

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

Nimrod — The Path of Pursuit

Having examined the Bible story of the Tower of Babel, it is interesting to read the following version of the same event as recorded in the Haggada, a rabbinical exposition of the Scriptures.

Cush, the son of Ham and grandson of Noah, married in his old age and begat a son whom he called Nimrod, because in those days the people were beginning to rebel against the Lord's command, and "Nimrod" means "rebellion."

After his victory over the sons of Japheth, the sons of Japheth became his subjects. Nimrod builded a walled city and called it Shina, and dwelt there, gradually becoming ruler over the entire world. All the people of the earth were then of one language and one speech.

In Genesis we read that Nimrod "began to be a mighty one in the earth ... a mighty hunter before the Lord." Nimrod was on the "path of pursuit." He represents humanity in its quest for worldly possessions and power, temporarily subjugating its higher nature (Japheth) and compelling it to serve personal ambition. The interests of self were separated from the good of the whole, for the city

(consciousness) which he built was walled in. Gradually he ruled the world. The Iron Age had come. Possessions were the measure of power and might was right.

The rebellion against the Lord's command here spoken of consists in a separation in consciousness from the Will of God. There are several aspects to this separation. The spirit's descent into matter drew a veil over its universal consciousness and it became less sensitive to divine guidance. Its newly acquired powers of mind set themselves up in opposition to the inner promptings of the God within. The desires of the lower nature were at war with those of the higher. The Lucifer spirits aided and abetted the fiery desires in their rebellion against reasoned control by the mind and guidance by the inner monitor. Man was launching out on a self-directed career, for better or for worse.

Commenting on the exploit of the people of Nimrod, Jacob Boehme, the German mystic, writes: "As is to be known by the children of Nimrod at the Tower of Babel, when they had fallen from obedience to God into their own individual reason, then they had lost their guide and did confound reason so that they comprehended not truth any more. Their own reason, which was mixed of all colors, had to rule them."

The *Haggada* account continues:

About this time the officers of Nimrod took counsel together and said to one another: Let us build a city, and in its midst a tall tower for a stronghold, a tower the top of which shall reach to the heavens. Then we shall truly make for ourselves a great and mighty name: and the king approved their design.

While they were building, rebellion budded in their hearts, rebellion against God, and they imagined that they could scale the heavens and war with him.

They divided into three parties, and the first party said: We will ascend into heaven and place there our gods and worship them.

The second party said: We will pour into the heavens and match our strength with His. And the third party said: Yes, we will smite him with arrow and spear.

The gods they would set up and worship were the newly awakened powers of mind. Proud and egotistic, they exhibited the qualities of Lucifer, to whose influence they were strongly susceptible, and proposed to oppose their strength against the Lord of Hosts. With arrow and spear they meant to wage war in Heaven, a battle which, in one of its aspects, is a conflict between the lower and the higher nature, between the forces of materiality with those of spirit.

God watched their enterprise, and knew their thoughts, yet they builded on.

Freewill is man's divine prerogative. According to his choice will be his recompense, by the working of the infallible law of compensation. Whether it be good or ill, "whatsoever a man sows, that also shall he reap."

If one of the stones which they raised to its height fell, they were sad at heart, and even wept; yet when any of their brethren fell from the building and were killed, none took account of the lives thus lost.

Thus they continued for a space of years until God said: "We will confuse their language" and they spoke to one another in a strange tongue.

Those who said "we will smite him with arrows" killed one another through misunderstandings, and those who had said, "Let us try our strength with his," were scattered over the face of the earth.

They wept over the loss of a stone but were indifferent to the loss of a life. In a material civilization property values supersede human values. In this lies the seed of its own destruction. Where there is little or no regard for another, there is neither sympathy nor understanding. There is a confusion of strange tongues, a warring of conflicting interests, a dispersion over the face of the Earth. Love is the cohesive force through which comes strength and unity.

Where this is absent disruptive forces bring enterprises of whatsoever nature to naught.

The Haggada's exposition concludes:

The tower was exceedingly tall. The third part of it sank down into the ground, a second third was burned down, but the remaining third was standing until the time of the destruction of Babylon. Thus were the people dispersed over the globe and divided into nations.

The end of three Epochs and the passing of three successive civilizations are here mentioned. The Lemurian continent "burned down;" the Atlantean "sank down," and the present Aryana will stand till "Babylon is fallen" — the material civilization of the present Epoch. Then follows another Epoch, when the Sixth Root Race will rise above the separative, contentious conditions of the present, recognizing once again the unity of each with all. Nations and races as we know them today will pass. Universal consciousness will be regained and cooperative brotherhood will become an actuality on Earth.

— *Corinne Heline*