

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

## **Elijah, The Hierophant**

There are three Old Testament characters who are said to have cheated death by drinking of the waters of Eternal Life; these are Enoch, Moses and Elijah. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, the name Elijah is translated Elias, and it is in this form that it is best known to Christian esotericism.

The Bible narrative relative to the kings of Israel is interrupted to introduce the history of Elijah, whose epoch-making career coincides with that of the evil Ahab (I Kings, 7th chapter).

Greater far, however, than the patriotic significance of Elijah's work is the esoteric meaning of labor he performed for the world in this specific incarnation. The division of the Kingdom is an outward expression of the failure of the Mysteries, those Mysteries that were to bridge the centuries between Solomon and the Christ. It was to restore this bridge that Elijah came to Israel. It is said of him, therefore, that "he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down."

Like Melchizedek, Elijah was a man of mystery. There is no mention in the biblical text of his having home, friends

or ancestry. He was Uranian in the abruptness and secrecy of his movement from place to place. Suddenly he appeared out of the unknown and as suddenly returned into it. There is no dividing line between his desert and his glory. In the Bible he appears first upon a hilltop, hurling denunciations against Ahab and his queen, Jezebel.

In the form in which Bible narratives now exist after having been edited many times, there is little to show the strong friendship that existed between Phoenicia and Palestine for so many centuries prior to the Exile and also for some time after.

The Bible account of Ahab and Jezebel shows only that the rites of Baal introduced by the Tyrian princess were already as degraded as were the Bacchanalian revels of decadent Greece, wherein the Christ, like Dionysus, was wholly lost in a drunken Bacchus. No esotericist attempts to justify practices of a prostituted religion, whether it be Baalism or some other; but Masters of the Phoenician Mysteries, which are almost identical with those of Melchizedek and Abraham, were no more responsible for the degenerate practices of the populace than were the Master Jesus and His Apostles responsible for the tortures of the Inquisition conducted in their names.

Casually reading the Bible story of Elijah gives no clue to the role he plays in subsequent Hebrew tradition, yet every

Hebrew since his day has looked for his return as the herald and Way-shower of the Messiah. Having ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire, he became the guide of souls; and in his innermost spiritual being he is identified with the Angel Sandalphon, Guardian and Prince of Paradise — hence, the Rosicrucian maxim that the Initiate will meet Elias in the Garden of Roses (Initiation Chamber).

But Elijah is not only the helper of souls. He continues his ministrations upon earth as the chief of Invisible Helpers. Again and again he appears, now in one guise, now in another, but always to help and to heal. The stranger who knocks at the door asking bread may be Elijah come to test a candidate for Initiation, or come to heal and to teach. Reminiscent of this tradition are the words of the Master Jesus in the New Testament: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ... I was a stranger, and ye took me in ... I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Elijah appears most often in the guise of an Arab of the desert, for it was out of the desert places that he came to Israel. He is not necessarily aged and venerable; he may be beautiful and young, with the beauty and youth of Paradise. Like Master Morya of the Mahatma Letters, he is sometimes stern and he brooks no least deviation, even in thought, from the path of rectitude. The man who offends against humanity or God (Truth) in any way discovers that the Elijah is no more

with him and his voice is no more heard in the meditation chamber.

To an esotericist this means that Elijah was the founder of a Mystery School to be the bridge between Solomon and Christ, and that he has continued his ministrations from that day to this on inner planes. Christian esotericists believe that John the Baptist was in very truth that prophet, as the Master Jesus declared: "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." But Jews do not accept this teaching. It is to be observed here that Elijah is not an empty mouthpiece of the gods; he is the Initiate-Master of a Mystery School and is in conscious, waking contact with the Spirit behind Nature. He belongs, therefore, to esoteric Masonry. He is journeying eastward when he encounters the "widow woman," who carries two sticks (or stones) in her hands. The Masonic path is the path of attainment through works, the Karma Yoga of the Orient. Elijah meets the widow and her son at Zarephath, which means smelting place. The first miracle Elijah performs is raising the widow's son.

The first prophecy made by Elijah — at the court of Ahab predicts a drought: "There shall not be dew nor rain these years." The wholesale squandering of the precious life force of the body by humanity at large is reflected in parching droughts afflicting the body of Nature.

In the New Testament, the Master Jesus proves His identity as the Messiah by paralleling each one of Elijah's great deeds by deeds of a like nature.

The "ravens" that fed Elijah as he journeyed eastward signify esoterically a Degree of Initiation to which he had attained: The Degree of the Raven, as it was known in later Mithraic Mysteries. The raven is black, designating that which is secret, hidden, mysterious, though not necessarily evil. By passing the Raven Degree Elijah allied himself with superphysical Beings and learned to control superphysical laws of Nature. Later, this was evidenced in the miracles he performed.

The Raven Initiate is a messenger between inner and outer Mystery places. For those who will hear, he bears tidings of the close interrelationship between the world of soul and the world of body, and he prepares worthy ones for instruction relative to these things.

Elijah's sitting under a juniper tree and being fed by an Angel has the same significance as the story of Buddha's sitting beneath a banyan tree. Both Initiates acquired at this point in their development the divine food of immortal Wisdom.

Nourished by fresh Wisdom springing eternal from the fountain-of God, Elijah was empowered to meet and

overcome the false prophets of Baal. The contest between the inspired prophet of Israel and the priests of Baal to bring down fire from heaven was a contest between the powers of white and black magic. Only he who has achieved control of the living Fire within himself can control manifestations of fire in Nature. Elijah was the pure and undefiled. His keyword is found in his statement to Ahab at their first meeting: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand." In modern metaphysical parlance, Elijah was one who "practiced the Presence of God." In the trial between constructive and destructive occult powers, it was a logical outworking of Divine Law that the profligate, luxury-loving priests of a decadent faith should fail and that Elijah, messenger of a new and holy faith, should be victorious.

The eighteenth chapter of I Kings describes the controversy between Elijah and the priests of Baal, who were likewise the priests of Ahab and Jezebel. It depicts an aspirant's effort to discriminate between truth and falsehood; and it contrasts the worship of form and ceremonial on the one hand against the light and life of awakened God-power on the other.

Fire is the symbol of God. In fact, it is more than a symbol. In all human experience warmth accompanies life, while coldness is the handmaiden of death. At a certain

stage in both mystical and occult development, the Fire of God pours down in a stream upon the head of the aspirant so that his whole body seems to be entombed in a fiery furnace (the "smelting place"). Such is the activity of fire, whether divine or carnal. But the Divine Fire nourishes the body to immortality; the carnal fire destroys it. An Initiate who endures Baptism by Fire has to some extent purified the atoms of his body. If the process is not halted, his body may become as indestructible as a diamond and as brilliantly beautiful. St. Teresa of Avila was a Mystic of the Catholic Church who achieved the Baptism of Fire in its lower Degrees. As a result her body became almost imperishable. The much-maligned Rasputin exemplified a like condition. It is well known that his assassin found it most difficult to murder him. His body was poisoned, shot, drowned; yet even at the last it retained a suggestion of life. When the Fire Initiation has been carried to its conclusion, death of the redeemed "Diamond Body" is literally impossible.

Such was Elijah's achievement. He could bring down fire from heaven. He could raise the dead. Then, as the Supreme Master of the Hebrew Mysteries, he continued to serve his fellowmen on earth until, at last, he himself ascended to heaven in a fiery chariot — the "diamond body" of the Adept.

*I Kings 18:22,24,30*

*Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.*

*And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.*

*And Elijah said unto the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.*

Observe that his first work was to repair the altar that was broken down. So also does a candidate for Initiation first of all repair the "altars" (centers of force) within himself that emanations of Divine Fire may enter his aura. This work is accomplished by a physiological transformation that renders his body a fit instrument of Holy Spirit.

*I Kings 18:31-33,38,40*

*And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:*

*And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.*

*And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in*



*pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.*

*Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones; and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*

*And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.*

The death of the priests symbolizes the elimination of false concepts of God. Their death occurring beside the brook Kishon means a passing of the spiritual Truth. The slain priests numbered 450; 4 plus 5 equals 9, the number of humanity, thereby indicating that all men must eventually eliminate such false concepts.

The Bible is the final word in Occultism and the essential textbook of every Mystic. All occult laws pertaining to the life and work of an Initiate are mentioned within its covers.

When an Initiate has gained mastery over Nature forces, he can control the elements: calm storms, walk on the water, direct winds and command rains to fall or to cease falling.

*I Kings 18:41-46*

*And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.*

*And so Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.*

*And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.*

*And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.*

*And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.*

### **Elijah's Initiation on Mt. Horeb**

Many who feel a call to the higher life come to the altogether erroneous conclusion that Initiation demands complete cessation of participation in the affairs of the world. Nothing could be farther from the truth, as the life of the great Hierophant Elijah demonstrates. In the very midst

of his mission to Ahab and Jezebel, whose destruction he had prophesied and whose enmity he incurred, the paramount event of his life came upon him. Fleeing into the wilderness, he longed for release in death:

*I Kings 19:4-8*

*But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.*

*And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.*

*And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.*

*And the angel of the Lord came again the second Nine, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.*

*And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.*

Every true disciple arises from a cave or grave into a new life of greater power and works. Moses also spent his time

of preparation, forty days and nights, upon the same holy mountain.

The Angel of Initiation touched Elijah for the second time and he passed beyond the portals of time into the work of a higher Degree, that additional spiritual faculties might be awakened lest "the journey" be "too great." This is shown by the Angel's words "A-rise and eat" — that is, arise into a higher state of spiritual functioning and let its. forces nourish, develop and sustain soul powers hitherto latent.

This final work has to do with the complete lifting of the kundalini fire. When one is ready for this Degree he will always find "a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." He, like Elijah, will go out in "the strength of that meat" unto "the mount of God."

*I Kings 19:11-13*

*And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord.*

*And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:*

*And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*

*And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his*

*face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave.*

*And behold, there came a voice unto him, and said. What doest thou here, Elijah?*

These verses conceal and reveal the workings of the Seer with the four cosmic powers of Air, Earth, Fire and Water, and their correspondences in the human organism. It is axiomatic in the Great Work that cosmic powers are first conquered within the personality before they become amenable to control in the outer world.

Elijah's path was narrow, rocky and precipitous, for the spiritual life is ever thus. His way led through Jerusalem and Bethlehem and Hebron, all reservoirs of great spiritual power. At last he was led to the mount of the cosmic knowing where Moses had stood face to face with the eternal record of God's immutable Law. The mountain's summit was the altar of the Lord of heaven, just as Greek altars to Zeus were placed on mountaintops. There it was that Elijah saw the Lord in His most awe-inspiring manifestations of power, and there the prophet completed the final Degree of Hebrew Initiation. He passed into the "Great Silence" where no sound from the outer world ever penetrates and where communion with Divinity may be established at will. From this time there was a marked transformation in him. No longer did he utter alternate

words of hope and despair. No longer did he pray "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life" as he had when threatened by the wicked Jezebel. He had found a great inner calm, a new and deeper wisdom, a wise and loving compassion. He now possessed the peace which passeth all understanding — for fear can never again touch one who has passed through this experience.

*I Kings 19:15-17*

*And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria:*

*And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.*

*And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.*

Damascus is a mystic place where light is always received; hence, a place of Initiation. The region round and about that ancient and beautiful city is another of the magnetically charged Temple areas of the globe. Elijah came hither to further his own illumination, as did Paul who travelled the same road long afterward. The "road to Damascus" must be traversed by every candidate to the Mysteries of Christ.

Elijah, now a Hierophant, possessed power to awaken prophetic faculties in his disciples — an ability always attained by Initiates to the highest Degrees. Henceforward, by day and by night, without interruption even by death, Elijah goes about his Father's business.

In its esoteric interpretation, slaying always refers to the transmutation of evil, or to the overcoming of the lower nature by the higher. The Hazael referred to in the text was a dynamic soldier, at first eager and earnest in his efforts to uproot the decadent worship of Baal in Israel. This was likewise true of Jehu, who was to become Israel's next ruler.

Thus slowly but inevitably, the Law of God (All Good) was being brought into objective fulfillment.

— ***Corinne Heline***