

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

Habakkuk

The Prophet of Freedom

With the death of Josiah in 609 B.C. evil again afflicted the land. Judah was in constant terror of Babylon. The prophet Jeremiah consistently counselled a placatory attitude toward Babylon; for this he drew upon himself the hatred of patriots who looked upon him as a friend of the Babylonians.. Habakkuk was a member of the Temple choir in Jerusalem during the time that Jeremiah was at the peak of his power as prophet and leader. The former's lovely odes were undoubtedly inspired by the work of his illustrious contemporary.

The prophet's rather peculiar name comes from a root which means to caress or embrace, and was possibly used to symbolize his close relationship with God, an intimate communion that resounds with the sweetness of heavenly choirs through his inspired and poetic utterances.

Habakkuk 1:1-3

The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

*O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!
even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not
save!*

Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance!

for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.

An experience similar to the prophet's comes to every aspirant when he first glimpses something of the purpose and plan of life, and is conscious of the great verities and the unity underlying creation. His faith is not yet equal to his vision, consequently he has many "dark nights of the soul" so familiar to the mystic. There comes a torturing realization of how far man has departed from spiritual realities, and in anguish of soul he cries out, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast Established them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he." (Habakkuk 1:12-13)

The aspirant Who is faithful will be guided, as was Habakkuk, to the Gates of Light where his questions will be answered and his mission of righting evil will be made plain: "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that

readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." (Habakkuk 2:2-4)

Every disciple comes to accept the fact that it is only through the action of the twin Laws of Rebirth and Causation, the basis of all evolutionary progress, that the inequalities and injustices of life can be satisfactorily adjusted. Only in the action of these Laws is God found to be both the Lord of Love and the Lord of justice.

Habakkuk 2:11-12

For the stone shalt cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Woe unto him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity!

Astrologically, Habakkuk represents Libra, sin of the Balance. In the life of a disciple Libra means temptation, choice, decision. Keynote of the first part of Habakkuk's song is the burden resulting from evil choice. Of that state when choice has become altogether spiritual, when the carnal has been transmuted into the celestial, Habakkuk sings a joyous refrain in stately measure: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas." (Habakkuk 2:14)

This book has been described as a complaint to God. So long as an ego is directed by an unillumined concrete mind, so long must there be the resultant burden as the Law of Causation reacts in sorrow and pain. "Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth; for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth." (Habakkuk 1:4)

Each astrological sign bears a higher and a lower significance related to the development of man's spiritual and physical natures respectively.

Habakkuk 3:19

The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer of my stringed instruments.

The vision of Habakkuk is considered one of the most magnificent fragments of Old Testament literature. It has been the source of inspiration for some of the most beautiful and majestic of all Christian hymns. By his entrance through the Gates of Light, he was able to sing to mankind of God's great plan for the eventual salvation of the earth and its inhabitants: "But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." (Habakkum 2:20) This is the song of a redeemed earth and a regenerated humanity.

Obadiah

The Servant of God

The Book of Obadiah is the shortest of all the prophetic Books. Historically, it is supposed to belong to the post-exilic period. Spiritually, it is clearly a continuation of the theme of cosmic justice celebrated by the earlier prophets, It reiterates that God is a God of justice whose Law governs all the people of the world, not of Judea alone.

Obadiah's message also has two principal themes: a hymn of judgment for Edom and a song of deliverance for Israel. Restoration of the latter is foretold. The conflict between Edom and Israel represents the eternal conflict between matter and spirit, between carnal man and the divine ego. In an earlier period these were typified in Jacob and Esau.

Edom (the Idumea of the New Testament) lay just south of the Red Sea. Its principal city was Sela, built high in the red sandstone mountains where its houses and Temples were cut in solid rock. Sela has been described poetically as "a rose red city half as old as time." For many centuries the Edomites prided themselves on the impregnability of their stronghold in the rocks of Sela. Because of the general characteristics of the people of Edom, they were used as a symbol for man's carnal nature. Their annihilation was

foretold by many of the prophets who used it as an out-picturing of the fate awaiting all carnality. Obadiah opens his message with the words: "Arise, let us go up against her."

Obadiah 1:3,4

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.

Astrologically, Obadiah signifies the sign Gemini, the Twins, made dual nature, the Jacob and Esau within every human being. Gemini governs the disunion now manifest in the affairs of men and nations. This will continue until union of the higher and lower selves is accomplished upon a higher level of consciousness — rather, until the ultimate conquest of the lower by the higher, the former being literally transmuted and transformed by the alchemy of spirit: "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever." (Obadiah 1: 10)

The great victory of spirit is the esoteric theme of the Song of Deliverance and Restoration:

Obadiah 1:17-18

But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall Possess their possessions.

And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it.

The Prophets of the Exile

Beginning of the Captivity

The House of Judah was taken into Babylonia in three detachments of captives. The first left Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim; the second in the reign of Jehoiachin, and the prophet-priest Ezekiel was included in this group; the third was in the reign of Judah's last king, Zedekiah. Among the last captives was the young Prince Daniel, whose writings were one day to be treasured as part of the most sublime esotericism of the Hebrew Mysteries. They were preserved in the sacred archives and not published to the world until the Greek period after Alexander the Great, when the last portion of the prophecies had been fulfilled and the advent of the Messiah was looked for hourly.

Much has been written about the fact that when the Hebrews went into captivity in Babylon they possessed no Bible, but when they returned they had one — and in a form similar to its present composition. Esotericists do not deny that if there had been no Babylonian Captivity there would have been no Bible; but unlike the modern skeptic, they do not minimize the work of Hebrew scribes and mystics during the exilic and post-exilic period. On the contrary, they give them due credit for preserving the great Mystery tradition of Chaldea after that nation had fallen into degeneration. It cannot be reiterated too often that Abraham himself was a Teacher and Master of the Chaldean tradition, and that when the Hebrews dwelt in Chaldea they were but renewing their spiritual inspiration at an ancient and familiar Fount, known to them through the sacred Teachings of their own nation. Jerusalem was already the Holy City at the time of Melchizedek's reign as King-Priest, when he inducted Abraham into the Christ (Adonis) Mysteries.

Moreover, the Judean captives did not arrive in Babylon empty-handed. They carried with them certain Scriptures (writings) of a spiritual nature along with records of the Kingdom, traditions of the Egyptian and Abrahamic period, many ancient songs and poems, and much liturgical material that had been used in the Temple at Jerusalem. Earlier, at Jerusalem in the Deuteronomic period before

worship was centralized, this material had been used in other Temples throughout the land. Deuteronomy was one of the Scriptures taken into exile by the Hebrews, but a priestly code was developed that led to many unauthorized changes. The Book of Ezekiel correlates with this priestly revolution; the Book of Jeremiah, with Deuteronomic reforms. The captives also possessed a Mystery tradition and writings of the prophets. To all these were added the theosophy of Chaldea and, later, the angelology of Persia, together with a still clearer Teaching on the Christ Mystery and a recognition of their world mission to prepare for His coming.

By the end of the Exile the vision of the mission had clarified itself in the minds of the great prophets, and this resulted in the appearance of leaders and scribes who oriented the life and thought of the nation toward fulfilling its requirements. They collected, arranged and rewrote their Scriptures from the standpoint of that one dominant idea.

Despite the conclusions of commentators, esotericists: trace the Christ idea much further back than the Exile. This series of Bible Interpretations reveals that it is far older than the most ancient Hebrew records. Although it is clear that it did not belong exclusively to the Hebrews, it is certain they possessed it from the beginning of their history

as a people. For example, Baalim (Numbers 24:17), a Canaanite prophet, prophesied the coming of the Star among the Hebrew invaders of his land; thenceforward in Hebrew tradition the Messiah was always a "Son of the Star."

The pseudo-Messiah of the second century A.D. was called Simon bar Kochba, meaning son of the Star. Jesus was known as a Son of the Star of Bethlehem, under the Light of which He was born into this world. The Star of David is well known as a symbol of the Jewish race.

Not until the exilic period did any but Initiates understand the cosmic work of the Christ and His labor of redemption for all mankind. Then, through forces active during the Exile, the concept of a World Savior became general. The apocalypse of II Esdras and also Deutero-Isaiah clearly evidence the idea of a World Messiah as distinguished from a national hero and liberator.

From Amos to Jeremiah appears the Hebrew concept of God as a God of Justice, Mercy and universal Love, the Divine Parent of all humanity. Jeremiah never ceased declaring that his God was the God of all nations; even during the terrors of conquest and at the risk of his life, the prophet maintained He was the God of the Chaldeans as well as of the Hebrews.

Ezekiel, writing in Babylon at the beginning of the Exile, carried forward the teaching of his Master, Jeremiah, showing how the fall of all Israel was in consequence of disobedience to cosmic Law. By the end of the Exile the prophets had learned to view their problem in a more spiritual light. To the question as to why the guiltless were made to suffer with the guilty when they, the faithful few, had done no wrong, disobeyed no law, the prophets replied that out of the suffering of this righteous Remnant should come the salvation of Israel and so of the world. From this explanation mystics drew the conclusion that suffering for a righteous cause, if voluntarily assumed, is never wasted in the economy of the universe, but that it is the actual stuff out of which victory for Good must come. Hence, the maxim that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church."

History verifies the vision of the exilic prophets. Had there been no Exile there would be no Bible as we have it today, no Christ Mystery in Palestine, no Christ Incarnate. Christ Jesus understood the Mystery of Suffering. He pointed out to His Disciples the portrait of Himself in Isaiah's writings, wherein the import of His life was fully set forth.

The sixth century B.C. brought a great Aryan nation into world supremacy for the first time in history, when Cyrus of

Persia, at his coronation, took the hand of Bel Marduk in the ancient Temple at Babylon in deference to Chaldean custom. He also received instruction in the Mysteries and the Wisdom of the Chaldeans. With Cyrus a fuller understanding of World Messiahship entered Hebrew thinking.

Cyrus of Persia was a man of tolerant vision. He granted religious freedom to the peoples subject to his rule, and he seems to have been genuinely interested in what the Wise Men had to say about God. The legend of his crucifixion hints that this great king was more than a mere conqueror; it suggests that he possessed some prevision of the Great Hope of the world then focusing upon Jerusalem. Moreover, Hebrew records show that he granted many special privileges to the returning Exiles, privileges beyond his usual treatment of subject peoples. He must, indeed, have known of Zoroaster's prophecy concerning the advent of the World Savior when a New Star should appear in the constellation Virgo.

Thus the universalism of Jeremiah bore fruit in the Exile. The captives were prepared to accept what was good in the Chaldean and Persian Teachings. The Book of Ezekiel is preeminently the work of a Hebrew Initiate writing of his celestial experiences in the Mysteries of Chaldea — which were those of Abraham.

We repeat, even before the Exile the Hebrews had their own Mystery doctrine. Prior to the Hebrew invasion of Canaan under Joshua, the Chaldean Mysteries had been established in all the lands of the Fertile Crescent from the Two Rivers to the Mediterranean, all of Phoenicia and Palestine. Hence, Abraham was assured of a welcome from Melchizedek to the Holy City of Salem — and in Christian esotericism the Christ is termed a "high priest after the order of Melchizedek." The Order of Melchizedek centered in the Adonis ritual, as did that of the Phoenician king, for Salem (Jerusalem) was the Holy City of the Canaanites long before it became the Holy City of the Hebrews. In esoteric Masonry the Mysteries of Hiram Abiff derive from this ancient source.

A Phoenician sage, Philo of Byblus, describes a statue of Chronos that is very similar to Ezekiel's Cherubim. This symbolic figure may be said to be the central image of Ezekiel's Initiate-vision. In astrological symbolism it represents the intelligence of God the Eternal (Chronos) manifesting as cosmic Law, karma, or the Law of Cause and Effect. Astronomically, karma is represented in the four fixed signs of the Zodiac, which occupied the solstitial and equinoctial points of the Sun's course during the Taurean Age. During the Exile the Sun was, by precession, crossing the equator northward at approximately mid-point of the

constellation Libra, the sign of cosmic justice (Law) celebrated throughout prophetic writings of the Arian Age.

From mid-point of Aries, the Vernal Equinox preceded toward the constellation Pisces, while the Autumn Equinox necessarily preceded toward the constellation Virgo, the Virgin. When Jesus was born in Palestine the Arian Age was entering upon its last quarter. About 495 A.D. it came to an end, when the Sun at the Vernal Equinox stood in Zero Degrees of Aries, on the boundary line of Pisces, sign of the Fishes. During the century preceding this point pagan oracles were silenced and pagan Temples were destroyed or converted into Christian churches.

Hence, the prophets of the Exile, knowing the astronomical law, were absolutely assured that the end of the age was at hand when, according to prophecy, the Messiah should appear in the world.

Chaldea was the supreme astronomical light of the ancient world. It is natural to assume, therefore, that the Chaldeans had specialized in Mysteries as depicted in the starry heavens and that they were authorities on the many Hierarchies of celestial Beings whose work in the cosmos was correlated in the zodiacal signs.

In later ages both Jews and Christians cast aside the astronomical basis of their angelology. It is part of the New

Age Bible Interpretation work to restore this basis because, whether recognized or not, it is definitely the foundation of Christian esotericism. The Hierarchies of Angels correspond to astronomical Hierarchies of stars and planets; the mystic who desires to commune with any particular Angel or Angels is wise to make his communion at a propitious hour according to astrological rule. The great wheeling hosts of stars are like a mechanism which, at specified times, looses celestial influences into the stream of world-consciousness and, as a consequence, races, nations and religions rise and fall. Orthodox Christianity, the Christianity of the Piscean Age, is now falling. Esoteric Christianity, the Christianity of the Aquarian Age, is rising. Likewise, pagan Messianism fell with the Arian Age; Christian Messianism rose with the Piscean Age.

The Book of Daniel deals with the Aquarian-Leo cycle of the immediate future. The Book of Ezekiel visions the Sixth Epoch which follows, when the Sun by precession will pass through Capricorn and witness upon earth the fruition of Christed humanity. This Sixth Epoch will bring the rise of the Sixth Root Race — the last of races as such — after which there will be a unified humanity embracing all peoples of the earth and embodying the best qualities of all the races that have ever inhabited our globe.

Ezekiel, son of a priest (of the House of Zadok), is the priestly prophet whose influence is everywhere evidenced in scriptural records of this period. As a youth he was educated at Jerusalem and he was a disciple of the great Jeremiah. When about twenty years of age he, with other aristocratic captives,, was taken to Babylon upon the downfall of Jerusalem. His work has been ranged with that of Homer and Aeschylus, while tradition names him a teacher of Pathagoras.

All world religions have been direct emanations from the Cosmic Christ-the Word or Logos of St. John's Gospel — according to the need of each age, and messengers were chosen to serve in capacities for which they were best suited. Abraham was the first Way-Shower of the Arian phase of religion. For this reason the events of his life correlate most interestingly with those in the life of Christ Jesus, the Supreme WayShower. Later, Moses came as the great Arian Teacher to establish this form of worship, both esoterically (the inner work for the few) and exoterically (the religion under law for the masses). Still later, in perfect harmony with evolutionary progression, came the great Seer Ezekiel, whose work was to reestablish the Solar Mysteries in their pristine beauty and sacredness.

Christians of the early Piscean Dispensation knew and observed these Mysteries, a fact shown in many ways

throughout the Gospels and the New Testament Apochrypha. Then, once'more these truths were lost or were obscured by the shadows of worldly power and materiality.

Now, in the closing centuries of the Piscean Dispensation, those persons are being called out who are to take part in reestablishing the Solar Mysteries in accordance with the New Christian Age. Again, the Holy Seasons of the Solstices and the Equinoxes are to become focusing points for the reception and dissemination of spiritual forces generated at these particular Seasons more powerfully than at any other time. As man comprehends the true inner or esoteric mission of the Christ in becoming the Indwelling Planetary Spirit of the earth, he will understand and increasingly respond to spiritual currents encircling and permeating our globe at these sacred periods.

— ***Corinne Heline***