

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

Inner Realm Activities

"And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth and his name was Boaz. And Ruth said, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter." So Ruth went to the field belonging to Boaz, and gleaned after the reapers, as the poor were allowed to do under the Law of Moses. In the life of the neophyte this means that because of his dedication and obedience to spiritual law he has developed the powers of conscious Invisible Helpership. Here "the harvests are white and the laborers are few." Now it is that the disciple merits the loving solicitude of Naomi, the tender compassion of Boaz.

The Invisible Helpers who work at night while their bodies are asleep are divided into groups according to ability, compatibility and attainment, and come under the supervision of one possessing greater spiritual powers, represented in the Book of Ruth by Boaz. The most sacred moment of the night experience is the privilege of contacting the glorious presence of the Teacher. How beautiful the words of His salutation and how radiant the halo of light about Him as He blesses His helpers! "The Lord be with you." And they answered him, "The Lord bless

thee." Blessed indeed is that disciple who consciously contacts one of the Great Teachers while engaged in the activities of the sleep hours.

As Ruth gleaned in the field, Boaz came from Bethlehem and saw her there. The shining light of the worthy neophyte never fails to draw the attention of the Teacher, who singles such a one out for a larger service and more profound instruction, as Boaz sought out Ruth: "Hearest thou, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens." Humbly Ruth bowed herself to the ground before him: "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

And Boaz replied: "It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." The story of Ruth's sacrifice had gone before her into the harvest-fields.

At this juncture on the Path of Enlightenment many modern neophytes turn back and walk with Christ no more,

for now the old personal life must be sacrificed to the new without reservation and without compromise.

"Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed." Every disciple who is found worthy to partake of the bread of spiritual refreshment first dips his morsel in the vinegar. "If ye would be my disciple," said the Christ centuries later, "ye must take up your cross and follow me."

Ruth gleaned in the fields until evening, when she returned home to Naomi with her gleanings of grain, symbolic of the added radiance of soul that follows upon selfless service.

Method of Evolving Night-Consciousness

To consider in detail the method of evolving the consciousness of the Invisible Helper it is also necessary to consider the subtler bodies of man.

When one sinks into the apparent unconsciousness we call "sleep", what really happens is that the ego is released from its physical casement, taking with it the desire and mental bodies. Sleep, therefore, becomes an extension of the outer or objective life, and we may check our inner-life progress by the events of our so-called dream state. The

habitual thought and the predominating motives and desires of the daily life establish the vibratory rate of the soul body in which we function at night while the physical body sleeps. This automatically attracts to the ego corresponding soul-conditions in the Desire World. Sensuous thinking and living attract to the ego undesirable experiences while spiritual thinking and noble deeds attract soul-experiences of a like nature. These experiences ordinarily register upon the brain-mind as dreams. Unpleasant and disagreeable dreams are soul-signals that the outer personal life needs rehabilitation.

In sleep the physical body, which the ego left temporarily, remains interpenetrated by the etheric vehicle, the channel of the vital or life-giving forces. This etheric body is most sensibly influenced by spiritual living; gradually a separation occurs between the lower and higher ethers. The ego absorbs the higher ethers which become the seat of soul memory, enabling the spirit to retain conscious recollection of the soul activities of the night hours.

There is no way of developing this consciousness which bridges the gulf between day and night, except by "living the life." This night-consciousness was one of the first fruits of the early Christians, and the New Testament contains many references to this place of spiritual service, with its varied and far-reaching opportunities for good. Services

impossible to perform under the limitations of the physical environment can here be performed without hindrance. The untrammelled spirit may visit far-off battlefields or scenes of national disaster. The woes of floods, famines and epidemics are mitigated by this invisible ministry.

Countless healers have entered the domain of sleep and added to their work a new and important method of healing undreamed of by the orthodox religionist and unnoted by the materialist. The hours of sleep thus are hours of intense activity to the Invisible Helper who strives to attain the ideal of twenty-four hours of waking consciousness.

Pure, clean living is an absolute requisite for Invisible Helpership. The use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, as well as indulgence in sexual excesses, dulls the consciousness to such a degree that continuous memory is impossible. But as civilization advances, this faculty, now the possession of the exceeding few, will develop accordingly until it becomes the familiar acquirement of the many.

Invisible Helpership was a familiar teaching many ages before the coming of Christ. In Greece it was symbolized in the figure of Hermes, the winged messenger of the gods, and in Iris, the winged messenger of the Divine Mother who was seen "wearing a rainbow" (an aura of color). The demigod, Aesculapius, the Divine Physician, and his sons, correspond to our own Elder Brothers, Initiates who have

attained immortality and have chosen to remain with us until we, too, are liberated from the wheel of birth and death. Of the "Sons of Aesculapius" we read: "Being grown now too glorious to abide any longer among men, by the aid of their sire they put away their mortal bodies, and came into another country, yet not indeed Elysium nor into the Islands of the Blest. But being made like unto the immortal gods, they began to pass about through the world, changed thus far from their first form that they appear immortally young, as many persons have seen them in many places — ministers and heralds of their father, passing to and fro over the Earth like gliding stars." Like their father, the Divine Physician, these "Sons" also made themselves known in "healing dreams."

Elijah is the great Invisible Helper of Hebrew tradition, and many fascinating legends are told of him. Porphyry, the Syrian Neo-platonist philosopher, makes an interesting contribution on this subject: "That which nature binds, nature also dissolves, that which the soul binds the soul also dissolves. Nature bound the body to the soul, but the soul binds herself to the body. Nature therefore liberates the body from the soul, but the soul must liberate herself from the body. Hence there is a twofold death, the one universally known, in which the body is liberated from the soul, the other peculiar to philosophers, in which the soul is

liberated from the body. Nor does the one entirely follow the other."

From all this we learn that the refining and sensitizing of the mind is the fundamental necessity in the development of Invisible Helpership. The mind, thus highly sensitized, receives and retains direct impressions from the spirit. These impressions are imbedded in the heart as soul memories, and later they become the "open sesame" to recollections of past incarnations.

Illumination

The path of discipleship leads both outward and inward; the further one progresses in the mystery of external things, the more complete is the communion with the internal or higher Self. Ruth typifies the essential qualities of a supreme faith in, and obedience to, the dictates of Wisdom-prime requisites for one who aspires to the Mystic Marriage. Ruth obeyed Naomi implicitly: "All that thou sayest unto me, I will do it."

At Naomi's suggestion, Ruth anointed herself (with the perfume of holiness), and put on her raiment — the golden raiment of her soul body. In this etheric garment she found Boaz at midnight beside the heap of corn, and laid herself down at his feet. "And it came to pass at midnight that the man turned himself; and, behold, a woman lay at his feet."

This refers to an experience in the higher realms while the body is asleep.

Midnight is the mystic hour when the call for service is received by all who have fitted themselves to "travel in foreign countries." Every neophyte, if he follows the instructions of Naomi as faithfully as did Ruth, may in this hour commune with Boaz beside the heap of corn and be instructed in the rites of the Mystic Marriage.

The "reaped ear of corn" was the symbol of the divine marriage in ancient initiatory rituals, according to early Christian writers. One of the secrets of Eleusis revealed to the worthy is referred to as a "cut cornstalk." In the fascinating legend of Persephone, upon which the Eleusinian Mysteries were founded, she returned each year from the nether realms through the young corn. The ceremonial of Ceres (the Greater Mysteries of Eleusis) culminated in this revelation of a "reaped cornstalk" and a sacred marriage.

In the harvest festival of Egypt, Pharaoh was called the fertility god, and in the sacred ceremonials he impersonated Horus, who, on reaching the Temple door, reaped the first sheaf of barley to gain admittance. Osiris is also a spirit of the corn, and there are representations of him with corn sprouting from his body; and in like manner, Dionysus was

worshipped in Greece as a god of the vineyards and cornfields.

The Greeks said that Dionysus was Osiris, and there is no reason to doubt that his worship originally derives from the early period of Greek history when Egyptian and Phoenician colonists settled in Greece and instituted their Mysteries among the Pelasgians. Thus it was an Egyptian, Inachus, who founded Argos, in the days of the Hebrew patriarchs, about two thousand years before Christ; another Egyptian, Cecrops, founded the city of Cecropia which later was called Athens, and established a dynasty there; still another Egyptian, Danaus, came in the period when the Phoenician Cadmus arrived, and established a new dynasty at Argos, the country round about becoming known as Argolis. Meanwhile, the Phoenician Cadmus founded Thebes in Boeotia, bringing to the Greeks their first alphabet. In later times, Orpheus was the great Hierophant of the Bacchanalian Mysteries of Thebes. There he was buried, and there the nightingales sang over his grave. But in Argolis the Egyptian Danaus founded the religious festivals in honor of Demeter, whom, therefore, the Greeks rightly identified with Isis of Egypt. Perseus was the descendant of this Egyptian king, and built Mycenae with its famous Lion Gate.

The Phoenicians and the Egyptians had long before this had trade relationships with one another, and their religions were fundamentally similar. Adonis, the Greek translation of the Phoenician Tammuz, corresponded to the Egyptian Osiris. Dionysus means "son of Zeus (Dion)" just as we call Jesus the Son of God, and Adonis comes from the word meaning "Lord," which is also used of Jesus when we speak of him as Our Lord.

Dionysus was the central figure in the Orphic Mysteries, and the Initiate became one with him. Orpheus founded important cults, chiefly those of Apollo and Dionysus. These Orphic Mysteries were most like the Christian, and were the vehicle of a strong impulse toward monotheism, since Zagreus (the Orphic name for Dionysus) was assimilated to all the gods of the Pantheon as being aspects of him. To the Christian Greeks of the early centuries, the Christ must have seemed another reappearance of Dionysus, and to the Egyptian Christian, Osiris.

We know that in addition to the daylight rituals celebrated in the Hebrew Temple, there were mysterious ceremonies in the night hours, and there are references to the "Night Watches" in the Psalms. In the Orphic Mysteries, Dionysus was the "mystic midnight Sun", the Light that shines in darkness; by no means an allegorical figure. One of the earliest experiences of the candidate for Invisible

Helpership is the vision of the Interior Light. Many mystics of the Church have seen this Light; St. Augustine beheld it, and was comforted to learn thereby how it is possible for God to be Light and yet not be confined in finite space.

As there are four points of the year at which the spiritual forces are most potent, so there are four hours of the day when the same condition prevails. These are at the four cardinal points of the clock-twelve noon, six in the evening, twelve midnight, and six in the morning. In ancient religions. the Sun was known by four different names corresponding to these points, and represented pictorially as four different gods; yet the Initiate knew the four to be one. There is also the inner-world equivalent of these four points, as states of consciousness, characterized by special activities in the soul world, and by complete change of psychic phenomena. Astral bells chime their summons as these four intervals of time write their signature upon the heavens for those who have the blessed eyes to see and ears to hear and the ability to function apart from the physical body in conscious Invisible Helpership.

It is in sympathy with this cosmic rhythm that the Masonic Craft is called "from labor to refreshment" at esoteric noon, a time of meditation and spiritual inflow for those who know how to avail themselves of it. But it is at

midnight that the spiritual forces are strongest, and the largest number are able to respond to the call to service.

With the return of the morning, Boaz gave Ruth six measures of barley, and said, "Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it." And he measured into it six measures of barley, which she took with her into the city.

Christ Jesus, at another mystic wedding, changed six pots of water into wine. The steps of attainment are the same; it is the descriptive symbolism only that differs. Six, in higher significance, is the number of a new life; it marks the awakening of a spiritual potency that manifests in a further extension of psychic or soul-powers. This expansion is out-pictured in the bride made ready for the mystic nuptials. In spiritual symbology the number six, represented by the interlacing upright and inverted triangles, pertains to the relationship of the human with the divine. In the power of six the human and the divine meet, not because the higher descends into the lower but because the personality is lifted up and united with the spirit. Since the association of the human and the divine is dependent upon the upliftment of the former, the number six is one of preparation through purification. The lily, symbol of virginity, is a six-petalled flower and Virgo, the Celestial Virgin, is the sixth sign of the Zodiac. That Ruth had attained to a realization of the high virtues of six, namely, transmutation, is the deeper

meaning of Boaz pouring six measures of barley into her veil. The veil, being a covering for the head, points to the Illumination that comes to the mind when the ideal of chastity becomes a realized actuality in daily life.

— ***Corinne Heline***