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"The Bible has been given to the Western World by the Recording Angels who give to each and all exactly what they need for their development."

—Max Heindel

The Star of Bethlehem

References: [Matthew 2](#); [John 13](#).

At one time we dwelt upon the Sun; that is to say, that even in this [Earth Period](#) we were in that central fire mist, and we were there up to the time spoken of as [the Hyperborean Epoch](#). There we crystallized until we could not respond to the high vibrations the other solar beings responded to. They could progress in solar vibrations, we could not; therefore we crystallized a part of that firemist to shield ourselves, and in consequence we had to be thrown off. Then when we had gone the proper distance away from the Sun we could crystallize again, and later we threw off that part which is now known as [the Moon](#). Those beings who are now on the Moon were too far crystallized, they were behind us; therefore we had to throw them off. From these two sources come two sets of vibrations that enables us to hold our bodies together.

At that time man was perfectly unconscious. He used his force only to build organs inside. Then gradually the Earth crystallized more and more, until in the middle part of [Atlantis](#) the Ego had at last drawn into humanity and man had become possessed of all the vehicles that he has now. Then he became conscious of the world, but he was in a far, far different state than now. When consciousness is awakened it begins to work as a leaven in matter. Since we were in Atlantis and had our eyes fully opened, since the atmosphere cleared and we first saw things about us clearly, we have worked in the Earth in the materials of our bodies as a leaven works in the loaf and raises it. Thus we have lightened conditions and are continually lightening them.

In [Lemuria](#) man had the three lower bodies—the desire body, the vital body, and the dense body. Outside hovered the Spirit. At that time the Earth was in a condition of fire. There were masses of crust and around them seething, boiling water, and volcanic outbursts were very, very frequent. Man had at that time lungs that were like tubes. He had a bladder such as fish have now, wherewith he could lift himself and leap great chasms. As the Earth condensed more and more that fire fog atmosphere of Lemuria condensed into a very dense fog in the early part of Atlantis. There those tubes had changed to gill-clefts, and he was breathing more as the fish do. This can be seen now in embryological development, where man goes through the same stages he went through at that time. The embryo lies in the amniotic fluid and has these gill-clefts, such as man had in the early part of Atlantis. He breathed in that manner in the dense watery atmosphere of Atlantis, but gradually that settled more and more, and man began to breathe as we do now.

In the early third of Atlantis there was a brotherhood; separation into nations had not begun. Mankind was a universal brotherhood,

and the Rite of Baptism, which makes one a member of a holy brotherhood, is in remembrance of that time. Man was truly innocent and lovable, he had no evil in him. In the middle third of Atlantis all that changed. He began to separate into communities, for the watery atmosphere was clearing somewhat and he was beginning to breathe by means of lungs. The human Ego was very weak, and had to get help from someone else. Therefore Jehovah, the Highest Initiate, the ruler over the Angels and Archangels that work with men, breathed into man's nostrils, gave him lungs, and gave him the Race Spirit in the air that was to curb the hardening tendencies of the desire body and help him to get it under control.

The desire body has control of the voluntary muscles, every movement we make is caused by desire, and every exertion breaks down tissue and hardens more and more every particle of our tissue. Therefore Jehovah aimed to help mankind out of their dense condition by means of law. The Race religions are all based upon law. "I am a jealous God, and if you fulfill my commandments I will bless you abundantly and make your seed as multitudinous as the sands upon the seashore," says the Race God, "but if you do not obey I will send your enemies upon you and they shall gain the victory over you." Jehovah is the ruler of all the Races and all the religions. He gave to each of these Races an Archangel to be their ruler, to be their special Prince. In [Daniel 12:1](#), it is said that Michael is Prince over the Jews, and in the tenth chapter another Race Spirit says: "I am going to fight against the Prince of Persia, and the Prince of Grecia shall go up."

Thus these [Race Spirits](#) work with man, punishing him by means of other people, and giving him rewards or punishments for his good or bad deeds. The fear of God and the desire for the material reward was pitted against the desires of the flesh and therefore these Race religions under Jehovah are such as to build up the

National-spirit. They subjected, or rather they neglected, the individual for the sake of the nation. The interests of the individual are always made subservient to the interest of the nation.

The Race Spirit took a special care of certain sects of people, for example, the Levites among [the Jews](#), who were destined specially for priesthood and they were herded around the temples and were specially bred to be the forerunners and teachers of their brethren. Their system of mating and regulation of the sex life of these special protégés produced a more lax connection between the vital body and the dense body which was necessary in order that [Initiation](#) might take place and help man to advance. As long as the Race Spirit works with us we are under the law, we are only overcoming the influence of the desire body; therefore Paul says well that the law was until Christ. Not until Christ came 2,000 years ago, but "Christ be formed in you." When we release ourselves from the toils of the desire body and live up to the vibrations of the vital body, we become imbued by the Christ Spirit. Then and only then do we rise out of the national, the separating principle. Then do we become capable of being brothers to men.

Now we see why Christ said so emphatically, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Ego was before the nation and must be exalted over the nation. To that end Christ came, because as long as there were nations, there could not be brotherhood. If we have a number of houses, and they are built of bricks, they are unavailable for building one building until torn down. When all the bricks have been separated we may begin building. When all nations have been chopped into individuals we may begin to build the grand Universal Brotherhood of Man.

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That is why the Race religions failed, they separate men into antagonistic groups. So the Race religions must be abrogated. We cannot do away with nations except we separate the individual. Therefore, we have wars; therefore, we have had revolutions, where men have rebelled against kings and rulers, and have instituted republics. But they are not enough. We want to be free individually. We want to be every man a law unto himself, and this is where a great, great danger lies. We cannot be laws unto ourselves—we cannot be free, until we have learned to respect everybody else's rights.

So then, under the Race religion, men grew by obedience to the law. Under the Christ regime that is to come, man is to rise above law, and to be a law unto himself. As Goethe says:

"From ever power that binds the world in chains,

Man liberates himself, when self-control he gains."

That is the goal—self-mastery—which every one must gain before he is fit to be a law unto himself, to be above the law, for no one except the very undisciplined man will think to improve matters by having the power to shoot down people. By obeying every law, man rises above all law, and by and by he will rise above the need of all law. Then and only then can he be a law unto himself. In the Christ regime man will be impelled and guided by love, and "perfect love casteth out fear." The Race religions compel man to do right by means of fear, but the Christ religion will impel man through love. Then he cannot do otherwise than right.

All Race religions—every one of them without exception—are looking for someone to come. The Egyptian religion looked forward to Osiris, the bright Sun Spirit; the Persian looked to Mithras; and the Babylonian to Tammuz. All looked for someone to come, to

free the Earth. We find the same thing in the Norse mythology. The old Norsemen looked for the "Twilight of the Gods," when the present regime must perish, and then out of the South from Muspelheim, the region of heat, should come that bright Sun Spirit, Sutar, and he should set up a new Heaven and a new Earth. Such we hear of in all religions, and even in the Christian religion we find them looking forward to a Sun Spirit. At one time in the ritual of the Catholic Church they used the phrase, "Our Lord the Sun." It is from the visible Sun that every particle of physical energy comes, and it is from the Spiritual invisible Sun that all of the spiritual energy comes.

At the present time we cannot bear to look directly at the Sun. It would blind us. But we can look at the reflected sunlight that comes from the Moon. In the same way, man cannot stand the direct spiritual impulse that comes from the Sun, and therefore it had to be sent by way of the Moon, through the mediumship of Jehovah, the Regent of the Moon. That is the origin of the Race religions. Later came the time when man could take the Spiritual impulse more directly and Christ, the present Earth Spirit, came to prepare this. Before the advent of Christ all spiritual impulse came to man by way of the Moon as Race religions. Only by initiation was it possible to get into direct touch with the spiritual solar impulse. A veil hung before the temple.

When the time arrived that the Christ Spirit could be entertained on the Earth, a ray from the Cosmic Christ came here, and incarnated here in the body of our Elder Brother Jesus. After the sacrifice on Golgotha had been completed, He drew Himself into the Earth. He said, "This is my body." He showed the bread, and it is the Earth Spirit that brings forth that bread. "This is my blood." The juices that are in the plant made the wine. It was not said,

"This symbolizes my body or blood." He said unequivocally, "This is my blood."

In John 13:18 in our New Testament, it is stated: "He that eats my bread hath lifted up his heel against me." Luther, who translated it in Germany, and was not tied up by any of the restrictions of the translators of the King James' Bible, put it: "He that eats my bread trampled upon me." We do trample, at every step we take, upon the Earth Spirit, and that Spirit's body and blood is consumed among us, and that Spirit is waiting for the day of redemption, when we shall be lifted so far from our material conditions that it shall be possible for the Earth Spirit to become liberated from its present cramped and dense existence.

The Christ Spirit, then, is the first incoming of a direct spiritual impulse. We know that at the time when the Sun Spirit is in the northern regions we have all the physical impacts upon the Earth. We get all the good there is in the Sun along physical lines; that is the time when the grain and the grape are ripening, and when everything is bringing forth in the Physical World. Then the spiritual impulse is abrogated for the time being; but when the Sun goes into [the winter solstice](#) in December, the spiritual impulse is strongest. Also, we have the spiritual impulse stronger in the night than in the daytime, and we can see that at the time when the days are shortest and the nights are the longest—on that Holy Night that we speak of, when the Christ was born, as a Sun, who was to lighten our darkness—the spiritual influence is then strongest and can be reached easiest. It was this great truth that is at the bottom of the Star in the Holy Night, illuminating the longest and darkest night of the year.

In the olden times, before the Christ came, only a chosen few could follow the path of initiation. Nobody could seek that path

except a few chosen ones, such as were the priests and Levites. These were brought to the temples and there herded together. They were married to one another in a certain way, certain people were mated with a definite end in view, namely, that they might develop the proper laxity between the vital body and the dense body that is necessary to initiation. A separation has to take place in order that we may lift the two higher ethers out and leave the other two. That could not be done with ordinary humanity. They were yet much in bondage to the desire body. They must wait until a later time.

Even with those people who were around the temples, it was very dangerous work to free them. It could be done best at certain times, and this longest night was one of those times. When the greatest spiritual impulse was here, they had a better chance to get in touch with it than at any other time of the year. So on the Holy Night which we call Christmas, it was usual for the Wise Men (those who were beyond the ordinary humanity) to take the ones who were also becoming wise, and therefore entitled to initiation, into the temples. Certain ceremonies were performed and the candidates were entranced. They could not at that time be given an initiation in their full waking state, it had to be done in trance. When the spiritual perception was awakened in them, they could look through the Earth, which became transparent, as it were, and they saw the Star at midnight, the spiritual Sun.

Do not think it shone only at that time. It is easier now than then to see it, for when Christ came He altered the vibrations of the Earth and has been changing them all the time since. He "rent the temple veil"—He made the Holy of Holies, the place of Initiation, open to "Whosoever will!" From that time on no more trance is needed, no more subjective states in order to go through

initiation. There is a conscious going forth into the Temple by everyone who wills to come.

We have one more thing to consider: the gifts these wise men brought - the gifts that were to be laid at the feet of the Savior. The legend tells us that one brought gold, one brought myrrh, and the third brought frankincense.

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The gold we always hear spoken of in symbology as the emblem of the Spirit. The Spirit is symbolized thus in the Nibelungen Ring, for instance. There in the opening scene we see the Rhinegold. The river Rhine is taken as the emblem of water, and there the gold is seen shining on the rock, symbolizing the Universal Spirit in its perfect purity. Later it is stolen and made into a ring by Alberich, representing mankind in the middle of Atlantis, when the Spirit had drawn into them. Then the gold became debased, was lost, and was the cause of all sorrow on the Earth. Later still we hear of the alchemists who tried to transmute base metal into gold; that is the spiritual way of saying that they wanted to purify the dense body, to refine it and extract the spiritual essence.

Therefore, the gift of one wise man is the Spirit. The next one brings myrrh. Myrrh is the extract of an aromatic plant that grows in Arabia, a very rare plant, very rare indeed. Therefore, it symbolizes the thing that man extracts when he cleanses himself. When he has cleansed his blood of passion he becomes plant-like, chaste and pure. Then his body is an aromatic essence. It is an actual fact that there are men and women so holy that they emit an aroma from them. It is said of some of the saints, and it is true. Therefore, the myrrh stands for that soul essence that is drawn out of the experience of the body. It is the soul.

The third gift was incense. Incense is a physical substance of a very light character that is often used in religious services. It serves as an embodiment for the ministering unseen forces, and thus symbolizes the body.

This is the key to the three gifts that were offered up by the Wise Men—the Spirit, the soul, and the body. As Christ said, "If you want to follow me, you must sell all you have. "You are not to keep anything for yourself." You are to give up body, soul, and Spirit, everything for the higher life, everything for the Christ. Not to an exterior Christ, however, but to the Christ within. The three Wise Men are said in the legend to be yellow, black, and white, representatives of the three races that we have on Earth: the Oriental, the African, and the Caucasian. Therefore we see that it is very well shown in the legend that eventually they will all come into this beneficent Christ religion. "To Him every knee shall bow." To Him each one will in time be led by the Star.

Questions:

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1. What help did Jehovah and the archangels render man in the middle third of Atlantis?
2. Why was it necessary that the Race religions be abrogated and the Christ come?
3. How can man be a law unto himself?
4. Explain the difference between the spiritual influences from Jehovah and those from the Christ.

5. What vital difference did the coming of the Christ make in regard to initiation?
 6. State the difference between initiation prior to the coming of Christ and afterward.
 7. Explain the symbology of the Wise Men and their gifts.
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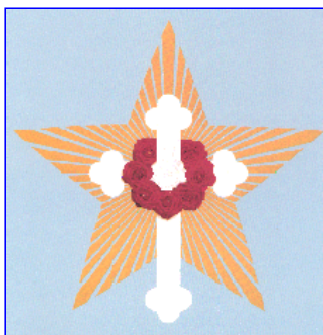
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