

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

The Promise In Israel

The Books of Kings and Chronicles

The Focus of Light

Reviewing the preparatory work of divine messengers to the ancient world outside the boundaries of Palestine, an orderly plan is seen to emerge from the vast and varied concourse of events. Names vary from tongue to tongue, but fundamental concepts remain the same. So strongly marked are the historic trends that an esotericist has no difficulty in recognizing the master touch which produced them. A certain ego appears among his people again and again in new embodiments until he is released from the Wheel of Birth and Death; but regardless of the mask he wears, his essential individuality is ever recognizable by its characteristic soul-emanation.

These World Teachers were the forerunners of the Christ. Each Teacher was distinctly himself and no other, yet he bore the secret insignia of the Cosmic Christ. As the Dionysion Hierophant proclaimed:

Most clear He stood and scanned
My soul, and gave His emblems to my hand.

And to the question "What are they like, these emblems?" he replied:

"That may none reveal nor know, save His Elect alone."
(Bacchae by Euripides)

The mighty Initiate known to Persian history as Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) has impressed his soul-mark upon all the processes which ripen in human nature and in conditions of civilization — in art and science as well as in religion and mystic communion with Nature. "Through his activity the I AM gains recognition within man's soul.

During the Egyptian epoch, the Zarthustrian impulse worked through two great leaders, Hermes and Moses: through Hermes to comprehend cosmic Law relative to racial evolution. The latter came not to Hebrews cosmic Law relative to racial evolution. The latter came not to Hebrews only, but to all races under the tutelage of Jehovah God. Moses' mission was as a Teacher of the Law — the Law from which man is not emancipated until he has become one with it. When he has incorporated cosmic harmony into his own consciousness, he becomes a law unto himself. Thus liberated, he looks no more to the old clairvoyant utterings to the race which were revelations of the Race God, but knows himself as an ego, I AM, individually expressing in part the Infinite Individuality of the Supreme and dependent upon the Supreme only, owing allegiance to no

lesser power. At this point he has become a Christed Man, a Son of God.

Moses came as the Way-shower of the Christ. The glory light of the Sun Consciousness streamed from his countenance so brightly that he veiled his face lest it blind the eyes of his brethren.

Zoroaster was the spiritual light of Persian civilization. As in the case of Gautama Buddha, he is remembered by the incarnation wherein he achieved his final Enlightenment, all previous embodiments being considered as rays of that full glory. Daniel and Ezekiel were his collaborators, reflectors of the same Light that glorified him; so was Pythagoras. Finally, it was the Zarathustrian impulse which led the Wise Men of the East to the Christ Shrine in Bethlehem.

But the little land of Palestine was not idle while this work of preparation went forward in other parts of the ancient world. More intensely here than elsewhere, potent though unseen, divine Hierarchs brooded over the land and great initiatory Intelligences focused their light upon the city of Jerusalem and the little town of Bethlehem in anticipation of the coming of that Light which would illumine the world.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ
...And not upon paper leaves, or leaves of stone.
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,

...Texts of despair or hope, of Joy or moan.

While rolls the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
Still at the prophet's feet the nations sit.

— James Russell Lowell

"It is as if Deity had reflected when projecting the Universe from out of His Infinite Heart," writes the Adept of Galilee. I will take one small corner of the world and will concentrate therein all the possibilities of my power in the way of beauty, for I will show grandeur and majesty in the form of high mountains, and austerity in the form of waste lands and deserts, and bountifulness in the form of the richest profusion of fruits and flowers, and gracefulness in the form of hillside curves and meandering streams and in the form of rushing torrents and seas breaking forth into sudden storms; and over all this blending of qualities I will pour the light of my Sun Body in a radiant blessing of warmth and peace, calling forth in response, as it were, every variety of color and shade and hue, so that mankind will marvel forevermore."

The Promise To The Hebrews

Luke 24:44

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of

*Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms,
concerning me.*

We turn now to a consideration of the Books of the four Major and twelve Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. All but four of these sixteen Books contain some reference to the great promise concerning the coming of the World Messiah, Christ Jesus.

The Solomonic period lies behind us but the Temple endures, for it is the pattern or shadow of the Christ and of all Christed men. It first appeared as the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, housing that Spirit which moves with and within the human ego as it journeys through the darkness and limitations of materiality.

The permanent Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, built upon the Mountain of Peace, marks a second initiatory step in human development — when the candidate has, after sorrow and search, found his way to the Temple doors and seeks admittance to the humblest Degree.

The third stage of spiritual unfoldment is represented by the Temple of Zerubbabel, the second Temple where the work of the prophet comes to a focus. In the high symbolism of its ritual the deeply esoteric work of Ezra-Nehemiah finds its culmination.

The second and third Temples merge. King Herod rebuilt the second Temple course by course, so there never was a time when it could be said that the second Temple had ceased to be. With the conclusion of his work, the Herodian Temple wholly replaced the Temple of Zarubbabel. It was this third Temple which received the bodily Presence of the promised Messiah. But the path to this culmination was beset with difficulties. Civil war and exile intervened between the promise and its fulfillment. Yet this too was part of the Divine Pattern, as a study of the sacred text reveals. The Hebrew Teachers spoke truly when they said that Israel was a unity of all her twelve tribes, but this unity also pertains to the human race as a whole, not to one people only. Israel is mankind. The spiritual history of Israel is the history of every human soul seeking God. Under David and Solomon, dedication and wisdom, the Kingdom of God is established. But if the human soul looks away from God and ceases to follow His Law, the Kingdom is divided, the Temple destroyed, and the work must be done over again from the beginning.

I Kings 11:26,40

And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king.

Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And

Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishhak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

The strife between Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and Jeroboam the son of a widow, which eventuated in the division of Israel into the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms, (Israel and Judah), refers esoterically to the strife ever existing between these two human types symbolically called "Sons of Seth" and Sons of Cain." The Sons of Seth live by faith. They are the docile wards of ecclesiastical authorities. They achieve union with God through love only, for to them God is ecstasy. Since they feel no overpowering urge toward knowledge, they eschew the Mystery Schools. The Sons of Cain, on the contrary, have from the first been driven by intellectual questing. They are the children of that symbolical Serpent which persuaded Heva to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, and have never left off hungering after its fruits.

At the present stage of human evolution it is impossible to state that one race, one class, or one sex, is a generation of Seth or Cain. Whether a person is one or the other depends upon the state of his consciousness, and the conflict between the two is a soul-conflict which must be settled individually. It is usually agreed, however, that in modern society the Masonic Fraternity represents a final fragment of the ancient Wisdom of Cain, while the Roman

Catholic Church stands pre-eminent as representing the Faith of Seth. In the time of Christ, Philo Judeus designated Gentiles generally, and the Greeks in particular, as Sons of Cain; the Jews, as Sons of Seth. Among Jews, the Essenes claimed to be the inheritors of Seth, and to this day the Master Jesus is called The Flower of the Sons of Seth. To Seth belongs the doctrine of self-sacrifice through love, as exemplified in the death and resurrection of Savior-Gods.

In the civil war of ancient Israel the line of demarcation was clearly drawn. Jeroboam was of the North (House of Israel) and he accused of worshipping a Golden Calf. He belonged to the line of Hiram Abiff, also a "son of the widow." Dissension arose between Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre and, by inference, between Solomon and Hiram Abiff, the Master Workman, the Occultist.

The twelfth chapter of I Kings describes the Path of Occultism as typified in Jeroboam. The eleventh chapter of II Chronicles outlines the Path of Mysticism as represented by Rehoboam.

II Chronicles: 11:1

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

A study of the biblical text shows that Jeroboam was a revolutionary spirit from the first, eager for progress and reform, demanding instant action on a program which he considered to be for the greater good of the people who had suffered under the stupendous building projects of Solomon. His mind was open to the Mystery Cults of Phoenicia and his sympathies were plainly international in scope — for it was to friends in Egypt that he fled when in need of protection. When Rehoboam refused to accede to his revolutionary demands, the great schism occurred which lasted for several centuries and was healed only by the captivity of the people and the dispersion of their leaders in a long and sorrowful exile.

Jeroboam and the ten tribes who followed him made Shechem their capital. They built two Temples one at Bethel and one at Dan, for worship of the Golden Calf-emblem, Egyptologists believe, of the Egyptian Hathor. He proclaimed to the people: "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." He also established a new priesthood "which were not of the sons of Levi." The Gods of Egypt and Phoenicia were also the Gods of Canaan, differing only in name one from the other. Thus Astarte of Canaan sometimes wears the headdress of the Egyptian Hathor.

This change of worship was instituted by Jeroboam, not from genuine religious motives, but as a political device to prevent his followers from making pilgrimages to Jerusalem where they might come under the influence of the King of the South.

The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin under Rehoboam, king and leader, became the Southern Kingdom, with its capital at Jerusalem. The Temple and Holy City were retained as their most cherished possessions. The Temple was built on the boundary between the two tribal areas: the outer Temple area, its halls and the chambers of the courts falling to Judah; the vestibule and Holy of Holies falling to Benjamin. Judah is ruled by Leo; Benjamin by Cancer.

In the discord, enmity, suffering and despair attendant upon this civil war, Bible writers portray like suffering that accompanies warfare between head and heart, between love and reason, between State and Church, between Free Masonry and Catholicism. "And there was war between Rehoboam and Jereboam all the days of his life." (I Kings 15:6). It is to be observed that neither one Path nor the other is in itself good or evil. But when divided from one another, each becomes evil to a greater or lesser degree. Jeroboam and Rehoboam turned away from the spiritual Path and the reigns of both kings were periods of discord.

The works of Jeroboam tended continuously toward materiality, as shown by his worship of the Golden Calf (Baal) which he set up. He did not, of course, accord the idol literal worship. It merely symbolized his concept of the Deity. Nevertheless, turning his back upon the great promise of the New Age, he had returned to the now decadent worship of the Taurean Age. Then a man of God was sent to him with a warning. The man came from the Lion-Tribe of Judah among whom the Messiah would one day be numbered. When Jeroboam failed to heed the warning his hand became withered (I Kings, 13th chapter). Why did Jeroboam's hand lose its grip? He is a Master Workman and, according to an ancient Masonic fragment in which is conserved true esoteric wisdom, the withering of one hand symbolizes lack of equilibrium between the powers of head and heart. A similar incident occurs in the New Testament where the Divine Physician heals the man with a withered hand, which again signifies one in whom the powers of the heart are superseded by those of the mind. Perfect polarity between these two centers of power must be established before complete and final liberation is attained.

Prior to Christ's healing of the man's withered hand is the story of the old prophet of Beth-el and that man of God from Judah who healed Jeroboam. In this narrative the latter disobeyed the heavenly voice and was slain by a lion;

yet the lion touched neither his dead body nor the ass whereupon he had ridden. The Prophet of Beth-el buried the man's remains in his own sepulchre; then commanded his sons to bury his own bones there also, mourning "Alas, my brother!"

In this parable the old prophet of Beth-el represents one of the ancient Mystery Schools. The man of God from Judah is a wandering Mystic, untaught of any but God in the silence and peace of his own heart and, therefore, of a childlike trustfulness not often linked with worldly discrimination. In this instance heart listens to head (reason or sophistry) to its own undoing. Reason is never a substitute for love, The ass whereon the Judean Mystic rode typifies the humble wisdom of the heart; the lion is uncontrolled desire, by which he was slain but not consumed. The essential unity of the two Paths is shown in the declaration of brotherhood: "Alas, my brother! ... When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulcher wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones."

At last, "Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. . . . And Abijam (Abijah) his son reigned in his stead." (I Kings 14:21) Also, "Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died." (II Chronicles 13:20)

Jeroboam's son, Nadab, was assassinated by Baasha, who warred against Asa, Abijah's successor on the Judean throne. Baasha left off building of Ramah (a high place of consciousness) to meet Asa in combat. Asa was victorious and "they carried away the stones of Ramah and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was bulding, and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah." (II Chronociles 16:6.) Mizpah means a watch tower, and Geba, a hill. Being high places, they symbolize the power and strength of heart development. Baasha, however, did not complete the building at Ramah. He failed in his work. "And there was war between Asa and Baasha ... all their days." (I Kings 15:32)

In the very first generation of these kings, for Rehoboam as for Jeroboam, spiritual disintegration is discernable: Shiskak, King of Egypt came up against Jerusalem and took away the golden shields made by Solomon, and Reboboam substituted brass shields for those of gold. So the house of Judah, like the house of Israel, was also substituting lesser things (brass) for the things of greater worth (gold, or the Solomonic tradition). Nadab and Abijah did but follow in their fathers' footsteps and both their reigns were short and disastrous.

The life of Abijah is described in the thirteenth chapter of II Chronicles. Abijah kept a pure table. The literal meaning

of the word "table" is something spread out; esoterically, the aura. He remained steadfast in his support of the royal church at Jerusalem, the Temple built by Solomon; "But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto God . . . they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening." The candlesticks of gold and the lamps burning in the Temple represent the Light of Spirit within men, that Light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world and which is clearly visible to the spiritual beholding of a Seer. Abijah conquered the children of Israel: "And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men." Five is the number of the senses, materiality.

The House of Israel never recovered from this blow. It suffered internal division by treason, plots and counterplots. After Baasha came a series of weak kings: Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab. Nineteen kings in all ruled over Israel after her separation from Judah, and of this number only nine died in peace. The throne was never long in the possession of any particular line. In a period of two hundred and forty years the crown passed into nine different families.

Zimri gained the kingship by treachery and murder and the people arose in revolt against him within seven days of his ascension to the throne., He set fire to the palace with his own hand, perishing amid its ruins. His successor, Omri, purchased the hill of Samaria and built a city upon it which he named after its former owner, Shemer. He was succeeded by his own son Ahab, of whom it is written: "he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal. which he had built in Samaria." The reign of the evil Ahab marks the beginning of the end of Israel. Samaria was now its capital.

Ethbaal was a cruel king who had murdered his predecessor to the throne of Hadoth. (I Kings, 21st chapter) King Ahab maintained a summer capital at Israel with a palace whose extensive grounds adjoined the estate of the Israelite Naboth. Seeing it from his palace window. Ahab coveted the vineyard of Naboth. When Naboth refused either to sell or exchange the land of his fathers, Ahab told Jezebel, who plotted to have Naboth declared guilty of blasphemy and of treason against the king. Both these crimes were punishable by death, so Naboth was stoned and Ahab took possession of the coveted vineyard.

Jezebel has been called the Lady Macbeth of biblical history. There are no high moments in her career; she is

completely dominated by evil. The very intensity of her unscrupulousness, combined with her tragic fate, sets her apart from all other feminine characters in the Bible. In the magnificent gardens surrounding her great ivory palace, she built a private sanctuary for the worship of Astarte (Venus), always conjoined with the worship of Baal. Herein the grossest immorality was practiced in the name of religion. All four hundred and fifty priests who administered the rites in this temple were fed at the Queen's table.

Incense was offered to Tyrian Gods on housetops and the Temples and altars were usually situated upon the summit of hills, for the people well understood that their Gods were of heaven (the Sun and Venus in particular, but all planetary Gods were also worshipped). They tried to raise themselves as close as might be to the heavenly sphere where stellar Angels were enthroned.

Unfortunately, Baal worship was debased by human as well as animal sacrifice, a decadent remnant of Atlantean worship long retained by the Akkadians. Abraham, the prophet from Sumeria, disproved of this practice, and his descendants never forgot the fact. But as time passed and the Hebrews mingled more and more with the Canaanites, it became increasingly difficult for the prophets and teachers of the Hebrew Mystery School to maintain their nation's pure tradition. The phallicism of the Geminian and

early Taurean Ages was innocent and undefiled; but by the end of the Taurean Age phallic worship had become unspeakably degraded; and in the reign of Ahab and Jezebel it reached its lowest state. Hence, the anger and bitterness with which the old cult was attacked by Elijah, the great Hierophant of the Hebrew Mysteries and outspoken prophet of the Coming Christ.

The old Testament records little about the religion and customs of either Phoenicians or Canaanites. These people spoke the Amorite tongue, which was also the language of Melchizedek and which was adopted by the invading Israelites and modified into Hebrew. In the course of time the Canaanites and Hebrews mingled their blood and culture as well, and it was not until the period of Hebrew history now under discussion that the latter's Mystery School was separated completely from its Canaanite matrix. It is not surprising that a close relationship prevailed between Phoenicia and Palestine throughout their existence as nations; and that this is true is shown by the fact that Hiram Abiff was the son of a workman of Tyre and a "widow" of the tribe of Napthah or Dan. (Napthali and Dan, the two northernmost tribes, located on the very borders of Phoenicia, were often spoken of as one tribe).

The great Pythagoras studied at Sidon in Phoenicia; Pherecydes, his teacher and friend, was also an Initiate in

the Phoenician Mysteries which were the same as the Mysteries of Hiram Abiff. In these Mysteries Baal was the Grand Architect, the Builder of the Universe; Archangels, Angels and the forces of Nature were his Craftsmen. Before Elijah the Hebrews in Canaan looked upon Jahweh (or Jehovah, as it is spelled in modern translations) as the Supreme Baal, the Divine Architect.

An Initiate of Jahweh Mysteries learned to use the tools of the Divine Architect to build the Temple "made without sound of hammer." This indicates use of the building power of Aries, first sign of the Zodiac, one symbol of which is the hammer. In Masonry it is the hammer of Hiram Abiff (the Sun in Aries at the Vernal Equinox), the Temple Builder and Master workmen, like Ptah of Memphis and Melcarth of Tyre. Thus, the Hebrews also had their Order of Initiate Workmen comparable to the Dionysian Builders of the Hellenic world. Its artists and craftsmen were originally drawn largely from the tribes of Dan and Naphtali — as it is specifically mentioned in the Bible, both in connection with the construction of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and the building of Solomon's Temple.

This bond between the Hellenic and Hebrew Mysteries is too little noted by Bible students, for without it the history of Christianity cannot be read aright. For instance Pythagoras was a philosopher of cosmopolitan interests.

Twenty years of study in Egypt and Babylonia followed his youthful training in the Temple of Sidon. These countries gave him the best that they had to offer, and from it he and his brethren helped to establish the Greek Mysteries. About two centuries before Pythagoras, Elijah had been sheltered by the widow of Zarephath (a smelting place), a Phoenician village only a few hours journey south of Sidon, whence he had fled from the vengeance of the Israelite king.

In view of these things it is not difficult to understand why words seemingly of Hebrew origin found their way into Grecian Mysteries — they came from Phoenicia. Similarly, because the founders of Carthage came from Tyre, many almost Hebraic words and names are found in Carthaginian records. The name Carthage itself is derived from the proper noun Kiriath, appearing in the Bible in compound form as Kiriath-Arba and Kirjath-Jearim, Kirjath means town and one of the names of Carthage, Kirjath-Hadeschath meant simply the New Town. Tyre the mother city, was the old town. Chief magistrates of Carthage were called Shophetim, the Hebrew word for judges, a title familiar to every Bible student. Hannibal, name of the famous Carthaginian general, means gracious Baal. It was from the Carthaginians under Hannibal that the Romans first adopted crucifixion as a form of capital punishment (although the Persians also used it), and thereby the

shadow of the Cross of Christ early fell upon Rome, prophetic of things to come.

A further connection between the Phoenician Mysteries of Hiram Abiff and the Hebrew Mysteries of the Bible is shown by the fact that in ancient times the name Baal was actually used as a substitute for the Tetragrammaton, for Baal means Lord. Therefore, ancient Canaanites and Hebrews called their God "Lord" just as modern worshippers do. Baal is found in many Old Testament names, such as Jerubaal, Ishbaal, and so forth. But after the Exile, Jewish scholars tried to eliminate every indication of sympathy between Judaism and the old religion of Canaan, so Adonai was substituted for the Tetragrammaton and Baal was entirely abandoned.

Hence, some reason other than that of religious differences must be sought to account for the universal hatred which was aroused by Ahab and Jezebel. This will be found to be twofold: first, patriotic resentment of the Israelites at finding themselves becoming subject to Tyre; second the cruelty and greed of the Queen herself, as already described in the story of Naboth.

To Jezebel came a fate as tragic as any she meted out to her enemies. The Bible always sets forth clearly the working out of the law of retributive justice for, as has been shown, the particular work of Moses and the Hebrew people was to

teach cosmic Law. Nowhere is that Law more plainly exemplified than in the fulfillment of Elijah's prophecy to Ahab: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.... The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." Both Jezebel and Ahab's sons met death where had formerly been Naboth's vineyard. But this story will be considered in another place in connection with the history of the Prophet Elisba, in whose time the prophecy of Elijah came to fulfillment.

The cruelty of this queen must have played no small part in causing Hebrew prophets to draw the line more sharply between their own Jahweh and the Baal of Canaan and Phoenicia, for her example was not such as to awaken admiration for any cause she espoused. She thus served unwittingly as an agent of destiny. It has always been true that evil must come under retributive justice, but woe to them by whom it cometh.

Simultaneous with these troublous times in the Northern Kingdom, the throne of Judah was stabilized during the long and prosperous reign of the noble King Asa and his equally fine and noble son, Jehoshaphat, their reigns paralleling those of eight Israelite kings: Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab and Ahazia. Their labors were directed toward healing the breach between Judah and Israel, and at various times temporary alliances were

formed: "And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-Gilead?" All names which occur in biblical narratives have esoteric meanings, as is usually revealed by a study of Hebrew. Thus, in the story of Tibni and Oinri, wherein Omri was victorious. Tibni means straw men while Omri means my portion of Jehovah. The lesson is at once apparent that he who fights with cosmic Law is sure of victory over a "straw man" depending solely upon his own strength.

Rehoboam and Jeroboam failed to achieve even a temporary reunion after their first falling out, and their conflict continues into the modern age with the grand labor of Hiram Abiff still unachieved. Blending of the two cosmic elements of Fire and Water is the labor to be accomplished through Christ Alchemy. Mankind has yet to achieve that final labor. Efforts made by the race toward this attainment are allegorized in I and II Kings and I and II Chronicles.

— ***Corinne Heline***