

The Significance of the Full Moon

AS THE NEW MOON marks the time of new beginnings, of Rededication and Reconsecration to the highest ideals to which one may aspire, so the Full Moon marks the time of Realization, Attainment, and Fulfillment, the three words which express its spiritual keynote. And as the Baptism which was generally observed at the time of the New Moon as the ceremonial of rededication and reconsecration of the Ego to that which is highest in man, the God Within, so also the deepening of realization, the heightening of spiritual attainment, and the glory of sublime fulfillment are all included within the beautiful ceremonial of the Mystic Love Feast or Eucharist, which in the Mystery Temples was celebrated on the night of the Full Moon.

The high attainment of the Eucharist Mystery cannot be acquired in a few months, or even years, but requires a span of many lives. Yet a foretaste of that glory touches the consciousness of every sincere aspirant, wherever he may be on the Path, however lowly. To partake of the Rite of Fulfillment means that the personality has become the obedient servant, at all times, of the dictates of Spirit. It means that it has achieved the supreme conquest, that of the self. In the life of Dante this had been achieved when he arrived at the top of the Mount of Purgatory, and Virgil, his teacher and spiritual guide, said to him, "With crown and miter I name thee sovereign o'er thyself!" And when we turn to the Bible, that supreme Book of Life, we find among its most important characters those



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

The Egyptian Army Perishes in the Red Sea

While the hosts of Pharaoh drown in the sea of unbridled passions, the Israelites subject their lower nature to the dictates of the higher self.

who have reached this high place of development.

In the fifteenth chapter of Exodus, Moses sings his triumphal song of complete self-conquest. He declares: "The Lord is my strength, and my song. The Lord is my salvation. Because of Him I have triumphed." In these words he describes his miraculous passage across the Red Sea. Esoterically this sea is appropriately called Red because it symbolizes the martian color of physical passion to which the emotional nature is subjected. The hosts of Pharaoh, who were pursuing the Israelites and who were engulfed and drowned by the waters of the Red Sea, represent those who have not overcome their lower emotional propensities and are consequently engulfed by the waters of passion and desire. Moses and the Israelites on the other hand, represent those who have mastered their lower nature and become obedient to the dictates and guidance of their higher selves. For them the emotional floods recede and they walk dry-shod

into the glorious vistas of the Promised Land. By self-conquest every obstacle that would bar the way to self-mastery and Illumination is unfailingly removed.

The Psalms of David are hymns of various degrees of Initiation. Some are addressed to the beginner, or neophyte; others are composed for those who have advanced farther on the Path; and yet others voice the exalted state of souls who attained to cosmic consciousness. In the twenty-fourth Psalm, for example, we hear the triumphant strains of an Initiate song: "Open up, ye gates, ye everlasting gates, that the King of Glory may come in." This King of Glory is not alone the Lord God of Hosts. He is also the luminous being who comes to awareness and expression in the soul that has reached the place from which it can open the gates to the spiritual worlds and pass in and out at will. With this attainment comes the ability to study, teach, and consciously serve on both inner and outer planes as conditions and circumstances require.

In his epistles Saint Paul outlined the path of the Initiate as he had himself experienced it. Hence he was able to utter those stirring words that countless "athletes of God" have proclaimed after him: "I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith. I have finished the course."

The Lord Christ withheld his most advanced teaching until the very close of His earthly ministry. The deepest mysteries which He came to reveal were imparted to His most advanced disciples when they met together in the "Upper Room" and shared the "Last Supper." This observance perpetuated the earlier Temple ceremonials known as the Mystic Love Feast, and sanctified it as the holiest of Christian sacraments. The Eucharist, or Holy Communion as observed by the Church, lies at the very heart of Christian faith and practice....

The Last Supper or Rite of the Eucharist has formed a part of every initiatory teaching that has

ever been given to man. In Egypt the mystic bread and wine signified the blessings of the Sun God, Ra. In Persia the Eucharist was a part of the Mithraic Mysteries. In Greece the bread was sacred to Persephone and the wine to Adonis. The Rite is also referred to in an ancient fragment from India's *Rig Veda*. "We have drunk soma," reads a passage; "we have become Immortal; we have entered into the light; we have known the gods."

Every age, people, and religion have received this sacred ritual of the bread and wine, and always it is observed as the ceremonial carrying the loftiest

spiritual teachings that can be given at the time. With each succeeding age and religion, as the divine revelation is extended, the Eucharist ritual has taken on deeper meanings, reaching its highest spiritual significance when the Christ, the supreme World Teacher, celebrated the rite with His disciples in the Upper Room on the midnight hour of Holy Thursday immediately preceding Good Friday or the Day of Passion.

At the time of the Last Supper this holy service was divided into three parts. The

first consisted largely of prayers and hymns, the object being to create a spirit of pure fellowship among those assembled, for only in harmony can effective spiritual work be accomplished.

The second part of the service consisted of the teachings which Christ gave to these, His most advanced disciples, relative to the doctrine of the balance, or equilibrium, between the masculine and feminine forces of mind and heart. The bread embodied the positive, or masculine (mental) force, and the wine the negative, or feminine (heart) power. As the Christ was administering to His disciples the bread and the wine, He was at the same time pouring forth from out of His own Being these dual powers which He possessed in a state of perfect equilibrium. These two forces are also represented as the Manna of Heaven, the Bread of Truth, the Wine of Love.



Created by Ariel Agemian exclusively for the Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Astrologically, the bread correlates with the earthy sign Virgo, the Virgin of the sky, who carries a sheaf of wheat; while the fruit of the wine, the feminine love power, correlates with the fiery, masculine sign of Leo, the kingly Lion.

In these stellar relations we discover how the blending of the opposites is woven into the very structure of the Universe. Thus the feminine Hierarchy of Virgo carries hidden masculine powers within it, and the masculine Hierarchy of Leo the feminine potencies. The harmonious interaction of these two powers, whether it be in the vault of the heavens or in the inner recesses of the human soul, is the state that leads to wholeness, or holiness.

From many points of view the biblical record indicates the need for man to attain the state of consciousness in which it may be said that he can think with the heart and love with the mind. With such attainment comes Illumination. Man can then walk in the Light as He is in the Light.

In the third and final stage of the Eucharist ceremonial, open only to the “few” or the “remnant,” the Master taught His disciples how to pour the spiritual powers of the Love-Wisdom polarity into physical substances, with the result that, so magnetized, they radiated powers for healing: That living, energizing potencies are transmitted into objects contacted by a Master has been intuitively recognized in all religions from the earliest times, and while this has given rise to many superstitious practices in connection with talismans and relics, yet there is an underlying spiritual reality.

After the Ascension and the departure of the Master, the disciples gathered each evening in that Upper Room which was sacred to the memory of the Mystic Repast. The most important occurrence of the entire day for them was the celebration of the holy Love Feast. When the elements of the bread and wine had been charged with cosmic life force, the disciples would take them out to the sick and sorrowing. So powerful were their magnetic emanations that many were healed by merely touching or even looking upon them.

On Easter afternoon, during the Feast time, on the road to Emmaus, two disciples invited a stranger who was passing by to come in and sup with them. They did not recognize Him as the



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

The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

Master until at the table He laid His hands upon the bread, and suddenly it became luminous as molten gold. Then they knew that it was the resurrected Christ who was in their midst. When later He disappeared from their view they went forth rejoicingly proclaiming that the risen Master had returned.

In one of its most important interpretations the Bible may be truly termed “The Book of Angelology.” Many of its illustrious characters are reported to have been surrounded, directed, and illumined by angelic visitors. Some of the most wonderful events in the Bible take place through angelic intercession. There is but slight recognition of the heavenly ministry in our day due to the blinding light of materialism. Even in the churches where one would expect it to be a very prominent teaching it falls short of the emphasis it deserves. And yet for those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear the angelic ministry continues to be as essential and effective to human life as it has ever been.

During the hours of night hosts of Angels congregate above the cities of the world, dispelling the dark astral clouds which hover over them. This miasmatic fog is composed of the population’s combined evil and negative thoughts and feelings. Fear, despondency, cruelty, hatred, lust, and discordant and destructive elements of every kind darken and weigh down the psychic atmosphere. To counteract this condition that arises in the course of each day’s activities the angelic ministry works throughout the night to dispel the overhang-

ing cloud and clear the atmosphere so that better conditions will prevail on the morrow's dawn for man's ongoing.

While angelic ministry is ceaseless, it is at night when human beings are asleep and their minds quiescent that they are more responsive to spiritual influences from this ministry.

Wherever there is trouble, sorrow and suffering, angelic messengers are always present to render loving, helpful service. They congregate in large numbers upon the battlegrounds, where they bring peace to the newly dead and comfort those who suffer. The Angels also visit homes, hospitals and mental institutions by day and by night. They bring light into dark places, strength to the weak, hope to the despondent, comfort to the bereaved, and peace of mind to the troubled and distracted minds. While they are no respecter of persons, being ministers according to need and not merit, they are happiest in the environment of those whose lives are attuned to the higher levels of consciousness and expression. They also gather in large numbers in and around sacred places, for example, the Mystery Temples on the etheric plane, and wherever the devout gather in observance of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Their presence and participation is inwardly felt by the devoted worshippers, and they are clearly seen by those possessing second sight. In either case the benedictions of their auric emanations are unmistakable.

In the legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, which are in fact veiled descriptions of Temple activities which took place in medieval times, each knight was assigned a particular chair in which he always sat.

Above each chair and over the head of each knight was to be seen an angelic form. For it was said that God appointed to each knight an Angel who accompanied him in all his adventures; or testings, to sustain him in failure and to uphold him in righteousness, rejoicing with him in his spiritual attainment as he progressed on his elected Path of Initiation.

Realization, Attainment, and the high glory of Fulfillment—these are the spiritual keynotes which convey the true meaning of the Full Moon night. Legends tell us that after Peter had denied



J. James Tissot, Brooklyn Museum of Art

Peter's Third Denial

Remorse may not only be purgative but transformative, tempering a zeal in the fire of suffering and resolution that is focused and invincible. Note the cocks above Peter's head.

his Lord he suffered such terrible agonies of contrition and humiliation that he was literally reformed, and his lower nature passed through complete transmutation. It was then that he became in very deed and truth Saint Peter the Initiate, and it was Peter's Initiation to which the Lord Christ referred in the words: "Upon this foundation rock I will build my church." And thus it was that according to legend Peter attained to such saintliness that as he walked along the way, wherever his shadow fell upon the sick they were healed, and on arising, joyously and exultantly proclaimed the Holy Name and its transforming power.

"I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith. I have finished the course." Such is the glorious ideal held to by those great spiritual disciples, St. Peter and St. Paul. And as we go forward upon the Path of Light, we too shall learn to overcome the turbulent waters of the Red Sea. We too shall stand upon the dry land and catch a glimpse of that Promised Land which is the golden dawn of the New Age, now so rapidly approaching; that Age in which the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man will become a living realization throughout all the world. □

—Corinne Heline