

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

Solomon and The Temple Builders

In his fascinating book, *Legends of King Solomon*, St. John D. Seymour relates a story of the birth of Solomon which has all the marks of a true spiritual vision: When the time of Solomon's birth drew near a multitude of Angels flew with festal banners and planted them on the right of David and on the left of the Queen until she had brought forth. The holy child came into the world with an appearance of dazzling purity; his countenance was suffused with light. The Angel Gabriel appeared in the king's chamber and said to him, "O David, peace and happiness be with thee because of this child by whom God hath comforted thee." Immediately David hastened from his dwelling to join his wife, and as he went he saw angelic banners flying and the Angels in ranks. They said to him: "Since God created us we have come down from heaven only at the birth of Abraham and of thy son Solomon." Then David fell on his face and gave thanks to God for the favor he had shown him, and he brought offerings. In the morning the whole world laughed for joy, and the wild beasts drew near and did obeisance to David in honor of the birth of his son, Solomon the Wise.

Legend further teaches that the Angels protected and guarded the young child Solomon when evil forces sought to slay him, even as they protected the Child Jesus. Again like Jesus (who according to esoteric teaching was Solomon himself in a later reincarnation), the boy Solomon increased in beauty of stature and wisdom, and at an early age was placed by his father David in the care of wise men to be instructed in the interior Mysteries of the Law of Moses. One day, it is said, Solomon being then thirteen years of age, the court was assembled in the great Hall of Cedars when an Angel appeared and placed a golden leaf in David's hands. This leaf bore certain mystic characters inscribed upon its gleaming surface. David read it and said: "Whosoever answers these questions will become king after me in Israel;" and thus speaking, he read, "What is everything? What is nothing?" In the silence that followed the young Solomon alone made reply, "The world is nothing and God is everything." Again David read from the golden scroll, engraven with mystic, magic letters, "What is of most account and what is of least?" And once more in the silence which followed these questions it was the boy Solomon alone who replied. "It is fear that is of least account, and it is peace that is of most."

Solomon's First Testing

When Solomon attained the age of twenty years the testing time came which was to demonstrate his fitness for

the serious work ahead. We have already observed how egos chosen for great missions are prepared even prior to birth, and how the divine wisdom hovers over them from their first breath, and wise men are sent to protect and teach them. Solomon's early life was attended on the outer plane by the holy Nathan and on the inner planes by the Wise Ones who always watch over the destinies of the Elect.

A true leader must be prepared to direct the spiritual as well as the physical destiny of his people. It is therefore necessary for him to possess a waking night consciousness — a mind sufficiently vitalized to bring through into the day the memory of the spiritual instruction received at night. We bear this in mind as we read the account of Solomon's testing, which follows:

II Chronicles 1:7-12

In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.

Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out

and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?

And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

In this experience, Solomon passed two preparatory tests. He proved his ability to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential, and gave proof of maturity of soul in turning from all the power, pomp, pleasure and display which the outer world offers, choosing rather to follow the path of true discipleship with its discipline and sacrifice. It is only the young soul that is swept away by the glamor and tinsel of transitory things. One who has gained wisdom knows their worthlessness and so they no longer interest him. Thus Solomon finds his own individual keynote, which is later expressed in the refrain:

Happy is the man who findeth Wisdom,
And the man that getteth understanding.

With exquisite humility he opens his mind and heart for further instruction from his angelic Teacher: "I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or come in." Although he could carry his consciousness in unbroken continuity from the night to the day-self, he had not yet learned to go in and out of the body at will. And this power he was eager to acquire in order to become a more understanding and righteous judge of his people.

Solomon's path to the throne of his father was by no means strewn with roses. Many obstacles stood in his way, for we read in the Book of Kings that David's throne was at first usurped by Adonijah, an elder brother. Zadok, the priest, and Nathan, the prophet, among others, refused to recognize Adonijah's right to the kingdom. They demanded that David be succeeded by none other than Solomon, a demand which was in accordance with a promise made to Bath-sheba by David himself. Adonijah was at length removed from the throne and Solomon declared king.

Adonijah represents the power of law, as Solomon represents the power of love. Between these two there is always a conflict so long as the ego continues to identify itself with the lower personality instead of with the divine spirit.

In the life of a nation this mortal conflict takes place between the state and the individual and usually for a time

Adonijah usurps the kingdom, brute power ousting love and peace. At length a gradual transfer from law to love comes through the wise admonitions of Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, the intuitive faculty, for always it is the Voice within which reveals the holiest love and the divine wisdom which is inseparable from it.

I Kings 1:33-35

The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your Lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon.

Then ye shall come up after him, that He may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

Zadok means "just", Nathan "gift" (of spirit), and Benaiah "a builder". By the "annointing" with these qualities of justice and Love-Wisdom, the disciple is worthy to be crowned in Gihon (bursting forth), and to make demonstration of the power attained. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

I Kings 1:51-53

Also it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah

feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold of the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me today that he will not stay his servant with the sword.

And Solomon said if he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

This incident reveals beautifully a character in which law has become transformed into love. The external mandate has yielded to a direction from the mind and heart.

Solomon, who was filled with the wisdom of the Sun, was the highest Initiate of the Old Testament Dispensation. It is true that if we interpret the Bible literally he began his reign in a most cruel and vengeful manner, and in striking contradiction to that love and wisdom which his name implies. Esoterically considered, however, the story yields a very different picture and one that is entirely in harmony with the life of a spiritually illumined man.

I Kings 2:4-11

That the Lord may continue his word, which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their

way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

Moreover, thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.

Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.

But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

Now therefore hold him not guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.

So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the

city of David. And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

David's parting words are neither so cruel nor so blood-thirsty as a superficial reading would indicate. They are merely a record of events in his own life as he reviewed them in retrospect at the time of his passing from earth life to life on the inner planes; a panoramic review of the experiences inscribed in the ethers which unreel before the eyes of the ego at the time of the transition called death. In David's panoramic review Jacob symbolizes the ego; Abner, (light) whom he slew, represents the violence committed against the higher nature; and Amasa (a burden), the son of Jether (preeminence), symbolizes the weight of mortality temporarily overcoming the power of the spirit. As the spirit liberates itself from the toils of the flesh it is able to see clearly and understandingly the spiritual significance of all Earth experiences. These transcribe themselves into the spirit's finer vehicles and become the basis for further soul growth during the spirit's sojourn in the inner worlds between earth lives.

Barzillai symbolizes grace of humility, one of the rarest attributes of character to be found anywhere, and one of the most important soul assets on both this and the subtler

psychospiritual planes. This fact is well illustrated in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, as previously observed, when the Angel of humility is represented as tapping Dante on the forehead, the seat of the spirit, indicating that he was being assisted by the quality of humility in his experiences while out of the body.

Shimei, the Benjamite, means "famous", and Mahanaim signifies "two camps" or paths, namely, the masculine and the feminine, the head and the heart. Between these there exists a curse or conflict when inharmoniously conjoined; a blessing when rightly united. When they meet at the river Jordan, the mystic stream, and are there awakened to function properly within the body, these two paths merge, great centers are united — an attainment which bestows upon its possessor the title of king of both Hebron and of Jerusalem, and a reign thereover for a period Of "thirty-three years," the life span of the Christ. This elevated position is symbolized by the double-headed eagle in mystic Masonry and contains the Sublime Secret of the Royal Prince, as referred to by Albert Pike in his great work, *Morals and Dogma*.

I Kings 2:12-25

*Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father;
and his kingdom was established greatly.*

And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba

the mother of Solomon, And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.

He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, say on.

And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces an me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about and is become my brothers: for it was his from the Lord.

And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay), that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife.

And Bath-sheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto the king. Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.

Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother; for I will not say thee nay.

And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine

elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathtar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruah.

Then king Solomon sware by the Lord, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life.

Now therefore, as the Lord liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day.

And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehotada; and he fell upon him that he died.

Physical means are depended upon to establish security until such a time as man awakens the love principle within himself which then is more potent than any exterior force. Abishag, the beautiful Shunammite maiden, represents the magnetic lure of the personality. It is of the senses, it is subtle and destructive, and to rise above it and express on a higher level constitutes a work of major importance. David arrived at the point where he passed beyond this lure as the following verses make clear. Such a one attains to liberation in Spirit.

I Kings 1:1-4

Now King David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be

sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat.

So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

And the damsel was very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not.

— **Corinne Heline**