

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

The Song of The Well

Numbers 21:17,18

Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it;

The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves.

From the valley of the river Arnon the Israelites went to Beer, and there the Lord said unto Moses: "Gather the people together and I will give them water."

The water promised was that of which the Master spoke when He said to the Samaritan woman by the well: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The wells from which this water springs were dug by nobles, the spiritually Elect, with their own staves (rods of power) — a reference to the craftsmanship of the "princes" and their way of service.

Refreshed by the waters of life, the Israelites went forth from the wilderness of the unenlightened life to Mattanah, which means a gift—the gift that opens the way to the heights of Mount Pisgah.

Song of The Fall of Heshbon

Numbers 21:27-30

Come into Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared; For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon; it hath consumed Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh; he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah which reacheth unto Medeba.

This song commemorates Israel's victory over Sihon, king of the Amorites, and capture of the city of Heshbon. That city, and all others in the land of the Amorites, fell after a battle which need not have been fought had King Sihon not rejected peaceful overtures of the Israelites asking permission to pass through their land.

Heshbon, the city that was taken forcibly after free passage through it was refused, means intelligence. It is the intelligence of the concrete brain mind that is naturally resistant to the approach of the higher mind (Israel). "Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto

Medeba." Medeba means quiet waters, the quiet of a composed higher mind.

The lower mind had been overcome by the higher; human intelligence had been transcended by divine insight. Sihon, the king who resisted, means sweeping away, and by the action of the Elect he was removed. Chemosh, who was undone, was a god of Moab, forces of carnal man.

Conflict of the Old with the New — Balak and Balaam

The story of Balaam is found in the twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth chapters of Numbers. It is the story of a priest of Baal, and an Initiate of the Taurean Dispensation. Baal means Lord and signifies the Sun. Balaam is described as a priest-magician having miraculous powers of both vision and enchantment, who dwelt in the mountains of the east. Like the three who came to worship the Christ, Balaam was a Wise Man from the East; and like them he saw a Star in Israel, concerning which he prophesied before the king.

After the fall of Heshbon, the victorious Israelites advanced into the plains of Moab, "on this side Jordan by Jericho." Balak, son of Zippor, was king in Moab; and having seen their victories over the Amorites, he was distressed at the presence of the Israelites in his land. He turned, therefore, to the famed priest-magician, Balaam,

for assistance, sending emissaries to ask him to curse the invaders, "for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian, departing with the rewards of divination in their hand, came to Balaam where he dwelt and gave him Balak's message.

Balaam means a gift of prophecy; or, as it is said of him, a "man whose eyes are open." In his experiences is found one of the most subtle temptations that beset the path of a disciple who has mastered the lessons of the age in which he lives, and who has progressed into the state of consciousness and acquired powers belonging to the age that lies immediately ahead. Balaam was a "modern" of his time; he met, therefore, the opposition of the more conservative and reactionary people of that day. The battle between the old and the new, the old and the young, is ever the same. In religious matters especially, the average individual is timid and fearful of change. Prejudices and bigotry develop more definitely in this field of thought than in any other. While new discoveries in science are opposed by the weight of previously set convictions and inertia to change, opposition to their acceptance is not so great as it is to presentation of new truths revealed in an ever-evolving religion.

Balak sent emissaries to Balaam with a message requesting him to use his influence to stamp out the new spirit that was arising within the borders of his kingdom. For such services Balaam was offered the high office of Court Minister in the royal house of Moab. But he refused. He had glimpsed the meaning, the purpose and the high source of that which he was asked to eradicate. To that knowledge and vision he remained true, except for an interval when he yielded to added inducements held out by the king. The temptation of worldly wealth and honors overcame him. He asked for time to consider. A night passed, and in the morning forces of the old won over those of the new. Balaam agreed to the king's wishes, even though this necessitated a compromise with spiritual principles in the interests of material gain.

But the Angel of the Lord barred his way. This Angel represents both the conscience of man and the teacher of a neophyte. Balaam turned aside and continued on his way, but the Angel went further and stood in a narrow place where there was no turning either to right or left. Here Balaam's ass lay down under him. When he belabored her for obstinacy, she pleaded with him as the voice of his own conscience protesting.

Early Egyptian astrologers used an ass as the symbol of Capricorn, sign under which the Christ is born in man. To

the degree that the Christ power is developed does the personality become conscious, through the faculty of intuition, of the admonitions of spirit. In Balaam that inner voice was unmistakably clear; his eyes were opened and he saw the Angel of the Lord barring his way with a flaming sword. His spiritual vision, which had been closed when turning away from his inner prompting to look longingly on worldly tinsel offered by Balak, was again opened. He now saw so clearly the path for his higher self, and felt so strongly the impulse of his better nature, that the temptations, which had momentarily caused him to falter and hesitate, lost their power over him. He resolved to remain faithful to his appointed destiny and to fulfill the Lord's (Law's) command.

Three times the Angel barred his way; this was the threefold testing of body, mind and soul — the means by which the whole nature of man is strengthened, made observant and alert, keen in discrimination and reliant on the inner counselor whose authority constitutes truth's last court of appeal. Having delivered himself from temptation, Balaam proceeded to the court of the king. He announced to Balak that henceforth he would prophesy only what the Lord revealed and nothing more. Balaam commanded that seven oxen and seven rams be prepared for sacrifice. He then withdrew to a high place of Baal to receive visions of the Lord; or, in other words, he turned within for divine

guidance. The oxen and rams prepared for sacrifice point to the two cycles that were merging into one another at this time. The Taurean (ox) Age was giving way to the Arian (ram). To those who responded to the new impulses, Aries was "as gardens by the river's side, and as cedar trees beside the waters."

There is a very great difference between the way cosmic illumination was attained in earlier cycles and at present. Under the Taurean Dispensation a candidate was put into a trance-like state while his spirit gleaned wisdom in inner realms. In the succeeding Piscean Dispensation the Christ opened the way for a disciple to rise in spiritual awareness sufficiently to read the Cosmic Records while retaining full waking consciousness. John the Baptist, like Balaam, lived and labored at a time when one cycle closed and another opened. A seer of the old school, he looked to and prophesied the coming of a new. Again a cyclic change is in process. The Piscean Dispensation is about to give way to the Aquarian. As the new outlook, the enlarged consciousness, and the fresh purposes of the oncoming cycle encroach upon long established viewpoints, outmoded concepts, and the limited powers of an age that is passing, there comes inevitably the inharmony, the conflicts and the general turbulence that characterize the present time.

Having received his command from the Angel, Balaam returned to the king and the princes of Moab where they still stood about the altar of sacrifice, and said: "Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

But Balak replied: "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether!" But Balaam replied: "Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?"

Balak was not content with this, so another sacrifice was prepared in the field of Zephim (the field of watchers) on Mount Pisgah. Again Balaam went to the high place of Baal to commune with the Lord. Returning he said.: "Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor; God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath

blessed; and I cannot reverse it . . . Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought! Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain."

Thus Balaam chose to serve the ends of truth even at the cost of worldly gain. He withstood the tests to which his threefold nature had been subjected. He met temptations, yielded temporarily to doubt and compromise, but in the end came out a spiritual victor.

Numbers 24:1,2

And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not, as other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

In every initiatory rite temptation is followed by transfiguration. Balaam "saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open." Balaam qualified to read again in the Memory of Nature, and to prophesy on the basis of what he there saw concerning

future conditions and events. He studied the coming status of the human race — the significance of the statement that he looked upon "Israel abiding in his tents." And looking down the lanes of time he saw the coming of the supreme Teacher, the Christ, of whom he says: "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." With this final prophecy, Balaam "rose up, and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way."

The names Balak and Balaam sound similar notes. Balaam is the higher, signifying that his vision was clearer, his understanding deeper, and his motives for action purer. Here, as always in the Bible, names deal not primarily with personalities, but with principles involved in the evolution of the race.

Being left in peace by King Balak, the Israelites "abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab."

The religion of Moab was sensuous but beautiful. The mountains were worshipped as the home of the gods, and an aesthetic ideal superseded the moral. Culture was directed toward the perfection of bodily form rather than unfoldment of graces and beauties of spirit. These Moabite ideals proved attractive to the children of Israel, with the result that many became converts to Baal-worship and fell

more deeply under the spell of its sensuous aspects than under the inspiration of its exalted principles that guided Baal Initiates like Balaam. Balaam exemplified Moabite worship at its best; the Israelitic adoption, at its worst.

Carnal excesses which accompanied their adopted religion's practices brought on a plague and there died 20 and 400, or 6, number of love in its lower human expression. The slaying of Zimri and Cozbi epitomized this condition. Cozbi was a Midianite woman taken in adultery with Zimri, a prince of the tribe of Simeon. Midianite means strife, and Simeon is of the dual sign Gemini, two facts pointing to the conflict between the higher and the lower natures in man.

— ***Corinne Heline***