

Contemporary Mystic Christianity **Bible Self-Study Supplement**

Disfigurement Forbidden (Deuteronomy XIV)

The body is the temple of the indwelling god; it is a holy instrument fashioned by hosts of celestial Hierarchies, its gradual development extending over aeons of time. Disfigurement of this temple originates not on the physical, but on higher planes of thinking and willing. Every evil and destructive thought, if allowed to work its way unhindered into the world of form, will manifest as a disfiguring feature of the physical body of their creator.

Nourishment is important to the body; a coarse and unsuitable diet cannot produce a graceful, sensitive physical vehicle. It must needs be clean, wholesome, and adapted to the ends it is to serve. But again, the outer reflects the inner. He who has reached the door to Initiation has long since overcome his grosser appetites; for him the problem is one of mental dietetics and soul nourishment. Clean, constructive thoughts and loving, selfless deeds provide the indispensable sustenance of one who chooses to tread the highway of the Illumined Ones, and to be counted among those whom "the Lord (Law) hath chosen — to be a peculiar people unto Himself."

The Law of Tithing (Deuteronomy XIV and XXVI)

The law of tithing is one expression of the law of ten, a tenth of the income is given to God. One (1) represents the power of spirit; ten (10), the spirit in physical manifestation.

Under the law of tithing man comes to recognize clearly that all his enterprises are related to the universal order, and that giving and receiving are reciprocal actions which cannot long be separated without bringing disruption to one or both.

Tithing was instituted as a measure that would work toward overcoming a fear complex — from which humanity as a whole suffered in the past as it does today. So long as man feels himself isolated and apart he fears all manner of things: poverty, sickness, death, even God Himself. Tithing establishes a sense of security; it emphasizes universal cooperation; it presupposes a divine interest that will never let one who faithfully brings his tenth to the altar go empty away. The law of giving and receiving must be fulfilled before a condition of sufficiency and security can be established, whether it be in the life of an individual or of society at large.

The tithe was brought to the Temple, the place especially set aside for meeting with the Lord, the All-Good. Since the Temple belonged to no one individual but to the entire community, whatsoever was placed therein was dedicated to the common weal. In the life of a modern neophyte it is even so; the law of the tithe has not changed. The Temple of Truth stands open to receive the tenth for the advancement of the kingdom of Righteousness among men. And to those who freely give shall it be given in return, full measure, and running over withal.

Release of Bond Servants (Deuteronomy XV)

During an era of universal belief in slavery, Hebrew Scriptures forbade the perpetual enslavement of one Hebrew by another. This is seen in the Deuteronomic Code. The master of a Hebrew slave is bidden to free him after seven years of servitude; and not only to free him, but to endow him with goods enough to keep him until he has found his place in the world.

The candidate for Initiation is also freed from the forces of his lower nature after seven years. Seven years is the period of studentship and probationership in most esoteric schools. During this time the personality is purified and made amenable to spiritual influences, so a certain freedom is now permissible. The law is within, and the disciple may

determine for himself what decrees he is to obey, what decrees to disobey, and whether these decrees be exoterically or esoterically received.

Seven-year cycles continue through life, and the completion of every such period means a new cycle of development. In the physical this is seen in seven-year periods of growth, during which physical powers mature, one after another. At the age of seven the vital body is matured; at fourteen, the desire body; at twenty-one, the mind. Then these primary periods are recapitulated until, at forty-nine, the mind has attained a high degree of maturity and comes more fully under the control of spirit. Under the law of mortality this age signals the beginning of decay; but under Higher Law it marks the renewal of youth, the attainment of new powers and a nobler vision.

The Law of Giving (Deuteronomy XV)

"Though I give my body to be burned," said Paul, "and have not Love, it profiteth me nothing." The candidate for Initiation learns by his own experience and illuminated vision that doing good and aiding the poor, whether poor in body or in spirit, involves much more than a mere gesture of kindness. "Thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest," is the command of spirit,

"because ... thy God shall bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto."

— **Corinne Heline**