

# The Life and Philosophy of Pythagoras<sup>1</sup>

Manly P. Hall

“After returning from his wanderings, Pythagoras established a school, or as it has been sometimes called, a university, at Crotona, a Dorian colony in Southern Italy. Upon his arrival at Crotona he was regarded askance, but after a short time those holding important positions in the surrounding colonies sought his counsel in matters of great moment. He gathered around him a small group of sincere disciples whom he instructed in the secret wisdom which had been revealed to him, and also in the fundamentals of occult mathematics, music, and astronomy, which he considered to be the triangular foundation of all the arts and sciences.

When he was about sixty years old, Pythagoras married one of his disciples, and seven children resulted from the union. His wife was a remarkably able woman, who not only inspired him during the years of his life but after his assassination continued to promulgate his doctrines.

As is so often the case with genius, Pythagoras by his outspokenness incurred both political and personal enmity. Among those who came for initiation was one who, because Pythagoras refused to admit him, determined to destroy both the man and his philosophy. By means of false propaganda, this disgruntled one turned the minds of the common people against the philosopher. Without warning, a band of murderers descended upon the little group of buildings where the great teacher and his disciples dwelt, burned the structures and killed Pythagoras.

Accounts of the philosopher's death do not agree. Some say that he was murdered with his disciples; others that, on escaping from Crotona with a small band of followers, he was trapped and burned alive by his enemies in a little house where the band had decided to rest for the night. Another account states that, finding themselves trapped in the burning structure, the disciples threw themselves into the flames, making of their own bodies a bridge over which Pythagoras escaped, only to die of a broken heart a short time afterwards as the result of grieving over the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts to serve and illuminate mankind.

His surviving disciples attempted to perpetuate his doctrines, but they were persecuted on every hand and very little remains today as a testimonial to the greatness of this philosopher. It is said that the disciples of Pythagoras never addressed him or referred to him by his own name, but always as *The Master* or *That Man*. This may have been because of the fact that the name Pythagoras was believed to consist of a certain number of specially arranged letters with great sacred significance. *The Word* magazine has printed an article by T. R. Prater, showing that Pythagoras initiated his candidates by means of a certain formula concealed within”.

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<sup>1</sup> *The secret teachings of all ages*, by Manly P. Hall, San Francisco, printed for Manly P. Hall, by H.S. Crocker Company, Incorporated, 1928, pág. 65. Scanned at sacred-texts.com, November, 2001. J. B. Hare, Redactor.