

# **HINTS TO BIBLE STUDY**

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## FOREWORD

There are two ways of intelligently reading the Bible. One is the very reasonable method of modern scholarship, which gives us the authorship, growth, compilation and literary values of the Scriptures together with their historic background.

The other is to read in order to discern the revelation which God made of Himself to a "peculiar people"--peculiar in their supreme desire to know God; to ascertain man's relationship to that God and for the inevitable consequence of this appropriated knowledge, the uplifted consciousness.

The first way is the method of scholarship and has high cultural values, the second is spiritual and is revelatory of the will of God.

There is another Bible than the printed page, it lies deep in the true nature of Man. Eternal life is man's only as he becomes the living Book. God's purpose in man is His own self expression.

When each can say with conviction of its Truth, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," we shall have found Religion itself, the one great Idea which is able to weld into one all of the children of men. True education is the subtle combination of the intellectual and the spiritual, a union which alone can break down the middle wall of partition which false religions have erected between man and the vital thing--the discovery and revelation of Jesus Christ.

Divine Science is the straight and narrow way to freedom of intellect and power of Soul. The Divine Science College desires to make this royal union and present it to man to a degree that is not surpassed by any institution in the world. So it is with joy that I dedicate this book to the corps of noble workers of this College, and to its president, the Reverend Nona L. Brooks, and acknowledge my gratitude for the absolute consecration of her life and work.

At one with this desire of the Colorado College of Divine Science, I desire to present to the world a religion that is narrow alone in its perception of the definitions and accuracy of Truth, but as broad

and ample as the needs of man in its applications. The world is ready for such a new presentation of the age old Truth that Jesus demonstrated and taught.

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## INTRODUCTION

Bible study will never cease to be vital to those who desire to reach spiritual heights of attainment and accomplishment. We awaken on a spiritual staircase that we seem to have climbed. This is the stairway the race has climbed and we inherit the fruits of their labor. There are yet stairs above us reaching into infinity. We are the surer of our present position and the better quipped for the journey ahead, if the essential steps below us are firmly imbedded in our consciousness. History has a fashion of repeating itself and in the light shed by past attainment, our decisions are the wiser and truer.

The spiritual discoveries of a nation devoted to finding God, which are contained in the Old Testament, are what make its study so valuable. This nation called itself the "Chosen People," because it chose to be chosen. Our debt to them is incalculable. They have given us an ideal of God that is both spiritual and practical, "A God who demands righteousness from his children and will accept nothing less from them," yet one who is interested in our every need and supplies it from his own bounty.

There were three great schools of antiquity, each bequeathing its gems to us, and these are foundation stones in our modern civilization. The Hebrew school gave us spirituality and righteousness, the Grecian school gave us reason and beauty, the Romans gave us law and virility. On this foundation Christianity stands and places her gifts, attainment and service.

The Bible is not one book, but, like the United States of America, "many in one." These books cover a period of about sixteen hundred years. They are the history, literature, religious tenets, ceremonies and experiences of a nation which felt that its commission was to present God to the nations, and to testify to His goodness and holiness. The Old Testament is the record of the nation's search for, and experience in, this search for God. The New Testament is the detailed account of the finding of Him and the experiences resulting from the knowledge of the divine nature.

There are two moments in a diver's life, Browning tells us; one when he plunges for the pearl, the other when he rises with the treasure in his hand. The Old Testament is the history of the plunge, the New Testament is the history of the rise with the treasure, God. We each represent those two phases in ourselves, for what has been discovered and achieved by the race must be rediscovered by each member of the race individually.

The Bible is the record of the quest of mankind for God. We find it from Genesis to Revelation to be our own history, for each of us repeats the race experience in his own. Can time be better spent than in conning the texts of the Bible and gleaning their meaning?

Civilized man unquestionably considers this Book his greatest treasure. The spiritual life is the real, and the Bible has inspired all that is best and truest in our modern life. Perception of an idea must be in the mind of the race before that idea can be demonstrated. It was revealed to a seer of the Hebrew race that "God created man in his own image"; later a member of this race said, "The Father and I are one," and demonstrated this great truth in the Resurrection. Man is not material nor in a material body. He is a citizen of the Spiritual Kingdom, and his body is spiritual when he knows the truth about it. Dominion over the earth is his divine birthright.

The message of the Bible is the Gospel, or Good Spell it casts over us as we come to understand it. It dispels and exorcises the evil spell of materiality and its consequent train of sorrow, disaster and death. We find that we are allied to Infinity, and so enter by the door into the life abundant. Here we live in Reality. We have left the world conceived by human imaginings and see in Spirit and in Truth. We are in eternity and only the eternal things matter. We have perspective here and our scale of values is completely changed. Love, life, truth, spiritual efficiency, are the things from which we work.

Surely no book ever had a more sublime opening sentence than this Book of books possesses. The invariable end of everything is in its beginning. "In the beginning God," and this can have but one

climax, God's representation in mankind. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." God in the beginning, God's graciousness in mankind the fitting completion.

A few words in regard to the growth and compilation of these books into one may be helpful here. There are two distinct narratives of spiritual evolution in the Bible. These two are commenced in the first two chapters of Genesis and are interwoven throughout the historic portion of the Old Testament. One is the priestly or religious account, the other the primitive or national account. The former is the more formal, as befits the foundation of the church, the latter is full of human and picturesque interest. The Priestly commences in the first chapter of Genesis and is continued through Chronicles. The Primitive account commences in the second chapter of Genesis, is continued throughout the book, and naturally merges into the book of Kings. It is the history of the nation as the Chosen People. Chronicles is the account of the merging of the nation into the church, and belongs to a later date. The same incident is sometimes told more than once and for a different purpose, as the national and churchly elements would see from slightly different standpoints.

The reader should always have sympathy in reading the Bible, for he is tracing the evolution of consciousness in the race. Always remember that we have the fuller light, because these people gathered "here a little and there a little, precept upon precept, line upon line." This rich inheritance has been bequeathed to us. Just as the childhood stories of our great men interest us, because we can trace the unfoldment from childhood to manhood, our interest in the Bible is sustained from the beginning of race insight to spiritual demonstration. Whether we study for the historic account, for the human interest, or, greatest of all, for the spiritual experiences and discoveries found therein, it will retain its place and hold us its debtors.

The Bible goes back to remote antiquity when literature was at its highest development. We find here allegory, lyric, drama, history, essays, sonnets, treatises, rhapsodies. Every form of literature, both

prose and poetry, are here. Satire and humor are not found wanting and a wealth of human incident unrivaled in literature. All, however, are spiritualized because this nation from first to last was interested in things of the Spirit. God to them was not something to speculate about, He was something to experience. He was a Shepherd who watched over his flock, loved and cared for them and was interested in their welfare and progress.

God is always reaching down to man. Man is always striving up to God and the Bible is the Book of the Meeting. This book grows in value to us as we grow in the knowledge of spiritual things; it interprets our own spiritual experiences, and enables us to see the goal of mankind, the Resurrection of the human race, above material limitation and darkness. It is the inspiration alike for individual needs, national needs, and international aspirations. It inspires the artist, the literateur, the musician, the merchant and the housewife. It comforts the sorrowing, and heals the sick in mind and body. It reveals our relation to God, and inspires our association with our fellow man to reach a closer affiliation. It is therefore not only the book of the meeting of God and man; it is the book of the meeting of man and man, for we never meet our fellow man until we meet him in Spirit.

# CHAPTER I

## ELOHISTIC ACCOUNT OF CREATION

Gen. 1:31; Gen. 3:1-3

The creation allegories stamp the Hebrew as pre-eminently artistic. A true artist, of necessity, must be a seer. Recently a prominent American said, "The greatest thing one can do is to see a truth and tell it in a plain way." The Hebrew saw a truth and told it in an *artistic* way. Is not this the greater faculty? Truth is always beautiful, why not give her a garment becoming to her loveliness? A pleasing melody of rhythmic sound or phrases satisfies us and makes an impression upon us, while a bald statement of scientific facts fails to penetrate our consciousness, and we pass it by unnoticed. A beautiful and valuable gem should have an appropriate setting.

The Hebrews (they who cross over), when they emigrated to Canaan, brought the Babylonian myths with them. The myth is the infantile speech of the infantile nation. Those myths were skeletons, bare events, plain, definite statements, told without grace or beauty. The Hebrew did for those myths what Shakespeare did for the old stories and legends he picked up here and there. He passed them through his spiritualized and artistic consciousness and they came out not myths, but allegories of personal interest to each of us. As Shakespeare took the old skeletons of former stories and clothed them with sinew, muscle and flesh, and then breathed a living soul into them, so the Hebrew does for the Mesopotamian myths.

I was asked in my Bible Class recently: "Are those creation stories true?" I answered: "They are truer than if they were true." If something is true of and applicable to every member of the race all of the time it is certainly truer than if it were an historic event of a fixed time, a definite locality, and confined to one man and one woman.

The first chapter of Genesis is a dignified and impressive account of creation. It is full of the characteristics which mark the Priestly

account. The word translated God here is plural, Elohim. It is both masculine and feminine, and most appropriately can we call it the Supreme, Father-Mother, for in this duality we find the creative principle of expression and unity.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was waste and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. Then God said: "Let there be Light." The eternal brooding of our Father-Mother God, over the face of the deep with life-giving power as the bird broods over the eggs to which she had previously given existence, this is something to feel. This brooding Love over the vast void never ceases. It broods through its majestic seven days continuously; seven is the mystic symbol of completion, and every cycle ends in the commencement of another.

Seven is written in the constitution of the universe. The moon changes every seven days, there are seven notes in music, and seven primary colors. There are seven stages in the evolution of every living thing. There are seven steps in the soul life, found in the life of the Nazarene, the only one who completed his soul cycle. This is the history of every soul that is true to itself. These seven steps correspond to the seven "days" of creation. They are conception, birth, unfoldment, testings, self-renunciation, self-elimination, and resurrection. These days, periods or cycles, are the spiritual experiences of every soul from birth to resurrection.

It is the warmth of the brooding mother that woos the chick from the shell. It is the everlasting Love and Light of the Father-Mother which breaks the shell of our selfish and material isolation into the warmth and light of spiritual expression.

This chapter does not describe God as creating the world out of nothing, but of forming it out of pre-existing chaos. Man has not been created by God, he is the eternal consequence of God. Infinite Mind and its ideas co-existed eternally. Chaos is man not conscious of himself nor his own power. Spiritually we could interpret this creative fiat: Let there be consciousness. The spiritual and physical worlds are reality and manifestation. What light is to the world,

intelligence or consciousness is to the spiritual world. Illustrations of the physical world are employed to teach spiritual truths. The spiritual includes the physical.

"And there was evening and there was morning one day." There is a sublimely beautiful meaning to this description of the day. The evening in the Hebrew means a *blending* and the morning means *a coming forth*. As the only intelligence is the Infinite Intelligence, we must blend in prayer into it as we appropriate it, and come forth with it in the morning. Jesus gives this same idea in another illustration as the one method of effective prayer: "When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Our description of the day, commencing with the morning and ending with the evening, is lacking in this spiritual significance.

In the Court of the Universe, in the Panama-Pacific Exposition, this concept was superbly illustrated. On either side of the court at the main entrance huge figures stood on illuminated pedestals. Evening, a female figure with great wings overshadowing and half enclosing the curved body, reverently closed eyes and folded hands, stood on the right hand side of the entrance. I invariably greeted Evening first and would then turn to Morning, and the glory of this masculine body, with open wings spread wide, face gazing forward and upward, lightly poised on the globe which held him aloft, will always linger as one of memory's greatest treasures. He had stepped forth on the ledges of the world, for he owned it. And so do we make "evening and morning one day."

How did this unknown Hebrew author know what science found out so many centuries later, that life begins in the water? How did he know that the bird is a flying fish, making it follow in the order of creation? If this is not "inspired," then I know not what inspiration is. God never leaves himself without a witness. He who is "closer than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet" is whispering his truths into the ear of everyone who is able to hear and comprehend them.

While we may not have anything better than man to look forward to, we shall gain a very much better conception of man as the ideal of infinite Mind unfolds upon us. This body to which there is nothing more to add is to be spiritualized. Confronting man as a task yet to be accomplished by him, is the transfiguration of his body into a spiritual one. We are transformed by the renewing of our minds. As we daily rise to new air in our lungs, new food in our bodies, we must have new thoughts in our minds continuously, new concepts of mind and body. We are acted upon from above, because God has never ceased His creative process, and so it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know, however, that we can never be anything but like Him. Listening to the Spirit as did this Hebrew of old, the image will form in our minds, and the likeness be expressed in our bodies. As we have appropriated our bodies out of the infinite whole, so our mind must be appropriated also.

On the seventh day there is rest. "On every height there lies repose," and we gain insight for our next ascent. But God rests. His creation is eternally complete. He is singing the order and beauty and harmony of it into the heart of man. Watching over Israel, He slumbers not nor sleeps. We are never alone nor comfortless. Until the "last day" of our darkness and all is light and life, will He keep vigil.

## CHAPTER II

# JEHOVISTIC ACCOUNT OF CREATION

Gen. 2:4-34

There is a wealth of spiritual teaching regarding God and Man in this primitive account of creation. As soon as the principle of Omnipresence is definitely stated, as it must be, every student wants to know: "If God be all, how can evil, sickness and death be? Where do they come from?" The Oriental answers questions in narrative form, and the following two chapters contain a penetrating insight into the cause of evil. Adam is the representative of the human race. He is the prodigal leaving the Father's house for an adventure he himself demands. He wants to know, he wants to experience. His first experiments are those of ignorance. It thus comes to have a universal significance and shows us each as in a mirror his own experience.

There is something in Adam that refuses to remain in abject obedience. Something more has been given him than the animals have received. Man does not refuse obedience, but he must know *why* he is to be obedient. This is the faculty that distinguishes him from the animals beneath him. Freedom of choice is his and however dangerous the faculty, and whatever we have suffered from it, none of us would eschew it. We give obedience when taken into the confidence of God, and our education consists in learning that none of God's "commands" are arbitrary but that they are "The Way, the Truth and the Life." On one hand man is related to the animals and of this he is conscious, on the other he is related to God who has breathed the breath of His own life into him, therefore man must understand God's laws in order that he may consciously and intelligently co-operate with Him.

Two gifts that are new in creation are man's--freedom of choice and intercourse with God, we do not need to go astray. However, when we do not come to Wisdom in making a decision, we "fall." This story is not of mere historic interest. The choice of right or wrong

judgment confronts each of us every hour; and every time our judgment is wrong we fall and out of Eden we must go.

In this account the Creator is not called God (Elohim) but "The Lord God" (Jehovah Elohim). This has given the Jehovistic to the primitive document, of which this passage forms the commencement. Where Lord is thus printed in the English Bible it stands for the Hebrew JHVH, the sacred name which was probably pronounced "Yahveh." In later times the name was considered too sacred to be uttered; the title Adonai (i.e. My Lord) was substituted. Hebrew was originally written without vowel sounds and when these were added the artificial form was produced. The meaning is, "The Self Existent." Yahveh was the proper name of the God of Israel rather than a title, and as such He was known by the other nations, who regarded Jehovah as the tribal God of the Hebrews.

The center of interest in this chapter is man on earth. God breathes into him a living soul. There was no tense system in ancient Hebrew, hence this passage reads: "The Lord God forms man out of the dust of the ground; and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, man is becoming a living soul." The continuous unity of God and man is thus established. All truth is paradoxical. Man, an ideal of Infinite Mind is eternally a "Living Soul." When it is actual to his consciousness, he expresses it.

"Never the Spirit was born, the Spirit shall cease to be never;  
Never was time it was not, end and beginning are dreams;  
Birthless, and deathless, and changeless, remaineth the Spirit  
forever.

Death cannot touch it at all, dead though the house of it  
seem."

.....

It is God's continuous "breathing" (this word in Hebrew means Breath, Wind and Spirit) that *makes* of man a living soul, i.e., a conscious one. We appropriate God's consciousness of man and come to see ourselves as He sees us. It is this that gives man dominion, it is this process of becoming conscious that seems to be

evolution. There is no evolution so far as God is concerned. His creation is finished, He is resting and pronouncing it "Good and very good." Man never can be anything that he is not in this creation, but he must become aware of what he is here.

Man is placed in a garden of infinite possibilities for growth and advancement. Eden means "Delight." As the water is the native element of the fish, as the air is that of the bird, so this garden is the native element of man, a "Living Soul." Every tree that is pleasant for sight and good for food is in this garden. The beautiful is just as necessary to us as supply of our physical needs. One feeds our spiritual nature as the other feeds our physical nature. Trees give man shelter, shade and food; they are also a symbol of immortality. They are continuous food producers, and annually their youth is renewed. In the midst of this garden is the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Of all the trees in the garden man may freely eat, save alone that of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, "for in the day that thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die." Duality is unknown to God and we go away from God when we think that we know something that He does not know. God is life; to go away from life is death. Good and evil are opposites, and they can never meet. Good is always good, absolute, positive; evil is negation. One is, the other is not; one is real, the other so unreal that God has never seen it.

The knowledge of evil brings death, evil is negation, so death is merely negation. It is the natural consequence of believing in another power than life. Man has not been asked to plant anything in this garden; all that is beautiful, all that is needful, is already there. He is only asked "to dress and keep it." Man is endowed with all of his faculties, both physical and spiritual. His work is to KEEP THEM IN HIS CONSCIOUSNESS. He does not have to create or develop them; he has to know that he has them, and he has.

The animals are all brought before man to be named. "And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Whatever we name animal, man or circumstance, that it is to us. To see good in anyone or anything is to make it our debtor,

and it is compelled by the laws of the universe to be that to us. To pronounce people or conditions evil is to place them in such a position that there is no line whereby good can reach us from them; we have broken the line of communication. If we strike a chord in music, music is compelled to respond; if we strike discord, discord is the sound we hear. The universe is like a vast organ that is responsive to one who knows the keys. To strike this instrument harshly or mar it anywhere is to produce discord instead of music.

The Lord God finds no helpmeet for man among the animals, so He causes a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. We have here three states of consciousness, the simple consciousness of the animal, the self-consciousness of man (reason), and the intuitional. The reasoning mind is objective; "a deep sleep" is upon it when we rise into the spiritual mind. Tuition is to be taught from the outside, intuition is to be taught within. Out of the side of man woman is taken, reason is of the head, intuition is of the heart.

And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Someone has said that the intuitional mind is to the reasoning mind what algebra is to arithmetic. A long-drawn-out process is completed in a few strokes, bones reduced to bone. The sexes are compliments of each other; reason is the stronger in the man, while intuition is the stronger in the woman. Each, however, possesses both faculties, for each is complete, the image and likeness of the infinite whole; reason is the first faculty of which we are conscious, hence in this chapter man is created before the woman, for it is the order of our unfoldment.

The similarity of the English words "man," "woman" (wife man), is also found in the Hebrew Ish, Ishshah. The ideal of one man and one woman is the perfect state and the eternal purpose of God in life. Because of man's "hardness of heart" he has not risen into this perfect concept of marriage. Man and woman are one, and together they constitute humanity. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." This is the state of unconscious innocence waiting to be clothed upon with the infinite wisdom of God.

Man receives everything that he is, everything that he has, direct from Infinity. To be "naked and not ashamed" is the meekness that inherits the earth. It is to be divested of self-righteousness and mortal thought. It is to be open for the Divine Mind and its ideas. It is to stand reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TEMPTATION AND FALL

Gen. 3:1-24

This chapter is the answer to that persistent inquiry, "How did evil come into the heart of man if he was created perfect?" The answer is that it came from outside of man and not from within him, hence his hope of victory. The sin that approaches us from without cannot be a native product of the heart of man. To choose the serpent as the tempter is another evidence of the artistry of the Hebrew. Its stealthy movements, its deadly venom, and the instinctive feeling of repulsion it provokes in us all go to make it an excellent symbol for sin. These are all suggestions of the insidious approaches of temptation.

It is the woman consciousness that the serpent approaches. The instinctive and intuitional consciousness is always the adventurer. Regardless of cost will she embark on the trial of her own prowess. "Deep, deep to the heart of life, and high to heaven" must the woman soar. Man's cautious reason weighs the consequences and therefore never ventures into unexplored fields. Herein is the essential difference in the characteristics of the sexes; the woman listens and sees, the man thinks and reasons.

"The serpent is more subtle;" it is to this subtlety that the woman yields. Our great security from sin is to see it as it is and reject it. The woman stopped to parley with the serpent and therefore fell under its seductive guile. I once heard Sam Jones, the evangelist, say: "The devil is a gentleman; turn your back upon him, and he will leave you." Sound advice that, for as long as we entertain evil it stays with us with all its arguments as to why it should remain.

Eve makes the mistake of listening to the voice outside of herself and not waiting for that guidance within to which she could so absolutely trust. The "still small voice" never errs, but alas! the loud strong one does, for it is the race belief in materiality. The lesson to be learned by us is discrimination. Wisdom lies at the root of our

being. We all know the way and the great lesson of life is to go to the depth of our being for guidance.

The serpent said to the woman: "Yea hath God said, ye shall eat of every tree of the garden." She replies that man's own safety is the object of the prohibition. As Eve has stopped to entertain him so the serpent grows bolder. The serpent now denies the truth of the divine warning and places upon the mandate another construction than a desire for man's safety, arguing that God desires to keep man in ignorance and that the real motive for making the prohibition is his jealousy lest the rise of men into knowledge should place him on terms of equality with his Creator. The serpent first makes an assertion, next a contradiction, last a promise.

Woman falls because she separates herself from God. She identifies herself with an appearance rather than with reality. She interrupts her intercourse with God, from whom her life emanates, by this belief in separation. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband; and he did eat."

The man's and woman's eyes are now opened, and they know that they are naked. The serpent's promise is fulfilled, but how differently from their expectations! The act of sin is immediately followed by a sense of guilty shame. To the pure all things are pure. The nude is never the naked. Innocence and Purity alike are better expressed without clothing, but no sense of nakedness can be in the mind of either of them. There is neither impurity nor immodesty in the nude in art, a high sense of chastity and the noblest sentiments of life are thus fitly portrayed. Nakedness is different, however, for purity is gone when this sense is there. To purity in its undisturbed communion with God, every natural thing is good and pure. As soon as sensuous guilt enters the consciousness the sense of nakedness which is weakness and impotence enters with it.

"In every temptation there is the serpent, the exciting cause without and the answering inclination within." To follow any voice in

the external world is to fail, for all Wisdom is of the Spiritual world. The worst thing about sin is the sense of being lost; we have no model for work; we have no guide for advancement. All progress is stopped and we are going around in a circle.

Sin warps our judgment and decisions. The clothing of the soul is the purity, wisdom and power of the Spirit, and we divest ourselves of them when we are beguiled by the serpent. Then God comes to us in the evening, always in the evening (to blend). Man and woman who had enjoyed the freedom of the garden and the confidence and friendship of their maker now hide themselves from Him. Is not this in itself hell enough? We have lost the companionship of God, and must go out of the divine presence, and while the dark pall is upon us we must remain out.

But God never ceases to call, "Where art thou?" This is a pertinent question. When we are not in God's presence, WHERE ARE WE? The man justly blames the woman, and the woman justly blames the serpent, for temptation comes to us from the outside, but when we resist it strength and power come from within. The Adam man never rises to this dignity. The difference between the Adam man and the Christ man is the difference in his judgments. Truth's eternal command is: "Judge not according to appearances but judge righteous judgment." Man cannot fall when his judgments are true, never can he be in sin, sickness or sorrow if his judgment is righteous, for truth is the exterminator of all error. We are always whiners, shirkers and cowards when under the delusion of sin. "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all." The Adam man always blames the outward excitement instead of the inner inclination when he yields to temptation.

The judgment falls on the serpent first. The serpent stands for the state of consciousness which is surface judgment, judging according to appearances. This is man in his most ignorant state. "Thou art cursed above all cattle, and upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life."

This curse is upon man as long as this state of ignorance lasts. He is the prodigal in that far country (materiality) and dust and husks of swine is all that this country yields for soul food. As man learns more and more to form righteous judgments he becomes more and more "upright."

Woman, the first to listen to the serpent, must be the first to repudiate him. "It shall bruise thy heel but thou shalt bruise its head." As it had affected her judgment she must take all power from it by crushing its head. But as long as woman is capable of being beguiled by the serpent, she must in sorrow bring forth her children, and be in wrong relationship to her husband. Intuition must lead reason, we never come into right relationship with God until it does. Reason follows and verifies intuition.

And unto the man God says: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife and eaten of the tree\* \* \*cursed is the ground, and in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." "Thorns and thistles it will bear, and in the sweat of thy face eat thy bread." Reason is that faculty that must hold us true, it must not yield under persuasion. Reason cannot travel one step forward. It is not the steering gear but the anchor, and as such should hold us true. There is nothing dynamic in it and it lacks initiative. So it is not profitable to work under it. The curse is the loss of the spiritual sense and woman's desire is to her husband; they are governed by reason.

And Adam called his wife's name Eve (life) because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made coats of skin for their protection. Man is clothed upon, his ideas do not emanate from himself; they descend upon him from infinite Mind. All truth clothes us, and to accept an untruth leaves us naked and ashamed.

Man is driven out of Eden when he is disobedient to the voice of truth. The Angel with the flaming sword guards the entrance, to keep the Way of Life, and we can enter it only as we rise above the errors of sense. We are happy in the garden in our child innocence, we must re-enter it in conscious power and purity.

## CHAPTER IV

### CAIN AND ABEL

Gen. 4:1-26

The narrative of Cain and Abel is impressive for two reasons. It reveals the evolution of sin and its consequences and it commences the series of allegories, running throughout the Bible, of the two brothers, symbols of the natural and spiritual man. Sin after it possesses us, like fire, is difficult to confine and it carries us along the broad road to destruction, gaining speed by its own momentum. Jealousy may not seem a great sin but it leads to hatred and murder, and not even natural affection can stay its ravages. Yet gleaming through it like sunlight through a crevice we see the restraining care of God, seeking to save us ere we yield to passion, and He is merciful to us when we turn to Him and ask for His aid.

This story gives us vivid pictures of wrong-doing and its consequences. It gives us warning that the wrong-doer is on the road to Nowhere but it lingers to tell us that the right road leads to peace and joy. In all of the other brother-stories, the elder brother is made to serve the younger, for natural man must be subordinate to spiritual man.

The moral of this allegory is to impress upon us the fact that there is a Way but this is not it. Scientists tell us that in the center of every cell there is a microscopic nucleus called Chromatin. Take this out, the cell behaves automatically for a time and then dies. Symbol of man with the Spirit unrecognized; fugitives and wanderers on the face of the earth, no meaning to life, no purpose, no destination.

Eve called her first-born Cain (acquired). The Hebrews attached great importance to names. They were usually descriptive of some characteristic in the thing or person on whom they were bestowed. Cain is a tiller of the ground but Abel is a keeper of sheep. Sheep is the symbol of obedience, while "tiller of the ground" is the symbol of the curse for disobedience. Cain brings the first fruits of the ground, and Abel the firstlings of his flock as an offering unto the

Lord. The Lord has respect for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering there is no respect.

Cain's gifts are "acquired" while those of Abel (a son) are the result of inheritance. God never accepts from us anything that he has not given us. Acquisitions all come from the "material realm" and are unknown and therefore unacceptable to Spirit. Cain is wroth when God does not accept his offering. The Lord asks Cain: "Why art thou wroth? If thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. BUT THOU SHOULDST HAVE RULED OVER IT."

Then Cain rose up and slew his brother Abel. Do we not slay the SON every time we think the mortal of us, to be real and desire to have our wilful way in life? The murder of Abel is the stifling of one's own individuality. One who can "come forth from among them and be separate" is the one who rights himself with the universal order of things, and is stronger than he was before "As a man is stronger who is standing upon his feet than the one who is standing upon his head."

The mark is upon us, every one of us, the brand of Cain, sensuous, weak, mediocre, or the mark of the Spirit, vital, individual, strong. The only sin is the dominion of evil and this is rebellion against the laws of our spiritual nature. The only true happiness is to be conscious of the Spirit and to keep it in the ascendancy. He alone can be said to possess It whom It wholly possesses. There is really no difference in degrees, even the smallest action opposed to the Spirit stamps us as in opposition to it.

When we are not conscious of the Son, we must be conscious only of the Cain. Then God is always demanding of us, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" To care for the spiritual first is the only possible way to care for the physical. We are our brother's keeper and God demands our brother's blood of us and will not hold us guiltless if we slay him. "The voice thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground!" Indeed an outraged God sees the Spirit in man always and hears its cry for self-expression no matter how many fathoms deep we have

buried it. Cursed are we while this blood lies on the ground; everything that we do proves a failure, we are uneasy, restless and unhappy.

Only the Spirit knows the way, and if It has not the right of way in us then the ground cannot yield its strength to us. A fugitive and a vagabond are we in the earth, wandering to and fro, aimless, meaningless, hopeless. Do we not feel life a burden, the life that under the Spirit is so free, spontaneous, glorious? Again the punishment for sin is banishment from the presence of God, and the greatest blessedness is the visible presence of the Spiritual Reality.

No one can take from us our misery, we cannot be slain and end it all. There are no secret sins, no violation of our spiritual nature, but are branded upon us. No soul can meet a critical, condemnatory judgment, if it is deserved, and not shrink back upon itself, just as no one can receive commendation, if true, but his soul reaches up to it as the flowers creep out to greet the spring sunshine.

Trust your own individuality, trust your own thought, trust your ability to receive from Spirit what Spirit has to give you. Trust your own judgment and "Trust in thine own untried capacity, as thou wouldst trust in God Himself." "All the capacity one has is God's; there is but one Mind and Power. Be genuine; what matter how little you offer so it be genuine and true. One true original thought and act evolved from your own Spiritual insight and experience and you are born out of the Cain class of mortal mediocrity, into the originality of Spiritual Reality, and have made an offering that God respects."

## CHAPTER V

### THE TOWER OF BABEL

Gen. 11

This is an ancient Hebrew explanation of the diversity of human language and the divergence and antagonism between men. Babylon, the cosmopolitan city of human grandeur and many gods, was a synonym for wickedness to the monotheistic and simple-minded Hebrew, and he uses it in many graphic illustrations to elucidate his spiritual truths. Babylon was the center of civilization at this date, and its life was marked by luxury and magnificance. The great buildings and remarkable achievements of the Babylonians without the consecration of them to spiritual purposes were the "pride of man" and "rebellion against the Lord" to the Hebrew.

The story runs in this way: The Babylonian in his pride and arrogance decides to build a city and tower that will reach to heaven, and make a name for himself that will be scattered over the whole earth. Jehovah comes down to see about it. Jehovah is always jealous, He will have no pride, arrogance, or self assertion. Every "tower" that we build in this attitude of thought invites this visit. And so the great Jehovah said, "Go to, let us go down and there confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth: and they left off to build the city."

Without unity of purpose no great tower can be built nor any great work be accomplished. Pride, arrogance, self assertion, can not translate spiritual truth into visible expression. Selfishness is always isolation, and when each works for self his language can never be understood by another. It is the one who has not found himself, and so does not know the meaning of his own life, and the one so lost in self that he has not outlets, who complains of being misunderstood. We all understand the large, generous, self-forgetting man or woman.

The Pentecostal gift of Christianity is the converse of the Tower of Babel. It is only as we sit with "one accord" that the gift of tongues descends upon us. Then we speak as the Spirit gives us utterance and we are understood of all. The great people are the most simple and they are easily comprehended, for they have the power to make themselves understood. A common purpose is a common speech; we know where a man is going if he is on the road to our home. There were many languages among the Allies but they understood each other well.

Just as selfishness confounds our language, and dispersion and disintegration must follow, so unity and obedience unite us and give us the gift of tongues, a common purpose and a common speech. The spiritual world is a universe, that is, it is so constituted that we, each, have a particular good and supply, and the welfare of the whole demands that each unit have free expression. There is never cause for dissension; there is no possibility for rivalry. The good that comes to another is but the prophecy of a similar good that is ours, and the rejoice in another's victory is the sure precursor of the arrival of our own. It is always on its way to us, will we but keep the way open for its passage; for each life is complete and that which belongs to us, from a Power in which there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, we must receive.

The great lesson of the Tower of Babel is to cease thinking of self. We are to come out of our narrow, selfish restrictions and work and live for others. God made the world and all there is in it just to have something to put His Life into. We grow up unto Him as we work for the welfare of the race.

What we all need is something outside of ourselves to work for. There is a Tower to be built, but it is not to make a name for ourselves. It is to benefit others. Whatsoever we do for others is twice blest, it blesses him who gives and it blesses him who receives.

There yet remains the great Tower to be built. Its base must rest on the earth and its top be lost in heaven. It is the discovery and

demonstration of all truth. It is Jehovah's Tower and must be built in His name and for His glory. We must work for truth alone, and as we work in Spirit and in truth we receive our New Name. Surely we feel the glad time coming, the Pentecost of the Spirit, and we know that the barriers of superstition and ignorance are being burned away in the white light of discovered Truth. Every truth perceived, every task nobly performed is a stone built into the Tower.

We grow fine and true as we measure up to the work that confronts us. No matter how lowly, all true work goes into the Tower. The stones in the foundation may not glitter as the gold on the spire, but there would be no spire if the foundation were not securely laid. We each have work, and to do it cheerily, truly, constructively, will place us on a level with the great of all ages. It will broaden us, educate us, and grow us into His likeness.

Service is the keynote of all true living. But the Tower of Babel is a warning not to serve self, but to serve the race. Every day see to it that something has gone forth from your heart and mind, that will lift humanity into a higher concept of man and his destiny. Love alone quickens us into definite and unified action. Therefore love, love and serve. Lose yourself in love and service, for the life of the individual is just a unit in the whole, and the whole is composed of these units, it is saved only as each of us does his part.

With the open vision of the present day, work is easy. At last we see the Spiritual Tower, and we are learning to work shoulder to shoulder. National boundaries are being swept away as we are welding the whole into one great body, religious differences must be adjusted with the advancing of man into the one White Light. All progress everywhere, which works for the betterment of the race anywhere, is a stone placed in the Tower.

## CHAPTER VI THE DELUGE

Gen. 6, 7, 8

The Elohist and Jehovistic accounts of creation are distinct documents, but some enterprising editor has so woven together the two accounts of the Deluge that to the lay mind they read as one narrative. Should the reader desire to follow this more closely than is possible in this condensed course, he is referred to Lyman Abbott's "Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews." He will find here in detail the Elohist and Jehovistic accounts, and the original Assyrian Account, from which both were evolved.

The Hebrew saw in all natural phenomena the approval and disapproval of God, whose reward and punishment of his children were unailing. We are too young yet in spiritual discernment to know how far the thoughts in the race mind affect the natural elements. That they do is the belief of many spiritual students. Let us be careful, however, not to branch out into theories that we are unable to prove. Let us keep our feet on terra firma, even though we walk through the sky. Washington Gladden has left us the legacy of a beautiful idea in his sermon, "Where Does the Sky Begin?" It begins at the surface of the earth. We walk in the sky all of the time. Were we merely earth creatures like the moles we should have to burrow in the ground. We are creatures of the sky, air and heavens, and we walk through the sky always.

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose." Only he who can unite the spiritual and the natural is on safe ground. This is merely a plea that as we study this great Book, we be careful that we read the truth out of it, instead of reading our own preconceived ideas into it.

The Deluge story is beautiful in its spiritual significance. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." God will never cease to

strive with us until we cease to resist the spiritual guidance, and cease to identify ourselves with the flesh man. Our text-book tells us, "Man is either drawn or driven by Love to his final destiny." God in our final destiny "rests" in man, His finished creation.

If one's life be true as was that of Moses, at an hundred and twenty years, the natural vigor should not be abated. Spiritual man knows no age, for he transcends human limitations, he belongs to another order. There must, however, be a distinction made between natural man, and mortal man. Mortal man is like Satan, he comes from nowhere and to nowhere is he doomed to return. He is a false concept, and all false concepts die when the true are born. Natural man is legitimate, he is the forerunner of spiritual man.

"But Noah (rest) found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations and Noah walked with God." If we do not perfectly fulfill our natural life we cannot come into the life of the Spirit. Natural life is the life of "generations." It is the chaste, normal expression of all of our natural life in all true functioning. There must be no perversions, no sense of repression. There is never a sense of repression to a perfectly directed life, hence the spiritual law fulfills the moral law. The Botanist tells us that every successive stage of the plant life is the transmuted lower one. The blade is the transmuted root, the stalk and leaf the transformed blades, the leaf is lost in the blossom, the blossom is found again in the fruit, while all are culminated in the seed. If at any stage it becomes defective then progress ceases. To be perfect in our generations is to have in ourselves the power to be transmuted into the life of regeneration.

Everything that hath the breath of life from "under heaven" will always be destroyed. It is impossible to save it, it is eternally doomed to destruction. Only that into which God breathes the breath of His own life can come into the ark of safety, for it is all that *has* life.

The covenant is established with the one who is true, he alone will find "rest" in God. Forty is the number four multiplied by ten. The

Hebrews wrote under a system of numerical symbolism, and when they desired to emphasize a truth they added another cipher. One is unity, totality; two is duality, complements; three is the trinity, continuity; four is perfection, of time or condition; five is law, orderly sequence; six is finished, the way a thing is; seven is completion.

"Forty days and forty nights" used in this sense means the full time until the destruction is complete and all that is untrue and unreal is destroyed in the downpour of the divine perfection. Noah's six hundred years is another instance of numerical symbolism. It is doubly emphasized, for did not Jehovah make a covenant with Noah, something that He never could do with Adam? Noah's "six hundred years" means that he had come into another cycle than that occupied by Adam.

"And God made a wind to pass over the earth and the waters assuaged." The wind and spirit are the same in Hebrew. A new cycle is commenced, a higher one, the earth is to be reinhabited by Noah's descendants. The beauty of the whole allegory is the immunity of the ark to which one may always flee and find safety, and the Bow of Promise, the token of the covenant between God and man. Its beauty transcends any earthly beauty and it promises us the beauty of a kingdom of which this earth is but an imperfect reflection. It is the symbol of infinity for we never reach the rainbow's end; like the ideal it recedes and recedes, luring us onward and upward into that world that hath "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **THE CALL OF ABRAHAM**

#### **Gen. 12-21; Gal. 4**

The history of the Hebrew family begins with Abraham. It is true that some of the higher critics begin actual history with Moses and reduce the Patriarchal period to "shadows in the mist." That the nation and religious organization begin with Moses cannot be gainsaid; but before there can be a nation and a church, there must be a family and a religion. Undoubtedly the allegories and stories of the book of Genesis are much later than Exodus, but they were written from popular oral tradition or pre-existing books now lost. A nation like that of the Hebrews would keep its traditions distinct and true.

Abraham is one of the greatest figures in the religious history of the human race. Three great religions trace their origin to him. The Hebrew religion, its child, the Christian religion, and Mohammedanism. The world owes to him its first clear knowledge of the true God and the manner of service that will be acceptable to him. Hebrew history requires the starting point which the Patriarchal period gives it. It was no new and unknown God in whose name Moses spoke to his brethren in Egypt. He had a basis to work from in the God of their Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The simple yet stately figures would be alike a loss to the historian, the literateur, the religionist and the artist. Their dignity, magnanimity and graciousness are examples for all ages. Simple spiritual guidance is much needed in our complex civilization. The visits of Jehovah and His angels are reminders that God and His angels do visit the children of men.

The country lying between the Tigris and the Euphrates, Mesopotamia (between two rivers), was one of the oldest civilizations on earth. There were three nations in this country, in

the north Assyrian, in the center Babylonian, and in the south Chaldean. Abraham came out from "Ur of the Chaldees." This was a great civilization, advanced in astronomy, science and arts. Every time that we look at our clocks, or wrist watches, we go back to the period of Chaldean history before Abraham was born. They had divided time into the year, month, week and days approximating the division used by us at the present time. The day was composed of twenty-four hours, and the hour sixty minutes, the minute sixty seconds. We owe to this great race also our one sacred day in seven, called by them the "Day of the Heart."

With this heritage back of him Abram was called of God. One of the greatest features of this great Book is the "calls" of leaders and prophets. Now the Lord said unto Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy Father's house, into a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation; and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse and in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." God speaks to us through the "still small voice" in our own souls. He spake unto Abram as he speaks to you and me. "There is a guidance for each of us and by lowly listening we hear the right word."

Abram is the type of character that hears; large, magnanimous, rich consciousness, of deep peace, poise and power. There are men who think in terms of self, others in villages, yet others in empires, but Abram held in his consciousness the whole human race. His ideal was "in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And this insight was true, the human family is indebted to him. This new race, started in the consciousness of Abram, has given us religion, and without this human progress would have been impossible. This race has given us a knowledge of God and man's relation to God. The relationship of man to God is dependency, but a relationship of this kind involves a mutual obligation. God is responsible for man, and is bound to work with and for man until he is free.

Abram emigrated from Chaldea to Canaan (low region), a distance of about three hundred miles. With him was Sarai his wife, Lot his

nephew, and a large retinue of slaves. The end of any life, enterprise or race is held fast in its beginning. We find certain characteristics of Abram in the Jewish character today: The rich consciousness, "and Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold"; his love for his wife and his deference to her judgment; his love of peace and the conciliatory method in which he settles the affair with his nephew, are all still strong characteristics in the Jewish race at the present time.

Abram had no heir, but he was assured of the Lord that he should have one; "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it unto him for righteousness." According to the custom of the day, Sarai, who was childless, gave her maid Hagar to her husband for a secondary wife. Hagar despised her mistress when she knew that she herself should be mother of the heir, and Abraham sent her away at Sarai's demand. In the issue here we see the prenatal influence on the child. Hagar's ingratitude and rebellion against her mistress to whom she owed her position marks the child. The Angel said to her: "Behold thou art with child, and shalt have a son; and thou shalt call his name Ishmael (God hears) because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he shall be a wild-ass among men, his hand shall be against every man's and every man's hand against him." Here again the end in the beginning. The Arabs, Ishmael's descendants, are of an untamable nature, always roving. Hagar could flee from the sight of her mistress but not from the sight of God, nor from the consequences of her rebellion.

Paul calls this an allegory. It is the first of the positive lessons of the two brothers. There is the son of the bond woman and Isaac, the son of the free woman. When Abram was ninety-and-nine years old--remember the Hebrew wrote in numerical symbolism, this is not to be taken literally--the Lord appeared unto him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk thou before me and be thou perfect." God can never speak to us but through our own consciousness. No race or person who had not a concept of the ideal could hear such words as these. The covenant made with Abram is another instance of the spiritual development of the race.

A covenant is an agreement, the law of prayer, the means through which we transmit the gifts of the Spirit to our own consciousness. Prayer is acceptance of God's gifts. In disagreement we repel; in agreement we open the way for negotiation and transmission. And Abram was given a new name, he who had been childless was to be the father of many nations, Abraham (father of nations). It is after our agreement with God that we become creative and fruitful. There are no barren lives in God, but out of him we cannot conceal our unfruitfulness.

Sarai also received a new name, Sarah (princess). Her son was the heir and his name was Isaac (laughter). It is significant that the son of the free woman should be spontaneous joy, which is laughter. There is no heaviness in spiritual life; life, love and work are all interspersed with laughter. No one can be a pessimist and see Principle. Optimism is compulsory to the one who lives in Spirit and in Truth.

The son of the bond woman is born "after the flesh," and all flesh is unruly, unspiritual, untrue. The son of the free woman is by promise, free, true, real. "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." Cast it out, the false concept of yourself. There is the eternal YOU, and the temporal unreality. Do not hesitate, temporize nor waver, cast it out; as long as it lingers with you, you are an house divided against itself, and defrauded of your inheritance.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

Gen. 22

We grow into true knowledge of God by obedience to the highest that we know. The highest that we know may be a false concept, but sincerity and aspiration are always seen of Him who looks not upon the outward act, but the inward intention. There existed for centuries among Semitic races the custom of sacrificing children to their gods. This may seem to the one who does not look beneath the surface hideous and loathsome. It is the thing that we do not understand that we condemn; charity always comes with comprehension.

The central impulse in the heart of man is to find his God and be united to him. Man is "incurably religious" the philosopher tells us. He is always seeking God and endeavoring to propitiate Him and enlist His favor. Man is dependent and has always felt this dependence, so he makes sacrifices in order to gain favor. The dearest possession of man is his children, and when he came to see that his best must be given to his god he was groping for the ideal.

This idea of child sacrifice was Abraham's inheritance from his age. We have to grow out of the beliefs we are born into. When the child of promise came, he was Jehovah's gift to him. Could he keep from Jehovah that which was his? "God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac." Do we believe this? Abraham who called himself the friend of God, meditating on what he could do to please Him, had the inward conviction that he must give his best, and the dearest thing in life to him was Isaac. Great men never hesitate, the act follows the conviction, and Abraham obeyed immediately.

Here are three of the highest qualifications of the soul of man: Obedience to his highest concept, instant action upon it, and neither condemnation of the God who demanded it nor self-pity for himself who must give. Self-sacrifice is the supreme test of faith, and Abraham was not found wanting. Willingness to give our

highest and best opens the way for God to give His highest and best to us. It is impossible to take anything out of life that we have not first put into it. An old concept was lost to Abraham, but a new one was born—God demanded the sacrifice of his son in another way than the one which Abraham knew. We never possess anything until we lose it, that is, we never get into right relationship to it. Human love must always be passed through the sacrificial fires before it is acceptable to God.

Sacrifice means to make sacred, and the one we have given to God has been made sacred to us. This is adjustment, an adjustment that we must make with everyone, our loved ones and unloved ones alike, for the human consciousness is chaos and the spiritual is order. Perfect adjustment would be eternal life, we have been told by one of the best thinkers that this planet has produced. We are always making adjustments, we must continue to do it until we get into right relationship with the universe and everything in it.

God does demand of us that we sacrifice our sons and daughters, our husbands, wives, lovers and friends, aye and our own lives also. It is not a mere humorist that exclaimed, "God save me from my friends, I can protect myself from my enemies." We instinctively protect ourselves from our enemies, we are always on guard against them. Yet they can never injure us in the sense that our unconsecrated lovers can injure us. The unwise parents who indulge their children, the foolish lover who flatters our mediocre efforts and thereby fails to stimulate us to better accomplishment are far more injurious than enemies would be. Our enemies often stimulate us to endeavor, for a definite determination to succeed often follows another's criticism or condemnation. It takes God to protect us from our friends, and He does it; He commands us to sacrifice them, and sacrifice them we must.

We give freedom when we have given up, we gain freedom as we are given up. Every life must come out and be its individual self, and the restrictions laid upon us by our mistaken lovers must be broken, as Samson broke the ropes bound around him by Delilah. Our genius is innate and solitary and must be worked out from itself and not

deflected by another's desire for us. The mother who would help her children must give them up. A mother of five children, four of whom died in infancy, sadly told me: "I have killed four of my children, and if my daughter had not fought me every inch of the way, she would not be alive." The truth had enabled this woman to see that the fear constantly held over her children had actually crushed their lives out. This woman is from the world's standpoint a model mother.

It is impossible to heal the sick and erring but by giving them up. We have not created them nor are we responsible for them. Turn them over to the One who did and Who is always responsible for them. Hold this responsibility up to God constantly and you will find that He always measures up to it. Time after time when in my blind human way a feeling of responsibility for my patients would creep over me, I have been enabled to give them up by repeating the words of that great seer, Robert Browning, "Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man; and doubt He alone will help him, who yet alone can?" Peace comes with sacrifice, and we can give no healing treatment that does not come from the deep conviction that the life of everyone, no matter what the seeming, is always hid with Christ in God.

God has nothing better to offer us than the love of a friend who has given us up. We have been given to God and, held in this, we have the required stimulus. We need this love as the tiny crocus needs the spring sunshine. We expand in it, we reach out in endeavor to measure up to it. "God never made a great man but He confided the secret to another." This stimulus is an actual necessity. No soul ever arrived at the goal without it.

The love which has passed through the sacrificial fire alone is true. There is only one love and that is Love. Love always sees our possibilities and believes in us until we believe in ourselves. In the mirror of another's love we find our real life. Let us pray with Hamilton Wright Mabie, "Send someone, Lord, to love the best that is in me and to accept nothing less from me." For those, who accept

from us anything less than God, will take from us, they are not an aid but a detriment.

I give the following experience as it was related in a class recently: "The youngest members of our family were two daughters, of which I was the elder. My mother was very sympathetic and had spoiled the family baby by indulging her in her belief in invalidism. The girl had no thought of anyone but herself and had enslaved our mother. She had alienated the affections of the whole family by her selfishness and uselessness, and when my mother died I was the only one who had compassion for her. For years I carried a deep-seated pain in my heart for her. I felt that she was not as intelligent as myself, nor as competent, and she was a trust left me by my mother that I could neither evade nor shirk.

"One of the greatest trials of my life were her letters; everything was hopeless from her standpoint. Her only diversion was trying new physicians; her letters were pleas for money to pay her bills. One day a peculiar vision came to me. I was in a large body of water bending over my sister as I held her head under the water waiting for her to drown. As I had been studying Divine Science for some time I knew that I was actually doing that. There could be no mistaking its meaning. I was holding her fast in my positive thought, and I must free her. I jumped up and, standing in the middle of the room, I positively threw her at God. I passionately exclaimed: 'God, I did not create her nor am I responsible for her. I absolutely refuse to carry her any longer.' From that moment my pocketbook was closed for her. She had the necessities, the luxury of physicians she must forego. She is a self-supporting woman today, she who never did a thing in her life to amount to anything until after she was thirty-five years old."

GOD DID COMMAND ABRAHAM TO SACRIFICE ISAAC. And He commands every one of us to do the same, and we shall know no peace until we place in God's care all those whom we love, and as we do it we gain them.

## CHAPTER IX

### JACOB

Gen. 27- 33

Jacob is more than a character in Biblical history, he is an epoch. In the history of Jacob, for the first time in Bible narrative, we touch Cosmic Vision. It is this Vision which, by common consent of civilized man, designates this series of books as The Book, the supreme book of all time.

If we read the story of Jacob in its outer significance, we have a peculiar Hebraic story. It traces the origin of the name Israel to this distinct ancestor, it casts a curious interest about two otherwise insignificant villages, Bethel and Peniel. This is national, narrow and of merely local interest. To read in this way, however, will not give the meaning of the character, it will hide it. This character is of far more symbolic interest than historic. It is the record of an experience common to all mankind.

Put aside the form of this narrative and look into the heart and meaning of it. It will instantly be seen that it is no longer anything local or Hebraic, but a great truth, wide as human nature. We have before us the record of an inward spiritual struggle, as real now in the twentieth century as then; as real in every earnest soul, as it was in the soul of Jacob. It reveals to us two things, on which all religion must ever stand, the soul's search for the inner reality, God, and God's revelation of this secret reality to the soul. It reveals that there can be no such thing as an outward church; that the Church of Christ is, as Jesus so definitely tells Peter in Matthew 16:14-19, the consciousness that can receive its revelation direct from God. The gates of hell will and can prevail against every one who has not received the new name Israel, one who has wrestled and prevailed with God.

In his early life and with the connivance of his mother, Jacob committed a deliberate sin. He deceived his father, he overreached his open, free-handed, careless brother, Esau. This alone is the

excuse for Rebecca and Jacob; Esau neither appreciated nor valued his birthright, nor would he have valued the blessing had he received it. Jacob gains both by craft, and must flee from his father's house to escape the wrath of his brother.

In youth the conviction of sin does not press home to us; Jacob, when he flees from his brother's wrath, does not yet realize that he has sinned. Fresh from his sin, he has the wonderful vision of youth; the vision of a ladder reared against the sky and the angels are ascending and descending upon it. His aspirations reach God, the vision tells him; and messages of reciprocal love are sent back to him. Leaving his father's home a banished man, this first meeting takes place. Fresh from his sin, God meets him in forgiveness and tenderness. The line between heaven and earth has not been severed, the divine Love watches over him and the way between God and his sinful child is clear and unimpeded still.

Then Jacob makes a covenant with his father's God. Note this, Jacob has no religion of his own, nor does this first vision of youth give him one. He covenants with this God of his fathers, and bargains with Him for hire. "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on; so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." This is not religion—it is the first law of nature, self-preservation.

Twenty years pass. In all of this time Jacob is Jacob, the crafty supplanter, still. He is under the law of action and reaction. He had deceived his father and Esau; Laban deceives him. He in turn deceives Laban and is again justified by his own conscience. Our *father's God* is never the redemptive God, He leaves our characters unchanged. After a score of years he turns homeward. Never in all of that time had he seen his brother. As he journeys homeward, word is brought him of the approach of his brother Esau, which makes a meeting inevitable. Jacob makes all provision to conciliate his brother. He prepares presents, he sends his flocks, servants and family over the brook Jabbok to meet him, and to

soften his heart towards him. Then he alone is left in the still dark night on the eve of the meeting.

There are moments when we stand face to face with a crisis to which great issues are linked; when we have done all that foresight can devise, and the hour of action being passed, the hour of reaction is at hand. The soul at this time is passive and helpless, gazing toward the anticipated event which is moving toward it. We go over again and again the whole circle of our own resources, and find them nothing, and we feel ourselves powerless in the grasp of destiny. In this feeling of insecurity the consciousness of a need of something greater than ourselves, greater than the combined power of all that we know as mankind, forces itself upon us. We reach out into the great Vastness for something to lean upon, something greater than human power or intelligence.

At this crisis there came into the soul of Jacob a conflict so violent that it seemed an actual struggle with a living man. In the darkness he hears a Voice, and comes into contact with a Form, and feels a Presence, the reality of which there is no mistaking. We know that this is not a form of flesh and blood, but something infinitely more real than flesh and blood can ever be. The realities of life are not those which the eye sees or the hand touches. Jacob here discovers the secret and mystery of existence. This is not the God whom he met twenty years before. That was the Father, but this is the Judge; and this meeting is the dread day of judgment, and no flesh can stand in it. No longer is it the protecting presence, the covenanting love; it is the power that pierces into the intent of the heart. It is that searching inward gaze in which the soul stands revealed to itself. One knows then how utterly hopeless it is for one to try to live the life of love and truth, except as he yields himself without reservation to the Divine Love. In and of ourselves we are nothing, only as we lose our lives do we gain them. We learn in this experience the helplessness and impotency of the soul that is not allied to God.

From our human point of view we should have expected the reverse of this. We should have expected the darker vision first, and the

vision of peace to follow it. However, spiritual experiences are always the exact reverse of what the mortal expects them to be. This is the true account by tried experience. God allows the wheat and the tares to grow together until the harvest; it is in the separation time that the tares must be cast out and thrown into the consuming flame.

The end and aim of Jacob's struggle is to know God. "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name." A very unimportant demand this looks at first sight. By whatever name He is sought in sincerity, He is found of us. What signifies a name? There is a deeper truth here. We have a name for God before we have been to Peniel; after we have met Him there, He is nameless, too vast to be limited by one.

In this second meeting of Jacob with God, he has no petition to make, he makes no promises. He is on the eve of meeting Esau, who had sought to kill him, but he asks no protection from Him. Deeper things are grappling the soul of Jacob, to know God's character, to know Him and what He is, for that he struggles from sunset to sunrise. We move through a world of mystery and the soul is not satisfied until it knows the real meaning of life. What is this haunting Presence that fills the universe? What is the name of this Being that floods us with light in our highest moments, that presses in heaviest weight when we are under a conviction of sin, crippling us in the sinews of the thighs, our tenderest points on which we lean, no longer leaving us the old prop of materiality? Who are you? Tell me, I pray thee, thy name? This is the struggle of all earnest lives.

"Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" This is worthy of the nameless One. God when He visits us gives us truths of feeling. Words change their meaning and lose their significance. A witty Frenchman once said, "We invented language when we wished to conceal our thoughts." Language is valuable for the things of this life, but for the things of the Spirit we should be better off perhaps without it. If religion were always based on truths of feeling, the world would be full of love and light.

Words often hide from us our ignorance even of earthly things. How often the child asks for information and we satiate his curiosity with words. Who does not know that we satisfy ourselves when we learn the name of a law of God, even as we do of natural things. We learn the name of a bird or a plant and fancy we know all about it. We are more hopelessly ignorant than we were before, for thinking we know all about it because we have the name we investigate no more, and the name covers over the abyss of our ignorance. If God had given Jacob a name, that might have satisfied him, but God impressed on him in that strange scene, His own character which would develop and change the man into the same character. Jacob felt the Infinite, who is more truly known when the least named. Words would have reduced Him to the finite; to know all about God is one thing, to know the living God is another.

Very significantly we are told that the divine Antagonist seemed anxious to depart as the day was about to dawn; but Jacob held fast to Him, as if aware that the daybreak would deprive him of his blessing. Again we have the distinctions of the religion of our childhood and our manhood. A little girl who was very willing to say her evening prayers, objected to saying them in the morning, "I can take care of myself in the light." But it is in the daylight that we need God the most. God is approached more nearly in that which is indefinite, than in that which is definite and distinct. He is felt in awe and wonder and worship, rather than in clear conceptions. There is a sense in which darkness has more of God than light has. "He dwells in the thick darkness." When the day breaks and distinctions come, the great thoughts that surged through us in the night time evaporate. We are then facing the cares and joys and distractions of our earth life. It is at this time we must cling to Him and not let Him go.

Literally more of infinity is revealed in the night time than in the light. Every morning God draws the curtain of His garish light across His Infinity. We look down upon earth instead of up to heaven. "We lay aside the telescope and take up the microscope and see

smallness instead of Vastness." But in the blessed evening we again "blend" into Infinity, and are changed into the same Image.

The forgiveness and tenderness of God twenty years before had not altered the character of Jacob. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening." [Jacob] is but half sincere; but when he comes into contact with the God of his manhood, the God who weighs him in the balance and takes his measure according to the strength of his soul, he becomes Real at once. Every insincere habit of thought shrivels up in the face of God. One clear glance into the depths of Being, and the whole man is altered. No longer Jacob the supplanter, but Israel the Prince of God, the champion of the Lord who has fought the mortal and conquered it.

N.B. I am indebted to Robinson's sermons for much of this chapter.

## CHAPTER X

### JOSEPH

Gen. 37- 50

Every youth should be familiar with the history of Joseph. King Midas had conferred on him the power of transforming everything he touched into gold; but had this gift not been changed, Joseph would have starved. In the modern Midas do we not behold the shrinkage of the soul, it being unfed? How much more desirable the gift of Joseph, the power to transform every event of life into good. What so easily could have been evil in the life of another, he turns into stepping stones and mounts upon them to a position of great power, saving the nations about him, and feeding them through the years of a great famine. "Perfect adjustment to our environment would be eternal life;" as long as human life exists, the story of Joseph will stand out as the symbol of direct purposefulness.

With the perspective that history gives us, how easily we read the intents of the Creator, and all His guidance of man. Here is a family grown from a great ancestor, Abraham, the product of a great civilization. Another powerful contemporaneous civilization exists; this too must be in the consciousness of a race who can transmit to succeeding generations what is in its consciousness. So this family must be transported to Egypt, and Joseph is the bridge over which they must be safely carried.

Joseph has the inheritance that every child has a right to have; he is the son of a woman whom his father loved. Early in life he develops the power of imagination, thus imaging a great life. It is just as easy to image a great life as it is a small one, and it is far more interesting. Joseph is a dreamer, i.e., he thinks visions, images. It is Whitcomb Riley who says,

"The dreamer lives forever,  
But the toiler dies in a day."

It is the mind that we put into our lives which makes them, and those who use their thoughts in this definite, constructive way, are, in the language of the Bible, Dreamers of Dreams.

Until French soldiers, who were digging at the mouth of the Nile, discovered the Rosetta stone, which enabled us to read the hieroglyphics of Egypt, this story of Joseph seemed most improbable. How could a foreign-born youth, one of an alien race, enter into the land of the proud Pharaohs and so quickly ascend to political heights? The stories of this great Book are amply verified. The characters of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are too valuable to reduce to mythology. We are reading Egyptian history now and we read that the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings conquered Egypt and reigned for several hundred years. These kings were of Asiatic origin and would gladly place one of the Semitic race in a position of power provided he had the fitness. It requires extraordinary ability to rule a conquered people in their own territory, and the prime minister is the real ruler, so we know that Joseph was a great statesman.

Joseph's brethren were jealous of him. His father had given him a coat of Oriental embroidery; and this favored lad of his father dreams his dreams of future greatness, and with youth's indiscretion tells about it. They will be rid of him, so he is sold into slavery and deported into Egypt. Does he waste time or energy in resentment or self pity? Not he; that is no way out of the dilemma. Joseph is a practical dreamer. The one man in life who cannot be kept down is the *practical mystic*; life to such a one is a fascinating game and he pits his own resources against anything that can happen to him. Man is always greater than any circumstance or condition will he but hold fast to his own God-given Mind.

Sold by his brethren he enters Potiphar's house and his ability soon makes him chief steward. Well favored, as well as brilliant, he attracts the attention of an unscrupulous woman. He will waste no more time on vice than he will in anger, self pity or revenge. Joseph is a man of values and vice has no value. True to his employer, he refuses to betray him and is falsely imprisoned. Joseph does not

know how to stop, so he keeps right on; and whatever was done in that prison, Joseph was the doer of it.

Always alert, he makes friends there and is not daunted if they forget him, he will make more and he will continue to do so until he succeeds. The way out of that prison is by friends and he will continue to make friends. The friend and the opportunity never fail to come to the one who steadfastly looks for them in faith.

The power of Joseph comes from dealing with God only. He harbours no revenge for any of those who have injured him, they might mean it for evil but God meant it for good. How easy it is to forgive a fellow-being for anything done to us if we but look through the individual to the forces at work for us. All nature is in league to place us where we belong; and behind all individuals whom we contact is a Power that is not of themselves, and It is working out Its purposes through them. Holding this Power responsible for all that occurs to us, we find that it always measures up to the responsibility and we have neither praise nor blame for our associates.

We glory in the innate goodness of mankind when we find that the men who sold their brother Joseph will protect Benjamin with their lives. If this were a fairy story or a melodrama, the wicked brothers would all be punished; but this is true life in a world watched over by Divine Love. A father like Jacob, a brother like Joseph, must of necessity redeem them. The only punishment for sin that God desires is correction of the sin; and man, when touched by the God love, desires for his enemy nothing but that he SEE.

Nothing that anyone ever does to us really injures us, only our own attitude of thought can do that. All injury is actually self-inflicted. Joseph's brothers did not injure him when they sold him into slavery. Potiphar's wife did not injure him when she falsely accused him; for the very simple reason that he did not invest that power in them. If God be all-power then there is no other power, and the power of Joseph is seen to be the reflection of the Power that he believed in.

The families of each of the eleven brothers become eleven of the tribes of Israel. Joseph's name is not given to a tribe, but the two half tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph, become the twelfth tribe. The Hyksos Pharaoh would welcome to Egypt and give to the twelve sons of Jacob the fertile valley of the Nile delta, the land of Goshen; for it was greatly to their interest to invite and give choice lands and positions to all that were of Asiatic origin, thus gaining cohorts that enabled them to keep the conquered Egyptians in subjection. Thus they strongly entrenched themselves in the land, and securely held this kingdom for five hundred years.

Again we have the two brothers. Joseph brings his two sons to Jacob that they may receive the blessing of Israel. Although Jacob is blind with age, and Joseph places the first born on the right hand of his father and the younger on the left, the hands of the old seer cross over and it is Ephraim that receives the blessing. The younger brother is a fruitful one, and it is his name which lingers. Manasseh (one who forgets) is forgotten. Nowhere in the Bible is the elder son blessed. Symbol of mortal man, whose "days are as grass; as a flower in the field so he flourisheth, and the wind passeth over it and it is gone; and the place thereof knoweth it no more." All mortality is thus destined to go, but the younger brother, the Spirit of man, abideth forever; yea, and he shall be blessed.

# CHAPTER XI

## MOSES

### Exodus - Numbers

Genesis, the book of beginnings, is the history of the origin of the Hebrew people. It deals with the family and the dignified patriarchal form of government. Exodus is the organization of those various families into one united nation; their departure from Egypt; and the codification of the necessary laws for their government. The oldest code of laws in the Bible is the Book of the Covenant, which is from the nineteenth to the twenty-fourth chapters of Exodus. These are by many conceded to be of Mosaic origin. Since Genesis was rewritten at least a thousand years later, its historical value is by no means as verifiable as Exodus.

The Hyksos kings were overthrown and the native dynasty again came into power. The Pharaoh of the oppression is generally supposed to be Rameses II and the Pharaoh of the exodus his son and successor Menephtah, who began his reign about 1300 B.C. This coincides with the statement: "There arose up a new king which knew not Joseph." Naturally those Egyptian monarchs feared this great nation which under the patronage of preceding kings had grown to very formidable proportions within their borders, and would look with disfavor on anything Asiatic. So all possible means to check their growth and render them powerless by reducing them to slavery became the policy of the Egyptian Pharaohs.

Great men are the result of the needs of their age. They embody the composite consciousness of their race and are the supply to the national demand. A national need was never greater than this one; for one of the outstanding characters of all time is Moses.

Again the Call. It came to Abraham to move from Chaldea with his family. It comes to Moses to move from Egypt with his nation. The task confronting him is not only the unwillingness of Pharaoh to let go of those whom he had made into profitable slaves, but also to stimulate to open rebellion this nation which had lost its initiative

under the hardships of its taskmasters. It required extraordinary genius to meet this condition; which Moses possessed with self-abnegation and the courage of his own convictions.

Moses was singularly equipped for his great work through his birth and education. It is too strange not to be true, for no flight of the human imagination ever equals the great truths that actually happen in a world that rests under the eternal shadow of the Almighty. The thread of the narrative of Moses' history is lost within much statement of law in Exodus and Numbers. Professor Moulton in the "Modern Reader's Bible" enables us to follow the story of his life easily, by using smaller type for the legal enactments.

Biography is always valuable, lives of great men are inseparable from history, and as Longfellow tells us, remind us that we can make our lives sublime. Hebrew biography and history are never mere chronicles of events. They are interpretations of God in His dealings with His people. Historic accuracy of time or events is not essentially the purpose of these writers, but to tell how God guided, watched over, and supplied the every need of this nation, the primal reason for all of their literature.

The life of Moses is divided into three forties. Since the Hebrew always wrote under numerical symbols, the question is—are those figures symbolic of perfect time, four being the number of perfection, or is there in the mathematical accuracy of the universe a method which works out perfectly to those who live closely under its laws? Moses stands as a synonym for law, the type of perfect manhood on the human plane. Scientists tell us that normal length for all animal life is five times its maturity. Counting man's maturity from the early twenties, one hundred and twenty years is the natural span of man's life, and we are told that Moses reached this age with his natural forces not abated. The soul never matures, for it is not under what we call natural law; it knows no time, no space, no material walls. In the life of Jesus we see natural law transcended, so we have come to see that natural law is but human belief, and the only law is the spiritual.

Great lives are the natural lives; the little, contracted life has not allowed itself to expand. In great men God has been permitted to have the right of way and expansion is the result. The book of Exodus fairly sings of the Presence. Moses was born under the conviction of the saving Power. The oppression had reached its harshest point, the boy babies were all to be slain, the race to be exterminated. His mother determined to save her child. He can be safe only under royal favor, and with the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove she laid her plans. What woman could resist her beautiful babe? The daughter of Pharaoh must see him. The princess proved herself to be a true woman, the child was saved, and she bestowed on him the Egyptian name Moses.

Nursed by his own mother, educated in the palace of the Pharaoh, the man reached his fortieth year. Two roads lay before him--the royal road to wealth, position, power. Over against this the championship of a race oppressed and powerless--an enslaved people. This man nurtured at the breast of his Hebrew mother, never hesitated, but chose that road which forever closed the royal palace to him.

His sympathy for the Hebrews led to his killing one of their taskmasters, and he must flee the country. He found refuge with the Midian priest, Jethro, married his daughter Zipporah, and tended the flocks of his father-in-law. He was taught of this Midianite priest, and the religion which we call Judaism emanated from Jethro, who was always a valued friend and advisor of Moses.

Here in the land of Midian, near Mt. Horeb, the Cosmic Vision came to Moses, and this benign Presence remained throughout the life of the man. We find Moses arguing with it of his own unworthiness to accomplish the tremendous task of gaining the consent of Pharaoh to lead his people out of the dominion of Egypt. Then we see the gradual breaking down of his own mental limitations, for whoever accomplished a big work in this way had ever failed to break through his limiting belief of himself and rise into the Infinite Belief in him?

"Who has more obedience than I, masters me," Emerson tells us. Moses found the One to whom he was to render obedience. Jacob, the self seeker, could not get the *name*, which was so graciously given to Moses, the self eliminator. I AM WHAT I AM is the comprehensive rendering of this by modern scholarship. I am what I am, perfect, eternal, spiritual. To Me the temporal and material are non-existent. Duality, time, space, weight are not in my Mind. Sin, sickness, sorrow and death are but inventions of human thought: I AM WHAT I AM.

Moses was now eighty years of age and his work was just commencing. A great work requires great preparation. He presented himself before Pharaoh, but this king is more subtle than his predecessor; the other would exterminate the race, this one had made of them a source of income and he hardened his heart and would not let them go. It is the will of Jehovah, however, that the people go, and who yet has defied that Will and lived?

How ignorant we are still about natural elements and conditions? How far reaching is man's control of these elements? Jesus, we are sure would say, Absolute. Did he not control the winds and the waves? All the plagues of Egypt were but intensified conditions to which that country which has been called "The gift of the Nile" was subject. The reddish color of the Nile, owing to the debris of vegetable and animal defilement; the locusts, the frogs, the cattle diseases, the storm of hail, all had been known before and have been since. "All nature is on the side of the one who would rise" and right royally she rallied to the aid of the Israelite at this time.

From this time dates the Passover, for did not Jehovah pass over the houses of the Hebrews and slay only the first born of the Egyptians? They are free now, and the third division of the life of Moses commences. The final culmination of the deliverance comes to us in the Song of Moses and Miriam, his sister: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously."

It is not in these great heroic movements that the accurate measure of man's stature can be taken; but in the sustained strength which

does not yield when the stimulated interest which comes with a movement into new conditions is gone, and the long, slow process of reconstruction commences. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, but the character of Moses yields not under any pressure. He fills "the measure of the stature of man." The people whom he led from Egypt had lost their virility and initiative in serfdom. Not until these have passed away, and a new generation is born and reared in freedom and under his tutelage, can they move forward and take the land promised to their fathers. Moses never fails either in heroic action or in the long tedious years in which he must settle their petty disputes, meet their murmurings and ingratitude, and supply their needs both physical and spiritual.

Exodus and Numbers are books of miracles because they are books of the Presence. The water never fails, and the herb which sweetens the bitter water is at hand; where there is no water the barren rock is made to flow. The manna with its lessons stimulating industry and rebuking covetousness fell as needed. For his daily bread man must work, nor is he entitled to more recompense than that his daily needs be supplied. When we gather more, is it not an abomination in the house? Storehouses may be full of the wisdom of man, but Paul tells us, "The wisdom of man is foolishness unto God." The guidance is unmistakable; the cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night; when to go forward, when to stand still, always clear.

The life of Egypt under foreign oppression, is the symbol of man under the hard taskmasters of sensuality, pride and avarice. The deliverance under Moses is the freedom man gains from these taskmasters as he learns the law of life; for we can never come under Grace except we first know the law. Law must be known in order to be fulfilled, as we must know the law of music before we make music. In the desert is the discipline and education which enable us to come into the promised land of our own creative power. Step by step, from bondage to freedom, can we trace the way for every living soul. We too, unconscious of the presence, see the cloud and the pillar of fire. We, too, in invoking this Power, have had the manna fall, and the rock gush forth its living water. We too,

in using our creative power selfishly, have had the loathsome stench come into our nostrils because of it.

Moses is composite man. He is father, mother, sister, brother, friend, judge, sustainer, and supplier to his people. His great mind can harbor no jealousies. Jealousy is always the sin of the little mind, in fact it is what constitutes littleness; for it is the belief that another has a better endowment than one's self. It chokes out the passage of the inheritance that belongs to all equally. Moses wants no monopoly of God's favors. "Enviest thou for my sake?" he says to Joshua. "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets and the Lord would put his Spirit upon them." The great soul does not want leadership; but the companionship of equal souls that will be a stimulus to better endeavor.

On tablets of stone stand the great commandments of Moses. To break them is to break ourselves. They are laws which are written in the very constitution of the universe. It is the first half of the ladder that we must climb as we ascend Godward. Beyond it lies spiritual law, but there is no means under heaven whereby we may come to that second law save as we fulfill the first.

Moses lived under the gracious Presence, and it focused its rays in his heart and they radiated from thence to the nation. The Christian revelation could never have been made had not this great revelation preceded it. But he who lived under the shadow of the Law, hid in the cleft of the rocks, can only see the "back parts" of God. That which is "existent behind all law, which made them and, lo, they are," can be revealed only to one greater than Moses.

Gleaming behind the Saviour of men will forever loom the great figure of him who thundered the law from Sinai. He whose reward was Pisgah's heights from whence he saw the promised land afar, and in Spirit perceived the people whom he loved better than he loved himself pass over into safety, laid the foundation of true religion broad in the roots of reality.

What matters what happens to the individual if his life has aided the race to go forward? Great souls only ask the privilege of serving, and

of being conscious that their lives have increased the leverage which raises the race to a broader vista and its consequent greater expression. Across the centuries the gracious benediction falls upon us and, loving and appreciating the inspirer of it, we too, may reflect in our faces that shining which was in his when, "He wist not that the skin of his face shone."

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;  
The Lord make his face to shine upon  
thee, and be gracious unto thee;  
The Lord lift up his countenance upon  
thee, and give thee peace.

## CHAPTER XII

### JOSHUA

#### The Book of Joshua

While the Israelites were encamped in the wilderness of Paran, Moses decided to send spies into the land of the Canaanite. These people were farther advanced in agriculture and the arts of civilization than were the Israelites at this time, but their moral and religious life was so vicious and demoralizing that affiliation with them was impossible, and the great Hebrew nation builders uncompromisingly destroyed them.

The question asked by the earnest Truth seeker is, Did God give the order to Moses to send spies into the country of Canaan that the Israelites might measure the strength of the inhabitants against their own, and thus go forward to exterminate the people and possess the land? Always bear in mind that, in the Bible, we are studying the evolution of the race and the unfoldment of the concept of God in the consciousness of man. God is intelligence, and if we will but take this intelligence with us as we study, we can readily see that God already knew the strength of both the Israelites and the Canaanites. If He was talking to Moses in the sense that one man talks to another, He would give the required information and there would be no need of sending spies.

Each man's God is his highest concept of Him. In the history of the race we do not come to a perfect concept of God until the revelation of Christianity. Moses lived thirteen hundred years before Jesus, and a comparison of his teachings with Christianity is unfair. To appreciate the great Law-giver, comparison must be made with the nations of his time. Inherent in the universe is a law called by Darwin "the law of the survival of the fittest." Certainly the Hebrews were more fit to survive than the nations which they conquered.

Man must progress, and he who does not, by inevitable law, recedes and finally is annihilated. No power can hold us on life's highway except as we unfold from within our own consciousness. Evolution

is the continuous progressive unfoldment of power within our own consciousness. Moses saw natural law and founded a nation and a religion upon this. A knowledge of law is absolutely necessary to its fulfillment; and until this idea is established in man's consciousness we cannot rise into Christianity, which takes us into the realm of spiritual Reality which controls every natural law.

Moses sends from each of the twelve tribes of Israel one of their princes, over into Canaan. Conspicuous among these princes are two--Joshua from the tribe of Ephraim, true descendant of Joseph, and Caleb from the tribe of Judah, "the lion's whelp." The spies go forward into the land, and return with the fruits of the country and their report of it. "We came unto the land that thou sentest us and surely it floweth with milk and honey, nevertheless, the people be strong, and the cities are walled and very great. And there we saw giants, the sons of Anak; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so were we in theirs." But Caleb said: "Let us go up at once, for we be well able to overcome it." Of all the spies sent out only those who felt their ability to conquer actually went over into the land of Promise, Joshua and Caleb. No man ever yet conquered a condition or a nation who did not first believe in his own ability to do it. To depreciate our own power is to limit God's power.

Moses had founded a unique form of government, a Theocracy. Jehovah was the real Ruler who spoke to His prophets direct, who in turn gave those commands to the people. After the death of Moses the divine command came to Joshua. "Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses so will I be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee;

turn not from it to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart from thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then shalt thou have good success. Have I not commanded thee? The Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Joshua is not great because Jehovah spoke those words to him; he is great because he heard them. The infinite God is never silent, He is speaking those words to the whole human race all of the time; and the measure of the stature of each is the measure of his ability to hear and obey. Under Moses, Joshua had learned to listen to the Voice and to obey it unhesitatingly, and only he who can be obedient can command. Joshua is the prototype of Jesus, whose name is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua. What Joshua did for the Israelites on the material plane, Jesus does for mankind on the spiritual plane. In his unswerving faith; his obedience to the call; in his definite clear-cut choice between good and evil; he merits the name bestowed on him by Moses, Joshua (Salvation).

Even in the Land of Promise, there are difficulties to overcome. There is no plateau in life on which we shall not have to put forth effort. To cease to do this is to cease to progress and life is eternal progression. After crossing the Jordan a big work still confronts the Israelites. Jericho is on the way to all of the passes of the interior, it must be taken. As we pass from the mortal to the spiritual life, do we not find that we in our interior experience repeat this whole drama?

The spies sent into Jericho find but one woman favorable to them, and she of that class which the great Master asserted should enter the kingdom of Heaven before the self-righteous member of society. Man is acted upon by Spirit, and everyone who has accomplished a deed or a work worth while will readily admit that a Power and Intelligence beyond that which he knows as his own possessed him while he did it.

It is only as we yield ourselves to the Spirit that we come into Spiritual power and knowledge. Jericho, the city of mortal thought, must it not be encamped around about by the armies of Israel? Must we not, with the ark of the covenant, march around it once each day for six days, thus gaining strength and enthusiasm to complete the work on the seventh day; when, shouting the name of our God and blowing the trumpet of Truth, the walls of mortal limitation fall away and give to us the citadel of our own soul power?

Must we not learn too the great lesson of leaving all belief of mortal life absolutely behind, and of not taking any of the accursed things over into our spiritual life? In the new life there is a new language, a new scale of values, a learning that sets at naught all of our boasted earthly knowledge. Provision has been made for all of our needs; there can be only trouble with all that we try to smuggle over, and in the valley of Achor must we finally leave it to destruction.

Joshua led by the "Captain of the host of the Lord," is invincible and irresistible in his march forward. What besieged city can stand under this invisible pressure? Have not we, when working in the great Presence, and knowing that our work must be finished before the setting of the sun, have we not done that which could not be done except we had invoked the Power?

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;  
And thou, moon in the valley of Ajalon.  
And the sun stood still,  
And the moon stayed,  
Until the nation avenged themselves on  
their enemies.

The division of the territory of the Promised Land among the twelve tribes occupies from the thirteenth to the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Joshua; and it consequently has been called the "Doomsday book of the Old Testament." In this division we find Joshua is more than a great general, he is an impartial judge, and the spur of action, "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land

which the Lord God of your fathers hath given unto you?" Joshua is pre-eminently a man of positive action.

Caleb comes for his portion of the land; and he asks characteristically for that part inhabited by the Anakim (giants), which he will have for his inheritance. It is the directed strength of you that makes the hale old age; and the one who believes his powers equal to his tasks who finds that they do not wane. "Forty years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me to Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart, and lo, I am this day four-score and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the days that Moses sent me; as my strength was then even so is my strength now, both to go out and to come in. Now, therefore, give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spoke in that day; for thou hearest in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fenced; if so be that the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out."

The strong soul asks not for the easiest inheritance, he is equipped to meet the hardest. Then why not leave the easier to another, and in the strength of Jehovah take upon himself the greater task? We shall find at least one blessing as we assume the greater work as our share of the inheritance; less competition and plenty of room. Thus do we come to Shiloh (tranquility) and set up our tabernacle there. From this eminence alone can we found cities of refuge to which the transgressor may flee and find safety and redemption.

Joshua, true son of man, comes conquering and to conquer; according to the divine promise made him, there was not any man [who] could stand before him all the days of his life. Faithful in service, true in command, leader of a nation in its march onward, he reveals the power of Man, child of infinite Promise, as he comes to believe in God and himself. To each of us the Spirit says as it did to Joshua: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon that have I given you." All that we understand stands under us in our consciousness, and what is rooted there can never be severed from us.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SAMUEL

Samuel 1:1-29

After the death of Joshua, the twelve tribes of Israel settled each on its own portion of the land. The wandering nomadic tribes now had a country, and the elements of national unity in their common acknowledgment of Jehovah as their God and Moses as their lawgiver. Otherwise they were scattered, and each still had his own borders to fortify, for the Canaanites were far from conquered.

At this period of Hebrew history we have an Anarchial state of society. Anarchy (self-government) is supposed to be the antipode of Socialism. In fact, Anarchy must precede Socialism. I am using these terms in their original meaning, not in the party significance given them in modern politics. Until the individual is self-governing, he can by no means affiliate under a social form of government. Socialism, which is unity in government, the welfare of the whole, the ideal that all must conform to, can result only from the aggregation of self-governing units, each voluntarily giving up selfish purposes for the good of the whole. We cannot give up self until we possess it, therefore a period of anarchy is absolutely essential in both individual and national growth. In this period of Hebrew history there is no central government. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Do we not find this true in our individual growth? After the restraints of childhood, it matters not how lovingly administered, there is a period of anarchy in the life of every boy and girl, which we find most unmanageable. The youth must find his own central self. This is so apparent that our psychologists say, "There never was a child who did not at some time wish its parents dead." It is indeed the wise parent who knows this fact and gives to his child that period in which he must find himself untrammelled, and the child may voluntarily come to him for advice without being either ridiculed or coerced.

The nation is but the aggregation of the individual and passes through the same phases. Russia and Mexico are both in this period today. Should we not understand by now and be both tolerant and patient, until these nations find themselves? Judges is this period of Hebrew history. When men came in conflict with each other their disputes were carried before a judge. These "judges" imply to us something quite different from what they implied to the Hebrew. Disputes were settled by the elders of the tribe of the village or town. At this period there were no appointed heads of government, but natural ability, fairness and spiritual power drew its own clientele, and these people were called judges. This period lasted for about two hundred years. The last and greatest of the judges was Samuel, who found the nation a loosely knit body of tribes, but left it a united people with national aspirations and power.

Samuel (asked of God) received his name because he is the answer to his mother's prayer. Hannah consecrated her child to the Lord all the days of his life, before he was born, and in the fulness of her heart at his birth burst into lyric thanksgiving:

"Mine heart exulteth in the Lord,  
Mine horn is exalted in the Lord.  
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;  
Because I rejoice in thy salvation."

Eli is judge at this time, and Shiloh is the center of national worship. Here the ark of the covenant rests, and to this temple presided over by Eli, the little Samuel is brought by his grateful mother. "And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli, and the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."

There can be but one reason for this; no one was at this time able to see the Vision. Eli in his indulgence of his sons, a sin against God, his sons, and society, could not see it. The penalty for sin is spiritual blindness. The Vision never fails, it always abides, but, alas, those who have the eyes that see, the ears that hear, are always the few, never the many.

Samuel's birthright is the Open Vision. It is woman indeed who must crush the head of the serpent (materiality) as she carries the unborn generations. Did woman but know the formative power of her own consciousness, each child would be born into the world with Samuel's gift; and humanity would walk freely on the King's Highway of creative power, spiritual unity, and the joy that no man can take from them.

It is a touching and beautiful account that we read in first Samuel; of the little lad girded in the linen ephod, serving in the temple with the old Eli. Samuel and Eli had both "laid down to sleep, in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was; then the Lord called Samuel; and he said, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou callest me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou callest me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou callest me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

So the Lord speaks to Samuel, and Samuel tells Eli every whit; and Eli, recognizing his sin and the justness of his doom, submissively says: "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good." But Samuel's secret is the key to every great life. "And Samuel grew and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground."

We meet at this period an enemy that the nation was long in conquering, the Philistines. These people, unlike the rest of the Canaanites, are not Semites, and have a strong political organization.

Samuel is not a man of war as was Joshua, nor a lawgiver as was Moses; but he "was a friend of man, and he dwelt by the side of the road." The people come to him in trouble, and he prays for them. He

has "the hearing ear, and the seeing eye," and they are always at the service of his fellow-man. He is a natural unifier and peacemaker and forms such a strong national organization, that while the Philistines are not conquered, they come no more to the border of Israel all the days of Samuel.

Samuel grows old in the service, and his sons walk not in his ways, so the nation comes to the conviction that centralization of government means national strength. They demand that Samuel appoint a king over them. He who has harmonized the scattered tribes and has become a recognized national leader is the one who has made the monarchy possible, and he must find and anoint the king. He is much displeased at this demand. Was not Jehovah their king? And was not the national government a theocracy under this invisible king? Samuel is not a terrorist as many of the doom prophets were, but he shrewdly tells them what will occur if they insist on a monarchy.

And he says, "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint them unto him as captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow the ground, and to reap the harvests, and to make instruments for war, and to make instruments for chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks and to be bakers. And he will take your fields and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take your manservants, and your maidservants, and the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and to his servants. He will take your sons and your daughters and put them to work. He will take a tenth of your flocks and ye shall be servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye have chosen you; and the Lord will not answer you in that day."

It all falls on ears that can not listen to reason, they wish to be as other nations and have "a king to rule over us." Samuel gives way to the popular demand, and anoints [the] first king of Israel, Saul, "A

young man and goodly; and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he." Over against the monarchy, however, stood the restraining bands, or schools of the prophets. They are the antidote for the king. The Hebrew word for "prophet" means to "announce" or to "foretell." Their message was always Jehovah's commands to the people. Thus they became the heralds at once of patriotism, national unity and religion. Samuel was neither prophet nor judge in the technical sense; but he organized prophetic bands, and this organization lasted until the time of Elijah and Elisha.

The true prophet had a peculiar place in the nation. He was the national conscience, and the kings feared him as man fears that something that invariably appears with the pointing finger of accusation, when he has been guilty of selfishness, sensuality, or oppression. The prophet stood between the people and the king, for the rights of Jehovah's people. The idea of a theocracy was never lost to the Hebrews, and the national king was only a vice-regent of the righteous Jehovah, and the prophets reminded the kings of this, to their great discomfiture.

Thus Samuel unwillingly becomes a king-maker; but as he is above all things a prophet, the rise of the prophetic order at the same time as the monarchy, is the national consequence of this insight. "An institution is the lengthened shadow of a man's consciousness," and this prophetic order, lasting for centuries, has given to the human race a great literature, whose influence on the character of the human family it is impossible to compute.

Samuel with the establishment of the monarchy, at the installation of Saul as king, would fain retire; and here in the presence of all Israel said: "Behold, I have hearkened to your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you; I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you; and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day. Here I am; witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine

eyes withal? and I will restore it to you." And they said: "Thou has not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." And Samuel said: "The Lord is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand." And they said: "He is witness."

A great seer cannot retire, he is a light that cannot be hid under a bushel. Saul walks not after the ways of the Lord, and Samuel is appointed to find a king after Jehovah's own heart. So he finds and anoints a shepherd lad, who was "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon." This choice of Samuel's marks the zenith of the national power, but from his other order, is founded that which supplants the Son of Man by the Son of God.

Samuel goes the way of all flesh, but the Spirit of a prophet can never die. Undoubtedly the greatest gifts of God to the children of men are its seers. To these we owe that power which separates man from the brute and makes him akin to the angels. These great supermen stand out in history as beacon lights, nor can their light ever fail, for it has entered the consciousness of the race and makes it what it is.

Woven into the fabric of our being is Samuel, with his incorruptible honesty, his clear vision, his large, tolerant charity, that like unto God lets us make our own mistakes, and then correct them. How otherwise can we come into his vision of the invisible Theocracy, where we need no visible ruler, and no man can say to us, "Knowest thou God, for all shall know Him."

## CHAPTER XIV

### GAINING THE KINGDOM

#### I - II Samuel

Again in Saul and David we have the symbol, ubiquitous in Hebrew history, of the rejection of the elder and the acceptance of the younger. Saul compromises with the enemies of his country; and keeps part of the spoil which he uses as a sacrifice. Subtle mortal man thus persuades himself that "the end justifies the means." No end, however, in the spiritual world is gained by compromise; man cannot bargain with principles, he must undeviatingly obey them. Nor can any sacrifice be made to Jehovah in lieu of the absolute obedience that he demands. Samuel, the prophet, is unyielding and uncompromising, and unflinchingly says to the king: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? He hath also rejected thee from being king."

Saul is unworthy of the kingdom, but one must be found who is worthy of it and it is Samuel's work to find him. Great trusts carry great responsibilities with them, and Samuel waits for the Lord to tell him whom to anoint. The chosen one is David (beloved), son of Jesse, who keeps his father's sheep. From Bethlehem (house of bread) comes David the king, apex of Israel's national power, and Jesus (salvation), climax of her spiritual power. From whence could they have come but from Divine Substance? And the shepherd who guards his father's sheep so carefully that with his own hand he slays the lion and the bear which menace their lives, is he not the type of the Good Shepherd? Of Him who said: "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep. He that is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them and scattereth them: he fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep."

Saul's sin results in insanity, the consequence of sin. We leave sanity, the basis of right thinking and acting, to sin. "Whosoever sinneth is the bond-servant of sin," and forgets the chains which bind him. The penalty of sin is the reaction or recoil of the sin upon the sinner. Penalty grows on the same stalk with sin and cannot be separated from it, it is its consequence. Sin and penalties are temporal, however, Love watches over all. David is brought to the court of Saul as a musician who can exorcise the evil spirit. Out under the vast dome of the arched sky, he has learned to think and to translate thought into music. So David plays his harp before Saul, "who was refreshed, and was well and the evil spirit departed from him."

"The universe has been created and is sustained by a musical law." The sinner is out of harmony and he must be restored to it. Life is one vast symphony and each, from the least to the greatest, has his place in the orchestration. Life is all music, if the notes are struck correctly. Sanity is the ability to strike those notes clearly, powerfully and definitely. Insanity is discordant and perverted thinking. Music is the expression of the musician, and David, the beloved, was under contract to the universe to give out what had been so freely given him. He loved Saul and through his music flowed that which makes the harmony of the spheres. Love is good will, and the only healer. Nothing can express love in the same degree as music. It is the soul's own language and should be used in therapeutics more universally than it is now. It is the most refined and spiritualizing of all the arts and spiritual ideas can be expressed through music as in no other art.

The elder brothers of David are in Saul's army; and their father sends his youngest son with provisions to his brothers and presents to their officers. When David arrives at the camp, the Israelites are encamped on one hill, and opposite them on another hill is the Philistine army. Into the valley between them Goliath, champion of the Philistines, presents himself daily. His "height was six cubits and a span, and he had an helmet upon his head and he was clad in a coat of mail." This giant cries to the armies of Israel: "Why are ye

come to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye the servants of Saul? Choose ye a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us. I defy the armies of Israel this day. Give me a man that we may fight together."

No man in the camp has dared to accept this challenge, until David arrives. He says to Saul: "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight this Philistine." He puts off him the armor of Saul, which the king has placed on him and which would mean defeat; for who can prove another's armor? He who accomplishes must conquer by his own methods and be sheathed in his own armor of conscious power. He only is invulnerable who is clothed in the power which he can gain from no man, but is inherent within himself. David believes in God; he believes in himself; and he believes in the righteousness of his cause; thus armed, he determines to accept the challenge of the Philistine.

In the sublime audacity of youth, the stronger for his inexperience--for every experience in which we have been defeated weakens us--David goes forth to meet Goliath in his own armor, a shepherd's scrip and sling, and sends a stone crushing into the forehead of his opponent. The way to success must be original; failure and mediocrity are the results of trying to win by the alien methods of others. Each soul is not only a distinct individual; it has its own distinct work, and inherent within it its own method of doing that work. "The fault lies not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings." And this fault lies in the fact that we endeavor to do our work weighted down with the unproved armor of another, and close our eyes to the fact that only in our own original thought are we equipped to meet the requirements of our own work.

Goliath (an exile), the Philistine (an emigrant), is the great braggart who presents himself daily before us and defies us. This exile emigrant from nowhere is brazenly standing between us and our birthright; his modern name is Finite Sense. It is only in our own spiritual insight that we can meet him, and send crashing into his

forehead the words of divine Truth. Each has his own work and there is a spiritual tie connecting one with the work that is his to do. The key of another will not open my door. There is a legend of a musical instrument which stood in an old baronial hall. It had become disordered, and though many had tried to repair it, they were without success. But there came one day to the castle the man who was the maker of the instrument. With loving care and skill, he set right that which was wrong, and again the instrument gave forth music that charmed the life and inspired the soul.

The crown of life is only given to him that overcometh, and each must slay his own Goliath, the limiting, hampering, defeating mortal thought. Each must adjust the strings of his own instrument, and release the music of his own soul. Daily and hourly will Goliath challenge us, until, like David, we go out and meet this Philistine, clothed in our conscious knowledge of Truth, and slay him with his own sword. Evil is self-destructive, its own sword slays it. It is impossible to compromise with Goliath, either we slay him or he slays us. Warfare with him is self-defense.

In "Self Reliance," Emerson says: "Let the stoic arise who shall reveal the resources of man, and tell men that they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations, that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and the moment he acts for himself, tossing the laws, the idolatries out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him, and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor, and make his name dear to all history."

Other tests await David. He must meet the jealousy of Saul; and more subtle still, the adulation of the people. Many a man has accomplished the heroic deed, only to fall under the seductive guile of his own vanity, when the plaudits of the multitude ring in his ears. And only the love that is tested to the uttermost, and weakens not under the severest strain is real. Saul's malady reaches an acute stage when the multitude sings:

"Saul has slain his thousands,  
And David has slain his ten thousands."

Still, "David played with his hand, as he did day by day; and Saul had his spear in his hand. And Saul cast his spear for he said: I will smite David even to the wall." But "David behaved wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him. All Israel and Judah loved David; for he went out and came in before them."

The charm and personal popularity is David's; and what can this be but love sent out in large measure from the soul, and returning upon it a gracious benediction? He is always one of the people even though he marries the king's daughter. All beautiful lives have their secret; and David could say as did another when asked the secret of his power, "I had a friend." Saul's son loved David, "The soul of Jonathan was knit with that of David, and Jonathan loved David as his own soul."

The story of Jonathan's friendship for David is one of the most inspiring pieces of literature of all time. Without the absolute love and trust of another in him, man never makes the supreme stand; for the soul requires this stimulus to grow to that state of consciousness which is fixed and unswerving. We grow out into another's faith in us; as the flower grows out to greet the sunshine. "Whenever God makes a great man he confides the secret to another," is a poetic way of stating the fact that the faith and love of a friend ennobles a soul and brings it out on the mountain top of greatness.

As One later gives up his life for his friends, Jonathan gives up a throne for his friend. Friendship has its own throne, but it is not of "this world," it is of that other eternal in the heavens, for friendship is immortal. Jonathan's love never falters when David, driven away by Saul's jealousy, becomes a freebooter for years. During this time Saul's life is twice in David's power, but he holds true to his course, and spares the king's life. Did not he who came from the house of David a millennium later say in his greatest discourse: "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the

publicans the same? Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven"?

The following estimate of David is from the pen of Richard Moulton, in "The Modern Reader's Bible." "The personality of David is perhaps the most splendid in all history. He is the warrior of Israel, the founder of the monarchy from which all kings trace their reigns. He is equally the center of Hebrew poetry, with whose name both earlier and later song is associated in the book of Psalms. He is the inventor in musical art; whereas the Greeks never learned the art of combining lyre and flute, David's orchestra of cornets, trumpets, cymbals, psalteries, and harps shows the union of strings, wind and percussion, which is supposed to constitute the distinctiveness of modern music. With him is associated whatever else of art is permitted to the Hebrews; the architecture of Solomon's temple is designed by his father, and he establishes the courses of sacred ritual which constitute Israel's highest art. And all this splendor of achievement is crowned with a personality that is intensely human, and lovable in all human relationships."

Jonathan and three of his brothers were slain in a battle with the Philistines. The misdirected life of Saul ends at the same time when he falls on his own sword and dies. In David's Lament, which is undoubtedly from his own pen, we feel a love that is not only human but super-human; from one who has been touched with the divine. David had been weighed in the balance and not found wanting; he had served up to the kingdom and it could not be kept from him.

#### DAVID'S LAMENT

Thy glory, O Israel,  
Is slain upon thy high places!  
How are the mighty--  
Fallen.

Tell it not in Gath,  
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;  
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,  
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

From the blood of the slain,  
From the fat of the mighty,  
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their  
lives,  
And in their death they were not divided;  
They were swifter than eagles,  
They were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel,  
Weep over Saul,  
Who clothed you in scarlet delicately,  
Who put ornaments upon your apparel.

I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan,  
Very pleasant has thou been unto me:  
Thy love to me was wonderful,  
Passing the love of women.

How the mighty--fallen!  
And the weapons of war--perished.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE MONARCHY

#### Samuel - Kings

The original inhabitants of Jerusalem felt so secure, the city being a natural fort, that they contemptuously sent word to David, "Thou shalt not come in thither, but the blind and the lame shall turn thee away." Material walls in themselves are no security; and the mortal who puts his trust in them, awakens to find the stronghold his no longer. Constant vigilance is the price we pay to hold forts, be they material or spiritual; and as Jerusalem belongs to him who can take it, David entered and established his kingdom there. The wandering tribes now had a capital and during the reigns of David and Solomon the nation reached the zenith of its national power.

One great sin darkens the pages of David's history; and the historian makes no attempt to condone it either because David is founder of the monarchy or the popular hero of the race. Then we see the "national conscience," the restraining hand of the prophet. Nathan presented himself before the king, and told him the story of a great wrong. "There were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb; which he had bought and nourished up; and it grew up together with him and his children; and it did eat of his own morsel, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom and was to him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man and he spared to take of his own flock but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man who was come to him." The anger of the generous David was greatly kindled, and he exclaimed: "As the Lord liveth the man who hath done this thing is worthy to die." Nathan answered: "THOU ART THE MAN."

In his own household he had sinned, and to his own household retribution came. There arose a feud between the sons of David and Absalom laid deliberate plans to depose his father. Still David was always the father, never the enemy of Absalom; and though driven

from Jerusalem again into hiding, commanded his generals, "Deal gently with the young man for my sake." He did not ask of the returned courier the success of his own army but, "Is it well with the young man?" And it was not the victor, but the father, who retired to the chamber over the gate weeping, "O my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son, my son." The kingdom belonged to David, he had gained it; Saul could not keep it from him; because he was friend and father first and king last. The spiritual fulfilment of our duties always holds the external symbol true and fast.

When Solomon succeeded his father, the Lord appeared to him in a dream by night, and said to him: "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon said: "Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil." The speech pleased the Lord, who said to him: "Because thou hast asked this thing, and not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself; nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked both riches and honor, and I will lengthen thy days."

This, however, is a "dream by night", it is not a day vision of God. A "dream by night" may be but a travesty of the Real. When we read closely and searchingly into the life of Solomon, we know this "Lord" was such an one. He is not our God; neither the wisdom he gives, nor the gifts he bestows strike a responsive chord in the soul. The "understanding" of Solomon is a cold judicial mind. "The heart hath its arguments which the understanding knows not of." Who cares for riches, honor or long life, if love be lacking? Who that has found infinite substance and has learned to build therein cares for riches? Who that has received the gift of "eternal life," knows aught of length of days? He dwells out of time in eternity.

There is always something elementary in David, he touches the soul of things and strikes a chord to which we always respond; but try as we will Solomon can never gain entrance into our hearts. Competency we grant him; executive power he certainly has; he is

magnificent and kingly in all of his ways; but all about him, all that he has relates to "this world," and though his kingdom seems to be flourishing, we always feel the rumble of disintegration. Unity is lacking; the many strange women, his political marriages with foreign powers, all bringing with them their gods; and Love, the combining power, is most conspicuously absent. It is all a spectacular play of scenic effects, the curtain will drop and the scenes will all be torn down. We come with the Queen of Sheba, to admire his temple, his buildings, his reservoir, his commerce; but we leave him and say with the Preacher, "For what hath man with all his labor, and of the striving of his heart wherein he laboreth under the sun? For all his days are but sorrow, and his travail is grief; yea, even in the night time his heart taketh no rest. This also is vanity."

The children of Israel pay the price for the king as foretold by Samuel. Solomon's magnificence is built out of the flesh and blood of his subjects, the nation has been reduced to slavery. He built the great temple with a levy of impressed labor, "of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house." He built a palace for himself that was thirteen years in building; and another one for the Egyptian princess whom he had married. He had a great navy which allied with that of the Phoenicians went as far away as India. But it is a monarchy of oriental splendor and despotism, dissatisfaction is rife and its downfall is imminent.

No master but Love ever receives loyalty, and an overseer whom Solomon had placed over the northern portion of his kingdom, Israel, was found guilty of intrigue, plotting for the secession of the ten northern tribes. Jeroboam was unscrupulous, but ambitious and valorous. Solomon discovered his plot and he was forced to flee into Egypt to escape the wrath of his royal master.

When Solomon died even his worldly wisdom and diplomacy did not descend upon his son and heir, Rehoboam. Israel demanded of the new king by the envoy sent out to meet him, "Thy father made our yokes grievous; now therefore make thou the service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve

thee." Solomon's son would not listen to the elders of the people who advised leniency; but to his own foolish young companions, and said to the envoy, "My father made your yokes heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

No government can last save that which rests on the consent of the governed; there is a rebellion against Rehoboam; and the ten northern tribes seceded leaving to the southern kingdom at Jerusalem [only] Judah and Benjamin. So the monarchy fell, and the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel were formed on its ashes. Jeroboam returned from Egypt, and was crowned king of Israel. Thus were the ten tribes lost to the nation and to Jehovah, for Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, did sin and caused Israel to sin. He made two golden calves, Egyptian symbols of fertility, one he placed at Dan and the other at Bethel. So in the maze of idolatry and debauchery, the ten tribes were swallowed up among other heathen nations.

From now on the real history of the Hebrews lies with "the remnant," those who either in the northern or southern kingdom remained true to the Mosaic law. The prophets now become the very soul of the nation, and we read the history of the people from this time on mainly through their written pages. The soul of the race deepens and broadens during the succeeding centuries, losing much of its intense nationalism, gaining thereby the universal idea which finally culminates in the Christ, whose country is the world. He who loves the world must love his country, not less but more than any other.

Consciousness in the race is like the tide in the ocean--it ebbs and flows. The apex of world power being reached, down again to the ebb, and again in Hebrew history we follow as it waxes to power, not again to the climax of a national monarchy, but to the spiritual kingdom of universal Christianity. The failure of earth ambitions is the beginning of spiritual aspirations. It is a law for the individual, the nation, and the human race; for the individual is the unit in the nation, the nation is but the unit in the race--all subject to the law

given by Him whom men call God's own son, "Whosoever will lose his life, will save it." None can enter spiritual life until he has lost the material conception of life, be it man, nation or race.

Associated with the monarchy will always be the names of David and Solomon. The genius was David's; Solomon but enlarged and consummated his father's plans. The characteristics of both David and Solomon have been incorporated in two distinct classes of literature; the Psalms are imputed to David, because he wrote at least twelve of them, according to competent scholars, and is the originator of this class of poetry. The twelve Psalms of David are: III, IV, VIII, XI, XV, XVIII, XIX, XXIV, XXIX, XXXIII, CI, of the one hundred and fifty.

The remaining Psalms are the poems of the eight following centuries, and celebrate the festivals and victories, or mourn the defeats and sorrows of the nation. This book contains all the extant lyric poetry of the ancient Hebrews. The spirit of poetry includes at least two elements—truth and beauty. There are two worlds, an outer and an inner; a world of sense and a world super-sensuous. One is Real and must be perceived by revelation; the other is unreal, the human concept of the Real. To see this inner world, the invisible, real and eternal world, and to translate it into outward form, thus enabling others to see what he sees, is the function of the artist, the musician and the poet.

In the Psalms the soul reaches out to the Soul; as the river seeks to be united to the ocean. They are the cry of the soul to be delivered from trouble and to find rest in the Spirit. They have been called the perfection of the lyric, and their musical rhythm, from the diminuendo of humility to the crescendo of triumph and attainment is aptly so denominated. They cover the whole gamut of soul experience; and there is no mood inherent in the soul of man, from repentance of sin, despair, sorrow, helplessness, to trust, hope, faith, love, triumph, but are expressed in the Psalms. They are the natural outpouring of the heart of man, who finds it impossible to find rest save in unison with God.

The Proverb is associated with Solomon because he was possibly the first of his race who took the ethical view of life instead of the spiritual. The Wisdom books of the Hebrews represent a distinct departure of thought from the national theme, religion. The Proverbs are not poems, they do not penetrate deeply into spiritual causes; but the maker of a proverb must have a keenly analytical mind and be able to sum up concisely his observation of a characteristic trait. The Psalms are spiritual; Proverbs, on the contrary, are a dissertation on the folly of wickedness, not because it is a sin against God, and a violation of man's spiritual nature, but because the man who is wicked gets nowhere. It is profitable to be good; it is unprofitable to be wicked, is the verdict of the Proverbs. The Psalm therefore comes from the heart of man, the proverb from the head. While the Psalms express our emotions, and all that is finest in life comes from the emotional or spiritual nature, the proverb is a sanity we are greatly in need of. Emotions without balance are wasteful and non-productive; and the proverb is always balanced. It holds the mirror before the face, and we see that every day is judgment day. The sinner never conceals his folly, but carries it where all may behold it, in his face, actions and conditions. There is no one great day in which the Lord calls us to reward or retribution; but each day has left the mark in his character where all may read; not God's verdict of him but man's verdict of himself.

One who is not familiar with Prof. Moulton's admirable arrangement of the Psalms can scarcely appreciate the variety of literature and beauty of expression contained in the book of Psalms. Come to the Psalms for comfort in any sorrow and you may find it. Spiritual guidance is found in the twenty-third, and the law of supply in the thirty-seventh. If attacked by discouragement read the one hundred and twenty-sixth; if vanity seizes you, read the nineteenth Psalm and see it fade away in the grandeur of the Whole. To walk above the material in the clear light of the spiritual world, flee to the ninety-first Psalm, and dwell under the "shadow of the Almighty."

The Greeks made alive their mountains, rivers, ocean, woods, glens, and glades, by giving to each its presiding deity. The Hebrew makes

the universe alive with the one Presence. It is an all-pervading, unmistakable Presence; man cannot hide from it. Gleaming behind the shadows of sense, it will retain its unbroken continuity until all men are alive with the One Life forever.

## CHAPTER XVI

### BANDS OF LOVE. ELIJAH AND ELISHA.

I-II Kings

The short history of the northern kingdom, Israel, lasting about two hundred years, is interesting and helpful, because it so clearly reveals the never-ceasing action of Divine Love in its endeavor to reclaim its children, no matter how sunken in degradation they be, to return them to uprightness, to lead them to peace with God and man, and to prepare them to receive their inheritance, spiritual peace and blessedness.

To this corrupt kingdom, four great prophets were sent. According to Hosea, all that Love could do for Israel it had done. "I taught Ephraim to go; I took them in my arms; but they know not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat before them." Three of these prophets were from "the remnant" of the ten tribes; the other was the missionary Amos, who came to Israel, from the southern kingdom of Judah. The three native prophets were Elijah, Elisha and Hosea. But Israel heeded none of them.

At the time Elijah, in the reign of the wicked Ahab and his still more wicked wife, Jezebel, Jehovah said to Elijah: "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed down unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." But one like Elijah is a mighty host in himself to testify to the truth: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away."

There had been under Ahab a great persecution of the prophets; and many of them had been slain. An overseer of Ahab, Obadiah, secretly sympathized with the prophets and hid many of them in caves, where he fed them. Elijah predicted a drought and was

forced to flee from the kingdom. He came to Zidon, where he lived with a widow who had on his arrival but "a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse." She shared her scanty store with the prophet, and during the years of famine "the meal lasted and the oil failed not"; for the infallible law of the spiritual world is: **To use and to share gives the increase; to spare and hoard will diminish.**

The drought, to Ahab, is not the result of his own sin, but it is Elijah "that troubleth Israel." The saving rain came after three years of famine in answer to the prayer of Elijah; but it did not bring with it redemption for the king. "Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that went before him." Elijah must needs flee from Israel again, and he came south to Judah, taking shelter under a juniper tree; and here the great heart absolutely yielded itself up, "It is enough; now, Lord, take away my life."

Perfect relaxation results as we yield our lives; mortal thought is always tension; and the refreshing sleep of absolute self-abandonment came to Elijah. He was awakened by the angel, who had prepared his food, and told to "arise and eat." In the strength of this heaven-sent food he traveled to his destination, "forty days and forty nights, until he came to Horeb, the Mount of God." Here he received the command, "Go forth and stand upon the mount of the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord! but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind the earthquake; and after the earthquake the fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice."

Behind the screen of nature and what we call natural law, yet everywhere present eternally, is the inner realm which Jesus called the Kingdom of God. To every so-called "natural law" Spiritual Law may be applied, a counteracting power. Is it a "law" that fire burns? Spiritualized man may stand in it and be immune. Is it a "law" that the human body will sink and drown in water? Jesus walked upon its surface in safety. Is gravitation a "law"? The resurrection of the Christ contradicts it; levitation alone is law. The whole visible

universe, with its elements of air, water, fire and earth, are all subject to spiritual Law, which, if a man knows and applies it, will render what human mind calls "natural law" absolutely null and void. Then it follows logically that there is no such thing as natural law; that they are mere human beliefs which are overruled as man comprehends Spiritual Law. Not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire shall we find the Lord, but in the "still small voice." Seers of all ages testify to the "miracles" that result when man transcends his belief in natural law and comes under Spiritual Law.

The material realm so apparent to the senses of man is absolutely unknown to God--God who is everywhere equally and evenly present. Where, then, is the material world? Nowhere but in the conception of mortal man. It is human mind's concept of the eternal Real. Jesus consciously lived in the spiritual world, and told his disciples over and over again that they had only to change their concept from a material to a spiritual basis to be able to work the miracles that he did.

Cosmic glimpses of this Real are borne in upon us in our highest moments. These rare moments of revelation are becoming more general in the consciousness of the race. When the spiritual principle of life is firmly established in the race-mind, creation will cease to be "material" to man, for all will be spiritualized. Whenever a truth appears, the false is automatically destroyed.

When man believes in the Real he dwells in the supersensuous realm. The stories of Elijah and Elisha are sustained contact with the Spiritual Reality. The iron hammer does not sink; the dead are raised; the hosts of the Lord visibly fill the mountains. This is the truth always to "beholding and jubilant souls." Like the infant hands unable to hold the article, it drops to the ground; the mortal consciousness is unable to hold its concepts, and so they appear to drop because [they are] not sufficiently sustained.

In times of greatest revelation the opposite evil is most pronounced. Moses had his Pharaoh; Elijah had his Ahab; Jesus had his Caesar. The appearance of Truth brings evil to a climax, and it is destroyed.

Or is it that in times of real wickedness the Divine Love seeks us even more yearningly than it does at any other time? Is not man's extremity always God's opportunity?

Naboth had a vineyard which the king coveted, but he refused to sell it to him. Jezebel, with fiendish cunning, had him put to death, and Ahab took possession of the vineyard. Elijah, stern and menacing, presented himself again before Ahab. Conscience is to the spiritual man what pain is to the physical man. Pain is a friendly warning that physical conditions are not right, and that they must be adjusted. Conscience warns the spiritual man that he is off the track, and danger lurks everywhere to the man who has gone astray. The ignorant condemn pain and ignore its warning; the wicked condemn conscience and defy it. Ahab greets Elijah: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" But conscience, the friend, follows us all, and says as the prophet said to the king, "I have found thee." Regard it as David did Nathan, and we are saved; defy it as Ahab did Elijah, and we are destroyed.

The most fixed belief of human conception is death. Is this a law? Laws are never destructive; they are all beneficent. Would or could Jesus have overcome it had it been Law; he who said that he came not to destroy but to fulfill? Would the great apostle, Paul, have called it an enemy had it been Law? We speak of death as inevitable; yet this to the Christian is as ignorant as it would be to a scientist to persist in calling the earth a flat surface after we have proved it to be round. Jesus, in the resurrection, proved man to be not material but spiritual; and the beautiful story of Elijah gives us the one inevitable thing to every child begotten by the Infinite Love--the "chariot of fire" that awaits each of us at the end of his mortal belief.

Elijah chose as his successor, Elisha; and touching indeed is the story of Elisha as he walked with Elijah to his transition. Elijah said to him, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me as far as Bethel [house of God]. And Elisha answered, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha

and said to him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said to him, Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho [a fragrant place]. And he said, As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came near to Elisha, and said to him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said to him, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan [descender]. And he said, As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they came and stood at Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass when they were gone over that Elijah said to Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken from thee, and Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

Elisha received his gift not because Elijah gave it to him but because he could see Elijah's ascension. What we perceive we understand and can reproduce. Only this can be a real possession to anyone. The story of Elijah and Elisha may be regarded as mythological by the merely intellectual student of the Bible; but, the letter killeth, the spirit alone giveth life; and to read this history believingly is to walk free on the high lands of spiritual Reality. It is these glimpses into the Real that makes this Book separate from all others; the greatest possession of civilized man.

A blind man may deny the brilliant colors of the sunset which we painstakingly describe to him; but that does not prove to the one

who sees that the colors are not there; it proves but one thing, the blind man cannot see them. The materialist may call "this world" real, but that does not prove it to be so; it only proves that "this world's" horizon is the limit of his vision. Elijah did not go into another world, for there is no other world. There is only one World, the one in the Mind of the Creator. Elijah is "here" in the only world there is, the spiritual Kingdom; mortals live nowhere but in sense beliefs and limitation; in the pictures which their own imagination makes. When Elijah lost his mortal concept of body and received his spiritual concept of body, those still in mortal concept were not able to see him.

The body of man appears to him natural if his belief of it be material, spiritual if his belief of it be spiritual. "The flesh profiteth nothing," it is but a picture in the thought of man; and if man ever dies, that is, if he ever "leaves the body," he has not yet received the truth in its entirety. The perception of the truth of the body, not passively but actively, must necessarily mean its transition from mortal sight. Man can never see beyond his own concepts; his range of vision is always confined within them. Faith is an active power, which dematerializes the material concept and transmutes it into the spiritual. It is the leaven which changes the composition of thought entirely.

Elisha walks the way of his master; neither is he a citizen of this three dimensional world, he lives in freedom above its confines. He too can part the waters, make the iron swim, raise the dead. The army of the Syrian King sent to capture him he can regard with fearlessness: "More are they that be with us than they that be against us." And the shining hosts invisible to mortal sense are clearly visible to him and fill the mountains about him.

He who believes "this world" to be real has not had Cosmic Vision, and is not in a world at all; he is in his sense beliefs of a world. He who will receive the testimony of those who do see and prays to Bartimeus, "Lord, that I may receive my sight," will receive it. The believing heart will receive the seeing eye, and the hearing ear that

receives into consciousness the world eternally existent in divine Mind, without variableness or shadow of turning.

Cosmic Vision sees the Real; it looks through the material as with the X-rays we look through seemingly solid walls. To spiritual vision there is nothing solid in the material world; but behind everything visible is the substance of Spirit, the Real, of which mortal sight sees but its semblance, its concept of it.

Out on the mountain of Horeb with Elijah; or in the forests of Dothan with Elisha, in my home or your home, be it Calcutta, London, Denver or Seattle, the shining ones are encamped around us; and if we do not see them we are accursed, and walk into the pit of mortality; if we do see them we walk free on the King's Highway of spiritual Reality, and material conditions are entirely subject to us.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BANDS OF LOVE. AMOS AND HOSEA

In the latter part of the eighth century B.C., a shepherd who owned a small place with a few sycamore trees on it and a peculiar breed of sheep, foretold an earthquake two years before it occurred. This man was not one of the school of prophets; but he is the first to write his speeches and so begin that unique class of literature known as Prophetic. The primary function of the prophet (one who speaks for another) is not the foretelling of events, but to speak for Jehovah or in place of Him, and in this sense he was the upholder of righteousness and the condemner of evil wherever found. Prediction was merely secondary and incidental; for anyone who comprehends principles knows that to fulfill them means safety, to violate them is disaster.

The book of Amos, according to Prof. Moulton, "is made up of two parts; one a single prophetic utterance of four lines; the other the most elaborately constructed piece of writing in all literature."

The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. And he said:

"The Lord shall roar from Zion,  
And utter his voice from Jerusalem;  
And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn,  
And the top of Carmel shall wither."

The fulfillment of this prediction brings the obscure herdsman into prominence, and was accepted as the seal of his prophetic calling.

To Amos, with his positive conviction that God is the supreme power in all human destiny and natural phenomena, there was no such thing as chance. Faith has lines of communication, and knows of things to come, for it is moved by the tides of unseen causes, in rhythm with nature's pulse. It was said that at the eruption of

Mount Pelee not a wild animal was found in its vicinity, but man, who had blunted by heedlessness and sin the finer instinct which feels the divine warnings, was destroyed. The faith of Amos was intuitive perception, which we may call educated instinct; it is instinct brought to the nth power of consciousness. This soul faculty belongs to each, as sight and hearing are universal faculties of man.

Elijah and Elisha stand out as lovers of God, and walk as supermen, above the normal level of man; but Amos and Hosea are lovers of man and will not save themselves until mankind is saved with them, and walk down among them, one telling the doom that must come, because the justice of God will permit no unrighteousness to flourish; the other with a message of the yearning love of the Father to reclaim His erring children.

Amos has been called "a moral reformer," in distinguishment of the practical work of reclamation which is the distinct note of his message. He comes from Judah to tell Israel of the impending doom that awaits her if she will not change. It is a courageous act, and he has a style of extreme boldness. Conditions in Israel were deplorable; the king and nobles have "houses of ivory" and "summer and winter" houses; the poor are oppressed and helpless. He preaches the justice of God; and the guilty must suffer because of this supreme attribute of God. He fearlessly denounces oppression, deceit, false balances, and inhumanity. "Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail, making the ephah small and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit; that ye may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of wheat. Shall not the land tremble for this, and everyone mourn that dwelleth therein?"

But mortals at all times like to be comfortable, and insist upon it, even when standing on the edge of a precipice. The one who speaks "comfortable words" is welcome; but the "doom prophets" are disturbers that they dread to hear. Coming from Judah, always less worldly-minded than Israel, already they think of their southern brethren as foreigners, Amos is invited to go home. "Amos, O thou seer, go, flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and

prophesy there; but prophesy not any more at Beth-el, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a royal house."

But Amos has been sent to Israel by Jehovah, and must deliver his message. His insight into the divine nature and the conditions in Israel enable him to perceive her impending downfall as clearly as he had foreseen the earthquake. God's righteousness cannot be ignored; Israel is steeped in debauchery, luxuriousness, and idolatry. Over against this he perceives a Power advancing to overthrow this condition--locusts, plagues, drouth, enemy powers, swords in their hands to destroy immortal Israel.

Reading Amos, and perceiving the superb literary climaxes that he attains, makes one wonder if we have not come far astray in our culture and education. To cram the stomach with food will not make the graceful, lithe form; to cram the brain with impressions does not give easy literary forms of expression. Amos makes the structure of his composition reflect his thought; and the general movement of his prose poem conveys the action of sin followed by judgment, not in a future life, but here and now; and he achieves a distinct literary triumph.

In the wilderness of Judah, David had grown under the open sky into greatness; here also Amos, another shepherd, in solitary communion with the Soul of Things, becomes sensitized to the rhythmical movements of mental forces. His imagery is direct, drawn from the rural affairs with which he is familiar--wagons, harvests, cattle--and from nature--hills, mountains, lions, birds. Chapter IV is a literary gem, the denunciations because of divine warnings unheeded naturally reaching the climax: "Yet ye have not returned unto me, said Jehovah."

Yet there is more than justice to God, according to Amos. He is merciful too, and he will not forget his suffering poor in the "great day" when wickedness will be overthrown; all the faithful will be saved. Judah and Israel will again be united. Not only this but all the nations about them will be united to them, whom before this the Hebrew had rigidly excluded from the salvation of Jehovah.

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and the nations that are called by my name, said the Lord that doeth this. Behold, the days come that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hill shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land which I have given them, said the Lord, thy God."

As the message of Christianity is given by the four evangelists, the last one being the climax because it reveals the supreme attribute, love, the last of the four prophets to Israel reaches the heart of the universe, Love. "Life is just our chance o' the prize o' learning love"; and Hosea stands out in human history as the first seer to understand the Love that is infinite, and that it never, never lets us go.

Hosea lived a little later than Amos; possibly near the time of the fall of Israel under the Assyrians in 722 B.C. He is the second prophet to leave a written record of his teachings. He is a little difficult to follow, as he makes reference to conditions with which we are not familiar; and he gives fragments of what we should judge were oral speeches. Israel could not reject Hosea on the grounds that she rejected Amos; for Hosea is no "foreigner" but native and a living flame of patriotism, in its best and highest sense.

Two political parties had sprung up in both Israel and Judah; divided and almost constantly at war with each other, both had become weakened. Weakness reaches for aid outside itself, so one party advocated an Assyrian alliance, the other an alliance with Egypt. Hosea, like our own George Washington, protested against entangling alliances. Jehovah was the strength of the nation, and to make an alliance with a foreign and heathen power was unfaithfulness to Him.

Hosea had learned the great truth "the state is the individual writ large, for he sees his own unhappy domestic affairs repeated in the state on a larger scale." He had learned to gauge Jehovah's love by the measure of his own heart throbs; he understood the love that is infinite by the unquenchable love in the depths of his own being, measureless, unfathomable, unending; a love that "alters not, when it alteration finds" but loves on in undiminished fervor; and must win in the end, because it can accept no end by unity.

Hosea's wife is unfaithful to him; she bears children, but leaves both her husband and her children for lovers. Down, down she sinks in the social scale until she becomes public property; forsaken by her paramours she is sold as a slave. Hosea buys her and brings her home; she is not reinstated as his wife, but is given the opportunity to redeem herself; and during this time she shall be "no man's wife."

No one can look out upon life save through his own lenses; and Hosea sees Israel--his poetic name for her is Ephraim--as the beloved wife of Jehovah; whose love for her was the same as his love for Gomer. The word "husband" means "caretaker," and after Hosea many of the prophets use the word as a synonym for Deity. What more could Jehovah do for his wife, Israel, than He had done for her? She is wealthy, and this wealth had come to her freely from her husband; she bears His name and is safe under His protection; she is beloved of Him and has borne children to Him, the nation; but faithless Israel runs out after strange lovers, Assyria and Egypt; and the idols of these nations are in her groves and on her high places, badges of her shameless disgrace. Yet, Jehovah must do what he himself had been compelled to do: "Ephraim is joined to idols: leave him alone."

After all, this is "hell" and the greatest punishment that can be meted to anyone; for the one thing that none of us can stand is to be "let alone" by Love. When we stray do we not want Love to follow us with its gentle reminders, that it is still there? He whom Love lets alone has no destination, no incentive for work, no goal of attainment; he is without friends, without home, without country, without God, and he is *lost*. We may want to stray and make

individual experiments, lose ourselves and find ourselves; but we never want to be "let alone" but to know that Love is still there, that it keeps the home fires burning, will welcome us on our return; and never can it leave us *alone*.

The hardest lesson any of us have to learn is the lesson taught by Hosea; to give freedom and yet not leave the sinner *alone*. This is Hosea's lowest note; Jehovah could not leave Israel alone. She was His wife, He loved her, and she had borne Him children, He was God, and could not do otherwise. Hosea knew he loved Gomer, because Jehovah loved Israel; that love had entered his heart and it was impossible for him to cease to love.

No, Jehovah could not let His erring wife go, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me earnestly." Love's opportunity is the need of him; it always comes, and Love, child of eternity, can well afford to bide its time. One of the greatest impressions ever made upon me was from the stage in "Peer Gynt." In his youth, Peer Gynt had wooed and won a beautiful girl and taken her to his mountain home, then he deserted his young wife. Over the whole world he roamed, seeking adventures and diversions everywhere; and when satiated, disillusioned, old, he returned. In the same mountain home where he had left her he found her, and she came to greet him with illumined face, "Thou hast made my life beautiful."

It is not the love that is returned to which we owe the most gratitude; it is the love that another can stimulate in us that holds us debtors and places us in a position that we can never fully repay. If another has sent a shaft of the infinite Love into our hearts, we are born out of this world into the Real, where "a thousand years is as one day." "Whosoever loveth another is born of God," the infinite Love, and can ask no return, just the privilege of loving. Love is sublimely independent, and asks, "And if I love thee, what is that to thee?" Its satisfaction is in just being Love.

The yearning tenderness of God, Hosea had found, "I will heal their back-sliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away

from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and blossom as the vine; the scent thereof shall be the wine of Lebanon.

And returned Israel shall say:

"Ephraim--What have I to do any more with idols?

"The Lord--I have answered and will regard him.

"Ephraim--I am like a green fir tree.

"The Lord--From me is thy fruit found."

(Modern Readers Bible.)

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE STATESMAN PROPHET: ISAIAH

Isaiah: 1-39

Isaiah, in Jerusalem, is aware of Israel's deflection and begins his prophecy with an arraignment of her, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." After all, is not this the cause of all deflection, national and individual? Man does not *consider* that, each being a unit in the whole, certain obligations necessarily ensue and must be fulfilled. The universe is a vast machine, not mechanical, but intelligent, and the welfare of all depends on the conscientious fulfillment of the work apportioned to each unit. The Millenium will be the result of this knowledge and the application of it.

Isaiah is the prophet of the spiritual era; he is the father of Christianity for it was conceived in his consciousness seven centuries before the birth of its founder. He is the prophet of divine forgiveness, and brings distinctively a new something into his writings that we have not previously had in Biblical literature. Before this there were seers who, looking into the heart of Life, saw a Power which was beneficent when obeyed and disastrous when disobeyed; or they were astute observers of natural law, which they considered a weapon used by this arbitrary Power to reward the good or to mete out inexorable punishment to the evil.

The prophet, since the time of Samuel four centuries before, in the establishment of the monarchy and the rise of the Prophetic Order, lived apart from the national life, a decrier of its evils. Isaiah came in another capacity. He was a part of the national life, keenly alert to the political parties which swayed, now to one side now to the other, the shifting opinions of a people not grounded in the faith that they professed; for Judah had the same political parties that agitated Israel, the one demanding an alliance with Egypt, the other with Assyria. Isaiah, however, was not a politician but a statesman; and every statesman relies on the strength of the state, not on an

outside alliance. He contemptuously refers to one party as "the fly from Egypt," and the other as "the bee from Assyria." And unwearingly for over forty years he preached, wrote and exhorted, that faith in God alone and His righteousness as the standard of action, could save Jerusalem from the fate meted out to Israel.

Not only as a statesman does Isaiah differ from his predecessors but in possession of the faculty of the seer--plus intellect and reason. Isaiah strikes the first modern note in the Bible; he makes an appeal to the reason in man, instead of the blind belief in an arbitrary God. Thus he comes before us as a man of genius well tempered with sanity. Of extraordinary versatility is he, a statesman, an orator, a writer, a poet, a historian, for modern critics assert that he possibly is the author of Deuteronomy. Above all, he is a prophet of God who holds the Golden Age of spiritual attainment in his consciousness. Intensely practical is he also in the minutiae of national affairs; and he is a prophet who saw many of his own predictions fulfilled.

No better introduction can be given the great prophet Isaiah than that of Richard Moulton in the Modern Reader's Bible: "In this writer it is easy to see that we have an orator who wields with ease the whole armory of rhetoric. It is easy to see also that with him imagery and poetic expression are much more than accessories; he loves to linger upon his images, and rapidly shift them, until they become lovely pictures which we love to dwell upon for their own sake. But Isaiah goes far beyond this; he is essentially a creative writer, and regularly conveys his thought in indirect forms of dramatic presentation."

To those who are seeking the inner connection, that which lies back of clarity of expression, the thought that grows clear as the Vision breaks through the consciousness of man, Isaiah stands out in distinctness, for he is the prophet of the New Age. He is represented in an old Greek miniature, with Night, sullen and veiled, behind him, while in front with torch held aloft is the child IMMANUEL (God-with-us), the dawn of infinite promise.

In the latter days of Israel, Isaiah was witness to one of her most disgraceful acts. Israel made an alliance with the king of Syria and together they marched against Jerusalem. It is harder to meet treachery from our own kith and kin than it is from strangers. News was brought to Ahaz, the king, "Ephraim is confederate with Syria. And his heart was moved and the heart of his people as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind." Whatever the trial that confronts us we must meet it; and the way of mastery is in the advice given the king by Isaiah, "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thine heart be faint; for thus saith the Lord God, it shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass." "Ephraim shall be broken in pieces that is shall cease to be a people." And Isaiah lived through the year 722 B.C., when faithless Israel ceased to be a nation, destroyed by the Assyrians.

Isaiah, unlike preceding prophets, was sought by the successive kings of Judah who reigned during his long ministry. His friendship and advice were valued. Well would it have been had his advice always been followed. His influence at court has led to the conclusion that he was of royal origin. It makes no difference to the seer of any age whether Isaiah was of royal origin or not; for well he knows that all men are of royal lineage, as children of God, and differences between man and man are but degrees of insight into this essential truth. From this basis we shall have to concede that Isaiah was a royalist of the Royalists, for, standing on the Watchtower of Faith, his was the vision of Reality.

"O Lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime,  
And am set in my ward whole nights."

No enemy can steal upon him unaware here. After the destruction of Israel, Assyria turns her attention to Judah, and marching upon her walled cities takes them all save Jerusalem; and besieging Jerusalem, the envoy comes to demand her surrender.

In his distress, Hezekiah, the king, sends to Isaiah, "Lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." And the Watchman sends back word,

"The remnant that is escaped from the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of Mt. Zion they shall escape; the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, he shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with a shield, nor cast a mount against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return. I will defend this city and save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."

The only power that our enemies have we invest in them ourselves. All power had been taken from Assyria by the lone Watchman, and in the night a mysterious disease breaks out in the camp and smites "a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." The besieging army leaves and shortly after the king of Assyria is killed. Thus would fade from our lives all the enemies that flesh is heir to were we to stand on the Watchtower of Faith and divest them of all the power that they have, *our belief in them as power*. Ignorance, disease, poverty, old age, death, have no power; they are mere negations, and all the power they have they derive from our belief.

Doom songs are not usually lovely, yet we must grant that the Doom Song of Isaiah lingers with a charming insistence on account of its persistent refrain. On a single sentence in which he sees evil and the inevitable destruction which follows in its wake will he turn and see,

"For all this His anger not turned away,  
But His Hand is stretched out *still*."

And comfort it surely is to know that wherever man stands in belief, steeped in sin, foul with disease, debased by ignorance, he has but to right-about-face and see "*His hand is stretched out still*." Isaiah's repetition of this beautiful symbol carries with it the conviction which brings the "peace that passeth understanding," for it is the Vision of Reality.

Nothing escapes his keen observation. The "women who sit at ease"; the "boaster that sitteth still"; the formal religionists who offer sacrifices yet fail to live in truth and righteousness; the folly of kings and princes who are rebellious; the time-servers who follow after rewards, and love gifts; all feel the stinging sarcasm of his facile tongue and pen. Yet never does he strike a note of despair. "Wash you, make you clean; put away evil from mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as wool. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Jesus quoted Isaiah frequently in his numerous references to Scripture. Jesus had memorized Deuteronomy until it had become his subconscious self. It was to him the great Book of the Law. The word means "the law repeated" and the book is the history of the last days of Moses and his farewell orations to his people. Who could understand and translate the great Leader who received the law on the Mount, as he who stood on the Watchtower as he made his report, even though six centuries lie between them?

Deuteronomy is said to be the most spiritual book in the Old Testament. The invisible God illumines it, and its religion is to live in the Light and reflect that Light. Yet so practical is it that the two ways in which man may tread are clearly outlined; "the narrow way which leads to life, and the broad way which leads to destruction." It is the dramatic presentation of the lifework of Moses: "The Lord was angry with me for your sakes." Thus the failure of Moses to lead the people into the Promised Land is described. Yet in the fuller light that is given us we know that Moses alone can lead us to the Land of Promise; and he must forever stand on Pisgah's heights and overlook it; for the moment we violate the Law, we must leave; only under his eye can we safely abide there.

Writing an estimate of Isaiah, possibly the greatest of the prophets, in one article, and having to choose from illustration after

illustration little pictures of exquisite beauty, the best one can do is to choose a couple at random. For instance, can anything be lovelier than his plea to Jerusalem, for the "faithful city" has become deficient also, and only complete repentance can save her:

#### Parable of the Vineyard

"Let me sing of my well beloved, a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.

My well beloved had a vineyard

In a very fruitful hill:

And he made a trench about it,

And gathered out the stones thereof,

And planted it with choicest vine,

And built a tower in the midst of it,

And also hewed out a winepress therein:

And he looked that it should bring forth grapes--

and it brought forth wild grapes! And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

(Modern Reader's Bible.)

Two distinct pictures make Isaiah supreme in Prophetic literature: his Watchtower, and his prediction of the advent of IMMANUEL. From his watchtower he sings:

"The morning cometh,  
And also the night  
If we will inquire, inquire ye;  
Come ye again."

From this high tower of spiritual insight he sees the process of life. Life and its good gifts are not on the surface; he who would understand must go beneath the exterior; seek its principles and understand its processes. Again and yet again must we come to the fountain of Knowledge to "inquire."

For the night of self-renunciation must precede the morning of spiritual illumination. Personal ambitions, material beliefs and pleasures, and selfish desires must be lost before the morning can dawn which ushers in the day of the new spiritual era. This "Day" will dawn when we learn, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." How can we rise into this except we take the Watchman's advice, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils: from wherein is he to be accounted of?" The more understanding that we acquire of the absolute nothingness of the material, the more quickly shall we understand the perfection of the Spiritual.

In Isaiah, "the Remnant" becomes a characteristic expression. It is they alone who save Jerusalem; and from them shall the Saviour be born:

"For unto us a child is born,  
Unto us a son is given;  
And the government shall be upon his shoulders:  
And his name shall be called *Wonderful Counselor,*  
*Mighty God, Everlasting Father,*  
*Prince of Peace.*"  
(Modern Reader's Bible.)

And this "King shall reign in righteousness, his princes shall rule in judgment." More than this, in this kingdom every individual can say, "The state it is I," for the Messianic Kingdom is made up of its units. Each unit is represented in the greatest summing up of the component parts of character that has ever been given. "A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

As nothing can excel perfection, this will forever stand the greatest definition of character that has ever been written. It is what we shall all be; when God's ideal of himself, spiritual man, breaks through into consciousness. This kingdom is within the consciousness of man; it is his established character. Those who are "greatest in the

kingdom" are those who have wrought this into their characters in the most positive degree. The "least in the kingdom" are those who have these characteristics the least developed.

In looking up the word "character" in my dictionary I find: "A sign, an engraved mark." It is what we have engraved upon ourselves; and as the Vision of spiritual Man can come to us only as we ascend into the Watchtower, it is what we have engraved upon ourselves from *here*. Established in truth, can we not hide those whom the winds of mortal destiny still buffet from the tempests within and without? Will we not make a "covert," in which man may be sheltered from sin and disease? Could a greater tribute be rendered character than that it should be, "rivers of water in a dry place," where lips and hearts scorched by mortality's unfertilizing drought stretches her weary wastes over and under them? Who that has been in desert wastes does not realize the shelter of the great rock from scorching sun, and drifts of sand sweeping by? Has he not seen the tender green shoots that will venture out even in the midst of the bleak desert under its shadow? Cannot an established character so stand in the midst of unrighteousness, defend the right no matter how unpopular it seem, and arrest the drift that prevents spiritual ideals from growing in men's thought? So can the great spiritual Character stand in the midst of disease, materialism and death; a Rock under whose shadow faith, love and life are established.

N.B.--The Book of Isaiah ends with the thirty-ninth chapter. From the fortieth to the sixty-sixth chapter is a book written at least one hundred and fifty years later. This prophet has been called "The Great Unknown," and wrote, not from Jerusalem but from Babylon in captivity. In this series he will be found in his proper historic place, under the title of "The Shadow Christ."

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE POET PREACHER: JEREMIAH

As Constance in "King John" made Sorrow majestic and bade kings come before it and render it homage, Jeremiah has made Sorrow beautiful. Artists of all ages pay tribute to his genius, and lovers of graceful expression acknowledge themselves his debtors. Jeremiah sings the Doom Song of the Old Order. It is the Swan Song of the national greatness and independence of the Hebrews.

From the last date that we have of Isaiah to the first that we have of Jeremiah is eighty-five years. Like Isaiah's, Jeremiah's ministry is a long one; he saw the successive reigns of five different kings; witnessed the fall of Jerusalem; is thought to have written "Lamentations" after its fall and was abducted to Egypt where we lose sight of him. We know more of Jeremiah than of any other prophet, for he speaks very freely of his life, both private and public. He takes us into the inner sanctum of his soul; tells us what he aspired to do and of the reception of his efforts both by the kings and the people. The latter days of old Jerusalem are inextricably interwoven with the personal life of the prophet.

Nothing more pathetic than the life story of Jeremiah was ever written. Belonging to the orders of both priest and prophet, living at a time when a profligate nation had ceased to respect either of them, he was compelled to submit to ridicule, buffeting, imprisonment and even corporal punishment at the hands of a people he earnestly desired to save.

In sorrow one can never be consistent, his perspective is not true, his vision is foreshortened and the vista beyond is therefore not clear. In the breakdown of an old order the new one grows; in fact, it is always the new one growing that batters down the old. Isaiah's vision had ushered in a new era. The horizon had so broadened that henceforth no national boundaries could hold a vision which had become universal. Before we can become

distinctively individualistic we must burst through the national consciousness; how else can we represent the universal God? "Jeremiah is the first distinct individualist among the Hebrew prophets--a Huguenot in an age ruled by the Medici, a Savonarola in an age of Alexander VI--execrating himself, at times execrating his age and his people, at other times pleading with them for Jehovah, and with Jehovah for them, with infinite pathos, and amidst the ruins of the old covenant destroyed by Israel's sin and Jehovah's repudiation of it, prophesying a new covenant with the elect individuals saved from the nation's wreck--strange, sad, self-contradictory, a Protestant before Protestantism, a Puritan before Puritanism," is the way that Lyman Abbott sees this unique character.

Should this contradictory seer follow the great vision of Isaiah? And if the history of the race is the history of the individual written large, what is its significance in our personal lives? Absolutely true in our individual unfoldment. The Transfiguration of Jesus preceded Gethsemane and the Crucifixion. The new vision inevitably breaks up the old life, because it makes new conditions; the new wine breaks the old bottles in the fermentation which makes a new being and the environment demanded by that new being for its expression. As Mary wept at the tomb of her dead "Rabboni," *when there was no dead teacher*, so do we mourn and cling to old conditions when the new stand beside us, asking us to recognize them.

In Biblical history, Jeremiah stands where Hamlet does in Shakespearean drama. After the joyous vision of the poet's youth, and the great historic dramas of his manhood, the vision of a spiritual world is breaking through Shakespeare's consciousness. Hamlet is a being that stands astride two worlds, a citizen of neither. The human desires revenge for his father's murder; the spiritual restrains his hand from taking life; indecision of character is the result. Jeremiah is not fully emerged from the spiritual cocoon; he has a great vision but is still held fast in the meshes of the material. Not positively belonging to either world, he is not the

power he would be did he not see double. He knows old Jerusalem must go and he sees clearly in his highest moments the return. He too believes in the Messiah that is to be born from the "remnant" who will save the people. Still with all his power he endeavors to save Jerusalem while in his heart he does not believe it can be. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*" Every one of us has been in Jeremiah's place of development. Many are still there. If the conviction of the Ethiopian and the leopard were not in our consciousness, we should heal every case that comes to us and nothing would be impossible.

When his "Call" comes to Jeremiah, conditions in Judah have become as bad or worse than in Israel during the time of her four great prophets. Under the shadow of the Temple itself, altars to other gods had been erected; and in the valley of Hinnom on the southwest of Jerusalem the gross immoralities of Canaanitish worship, with its human sacrifices of their children, were flagrantly practised. "Wherefore I will yet plead with you said the Lord. Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this; for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

"Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on the bare heights; for the Lord hath rejected the generation of his wrath. The children of Judah have done that which is evil in my sight, saith the Lord, they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it. And they have built high places of Tophet which is in the valley of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I have commanded not neither came it into my mind."

Modern Man, Up-to-date Lady, from your lofty height of "government by the people and for the people" look not down on these benighted Judeans of an olden time. Are we in this country free from either idol worship or sacrifice of our children? Does not

money, or what money buys for us, play a stronger part in our lives than our spiritual development? Are our child labor laws rigidly enforced? The valley of Hinnom was merciful to children compared to the cotton mills of the South, in "Our Own United States." Who would not prefer a quick death to a slow, lingering one? "Take the beam from thine own eye." We shall not be at liberty to criticize these people until spiritual ideals come *first*, and the physical, mental and spiritual development of the young are considered the primal work of the whole nation.

Five years after the Call of Jeremiah, Josiah, the young king, then in his eighteenth year, determined to have Solomon's temple repaired. Since it was over four hundred years old at this time, no doubt it was in great need of it. During the renovation, Hilkiah, the high-priest, found the Book of Deuteronomy. After the Book was read to Josiah, he started upon tremendous reforms. He tore down the altars and symbols of idolatry everywhere--but changing externals can never change anything permanently, if the consciousness is not changed also. Jeremiah believed the reforms to be superficial: Jehovah had given "backsliding Israel a bill of divorcement. Yet for all this her treacherous sister, Judah, hath not returned unto me with her whole heart but feignedly, saith the Lord." Josiah's sons and successors were as profligate as his predecessors had been; so while Deuteronomy made a lasting impression on the few, the nation as a whole quickly returned to idolatry.

Jeremiah resorts to many ingenious methods to attract the attention of the people and convert them. He is a "defenced city, and an iron pillar with brazen wall against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land, and they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee." We should not consider this a treatment to give ourselves did we desire to come into unison with others; and it acted as adversely to Jeremiah as it would for any of us. He was put into stocks, lowered into a well, imprisoned, yet that *belief* in divine protection always saved his life; though it was endangered many times.

The people will not listen to him and he well nigh despairs; why talk about Jehovah when nothing but the sound of his own voice is the result: "And if I say, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name then there is in mine heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing and cannot contain." He must continue, heard or unheard, for Jehovah fills his consciousness so that he must speak; and we love him, and read him for this reason and for the purity and beauty of his prophetic insight into the Divine Nature.

Assyria had been conquered by Babylon, as foretold by Isaiah, and the political parties had changed to those favoring an alliance with Babylon, or those favoring one with Egypt. Palestine had an unfortunate geographical position; she was the battleground of those great rival kingdoms, and Judah was now far too small a nation to exist except under the protection of one or the other of them. Babylon was energetic; Egypt was decadent, slothful and luxurious; and Jeremiah loathed her with all the force of his virile and ascetic nature. He openly advocated submission to Babylon as the one way of saving the national life. For years he wore a yoke, a reminder that only in this way could disaster be averted.

He was thrown into prison; the king favored the Egyptian party, so Jeremiah and his yoke were not popular in Jerusalem. Here, with the aid of Baruch, a scribe, whose brother was chief chamberlain to the king, he wrote a warning of the fall of Jerusalem if they did not come under the protection of Babylon. The book was read to the king as he sat in his winter palace before a burning brasier; but when he had heard a few pages he took a knife, cut the leaves and burned the roll, though members of his court advised against it. He ordered the death of both Jeremiah and Baruch, but they escaped, and Jeremiah dictated another book to Baruch, which we read today.

As predicted by Jeremiah, Babylon conquered Jerusalem. The king, Jeconiah, the chief of the people and the craftsmen, were deported to Babylon. Ezekiel was in this first captivity in the year 597 B.C. The brother of the king was placed on the throne, and left there on

sufferance. Zedekiah was a weak king, not strong enough to resist the Egyptian party, although he was more favorable to Jeremiah than his brother had been. So twelve years later the army of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, returned and destroyed Jerusalem. This time the city was sacked and destroyed, and the whole population, excepting the very poor, carried away to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, in recognition of Jeremiah's advocacy of the Babylonian party, charged his captain, "Look well to him, and do him no harm, but do even as he shall say unto thee." Jeremiah desired to remain in Palestine, and was permitted to do so.

The most charming illustration of Jeremiah's is the potter and the clay. "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, Arise and go down to the potter's house and behold, he wrought his work on the wheels. And when the vessel that he made of the clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand."

So Judah, just as we each individually must do, lost her life of rebellion and idolatry that she might find the life of obedience to Jehovah. The Potter has his ideal for each child of His, and His purpose in each nation. On the wheel we remain until we learn to yield ourselves without reservation to Him. The clay cannot dictate to the potter, nor can man to God; for He alone knows our final destiny. We save ourselves from being "broken" by training ourselves into pliability.

Jeremiah could see no hope for Judah save the discipline that would come from the captivity, for "We walk after our own devices, and we do every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart." What more could Jehovah do? As he had sent his "Bands of Love" to Israel, he also had sent great prophets to Judah. Isaiah he had sent to the influential people; Micah he had sent to the poor and plain people; Zephaniah had come and seen, "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity, every morning doth he bring his

judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame." Habbakuk also has stood on the watchtower: "I will stand on my watch, and will set me upon my tower, and I will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprov'd. And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but in the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will come." Nothing more remained for Jehovah to do, he had done all; he must make Judah again another vessel, for it was marred in the hands of the potter.

In a cave, near Jerusalem, Jeremiah, it is thought, wrote his dirge over the fallen city. The city of David lay in ruins before the poet, and he has written a poem of such beauty and pathos that not since has it been excelled:

#### LAMENTATIONS

"How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!  
How is she become as a widow, she that was great among  
nations!

Princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary."

Surely, we can all understand the author's great anguish. We have each experienced it, when we have been bowed under a great sorrow, when life seemed desolate--that narrow bridge we all must cross and cross alone--when the old life lies in ruins and the new is not yet clear. We look forth and see that the merry old world goes on as usual; the careless laugh, the busy pass by, each intent on his own work; we are amazed that it can be so, when our world has ceased to be.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
Behold and see if there be any sorrow like my sorrow, which  
is done unto me."

--Modern Reader's Bible.

But the world moves along and carries us with it; each must turn from his sorrow, just as the great dirge ends:

"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned:  
Renew our days as of old."

Life is movement, there is no cessation:

*"Weeping may endure for the night,  
But joy cometh in the morning."*

## CHAPTER XX

### A COSMIC ARTIST: EZEKIEL

Although neither mentions the other, Ezekiel and Jeremiah were contemporaries, the former much the younger of the two. Ezekiel is the "Watchman" of the captivity. His "call" came to him five years after his deportation to Babylon in 597 B.C. He was the son of a priest, was married and lived in his own house among a colony of his fellow exiles in a place called Telabib. The exiles had the freedom of the city, many held influential positions; they were an organized community with "elders" at their head. At first Ezekiel was not popular with his people for he would not prophesy a speedy return as the "false prophets" did. He had, however, a small following which met at his home, and the deepest interest of those exiles was the welfare of Jerusalem. After its fall, the attitude of the exiles became more favorable to the prophet, for he had long predicted that event.

Ezekiel was the first Hebrew prophet to write a consecutive book. The books of preceding prophets were fragments of oral discourses, gathered together but not always in sequential order. Ezekiel wrought out a book which is a unified whole, it is divided into three great divisions. His imagination is powerful, akin to that of Dante. Three forms of prophecy are characteristic of him: "We have *symbolic actions*, in which truths to be taught are practically illustrated; *allegories*, which present the subject in hand under elaborate figures; and *visions*, in which material emblems stand out spontaneously before the prophet's mind."--(Dummelow's Commentary.)

Isaiah and Jeremiah had calls, luminous while upon them, preparatory to their life work; but that of Ezekiel seems to have stayed with him throughout his ministry; he repeats it in substance three times--graphic, spiritual pictures form themselves before his vision, and he is commanded to open his mouth and tell them, and without the vision and the command, he will not speak. His Cosmic

Visions can only be given to those who understand the deeper truths; simpler prophets must therefore go out to the others.

By the River Chebar, in Babylon, the Vision opens, which has been so well told, the Occidental world by Milton in "Paradise Lost," Book VI. Amid all the elaborate pictures, Ezekiel is careful to make us understand, that it is not a concrete picture of one thing, but a universal picture of God and Man. He is careful not to identify the spiritual with the material, which is always the result of Cosmic Vision. The spiritual and the material never touch each other. What can that mean when the spiritual fills everything? What is the material? The material is nothing but thought pictures in the human mind; human mind's concept of the Eternal Real. It is nowhere existent but in human thought; therefore it is counterfeit; and as the Real appears the unreal disappears. "Material" body and the world are our first translations of life; Cosmic Vision enables us to see the Real and thereby correct our material concepts by spiritual reality.

We may liken the material world to the picture writing of children and primitive races; and the spiritual world to the great classics and works of art. No race could arrive at reality did it not commence to translate life to itself, in that first crude way. The concept of a material body disappears as we accept the ideal of a spiritual body that is eternal. Ezekiel is therefore careful to say, "the likeness of a throne," "the likeness of the appearance of man," "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah," for he who can look *through* the appearance can never after confound it with reality.

The most elaborate vision of any of the prophets is Ezekiel's, the vision of the wheels within the wheel, of man in God; the little world in the big world, the microcosm in the macrocosm. Ezekiel is charged with the message to man universal, in the amber colored atmosphere of the Infinite Glory. Out of the "North" the highest point it comes; "a fire infolding itself" and from it; "the likeness of four living creatures." "They had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces," the central face man, reason; on the *right side* the lion, strength; on the left side, the ox, sacrifice; and the

innermost the eagle, the seer, symbolic of divine sonship. Individuality is here, their faces and wings are separate above; cooperation is seen of man with man, in the joining of the wings; transmutation of the body, in the covering of the body with the wings.

And, Oh, the *encouragement* of it; "they every one went straight forward; whither the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not when they went." Is it just our *blindness* that does not see this? Was the penitent thief going straight to Paradise all of the time, as was the Master? Was the other, the blasphemer, going straight forward also, and did he only have to reach the *other side* of the crucifixion to recognize the Saviour? We condemn the sinner, thinking that he is going in another direction than ourselves, but if we stood on the Mount, perhaps we too could see. "The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag course of a hundred tacks," and from this eminence of Cosmic Vision all would be seen "going straightforward." The eleventh hour labourer received the same as those who served all the day, because there is only one reward, *The Vision*.

"As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches, it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright and out of the fire came forth lightning." Can this be aught else save the real of man, playing and leaping through our consciousness; breaking through the material barrier, which we ourselves have erected? Flashes like "lightning" illumine us--intelligence that we know to be higher than that which we know as man's.

"Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces thereof. The appearance of the wheels and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel. As for their rings, they were high and dreadful, and they four had their rings full of eyes round about. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went; and when those stood,

these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them: for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels."

The trinity is God, Man and Work. The omnipresence of God pervades the universe and carries all forward. When it stands all stands still. We should not have music without the rest; incessant motion or sound would not be rhythmic, and every thing in life is undulatory and rhythmic. Man's work is in his "ring," it is lifted up as he is lifted up, and intelligence is in work done under spiritual illumination, it is "full of eyes."

"And he said unto me, Son of Man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak to thee." God had been waiting since "the beginning" for this supreme moment. He can only speak to man who has found himself; i.e., who is standing upon his feet at attention. The term "son of man" is original with Ezekiel; who uses it over a hundred times--a term loved by the Great Teacher--who used it in the sense of composite man, the heir of all the ages.

Word comes to Ezekiel, "Go shut thine self in thine house," and from here he gives a series of illustrated lectures; he precedes his prophecies with acted out emblems; which gives the keynote of his talks. Thus he acts out the whole siege of Jerusalem. His "call" came in the fifth year of his captivity, therefore it was seven years before the fall of Jerusalem in 585 B.C. Daily his little circle came, and as the spirit entered into him he spoke. Impressive is Ezekiel's method of illustrating his discourses; he "eats bread of trembling" to show the panic in the besieged city; he brings out household goods, suggestive of flight. Then again he would appear walking with face covered, a flight by night.

Ezekiel has "punch" to his teachings; like preceding prophets, he did all in his power to awaken the consciousness of Jerusalem; the people must see sin, not through a refined glamour, but in its own hideousness. Such is the Parable of the Foundling, in the sixteenth chapter: "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, Thus said the Lord God unto Jerusalem: Thy birth and thy

nativity is in the land of the Canaanite; the Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thou wast not washed in water to cleanse thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these things unto thee, to have compassion on thee; but thou wast cast in the open field, for that thy person was abhorred in the day thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee weltering in thy blood, I said unto thee, In thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee, In thy blood, live. I cause thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou didst increase and wax great, and thou attained to excellent ornament; thy breasts were fashioned, and thy hair was grown; yet thou was naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, said the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with sealskin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thine hands, and a chain about thy neck. Thou didst eat fine flour and honey and oil, and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper unto royal estate. And thy renown went forth among the nations for thy beauty; for it was perfect, through my majesty which I put upon thee, said the Lord."

All that Jehovah had done for the city, but the more that we have it seems the less we really desire to be. "Thou didst trust in the beauty," ungrateful foundling that she was; destroyed she must be before she could see that beauty and power belong to only the One. None other thing can the great Jehovah do; he must destroy her, that losing her life she may find it in him.

To the little home in Babylon the grim reaper comes; but Ezekiel in his sorrow does not bow under it; he shows others how to nobly meet him. Ezekiel's wife dies, but sorrow is coming to the whole of his circle; all who gather around him have relatives in Jerusalem, and

death will come to many of them. Ezekiel will not give way to personal woe when others need comfort and work is to be done for them. Surely this is what the Nazarene meant when he told the man, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." To sit and nurse our private woes is selfishness; to rise and do the work that confronts us is *character*; and character is the supreme end to which we all work. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," but to the one who never gives up and goes "straight forward."

"Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead, bind thy head-tire upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

"And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? Then said I unto them, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Speak to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord: Behold I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye left behind shall fall by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your heads: ye shall not mourn nor weep. Thus shall Ezekiel be unto you a sign: and according to all he hath done shall ye do."

We can never teach beyond what we ourselves live up to; the teaching not backed up by the demonstration is without power; it is empty. His people were prepared when the shock came! "And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying: *The city is smitten*. Now the hand of the Lord had been upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened,

and I was no more dumb." His silence which had begun with his wife's death and the siege of Jerusalem was thus ended.

Individuality is a strong point in Ezekiel's teachings; he shows the foolishness of believing in outside saviours; each man must be his own saviour: "Son of man, when a land sinneth against me by committing a trespass, and I stretch out my hand upon it, and break the staff of the bread thereof, and send famine upon it, and cut it off from man and beast, though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness saith the Lord."

But the "righteousness" of each saves himself, it matters not what external condition he is in. No man is under the curse of heredity; each is unhampered and free to work out his own salvation: "The word of the Lord came unto me again saying, What mean ye that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying,

The father's have eaten sour grapes,  
And the children's teeth are set on edge?

As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die." Only for our own individual actions are we responsible, for this we pay the penalty of death. When we cease to sin, we cease to die; for we have broken through the belief in materiality.

Ezekiel also teaches our responsibility to others: "So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me; When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require from thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way, and he turn not from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but thou has delivered thy soul."

There can be no desolation or unfruitful condition to the seer. Chapter 37,--The Valley of Dry Bones, is but the son of man's

opportunity to prophesy. Under the prophetic word, he can see the bone come to bone, the sinew laid upon them, and the flesh creep up over them; then, joy of joys, the breath of life come into them. So lies unseen the limitless possibilities of man, waiting the word of prophecy that shall make them live in our consciousness.

Ezekiel exercised a great influence over the writers of the New Testament. His allegory of the Good Shepherd, undoubtedly suggested that illustration to Jesus. In Revelations, his influence is especially evident; the eating of the roll; the invasion of Gog and Magog; the measuring of the Temple; the life-giving river and the four-square city with its twelve gates.

He believed in the Messianic Kingdom. His prophecies were partially fulfilled in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple; but not yet has the full vision of any prophet been fulfilled, nor will it be until, "No man shall say, knowest thou God, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest." His Vision is for all time for those who having eyes, see. The all-Presence with its luminous amber atmosphere surrounds us at all times. "The light shineth in the darkness," we have only to turn to it believingly to have it break through our night of sense.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE SHADOW CHRIST: ISAIAH

Isaiah 40-64.

To attempt to appraise this Herald of the New Time--which is not new at all, but a proclamation of the "Ancient Days," the eternal Real, knowing neither time nor space--requires a pen tipped with Light. Not a vestige of the personality of this prophet appears; he is just a Voice speaking from the latter end of the captivity in Babylon to his fellow captives; looking across the desert to Jerusalem--then a city which lay in ruins, to be rebuilt by the soul of the nation which through suffering had found itself--and from thence to the "ends of the earth."

As Jeremiah had sung the swan song of the old time, the "Great Unknown" sings the trumpet song of the new time--proclaiming the advent of the reign of Righteousness. So modest is this greatest of all Hebrew writers that we find his book attached to that of Isaiah, possibly because the optimism which is the keynote of each made their association inevitable, or maybe because this is the fulfillment of Isaiah's vision. The writer who begins his book with the words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," sees farther than he whose vision climaxed with the One who should be born of the house of David, and who would establish what would be still a typically Hebrew kingdom; this seer visions a people going out to conquer the whole world with no other instruments of warfare than gentleness and light.

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the nations. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment in truth. He shall not burn dimly nor be bruised, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." O, Jewish and Christian nations who have persecuted each other,

how far short ye have fallen of his ideal! Ye have slain each other, fought religious (?) wars, and martyred the prophets of light. Yet steady and persistent has his light shone, and the One, who personified himself with the vision, was bathed in his light. Yet this prophet's ideal is not limited to one man; he saw a *people*, those whom he called the "Suffering Servant of Jehovah," resplendent with the spirit that had been put upon them, redeeming a world by shining through it.

Instead of writing this article I was strongly tempted to say to the readers, "Procure a 'Modern Reader's Bible,' read the notes to the book and the book itself--'The Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed'." I am conscious of a feeling of humility in approaching this prophet; and I write about him because, among Biblical characters, this, which is neither a man nor a character, so far as we can trace, but a Light, is so insistent that all before his time leads up to him--and all after his time must look back to him. In my own Bible, the one used when I first became a student, and clung to for both comfort and healing, this prophet's pages are more marked than any other in the whole book, and that which is most sacred to us we are most reluctant to speak about, because words are so impotent to convey the feelings aroused by one who has been a great inspiration.

Christianity was born in the consciousness of Isaiah but it culminates in him who has been called "The Second Isaiah." His vision is no longer confined to the *Hebrew*, but sweeps out into the *human* race. It is a light of "irresistible illumination, which shall not burn dimly until it reach the farthest ends of the earth." Rhapsody is a word borrowed from music by Professor Moulton to express something which "is not paralleled in other literature. They are spiritual dramas, a fusion of all literary forms." Of this particular book he says: "It may be safely asserted that nowhere else in the literature of the world have so many colossal ideas been brought together within the limits of a single work."

Furthermore: "It is the boast of both England and America that its higher education is religious in its spirit; why is it then that our youth are taught to associate exquisiteness of expression, force of

presentation, brilliance of imaginative picturing, only with literature in which the prevailing matter and thought is on a low moral plane? Such a paradox is part of the paganism which came in with the Renaissance, and which our higher education is still too conservative to shake off. The friends of literary education who rebel against the thought of so one-sided a culture have a definite issue to contend for; that at least Isaiah and Job should take their place beside Plato and Homer in the curricula of our colleges and schools."

The American writer who said, "I wish that every young man and woman could go through college, to find out how little they can learn in them," was probably right. Personally I am an ardent advocate of the higher education, but in meeting many college trained men and women have found their education to be what we call in typing the pick-and-peck method. A scrap of learning here, and a scrap there, no beginning, no orderly unfoldment, no climaxes. Thoughts, ideals, nations, do appear, unfold, climax and pass away, leaving their message in the human consciousness, a leaven that never ceases to work for the betterment of the race, so that no matter what the seeming to human outlook, to spiritual vision the race is always "going straight forward."

The great nameless prophet made a discovery, hitherto unrecognized by preceding prophets: Suffering, trials, temptations, deprivations are not evidences of divine displeasure; but divine educations and opportunities to apply the spiritual principles that one professes to believe in. I find this misunderstood so largely among students today. Those students who wonder, Why *this* came to me? It is a special opportunity to demonstrate Truth. They get on the *underside* of it by calling it a *trial* instead of taking the *upperside* by calling it an opportunity.

In captivity the nation had so grown in knowledge and self-discipline that this prophet foresees that they are to be called out to a larger work than just saving themselves: "It is too light a thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the

Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth."

In Life's own school are the beloved of Jehovah educated; and the conditions of life are the spiritual gymnasium in which we develop the power to overcome "all things." In exile, having lost its national life, the nation had found its *international Soul*. Jehovah could not take his "wife" back, to whom he had been compelled to give a "bill of divorcement" because of her many infidelities. The "ungrateful foundling" now was a woman, with a woman's sense of responsibility, and a woman's soul looking out of her clear eyes.

"Sing, O barren,  
That thou didst not bear;  
Break forth into singing and cry aloud,  
That thou didst not travail with child.

For more are the children of the desolate than of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not; lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt spread abroad on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall possess the nations and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

Not in sheltered nooks and happy surroundings does character grow broad and powerful. Many a storm and tempest must the great oak pass through before we can rest under its comforting shelter, and only he knows the power of his own soul who has been tested to the uttermost and has found the spiritual power sufficient to meet every demand made upon it. One who has seen only the happy side of life can never touch the heights nor sound the depths of the spiritual universe. Only the soul who has been in the Vast Loneliness lets go of itself in absolute self-surrender; and only that soul that the Spirit finds empty can it completely occupy.

According to Luke, Jesus opened his great public ministry with a reading from this prophet, and was rejected by the Jews on account of the interpretation that he placed upon it. This new name for the nation, "Jews," came with the Babylonian captivity, a contraction of

"men of Judah." But it is not this people, the *Jews*, that the great prophet had foreseen, but those that should be born from the soul of the nation, the *Christians*.

Historic research had not gone so deeply into the making up of the Bible in the time of the Nazarene as it has in our day; so when following his baptism by John, Jesus returned to Nazareth, "where he had been brought up: and he entered as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book and found the place where it was written, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.* And he closed the book and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, *Today hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears.* And all bear him witness at the words of grace, which proceeded out of his mouth; and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"

If the preceding prophets had seen that Jehovah could raise up enemy powers to punish a sinful nation, this one sees that He can also raise up another foreign power to deliver his oppressed people. In the rise of Persia under Cyrus the Great, he sees an instrument which God will use to save the nation. As men and conditions are always to us what we name them, no doubt can exist in the minds of those who understand the laws of mind that this prophet's thought influenced that of Cyrus, and the privileges given to the Jews under this king were the result of his thought of him. By an inevitable law people respond to us from the dominant conviction of our consciousness, truly if the thought be true, wrongfully if the thought of them be doubtful or condemnatory.

The strength of the Hebrew prophets lies in their centralization of power. There was to them no power but God. "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be any after me. I, even I, am the

Lord: and beside me there is no saviour. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee to make the rugged places plain; I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. I will gird thee though thou hast not known me."

The worship of one God is established in this rhapsody; and scorn is shown for all idolatry. History is an endless repetition of itself and not yet have the nations which we consider civilized outgrown idolatry though the fashion of it be changed. Still we find Christians believing that health may be found in medicines, deliverance and freedom in the accumulation of wealth, and satisfaction in gaining some social position and in gratification of the senses. Contempt for idols fashioned by hand and carried in processions we easily can transfer, to suit the times, into idols fashioned in man's thought and laboriously carried around as dead weight to their makers. Jehovah announces himself through this seer as not being something we can *carry* as we do false gods, but as One who having *made* man HE CARRIES HIM.

A complete reversal of thought is given here, which this age has not yet caught up with: it means absolutely yielding our lives to the Supreme One, as the earth has yielded itself to the power that carries it in its orbit around the sun. We do not choose our God, He has chosen us, our work, our whole life, are His and He carries us through to completion. *There is nothing for us to do but accept and permit ourselves to be carried out into His ideal of us.* This which is our work is anything, however, but spineless acceptance of all that comes to us; it is positive rejection of all evil and perfect faith in the power of God to carry us through all the trials and temptations of life to a triumphant climax.

Is not the whole work of man given in the first chapter of the Shadow Christ, Isaiah 40:3-6?

"Prepare ye, in the wilderness the way of the Lord,  
Make straight in the deserts a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be exalted,  
And every mountain and hill shall be made low;  
The crooked shall be made straight,  
And the rough places plain:  
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
And all flesh shall see it together:  
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

There is only One Mind and One Thinker; our work is to make way for it. This is done as we rest in the Truth and let this Mind know in us. This pure knowing is what makes us free.

Could anything be more comforting than this, the twenty-eighth to the thirty-first verses of the same chapter?

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength; they shall mount up with the wings of eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Today, Great Prophet, thy people are seeing that light from thy consciousness, which has never burned dimly since thou hast spoken thy words of living truth. When we look into the eyes of companions who are comprehending thy truth, we know at last it is penetrating the consciousness of man universal, and our hearts are comforted, and each holding aloft his own torch and marching forward knows that at last thy vision is fulfilled, it is reaching the "farthest ends of the earth."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE RETURN OF THE EXILES

The history of the Return introduces us to a new people, the Hebrew nation has changed into the Jewish Church. We hear no more of idolatry, that phase of the national childhood being over, so we may call it the end of the first period of life. Broadly speaking there are three great periods to individual and national life. The first, the development of the national life, is in the individual the development of the physical life; the childhood period. In the second period we find the growth of the mental life, the systematizing of knowledge, the learning of co-operation, organization, and the turning to highest ideals; the manhood period. The third is the spiritual life, in biblical pages the Christian era, the reign of spiritual man.

We enter now on the second period of Jewish history, dealing with a new people, the Jews, broadened by contact with other nations, a chastened and disciplined people. As in our childhood period physical prowess is the great goal to be striven for, in the nation it is national power. But growing side by side with the physical man was the mental man, to bring the physical into subjection, and the restraining power of the national life were the prophets. These have now such ascendancy in the new life that around their written words a church and national organization grows. As the dethronement of the national life came with the captivity so the physical man is dethroned when the mental man takes possession by subordinating the body to mental discipline. In the third period, the Real, the spirit, comes into dominion, and both the body and the intellect are reduced to servitude, which however is joyous, spontaneous service.

These people are not going out under great warriors to conquer, they are reconstructionists with the zeal of hardy pioneers, animated with the intense love for the traditions and historic places of their race. The waste places are to be rebuilt as foretold by their

prophets, and their literature and religious ceremonies will be systematized, and the nation reorganized. They do not work under taskmasters, but voluntarily yield themselves to scribes, teachers and rulers. Well seasoned and disciplined lives confront us now, marching forward with definite purpose and constructive ideals to retain all that is their inheritance to rebuild on the old national sites, and await there the fulfillment of their prophecies.

The great National and Prophetic literature is changed to Ecclesiastical Histories and ceremonies. The national history is re-written by the churchmen and called Chronicles. Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra and Nehemiah are the names which stand out most conspicuously at this period; different men from the preceding period because the times are different. Men make the times, and in turn the times make the men. Great men answer the call of the needs of their own periods, supply it and therefore become the mirror in which we see the consecutive steps of history.

Great spiritual ideals come from youth rather than manhood, so we find that the great prophets belong to the past rather than the mid-period. This period is interesting for its discipline, accuracy and active work rather than for any new ideals or dynamic climaxes. These belong to the third, the spiritual period, in which all the ideals of youth culminate. "The first shall be last" and so in mid-time, we eliminate, separating the wheat from the chaff, and establish in consciousness the true, and "wait" for the promised Messiah, the Real of us to descend upon us and take possession of its own.

Fifty years after the fall of Jerusalem, 538 B.C., in the first year of his reign over conquered Babylon, Cyrus permitted all of the Jews who wished to do so to return to Jerusalem. He also gave them the vessels which had been taken from their temple. Many Jews had grown rich in Babylon and held influential positions who did not wish to return and face the hardships and privations of what would be pioneer work; but they contributed liberally to their returning countrymen under the leadership of a descendant of the former reigning house of Judah, Zerubbabel.

The company came to Jerusalem and immediately began work on the temple, by laying the foundation of it. Work on it was stopped by the jealousy and interference of the Samaritans, a mixed race of portions of the lost ten tribes who had intermarried with the heathen nations about. These people still called themselves followers of Moses, but were largely idolatrous. The foundation lay for sixteen years, and in 520 B.C. the zeal of the city and temple builders received an impetus from two complementary yet wholly different characters, Haggai and Zechariah. These men set themselves to the task of rebuilding the temple; Haggai, from the practical standpoint of a business leader who stimulates to actual work, is the man of the hour.

Haggai, with that faculty which all practical people have, knows when the opportunity comes to do a thing it should be accepted. Darius had attained the throne of Persia, there was some doubt as to his actual right to it, and he was kept so busy with this affair that the province of Judah is left much to itself. At this opportune time, Haggai, with the old direct method of pre-exilic prophets raised his voice, "Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts saying: This people say, It is not time for the Lord's house to be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet saying, Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in ceiled houses, while the house of the Lord lieth waste?" And the encouragement of the leader, not the driver is in his words: "Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land and work; for I am with you. The silver is mine and the gold is mine. The latter glory of this house, shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord."

Zechariah, "Whose mystic visions are as untranslated into prose as those of Percival in Tennyson's 'Holy Grail'" (Abbott), a priest who makes his appeal to the imagination of the people, is a splended combination with the practical layman, Haggai; such complementary characters should always work side by side. The practical man needs the vision of the seer, or he works around in a circle with no expanding models; the seer must have the power to get his vision

over into expression, else they fall still-born by the way. This prophet shows in his work the influence of Ezekiel, and of Babylonian art with its mystic imagery.

Zechariah gives us the secret of work, which does not waste but increases our power. Work by his method and we astonish ourselves with accomplishment. In fact, we never do anything except what we do under this rule; everything else will fail, a useless expenditure of force. When we blindly rush ahead in the human way, we do not *make*, we *mar*. "Not by my might, nor by my power, but by my spirit, said the Lord of Hosts." And the easy way to the goal, simple receptivity, he also sees: "Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for he is waked up out of his holy habitation."

His mystic name for the Messiah is "The Branch." "In that day shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree." Pre-exilic prophets had seen the great day of the Lord, to be destruction, when the Lord would overthrow wickedness; but Zechariah sees the breakdown of national borders and differences in creeds; in the great day when the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is an established fact, which holds the race in unity and peace. Under this inspiration the Temple was completed.

A singular instance of pre-vision was Jeremiah's. He had predicted the return of the exiles in seventy years, and the Temple was actually built in the seventieth year from the destruction of the old one. If the second temple was not a magnificent royal edifice--and those who remembered the former glory wept at this deficiency--it was surely more acceptable to the democratic Jehovah, built by the voluntary co-operation of prophet, priest, governor and people.

In 458 B.C. rose another great leader, who formed a company of exiles desiring to return to Jerusalem. In this character we have a priest and a scribe, one who was deeply rooted in piety, unwavering in faith, a strong leader and an active worker. Ezra "was a ready scribe in the law of Moses," and the reigning king, Artaxerxes, granted him permission to return with a company he had formed. He collected large sums of money, freewill offerings, with many

vessels of gold and silver, and "two vessels of fine brass as precious as gold."

There was a long and dangerous journey before the exiles whom Ezra had gathered, and who met at "the river which runneth to Ahava." "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of him a straight way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him, for good; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this and he was entreated of us."

It was a naive confession, and Ezra's faith carried them through to Jerusalem to safety. Ezra became a great power here, so great indeed that he induced the Jews who had married foreign women to put away those wives. No one without intense zeal could wield a power like this. Heathen women had been responsible largely for the fall of the old kingdoms, and this precaution was considered necessary to keep the faith pure. Many hardships and wrongs remained to be adjusted and as the demand always creates the supply, we come to another great character, Nehemiah.

Some thirteen or fourteen years had elapsed since the return under Ezra, when the word comes to Nehemiah, the cup-bearer to the king of Persia: "I was in Shushan, the palace, when Hanani, one of my brethren came, he and certain men out of Judah; and I asked him concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem is also broken down and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven, that keeps covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes

open, that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer of thy servant, which I pray at this time, day and night, for the children of Israel, thy servants."

Marvelous and speedy is the answer to direct prayer: "And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, when wine was put before him, that I took up the wine, and gave it to the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. And the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was sore afraid. And I said unto the king, Let the king live forever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make thy request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favor in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me unto Judah, that I may build it. And the king said unto me (the queen also sitting by him), For how long shall thy journey be? and wilt thou return? and I set him a time."

Nehemiah receives all necessary letters from the king to his foresters for lumber and other needful aids; also a military escort of the king's own soldiers. He comes to Jerusalem and becomes governor of the province. An indefatigable worker is he, going about at night alone and acquainting himself with the conditions of the city; its ruined walls and the debris so great that : "There was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did. Then said I unto them, Ye see the evil case that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come let us build up the wall of Jerusalem that we be no more a reproach."

Much he has to contend with, but he is a liberal and sagacious governor. He has singleness of purpose and does not ask any one to do what he himself is unwilling to do, or to go where he himself does not lead the way. He works well with Ezra the scribe, and between them the ecclesiastical and political organization is

established. The book of Nehemiah carries the history of the Jewish people down to a later date than any of the other historic books of the Old Testament, 443 B.C. We must therefore trace the rest of the history by means of the miscellaneous writings and through the history of other nations with which they came into contact.

The establishment of formal religions brings protests against the abuses which inevitably follow when the original founders with their consecrated zeal have passed away. So we come to the last prophet in the Old Testament, Malachi. This prophet's name is unknown, he receives his name from his title for the Messiah, My Messenger. He is one of the most advanced thinkers in the Old Testament: he recognizes Jehovah as God of the whole earth, and that even the worship of heathen nations, if sincere, will be acceptable to him. His trust in God to make himself clear is absolute, therefore formal religionists need not *misinterpret* him.

He is worthy of being the last prophet, before the advent of the One who fulfilled all prophecy. He exhorts us all to true religion, and to the fulfillment of all of our duties: "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith said the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

And this tribute to the Messiah is a fitting one from the last great figure of the old Dispensation to the One who opens the new Dispensation: "Behold, I send *my messenger*, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple: and the messengers of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he cometh, said the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and they shall offer unto the Lord offerings of righteousness."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### HEBREW LITERATURE

Besides the historic and prophetic portions of the Old Testament, there is a varied literature of allegories, love, patriotic and satirical romances, essays, dramas and poems. The poetic mind of the Hebrew has long been recognized. To our western and sometimes prosaic minds the symbols at times seem fulsome and exaggerated, yet in the main we see that by the beauty of their expression a graciousness is placed upon ordinary incidents and that there are no commonplaces to the soul that sees life through the glory of spiritual interpretation. When we can elevate and glorify all the natural duties and varied relationships of life, we are getting most out of it and are transmuting material dross to spiritual beauty by a divine alchemy.

The Hebrew, denied the outlet of the stage, utilizes his intense dramatic power in spiritualized dramas impossible to stage. The modern arrangement of the Bible enables us to get his effects in a manner impossible to gain from the authorized versions. "The true form of the literary work must be presented to the eye. At present the effusion of the poetmaster in a corner of a provincial Journal is printed with more discrimination of poetic form than the masterpieces of the Bible." (Moulton.) The stage of the Hebrew dramatist is Heaven and earth; the *dramatis-personae*, God, Man, Satan, Wisdom and Voices of mystical import; the accessories, the elements and natural phenomena, not simulated but real.

*The "Psalms"* are poems in which the soul of man stands revealed. They are the history of the soul piqued to one object, that of finding God. They are the expression of the soul in all its moods "from pompous ritual and national paean down to the cry of the solitary soul in the dark." They are the march of the soul from the isolation of sense oversight to the unity of the soul insight; in them we find its unrest when out of touch, its supreme faith and joy when on the

mountain top of spiritual vision where it feels underneath it the Everlasting Arms.

*The first romance* of length enough to be a book in itself is "*Ruth*," an idyl of the time of the Judges, but written much later, possibly after Ezra had prohibited foreign marriages. It is a charming story of the love of a foreign woman, a Moabitess, for her mother-in-law. In it we have a series of pictures of the customs of that day. It is through love for each other, of woman for woman, of man for man, and of man and woman that we feel most directly the rays of the Over Love that unites us in one human family. Simplicity, sincerity and love are the characteristics of the book of Ruth; it deserves its place in our sacred books, for it casts its spell over us and makes us feel that the spring-time of life will never wane.

"*Esther*" is a story of the exile told with dramatic power. It is the one book in the Bible in which the word God does not appear. It must have some historic basis, though scholars have been unable to trace it. It was held in great regard by the Jews, called "the Roll" and read annually at the feast of Purim. It is a story of patriotism, in which a woman matches triumphantly her resources, her wit, beauty and charm against the villain who would annihilate her race.

"*Jonah*," called by Lyman Abbott "A Satirical Romance," brings to us a lesson we may all well heed. It is a story of Nineveh, written several centuries after its fall. There is no historic basis for either the character of Jonah, or the conversion of the Ninevites. What this writer endeavors to convey is that God cares for our enemies just as much as he cares for us. The Hebrew felt that the Ninevites who had overthrown the Northern kingdom were outside of the pale of Jehovah's love; but the horizon of the Hebrew mind is broadening, this writer sees God as the God of the whole earth, and all peoples as God's people.

The unknown author of "*Jonah*" did for the nation's narrow concept of God what Cervantes did with the ridiculous excesses of Spanish chivalry, laughs it away. Jonah, a prophet, is commanded by Jehovah to go to Nineveh and save that pagan City. Jonah is a loyal

Hebrew, the Ninevites are the enemies of his nation, so he determines that he will not save them. He takes a ship which sails west, the opposite direction to Nineveh, but sailing in an opposite direction cannot thwart the purposes of Jehovah who owns the sea as well as the land. He sends a storm which well nigh wrecks the ship and Jonah must confess that it is he that is remiss. The heathen mariners are most reluctant to throw him overboard, a lesson wholesome for a man of Jonah's type, the *heathen are merciful*.

Jonah arrives at his destination; it matters not how, this author merely wishes to assert a truth given in our Text Book, "Man is either driven or drawn to his final destiny." Jonah preaches to the Ninevites and they repent. He sulks over it, angry because God is merciful. Jehovah does not condemn Jonah for that, but with the patient love of a father for a wayward child endeavors to make him see the larger love. He makes a gourd to grow and under its shade Jonah finds shelter from the blazing rays of the sun. Jonah loved the gourd, but Jehovah prepared a worm which destroyed it during the night. "And it came to pass, when the sun arose, that God prepared a sultry east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry even unto death. And the Lord said, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night; and shouldst not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city; wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

God receives no answer from Jonah; he is the type of mind at which this author aimed his shaft, the orthodox Jew. God has no favorite nation nor individuals; all are his children. A wonderful lesson and artistically told, the universality of the Infinite Love.

The *Song of Songs* is a love drama, but one into which a real spiritual meaning can be read. In each individual choice there is a larger side of universal significance. A Shulamite maiden is loved by a man of

her own class, a peasant. King Solomon (chosen as the hero because he represented the apex of worldly power to the Hebrew) sees the maiden and would add this beautiful brunette ("I am black--but comely") to his harem. He woos her and his court women assist as the chorus. All the intrigue of worldliness, all the lure of sensuousness, all the blandishments of wealth are used to decoy her. It all falls on ears, eyes and heart filled with love that cannot be deflected from its object, therefore she is immune from temptation.

She is carried to Jerusalem into the royal palace and shown all of its grandeur and wealth. But in her dreams she wanders away through the streets seeking him whom her soul loves. Then comes the climax, she finds and is reunited to her lover. The steadfast love of a true woman is the best symbol of the soul whose mind is stayed on God. The soul stands between the true lover, God, and the false seducer, worldliness; when the love is so fixed on God that it can *hear* no other voice it is established and therefore free.

*The Wisdom Literature* differs from the prophetic; one is based on Divine revelation, the other arriving at essentially the same conclusion is based on observation. Wisdom literature is the philosophy of the Hebrew, a philosophy based on God and the inevitable judgments of God not in some future life but here and now. Wisdom literature includes Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon. The latter two books are Apochryphal, therefore not found in the authorized version. "The principle underlying Wisdom literature and giving it its unity may be described by a single word, Observation. The prophet rests his message on an immediate Divine revelation; the wise men claimed only to have observed life. Modern Science is not more faithful to its root idea of examining details and grouping results than is the wisdom of the Bible to its principle of analytical observation." (Moulton.)

*Job* is the most stupendous drama that has ever been written. "The masterpiece of the human mind," Victor Hugo calls it. It answers the query which every student asks, as soon as he hears the principle of Omnipresence enunciated. "If God be all, where then did evil come

from?" And the answer is that in the process of life's unfoldment in consciousness, man must stand in unwavering faith, clinging steadfastly to his principle until all the shafts of mortality are exhausted and the soul can stand in undisturbed serenity and not be deflected by any outward appearance.

No evil is evil to the soul that overcomes it, it is only evil as it overcomes us. Otherwise it has been a beneficent development of consciousness and power. The Book of Job contradicts the conception that trials are punishment for sin, but enunciates them as opportunities for spiritual initiation. Satan tells us his origin, and to know the origin of anything is to have the mastery of it. God does not know him, therefore he is not of God's Creation. "Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Adversary came also among them. And the Lord said unto the Adversary, Whence comest thou? Then the Adversary answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." The Adversary is something that exists only in human belief; it actually is nothing but what we have not worked out. A great modern prophet says, "All the good the human mind knows is negative." Job's early possessions of health, wealth and friends were negative; that is, they were based on external beliefs in what he possessed. Possession is never an external hold of anything; it is an interior consciousness of eternal Reality. Evil then in any guise is only a vacuum in thought to be filled with the eternal idea of substance.

Outside of the historic prophets we must place Joel; he belongs to no time, but, like Revelation, gives us the eternal irreconcilability of good and evil. It is a continuous dramatic presentation of the mystic forces of destruction and the power to stay these forces as we arrive at the Valley of Decision (Valley of Jehosaphat). This great poem, under the symbol of the Locust Plague, reveals the destructive power of sin, and sin is *indecision*. Power is a definite stand in God's judgments. What truer picture can be drawn of a soul or a nation who is overcome by sin than this:

"The land is a Garden of Eden before them,  
And behind them a desolate wilderness."

The soul that has yielded to temptation, instead of overcoming it, is a desolate wilderness, for the fair flowers of spiritual accomplishment cannot grow in it.

Of this work Professor Moulton says, "The movement of the poem is the beautiful movement of a regular arch, with the turning point in the center, while every stage in the rise of the action has its counterpoint in the fall." First, Desolation and Mourning; second, Judgment Advancing; third, Repentance; then the top and the turn, Relief and Restoration; fifth, Israel Repentant; sixth, Valley of Decision; seventh, The Holy Mountain of Eternal Peace. Thus we trace the steps the soul takes as it turns from mortal beliefs (Locust Plague) and comes to God's judgments, spiritual Reality. And the gracious promise abides, "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten." To the repentant soul who turns to God's judgment there is no loss, all is restored.

The later books of Jewish literature show a decidedly Grecian influence. This is most pronounced in the Apochryphal Wisdom books. The Wisdom of Solomon is so largely Grecian that it uses the phraseology of Greek philosophy and it enumerates the four cardinal virtues of Plato specifically. The contribution of the East is the infinite nature of God; that of the West unconquerable man, God's own son. Emerson claims that the East and the West met in the mind of Plato; if this is true of the Grecian philosopher it is still more true of the universal consciousness of Jesus. He saw the infinite God and man's infinite capacity to comprehend Him.

"*Daniel*" was written at a crucial point of Jewish history. The nation since the time of Alexander the Great had been under Grecian kings. In the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (176-164 B.C.), this monarch persecuted the Jews with great severity because of their resistance to the introduction of Grecian gods. The heroic Maccabees successfully resisted him, and the Jews gained eighty years of independence; then they came under the Roman Empire.

During the persecution of Antiochus, the Jews needed a stimulus and this was given in the historic romance of Daniel. "The Abomination of Desolation" refers to the erection of the Greek god Zeus in the temple of Jerusalem and the order given the Jews by the king to worship it. Many suffered martyrdom for their faith and the book of Daniel, with a hero absolutely true to Jehovah when in exile and under a foreign king, must have been a powerful encouragement to an oppressed people.

It is interesting and inspiring to see that this writer believed in the ability of man to read all mysteries; also his perception that men true to the highest could not be burned in fire and that the lions could be subdued by a power which they recognized as God. A spiritualized body would be immune in the fire and to one filled with love all nature would be subservient.

Jesus, foreseeing the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and an inner experience which befalls every soul as it turns from the concept of a material life to the spiritual, quotes from the book of Daniel, "But when ye see the Abomination of Desolation, spoken by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains." Judaism and its temple were destroyed because with the advent of Christianity they were outgrown and the old form could not contain the new wine whose fermentation changed the history of the world.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### CHRISTIANITY

Christianity followed Judaism as naturally as the fruit follows the blossom, for one is the fulfillment of the other. A little over a half century after Palestine had become a Roman province a child of humble parentage was born in an obscure village of that province. As the child grew he revealed a comprehension of life and exercised powers hitherto unknown as being inherent in man. His advent was of such importance that besides dividing our history into two great sections it has caused an understanding of the purpose of the Creator in and for men to steadfastly unfold in the consciousness of the race.

Before the revelation of an inner and spiritual world which Jesus called "The Kingdom of God," the human race was ignorant of the destiny of man or the dominion which he might have over his body and the earth. Up to this time the visible had seemed to be of such a nature and solidity that control of it was considered the dream of a poet or the result of supernatural interference, which peoples of unscientific ages so readily accept.

Someone has said that the greatest discovery of the nineteenth century was Jesus Christ. He was rediscovered and rescued from the superstitious misconceptions regarding him, in which he was thought of as a superman of extraordinary powers which were, and ever would be, beyond the rank and file of the race. A new interest was given Christianity with the rescue of the thought of its founder from a supernatural being to that of a man who was but a member of the human family with powers not extraordinary, but the ordinary powers all men possess will they but believe in them and use them.

This brought about the renaissance of Christianity and it is studied now, not as something supernatural to which all men must give superstitious credence, but as a revelation of spiritual law which all men may comprehend and apply. "Ye shall know the truth and the

truth shall make you free," is the fiat of Christianity. This is the positive assertion of one who has perceived the principle of life and demonstrated its exactness.

Booker T. Washington has told us, "Freedom is not a bequest, it is a conquest." Freedom is both a bequest *and* a conquest. Christianity establishes the fact that everything that exists in principle in completeness. Principle is the way things are in the spiritual world; in other words, the way God thinks of them. The eternal quest of man is for principles, for when he masters the principle of anything he possesses the thing itself. Freedom is a bequest then in that these life principles exist for man's benefit. The conquest of these principles through our comprehension of them is the promised freedom of Christianity.

The disclosure of the spiritual world revealed by Christianity brings the end of our quest. We may now indeed find the "journey's end at every step." Christianity invites us to enter this realm of light, love, peace and perfection, not at some future time but now.

Christianity is more than an evolution, it is a revolution. It reveals a spiritual creation in the consciousness of the Creator, perfect, eternal, finished. This Creation, like the mind of the Creator, is without "variableness or shadow of turning." Time and space conceptions of finite sense are eliminated as we put off "mortality," the race beliefs of life, "and put on immortality," God's consciousness of His universe.

Man is the central figure of the Kingdom, he is the "Son and heir" to all that the Father possesses. Christianity reveals man as being created by God, not in the sense that man is later in time than God, that there was a time when God was and man was not, but since God is Mind, man, the Idea of God, is an eternal consequence of this Mind.

The founder of Christianity discovered the relationship of God to man and of man to God. Man expresses his Creator in fullness and freedom when he knows the truth. Jesus revealed the nature, spirituality, love and substance of God. He said the Kingdom is here

and now, that it becomes apparent to us as we put away sin (the discords of sense) and that it was the Father's good will that we have the Kingdom. God is Life and the purpose of life is its own expression. God is Love and the purpose of love is to express love. God is Light and the "darkness" of material beliefs does not exist but is merely the result of our failure to perceive this omnipresent Kingdom.

Life has fixed and eternal principles even as mathematics and music have. These principles must be comprehended and applied; man rises into the resurrection and the life, out of his misconceptions of sense. He must work out his own salvation, through his perception of Reality. Reality is the Kingdom, the Soul, eternally perfect. Sin, sickness and death are ignorance of life; love, joy and eternal life are knowledge of truth. *Knowledge is what we know*; we can know only what we have experienced. Knowledge can never be received from another.

The spiritual realm is omnipresent. The author of Ben Hur has this to say of it: "There is a kingdom on this earth though it is not of it; a kingdom of wider bounds than the earth; wider than the sea and the earth though they be rolled together as finest gold and spread by the beating of hammers. Its existence is a fact as our hearts are facts and we journey through it from birth to death without seeing it. Nor shall any man see it until he has known his own soul, and in its dominion there is glory such as has not entered imagination, original, incomparable, impossible of increase."

This is the Real and to enter the life of the Soul is to be in it and of it. On many occasions I have consciously experienced this--and many others known to me personally have also been aware of it. Jesus said: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." That is, it must be within one's consciousness.

When aware of this realm one has a sense of buoyant life and health, a sense of the spirituality of the body and of radiant joy.

Having once in consciousness experienced this realm, the fundamentals of Christianity are readily comprehended.

The central doctrine of Christianity is the incarnation. Man is the incarnate word of God held steadfastly in God consciousness, a spiritually perfect being. This includes the spiritual body of man which is the only body he has. Man is never in the body finite sense perceives, which is but a picture in his mentality. To know the truth of the body is to place it in its sustaining principle, incapable of discord, for we are individual entities in perfect bodies, our eternal identity in God.

Man comes to know himself because God knows him eternally. A realization of the dignity and value of our lives comes to us through the revelations of Christianity. Infinity can have no useless ideas, something new is to be revealed in each. "The whole is the sum of all its parts." Jesus redeemed the prostitute, he recalled the publican to a sense of life's value, for life is not to be squandered in sensuous pleasures, but held as a sacred trust for the expression of God's *original* idea. When we have found this we have found ourselves in God and henceforth life is free, spontaneous, joyous expression.

As man reconstructed his conception of astronomy, changing its basis from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system, thus eliminating a mortal belief that the earth is the center of the solar system and substituting the truth that the sun is the center, so Christianity demands another basis for life than the human conception of it. Christianity's initial command is, "Repent ye," demanding a complete and radical change of thought. Man is not mortal nor has he a material body. He is an idea in God's mind, sinless and deathless. He is eternally a citizen of the spiritual world even when he is ignorant of its existence.

The education of man consists in learning accurately the temporal facts of his unfoldment and learning definitely the established truths of his eternal verity. The Gospel is the "good news" the truth brings to us. It uncovers Reality thus delivering us from the evils of

mortal belief. The Gospel is the power to conform our concepts of life to God's eternal truth.

There is a perfect method given in Christianity for the task which confronts humanity in the mode of thinking called prayer in the New Testament. Man works out his own salvation. The original meaning of certain words brings to our knowledge the purpose of the sacred writers. (Testament, being a witness, making one's last will; a covenant.--Webster.) The New Testament then is a later revelation of God's will, his last will. A covenant binds the two contracting parties.

Agreement is the working basis of Christianity, the method of transmitting God's power to man and it reveals the eternal union of God and man. There is no line of demarcation where God the cause ends and man the result begins, so there must be perpetual agreement between them; if they cannot be separated they are one, there can be no disagreement in absolute unity.

In spiritual creation man exists in eternal completeness and supply, not only for every need he has now but also for every need he ever will have. The *eternal* action of God consists in his sustaining thought of Creation. This thought of God is the *principle* of man, for God sees man always in exactly the same way and this persistent thought of man in God's consciousness is reality. "The ultimate test of the reality of a thing is its persistence," Herbert Spencer tells us, and this thought of man as God thinks of him does persist and man is never satisfied until he accepts this truth and rests in it.

Prayer as taught by Christianity is the process of getting into the stream of God's will and receiving our inheritance. Prayer is a state of pure receptivity and acceptance on man's side, of gracious bestowal on God's side. True prayer is never petition, it is contemplation of the truths of life and establishing these facts in consciousness.

In agreement with God, healing of thought, health of body, freedom of expression, come into our consciousness, and man possesses all that enters his consciousness. "For whosoever hath (in his

consciousness), to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not (in his consciousness), from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." Luke 8:18.

Agreement is the law of Christianity because it is unity and unity is love. God is life and all life is on the inside of this universal life. The thing which finite sense imperfectly perceives exists in perfection in divine Mind. In spiritual creation there is nothing nor anyone to disagree with; agreement extends to the relationship between man and man. Only in affiliation can we accomplish our purposes with each other. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 18:19.

Since life is one and that One pure Spirit there can be nothing to disagree with, therefore we are told to "resist not evil" and to agree with even our adversary. The adversary can be nothing but a wrong belief, "the devil," therefore instantly agree with it; it is nothing and there is nothing to oppose our full expression of life. Thus we take all power to harm us out of everything or any one. The only power the adversary has we give it by our belief in it as power. All power is God's, there can be no other *power*.

In disagreement we repel, in agreement we receive and attract. The former holds us in bondage to evil beliefs, the latter enables us to live the life of truth and freedom. To live in spirit and in truth gives us the "New Tongues" of Christianity. Life, love, competency, power, truth, are the life bringing words of the New Era; sin, sorrow, materiality, death, are the obsolete language of our former ignorance.

The great discovery of Jesus was, "The flesh profiteth nothing." The life of man and his body are in Spirit alone. "Satan hath bound him," Jesus said of the one who was under the material delusion being rendered impotent by the limitations of his own erroneous beliefs. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," that is, changing our material belief of body to a spiritual conception of it.

Forgiveness of sin is the Biblical term for correcting our misconceptions of life to the Truth. We correct our material errors in direct ratio to our perception of God's finished Creation. This is another of Christianity's revolutionary ideas, that it is man not God that forgives sin. It is the false concept of life which has sinned and man's perception of Reality enables him to correct the errors of sense, in both his own mentality and also that of others. There is no forgiveness of sin save as the sin is corrected and abandoned.

Man's responsibility is clearly defined in Christianity. "Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Every advance of the human family is by the correction of the errors in the thought of the race. As we make our accounts tally by making them square with the principle of mathematics, correct our unmusical discords by the fixed fundamental rules of music, we forgive sin, a violation of spiritual law by the application of the unerring accuracy of spiritual principles. This restores us to unity, peace and truth; a false sense of life miscreates "all the ills that flesh is heir to." True vision enables us to live in God's eternal love and life.

To "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils," is the natural result of the forgiveness of sin. In fact there is nothing to cast out but sin (an evil belief), and wholeness results. The whole process which confronts the Christian worker is to hold consciously in vision the Real, thus giving to one's self the supreme joy of knowing that "I have filled the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run."

For joy, radiant, soul-filling joy, is the purpose of Christianity. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might be in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:11. Life is an ecstasy and of unending interest while we remain with the vision. Nothing is hopeless and our service to the race is incalculable in its light, for every one that sees aids in the freeing of the race from its delusion of power in the material misconceptions.

Every one of us is a distant thought in God consciousness, a channel through which an idea is to be expressed.

Frederick Froebel, the apostle of individuality, says: "Every human being has but one thought peculiarly and predominantly his own, one fundamental thought, as it were, of his whole being, the keynote of his life's symphony, a thought which he simply seeks to express and render clear with the help of a thousand other thoughts, with the help of all he does."

Life is a symphony and each has his part in it, and not to yield ourselves without reservation to the Power is to fail "to do the will" which enables us to "know the doctrine." As we individually emerge from the isolation of the self to the unison of the Self, the stately and harmonious rhythm of the great solar systems each majestically "about the Father's business," will be apparent in our lives. Then in the universal birth of the Christ idea, may the angelic anthem be heard, "Peace on earth, good will to men."