

This confessional formula is not an appeal to arbitrary authority, but a disclaimer of personal authority. It says, as HPB did herself repeatedly in her writing, “I have not made this up, but rather it is what I have learned from those who know more than I do.”

Verses 120-122 introduce a new metaphor, that of the mill which grinds the flour from which bread is made. The mill is the “good Law” or the “Heart Doctrine,” that is, the esoteric teachings. It is operated by the hand of karma, that is, by the results of our own past actions. The grain which it grinds is human experience. The husks or refuse it separates out is that part of our life’s experience that is not eternally useful — all that is shadowy, petty, narrow, and limited in our lives, and especially false learning or head-learning. The flour that the mill produces is true knowledge, gnosis, self-discovery. If we try to combine that flour of true knowledge with Māyā’s dew (the illusions of this world, head-learning), the result will not endure, being fit only as food for the doves of death. But if we mix it with the waters of am ta (which HPB notes means “immortality,” or what survives an incarnation), the bread that rises is Wisdom, which feeds the soul.

These three verses are saying that we come to the esoteric teachings by our own self-created karma. If we submit ourselves to those teachings, they will separate what is transitory and worthless in us from what is of enduring value, which can be absorbed into our permanent reincarnating Self, and that is indeed the Bread of Life.

C. MEDITATION.

These verses contain a number of striking and dramatic images. Take one of these images and visualize it clearly. See every detail of the picture and of the action involved with the picture. Hold it firmly in mind. Let it speak to you.

- A bird shut into an airless vessel, from which it must escape.
- A mirror gathering dust, which is then brushed away by gentle breezes.
- A high tower to the top of which a haughty fool has climbed, where he sits alone.
- A mill grinding grain into flour, which is mixed with sweet water to make bread.