

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

Testings of the Way

Every teacher or leader, as well as every neophyte, must meet the test of choosing between dependence upon material things and trusting wholly in spiritual law. Ezra recounts his own trial in these words:

Ezra 8:21-23

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we have spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him: but his power and his wrath is against all them that foresake him.

So we fasted, and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us.

As to the reward for his faith and trust, Ezra adds: I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, and of gold an hundred talents." (Ezra 8:26) One hundred is a higher power of ten, the number symbolic of men and women in

generation on the physical plane and in regeneration on higher planes.

"The hand of our God is upon all of them for good that seek Him." This was the foundation stone of Ezra's faith and it enabled him to set forth upon the long and perilous journey. He required no soldiers or horsemen to protect his band although dangers surrounding them were grave. The country through which they passed was infested with hostile tribes and bandits, while his was a small company carrying much treasure. However, "the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way."

"And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days." Ezra's second message was not for Jerusalem alone but for the Samaritans also. To be permanently established, every spiritual Temple must unite the high and the low, the inner and the outer. In initiatory experience "three days, is a term signifying profound changes in consciousness, wherein an Illumined One witnesses a recapitulation of the first three Great Cosmic Days during which the Mysteries of life, being and form are revealed. This work occurs in the "holy city," place of beatific vision, and can only be seen after completion of the long and arduous "journey from Babylon." Victorious candidates of every age and clime eventually hear the magic words spoken by the Teacher:

"And we came to Jerusalem and abode there three days." They contain the essential formula of Initiation and reveal something of the neophyte's spiritual joy of attainment when he makes them the subject of devout meditation.

The Rite of Renunciation

The Rite of Renunciation was established for seekers who are of lesser attainment. It represents experiences on the Path which gave rise to the descriptive statement "so narrow that few there be who find it."

The Rite comes to every aspirant who holds any possession dearer than the things of the spirit, and the possession must be given up, be it person, place or thing. Sacrifice is an important part of every initiatory process because inner freedom depends upon it; even the Holy One endured this trial in the Garden of Gethsemane,

Ezra, a spiritual Teacher, suffered in like manner because of the transgressions of his people. The bond between a teacher and his pupils is so close that their weaknesses cause him great grief.

This was again at the Winter Solstice. It was a season of many tears and of much rain. We read: "Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the

street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain." (Ezra 10:9)

"Now when these things were done," Ezra previously states, "the princes came to me saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." (Ezra 9:1,2)

The Aryan or Fifth Root Race had been set apart because of special fitness for the evolutionary task to be performed, and in order that this destiny might be successfully fulfilled it was necessary that the Aryan remain racially intact. No intermarriage with the less developed surrounding people was to be tolerated because such intermarriage would tend to perpetuate obsolescent evolutionary states. The Original Semites who came forth from Atlantis successfully developed into the Aryan peoples of the Fifth Epoch; but their half-brothers, the Jews, also descendants of those Original Semites, disobeyed the divine command and unwisely mingled their blood with less advanced peoples.

Ezra recognized this condition and set himself to correct it so that Palestine might become the cradle of the Christ. As a spiritual leader Ezra understood the heavy debt of destiny the race would incur by continued failure to obey the divine mandate; also, how greatly the evolution of the entire Fifth Epoch, with its varied races, might be retarded thereby.

It is significant that kabbalistic teachings, though stated in mystical language, are far more in accord with modern scientific teachings on evolution than with those of orthodox churches, whether Jewish or Christian, which have rejected the Kabbala in the past and still continue to reject it.

Ezra 10:10-12

And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye nave transgressed, mid have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel.

Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure; and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange women.

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

Esoterically, the strange wives represent evil attributes within an individual himself, their children are the karmic reaction to accumulated wrongdoing. "Many are called, but

few are chosen." This is true in every age and race and land.

Ezra 10:16,17

... And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated. and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine me matter.

And they made on end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.

The first day of the tenth month refers to the holy season of the Winter Solstice and to the birth of Christed consciousness within man. The work was completed by the first day of the first month, the Spring Equinox and time of the spirit's resurrection into a new life. For a disciple it marks the attainment of the great Liberation, when the ego has learned to free itself at will from the body that it may "travel in foreign countries and receive the Master's wages."

A trained esotericist is familiar with the importance of inner-plane work to be accomplished annually during the three-month interval between the Winter Solstice, marking birth of the new Light, and the Spring Equinox, when this same Light is resurrected and begins its ascension to the Father.

The Books of both Ezra and Nehemiah contain many occult keys pertaining to this work. They are easily recognized by an aspirant for the Degree work of mystic Masonry.

As David centered the political life of Israel in Jerusalem, so Solomon centered the religious life of Jerusalem in the First Temple — without, however, outlawing or abrogating ancient shrines of the land. This Temple stood on the site where the Mosque El Aksa, commonly called the Mosque of Omar, is now located. There were three sections common to all Mystery Temples, namely, the Outer Court, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Before the Holy Place was the porch with two to the Table of the Laws. The Golden Candlesticks, the Brazen Serpent and the Brazen Sea. The Most Holy Place contained the Ark, wherein were only the Tablets of the Law, and above which were the overshadowing Cherubim. Each year the Ark was carried in solemn procession to the singing of the twenty-fourth Psalm.

Solomon's Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem and took its leaders into exile, where they remained in captivity for seventy years.

The Second Temple was completed on the same site under Zerubbabel about 520 B.C. The new Temple closely resembled that of Solomon as to plan but differed in its

equipment, since all tangible symbols contained in the First Temple had been removed. There were here no signs of the Brazen Sea, the Bronze Serpent, the Columns of jachin and Boas, the Ark or the Cherubim. Israel now worshipped an unseen God in the Persian fashion.

Information on the various Temple structures verifies an occult teaching relative to man's evolution. As mentioned previously, the phases of Temple worship represent the state of man's own spiritual development. In the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle of Moses was the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod that budded (both signifiers of high spiritual attainment), in addition pillars, Jachin and Boaz. In the Holy Place was the Altar of Shewbread.

In the Temple of Solomon the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod were missing; the Ark contained only the Ten Commandments received by Moses upon Mt. Sinai.

In the Temple of Zerubbabel the Holy of Holies was empty. Man was beginning a new phase of evolutionary progress and all of the spiritual powers symbolized in the "furniture" he must now create anew within himself. It was said, however, that for a time the Foundation Stone occupied the Holy of Holies; but this, too, disappeared, and when Pompey invaded the sacred place he found it empty.

The Third, or Herodian, Temple was merely the gradual rebuilding of the Second Temple, course by course. It was begun in 19 B.C. and completed in 64 A.D., a magnificent structure occupying the summit of the hill of Zion. It was an impressive pile of snowy marble and glittering gold. In the Holy Place were the Table of Shewbread, the Golden Candlesticks and the Altar of Incense. A double veil hung before the entrance to the Most Holy Place, and legend has it this veil was a Babylonian curtain interwoven with golden roses — the one that was symbolically rent in twain at the hour of the Crucifixion.

Esoterically, the Holy Place, with its furniture, is the Hall of Service The Most Holy Place is the Hall of Initiation.

When Christ came the Most Holy Place was empty. The Ark, with its divine symbolism, had been entrusted to the care of Jeremiah who had it hidden away in a secret place; a Royal House had been "transplanted" to a new world: western Europe. The Ark will be "discovered" and returned to the great Mystery Temple destined to arise in Jerusalem when humanity is qualified to receive it and to profit by the holy Teachings concealed within its majestic symbols.

With Christ's advent as planetary Regent of the earth a great new spiritual impulse was imparted to our planet and to its humanity, an impulse symbolized in the Foundation

Stone. The outer symbolic Stone had disappeared but was replaced by the Rock of Ages, the Christ Being Himself.

The Christian religion of Aquaria will be centered in that Initiation made available to the whole world by the Christ. Hence, the Rock is the symbol of Initiation, and Peter was the Rock (the Initiate) upon which the Christian Church was founded. All men are sacred stones, destined to be built into the Christ Temple of Initiation. When a sufficient number have achieved Initiation, the Christ will return unto His own.

The Apocryphal Books of Esdras are similar in their mystic visions and parables to some portions of the Gospels. The former's dark and lurid pictures of happenings in the "last days" remind one of similar depictions in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the twenty-first chapter of Luke. The judgments described point to workings of the Law of Causation referred to in the New Testament as sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind, and in the Old Testament as an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Esdras, under guidance of the Archangel Uriel, one of the four principal ministers of Christ upon the earth, is taught to read the Eternal Records. Therein he sees the Woman in all her wondrous shining (The Eternal Madonna). She guides him into that glorious new city wherein no man has yet entered (the New Age). This vision is similar to that of

St. John on the Isle of Patmos, described in the Book of Revelation.

The Christ-theme runs like an undercurrent of song throughout both the Old and New Testaments. Esdras, too, sings the same sublime song. By the help of Uriel he attained remarkable skill in exploring the Memory of Nature. He beheld the coming of the Christ and His work upon earth. In a vision of Christ's Second Coming he saw Him standing on mountain tops and followed by multitudes. He also witnessed the restoration of the ten Lost Tribes in the New City.

II Esdras 7:28-34

For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years.

After these years shall my son Christ die, and all men that have life.

And the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the former judgments: so that no man shall remain.

And after seven days the world, that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corrupt.

And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were

committed unto them.

And the most High shall appear upon the seat of judgment, and misery shall pass away, and the long suffering shall have an end:

But judgment only shall remain, truth shall stand, and faith shall wax strong.

II Esdras 13:3-4

And I beheld, and, to, that man waxed strong with the thousands or heaven; and when he turned his countenance to look, all the things trembled that were seen under him.

And whensoever the voice went out of his mouth, all they burned that heard his voice, like as the earth faileth when it feedeth the fire.

Esdras, like every disciple upon the Path, was given instruction on how to "live the life" and thus become worthy of high spiritual attainment.

II Esdras 14:13,14

Now therefore set thine house in order, and reprove thy people, comfort such of them as be in trouble, and now renounce corruption. Let go from thee mortal thoughts, cast away the burdens or man, put off now the weak nature.

II Esdras 9:24-26

But go into a field of flowers, where no house is builded, and eat only the flowers of the field; taste no flesh, drink no wine, but eat flowers only.

And pray unto the Highest continually, then will I come and talk with thee.

So I went my way into the field which is called Ardath, like as he commanded me; and there I sat among the flowers, and did eat of the herbs of the field, and the meat of the same satisfied me.

All great World Teachers have told their disciples that to "live the life is to know the doctrine." The divine compensation of acquiring priceless soul qualities inevitably follows. Hence, this angelic pronouncement to Esdras:

II Esdras 11:5-7

Moreover I beheld, and, lo, the eagle flew with her feathers, and reigned upon earth, and over them that dwelt therein.

And I saw that all things under heaven were subject unto her, and no man spake against her, no, not one creature upon earth.

And I beheld, and, lo, the eagle rose upon her talons, and spake to her feathers, saying,

II Esdras 14:9

For thou shalt be taken away from all, and from

*henceforth thou shalt remain with my Son, and with
such as be like thee, until the times be ended.*

— **Corinne Heline**