

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

### **Mary's Initiatory Preparation for the Annunciation**

The life of Mary is the perfect type-pattern for all women in the world whether their station be high or low. Mary was the perfect householder as she was also the supreme Initiate among women. Never idle, she was scrupulous in all her menial duties and when these were finished she prepared wool and linen garments for the poor. During these hours of strenuous outer activity her mind was constantly centered upon God and His glory, and the prayer which was ever carried in her heart was for the coming of the Messiah and that she might be the handmaid of the Divine One's mother.

After the Marriage Rites were concluded, the holy couple were directed by their angelic Guardians to go to Mary's former home near Nazareth where they were to abide. Although both had aspired to remain Temple-Initiates, all the purity and sanctity of Temple life was incorporated in the sanctuary-home which they established in Nazareth.

The Annunciation was the climax of the passing of the Blessed Virgin through the nine lesser mysteries in order that she might meet the Lord of the Sun, the Christ, in the heart of the earth, which is the work of the first of the four Greater Mysteries and has been described as the high

exaltation of Mary in the Eastertide or Resurrection Season. These nine Initiations of Mary in preparation for the Annunciation are called "Novenas" by the Church as they are supposed to have occurred during a period of nine days, which is, however, purely symbolical.

The ability to comprehend the great phenomena of nature, both the visible and the invisible forces at work throughout the earth, requires the illumination gained by means of the nine Lesser Mysteries. There are nine strata of the earth; one of these is investigated in each of the nine Initiations. This work is traced briefly in the Genesis record of the Seven Creative Days.

It was Mary's privilege through a series of mystical experiences at this time to review this vast work. As the cosmic Days were recapitulated before her, she obtained power over the element predominant in that particular earth "Day" and all the life forces connected therewith. On the "Seventh Day," as the triumphant messenger of Light, having witnessed the Fall of man and the Christed Plan for his redemption, she was caught up into the highest heaven to be "worthily robed." She was arrayed in luminous white and crowned with many sparkling jewels, which is symbolic of the radiance of her own beautiful soul body.

Upon the midnight hour of the "Eighth Day" Mary was subjected to the test given to Solomon, and like the wise

king she, too, chose the highest. "Since thou hast found grace in my eyes, ask what thou wilt and it shall not be denied thee even to the half of my kingdom." Mary replied: "For myself I ask nothing, but for the human race, all. Let the Messiah be born." Upon the "Ninth Day," again lifted up into the exaltation of the heavens, amidst the joyous songs of angels she was crowned with the mystic inscription "Mother of the Divine One." The glory of this divine experience had its climax in the appearance of the white Angel Gabriel with his message of the Annunciation. The Angel's coming was accompanied by a brilliant light like that of a star together with a fragrance past all earthly sweetness. The light and perfume became a part of Mary's consciousness, and again she saw in the Eternal Records the divine plan of human redemption through the sacrifice of the Christ, together with her divine role in this supreme cosmic drama. St. Bernard describes it most beautifully in a few words: "Jesus Christ, the flower of Jesse, wished to blossom from a flower, in a flower, during the season of flowers."

### **The Rite of the Annunciation**

*Luke 1:26,27*

*And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a City of Galilee, named Nazareth,  
To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.*

The mothers of many of the world teachers have borne names beginning with the letter M, which is the great feminine letter of the Hebrew alphabet; it symbolizes "water," and is representative of the feminine principle in man. It is by means of this principle that the Christ or Saviour is born within man. Jerome interprets Mary as "Myrrha" or "Maris" (bitterness).

The process of purification is always difficult. "If ye would be my disciples ye must take up your cross and follow me," said the one perfect Exponent of the Way. Mary, or Mare, is interpreted by the Spanish as "Star of the Sea."

Esoterically, the sea is the desire nature, and the star is the spirit which rises above the lower nature, even as Grecian mythology portrays Venus, the goddess of love, rising star-crowned from the sea, symbolical of the separation of love from passion, the great work of the neophyte in all Mystery Schools. Since a virgin is a symbol of purity and chastity her adoration is common to every world religion. Isis in Egypt and Ceres in Greece are familiar examples. Around the virgin who becomes a divine mother centers the important work of the spiritual Mysteries of each country. Isis says: "The fruit that I bear is the Sun." The pre-Christian Madonna is represented as bearing in her arms the Sun Child, born at the Winter Solstice, to bring new life to the earth and all mankind.

The early pictures and statues of the Virgin sometimes bear a flower or sheaf of wheat, symbolical of the highest spiritual attainment. Among the early Christians it was not the person of the holy Mary that was worshipped, great and glorious though she was, but the Feminine or Wisdom Attribute that she typified. It is that universal emanation of the Cosmic Christ, that word or formative power which became flesh and dwelt among men, which makes every human being potentially divine. Hence Mary was represented among the early esoteric Christian groups as being the complement, or the bride, of the Holy Spirit. This feminine principle is formative in its nature, consequently the Virgin becomes through an Immaculate Conception, the mother of a new and higher ideal called the Christ in the Christian world, and known by various names in other religions.

Christians of the Piscean Dispensation (the present age) have worshipped the personalities of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as the principle characters of the Christian era. The Christians of the Aquarian or New Age Dispensation, while reverencing them as the highest of earth's Initiates and perfect patterns for man's emulation, also recognize that they represent the awakened feminine principle in man, through which the new or spiritual Christ-man is born.

Mary, as previously stated, was the greatest Initiate ever to be born upon the earth in a feminine body. Like Jesus, she was born of an angelic annunciation and an immaculate conception, according to the exquisitely beautiful story given in the apocryphal Protevangelium, or Gospel of James the Less. Not now included in the orthodox canon itself, this apocryphal book of the New Testament contributes substantially to an understanding of the deeper truths concealed within the canonical Gospels. Indeed it was included by Jerome in his Latin Vulgate, and it was considered as part of the English Bible also until the time of Luther.

The name Anna, or Hanna, who was the mother of Mary, means "virgin of light." Great souls can be born upon the earth only through pure and holy parents. To be born of a virgin is not an occurrence limited to the Master Jesus but applies equally to all highly illumined souls who come to give their lives in service for the benefit of humanity. This is illustrated in the life of John the Baptist, and also that of Abraham and Samuel, who stand out as notable examples among the teachers of the Old Dispensation.

The Old Testament period was largely concerned with the replenishment of the earth after the Flood. Man concentrated on material endeavors. The free expression of the personal nature bound him more closely to the material

world. Polygamy flourished among the masses. The primary consideration was the rapid re-admission through rebirth of the largest possible number of egos upon the earth plane, and the immediate evolutionary purpose was number rather than quality.

The New Testament portrays a much higher attainment. With the preparation for the coming of the Christ to the earth a new ideal was given. To the most advanced of the Arian Age it had been taught that the act of generation might be performed without passion, as a holy sacrifice. Only by parents whose souls are wedded in a high and holy love is the act of generation consistent with that ideal and blessed by the attending Angels.

Every ego thus born is immaculately conceived. All parents who thus prepare themselves for this sacrament, through prayer and holy living, will know the inspiration of an angelic annunciation. And only in this way can the new race of supermen be born on earth. This has been the inner teaching of Christianity during the Piscean Age, as revealed under Pisces' zodiacal opposite, Virgo, the sign of the Immaculate Conception and of service through chastity. This ideal, which it was the mission of those sublime Initiates Mary, Joseph, Zachariah and Elizabeth to demonstrate in preparation for the coming of the Christ Spirit to the earth, will become generally understood and to

some degree manifest in the coming Aquarian Age, while the still higher teaching of the power of the manifestation of Cosmic Love will be disseminated under its zodiacal opposite, Leo, the ruler of the heart.

In the story of the Annunciation Luke has given expression to something of the beauty and grace that belonged to ancient Greece, and which, indeed, characterized the whole of his Gospel.

*Luke 1:28-32*

*And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.*

*And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.*

*And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; For thou hast found favor with God.*

*And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.*

*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.*

Mary was accustomed to the visitation of Angels and the wondrous light of heaven which they emanated. She did not, however, fully comprehend the import of the angelic



message, for Mary, in her humility, had never even considered that she was worthy to be chosen to become the mother of Jesus; her petition was only that she might be her handmaid. According to legend, Gabriel read her thought and said to her: "Fear not Mary; there is nothing inconsistent with your vows of chastity; you have found favor with the Lord because of your purity; you shall not conceive in the ordinary way. The power of the Holy Ghost shall come upon you and the Most High shall overshadow you without any heat or lust." This voices the lofty ideal of attainment that Mary and Joseph came to teach to all mankind. Understood at present by the few only, it is destined to become the universal teaching of the new race.

*Luke 1:38-39*

*And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

*And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah.*

Mary, the ideal woman, becomes the perfect pattern for every prospective mother. An important phase of the New Age teaching will deal with the prenatal effects upon an incoming ego. An ego often hovers about its future mother for months, sometimes even years, before the opportunity for re-embodiment occurs. The decided change that takes

place at such a time in a woman's taste and disposition may often be traced to the influence of the incoming ego that hovers near. The prospective mother may be greatly helped by harmonious surroundings and by the inspiration that comes from the beautiful in all the arts. And if these be absent there is always nature — the sunset and the stars, to which the heart can lift and in the glory light of which it can build. Such is the hill country of consciousness to which Mary journeyed.

The incoming ego remains within the aura of its chosen mother for about twenty-one days after conception has taken place, after which it enters the body and begins to assist actively in building its new vehicle. This it forms in complete harmony with the archetypal pattern in the higher realms. This archetype is fashioned in conformity with forces set into motion by the ego itself in previous lives upon earth. Negative forces of evil, disease and destruction create inharmonious patterns that externalize as homely features and weak or distorted bodies. Constructive forces such as peace, sympathy, helpfulness and love build harmonious lines that favor health, strength, grace of form and feature, and congenial environment. No man lives unto himself and no man dies unto himself alone. Every action possesses a far-flung significance.

The mystic sage, Ralph Waldo Emerson, says: "When a child comes forth from its mother's womb, the gate of gifts closes behind it." To a woman who learns to surround herself and fill her consciousness with only the good, the beautiful and the true, an unworthy ego cannot come; the strength of her love and aspiration will draw to her, unerringly, one who is worthy of her ideals.

Elizabeth through her communion with Mary, received a profound illumination in preparation for her holy mission to become the mother of that one of whom the Master said: "Of all that is born of woman, there is none greater than he." In these few words was described the spiritual status of John the Baptist.

*Luke 1:46,47*

*And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
And my spirit hath rejoined in God my Saviour.*

In the Magnificat, the holy Mary voices something of what she, too, had read in the Memory of Nature about the life of Jesus and his mission in preparing for the coming of the Christ. She, too, was then taking another step forward in spiritual attainment. The esoteric meaning of the Immaculate Conception has to do with this new and higher illumination, symbolized in Revelation by the woman clothed with the Sun and with the Moon (generation) under her feet.

The process of the Annunciation is enacted within the body of every neophyte. He becomes conscious, after a certain period of preparation, that particular changes are taking place within himself, due to an accumulation of the higher life essences (ethers) and the acceleration of the vibratory rate of his entire being. The Immaculate Conception consists in the complete dedication of the sacred life forces on the altar of the Holy of Holies. This rite is always accompanied by celestial music and the triumphal chanting of angelic choruses. Such an illuminated one may sing with Mary:

*Luke 1: 48, 49*

*For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden;  
for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me  
blessed.*

*For he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and  
holy is his name.*

— **Corinne Heline**