

him. "Now listen," she continued, as he started back in surprise. "When I awoke this morning I sprang up because the dream was all so very real. I stood. Then I walked. The dream had cured me! I let them wheel me down as usual because I wished to surprise you, and tell you about it myself. I wanted you to be the first to know."

She walked a few steps to prove the truth of her assertion. Then she turned

and came back. She appeared so buoyant and youthful with her new-found joy. He was too amazed to speak; but when she came up to him, he put his arms around her.

"Our dream has come true," she declared tremulously, as he kissed her.

"It was no dream, dearest," he returned. "We really dropped into the sea of—love."

(The End.)

Esoteric Bible Studies

BY CORINNE S. DUNKLEE

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST JESUS

XI.—*The Crucifixion.*

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—Luke 23:34.

The two paths of development, the mystic and the occult, converge at Gethsemane where the candidate for Initiation is saturated with sorrow which flows into compassion—that all-encompassing love which weeps above Jerusalem, which breathes in gentle tones of infinite understanding beneath the heavy burden of the cross: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." And again from the three hours of agony comes that immortal prayer, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

In the Crucifixion we stand before one of the holy mysteries which must ever remain sealed for the profane. The sacredness of its meaning can only be briefly touched upon. *Its true, inner purpose can only be revealed to those who seek and find the light within themselves, the flame of the great Christ love which passeth all understanding.*

When Barabbas was released, Christ Jesus was scourged and heaped with indignity and abuse. His garments were torn off, and a certain cloak was put

upon Him. A crown of thorns was woven, placed upon His head and crushed down into His temples. This phase of the stigmata is produced visibly in the mystic through intense concentration upon the Passion of our Lord. In the occultist the same is produced *invisibly* through the effect of certain exercises given to those who have made themselves worthy by living the life. The spiritual currents generated in the vital body of such a person are so powerful that the body is literally *scourged* by them, particularly in the region of the head where the pain of the Crown of Thorns is produced. Also in the palms of the hands, the arches of the feet, and the side.

Initiation in pre-Christian days contained a ritual drama consisting of the Crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. It is only as we become students of esoteric Christianity that we find the golden thread of unity which binds the hearts of the religions of the world together and lays them all, in ever-ascending steps, at the feet of the Christ. Every world Teacher has been a high Initiate and every religion holds some phase of Initiation as its supreme goal. They each lead to the throne of the Sun Spirit, the Christ, whose mission it was to bring the great spiritual power of the Greater Mysteries to the world and to rend the veil so that whosoever wills may come

and partake of these same waters of life freely. In the Aquarian Age the truths of Initiation (which only mean a greater spiritual attainment than the masses of humanity are aware of) will be commonly accepted and taught, for that development which occultists term Initiation will be the goal of the religion of the Aquarian Age.

Josephus says that punishment by crucifixion was introduced into Palestine during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, 104-74 B. C., and that many Pharisees perished in this way.

This was the common form of punishment during the early Christian era. Many of the followers of Christ Jesus and many of His disciples were martyred in this manner. Tradition says that all of the disciples with the exception of John followed their Master to the cross.

In those primitive times every particular connected with a crucifixion was designed to prolong and to increase the agony. The upright stake of the cross was placed on the ground, and the cruciarius, as he was called, was stripped of his clothing, laid on his back on the stake and the transverse beam thrust under his shoulders. The arms and feet were stretched out and tied by ropes or nailed to the cross, which was then set up. Thus the victim was left to linger through death, which might come through loss of blood or exposure, fever or hunger. The slowly dying cruciarius was exposed to the heat of day and the chill of night. The rabble who gathered around were free to abuse the victim in any way they desired. Besides the throwing of missiles or beatings, he was also often attacked by wild beasts during the night hours. We learn that the disciple, Andrew, was protected from an attack of this kind by a shaft of light from heaven which frightened the beasts away by its very intensity and brightness.

It was customary to place a board at the head of the cross bearing a statement of the victim's crime. That all might understand the inscription placed upon the cross of Christ Jesus, it was written in three languages: Greek, the language

of culture; Latin, the language of power; and Hebrew, the language of religion. Of these, "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum" is the Latin, or "I. N. R. I." Esoterically deciphered in Hebrew, "Iam" (I) symbolizes water; "Nour" (N), fire; "Ruach" (R), air or spirit; "Iabeshah" (I), earth. Alchemically they symbolize Salt (Iam and Iabeshah); Sulphur (Nour); Mercurry (Ruach), Ruach also symbolizing the sublimated essence of spiritual power, Azoth. Herein lies the secret of the meaning of the Crucifixion which shows us why we each one must *individually* follow Christ upon the path which leads *unto this place*, (Golgotha, the place of the skull).

Every step of this process is fraught with mystic meaning. The *two thieves* who are crucified with Him, the *seamless tunic* for which lots were cast, the *piercing with the lance*, and the issuing forth of *blood and water* from His holy side, the *seven last words*, and the *burial* in the *new tomb* cut in the *solid rock*, in the *garden facing Golgotha*.

All of these things are worthy of our deepest meditation for they will yield to us rare gems of light upon the subject of Initiation to be found in no other way.

Just for Today

(Prayer of Canon Wilberforce)

Lord, for tomorrow and its needs

I do not pray.

Keep me from stain of sin

Just for today.

Let me both diligently work

And duly pray.

Let me be slow to do my will,

Prompt to obey.

Help me to sacrifice myself

Just for today.

Let me no wrong nor idle word

Unthinking say.

Set Thou Thy seal upon my lips

Just for today.

So for the morrow and its needs

I do not pray,

But keep me, hold me, Lord,

Just for today.