

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

The Song of the Threshold

The Door, or Gate, is the symbol of the entrance into spiritual realms. This symbol is as ancient as the human race, and is known wherever human beings have given thought to the problems of life and death.

Psalm 24 is pre-eminently the Song of the Threshold. This Psalm was chanted by the Israelites when the Ark (symbol of the Initiate) was moved from place to place. In the Temple Processional, before the entrance of the outer court, the bearers of the Ark called out their summons for admission of the glorious and triumphant one, the newly-Initiated one. Upon entrance into the Sanctuary the summons were repeated before the inner shrine.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of Glory will come in.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of Glory will come in.

The Door, or Gate, of the heavenly Jerusalem opens before the repeated command of the Initiate. The King of

Glory refers not only to Jehovah, but to every man when transformed through Initiation.

There is a golden legend connected with the 24th Psalm which asserts that to the rhythms of this Psalm as intoned by the holy Temple choristers on the Feast of the Spring Equinox, the doors of the sacred Sanctuary would swing wide so that all those who had prepared themselves might enter in to be evermore protected from infernal spirits. In the words of a modern singer:

Bright portals of the sky,
Embossed with sparkling stars;
Doors of Eternity,
With diamantine bars
Your arras rich uphold.
Loose all your bolts and springs,
Open wide your leaves of gold,
That in your hearts may live
The King of Kings.

Who is the Initiate? It is he who has lived the life, and has thereby earned the right to the holy (esoteric) doctrine:

Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;

Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.

The Song of the Fifteen Degrees, comprising the Psalms from 120 to 134, was the pilgrim's song, and takes its name from the fifteen steps between the Outer Court and the Women's Court of the Temple (symbolic of the Path of Initiation) upon which the pilgrims stood to chant these songs. The songs are descriptive of the journey, or pilgrimage, from Babylon (darkness) up to Jerusalem (the place of light). The meter changes markedly in these poems, so that the "song of going up" (acceleration of vital currents) is actually realized in the songs themselves.

To the Christian, these Degrees refer to the Stations of the Cross by which one ascends the Mountain of Golgotha, and the release therefrom into spiritual space. Such ascending degrees are outward symbols of an interior development whereby the human body becomes an illumined Temple for the manifestation of God.

When ye lie among the sheepfolds,
It is as the wings of a dove covered with silver,
And her pinions with yellow gold.

This comes as near to an accurate description of the difference between the carnal and the spiritual, the ordinary

man and the Initiate, as language, inadequate for the purpose, makes possible.

Having passed behind the veil, the aspirant comprehends the glory of the unutterable, the J.H.V.H., and rejoices before Him; as in the 68th Psalm:

Sing unto God, sing praises to his name;
Cast up a highway for him that rideth through the
deserts;
His name is Jehovah; and exult ye before Him.

This Glory is the Power which declares, "I will beat down his adversaries before him, and smite them that hate him," referring to the trials of the candidate for Initiation when he faces the problem of esoteric evil.

Having overcome the grosser evils on the Path, the neophyte learns on the spiritual planes the true Unity of Life. There can be for him no more separateness, no divisions henceforward. "If we walk in the Light as He is in the Light we have Fellowship one with another." Therefore the Psalmist chants in the 133rd Psalm:

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
Like the dew of Hermon,
That cometh down upon the mountains of Zion;

For there Jehovah commanded the blessing,
Even life for evermore.

Dew, as previously noted, comes from the same root as the word rose, and symbolizes the holy life essence, the conservation of which gives the blessing of life evermore.

The danger of temptation does not end with the opening of the Temple doors. On the contrary, then it is that temptations become more subtle than ever before. Then comes the test of using newly acquired powers for personal gain or self-aggrandizement. Therefore the 62nd Psalm may well apply to this place on the Path:

If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from Him.

The only purpose of working for greater spiritual light than is the portion of most of mankind is that the recipient may serve his fellowmen more efficiently. Many of the Psalms indicate this:

Psalm 20:

Now know I that Jehovah saveth his anointed;

He will answer him from his holy heaven

With the saving strength of his right hand.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses,

But we will make mention of the name of Jehovah our God.

Psalm 31

O love Jehovah, all ye his saints;
Jehovah, preserveth the faithful,
And plentifully rewardeth him that dealeth proudly.
Be strong, and let your heart take courage,
All ye that hope in Jehovah.

Psalm 40

Then said I, Lo, I am come;
In the roll of the book it is written of me;
I delight to do thy will, O my God,
Yea, thy law is within my heart.
And He hath put a new song in my mouth.

No longer is there need of external law; the holy precepts of life are inscribed upon the heart. In Psalm 65 David sings, "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth even to enter into the holy Temple" — the Temple of the chosen ones, the Initiates; and in Psalm 77, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary"; and again in Psalm 93, "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever."

Psalm 97 reflects the transcendent ecstasy that overflowed Paul when he quoted the saying, "In Him we live

and move and have our being." The illumined lives only in the consciousness of the Whole:

Jehovah reigneth; let the Earth rejoice;
Let the multitude of isles be glad.
The mountains melted like wax at the presence of
Jehovah,
At the presence of the Lord of the whole Earth.
Light is sown for the righteous,
And gladness for the upright in heart.

— ***Corinne Heline***