogma of Atonement, it is traced to ancient "heathendom" again. We say: "This cornerstone of a church which had believed herself built on a firm rock for long centuries, is now excavated by science and proved to come from the Gnostics. Professor Draper shows it as hardly known in the days of Tertullian, and as having 'originated among the Gnostic heretics' (see *Conflict Between Re-*