

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

Abraham and Moses Contact the Coming One

Egos that come to earth as great spiritual messengers, often called sons of destiny, are given special care and protection from inner realms—although their lives are usually filled with sorrow and travail, for it is pain that sensitizes and refines the nature of man. Such are often conscious of the angelic ministry, as exemplified in the lives of Abraham and Moses, both of whom were chosen and prepared for becoming leaders of the Fifth Root Race.

Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria—the latter a second century Father of the primitive Church, and most noted as the founder of the Alexandrian school of theology—held that it was Christ who appeared to Abraham and said, “I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Gen 17:1). These same Fathers, together with Tertullian and Origen, assert that it was also Christ who appeared to Abraham on the “plain of Mamre.” There He is called Lord and Judge of all the earth. Cyprian, a third century ecclesiastic and martyr of the African Church, considered that Christ was the Angel who called to Abraham when he was about to sacrifice Isaac.

It was after Abraham’s intimate contact with the spirit of the Cosmic Christ that he developed extended vision, expansion of consciousness, and an ever-deepening spiritual awareness. His development led to the birth of Isaac as foretold by angelic visitors—the name Isaac meaning *all abiding spiritual joy* which, once acquired, is dimmed by no vicissitudes of the mundane world. It is what



Die Bibel in Bildern, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1789-1853)

The Angel Stays Abraham’s Sacrifice of Isaac

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the psalmist had in mind when he sang: “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.”

Again, Cyprian attributes to Christ the guidance given the people of Israel during their wandering in the wilderness, as recorded in Exodus 13:21 and 14:9: “And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light....And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.” He also conceived Christ to be the Angel promised in Exodus 23:21-22: “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way...obey his voice...for my name is in him.”

Every disciple being prepared for service in the Christ Dispensation meets upon the Path, in some form or other, the paramount test—such as Abraham’s being called upon to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. At this point the disciple must

be able to say with the Christ: "Not my will, but thine, be done." It was the Comforter, the Lord Christ Himself, who attended upon Abraham during this supreme trial, a fact recorded by both Origen and Cyprian, a contemporary of Origen. The sacrifice was not really required of Abraham, but only his willingness to renounce all for his Lord. This is beautifully demonstrated in the biblical sequel telling how a ram was substituted for Isaac, the ram being a symbol of the coming Arian Dispensation when the Lord Christ would descend and, in human embodiment, make the supreme sacrifice. In this test Abraham had proved his worthiness, and also his ability to study profound truths directly from the Akashic Records.

Polarity is the fundamental teaching underlying esoteric Christianity. The High Priest Melchizedek gave it to Abraham in the ritual of the Holy Supper to prepare him for his mission as pioneer leader of the incoming Fifth Root Race. The same teaching was the final pronouncement of Christ's ministry on earth, given to His Disciples at the Last Supper on Holy Thursday preceding His sacrifice on Golgotha. This ritual is now largely regarded as mere ceremonial. Few persons have any concept of the power that can be communicated to its recipients when this divine ordinance is worthily and understandingly observed.

The hidden power of the fruit of the vine was realized by the early Fathers, as the following passage from Justin Martyr indicates: "The words 'blood of the grape' are used purposely to express, that Christ has blood, not from the seed of man, but from the power of God. For in the same manner that man does not produce the blood of the vine, but God; so also this passage foretold that the blood of Christ was not to be of human origin, but from the power of God: and this prophecy shows, that Christ is not a man, begotten of men according to the common law of men." Eusebius, a fourth century ecclesiastical historian, writes of the same text: "...men are redeemed by the blood of the grape, which has God dwelling in it, and is spiritual."

Such statements make plain that the "blood of the grape" has a deep significance. It refers to the purification and transmutation of the blood of man.

Christ told His Disciples: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." A consecrated aspirant places himself into closer and more perfect attunement with Christ by means of the bread and wine, and is thereby able to develop and manifest greater Christed powers within himself.

Both Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria claim that it was the Christ who appeared to Jacob in the dream where he beheld a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with Angels of God ascending and descending upon it. Above it stood the Lord, who said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac" (Gen 28:13). Cyprian, quoting from Genesis 35:1, writes: "...believing as all the Fathers did that the God there spoken of who appeared to Jacob when he fled from Esau was Christ."

...[I]llumined Masters down through the ages have understood and have taught their disciples that the work of Mystery Schools and the various forms of their Initiation were but preparatory steps for the coming of the Supreme World Teacher, the Lord Christ. This statement holds true regarding seer-teachers of the Old Testament Dispensation. They were preparing themselves and their followers to later serve the Christ. In his dreams Jacob was being taught to read in the Memory of Nature. There he saw the involutory-evolutionary ladder which extends from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven, with multitudes of spirits descending into incarnation and reascending into heaven after earth's lessons have been learned.

The Path of Discipleship has been similar in all ages. Aspirants must meet the same tests and make the same over-comings. Only particulars change in the course of succeeding epochs. This initiatory Path is outlined with exceptional fidelity in the life of Jacob.

It is recorded in Genesis (32:24) that when Jacob was left alone "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of day." At the conclusion of this incident it was made clear that the One who prevailed over Jacob was invested with super-human authority, for He gave Jacob the new name of *Israel*: "for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men." The experience here related is a most meaningful one. That the Lord Christ was herein the

Teacher and Guardian of Jacob is noted by Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus.

Jacob's experience of wrestling all night with the Angel and refusing to let it go until he received a blessing is a familiar one upon the Path of Discipleship. Spiritual powers latent within each aspirant thereby become sufficiently dynamic for him to manifest them within his life. St. Paul's admonition to his disciples was, "Let the Christ be formed in you." This must be accomplished by a candidate before he becomes a pioneer of the Christ Dispensation. Through it the life of Jacob was completely transformed. He parted from Esau (the lower nature) for all time, and in conformity with his inner change he was no longer called Jacob, but Israel (those who see God). Jacob was now an heroic conqueror and a dedicated server. He was qualified to become a worker in the vineyard of the Lord Christ, who declared: "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all" (Mark 10:44).

Referring again to the verse in Genesis (32:24) which says that "Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him," Origen writes: "Who else could it be that is called at once man and God, who wrestled and contended with Jacob, than He who spake at sundry times and in divers manners unto the Fathers (Heb 1:1) the holy Word of God Who is called Lord and God, Who also blessed Jacob and called him Israel, saying to him 'Thou hast prevailed with God.' It was thus that the men of those days beheld the Word of God, like our Lord's apostles did, who said 'That which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our own eyes, and looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life' (John 1:1), which Word of Life Jacob also saw and added 'I have seen God face to face.'"

From thence Jacob ascended into Bethel, there, to build an altar where he dedicated his life to God. Many who pass through this exalting experience



Gustave Doré (1833-1883)

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel

Jacob did not meet Esau—esoterically, referring to a meeting with the Dweller on the Threshold, an entity whose force and form derive from evil generated in the ego's past lives and awaiting liquidation—until after his encounter with the Angel, which signifies the strengthening of his inner powers, an enhanced spiritual awareness, and an increased access to divine presence.

are conscious of the presence of the Christ, and of His pouring out a tender blessing upon their endeavors. Bethel means *the House of God*, and it is in Bethel that a victorious candidate makes a complete dedication.

Hyppolytus, an ecclesiastical writer of the third century and a pupil of Irenaeus, made the following statement with reference to Christ as described in Jacob's prophecy (Gen 49:9) and in Revelation (5:5): "Now since the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, on account of his kingly and glorious state, was spoken of before as a lion."

Four of the most distinguished Church Fathers—Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus and Tertullian—assert that it was none other than the Christ who appeared to Moses in the burning bush. This phenomenon was a reflection of the Cosmic Christ as He drew closer and closer to the earth prior to His human incarnation. Christ is the Lord of the Sun and Chief among the Fire Spirits, the Archangels. The Christian Dispensation is intimately guided by the Hierarchy of Leo, the

Lords of Flame. Hence, the Fire Initiation is directly connected with the Christ Mysteries. This Fire is not a flame that burns but a light that purifies and transmutes. The bush that “burned,” in that it became ablaze with light, was not consumed. This experience of Moses is a veiled account of the exaltation engendered by the Fire Initiation.

In agreement with many Church Fathers, Justin Martyr believed that it was Christ who talked with Moses out of the bush, and he condemned those who confounded God the Father with His Son. “Those who think that it was always God the Father who spoke to Moses (whereas He who spoke to him was the Son of God, who is also called an Angel, and an Apostle), are justly convinced both by the prophetic spirit, and by Christ himself, for knowing neither the Father nor the Son. For they who say that the Son is the Father are convinced of neither knowing the Father nor of understanding that the God is also God. And formerly He appeared to Moses and to the other prophets in the form of fire as an incorporeal image.”

Clement of Alexandria is another authority for the claim that it was Christ who said to Moses: “I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt.” It is this Christ power which always delivers an aspirant out of Egypt, the land symbolical of bondage to the senses and to the darkness of mortal mind.

Moses was permitted to view the Promised Land, the land flowing with milk and honey (the Christ Dispensation of the Aquarian-Leo cycle). The saintly Origen tells us that it was the Christ who gave Moses on the holy mountain the Tables of the Law, when Moses was being taught to read the Akashic Records. He saw that the civilization of the Fifth Root Race was to have its foundation in the laws that became known as the Ten Command.

He saw further that the Christ Himself would bring an extension of these laws, which He did by

the precepts enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount. Humanity of the Fifth Root Race is still far from the development scheduled for it in the divine plan. Only a few of its members have reached the evolutionary status where they live in full accord with the Ten Commandments; and fewer still have any conception of the spiritual import of the Sermon on the Mount.

...The two columns of polarity [in esoteric Christianity] are formed by the Ten Commandments (the masculine column) and the Sermon on the Mount (the feminine column). For the Christed man of the coming Aquarian-Leo Race, the Ten Commandments will be the foundation on which he establishes his daily life, while the Sermon on the Mount will be its superstructure as he rises into higher dimensions of unfoldment.

Dr. Rudolf Steiner, in the volume *The Gospel of St. John*, asserts that “When he heard the voice calling unto him saying, ‘When thou wouldst proclaim my name, say that I AM bath said it unto thee,’ here for the first time sounds forth the knowledge and manifestation of the Logos, of the Christ.... ‘Isaiah spake with him.’ With whom did Isaiah speak? Reference is made here to the passage in Isaiah 6:1 which reads: ‘In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple.’

“Whom did Isaiah see? This is clearly told here in the Gospel of St. John. He saw the Christ... the Logos of which the Gospel of St. John speaks. The writer of this Gospel means nothing more nor less than that the One who could always be perceived in the Spirit became flesh and dwelt among us.”

The question is sometimes asked why Jesus is not mentioned in the Old Testament. His name is there but in another form. The Hebrew equivalent for the Greek name *Jesus* is *Joshua*. In Numbers 13:16 Joshua was called Jehoshua, which means *Jehovah is the Saviour*.

This is exactly the meaning of the word *Jesus* as

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given in Matthew 1:21: “And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” The fact that Joshua bore a name of such high vibratory power is in itself an evidence of this high spiritual attainment.

On the road to Jericho Joshua was met by a shining Being bearing a flaming sword. So impressed was he by its splendor that he prostrated himself on the ground before this Being. The celestial visitor, according to Joshua, was “captain of the host of the Lord,” who bade him remove his shoes from off his feet for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. Joshua did so.

This record states that Joshua lifted up his eyes and looked, he beheld “a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went up to him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the

Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?” (Joshua 5:13-15)

Commenting on the above passage, Origen says: “Joshua, therefore, not only knew he was of God, but that he was God; for he would not have worshiped if he had not known him to be God. For who else is captain of the host of the Lord except our Lord Jesus Christ?” This agrees with the judgment of other Church Fathers that the One who appeared either in human form or in that of an Angel to any of the patriarchs was the Christ.

Having attained perfect equilibrium within himself, which is an evidence of high Initiateship, Joshua is said to have caused the Sun and Moon to stand still. He was the most advanced disciple of Moses, his successor as teacher and leader of Israel, and an emissary of the coming Christ Dispensation.

Elijah’s ascent into heaven in a chariot of fire is the description of another illuminated spirit who was being prepared through the Fire Initiation to work on both inner and outer planes in anticipation of the coming of Christ. This was likewise the Initiation of the three holy men who were cast into



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Joshua and the Captain of the Lord’s Host

As spiritual heir of Moses, Joshua, whose Hebrew name is the equivalent of the Greek name Jesus, led the “chosen people” into the Promised Land.

a fiery furnace yet remained unharmed, as recorded in the Book of Daniel. In its entirety this Book contains much information relative to Initiation of Fire.

The Book of Daniel correlates closely with the work of the Hierarchy of Leo. It was the Initiation by Fire, as it guards the threshold of the Christ Mysteries, that the Supreme Teacher referred to when He told Nicodemus “Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God,” the new Christed order.

Concerning the three holy men (Initiates) who were thrown into the fiery furnace, the following observation was made by Tertullian: “Jesus was seen by the king of Babylon in the furnace with his martyrs, being the fourth person like the Son of man; the same was expressly revealed to Daniel himself as the Son of man, coming as a judge with the clouds of heaven, as the scripture showed beforehand that the Gentiles were afterwards to know him in the flesh, whom Nebuchadnezzar had long before seen without flesh, and recognized in the furnace, and acknowledged him to be the Son of God.” □

—Corinne Heline, *Mystery of the Christos*