

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

Hidden Years in Nazareth

Many are the beautiful accounts given in the Apocrypha relative to incidents in the early life of Jesus, each bearing a deeper significance than is apparent on the surface, and pointing to the powers of the Initiate. We read, for instance, that those who came to Him who were blind, deaf, dumb, or leprous, or possessed of demons, needed but to touch His garment or His person in order to be healed; also that healings were similarly effected by a sprinkling of water in which the Child had been bathed. This water was said to be like a perfume. One incident tells of a boy who, when dying, was placed by his mother upon Jesus' clothes and their perfume awakened him. This boy afterward became Bartholomew, one of the Disciples.

Jesus had the consciousness of universal and eternal life. The forces of crystallization, disease, or death could not exist in His presence. When we are told that He formed images of birds in clay and breathed upon them, whereupon they took life and flew away, we understand that He extended His healing powers to birds and beasts as well as to human beings. Another legend states that as He was carrying a bucket of water for His mother, He dropped

it but at once gathered up the spilled water in His mantle — a mystic reference to His control of the elements.

Herod lived only a few weeks after the Massacre of the Innocents. He was succeeded as governor of Judea by his son, Archelaus, a man more wicked than his father, and without his sire's ability for rulership. On this account Joseph did not return to Bethlehem and the childhood of Jesus was passed in Nazareth.

Matthew 2:19-23

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.

Saying, arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee;

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Great souls, in being prepared for a world mission, need peace and quiet to bring their spiritual powers into full

fruition. Jesus' home in Nazareth provided such an environment. The white houses of the village were scattered among orchards of figs, olives, and pomegranates. Myriads of white doves circled about constantly and from the heights above one could see the soft shimmer of the Sea of Galilee. Knowing the companionship of pure, chaste, Initiate parents, and under the constant guidance and instruction of bands of Angels, the boy Jesus was ideally circumstanced to fit himself for becoming a suitable instrument for the Christ to whom he was later to surrender His body.

In this holy home in Nazareth, which was like a Temple of Peace, the early education of Jesus progressed. At the age of six He was sent to the day school in the auditorium of the town's synagogue. (This was necessary, in order that His body would not become too highly sensitized.) He studied the chief textbook of the Jews, the Old Testament, together with the rabbi's comments thereon. In addition to the Aramaic, the common form of Hebrew, He learned classic Hebrew and Greek. He procured important ancient manuscripts which He studied with deep spiritual insight, His vast fund of knowledge being a constant source of wonder to His teachers.

"He shall be called a Nazarene." There is still in existence a Codex Nazareus, written in 1042 A. D. According to Pliny

and Josephus, the Nazarenes were a branch of the Essenes, and existed on the banks of the Jordan, 150 B. C. Pythagoras is said to have been a pupil of an Assyrian Nazarene, who is supposed to have been the prophet Ezekiel. Nabao and Naba are Arabic words, meaning "to wander," and "to prophesy" respectively. The Essenes used only water in their rites; the Nazars used oil; Christ Jesus used both. The Nazarenes were a sect practicing severe asceticism and performing miraculous healings. Their Initiations were called "Mysteries of Life" and in the ceremonial the candidate was put to death figuratively, and through baptism resurrected into a new life. Jesus was the Rose of Sharon, or "Lily of the Valley which bloweth in the mouth of his mother, Maia." "Nazir" also means a flower, generally the lily. Jesus of Nazareth means literally, "Jesus, the Flower (or Lily)."

Nazareth was on the route of many passing caravans from the East. From the age of five Jesus would go out and converse with these travelers concerning the Mysteries of the East.

As already noted Jesus was quite a young child when his parents returned to Nazareth. Here He soon became the leader and favorite among His youthful companions. In play and games He ever sought to impress some high phase of truth. His manner was so gentle and modest, yet so firm

and authoritative that all listened to Him with respect. His favorite method of instruction was by parable generally drawn from nature on their walks into the country.

The resemblance of the boy Jesus to His beautiful mother was marked, as was their intimate companionship. Jesus used much of the time during these quiet years to prepare Mary for her work as head of the Church in the days that were to follow the Ascension. By means of vision and the great wisdom of her Son she was made ready to assume the highest place ever given to woman.

The young Jesus was already about His Father's business in visiting the poor, ministering to the unfortunate and healing the sick. Many were the hours the young Master spent in travail for the transgressions of men. At these times His transmutative power was such that a glory of heaven like unto the Transfiguration shone about Him.

— ***Corinne Heline***