

Esoteric Bible Studies

BY CORINNE S. DUNKLEE

TEXT

1. And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.

6. And he made haste, and came down; and received him joyfully.

7. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods, I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

9. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

—*St. Luke, 19th Chapter.*

INTERPRETATION

If we try to interpret this story literally, we find it has very little meaning. We even wonder that an episode of such slight significance was included within the Gospel narrative of St. Luke. But when we bring to light its spiritual meaning, we find quite another story and one of the most important of all the lessons given to us in the entire Gospel of St.

Luke. From the esoteric standpoint this is not simply the story of a man who climbed a tree in order to see Christ Jesus pass by, and whose guest Christ chose to be for a time. Some no doubt may read into this story a reward of faith in and enthusiasm for the great Master, and that because Zacchaeus possessed these attributes the Master chose him from out the great throng which surrounded Him and said that He would be his guest. But there is a much deeper meaning for us to be found here.

Zacchaeus is taken from the Hebrew word *Zakkay* meaning "the pure." The tree with its rising sap, its leaves, its blossoms and fruitage at the top, has always been a symbol in all esoteric schools of the ascending spinal spirit fire. Buddha received his enlightenment under the banyan tree; Gurnemanz taught the Grail Knights under a tree; Elijah received his illumination under the juniper tree; and Christ Jesus suffered His great agony for all humanity under the olive tree. All of these stories and many others have the same occult significance, for they symbolize the *only way* to obtain illumination, to attain liberation, which is the chief goal of all esoteric students.

When we all have learned to live the life of purity and loving, selfless service, then we shall become as pure as Zacchaeus. When we have taken the cross and followed Christ up the steep ascent of Golgotha, which means the skull, then from that high place we shall see Christ Jesus just as Zacchaeus did, and hear His tones of love as He says, "Today I must abide at thy house."

Verse eight gives briefly the life lived by Zacchaeus, which is the life of every true disciple of the Master.

Verse ten means that one of the important parts of the mission of Christ

Jesus was to bring again to man's understanding the esoteric or hidden meaning of religion.

This story is universal in its appeal. Christ Jesus trod the way of the cross for each one of us. His blessed words have been ringing down the ages more than nineteen hundred years: "I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father save through me." And yet man has not understood what He meant. Through all these years we have studied the Bible, a book filled with stories bearing this message, and yet man has been blind to the real meaning hidden therein namely, *no one can save us but ourselves*. Christ Jesus came as the great example, the great way-shower for us. We must learn that He is indeed the way, the truth, and the life

as He said, and at the same time that the way, the truth, and the life are all within ourselves, for we are all Christs in the making.

We must become wholly pure and wholly loving before we can hear Him say, "This day is salvation come to this house (meaning the purified body)," for it is only as we demonstrate purity and love that we may become, "a son of Abraham." The story of Abraham is not only the story of the founding of the Jewish race, but it is the story of the spiritual regeneration of all mankind as well. Christ Jesus has rent the veil so that whosoever will may come. The Bible when interpreted spiritually holds the key to regeneration. It remains for us as neophytes to live the life and to know the truth that shall make us free.

Mid-Noon

BY AGNES JAMES

(Concluded)

WE HAVE advanced in knowledge of psychology since Tennyson so poetically queried:

"Ah, what shall I be at fifty,
Should nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five?"

We know with a fair degree of certainty that to find the world bitter at twenty-five and not to do something about oneself is a pretty humiliating state of affairs, but it is not so serious as to find it sweet at twenty-five and bitter at fifty and letting it go at that. It may be that science will discover some elixir of life which can be retailed at so much a bottle or a shot or a ray, but even that will have its limitations and the seeker will be driven back to the self.

Scores of persons have no ideas of their own about anything, and yet they complain that their lives are drab and

without future. Only very recently a woman said to me, "I don't know what I believe, only sometimes I find an opinion in a book that expresses what I think inside, and it heartens me up wonderfully, especially if it is something I'd have been scared to say." The failure to give outward expression to the inner convictions is the cause of much discord on every plane, and to my mind it ought not to exist in middle life. Enlightened preparation ought to make it possible to emerge from any form of pressure or tyranny whatever which one has outgrown and to set about attaining the stature becoming ripe years. If the teachings and impressions of younger days still satisfy, well and good, the life is simplified by adherence to them, but if their use is habit or failure to square things afresh, there is neither merit nor profit in fidelity. Original thinking does not necessarily alter anything which has been received in the past, but it must either confirm or reject it and from it