

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Escape of the Righteous

Genesis 19:15-22

And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here: lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life: look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

And he said unto him. See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also that I will not overthrow this

city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

Lot represents the man who has not yet developed his spiritual faculties sufficiently to be self-guided by the divine light that is within, and who must therefore, seek guidance from without. Abraham, as we have seen, had consciously contacted the God within and lived in the light of this knowing. Because of Abraham's more advanced development and greater wisdom, Lot came to him for advice; when he followed it he prospered; when he failed to do so, he was in difficulty.

Lot's association with Abraham brought him material riches and personal safety. He came into possession of large tracts of land: he was rescued from thirty-six kings who pursued him.

The thirty-six kings represent the power of nine, the number of humanity's present evolution during which it is pursued by the forces of this world, but rescued by the divine spirit within it.

The Angels that spoke to Lot, warning him to flee from danger, were but the voice of the higher self that is ever counseling the lower personality to move forward and not look behind; also, not to remain on the plain, but to go to

the mountains. The way of escape was by rising in spiritual consciousness.

Lot was not ready to flee to the mountains. He was as yet too materially minded; and the mind is the path. He asked that he might go instead to Zoar, a small nearby city. Zoar means "little" and "city" signifies a state of consciousness. Lot has a degree of spiritual understanding even though not yet sufficient to take him to the mountain top. Later, in this same chapter, we read that he, together with his two daughters, repaired to a cave on the mountain. While he had made progress he was not yet in open communion with the Lord — as the mountain height would signify — but in a lower state of consciousness, as indicated by the cave in which he dwelt.

Genesis 19:24,25

*Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah
brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;
And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all
the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon
the ground.*

Sodom and Gomorrah, like ancient Lemuria, were destroyed by fire. The cause was the same in both instances — a perversion of the sacred fire force in the body of man. "Daemon est Deus inversus." Sodom and Gomorrah are the two pillars in ruin, restored, they are the

Jachin and Boaz that stand at the entrance of Solomon's Temple, the Shrine of Wisdom, which is man himself.

The initial letters "S" and "G" of the names of the two cities point to the love principle which, because of its abysmal fall in the wicked cities of the plain, caused their overthrow. Studying the letters in their Hebrew significance we find that "S" or shin was one of the master letters, the other two being "A" and "M." When the dot was placed on the left hand prong of "S" the letter meant sin. The same word in ancient times also meant Moon.

The letter "G" or gimel holds the mystery of the feminine principle. It pertains to generation. In Hebrew a symbol for the letter is a hollow tube or canal. Such is the spinal cord. When the kundalini power rises through the canal from base to summit, generation becomes regeneration and the human consciousness enters into awareness of the divine. The letter "G" also symbolizes the throat, wherein an idea conceived takes form. It is outspoken; the word becomes flesh.

Many different symbols and allegories are used in the Bible to teach man the sacredness of the creative force and the painful consequences following upon its misuse. This is the unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, the sin which must be expiated by a weakened body and enfeebled faculties until the sacredness of the very life

essence itself be learned and observed. Again and again the Bible points out the glorious heritage of those who have learned conservation and transmutation, and so build for themselves higher faculties and finer vehicles by which to enter into a new heaven and a new earth.

Astrologically, Sodom and Gomorrah represent the misdirected powers of Taurus (throat) and Scorpio (genitals). These signs are opposite and complementary. Venusian love (Taurus) and Martian passion (Scorpio) were subverted to unnatural and destructive ends.

Lot's wife, failing to heed the Angel's warning, "looked back, and she became a pillar of salt." For one who has entered upon the Path to turn back is retrogression. Of such the Master said that the last state would be worse than the first.

In the Bible salt is used frequently in both a literal and figurative sense. Spiritually, it refers to suffering, to warfare with the lower elements in one's nature, and to the processes of regeneration. The very battle in which Lot was taken prisoner was fought in the valley of Siddim near the Salt Sea.

It was a cleansed, regenerated body to which the Master had reference when He told His Disciples that they were "the salt of the earth." To this he added: "But if the salt

have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Lot's wife turned into salt that had lost its savor. In describing the location of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, salt is always referred to in relation to the work of regeneration through restoring the fallen feminine or heart power to its rightful estate.

Early alchemists referred to Chaos, the undifferentiated mother substance out of which all things are made, as universal salt. The three alchemical substances, sulphur, mercury and salt, correlate to the principles Fire, Air and Water, respectively. Water is a feminine principle. The Moon is feminine also and alchemically associated with salt. It was "turning back," or lowering the vibratory activity of the feminine principle, that changed Lot's wife into a pillar of salt.

Genesis 19:29-38

And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the seed of our father.

And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose, And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.

And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon to this day.

This story of incest might justifiably be expurgated from the Bible, together with others equally unpleasant, were it not that it is a blind concealing mysteries from those not

yet ready to read them. The incident points to man's dual nature. The older, or firstborn, from whom the Moabites are descended, represents the lower nature. The Moabites symbolize materiality. "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever." (Deuteronomy 23:3)

The younger daughter gives birth to Ben-ammi, "son of my people." She represents the lower nature struggling toward the higher. The birth of children refers to attributes in the nature of man that come into manifestation. To be drunk with wine signifies the benumbing effects of the sense life on the higher spiritual perceptions. Lot did not perceive "when she lay down, nor when she arose." It was, spiritually, night time.

Genesis 20:1,2

And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.

And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

When Abraham wandered from his "father's house," and found himself among strangers, he introduced his wife Sarah as his sister. He did so in Egypt, as we have observed. He did so now in Gerar. Both Pharaoh and

Abimelech took Sarah, and both were plagued because of her. Belonging to Abraham (spirit), she could not be appropriated by the powers of this world (material mindedness), however rich and regal their stations. The attempt to do so proves futile in the end, causing pain and impoverishment.

Abimelech was a man of integrity but not yet spiritually awakened. Because he lived true to such light as he had, the Lord came to him "in a dream" and told him Sarah was "a man's wife."

But "Abimelech had not come near her." He had been protected because of his righteous inclinations. "And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her."

When Pharaoh (mind) restored Sarah (emotional nature) to Abraham (spirit) there was plenty in the land. Similarly, when Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham, God healed Abimelech and all his household from the barrenness they had suffered. And Abimelech (mind) now turned to Abraham (spirit) and said: "Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee."

Genesis 21:1-10

And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.

And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking.

Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

Abraham was "an hundred years old when his son was born unto him." The number value ten indicates that

Abraham and Sarah, masculine and feminine principles, were now balanced and capable of bringing forth a new joy (Isaac). In the soul exhilaration that was now theirs a feast was prepared. Meanwhile, Sarah observed the son of Hagar (lower nature) mocking. The carnal nature is reluctant to release its tenacious hold on the personality. But Sarah had developed her intuitive faculty sufficiently to know that the offspring of the lower nature (son of Hagar) would not be heir with the child of the higher nature (Isaac).

When the Bible story is read in the light of New Age interpretations which relate all characters and events to man himself, especially the several characters representing qualities and attributes to be either eradicated or cultivated, the Scriptures become a living word immediately applicable to personal problems and daily living at the present time. Historical aspects then recede into the background. The Bible ceases to be a book about a dead and an alien past, and becomes the guide to a living, pulsating present.

The incident of Hagar's son's mocking was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. Even in one as advanced as Abraham, inclinations of the lower nature were so well rooted in his subconscious mind that they were not easily removed. But God consoles Abraham saying, "Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto

thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be culled. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." (Genesis 21:12-13)

Genesis 21:14-20

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept.

And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad to drink.

And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

The Lord (Law) spoke (worked) with Hagar and Ishmael during their wandering in the wilderness (unillumined state). Hagar received bread and water from Abraham (spirit), and after chastening experiences and an angelic call, the Lord "opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water" — the water of Eternal Life which is the heritage of every Ego. Hagar had wasted the water received from Abraham; for this she suffered remorse and, having repented, earned the privilege of drinking from the well of living waters.

Genesis 21:22-34

And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and in the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

And Abraham said, I will swear.

And Abraham reprov'd Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.

And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but today.

And Abraham took a sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware both of them.

Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba; then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines. And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba and called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

The conversation between Abraham and Abimelech pertains to the spiritualization of the mind. Abimelech symbolizes the power of mind; Abraham, the power of the spirit. When the two are united, there is power to perform miracles.

The processes involved in raising the mind to levels where it joins forces with those of the spirit are indicated

symbolically in the reference to the well which, as previously stated, signifies esoteric truth. The place where the covenant was made was called Beer-sheba, meaning well of the oath, and there Abraham called upon the name (power) of the Lord (Law). This power is always present with one whose first allegiance is to the spirit. The seven ewe lambs that were set apart by themselves refer to seven centers in the body of man. These must be worked upon and sensitized to a certain degree before the mind can become spiritually illumined.

The realization that came to Abraham brought added understanding. With deeper realization comes added responsibility and enlarged opportunities for service. Abraham found these in his immediate environment among the Philistines, where he remained "for many days." The true fruit of Illumination is service loving, self-forgetting service to others.

The Offering of Isaac — The Great Renunciation

Genesis 22:1-5

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee in to the land of Moriah: and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the

mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went into the place of which God had told him.

Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

That this experience was on the higher planes of consciousness is symbolically indicated by its occurrence on a mount. Specifically, it was on Mount Moriah, the elevation on which Solomon built the Temple and where later he was buried. Not Until Consciousness has transcended the personal and become utterly selfless is one capable of the renunciation made by Abraham.

Genesis 22:6

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

The statement that Abraham "took the fire in his hand" indicates that he had learned the most difficult of all lessons. He had mastered the fire in his own nature; he had

gained complete self-control. Consistent with this fact is the statement that Isaac, representative of the joy of the soul that has sublimated the lower forces into the higher, carried the wood for the sacrifice as he, together with his father, ascended the Mount of Renunciation which was to become the Mount of Transfiguration.

Genesis 22:7-12

And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of and Abraham built all altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him oil the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife, to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and Said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou hearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

This passage leaves no doubt as to Abraham's complete surrender of self. He had the strength to meet the test successfully, and thereby to open the door to power and illumination little dreamed by those of lesser spiritual stature. He had the courage to obey the words of the Lord (Law), whatsoever the cost. Such is the course that qualifies for cosmic service. The statement of the Christ that "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," is a Temple teaching belonging to all ages.

Genesis 22:13

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

The ram is the symbol of Aries. In its highest aspects Aries stands for purity, service and sacrifice, all keywords to the higher life. It is the sign of the resurrection. Pisces, the last constellation of the Zodiac, is the sign of sorrow, the garden of tears, the Gethsemane on the Path whose gates are closed only to open on the first sign, Aries, the power of the new-born. Abraham has now arrived at this place in his initiatory development.

Genesis 22:14-18

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-

jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son,

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore: and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies:

And in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Jehovah-jireh means the Lord will provide. It indicates the attainment of that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Whoever enters into this state of consciousness will always receive the same promise from the Angel of the Lord that was given to Abraham. This follows in accordance with the perfect and harmonious expression of spiritual law.

The multiplication of Abraham's seed even "as the stars of heaven" refers, esoterically, to the atomic rhythms of the new body of the Initiate. In that seed (rhythm) "shall all the nations of the world be blessed." The raised vibratory conditions of man will render him immune to negative and

destructive influences, thus giving him possession of "the gates of his enemies."

The twenty-third chapter of Genesis records the death of Sarah and Abraham's purchase of a burial place from the children of Heth for the price of four hundred pieces of silver. Details concerning the burial are apparently trifling if taken in their literal sense. But like all other incidents recorded in the Bible, they have esoteric values. Heth is the Hebrew letter "H." It is a feminine letter and indicates illumination attained through the awakened powers of heart and head. Equilibrium is an attribute of the daughters of Heth.

Further details connected with the burial of Sarah point to her passing as signifying, an illumination within the body of the Initiate. Sarah is buried in the field of Machpelah. Field is a feminine word, a place where fruit is nurtured, Machpelah means doubling. The price, four hundred pieces of silver carries the significance of polarity in the number four — the completion of the perfect square — and the feminine principle is indicated by the feminine metal, silver. The entire chapter is not a lamentation, but a song of exultation over that which the Zohar speaks of as the feminine in liberation.

Genesis 24:2-4

And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house,

that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh.

And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my Son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell.

But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

The marriage that Abraham aspired to for his son Isaac was one befitting his true nature. Since that nature was spiritual, the wife could not come from the Canaanites, who symbolize materiality or the mortal man, but must be found among a people representative of the spirit. The marriage here referred to is not the physical union of two persons, but the mystic mating of the dual principles within. The entire chapter from which the above passage is taken is one of the Bible's many beautiful love idylls of the spirit. The several characters of this idyll, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Laban and the servant whom Abraham commissions to find Rebekah, are all representative of qualities to be unfolded in the life of the aspirant.

Genesis 24:62-64

And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi: for he dwelt in the south country.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the

eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.

And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

Throughout the Bible water is associated with some aspect of attainment. A well of water signifies the deeper truths. It is by the well that Isaac, the seeker, finds Rebekah, the light of the soul, and from her pitcher drinks of the spiritual verities that help him to a realization of his high quest. Laban means *white essence*, which is symbolical of the soul body. Rebekah (willing service) points the way whereby one is prepared to receive "the jewels of silver and jewels of gold and the raiment" with which she was arrayed for the meeting with Isaac.

Isaac, the neophyte, in his meditation sees Rebekah "from the way of the well Lahai-roi" or the well of vision: that is, the way of extended consciousness. In the high ecstasy of this communion the neophyte comes to understand something of the glories of the kingdom which God has prepared for those who love Him.

Genesis 25:1

Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

As previously stated, Hagar represents the lower nature and Sarah the higher. Keturah means incense and represents the union of the two. She signifies the regenerated body which is responsive to the slightest impact of mind and spirit, and therefore a fitting channel for the use of the illumined Ego.

Abraham means the "father of multitudes." The principal events in his life are representative of experiences in soul growth such as characterize pioneers of a New Race and Age. They are not merely a history of past events but deal with developments belonging to the present and, furthermore, serve as blueprints for the coming Sixth and Seventh Root Races.

Genesis 25:12-18

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Abdeel, and Mibsam.

And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles: twelve

princes according to their nations.

And these are the years of the life of Ishamel, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people,

Ishmael had twelve sons. These represent the twelve soul attributes to be evolved as centers of spiritual functioning within the body. Isaac's two sons signify the masculine and feminine elements that are to be balanced in man. Keturah's six sons represent the equilibrium of the negative and positive poles in the twelve attributes as they are United through spiritual living.

— ***Corinne Heline***