

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

## **The Holy Sect of the Nazarites**

The fifth chapter of Numbers deals symbolically with the concept of law as it applies to the external life of the masses. Jealousies and infidelities must inevitably bring "curses" and the unhappiness from drinking the bitter waters of sorrow through the operation of the immutable law of causation. Yet this law, though immutable, as universal law must be, is not a blind, inimical law; it is a law which automatically prevents final establishment of any state that is less than perfection. It is the law that adjusts and readjusts until unity with the divine order has been attained.

Man may avoid its painful action by intelligently cooperating with it and seeking the ways of harmony with eternal justice and goodness. Such cooperation calls for restitution whenever a wrong has been committed. Hence the law of confession and restitution (Numbers 5:6-10) ordains that if a sin has been committed it shall be confessed and full restitution made. If the restitution to the victim of the error is not possible, then restitution must be made to God; that is, to universal good or the common welfare of the community.

From a consideration of exoteric law operative in the life of the masses, the biblical account (Numbers VI) enters upon a consideration of the esoteric law operative in the lives of the few, for it sets forth laws concerning the Nazarites. But it must not be supposed that the external law does not apply to a neophyte who is following his inner light; it applies to him as to others, in his objective life. In addition to this, he comes under the operation of a higher law, which pertains to his spiritual development and subjects him to a stricter discipline, mentally, morally and physically, than that enjoined upon the masses. An example of this truth is found in the following verses describing the discipline of the Nazarite:

*Numbers 6:2-5*

*When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord:*

*He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.*

*All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.*

*All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in*

*the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.*

There are but few references to the sect of the Nazarites in the Bible. This is also true of the Essenes who belonged to a later date, and to whom the Nazarites were related. This is because they were both shrouded in mystery, their work being primarily of an esoteric nature. Their activity was apart from the world, it was performed quietly, with a single eye to holiness and selfless service. Work of such a nature is always subject to persecution by the uncomprehending world; hence, not only the wisdom but the need for carrying it on in comparative secrecy. The contemptuous manner in which Christ was asked if any thing good could come out of Nazareth illustrates this general attitude of the majority toward a minority with whom it differs.

The Nazarites were located on the banks of the Jordan. Josephus, Pliny and Herodotus refer to their work. Joseph was called a Nazar, as were Samson and Samuel. The Talmud alludes to them as a band of wandering physicians and refers to all Christians as Nazari. Nazar means to consecrate to God; also a diadem (halo).

The word Nazareth in Hebrew means a flower, usually translated as the lily. Jesus of Nazareth was, therefore,

Jesus the flower. When so used the appellation contains a mystical reference to His spiritual status among that band of holy men and women who lived in and near the environs of Nazareth during the beginning of the Christian regime.

The chapter on the Nazarites concludes with a priestly blessing given by the Lord through Moses to Aaron and his sons for blessing the children of Israel:

*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:*

*The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:*

*The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

These beautiful words, fraught with deep mystic meaning, embody both the salutation and the benediction of the Nazarite.

## **The Princely Oblation**

Thus far this interpretation has emphasized the priestly and monastic side of spiritual development, as exemplified on the one hand by Moses, Aaron and the Levites; on the other by sects such as the Nazarites, who sought seclusion in order to devote themselves to the work of holiness. Are we then to conclude that this is the only path to Liberation?

Mention has been made of the two fold Path to Initiation: the way of the Sons of Seth and the way of the Sons of Cain, the first representing mystical development and the other, intellectual. The mystic path is synonymous with priestly, or devotional, development; the intellectual path belongs to the princes who, by means of their work in the world, learn the art of Temple Building and become Phree Messen (children of light). That this line of development is not inherently antagonistic to priestly development is shown in the biblical account of the gift of the princes for the holy Tabernacle (Numbers 7). These gifts were:

(1) Six wagons and twelve oxen. Later in the history of Israel when Solomon builds his Temple, there are twelve brazen oxen (the twelve zodiacal signs) which support the Laver, or Molten Sea of the great prince, Hiram Abiff. The six wagons are six of the seven planetary vehicles (Earth excepted) which serve before the solar Throne of our system. (Esoterically Neptune and Pluto belong to other systems.) These gifts were for the use of the Levite families of the Outer Court, Merari and Gershon, in transporting the Tabernacle. (Not for Kohath of the Inner Court, "because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders"; i.e. their sacred burden could be borne by themselves alone.)

(2) The offerings for the Altar. Esoterically, man builds this altar within himself, and the first step towards liberation is sacrifice. The animals for the burnt offering represent work on the desire nature, which is the first requisite; the peace offering is an extension of this work. The goat for the sin offering represents work on the physical body. The offering of fine flour and oil symbolizes chastity and regeneration, and represents work on the vital body. The silver chargers, silver bowls, and twelve spoons of gold represent the blending of the masculine and feminine forces, and bear the same meaning as the cup of manna, or holy grail and sacred spear; and the incense in the golden spoons is the sweet fragrance of the soul. Each neophyte who sets out upon the quest for truth brings his offering of body, mind and spirit to lay as a sacrificial gift upon the altar.

This is the Princely Oblation which, having been made, permits the pure spirit to enter into the inmost sanctuary of the universe where he becomes conversant with the One Reality: "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle ... he heard the Voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat."

Israel's guidance by a pillar of cloud and pillar of fire (Race Spirit) hovering over the Tabernacle is also treated in Numbers. Repetition enforces the significance of the

masculine and feminine powers in the spiritual development of a people or an individual. In the life of an advanced disciple, these forces manifest even as they did over the Tabernacle of the elect. As it was sometimes the cloud and sometimes the fire that appeared, so in the individual. One or the other of the two potencies predominates according to whether development be of the princely or the priestly type.

When the pillar was lifted from the Tabernacle, the signal for the march was blown by the sons of Aaron on two trumpets of silver, made of a "whole piece" according to angelic instructions. When the two were blown all the assembly gathered; when one alone sounded a call only the princes responded. The two trumpets which called the assembly (masses) are representative of one force (a whole piece) operating in duality; the one trumpet that called the elect symbolizes the divided forces blended into unity.

The forces projected by a stream of strong and continuous thought power assumes somewhat the semblance of a horn or a trumpet, built in accordance with high or low, constructive or destructive, thinking. Only as man pursues the quest of Truth in superphysical realms does he begin to comprehend the power of thought and how far-reaching and fundamental are its effects in building, controlling and maintaining the function of the

body. "All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted." (Psalm 75) "I (the soul) make a way among the horns of all those who make themselves strong against me." (Book of the Dead)

The Torah says that when Moses was about to die, he hid the silver trumpets so that no one else could find them. Esoterically interpreted, this means that each neophyte must learn to make his own trumpet through using the finer essences of his own creative faculties. The trumpets sound the rhythmic note of a spiritualized and highly sensitized body. The princes are the most advanced; therefore no one else can respond to their vibrational keynote.

— ***Corinne Heline***