

crucians. This word still holds a fascination for me, but where formerly I associated it with learned wonder workers long since dead, now I connect it with a band of living alchemists, striving through actual work and selfless service to humanity to extract from material ex-

perience the true, living gold. In my humble way I am endeavoring to put to practical use the knowledge gained that I may do my small part to hasten the coming of that future age when the Kingdom of Christ shall be established among men.

Esoteric Bible Studies

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST JESUS

VIII.—*The Last Supper.*

TEXT

7. Then came the day of unleavened bread. . . .

8. And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10. And He said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11. And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12. And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20. Likewise also the cup after supper,

saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

24. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them: and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.—*Luke 22:7-20, 24-27.*

INTERPRETATION

Christ sent Peter, who represents the *faith* which is a dynamic quality in the life of the mystical aspirant, and John, who represents the *power* of love, into "the city," or new state of consciousness. The man they were destined to meet with the pitcher of water is the androgynous man of the Aquarian Age. The guest chamber is the new body to be built through the great spiritual attainment which we term Initiation. The upper room, all furnished and prepared, means the organs in the head awakened through the transmutation of the life force. Only through these different steps mentioned in the Bible can we make ready for Him to enter and celebrate the Holy Supper *within our own bodies.*

These truths of course have their outer significance as well. The "upper room" is said to have been in the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, who wrote the

gospel of Mark. Here the risen Lord met His disciples, and later in this holy place they experienced the sacred mystery of Pentecost.

Verse 14: "When the hour was come," means about 6 P. M. "The early evening stars were visible, and the threefold blast of the silver trumpet from the temple mount announced to all waiting Jerusalem that the Pascha had again begun."

Verse 15: "With desire I have desired," is a Hebrew expression meaning, I have desired *earnestly*. Christ used this because He knew they could not partake of the Last Supper until they had made themselves *worthy*. This was no mere outward ceremonial of eating bread and drinking wine, but consisted of the deepest esoteric work in preparation for the deeper mysteries.

St. Dionysius, the first Bishop of Athens, said that the sacrament was divided into three parts: first, Purification; second, Initiation; third, Accomplishment or Perfection. He mentions also as a part of the ceremony *the bringing to sight*. These *esoteric* sacraments were open to the faithful only, and no spectators were allowed at these communions. The Sacrament of Communion is found in the ancient religions of the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the Greeks. Its ceremonial means always the teaching of the deeper truths of Initiation.

The "Acts of Thomas" relates that a young man had committed murder. He came to partake of the Eucharist, but as he did so both hands became paralyzed, and he could not raise them to his mouth. The observance of this sacrament possessed a much greater spiritual potency at the time mentioned in the Bible than at present due to the greater spiritual attainments of those who administered and those who partook of it. The celebrants of that early Christian period were Initiates, holy men and women, and those who were consciously preparing for this great spiritual attainment.

The early Christian Fathers mention the fact that demons (obsessions) were exorcised through the power of the Holy Supper.

Verse 17: Preparatory work with the fundamentals of brotherhood and fellowship.

Verses 18-19: Wine represents the masculine or head principle; bread the feminine or heart principle within man. Christ was teaching them to build the philosopher's stone within themselves. The body is the workshop of the spirit, and contains all the elements necessary to produce the *elixir vitae*. *The philosopher's stone is not exterior to the body, but the alchemist himself becomes that stone.*

The cup we must learn to build within ourselves. It must be constantly filled with the waters of eternal life. When the disciple is able to drink in *full understanding from this cup, which includes also the act of its replenishment*, his love of and desire for the personal life are finished. He has found the entrance to a new and larger life that is immortal and eternal.

Verses 24-27: The two words which encompass the entire life and work of the Master are *love and humility*. How prone are we to seek the high places as did those first disciples, leaving the lowly, humble work for some one else to do. The path of attainment is indicated plainly all through the Bible. The philosopher's stone, the celestial body which St. Paul describes in the 5th chapter of 2nd Corinthians, that body which is likened to a diamond or a ruby, is not built through courting the adulation of throngs or seeking the most prominent positions for ourselves. But let us rather remember the example of the Master, whose great spiritual attainment led Him to the heights of the Transfiguration, yet whose love for humanity caused Him to take upon Himself the form of a servant. Let us strive each day to become more loving and more humble so that we may be *true* followers of Him.