

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

Miscellaneous Interpretations

Part 5

“And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of a honeycomb.”—Luke 24:36-43

A**FTER THE** resurrection the Christ at one time appeared among His disciples while they were in a locked room. They did not recognize Him at once and did not believe that His was a material body. But the vehicle in which He appeared was the vital body of Jesus, and it was possible for Him, as for anyone else capable of functioning in that vehicle, to draw matter of the chemical region around Himself and build a perfectly tangible, dense body in a moment. In order to convince them that He was as usual, He asked for something to eat and was given a piece of honeycomb and some fish. It was stated that He ate, but not that He ate the fish, and one who had been brought up among strict vegetarians like the Essenes would not have eaten the fish any more than he would have eaten flesh if it had been set before him.

It is also related of the Buddha that he died after gorging himself upon boar's flesh, which is highly ridiculous to anyone aware of the fact that he taught his disciples the simple and harmless life—to sustain the body upon the purest and best foods as they come directly from the ground—and was moved to the greatest pity at the sight of suffering on the part of man or beast.

The esoteric student understands that in olden times the boar was a symbol of esoteric knowledge. One may give of his knowledge; the more we give the more we have—at least, the same amount of knowledge remains. The Buddha in his Earth life had



Watercolor, J. James Tissot (1836-1902), Brooklyn Museum of Art

Christ Appears on the Shore of Lake Tiberius

“Children, have ye any meat?...Jesus then cometh and taketh bread.”—John 21

gorged himself upon this sacred knowledge, and when he died he was full thereof.

Not everyone should be a vegetarian at once. The vegetarian diet generates an abundance of energy, much more than flesh foods. This energy is not only physical but spiritual, so that if a man leads a sedentary life and is of a material disposition, engaged, perhaps, in sordid business transactions or in other lines of strictly material endeavor, this spiritual energy can find no vent and is apt to cause systemic disturbances.

Only those who live an active, busy life, where the abundance of energy generated by the vegetarian food can be thrown off, or who transmutes that energy into spiritual endeavor, can thrive on the vegetarian diet.

Besides, we recognize that the heredity of many generations has made man partly carnivorous, so that in the case of most people the change from a mixed diet to vegetables should be gradual. The diet which suits one man is not fitted for another, as indicated in the old proverb that “one man's meat is another man's poison,” and no hard and fast rules can be laid

down which will apply equally to all people. Therefore, everything that we eat as well as everything else connected with our personality should be determined by ourselves individually.

The Bible says truly that it is not that which goeth into the mouth that defileth us. If we crave and support ourselves upon loathsome food, it is the craving that is the sin and not the food itself. If a man is in a place where he cannot obtain the pure foods which he desires and craves, he ought to take the food which is obtainable, even flesh food, just as thankfully as he takes the pure food. It will not defile him because of his attitude of mind.

“And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes he divided among them all.”—Mark 6:37-44

It is the nature of a beast of prey to eat any animal that comes in its path, and its organs are such that it must have that kind of a diet to exist, but everything is in a stage of becoming; it is always changing to something higher. Man, in his earlier stages of unfoldment, was also like the beasts of prey in certain respects. However, he is to become Godlike and thus he must cease to destroy at some time in order that he may commence to create.

We have been taught that there is no life in the universe but the life of God, that “in Him we live and move and have our being.” His life animates everything that is and therefore we naturally understand that as soon as we take life we are destroying the form built by God for His manifestation. The lower animals are evolving Spirits and have sensibilities. It is their desire for experience that causes them to build their various forms, and when we take their forms away from them we deprive them of their opportunity for gaining experience. We hinder their evolution instead of helping them.

It is excusable in the cannibal, who knows no better, when he eats his fellow men. We now regard cannibalism with horror, and the day will also come when we shall feel a like disgust at the thought of making our stomachs the burying ground of the carcasses of murdered animals.

It is natural that we should desire the very best of food, but every animal body has in it the poisons of decay. The venous blood is filled with carbon diox-

ide and other noxious products on their way to the kidneys or the pores of the skin to be expelled as urine or perspiration. These loathsome substances are in every part of the flesh and when we eat such food we are filling our own bodies with toxic poisons. Much sickness is due to our use of flesh foods.

In a great many places where the Bible speaks of “meat” it is very plain that flesh is not meant. The chapter in Genesis where man’s food is first allotted to him says that he should eat of every tree and herb bearing seed, “and to you it shall be for meat.” The most evolved people at all times have abstained from flesh foods. We see, for instance, Daniel, who was a holy man and a wise man, beg that he might not be forced to eat meat, but that he and his companions be given pulse. The children of Israel in the wilderness are spoken of as “lusting after flesh” and their God is angry with them in consequence.

There is an esoteric meaning to the feeding of the multitude where fish was used as food, but looking to the purely material aspect we may sum up the points made by reiterating that we shall some time outgrow flesh and fish eating as we have risen above cannibalism. Whatever license may have been given in the barbaric past will disappear in the altruistic future, when more refined sensibilities shall have awakened us to a fuller sense of the horrors involved in the gratification of a carnivorous taste.

“And He said, a certain man had two sons.”—Luke 15:11-24

The story of the prodigal son was a parable whereby the Christ intended to teach a lesson and not an actual fact. It is a story which tells of the Spirit’s pilgrimage through matter. There are different classes of Spirits. Some, but not all, have gone into the school of experience, the world. They have descended from their high estate in the World of God gradually deeper and deeper into the sea of matter which blinds them. At last they find themselves enmeshed in the dense matter of the Physical World. That is the turning point where they wake up; where the unconscious path of involution ends; where self-consciousness is attained plus a consciousness of the world without. But the Spirit within is not content to remain in this world. Reawakened to a sense of its inherent divinity it feels drawn anew to its highest spheres, and says “I will arise and go to my Father.”

Then comes the toil of stripping off the various

vehicles in which it has become enmeshed and of raising itself once more to the conscious communion with God. While engaged in this arduous task “the Father meets it a long way off”; the still small voice from within begins to speak and tell of heavenly glories and, at last, when either the evolution of humanity has been completed or the single Spirit has taken the short cut of Initiation, there is a reunion with God and the other brothers who have not yet gone out into the school of experience. Naturally there is more rejoicing over the return of one who has fought the good fight and has come back to his heavenly home, than over the one who has not yet sought to improve his opportunities.

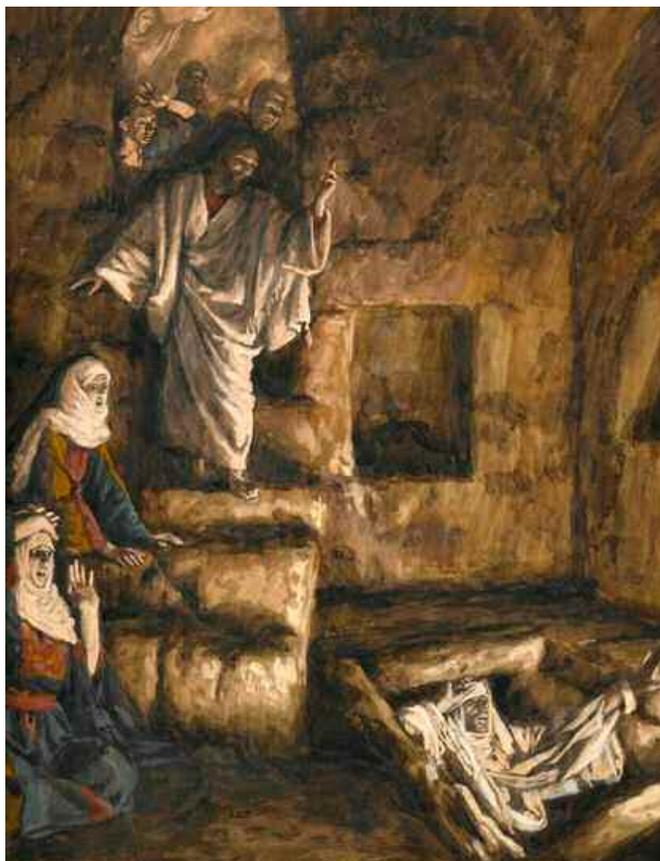
Raising the Dead—John 11:11, Acts 9:36-42

Peter did not raise Dorcas from the dead, neither did the Christ raise Lazarus or anyone else, nor did He so claim. He said “He is not dead, he sleepeth.”

In order that this matter may be understood, we will explain what takes place at death and wherein death is different from the state of trance, for the persons mentioned were entranced at the time the supposed miracles took place.

During the waking state, when the Ego is functioning consciously in the Physical World, its various vehicles are concentric—they occupy the same space—but at night, when the body is laid down to sleep, a separation takes place. The Ego, clothed in the mind and desire body, extricates itself from the dense body and the vital body, which are left on the bed. The higher vehicles hover above or near. They are connected to the denser vehicles by the silver cord, a thin glistening thread which takes the shape of two figure sixes, one end being attached to the seed atom in the heart and the other to the central vortex of the desire body.

At the moment of death, this thread is ruptured at the seed atom in the heart and the forces of this atom pass along the pneumogastric nerve, through the third ventricle of the brain, and thence outward through the suture between the occipital and parietal bones of the skull, along the silver cord and into the higher vehicles. Simultaneously with this rupture, the vital body is also disengaged and joins the higher vehicles which are hovering above the dead body. There it remains for about three and one-half days. Then the higher vehicles disengage themselves from the vital body, which disintegrates synchronously



Watercolor. J. James Tissot, 1836-1902. Brooklyn Museum

The Raising of Lazarus

An initiation of the future Christian Rose Cross by Christ Jesus was taking place during the three and one half days that Lazarus was lying “dead.”

with the dense body, in ordinary cases.

At the time of this last separation, the silver cord also breaks in the middle, and the Ego is freed from contact with the material world. During sleep the Ego also withdraws from the dense body, but the vital body remains with the dense body and the silver cord is left intact.

It sometimes happens that the Ego does not enter the body in the morning to waken it as usual, but remains outside for a time varying from one to an indefinite number of days. Then we say that the body is in a natural trance. But the silver cord is not ruptured in either of the two places mentioned. Where these ruptures have once taken place no restoration is possible.

The Christ and the apostle were clairvoyants; they say that no rupture had taken place in the cases mentioned; hence the saying, “He is not dead, he sleepeth.” They also possessed the power to force the Ego into its body and restore the normal condition. Thus so-called miracles were performed by them. □