

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

Isaac Blesses His Two Sons

"Is not he rightly named Jacob?" said Esau, "for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing." (Genesis 27-36)

The lesser inevitably loses to the greater. Esau lost his birthright through a disregard of its true worth; he later lost the blessing through a device conceived by Rebekah, the intuitive and image-building faculty, and carried out by Jacob, the supplanter. The ultimate end of evolution is the supremacy of the spiritual.

Isaac sent Esau to the field to get him venison, and charged him, saying: "Make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat: that my soul may bless thee before I die." The meat was prepared and served, though first by Jacob and by Esau afterward.

Having eaten, Isaac called Jacob near to him. Believing him to be Esau, he smelled his raiment and said, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." The reference here is to the fragrance of the soul body of a developed Ego. The skins of kids of goats that Jacob wore on his hands point to Capricorn, sign of the

Christed one. The "meat" was a spiritual nourishment. (The word fish is used frequently in the New Testament in the same sense.)

This incident illustrates again Rebekah's special attachment for Jacob and Isaac's for Esau. The heart and head qualities lean toward spiritual and material concerns, respectively. Jacob verifies the statement that "In my heart thou wilt find liberation."

Esau wept when he learned that Jacob had preceded him, yet it was but the consequence of his own action in forfeiting his birthright, for to him alone belonged the blessing that had been given Jacob. Isaac informed Esau that he had made Jacob "thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; with corn and wine have I sustained him."

Esau pleaded with his father to give him a blessing also. And he did: "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven above." The dew symbolizes manna, the white purified substance conserved through chaste living. In this lay the power that would enable Esau to rise to Jacob's status. Jacob had attained to self-mastery and, in the words of Solomon, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Before such great souls

the peoples of all nations do homage; such a one they will serve and sustain.

Both sons are blessed, but differently. It is to each according to his character and development. The blessings and curses of the Bible are but allegorical statements of the nature and operation of spiritual law as it manifests in man and nature. Esau, material-minded man, shall live by the sword and shall serve his brother. "And it shall come to pass," added Isaac, "when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

Living by the sword is the way of conflict which arises from a state of consciousness that is selfish and separative. It is each for self rather than each for all. Esau (material man) was to serve Jacob (spiritual man) until by such service he would gain dominion over his mortal nature and thereby break the yoke of materiality that now pressed down upon his neck.

Evil has become powerful for a time. Materiality has waxed strong. Its progressive growth may be traced in successive Bible characters, beginning with Cain and continuing through Nimrod, Ishmael and Esau. This condition of materiality is temporary. When the New Age now dawning shall have come into its own, the race will experience an awakening similar to that of Jacob's when he

discovered that the Lord was in truth near beside him, and he knew it not.

Jacob's Expanding Vision

Genesis 28:10-19

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Heran.

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely

the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

And he called the name of that place Beth-el, but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

From a place of dedication (Beer-sheba), Jacob journeyed toward a mountain (Haran). He was rising in consciousness. The curtain of night was drawn on the objective world and Jacob lay down to sleep. His outer senses were stilled. His pillow was a stone. The symbolism here is identical with that of the Philosopher's Stone. Jacob had quickened the higher centers in the head so he was able to look into inner worlds. He saw Angels ascend to and descending from heaven. The ladder of being that links man to God was manifest before him He was divinely illumined.

The physiological key to the Scriptures also unlocks untold treasures. Used in this instance, the ladder of Jacob's dream refers to segments of the spinal column, and the Angels of light to the sacred fire which ascends therein to the head (heights of illumination). As the life force passes through the several plexuses they each receive a

certain vibration from the astrological sign governing them. Since every individual is differently constituted and in varying stages of development, no two respond in an identical manner to the rising spirit fire.

The ancients described Jacob's ladder as the seven coils of a serpent that reached from heaven to Earth. This refers to the Path of Initiation, which has its counterpart in that starry ladder of the skies stretching from the Pleiades to Orion. In Amos 5:8, it is described thus:

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is His Name:

From the cosmic standpoint, Jacob's ladder reveals the entire scheme of evolution. Egos descend from the spheres of God to the world of matter, later reascending to be reunited with God at the end of a Day of Manifestation. In the elevated state of Initiate-consciousness, Jacob viewed the "perfect round" whereas ordinary perception sees but the "broken arc." The Cycle of Life was viewed from the time the Ego ascends through the physical world and the successive spheres of being until it reaches the Third Heaven, the point of equilibrium between the world of spirit and the world of form; and from there returns again to

Earth life for added lessons — a cyclic journey that is repeated again and again until all the lessons of this plane of existence have been mastered and complete freedom from its limitations achieved.

Jacob's dream outlines the teachings of Initiation belonging to the Lesser Mysteries. In religions preceding the Christian Dispensation, the candidate, passed through various tests and trials, symbolized by steps. There are, for instance, a certain number of steps or degrees in the Masonic Order (a fragment of the Ancient Mysteries) leading up to the throne of King Solomon. A pyramid near Babylon was built with seven receding tiers of stones, forming as many steps, each of which corresponded to one of the seven planets. Masonry speaks of Jacob's ladder as having nine rounds or steps, the bottom one being upon the Earth and the one at the top in heaven. The allusion here is to the path of the nine Mysteries. The Hebrew word for ladder is salam meaning elevated or lifted up. In studying Initiation we find that the various experiences presented as external events are descriptive of processes in the body of the aspirant which lead ultimately to Illumination.

The land which the Lord promised to give Jacob and his descendants has also its physiological significance. It refers to the new regenerated body in which the atoms have been

purified and the physical vehicle conditioned to become a worthy temple for the indwelling God. When this cleansing process has taken place in the neophyte he exclaims with Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

What is spoken of as Jacob's fear and dread was but his sense of pronounced awe and reverence. Like Stephen at the time of his martyrdom (Acts 7:56), Jacob beheld the wonders of the spiritual world and the activities of the glorious Beings therein.

A pillow is associated with rest in a horizontal position; a pillar is an upright column, and usually a support suggesting strength. Note that Jacob used the stone as a pillow in the night time, and the same stone as a pillar when the light had dawned and morning had come. His spiritualization was accomplished through the process of lifting the spinal spirit fire. The oil poured upon the stone is the wisdom and understanding through which he accomplished this great work, and the spiritual results obtained therefrom.

— ***Corinne Heline***