

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

The Book of Job

The Fruits of Initiation

Whence Cometh Wisdom?

The twenty-eighth chapter of Job is generally conceded by scholars to be an interpolation and the work of a much later writer. Some commentators are of the opinion that the chapter has no place here at all, and was inserted solely to insure its preservation. Regardless of the historical period from which this chapter emanates, it is evident to the esotericist that from the standpoint of spiritual unity it belongs in the narrative as the capstone of Job's career of sorrow, for it reveals the ultimate wisdom of Illumination unto which he attained after passing safely under the rod of Satan (Saturn); and allegorically considered, it describes the Path of Initiation.

Job 28:7-8,12-20

There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

"Whence cometh wisdom? where is the place of understanding?" is asked by every novice who seeks the Path of Perfection. Jacob Boehme compares this quest to the Great Pearl, the pearl of great price spoken of by the Master when He admonished His disciples to sell all they had in order to gain the Pearl which is beyond the value of all things earthly.

The pearl is not found easily, even when one is willing to sell all that one has for its possession. It is often seen dimly, as under a veil. The neophyte must pass through a long and arduous probation before the Pearl comes into his keeping, for it cannot be obtained merely for the asking. Each must endure the forty days of preparation, a period

beset with temptation and trial as evidenced in the experiences of Job. Every man, like Job, says at this point, "When I looked for good, then evil came unto me; and when I waited for light, there came darkness." (Job 30:26)

This period of trial, as Job endeavors to prove, is not a necessary sign of the wrath of God. On the contrary it is a manifestation of the divine protection. A lesser good is taken away that a greater good may be substituted for it. The path of service has led to this Place:

Job 29: 12-17

I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for Joy.

I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.

I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.

I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.

And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

In the thirtieth chapter, Job describes the dishonor and suffering which fell suddenly upon him, for no apparent reason; none, that is, apparent to the human vision, but, as we have shown from the scene described in the Prologue,

fully known to God and to his celestial emissaries, one of whom is Satan, Saturn, the tester and purifier of spiritual gold.

Job 30:25,26

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor?

When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness.

Not only, says Job, has he lived for the good of the community, he has been equally careful to keep his faith pure: he has not kissed his hand in salute to the pagan gods.

Job 31:26-28

If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness: And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above (i.e. above all material phenomena).

Unable to discover any reason for the trials which beset him, knowing as he does that he has never voluntarily sinned, Job asks only that he may talk face to face with God, and look into the eyes of the divine Wisdom, whence

alone he may know the truth. "Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me."

The Book of Job

The Fourth Friend

"So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes," observes the author, in the first verse of the thirty-second chapter. That a degree of self-righteousness did indeed exist in Job may be admitted; but it is equally true that he was all that he said of himself — his were no idle boasts. He was indeed an exceptionally honorable man, a bright and shining light, and as an intelligent man it was impossible that he should not be aware of it. He is at any rate open to instruction. He is willing to submit to the will of God, even if it means life-long disgrace and suffering, if he can be convinced of its justice.

The three friends have now given up the dispute; and the fourth friend, a young man named Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, takes up the discussion. In the twenty-ninth chapter (verse 3) we saw that Job looked back upon his happy days when "his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." The candle which shines upon the head is here a figure of speech, but it is also an indisputable esoteric fact. Fra Angelico depicts

his luminous angels with a "candle" upon their heads, and the "light" refers to the halo which surrounds saintly people. The halo and the candle-light are not always of the same color nor brilliance in all people, for they vary according to the holiness of the individual. The Christ love is a fiery golden light, represented by Byzantine artists in the solid golden background upon which their holy figures are painted. Max Heindel, the Christian mystic, has observed that this Christ gold is the gold of love which pours out in service to others, but where that service is adulterated by even the least taint of self-seeking, desire for gratitude, pride, etc., the gold is no more the true Christ gold, but an alloy, and a channel for the "false light."

During the time when Job enjoyed worldly prestige, "the young men hid themselves", but now they hold him in derision. The fourth friend, Elihu, is one of these young men; he has been sitting quietly, without speaking, in deference to the older men. "Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God." (Job 32:2) Elihu means literally, "God is he", or the divinity to be awakened within all mankind. Ram means "son of the Most High" — Elihu was "of the kindred of Ram" — and as used in the Bible generally refers to a sanctuary or place of prayer. Here Elihu is an impetuous young man: "I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you my opinion." We may interpret Elihu's

part in two ways. On the objective plane, he is representative of the "young" soul, impulsive and hasty, quick to condemn, fiery in denunciation of what he deems evil. He now rebukes Job: "Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment." He admits that none of the three friends have "convinced Job, or answered his words", and he has been nigh to bursting with the force of his own opinions which he would like to express: "Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak . . . I will open my lips and answer."

He then proceeds with his own argument, which he has been developing while listening to the speeches of the three friends.

Esoterically, Elihu represents the new understanding of truth, the triumphant declaration of the "young child" born within. Adherents of the old religion are content to worship an external God, and have placed Him upon a throne in a far-away Heaven. The new religion emphasizes the fact of God within us, affirming, "In Him we live and move and have our being." — hence, Elihu's name, God is He.

Job 33:13-17,23-24

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it

not.

*In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep
falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;*

*Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealet their
Instruction, That he may withdraw man from his
purpose, and hide pride from man.*

*If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one
among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:
Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him
from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.*

Orthodox commentators consider that the last two verses refer to the Christ as mankind's ransom, accepted by God to deliver man from the pit.

We have seen that Zophar, of the three friends, typified the false light ("shining") of the mortal intellect; Elihu, young and unformed as he is, nonetheless is the type of the spiritualized mind; the Christing of the consciousness. The mind is the youngest (i.e. the latest acquired) of the vehicles of the ego, having been begun only in the present Earth Period of our planetary evolution. The desires, feelings, instincts, the very form of the body itself as idea, existed long before. "The mind is the Path", and the only path, by which man can conquer nature. Elihu rightly declares that "none of you convinced Job or answered his words," for the materialistic mind and animal soul can offer

no satisfactory solution to the problems of life. Naively, the youthful Elihu declares, "I shall teach thee wisdom;" and it is true, that he can and does, for "from the mouth of babes" the Lord giveth wisdom.

Elihu represents the "new wine" bursting the wine skins of the Old Dispensation now yielding to the New. This new spiritual power, this new inspiration, must be awakened in man to fit him for the Aquarian Age. To hasten the fruition of this power and the extended knowledge which it makes available is the work of the occultist in the approximately six hundred years which yet remain of the Piscean Age. With the new understanding that is found through this Illumination, the neophyte is literally born again. "I once was dead, but now I am alive," chants the newly illumined one. This life-sense has been called by inspired writers and teachers the new sense of the New Age.

The work of Initiation, according to Elihu, is "to bring back the soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." (Job 33:30) This involves the complete submergence of the personal will in the Divine; it is learning to say, "Not my will but Thine be done." Elihu truly discovers one of Job's faults when he says: "My desire is, that Job may be tried unto the end ... for he addeth rebellion unto his sins." (Job 34:36-37)

Elihu declares that Job has, in effect, put himself above God: "Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?" (Job 35:1)

He continues (Job 36th chapter), "Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.... Truly my words shall not be false." And he proceeds to enlarge upon the glory and magnificence and power shown in the works of creation: "Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold." This Job had already done, before his trials came upon him. Elihu continues "magnifying the works of God." in the following chapter (Job: 37th chapter): "Hearken' unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God." There is no question that the practice of "considering the wondrous works" is of the utmost benefit to the novice. It arouses within the soul a vast tranquility, in which visions of splendor may arise from the inner worlds.

— ***Corinne Heline***