

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Song of Hannah

I Samuel 2:1-10

And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the

pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them.

He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall be thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

Hannah is one of the beautiful feminine characters of the Old Testament. The mother of Samuel, she has often been compared with Mary, the spotless Virgin of the new Testament. Her son is a Song of Annunciation in which she proclaims the successful accomplishment of her mission. To the esotericist, Annunciation is an Initiation marking a definite degree of spiritual development. In Hannah's song we recognize that she tacitly proclaims her ability to read certain records in God's Book of Remembrance, by which the Initiate knows the facts of rebirth and the cyclic action of the Law of Consequence, or Causation.

The birth of the child Samuel refers also to a new spiritual development taking place within Hannah herself. When presenting Samuel in the Temple, Hannah made a promise, "As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." This is

the dedication of what the Christian knows as the "Christ Child Within", for as the Crucified is found within oneself at a certain stage of unfoldment, so, also, many years before, the Child is born and dedicated to the Lord. In all true esoteric work no promise is ever required to be made to another person. The dedication is always within, and only to the Higher Self. With this in mind as we meditate upon the inner meaning of Hannah's song we find it to be a chant of thanksgiving, an ecstatic rhapsody on the wonders and beauty revealed through the vistas of Truth at each forward step upon the path of Initiation.

The Secret Doctrine of Israel

To appreciate fully Hannah's spiritual achievement, we must know something of Israelitish background, Samuel came of the clan of Jerahmeel, one of those clans which inhabited the steppes of southern Palestine, among which were Caleb and the Kenites, devoted to the cult of the Brazen Serpent (Nehushtan). The tribe of Dan also belongs to this group, although its inheritance under Joshua lies in the north, far distant from the other southern tribes, for Dan in particular bore the character of a wanderer, as do all the descendants of Cain. It was precisely those clans most closely associated with the serpent cult (under the leadership of Moses, the Levites, and the Midianite Jethro, Moses' father-in-law), who were most largely instrumental in constructing the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle

in the Wilderness. The Midianites (Kenites) were looked upon as kinsmen by the Hebrews, being the descendants of Abraham through Keturah, but they were not Israelites in the strictest sense of the term. It was not until the time of King David that these alien elements were united into one and incorporated with Judea. This is indicated in the genealogies by the statement that Jerahmeel and Caleb are descendants of Judah.

After a century or two of occupation in Palestine, it is Samuel of Jerahmeel who is found presiding over the Sanctuary of the Ark, now housed in a Temple among the hills of Ephraim. The association of the Ark with the serpent cult is shown in a legend that the Ark of the Covenant was filled with serpents, while another legend has it that it held certain sacred stones. These legends seem correlative to the known historical fact that the Brazen Serpent, inherited from Moses, was indeed kept in the Sanctuary, and that the Tablets of the Law received by Moses on Sinai were also preserved in the Ark, as well as the Rod of Aaron. Thus at the time that Hannah presented the infant Samuel in the Temple, the Brazen Serpent of Moses was still venerated in the Sanctuary, for it was not destroyed until the time of Hezekiah, the reformer king, who reigned 719-745 B.C.

Now there is a phase of the serpent cult which is seldom touched upon by biblical scholars, because without the

astrological key which is not generally accepted, they are unable to understand the veiled references to certain esoteric teachings known to the ancient Hebrews.

They recognize and elucidate the separate influences of North and South in the biblical documents, both in theology and in the names attributed to Deity, and also in certain historical developments. But they universally insist, except in the field of recognized mythology, that the Hebrews were distinguished in one particular from all ancient peoples, namely, that they had no goddesses, no priestesses, and that Moses spoke against the authority of sibyls and "Wise Women." But the esotericist, who understands the meaning of obscure astrological phrases and figures, recognizes that while this was true to an extent, it was not the whole truth.

As early as the age of Moses in Egypt the priesthood had already begun to preempt the authority of the priestesses. This was in fact the beginning of a kind of religious revolution which culminated approximately 1200 B.C. with the male hierarchy assuming the supreme authority. This change coincided with the precession of the Equinoxes from Taurus into Aries (in the Spring) and from Scorpio into Libra (in the Autumn). Taurus and Scorpio are both feminine signs, Taurus being ruled by Venus, the Morning and Evening Star, while Scorpio is the feminine "house" of Mars, and is the sign ruling the Fallen Angels, or Lucifer Spirits. It

is also the sign of the sybil, for it rules all hidden or esoteric Wisdom.

Yet though the exoteric authority passed into masculine hands in the fiery, positive, masculine Arian Age, it was neither possible nor desirable to stamp out the feminine cult completely, and throughout Hebrew history we find mysterious women enacting the role of prophetesses and Wise Women. Thus we beheld Miriam assuming leadership for a time in the Wilderness; we beheld Deborah under the Palm Tree, which is the Tree of Life; we shall behold a community of witches, and of them, one in particular, able to call a major prophet from the Beyond, namely, the mysterious Witch of Endor; we shall behold the prophetess Huldah awakening the heart of the boy king Josiah to the Word of the Lord; and in the New Testament there is the prophetess Anna who, like the aged Simeon, recognizes the Christ Child and prophesies His future messiahship.

In Hannah, the mother of Samuel, we have one of the last representatives of the sybils of Palestine, and her Song of Annunciation is typical of the chants of the ancient Wise Women which were so highly prized in the Taurean Age, and which even into the Arian Age influenced the destiny of Rome. (Legend says that the sybil of Cumae, too, was a Hebrew).

The serpent cult, with its symbol of the Brazen Serpent, is the hidden side of the Old Testament, concealed from the multitude because it was necessary for human evolution that the masculine principle should bring its work to a special fruition as typified in the Christ Ideal. The Christing of the feminine principle is to be the exalted work of the Sixth Epoch, as explained in an earlier volume.

Astronomically, the Brazen Serpent represents the Ecliptic, as revealed in the astrological names for the Moon's Nodes; the Dragon's Head and Tail being the North and South Node, respectively. This is the Dragon of Eve, for it was among the Southern tribes, particularly among the Kenites, that the cult of Eve, (Heva is sometimes given the meaning of "female serpent") flourished, Eve being venerated as the holy Mother of all living. This is the cult which we find progressively dwindling in historicity as the story of Israel unfolds, hence the "secret doctrine" of Israel, to be preserved by those who to this day call themselves Sons of Cain. Their eventual liberation from "the curse of Cain" is shown in the Christian glyph of the celestial virgin, crowned with stars, her foot resting lightly on the head of the Dragon, which is become her servant. In the Aquarian Age, when each year at the Winter Solstice the Sun is "born" in Scorpio (it is now "born" in Sagittarius, the house of Jupiter), the influences of the divine sybil will again penetrate the hearts of men and women with interior

wisdom; and every Yuletide when the songs of adoration for the Christ Child ascend through the ethers, it will be through the ministrations of the Wise Mary, Mother of Knowledge, that the Lord of Light will ascend over the waters of sorrow. Nevertheless, the Great Work of Mary is not to be accomplished in the Aquarian Age, but must wait for the Capricornian era and the Sixth Epoch or New Galilee.

Esoterically, as we have shown, in our discussion of the Book of Exodus the Brazen Serpent symbolizes the kundalini, the serpent fire of regeneration. It remains to show the correlation with what we have said a Dove. The polarity of the serpent fire is always the opposite of that of the physical body. Thus a man, whose body is said to be positive in polarity, speaks of the kundalini as feminine, or negative. In Hindu terminology it is the goddess Kundalini. (Incidentally, Indian literature, like the Hebrew, also has its Adim — spelled with an — "i" — primeval Man, and Heva, Mother of All Life.) A woman would more properly speak of the kundalini as positive, or masculine, however. Eve, therefore, is shown in certain ancient Hebrew glyphs as accompanied by a male serpent. This also has been discussed in the chapters on Genesis and the Garden of Eden, to which the reader is referred for added information on this point.

Astronomically, the female serpent is the Moon's Path; the male serpent is the Sun's Path. Yet that Path, the Ecliptic, is one and the same, and thus we behold in the heavens the union of the Male and Female Serpents of Wisdom, namely, Osiris and Isis, Adam and Eve (or Adam and Lilith), Sun and Moon, whose conjoined pathways through the stars mark the progress of the year and the cycle of growth and decay for the Earth and its dwellers. The planets also march along this serpentine path of the heavens, and esoterically, they are the children of the Sun and Moon, which means that each planet specializes a certain Ray, or quality, of the Sun and Moon. The Sun, however, is the supreme fullness of all masculine qualities, gathering these powers into itself from all the planets, while the Moon is the supreme fullness of the feminine powers of all the planets.

Each planet is polarized in two signs of the Zodiac: Mercury is feminine in Virgo, masculine in Gemini; Venus is feminine in Taurus, masculine in Libra; Mars is feminine in Scorpio, masculine in Aries; Jupiter is feminine in Pisces, masculine in Sagittarius; Saturn is feminine in Capricorn, masculine in Aquarius. Saturn was called by the Chaldeans "another Sun," which shows us that it is the polarity of the Sun, esoterically, hence its special sacredness among Hebrews and Chaldeans. Saturn in its feminine aspect may

also be called "another Moon," and in this connection plays an important role in Hebrew esotericism.

Such are the diverse elements which contribute to the glory and mystery of the Song of Hannah as she rejoices over her spiritual victory and the reward of the overcoming (verse 1).

It is taught repeatedly in the esoteric study of the Bible that one must understand that the enemies so often mentioned which are to be overcome are within ourselves. Consequently, the rejoicing at victory refers to the joy of the spirit at overcoming the mortal or material man. In Hannah's case this means especially the sub-lunar world in which all is constant change, and also the bewildering beauty of the astral world, which is illusion to the unwary until the ego receives the Divine Illumination, when through the exaltation of reason into intuition, the unchanging pattern of evolution is revealed. By means of revelation the pieces of the puzzle of change are formed into a coherent picture, which the seer or Sybil reads at a glance.

Verse five of Hannah's Song is filled with a new depth of meaning when we approach it in the light of esoteric understanding. The supreme promise to every seeking soul is, "They that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall be filled." Hannah has realized the fulfillment of this promise as she tells us in her chant. For the aspiring

ones who endeavor to live that the seven spiritual centers may awaken in the etheric body (which interpenetrates the physical), her words bear a holy meaning when she proclaims: The barren hath borne seven. As esotericists know, the seven spiritual centers correlate with the powers represented by the planets and Sun and Moon. This has the further meaning of the Primordial Feminine, the Original Mother who is the divine spiritual Space, or Chaos, which bore the Seven Heavens, and all their multitudinous offspring. For the Divine Feminine is concealed by seven veils, and the rarest veil of all, which hangs before the profoundest mystery, is that veil called Space. For it is not from Nothing that creation springs, but from Space, the most mysterious Feminine of all, which is the All-Life, bringing into active objective and formed manifestation the Germinal Idea received from the Divine All-Father.

As we analyze Hannah's song of thanksgiving we shall find its principal soul quality to be humility. Everyone who has any degree of true spiritual attainment has first been tested in order to prove his ability to remain always humble and self-effacing. Dante and Virgil in their journey through Paradise were stopped by the Angel of Humility, who beat his wings upon the forehead of Dante, whereupon he heard voices saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." He then discovered that although he was climbing, yet he was progressing more easily than he had done previously when

on level ground. He asked for an explanation, and Virgil told him that one of the seven sin marks, that of pride, had been erased from his forehead by the angel's wings, and that as a result the remaining six had become much fainter. Pride is the most powerful and the most subtle of all sins. Dante was an Initiate and understood well the trials and tests that block the way unto the finding of eternal life (through Initiation) We also perceive the beautiful spirit of humility permeating every line of Hannah's song. "By strength (of one's mortal self alone) shall no man prevail," but "He will keep the feet of His saints."

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not arrogance come out of your mouth," she adds, with true sybilline sternness. For one who has glimpsed the eternal must always realize the insignificance of the limited personality. The seer who is proud of his attainments has caught but a reflection of the true Light.

From the glorious height of her spiritual seership, Hannah forgets self and sings, "There is none holy as the Lord for there is none beside Thee," even as the Supreme Teacher, the Way-Shower for the mystic Christian said, "Not I, but the Father, He doeth the works."

Humility is never satisfied with its attainment, even though it knows its inheritance to be "the throne of glory." "The Pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the

world upon them." These pillars are the great united powers of the feminine-masculine polarities whose harmonious blending is manifest in the Earth and all the life evolving upon and within it. The Initiate comprehends the meaning and ultimate purpose of these great Principles, positive and negative, which underlie all creation. Hence, in all reverence, for the keynote of humility is reverence, the inspired Wise Woman sings, "He shall give strength to His king", (one who walks in the way of the Cross) "and exalt the horn of His anointed," (the power of one who has attained, or been anointed with the Christos, conscious Eternal Life and Wisdom).

Walt Whitman sings, "Where I pass all my children know me." And so in the Bible every Initiate has left guide posts along the Way for those who will follow their footsteps on the Highway of the King.

— ***Corinne Heline***